

**** Revised May 2, 1997 ****

A Report on the Work Toward National Standards, Assessments and Certificates

Part I



Prepared for the
Ohio State Board of Education

Researched and compiled by
Diana M. Fessler

December 10, 1996

[Letterhead]

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To: Members of the Ohio State Board of Education, and Dr. Goff
From: Diana M. Fessler, Third District
Date: December 10, 1996

RE: Standards, Assessments, and Certificates

At the close of the August State Board of Education Retreat, Ms. Purdy asked me to present a twenty minute report on a conference that I had attended earlier that week. As you will recall, I presented an oral report on the work of the National Center on Education and the Economy at the close of our September meeting.

The National Center on Education and the Economy is an organization dedicated to the development of a unified system of education and employment. **The National Center's vision is to create a national human resources development system, interwoven with a new approach to governing.** This report is a summary of **the National Center's agenda, that is, by design and intent, applicable to all states, and it is now being implemented in many of them.**

As you are well aware, the *Standards for Ohio Schools: Coming Together to Build a Future Where Every Child Counts* document is coming up for a vote in the near future. It is riddled with continuous improvement, professional development, diminished authority for local schools boards, school performance standards, a call to "organize" programs according to labor market needs, and a provision for worksite-based learning opportunities; all of which dovetail quite nicely with the NCEE agenda.

In preparation for giving the requested report, I outlined the various programs provided by the National Center on Education and the Economy. Over the course of time, the outline expanded to approximately seventy-five pages. Although the original outline was a useful tool for me, it was totally inadequate for submission as a written report due to the lack of formatting and the use of casual grammar and punctuation. While revising that outline, double-checking for accuracy, and creating a more reader-friendly format, this report took shape. For the sake of the children, it is my sincere desire that this report will begin a much needed discussion, and that it will lead to corrective legislative, and corrective regulatory, action.

That corrective action is predicated on first recognizing how successful the National Center on Education and the Economy has been in moving their agenda forward. Collectively, the NCEE/*New Standard* partners "teach more than half of the public school students in the United States." Accordingly, the NCEE agenda cannot be dismissed as unimportant or irrelevant.

There is no doubt that H.R. 1617 (known as the "Consolidated and Reformed Education, Employment, and Rehabilitation Systems Act" or "CAREERS Act"), and the Senate version of the same bill, S. 143 (The Workforce Development Act of 1995), are extensions of the 1994 School-to-Work Act. They represent the culmination of the NCEE's effort to get Congress to impose *The System* on all Americans. **However, federal control is not needed to put *The System* in place in every state. The only thing that is needed is the federal money that will become available as a result of the legislation being passed. **As an aside, although a very important one, the proposed legislation would have sent the money to the office of the governor, by-passing the General Assembly.****

On September 27, 1996, the NCEE plan was *temporarily* halted from being incorporated into federal law when the Careers Bill was defeated in Conference Committee. **Undoubtedly, the bills will be re-introduced in 1997.** Nevertheless, much of the plan can be, and is being, implemented under existing laws, regulations, and/or waivers. Unless something is done to stop it, the NCEE agenda will continue to be implemented, albeit on a less expansive scale, to the detriment of our children and grandchildren.

By not bringing forth in-depth information, for and against initiatives such as the NCEEs, state education agency employees – specifically those whose job it is to inform and advise members of the State Board of Education, members of the General Assembly, and the Office of the Governor – have disclosed, by virtue of their silence, that they **either don't know** what's going on, **or they are enabling participants.** To narrow the field, and to eliminate the first possibility, I am asking Dr. Goff to distribute this report to his senior staff and the division heads, for their review.

When talking about the need to restructure education, mention is often made of the practice of “leaving one's head at the factory gate” thereby implying that workers have been in the habit of leaving their brains outside of the workplace — to the detriment of business, industry and the economy. However, when proponents of education restructuring are confronted with facts and sound reasoning — the result of not leaving one's head at the gate — they often attempt to label their critics as uninformed or reactionary, and to label their views as mere extrapolation, misunderstanding, supposition, distortion etc. etc. etc. Therefore, to preclude such response, and to foster constructive debate of the facts, this report is heavily footnoted. My personal comments are clearly labeled as *Notes*.

Because of the complexity of the material and the interwoven nature of the many facets of what I refer to as *The System*, additional research is needed. Accordingly, *this report is a work-in-progress*. I recognize that external input will inevitably produce a more comprehensive report. Therefore, I welcome submission of additional information and rebuttals, providing that supporting documentation is included with it.

Your letter of support will be very much appreciated.

STYLE NOTES

- ♦ Italic, underlined, and boldface type have been added throughout the document for emphases. When emphasis is within a quote, it too was added, unless otherwise noted.
- ♦ Personal comments are in square brackets after quotes and paraphrasing.

December 17, 1996

- Changes regarding Occupational Competency Analysis Profiles (OCAPs).

January 2, 1997

- Reduction in font size to compress the file. Information regarding alternatives schools was added, and a postscript was added.

January 10, 1997

- A partial membership list of the New Standards Governing Board was added.

January 27, 1997

- Information regarding investigation of NCEE by the New York Attorney General's office was added.

January 28, 1997

- Typographical corrections were made.

February 3, 1997

- The notation regarding the changes has been lost; the changes were not of major significance.

May 2, 1997 - Revisions

- Minor grammatical and punctuation errors were corrected.
- Development of Certificates of Mastery - updated - page 29
- Career Passport - expanded. pp. 27-28.
- Letter-to-the-editor by 16-year-old Jenny Potochnik - page 30.
- Appendix A - Reply to the Response

To request a copy of this report via electronic mail, e-mail

Diana@Fessler.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL	2
STYLE NOTES	4
INTRODUCTION	8
Annual Conference	8
Origin of the National Center on Education and the Economy	8
Original NCEE Board Members	9
Five Recommendations	9
RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTED	10
Clinton Administration Receives NCEE's Plan	10
NCEE'S Agenda	11
NCEE's Family of Programs for Accomplishing the Agenda	11
Overview of NCEE's System of Standards, Assessments and Certificates	11
National Impact of the NCEE Programs and Funding	12
Review	13
SYSTEM # 1: CERTIFYING WORKFORCE READINESS	15
Part A: Setting up Standards	15
Why is the CIM Needed?	15
Content Standards versus Performance Standards	16
Assessing Whether the Standards Have Been Met	16
How State Standards Become Linked to NCEE <i>New Standards</i>	17
Who Sits on the <i>New Standards</i> Governing Board?	18
Review	19
Part B: The Certificate of Initial Mastery	21
National Alliance for Restructuring Education	21
Timeline and Purpose	22
Alliance Programs and Tasks	23
Engaging the Public	23
High Schools Reconfigured	23
Capstone Project	24
Schools Moves to the Work-Site	24
Ohio's Individual Career Plans	25
Career Passports	25
Ohio's School-to-Work	26
Assessments	27
Ohio's School-to-Work Funding	28
Post-CIM Options for School and Work	28
Choice In Education Is Promoted	30
What Happens to Students Who Don't Receive a CIM?	30
Engaging the Public	30

Public Acceptance _____	30
What the Minutes Say _____	31
Review _____	31
Part C: Standards for Schools _____	35
Performance Standards for Schools _____	35
Diminished Academic Freedom _____	36
Grants and Waivers _____	37
“Quality” _____	38
Review _____	39
SYSTEM # 2: YOUTH CENTERS FOR THOSE NOT CERTIFIED _____	41
A New Spin on Compulsory Schooling _____	41
Legal Responsibility Wanted _____	41
Funding Youth Centers _____	41
Review _____	41
SYSTEM # 3: OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION _____	43
Overview _____	43
Apprenticeship Programs for 80% or More _____	43
National Skill Standards Board _____	43
Setting Up <i>the System</i> _____	44
High Performance Work Organization _____	44
But Isn't This a Voluntary System? _____	45
The Motivation Cycle _____	46
Problems Recognized _____	46
Civil Rights _____	46
Opposition Recognized _____	47
Setting Policy _____	48
One-Stop Career Centers _____	48
Review _____	49
SYSTEM # 4: ACQUIRING TRAINING _____	52
Guaranteed Funding _____	52
Free Market Economy Under Attack _____	52
Compulsion _____	53
Why is Universal Participation Needed? _____	53
Review _____	53
SYSTEM # 5: A LABOR MARKET SYSTEM _____	55
The Backbone of <i>The System</i> _____	55
Seamless Web _____	55
Competition for the Money _____	55
Ohio Systems - A Mini-Glossary _____	56
Urban Initiative _____	56
Elected School Boards Obsolete _____	57
POSTSCRIPT _____	58
Recommendations Implemented _____	58

Shift in Focus _____ 58
New Standards Governing Board _____ 60

APPENDIX A _____ **62**
A Reply to the Department of Education’s Response _____ 62

INTRODUCTION

. . . it is essential that we create a seamless web that literally extends from cradle to grave and is the same system for everyone - young and old, poor and rich, worker and full-time student.¹

. . . a seamless system of skill development that begins in the home with the very young and continues through school, postsecondary education and the workplace.²
- National Center on Education and the Economy

We are moving toward a seamless education system, where there is a continual lifelong learning process.³
- Virginia Purdy
President, Ohio State Board of Education

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

As a member of the Ohio State Board of Education, I attended the First Annual National Standards-Based Reform Conference, August 8-10, 1996, in San Antonio, Texas. The Conference was sponsored by the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), an organization dedicated to the development - *in the United States [not by the United States]-* of a unified system of education and employment. The stated purpose of the conference was to “take stock, gather strength, and share the energy needed to move the NCEE’s agenda forward.”⁴

The conference literature referred to the recent Governor’s Education Summit meeting in Palisades, New York, as a major turning point in American education. NCEE literature states that there is “an increased consensus that the path to better student performance is through a broad system of standards.”⁵ Seemingly, the consensus referred to here is shared by the governors and business leaders who attended the Education Summit and by the members of the NCEE. The governors have created a new group, *Achieve*, to achieve better educational outcomes. *Achieve’s* directors are: Governors Tommy Thompson (R-WI), Roy Romer (D-CO), John Engler (R-MI.), George Voinovich (R-OH), Bob Miller (D-NV), and James Hunt (D-NC). Other board members are: Louis Gerstner, Jr. (IBM), John Pepper (Proctor and Gamble), Robert Allen (AT&T), John Clendenin (BellSouth), George Fisher (Eastman Kodak), and Frank Shrontz (Boeing Co.).^A The group will monitor state progress toward restructuring schools around standards and assessments. **The governors promised during the March 1996 summit to restructure their state school systems within two years.**⁶

ORIGIN OF THE NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY

A **1986** report entitled *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* called for **fundamental restructuring of American schools**. The report was commissioned by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, and the

^A Many of these individuals also serve on the Board of Directors for the New American Schools Development Corporation.

principal author was **Marc Tucker**, the Carnegie Forum's Executive Director.⁷ To implement the recommendations of the report, **Tucker formed the National Center on Education and the Economy** in 1988.

ORIGINAL NCEE BOARD MEMBERS

It is important to note that **the original twenty-seven NCEE board members were, and still are, very influential people**, most notably: **Ira Magaziner**, principal in the Clinton national health care plan; Mario Cuomo, Governor of New York; John Scully, then President and CEO of Apple Computer, Inc.; Vera Katz, then Oregon's Speaker of the House; **Marc Tucker; David Rockefeller, Jr.; and Hillary Rodham Clinton**, who was at the time a partner in the Rose Law Firm.⁸ NCEE paid Mrs. Clinton \$102,000 in 1992 for her work as a consultant.⁹

According to constitutional law scholar Karen Iacovelli, "NCEE and its payment to Mrs. Clinton are currently under investigation by New York Attorney General Dennis Vacco. As a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, NCEE has admitted to spending more than \$2 million lobbying. This is not only a violation of federal and state tax statutes, but the lobbying effort and payment to Mrs. Clinton also raise other legal and ethical questions: What was the nature of NCEE's lobbying, and who were the beneficiaries of \$2 million in "fees"? Did NCEE violate New York's competitive bidding laws? Was NCEE, in fact, a political strategy organization using taxpayer money and the protections of tax-exempt status to advance a socialist scheme? Apparently, NCEE had a contract with the controversial Arkansas Rose Law firm to perform work that, to date, the firm is unable to identify. It is also unable to explain the \$102,000 fee paid to Mrs. Clinton. While we await the results of Mr. Vacco's legal probe, there is abundant evidence available exposing the tangled web and tentacles of NCEE and its questionable motives."¹⁰

After the National Center was established, **NCEE/Tucker then created the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce**. The Commission issued *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, a 1990 report that contained a series of recommendations to improve our position in the global economy. **Membership on the NCEE board and the Commission overlapped and included Marc Tucker and Ira Magaziner**. Curiously, the meeting minutes of the National Skills Standards Board, an off-shoot of *Goals 2000*, record that "**The Skills Commission began because** Ira Magaziner resided in the State of Rhode Island, and he had been very much involved in the development of the *America's Choice* report. He was asked by the then governor of Rhode Island to look at how that report might influence education and the economy, and so Ira . . . decided to engage a very large grassroots effort in looking at **how to implement the national report**. **The recommendations** that the Rhode Island group came up with **were quite similar to the kinds of things that we're hearing at the national level . . . that [were] largely translated into the School-to-Work Opportunities Act**."¹¹

FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The NCEE/Commission made recommendations to the NCEE board for the creation of five interlocking systems. The remainder of this report is divided into chapters that correspond to NCEE's five systems. I refer to these systems, collectively, as *The System*:

- A system to **certify student readiness to enter the workforce**¹²
- A system of **Youth Centers for those not certified labor ready**¹³
- A system of **occupational certificates**¹⁴
- A system of **finance** for education and workforce training, and¹⁵
- A system of **labor market boards** to pull it all together¹⁶

The magnitude and interdependence of NCEE's five systems can be difficult to grasp, but it is essential to do so. It may help to consider the folk tale about four men, blind from birth, describing an unknown creature after touching just a

portion of it. The first man, feeling an elephant's trunk, described it as a thick, snake-like creature. The second man, feeling the elephant's leg, argued that it was a large, column-like creature. The third man, feeling the elephant's ear, insisted it was a fan-like creature. Finally, the fourth man, feeling the side of the elephant's body, described it as a giant, wall-like creature. The *parts* of an elephant do not convey even a rudimentary picture of the whole animal. Likewise, the *parts* of the NCEE's family of systems do not convey the whole. This report examines the NCEE "elephant" as a whole.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTED

In 1995, NCEE affirmed that the five recommendations put forth in *America's Choice* "did not sit on a shelf."¹⁷ "At the national level, an impressive number of the recommendations made in *America's Choice* have been implemented."¹⁸ In all, remarkable progress has been made. Much of what the Commission recommended is now incorporated in federal law."¹⁹ NCEE reports that "The nation has been hard at work developing the standards and assessments needed to support a national certificate system. . . Seven states [Oregon, New York, Maine, Vermont, Kentucky, Massachusetts and Washington²⁰] have adopted the CIM idea as state policy. More than 50 schools involved in the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, a consortium of five states and four urban school districts, are well along in piloting the CIM idea as a lever for making fundamental changes in educational practice."²¹

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RECEIVES NCEE'S PLAN

The day after the November, 1992 elections, **Tucker sent Hillary Clinton an eighteen-page congratulatory letter. In it he presented the incoming Clinton administration – through Mrs. Clinton, his fellow NCEE board member – NCEE's revolutionary national human resources development plan** for the United States - the five interlocking systems. The plan built upon the proposals that Bill Clinton had advanced during his first presidential campaign.²² Tucker's letter was also published as a 26-page booklet entitled *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. **Both the letter and the booklet declare that Clinton's election was an opportunity to remold the entire American system** by developing a national system for human resources development.²³

Human resources are people; remolding them is the task at hand. The main activities in human-resource management are:

- planning and forecasting the need for the right number of people, with the right training, to do the work that needs to be done,
- selecting people to hire,
- training people for the job,
- evaluating workers' actual performance based on what was expected,
- career planning (planning the sequence of jobs someone has until retirement),
- compensating workers, and
- moving people by promoting them, transferring them, or de-hiring them.

[*Note:* This human-resource work is done to achieve organizational goals. Envision if you will, human resources development/management system that is based on national standards and assessments, and carried out on a national scale. This is what NCEE has in mind when speaking of education and workforce development.

NCEE'S AGENDA

The NCEE agenda is four-fold with plans to:²⁴

- Use an apprenticeship system as the foundation for putting a “whole new postsecondary training” and human resources system in place nationwide,
- Create a new system of labor market boards. This is the backbone of The System.
- Concentrate on the inner cities [*Note: An urban initiative?*], and
- Take advantage of the legislation which Congress has been working on to advance the elementary and secondary education reform agenda.

NCEE'S FAMILY OF PROGRAMS FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE AGENDA

To carry out its agenda, NCEE, as the parent organization, **created a family of programs**, each with its own distinctive mission:

NCEE/The New Standards Program. In 1990, *New Standards* began “creating a system of internationally benchmarked^B standards” for student performance, and an assessment system to measure whether individuals are meeting the standards.²⁵ When an individual meets the standards, as verified by assessment, he receives a document called a Certificate of Initial Mastery. He then becomes eligible for work or more schooling. “*New Standards* is by far the nation’s largest and best funded program to develop a multistate system of standards and assessments to match them.”²⁶

NCEE/THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION. The National Alliance is a partnership of states, school districts, and organizations that focus on ensuring that all students, except the most severely disabled, attain a Certificate of Initial Mastery. The National Alliance also focuses on “how-to” **put the Certificate system created by *New Standards* into place.**

NCEE/THE WORKFORCE SKILLS PROGRAM. The Workforce Skills Program **works to influence public policy and legislation**, especially regarding Certificates of Initial Mastery, School-to-Work transition systems, occupational certificates, and a national labor market system.

NCEE/THE HIGH PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM. This program focuses on implementing how NCEE thinks schools and other government entities should be organized and how they should be governed.

OVERVIEW OF NCEE'S SYSTEM OF STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS AND CERTIFICATES

NCEE has developed a three-tier framework for national standards, assessments, and certification.

TIER I - GENERAL STANDARDS FOR EVERYONE. This tier is associated with elementary and secondary education and adult basic education. These are the “standards for what everyone in the society ought to know and be able to do to be successful at work, as a citizen and as a family member.”²⁷ When an individual meets the standards, as verified by assessment, he receives a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM), and becomes eligible for work or more schooling. [*Note: Although it is audacious for anyone to presume to set such standards for others, it is even more audacious for*

^B Benchmarking - Identifying an organization that appears to do something well and copying or adapting its methods. Business Advisory Council, Department of Education Resource Group. January, 1995.

government schools to assess — and then reward or punish people — based on whether such standards have been attained.]

Ohio's School-to-Work Grant application discloses that **the Ohio Department of Education will “begin to explore the need for the development of a Certificate of Initial Mastery.”** Further into the document we read: **“Ohio's School-to-Work (STW) system must . . . create certificates . . . [that are] recognized throughout the State and nation. . . .”**²⁸ It also clarifies the design of the STW system. It includes education and training options, curriculum and instruction, assessment, and career development.²⁹

TIER II - STANDARDS THAT BUILD ON THE GENERAL STANDARDS. These standards are associated with the education and training that takes place after meeting the Tier I standards for being “successful at work, as a citizen and as a family member.”³⁰ Those meeting the Tier II standards and passing the performance assessments, will receive **occupational certificates**, permitting them to enter the workforce.

TIER III - STANDARDS FOR INDIVIDUAL JOBS AND FOR INDIVIDUAL FIRMS. This Tier is associated with occupational training that takes place after meeting the Tier I good worker, good citizen, and good family member standards. It then draws on the Tier II occupational standards, augmenting them with specific standards set by individual firms for individual jobs.³¹ **Reportedly, the government will have no more to do with setting standards for Tier III than it does now, “at least at the beginning.”**³²

NATIONAL IMPACT OF THE NCEE PROGRAMS AND FUNDING

Again, it is important to recognize just how very successful NCEE has been in moving their agenda of national standards, assessments and certificates along. The National Alliance partners teach nearly 5 million students in over 9,000 schools.³³ And, collectively the NCEE/*New Standards* partners “teach more than half of the public school students in the United States.”³⁴ Accordingly, the NCEE agenda cannot be dismissed as unimportant or irrelevant.

Funding for the central staff, professional development program and relation functions of the **National Alliance for Restructuring Education** is provided by the New American Schools Development Corporation and The Pew Charitable Trusts of Philadelphia. A “substantial share of the Alliance's costs are borne by the state and school district partners. Additional funding has been provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, an anonymous Donor, Apple Computer Inc., Carnegie Corporation of New York, Danforth Foundation, DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Xerox Corporation.”³⁵

With major support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and an anonymous donor, *New Standards* has involved some of the nation's leading education experts, curriculum experts, psychometricians,^C and cognitive scientists in the development of the *New Standards* system.³⁶ Part of the funding has been provided by corporations and private foundations. In addition, partner states and school districts paid NCEE membership dues that ranged from \$100,000 to \$500,000 per year, depending on student population.^D [Note: When multiple states and districts ‘volunteer’ to participate, the result is the creation of a national system. Thus, The People, without their informed consent, have been paying for the development and implementation of a national system, certainly with state and local money, and most likely with federal dollars as well.]

^C psychometrics - The branch of psychology that deals with the design, administration, and interpretation of quantitative tests for the **measurement of psychological variables such as intelligence, aptitude, and personality traits.** The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc.

^D These figures were given to me by Cheryl Tibbals, Director of State and Local Relations for NCEE/*New Standards* in response to my public inquiry of the cost of joining NCEE.

REVIEW

To organize standards, assessments, and certificates, the National Center on Education and the Economy has developed a three-tier framework. Tier I standards are associated with elementary and secondary education and adult basic education. Tier II standards are associated with education and training of individuals after they have met the Tier I standards. Tier III standards are for individual jobs in individual firms.

NCEE expects that all students, except the most severely disabled, will meet the standards by the time they are sixteen years of age, “regardless of future career and education plans.”³⁷ Those who do will receive a Certificate of Initial Mastery, further education, and good jobs.³⁸ **Workers who do not possess CIMs “will be condemned to dead-end jobs that leave them in poverty even if they are working.”**³⁹ The standards, set at an international level, are for what everyone ought to know and be able to do to be successful at work, as a citizen and as a family member.^{40,41} New Standards, an arm of the National Center on Education and the Economy, is developing the standards and assessment system needed to make the Certificate of Initial Mastery a reality.⁴² “Much of the system is in place.”⁴³

¹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³ *Ohio's Future at Work: Beyond 2000*. Ohio Department of Education. (October, 1996). p. 6.

⁴ *Moving the Agenda Forward*. The First Annual Standards-Based Reform Conference program. National Center on Education and the Economy. (Summer 1996). p. 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.5.

⁶ Family Research Council. Press Release, October 25, 1996.

⁷ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 143.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 133.

⁹ *Will Republicans Betray America By Voting For Marc Tucker's Human Resources Development System: H.R. 1617 and S. 143?* The Blumenfeld Education Letter. p.1.

¹⁰ Karen Iacovelli, "Hillary's Scarlet Letter," *CRISIS Magazine*, April, 1996.

¹¹ National Skill Standards Board Meeting Minutes. March 19, 1996. p. 212.

¹² *America's Choice: High skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 69.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁷ *Building a System to Invest in People: States on the Cutting Edge* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1995), 150. p. 7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²² *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.3.

-
- ²⁵ *Moving the Agenda Forward*. The First Annual Standards-Based Reform Conference program. National Center on Education and the Economy. (Summer 1996). p. 40.
- ²⁶ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 11.
- ²⁷ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. (Dept. of Labor contract # F-4322-3-00-80-30). p. 8.
- ²⁸ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 30
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ³⁰ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. (Dept. of Labor contract # F-4322-3-00-80-30). p. 8.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ³³ National Alliance for Restructuring Education, National Center on Education and the Economy brochure. p. 9.
- ³⁴ *Implementing A School-To-Work Transition System: A Rochester, New York Case Study* by C. Spangenburg, 1995. p. 15.
- ³⁵ National Alliance for Restructuring Education, National Center on Education and the Economy brochure. p.17.
- ³⁶ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 11.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- ³⁸ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 5
- ³⁹ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 73.
- ⁴⁰ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. (Dept. of Labor contract # F-4322-3-00-80-30). p. 8.
- ⁴¹ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 10.
- ⁴² National Alliance for Restructuring Education, National Center on Education and the Economy brochure. p. 1.
- ⁴³ *Moving the Agenda Forward*. The First Annual Standards-Based Reform Conference program. National Center on Education and the Economy. (Summer 1996). p. 40.

SYSTEM # 1: CERTIFYING WORKFORCE READINESS

Part A: Setting up Standards

*States, districts and localities will be “**permit[ted] considerable freedom** to come up with their own standards and examinations, **providing** that they are reasonably **congruent** [the same] as those developed by New Standards.”¹*

- National Center on Education and the Economy

WHY IS THE CIM NEEDED?

“The Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) is intended to be the **first tier** in a three-tier system of national education and training standards.”² The development of the Certificate of Initial Mastery system was the first of the five recommendations made by National Center on Education and the Economy’s Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce in its 1990 report, *America’s Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*³

According to NCEE literature, the United States became the world’s wealthiest country by inventing and fully exploiting mass production – using low skilled workers to produce low-priced standardized products.⁴ The NCEE asserts that mass production is obsolete, so a new system must be established. [Note: Confining the discussion of what made our nation wealthy only to economic competitiveness, and viewing workers as uneducated, unskilled cogs in the machinery of mass production, does our forefathers a grave disservice.]

NCEE cites other developments that contribute to making mass production obsolete: declining shipping costs, improvements in telecommunications, electronic transfer of capital, and increased second and third world literacy levels.⁵ NCEE reports that countries with lower cost structures are also exploiting mass production and will “beat us at our own game” unless we lower the costs of goods and services by increasing hours and lowering wages, or by finding an alternative.⁶ According to NCEE, the alternative is the **creation of a demand for high-quality products and services that cannot be achieved by mass production**. Firms that meet the need for non-mass-marketed goods and services will reportedly be able to demand high prices and pay high wages. Supposedly, meeting the demands of this new market will require employees to possess the knowledge and skill levels as high, or nearly as high, as the “knowledge and skills formerly required only of management and the professional staff of the firm that was organized for mass production.”⁷ Thus, we have the philosophy behind the perceived need for a **national strategy to develop a system of standards geared to the needs of work**.

These standards will:

- Inform people what education and training will be “demanded,”
- Tell providers of education and training programs what skills will be needed in the marketplace,
- Provide an easy way for employers to determine whether the individual has the qualification needed, and
- Inform employers whether job applicants have the knowledge and skills they say they do.⁸

However, “**only five percent of employers feel that education and skill requirements are increasing significantly.**”⁹ Author Samuel Blumenfeld points out that, “Apparently, **the Commission found no great sense of urgency among American companies for a radical restructuring to meet skill demands that do not exist**. Nevertheless, the Commission decided to anticipate the changes that American employers *might* be forced to make in

the future, therefore making it urgently necessary to destroy every last vestige of traditional education and put an entirely new school-to-work system in its place to help American students meet this unknown future demand.”¹⁰

Building on the premise that we need a new system, NCEE believes that *something* is needed to compel schools to abandon “the curriculum that is taught to many students” and our system of credentialing that is based on fixed time and course completion.¹¹ The NCEE further believes that *something* is needed to bring an end to tracking, i.e., “academic, vocational, and general” programs.¹² The NCEE thinks that they have that *something*: their Certificate of Initial Mastery¹³ — a document that certifies that certain standards have been met and that the holder of it is ready for the workplace.

Cottage Grove High School in Oregon’s South Lane School District was the first school to issue the Certificates of Initial Mastery. The standards listed on the certificate are vague and leave parents wondering how their children were assessed. The standards are: Involved Citizen, Quality Producer, Self-Directed Learner, Constructive Thinker, Effective Communicator, Collaborative Contributor. To receive the certificate, students must also be able to Quantify, Apply Math/Science, Understand Diversity, Deliberate on Public Issues, Interpret Human Experience and Understand Positive Health Habits.

CONTENT STANDARDS VERSUS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Even NCEE acknowledges that “Standards mean different things to different people.”¹⁴ To understand which standards are being met, it is necessary to differentiate between **content, performance, and assessment** standards. **First are the Content Standards that “identify what a student should *know* and be able to *do*.”**¹⁵

Next are the Performance Standards; they recommend the **level** of achievement students should perform or demonstrate.¹⁶ These standards are for mathematics, English language arts, science and **applied learning**. “Applied learning refers to the ability to **solve** problems (See Problem Recognized - p. 46), use communication and technology tools and techniques, and work well on their own and in groups.”¹⁷ Performance Standards include: **Descriptions** that have been pulled from the content standards; **samples** of student work, sometimes called portfolios; and **commentaries** to explain how the sample work meets the required standards.¹⁸ Performance Standards require “a different kind of assessment system.”¹⁹

ASSESSING WHETHER THE STANDARDS HAVE BEEN MET

In 1995, *New Standards* issued Content Standards derived from *national consensus standards* developed by professional *societies*.²⁰ [Note: It is important to understand that members of the various societies who developed the content standards, and the people developing the subsequent assessments, are not elected representatives of The People. They represent no one but themselves, their respective societies, and/or their employers.]

New Standards is run by NCEE and the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh. They are, by their own admission, “**well along a path that will provide the technical means to implement the CIM plan.**”²¹ Known partners are the states of Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and Washington, and school districts in Fort Worth, TX; New York City, Pittsburgh, PA; Rochester, NY; San Diego, CA; and White Plains, NY.²² “**The states and districts that joined *New Standards* did so to develop performance assessments that are set to national and international standards.**”²³ [Note: An assessment is not a test; to assess something is to determine the value or worth of something. In the case of Tier I standards, the value and worth of people is being assessed, i.e., whether they are good workers, good citizens, and good family members.]

To assess how well students meet the Performance Standards, *New Standards* developed *Reference Examinations* . . . and a **Portfolio System**^E that complements the *Reference Examination*.²⁴ “Taking into account international standards, *New Standards* is developing two sets of assessments.”²⁵ One set is for use toward the end of elementary and middle school and the other for use at the high school level.²⁶ **“It is this last set of assessments that will be available as the basis for awarding the CIM.”**²⁷ *New Standards Reference Examinations* are available only through *Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement as part of a system of examinations and portfolios based on New Standards standards*.^{28F} The exams, available in English and Spanish for fourth, eighth, and tenth grades, include essay, extended **open-ended** responses, short-answer responses, and some multiple-choice items. [Note: How can open-ended questions be evaluated objectively?] Students take the *New Standards Reference Examinations* in three, forty-five minute classes. The scoring, which is holistic^G and dimensional (as opposed to scoring based on straightforward right or wrong answers), is also done by *Harcourt Brace* according to *New Standards* guidelines. *Harcourt Brace* then creates reports on student, classroom, school, and district performance in relation to *the standards*.²⁹

In June 1997, NCEE will “enter the market place to receive the value for [their] products that will allow [their] work to continue.”³⁰ Specifically, *New Standards* is establishing a joint venture with *Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement* to market, publish and distribute standards, and to score the examinations.³¹ [Note: NCEE, et. al., will be selling their wares to schools, districts and/or states.]

HOW STATE STANDARDS BECOME LINKED TO NCEE *NEW STANDARDS*

Implying that there is local control, *New Standards* proclaims that “each state will determine for itself the rules governing the awarding of CIMs. . .,” but then negates that notion by adding that states will operate “within the context established by the *consortium* of participating states.”³² **“States and districts wishing to participate in the CIM system agree on a set of content standards and agree to benchmark their performance standards to a common reference standard.”**³³ States, districts and localities will be “**permit[ted] considerable** [but not complete] **freedom** to come up with their own standards and examinations, **providing** that they are reasonably **congruent** [the same] as those developed by *New Standards*.”³⁴ Supposedly, states and districts, “will find it relatively easy to comply with the technical standards that *New Standards* will **require** its partners to live up to.”³⁵

[Note: The very idea of *New Standards* **presuming** to **permit** governmental bodies [states and districts] **SOME degree of liberty** to adopt standards, providing that they are, for all practical purposes, the same as *New Standards’* standards, is absurd. What rational person, board, general assembly, governor, or state would for one minute surrender one ounce of liberty to these self-appointed central planners regardless of how “relatively easy” compliance might be? Yet, **because of pressure to conform, or lack of knowledge, a lot of surrendering has already taken place — since, collectively, *New Standards’* partners teach more than half of the public school students in the United States.**³⁶

Recently, in our *School-to-Work Application*, the governor pledged to the United States Department of Labor to “**continually examine and refine proficiency tests to ensure they are benchmarked to high standards.**”³⁷ [Note: In

^E portfolio - Laser card technology is being used to encode information onto laser cards that are no bigger than a credit card. The card is imprinted with a photo of the student, their signature, name, and student ID number. The card can store about 1250 pages of text. If the card is lost, a new one can be issued. Data stored on the card: student records, progress on assessments for the CIM, sub-endorsements, and portfolio of evidence. Any time there is a change, information can be updated on the card. **It will contain information as to which assessments a student passed in the CIM areas and the score they received on each assessment.** Marshall High School, Portland, Oregon.

^F It is entirely possible for two people having a conversation on new standards for one person to be referring to generic new standards, while the other person is referring to *New Standards*. Example: “We need to adopt new standards” versus, “We need to adopt *New Standards*.”

^G holistic - emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts rather than analysis or separation into parts.

light of what is taking place nationwide, one might safely assume that the reference to ensuring that Ohio “standards” are benchmarked to “high standards” is a not-too-subtle reference to the development of standards that are congruent with NCEE standards]

To ensure that all “partners” in the system are consistently adhering to the same standard, *New Standards* aspires to take on the role of national auditor, by establishing “an auditing **system . . . that will ensure that the partners in the system are grading to the same standard.**”³⁸ “The **national CIM system** will provide the means for making sure that a student receiving a Certificate in one state or district has reached a standard of accomplishment substantially equal to the standard reached by a student in any other **jurisdiction.**”³⁹ [Note: I found the use of the word jurisdiction interesting; I wonder why it was used rather than “state or district.” Perhaps ‘jurisdiction’ is a subtle reference to the CIM being recognized internationally.]

NCEE seeks a system in which districts have “**delegated** authority to confer Certificates of Initial Mastery.”⁴⁰ [Note: The result of non-adherence to *The Certificate System* will mean, among other things, that citizens in non-member states will not be able to receive the CIM/work permit required to secure employment in states that are members.]

The CIM is clearly an NCEE product. Therefore, school districts would be seeking the authority from the product’s owner, NCEE, to dispense their product, the CIM. Under *The System*, the standards, the assessments, and the Certificates of Initial Mastery are all under the domain of a non-governmental body, the NCEE. Therefore, they cannot issue these certificates in the way that a state or district issues diplomas. Yet, NCEE speaks of districts having **delegated authority** to confer CIMs.

WHO SITS ON THE *NEW STANDARDS* GOVERNING BOARD?

Various entities *influenced* the standards and the assessments, but **who actually set the standards?** Drawing on the work of the national societies, the standards set by other countries, and the views of the public, “**the standards for the Certificate of Initial Mastery are set by the Governing Board of New Standards,** a 65-member body that consists of governors, chief state school officers, state and local board of education members, school superintendents, college presidents and professors, chief executive officers of corporations, union presidents, youth advocates, civil rights leaders, classroom teachers, subject matter experts and people from other walks of life.”⁴¹ Accordingly, I contacted *New Standards* and **requested a current list of board members and received the following response:**

Dear Ms. Fessler,

*The New Standards Governing Board consists of about sixty people. [Emphasis added.] This is probably the board that you were referring to. The Washington D.C. office of New Standards is located at the National Center on Education and the Economy. **The New Standards Board of Trustees is the same board that governs the National Center on Education and Economy, as well as the other organizations located here.** The other organizations are the **Workforce Skills Program,** which [sic] guidelines are laid out in “America’s Choice: high skills of [sic] low wages”, and **the National Alliance for Restructuring Education,** who’s [sic] hallmark is the Certificate of Initial Mastery.*

*I hope this clarifies some questions for you. Unfortunately, **I have been advised not to release the names of the New Standards Governing Board to inquiries such as yours without asking what the purpose is in having the names.** [Emphasis added.]*

If you need the actual list of the New Standards Governing Board, you may contact Eugene Paslov, the Executive Director of New Standards, at the Washington D.C. office, (202) 783-3668. Also his Staff Assistant, Real Thornton may be able to help you as well, if Dr. Paslov is not available.

I replied:

*My, such intrigue. As I mentioned on the phone, I attended the recent conference in San Antonio. At the request of our Board president, I was asked to prepare a twenty minute report for presentation at our board meeting last week. At the close of my oral report, I asked if any of my fellow board members would care for a copy of my written report, which was at the time, only an outline. Now that the board meeting is over, I am trying to pull together a respectable written report. Accordingly, I re-read NCEE materials - came across the reference to a **65-member Governing Board**. Having read America's Choice, including the appendices, it didn't seem that the two boards would be one and the same due to the difference in size. Thus, my phone call to you. So, yes I would still like to have the current Governing Board list of members/trustees. I am thrifty, therefore would you please forward this message to Eugene or Real Thornton.*

*Diana M. Fessler
Ohio State Board of Education - Third District*

[Note: **The following day I received**, via electronic-mail, a list of **forty-nine** names, not the sixty or sixty-five previously cited. (See page 60). The name of the file I received was "Bd.External." I wonder how many names are on the "Bd.Internal" list? As an aside, the reluctance of the part of NCEE to provide a complete list of members reminds me of First Lady Hillary Clinton's reluctance to provide the names of those individuals who were working on the national health care plan.]

The majority of NCEE board members are not elected representatives of the people. Those who are elected, were not elected to put in place a national education system. In addition, it is important to note that although prominent Democrats are often associated with education restructuring, prominent Republicans have been involved as well. Regardless of how many people are on this board, or who they are, **the fact remains that the members of this board set the standards for the CIM.**

By their own admission, NCEE says that **"future workers" without a CIM "will be condemned to dead-end jobs that leave them in poverty even if they are working."**⁴² It should be readily apparent that **the NCEE Governing Board is setting up a monopoly**, since there is no other source for the CIM. This raises a series of very important questions that need to be answered: **Who is on the Governing Board of the NCEE? In which states are the NCEE and its off-shoots incorporated? How are board members compensated? And, who are the stockholders?**

REVIEW

The National Center on Education and the Economy asserts that there is a tremendous gap between what our education system is producing and what *they* believe is needed for the United States to remain competitive in the global economy. To that end, they are making available what they consider to be a remedy that includes, in part, content, performance standards. Those who meet the Tier I standards, verified, in part, by non-objective, open-ended assessment questions, will receive a Certificate of Initial Mastery, a passport that will allow them to pursue further education or to get a decent job.

The NCEE/National Standards Governing Board sets the standards for the Certificate of Initial Mastery. States and districts that wish to participate can come up with their own standards, but *their* standards and assessments must be virtually the same as those adopted by *New Standards*. Many states and districts have joined with the National Center on Education and the Economy and are implementing The System.

-
- ¹ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p 11.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- ³ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 69.
- ⁴ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 1.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3-4.
- ⁹ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 25.
- ¹⁰ The Blumenfeld Education Letter. School-to-Work is OBE. March, 1996. p. 2.
- ¹¹ *Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy p. 5-6.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 5-6.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁴ The Alliance. A publication of the National Center on Education and the Economy. Vol. 4. Number 2, August/September 1996. p. 6.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ²⁰ *Certificate of Initial Mastery*. Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. 1994 p. 11.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- ²² IMPLEMENTING A SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION SYSTEM: A Rochester, New York Case Study by Cathy Spangenburg, April 1995. p. 15.
- ²³ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 11
- ²⁴ Harcourt Brace & Company, Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement, San Antonio. TX. *NEW STANDARDS* brochure. p. 1.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- ²⁶ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 11.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ²⁸ Harcourt Brace & Company, Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement, San Antonio. TX. *NEW STANDARDS* brochure. Cover.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, back cover.
- ³⁰ *The New Standard*, Vol. 4, Number 2. June/July 1996. p. 2.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ³² *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 9
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ³⁶ IMPLEMENTING A SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION SYSTEM: A Rochester, New York Case Study by Cathy Spangenburg, April 1995. p. 33.
- ³⁷ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 33.
- ³⁸ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy p. 9.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ⁴² *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 73.

SYSTEM # 1: CERTIFYING WORKFORCE READINESS

Part B: The Certificate of Initial Mastery

The Ohio Department of Education will “begin to explore the need for the development of a Certificate of Initial Mastery.”¹

The State of Ohio will implement a full range of strategies that allow all students to achieve the competencies necessary to be successful in their adult lives. This means that Ohio’s STW system must . . . create certificates . . . [that are] recognized throughout the State and nation . . .²

Workers who do not possess CIMs “will be condemned to dead-end jobs that leave them in poverty even if they are working.”³

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION

Another National Center on Education and the Economy offspring, the National Alliance for Restructuring Education (see page 11), co-chaired by Marc Tucker and David Hornbeck, was established in 1989 to “**transform school systems, not just individual schools.**”⁴

The National Alliance is a partnership of states, school districts, corporations, universities, foundations and non-profit organizations that includes the states of Arkansas, Kentucky, New York, Vermont and Washington, and districts in Pittsburgh, PA; Rochester, NY; San Diego, CA; and White Plains, NY.⁵ “**Collectively, Alliance partners teach nearly 5 million students in over 9,000 schools.**”⁶

The “hallmark” of the Alliance “effort is the Certificate of Initial Mastery.”⁷ The NCEE/Alliance has developed an Implementation Guide for schools and districts to use to develop a first phase Certificate system for use until a state and/or national system is in place.⁸ The guide equips Alliance partners to implement the system by the fall semester of 1997.⁹ “The Alliance assumes that “initially, the CIM . . . will be optional for students . . . [but] after two or three years, all [Alliance] students will be required to achieve the CIM.”¹⁰

In July, 1992, the NCEE/Alliance became one of eleven national design teams funded by the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC) which was founded in 1991. Many of the original NASDC board of directors are now serving on the board of directors of *Achieve* (see page 8). NASDC funding helps organizations such as the National Alliance to “**break-the-mold**”¹¹ of today’s schools. The **design teams** work with **ten partners** including **Cincinnati, OH**;¹² Dade County, FL; Los Angeles, CA; Memphis, TN; Philadelphia, PA; San Diego, CA; Kentucky; Maryland; and five districts in the Seattle, WA area. The collective mission of these design teams is the “**total reformation of our country’s education system.**”¹³

According to a newsletter published by Cincinnati Public Schools, representatives of the New American Schools Development Corporation approached the Ohio Department of Education in search of a reform-minded district that would be receptive to their “break-the-mold” agenda. Reportedly, state school officials didn’t hesitate to recommend **Cincinnati Public Schools**. On November 1, 1995, Cincinnati Public Schools and NASDC signed an agreement “sealing the collaboration” to transform at least 24 schools – one third of the schools in the district by the year 2000.¹⁴ Reportedly, the choice of whether to become a New American School is left to each school “community.” At least 80%

of each school's staff agreed to adopt a NASDC design,^H and the school's Local School Decision-Making Committee also approved the agreement. Funding for "total reformation" is being provided primarily through Venture Capital^I grants and Title I^J money, along with other grants from the state, and the Annenberg Foundation. The bulk of the cost is devoted to training school employees.¹⁵

TIMELINE AND PURPOSE

To understand the focus of the National Alliance, it may be helpful to first see the Alliance's chronological relationship to other restructuring efforts.

- 1988 - The National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) was formed. Their goal: To put a whole new cradle to the grave human resource education and workforce training system in place.
- 1989 - An NCEE offspring, The National Alliance for Restructuring Schools, was formed. Their goal: To ensure that **all students attain a Certificate of Initial Mastery**.
- 1990 - Another NCEE offspring, *New Standards*, was formed. Their goal: To create a national/international system of content, performance, and assessment standards that culminate in a Certificate of Initial Mastery.
- 1991 - New American Schools Development Corporation was formed. Their goal: **To "break the mold" and totally reform our country's education system.**
- 1992 - NCEE/National Alliance becomes a New American Schools partner. Their goal: To attain "critical mass" toward "breaking the mold" and restructuring education.
- 1994 - Goals 2000/National Skill Standards Board become law. Their goal: To set up a system for national occupational skill standards.
- **1995 - Cincinnati Public signs agreement with New American Schools and becomes an NAS/NCEE/National Alliance partner. Collective goal: Implementation of a whole new human resource management and workforce training system based on national/international standards, assessments, and certificates.**
- 1996 - National Governor's Summit meeting in New York, (see page 8). Goal: To restructure state school systems within two years.

^H Design options - Co-NECT, Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound, Roots & Wings, ATLAS (Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment of All Students), and the Audrey Cohen College System of Education (The College for Human Services).

^I Schools that received **Venture Capital** grants were given \$25,000 each year, for five years. Some schools have received multiple grants. The money is to encourage "risk-takers" to explore fundamental change in **assessment, governance, organization and professional development**. These grants, with their emphasis on professional development (re-training of teachers), are an "essential strategy for high performance teaching and learning." Schools use the money to break down barriers to "progress." -*Venture Capital in Ohio Schools: Building Commitment and Capacity for School Renewal*. Ohio Department of Education, 1995. p. 1-4.

^J **Title I** is the largest federal program for elementary and secondary education. If 35% or more students in participating schools are from low-income homes, the funding from *all* sources – local, state, and federal – can be used "schoolwide" to serve not just the "disadvantaged/at-risk/low-income students" for which it was earmarked, but for all students, regardless of need. - U. S. Dept. of Education, Office of the Under Secretary. Oct., 1996 newsletter.

ALLIANCE PROGRAMS AND TASKS

While implementing the NCEE/National Alliance agenda, the partners use Alliance tools, pursue Alliance results, engage in Alliance strategic planning programs, participate in Alliance professional development programs, use Alliance technical assistance, implement the Alliance design, and work on five integrated tasks.¹⁶ [Note: It appears that a partnership with the National Alliance is the antithesis of local control.]

States and districts that contract to become Alliance partners commit themselves to five tasks and all of them are addressed, as much as practicable, at the same time. The tasks^K are:

- Using **advanced assessing techniques** to assess the progress toward the [New Standards] standards.¹⁷
- Building a **national and regional professional development system**.¹⁸
- **Redesigning health and social service programs so they “work hand in glove with the schools.”**¹⁹
- **Restructuring^L the organization and management of schools, school districts and state departments of education and the policy system in which they do their work.**²⁰
- **Engaging the public about *how* the goals should be achieved.**²¹

[Note: The NCEE/National Alliance seeks, among others things, to build a national professional development system, to connect state and local standards to *New Standards*, and to redesign health and social service programs and reconfigure schools. Their audacious goal of restructuring state departments of education is a direct assault on the rightful authority of state boards of education to structure their respective departments of education as they see fit. **Likewise, their goal of restructuring school districts is one of usurping the rightful authority of locally elected school boards, as representatives of The People, to organize local schools as they see fit.]**

ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

However, **the most ingenious of the tasks that NCEE/The Alliance has appointed for themselves is that of “engaging the public” in discussing *how* the pre-determined goals should be achieved, thereby appearing to welcome public input, while avoiding the real issues. Determining *how* pre-defined goals will be achieved is meaningless when compared to determining *what* the goals are going to be and determining *who* will set the goals.** [Note: For example, if Someone says “Here is your airplane ticket. Your flight leaves tomorrow. *How* do you want to get to the airport?” Someone has already decided that *you will be taking a trip*. Likewise, those who have decided that the United States will have a seamless human resource development system, cradle to the grave, have already filed flight plans for us, our children, and our grandchildren. Participating in a discussion of *how* we can get ready for take-off has absolutely **no impact** on the cost of the ticket, the safety of the plane, the training of the pilot, the time of departure, the final destination, or whether we even want to take the trip.]

HIGH SCHOOLS RECONFIGURED

One of the NCEE/Alliance goals is the reconfiguration of high school into two divisions: the junior division corresponding to the current 9th and 10th grades, and the senior division corresponding to the current 11th and 12th

^K task - A well-defined responsibility that is usually **imposed by another** and that may be burdensome.

^L **restructure** - To make a basic change or to alter the structure of something. To restructure a room, one would first *de-struct or demolish* it, and rebuild from the ground up. Reform refers to *improving* by alteration, correction of error, or removal of defects. To reform a room, one might re-arrange furniture, re-paint the walls, and/or install new flooring.

grades.²² If the student receives a Certificate of Initial Mastery while in the junior division, he advances to the senior division – with honors. If the student does not earn sufficient points to get a CIM while in the junior division, he can still advance to the senior division, but he is not eligible for the ‘honors’ program. [Note: The designation of honor student or an honor’s course is being changed from meaning that a student is excelling academically, or that the course is particularly challenging, to an indicator that the CIM was earned during the first two years of high school.]

CAPSTONE PROJECT

To receive a CIM, individuals must accumulate sufficient points (recorded by the Guidance Office)²³ in math, English language arts, science, and a local option, and they must complete a special project called a Capstone Project.²⁴ The Capstone Project must demonstrate **applied learning** in a tangible way, such as an actual product or service. The project is guided by a *committee* that includes a *teacher/advisor*, a *practitioner* in the field or area of interest, and *another CIM candidate*.²⁵ The project must include a *proposal approved by the committee*, two *progress reports made to the committee*, and a *final presentation* to a targeted high-stakes audience to whom the *practitioner* or *committee* [not the student] could present the project.²⁶ The Capstone Project “**requires substantial outside-of-school work.**”²⁷

[Note: If one cannot get a good job or further education without receiving a CIM, and if out-of-school work is required in order to get a CIM, it becomes imperative for the state to provide every student with multiple opportunities for applied learning^M and opportunities for students to do “out-of-school work.” No mention is made where these large numbers of jobs are to come from, nor is mention made of the displacement of the currently employed by school children. In the past, some students have been involved in cooperative work programs as a matter of choice, usually because they are struggling with the academic program, or because they have chosen to pursue a service-orientated occupation. Now, if all goes according to plan, such work will be **universal and non-optional**, and this will undoubtedly result in a longer school day, an increased number of school days, and an increase in the number of school years to accommodate on-the-job-training.]

SCHOOLS MOVES TO THE WORK-SITE

The writers of Ohio’s STW grant application acknowledge that work-site accidents are possible, and that it is a “serious legal concern that needs additional study and research and that [it] will ultimately be addressed through statute and regulation.”²⁸ To address this major issue, “some of the pilot projects have contracted with a **third-party intermediary to be the employer of record.**”²⁹ According to the STW grant, “This approach appears to result in a **shared legal responsibility for the youth** while at the work site.”³⁰ [Note: Such an arrangement suggests that another business will be the employer, but on paper only.]

It is planned, and actually the state has given their word, that “**Every** student will have the opportunity to benefit from the advice and counsel provided by a **workplace mentor.**”³¹ These mentors will be trained to “assist in the instruction and evaluation of student competencies, and to work in consultation with school-based personnel.”³² [Note: Ohio’s School-to-Work plan does not address *who* will be conducting the training, *who will pay for training* the mentors, or *who will be paying the mentors for their ‘assistance.’* At some sites, unionized workers are serving as workplace mentors.] SchoolNet, originally sold to the public as the means to put computers into the classroom, will also be used to connect “school-site staff and workplace mentors.”³³

^M Components of Applied Learning:

1. Problem Solving
2. Communication Tools and Techniques
3. Information Technology Tools and Techniques
4. Learning and Self-Management Tools and Techniques
5. Tools and Techniques for Working with Others

OHIO'S INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLANS

“Ohio already has one of the most extensive and systematic Career Development programs in the nation.”³⁴ It is a process “that **begins in kindergarten, leads to an Individual Career Plan in the eighth grade,**” and results in ongoing refinement throughout the high school years.³⁵

According to the STW grant, the development of a comprehensive system that reaches all students requires that:

“ . . . *new partners* representing schools, families, communities, and workplaces *take on* responsibility for the education of each young person. This more expansive view of educating students is a **true paradigm shift away from the traditional view that education is the exclusive domain of the educational system.** To be successful in making this shift, **STW activities must begin with all learners at the earliest age possible.**”³⁶

Section 3313.607 of the Ohio Revised Code states:

“(A) The board of education of any school district may provide assistance to any student to develop a written career plan. **If a school district receives any state money** appropriated for the purposes of this section, career plans developed utilizing these funds **shall** be completed prior to the end of the eighth grade year, **shall** identify career goals and indicate educational goals to prepare for those career goals, **shall** be updated periodically as students successfully complete high school coursework, and **shall culminate in a career passport** described by division (B) of this section.

“(B) The board of education of any school district may provide an individual career passport to any student upon the successful completion of the coursework of any high school. **If a school district receives any state money for the purposes of this section, a career passport shall be provided to each such student.** Each such passport shall document the knowledge and skills of the student, including documentation of the student's coursework and any employment community, or leadership experiences. Each such passport shall also list the competency levels the student achieved, disclose the student's attendance record, and identify the career credentials the student gained.”

[Since the School-to-Work *system*, and the funding for it, is by its very nature, for *all* schools and all students, eventually all students “**shall** be provided” with a career passport. Is the state encouraging business and industry to make hiring decisions based on student portfolios? Yes. So, if the portfolio doesn't contain the career plan, a listing of work-based learning experiences, the career passport, or the CIM, what are the realistic chances of being hired for a high skill, high wage job? Poor to slim. Therefore, regardless of the disclaimer that “participation” is voluntary, the consequence of not “volunteering” will be a low paying job with little chance for advancement.]

In 1994, “over 92 percent of Ohio's eighth graders initiated an Individual Career Plan.”³⁷

CAREER PASSPORTS

For students enrolled in vocational education, **the Career Plan culminates with a Career Passport,**³⁸ “a **portfolio** containing formal documentation of work and/or community experience, a competency **profile**, student achievement and attendance records, leadership experiences, an outline of continuing education needs, and career credentialing.”³⁹ **The Individual Career Passport provides information to employers, colleges, and training institutions for screening, interviewing, and selecting applicants.**⁴⁰ The Passport is a “**learner credential.**”⁴¹

In the Ohio School-to-Work Grant we read, “The Ohio Department of Education is currently in the process of **redesigning the existing Passport to serve all students, not only vocational education completers, as is currently the practice.**”⁴² **It will be expanded to all students** – “including out-of-school-youth, adults and students with disabilities” – to serve as a **portable credential**”⁴³ **“Ohio clearly has set itself an ambitious agenda for making**

School-to-Work a reality for its citizenry. It is committed to this plan and seeks venture funding . . . to firmly place STW on the road to full implementation in this state.⁴⁴

OHIO'S SCHOOL-TO-WORK

Ohio's *School-to-Work Plan* acknowledges that the **Ohio Department of Education will "begin to explore the need for the development of a Certificate of Initial Mastery."**⁴⁵ "Begin to explore" is then clarified:

"The State of Ohio **will implement** a full range of strategies that allow all students to achieve the competencies necessary to be successful in their adult lives. **This means that Ohio's STW system must . . . create certificates . . . [that are] recognized throughout the State and nation . . .**"⁴⁶ (1995 STW Grant)

Page seven of Ohio's Request for Continuation of Funds and Performance Plan/Report Form, the sequel to the 1995 grant, says:

"Continuation of Integration Progress - The Ohio Department of Education administered state system integration projects for FY96 are listed below. Project **managers are being assigned, partnerships developed,** and project **specifications written.** An additional \$102,000 has been added to Core Curriculum Linkage Development in FY97 for a total of \$1,000,000.00 in FY 97." [Ten projects are listed; number six is as follows]:

"Certificate of Initial Mastery Development (Work Keys Pilot) - \$150,000

Strengthen the link between education and work by addressing workforce academic requirements and developing a comprehensive student assessment system **to certify that students are prepared** for the next education and career development stage."

[One might conclude that we are moving beyond exploration to development of the Certificate of Initial Mastery.]

Governor Voinovich believes that "our implementation efforts can serve as a model for the nation."⁴⁷ Legislative leadership for STW in Ohio includes Senator Linda Furney, Senator Charles Horn, Representative Priscilla Mead, and Representative C. J. Prentiss.⁴⁸ [Note: Until recently, even I, as a member of the State Board of Education, did not comprehend the scope of education restructuring in this state and across the nation. Because education and workforce development are complex initiatives, and because legislators are *very* busy people, until I know otherwise, I will continue to hope that these and other legislators are not fully aware of what they are supporting.]

In order to fully implement the STW system, the state will be pursuing partnerships with the Ohio Business Roundtable, the Ohio Manufacturer's Association, and the Ohio Chamber of Commerce "to develop a strategic plan involving their members as full partners in all School-to-Work activities."⁴⁹ The Governor's Human Resources Investment Council (GHRIC) "created the opportunity for the *STW* endeavor to be included in a **partnership with other members of the Council of Great Lakes Governors, "regarding the development of universally accepted industry skill standards and the training and certification of its regional workforce to meet world-class standards."**⁵⁰ "The GHRIC helps to link STW with **broader** workforce and economic development **strategies.**"⁵¹

The State of Ohio has embarked on a five-year implementation plan that has already been approved by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor. **At the heart of it is the "inclusion of world class standards."**⁵² "All students in Ohio's school system engage in learning that is organized around a common core of academic and **occupational competencies.**"⁵³ **Ohio has laid "a strong foundation of . . . skill standards . . . through the *Occupational Competency Analysis Profiles* (OCAPs) and the *Tech Prep Competency Profiles.*"**⁵⁴ [Note: These profiles are list of the occupational outcomes/standards/expectations for students.]

ASSESSMENTS

To date, 63 separate *Occupational Competency Analysis Profile* booklets have been developed, and each one “identifies occupational, academic, and employability skills needed to enter a given occupation.”⁵⁵ The OCAP process is directed by the Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory located at The Ohio State University’s Center on Education and Training for Employment.⁵⁶ The OCAPs list the knowledge, skills, and **attitudes (competency builders)** needed to perform each occupational area.⁵⁷ [Note: Because of Ohio’s STW commitment to the federal government **all students must be involved in some form of occupational training beginning in kindergarten. Therefore, the content of the OCAP booklets, and the corresponding assessments, are important, and in the mind of some people, just as important as Ohio’s model curricula.**]

Student achievement, as it relates to the OCAP curricula, is then assessed through the administration of the *Vocational Competency Assessment* — developed in conjunction with American College Testing. The assessment “consists of *two separate components* – tests developed based on the OCAP competency standards and on *Work Keys*.”⁵⁸ According to the Ohio STW grant, “During 1994-95, 55,000 assessments were administered through the *Work Keys* tests.”⁵⁹ **Work Keys is a national system** for teaching and assessing workplace academic skills:⁶⁰

- Applied Mathematics - focuses on mathematical problems in the workplace;
- Reading for Information - focuses on reading memos, bulletins, notices, letters, policy manuals;
- Locating Information - focuses on workplace graphics;
- Applied Technology - focuses on generic technological literacy;
- Teamwork - focuses on behaviors that support team relationships;
- Listening - focuses on work-related listening skills;
- Writing - focuses on writing work-related messages.

The results of these tests are documented in the Career Passport.⁶¹ [Note: Ohio is using *WorkKeys* to pilot the Certificate of Initial Mastery.]

The following editorial was faxed to the *Wichita Eagle* on March 26, 1997 by 16-year-old Jenny Potochnik about the *WorkKeys* assessment. Taking the *WorkKeys* assessment is now a requirement in the Wichita school district.

. . . As a junior at Heights High School, I took the Work Keys last week. It costs the school district \$39 per student for this test and takes 10 hours out of valuable classroom time. Here are some examples of test questions, as well as my editorial comment.

A audio tape of a phone conversation was played for us and we were to take down the message in detail. Taking phone messages. Now that’s a good thing to test high school students on! Everyone I talked to thought it was stupid.

A video tape was played showing us how to transfer a phone call. We were instructed to press flash, the extension number, then flash again. Our multiple choice question was: After pressing flash and the extension number, what button do you press? At that point, I was beginning to wonder exactly why I had gotten out of bed. I could have taken this assessment in my sleep!

Then came the floor mopping question. We were instructed by video on how to mop a floor. Then we were given a scenario in which the person mopping did something wrong. We were supposed to say what went wrong. No, I'm NOT kidding!

The math portion of the test was 32 questions of simple arithmetic with a few questions about area and volume. No algebra required. The reading assessment was also very simple. It consisted mainly of short memos that we were given to read with very short, basic questions to answer.

The only part of the Work Keys that I was uncertain of was the technology assessment. We were given diagrams of the inside of a computer and asked questions such as: If floppy disk drive A doesn't work, where should you check first? In another question we were given a diagram of a golf course and its sprinkler system. We were asked about what valves to shut off on what greens to maximize water pressure and so on. There were also questions about refrigerator repair, the installation of electrical outlets, and the interworkings of a vacuum cleaner. I am a high school student, not an appliance repairman or electrician.. .

OHIO'S SCHOOL-TO-WORK FUNDING

Ohio has already received \$9 million dollars of the expected \$45 million in seed money for School-to-Work. This money is in exchange for carrying out the many activities listed in the application. Implementation is expected to cost **1 billion dollars in state and federal money.**^{62,63} [Note: \$45 million subtracted from the needed \$1 billion, leaves us **\$955 million** needed from other sources.]

POST-CIM OPTIONS FOR SCHOOL AND WORK⁶⁴

According to the TASKIT IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE put out by the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, individuals who receive a CIM will “go through a ceremony and rite of passage”⁶⁵ and will receive a high school diploma with “the gold CIM seal.”⁶⁶ They will also receive a reformatted high school transcript (via *Worklink* or *Work Keys* programs), a bronze medallion, and a diploma awarded by their business-industry mentor, teacher/advisor and/or other significant adult partner.⁶⁷ According to the Implementation Guide, “schools will hold an **assembly three times** a year involving the **entire student body**, the CIM candidates, their Capstone Project committee members and parents or guardians.”⁶⁸

With a CIM in hand, the student can then **prepare to attend** college, **actually attend** college, begin work on an occupational certificate, or go to work. Students “. . . are entitled to the equivalent of three more years of **free additional** education . . .”: The last two years of high school **and one year of apprenticeship, redefined as college**, to be paid for with “federal and state matching funds.”⁶⁹ **“Eighty percent or more** of American high school graduates **will be expected to get some form of college degree though most of them less than a baccalaureate.**”⁷⁰

1. PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

a) COLLEGE PLACEMENT PLUS REGULAR

While attending the restructured high school, the student can earn college level credits by taking Advanced Placement exams. In addition, these students can take **weekend and summer** classes at a **state** university. [Note: No mention is made of private colleges or universities. It is also important to understand that a student can take college level “certificate” courses that do not lead to an associate or baccalaureate degree.]

b) COLLEGE PLACEMENT HONORS

Students who have received their CIMs can earn college **level** credits by taking Advanced Placement exams, and by taking weekend and summer classes at a state university. In addition, they will be **allowed** to take college or university **courses** and participate in youth apprenticeship or national (community) service described below.

c) ACCELERATED COLLEGE EDUCATION HONORS ONLY

Students following this track fulfill their high school **English and government** credit through **independent study** and complete a senior project. Students will be **allowed** to attend community college, technical school, or university **full time**.

2. BEGIN OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION

a) CAREER TECH PLUS REGULAR

This program combines English, science and mathematics with an occupational, professional or technical course at both the high school and a community/technical college. [*Note: Such training is the antithesis of a liberal arts education and, in the mind of some people, such training will result in the production of technocrats who lack exposure to the humanities.*]

b) CAREER TECH HONORS

In this program, business and industry provide mentors and internships for students. This program includes youth apprenticeship or national (community) service. An undefined Senior Project is required.

c) YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP, HONORS ONLY

This program is a full-time program in which students complete English and government requirements through independent study. In addition, students must complete a Senior Project and submit a portfolio to an advisory committee made up of school and business partners.

3. GOING TO WORK

a) COOPERATIVE WORK HONORS PROGRAMS, HONORS ONLY

Students choosing this option will meet their English and government requirements through independent study and will complete a Senior Project exhibiting their workplace skills.

b) NATIONAL (COMMUNITY) SERVICE, HONORS ONLY

Students in this program will complete their high school English and government requirements through independent study. In addition, these students will be placed in “helping roles” within local agencies and community-based organizations.^N Students must demonstrate skill knowledge by completing a Senior Project and by submitting a portfolio to an advisory committee of school and agency partners.⁷¹

^N **community based organizations** are defined by law and usually include those which provide job training services (for example, the National Urban League, United Way, literacy organizations, youth corps programs, community action agencies, union-related organizations, organizations serving the elderly, etc.)

CHOICE IN EDUCATION IS PROMOTED

NCEE is promoting an “aggressive program of public choice” in education.⁷² **Accredited** proprietary schools, employers, and community-based organizations will be allowed to offer the **reconceptualized college programs, i.e., apprenticeships**.⁷³ This funding ties apprenticeship and college together in a seamless web.⁷⁴

[*Note: “Choice” will allow any accredited entity to receive federal, state and local dollars earmarked for education or workforce training.* This, of course, adds a whole new dimension to the discussion of charter schools, choice, and vouchers. If I understand this correctly, and I believe I do, any school, business, or industry that provides training based on applicable standards that lead to a CIM will be eligible for local, state, and federal money. This would totally redefine “public education” and create a major incentive for business and industry to “get involved” in education as never before; they would have much to gain in terms of training future workers to meet their needs while receiving local, state and federal dollars to offset or cover the cost of the desired training. **When all students must meet the same national/international standard**, it makes little difference who provides the program. This is like asking someone if they prefer stale rye bread or stale whole wheat bread; either choice results in the same outcome, stale bread.]

WHAT HAPPENS TO STUDENTS WHO DON’T RECEIVE A CIM?

NCEE believes that “students who have not received their CIM by age 16 should be able to enroll in a school-to-work *transition* program at that age, but they should **not** be able to get an occupational skills certificate without first getting their CIM.”⁷⁵ **Students can enroll in these transition programs but they will not be able to get anything but menial work without the CIM.**⁷⁶

In this vein, it is noteworthy that the NCEE has raised the issue of “what will happen when parents are told that their children cannot meet the new standard?”⁷⁷ Their reply is, “Much depends on how well the American people are prepared for this eventuality. **What we do know is that in those states that are installing new assessment systems with high proficiency standards, the majority of students are not meeting them. And the public, having been prepared for that result, is neither surprised nor outraged.**”⁷⁸ [*Note: This may be because the students in the trail-blazing states and districts who are having problems are not yet being relegated to Youth Centers or School-to-Work transition programs. Anyone who believes the NCEE statement that there will be no public surprise or outrage is engaging in wishful thinking.*]

ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

The CIM Implementation Guidebook admonishes schools not to “drop” the CIM on people but to “develop the system *with* them” creating “listening systems” for stakeholders.⁷⁹ Under the heading, “Lessons learned from other early CIM efforts,” the Guide states that schools are encouraged to stress “the basics” and to hire “public engagement help” if needed.⁸⁰ “Research will help you identify existing beliefs, attitudes, values, perceptions and expectations among the public about education and education reform” and it will “help identify supporters, fence sitters and opponents.”⁸¹ [*Note: This tax-supported “research” is nothing more than an illegitimate attempt to accumulate a demographic profile in order to size-up the field.*]

PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE

According to NCEE, “there is increasing acceptance of a new vision and structure among the public at large, within the relevant professional groups and in Congress.”⁸² [*Note: Although the “relevant professional groups” are probably dancing in the aisles, the public, as a whole, knows very little about *The System*.*] Supposedly, “the notion of a national certificate . . . has captured the imaginations of thousands . . . and, as is natural for any proposal that would produce a profound change in our conception of the purposes of education and in its institutional structure, **this proposal has generated a lot of debate.**”⁸³ [*Note: Again, actuality does not match NCEE’s declaration.*]

From November 1992, until the present, the Ohio State Board of Education has not engaged in discussion, let alone debate, on national content, performance or assessment standards, and/or Certificates of Initial Mastery. I presume that no such discussion is taking place in the legislature. The result of this grievous omission is that the necessary groundwork for *The System* continues to be laid in Ohio without the informed consent of elected representatives of The People. And all the while, control of education is shifting from state and local school boards to NCEE and company.]

WHAT THE MINUTES SAY

The following quotations were taken from **official transcripts** of Goals 2000 National Skill Standards Board meetings. These statements appear to be totally inconsistent with NCEE's stated rationale for the entire system, i.e., that we need to close the gap by **upgrading** and restructuring education and workforce training. When first reading these quotations, it occurred to me that the perceived **public acceptance** of national standards, assessments, and certificates **has been over-estimated; no one likes to be mocked or duped, especially parents and taxpayers.**

"We ended up with an understanding across the table among all the participants that there is a good deal of dignity whether you are a dishwasher or a \$65,000 banquet waiter in doing whatever it is that you like to do and increasing your skill set and remaining in essentially the same position or transferring inside your industry doesn't mean that it is a negative thing. **Not everyone needs to have the ongoing career development** to be a general manager . . . so as the Board looks across, please keep in mind that **not everything needs to be a career path to somewhere else; that changing work environment can also mean improvement of skills to do the job that you're already doing.**"⁸⁴

"I think that a piece of your job, all of our jobs, is on the education of our populace. In large measure, **we spend most of our time, dealing with reactions because people are uninformed.** I think a measure of **that is because most of our population went to school.** It is one of the few industries everyone believes they are the expert in terms of education. As a result of that, **they believe, for example, that an 8th grade math is inadequate and inappropriate and that is not a high enough standard on the continuum** that Paul articulated **when, in fact, it may be more than adequate,** but without first educating your population about what that really entails in terms of what does 8th grade math – and by the way could anybody in this room pass a test – educating the rest of the country around those standards and that reality is fundamental before you go forward in articulating those standards or they will apply it to **their knowledge base which I suggest is flawed,** based on what's happening in education."⁸⁵ [sic]

[Note: Most parents would heartily disagree with the notion that 8th grade math competency is more than adequate. Personal and national freedom as well as self-determination require and educated populace. Eighth grade math is not good enough even if central planners, with their poor grammar, are convinced that it is.]

REVIEW

The hallmark of the National Alliance for Restructuring Education is the Certificate of Initial Mastery. To that end, Career Development will begin in kindergarten and will culminate in a Career Passport. The Passport is for all students, not just vocational students. Ohio is committed to this plan. Those with a CIM will be permitted two additional years of high school and one year of free college. However, it is important to understand that what we now consider vocational education **is clearly being redefined** as college. This is being done because parents everywhere want their children to go to college as opposed to going into vocational programs

The NCEE's mission is to transform our country's education and labor system. To that end, a plan has been developed, and it is being followed in over half of all the schools in this nation. The central planners know full-well that a significant number of students will not be able to meet the standards that are being required. The public knows that eighth grade students are not ready to choose a career at such an early age. NCEE and other economic reconstructionists

know that their efforts will continue to move forward unchecked as long as the general public remains ignorant of their agenda, and their success, as demonstrated in their having impacted over one-half of all the students in this nation without significant “interference” on the part of the general public.

-
- ¹ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 25.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 30
- ³ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 73
- ⁴ *The Alliance*. Volume 4, Number 1, April/May 1996. P. 2.
- ⁵ National Alliance for Restructuring Education, National Center on Education and the Economy. Red & White brochure. p. 9.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁷ *Moving the Agenda Forward*. The First Annual Standards-Based Reform Conference. National Center on Education and the Economy. (Summer 1996). p. 39.
- ⁸ TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 2.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ¹¹ *The Alliance*. Volume 4, Number 1, April/May 1996. p. 2.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹⁴ Up to Date, *An Ideal Match: New American Schools and Cincinnati Public Schools link as partners in reform*. Cincinnati Public Schools Special Edition Newsletter. April 1996. p. 1.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- ¹⁶ National Alliance for Restructuring Education, National Center on Education and the Economy. Red & white brochure. p. 12.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ²² TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 4.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ²⁸ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 59.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ³⁹ *Ohio School-to-Work Glossary*. Ohio School-to-Work Office. p. 8.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ⁴¹ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 13.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- ⁴⁷ A Special Message from Governor George V. Voinovich. Cover letter to Ohio's School-to-Work Application.. p. ii.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. i.

-
- ⁴⁹ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 8.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- ⁵¹ A Special Message from Governor George V. Voinovich. Cover letter to Ohio's School-to-Work Application.. p. i.
- ⁵² *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 33.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ⁵⁴ A Special Message from Governor George V. Voinovich. Cover letter to Ohio's School-to-Work Application.. p. ii.
- ⁵⁵ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 14.
- ⁵⁶ Occupational Competency Analysis Profile. Employability. Division of Vocational and Adult Education, Ohio Department of Education, Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory, Center on Education and Training for Employment. Columbus, OH. (1995). p. 1.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- ⁵⁸ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 34.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ⁶⁰ Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory, 1996-97 catalog. p. 36. Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.
- ⁶¹ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 25.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- ⁶⁴ TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 12-13.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁶⁹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p.5.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 6.
- ⁷¹ TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 12-13.
- ⁷² *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 5.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ⁷⁵ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 16.
- ⁷⁶ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 73.
- ⁷⁷ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p.14.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- ⁷⁹ TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 19.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁸² *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. 1992. p. 20.
- ⁸³ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 1
- ⁸⁴ National Skills Standards Board meeting minutes. March 19, 1996. pp. 258-259.
- ⁸⁵ National Skills Standards Board meeting minutes. February 22, 1996. p. 97-98.

SYSTEM # 1: CERTIFYING WORKFORCE READINESS

Part C: Standards for Schools

*. . . the Certificate idea will challenge the schools to make fundamental changes in the way they operate. No change in the last 60 years has had an effect as profound as this one will be. . .*¹

- National Center on Education and the Economy

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLS

NCEE literature states that “**All students are guaranteed that they will have a fair shot at reaching the standards, that is, that whether they make it or not depends only on the effort they are willing to make.**” A determined effort on the part of the federal government will be required at this point. School delivery standards . . . should have the same status . . . as the new student performance standards.² How is it that the student’s success depends only on the effort he or she makes, but then it also is determined by the effort of the federal government? The effort by the federal government requires them to establish school delivery standards with the same status as student performance standards. Since **the student performance standards are non-optional**, in terms of the student mastering them or suffering the consequence of not possessing a Certificate of Initial Mastery, we can conclude that any proposed school delivery standards will be non-optional as well. [Note: “School delivery standards,” re-named “opportunity-to-learn standards,” by the Clinton Administration, was the most hotly debated portion of *Goals 2000* when it was making its way through Congress.³]

School performance standards for all school districts and school buildings are a part of the proposed “Standards for Ohio Schools” regulations. **At minimum, Ohio schools and districts must show a 75% cumulative passage rate on the 4th, 6th, and 12th grade state proficiency tests. For the 9th grade test, the passage rate is being set at 75% for ninth graders and at 85% for tenth graders. The minimum attendance rate is tentatively set at 93%, and the proposed dropout ceiling is 3%.**⁴ More stringent levels are set for Ohio schools who seek to be named “high performance” schools. Failure to meet the minimum standards will trigger state intervention to ensure that the school performance standards will be met. [Note: These performance levels are unrealistic and they will force many districts to establish Youth Centers or Alternative Learning Centers for the placement of those students whose inclusion in the main program would dilute a school’s statistical showing.]

School delivery standards put tremendous pressure on teachers. When speaking of teachers, NCEE says, “**Everything in your world has changed.**”⁵ The “**measure of success**” and “**sense of accomplishment and professional responsibility**” for teachers will “**hinge on the proportion of the school’s students who reach these new [performance and assessment] standards**”⁶ [Note: It is hard to imagine a single teacher who decided to pursue a career in the field of education to spend whatever time it takes making sure that students meet national/international content, performance, and assessment standards. I do hope that I am being realistic, but I am still of the persuasion that teachers are in the field of education, above all, because they want to **impart knowledge** to their students — a noble calling quite different from, and superior to, being a human resource development facilitator who is dedicated to training workers for the good of the economy.]

NCEE recognizes that “teachers cannot possibly get all students up to an internationally benchmarked standard of performance . . . unless the performance of the students entering high school improves radically. Ideally, this would lead to a process in which the elementary **schools reach agreement** with middle schools on the standards they will meet for students leaving elementary school, and the middle schools then agree to a standard they will meet before the end of

middle school. . .”⁷ [Note: These agreements between and among schools have been set in stone by entities far removed from local communities. In Ohio, such “agreements” are in place via the 4th, 6th and 9th grade proficiency tests.]

Again, the objective is to achieve the school performance standards. To do that, all students, except for the severely handicapped, must meet the student performance and assessment standards.⁸ “All teachers will be involved in the CIM, either teaching to the standards or through being a teacher/advisor to ‘x’ number of students.”⁹ School professionals “**are expected to put in a full year, to spend whatever time it takes** to do the job and to be fully accountable for the results of their work.”¹⁰

“Everyone discovers that the most important variable is time. Some students are simply going to need more time to reach these high standards than others. If they are all going to get to middle school meeting the new targets when they should, then **some will have to be at school for longer school days, or come on Saturdays or be at school during a substantial part of the summer.**”¹¹

“What we have just described here is . . . the extent to which the **Certificate idea will challenge the schools to make fundamental changes in the way they operate. No change in the last 60 years has had an effect as profound as this one will be.** . . .”¹² NCEE envisions school professionals putting in “**a full year . . . to spend whatever time it takes to do the job.** . . .”¹³ Federal, state and local governments will provide the time.¹⁴ [Note: “Time” is not under the jurisdiction of local, state or federal governments. What government *can* do is collect more tax dollars to pay people to work the hours it demands: in this case, to do whatever it takes to bring all students, except the most severely handicapped, up to international standards, ideally by the time the student is sixteen years of age.]

DIMINISHED ACADEMIC FREEDOM

NCEE states that “**There is no standard curriculum.**”¹⁵

“[Teachers] are **free to decide whether to use a text**, and, if so, which text to use. You are **free to decide how to organize the topics** you will teach **and the order in which to teach them**. And you are **free to figure out which kinds of experiences your students need** to learn. . . from your point of view, this is great, because your students are very different from the students in several other schools in the same district and will need to travel a different path to get to the standards. **But the curriculum you and your colleagues decide on will have to be designed to get your students up to the same . . . standards** everyone else meets.”¹⁶

[Note: Since the vast majority of teachers will not have the time or expertise to write curriculum benchmarked to national/international standards, school districts will simply purchase pre-packaged standards, curricula, and assessments, and teachers will be given the **freedom to organize the topics and to decide the order** in which they will teach the material.]

Although espousing academic freedom, NCEE’s goal is a “**national system** of education in **which curriculum, pedagogy, examinations and teacher education and licensure systems are all linked to the national standards.**”¹⁷ NCEE proclaims, “. . . **the standards are the same everywhere.** . . . and programs can be custom designed . . . **as long as the programs . . . lead to certificates and degrees defined by the system.** . . .”¹⁸

[Note: It is now well established that NCEE/*New Standards* controls **student** standards, assessments, and certificates. Since everything is linked, how are **teacher** education and licensure standards linked to NCEE? In Ohio, a college or university desiring to prepare teachers must meet the standards of an external entity, the **National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)**. **When NCATE changes their standards for accrediting teacher training institutions, all Ohio teacher training colleges and universities will be obligated to comply with them. Therefore, NCATE is controlling teacher education and licensure in Ohio, and most assuredly, in other states as well.** Further research will be required to establish the link between NCEE and NCATE, but it appears that the

foundation for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was a result of a Carnegie report, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (see p. 8 - Origin of the National Center on Education and the Economy). In addition, Ohio standards require an assessment for teachers. Although our board has never taken formal action, it appears that PRAXIS III, a product of the Educational Testing Service, has been established as *the* assessment standard for Ohio's teachers. Further research will be required to establish the link between NCEE and the National Teaching Examination. The NTE, a product of the Educational Testing Service is being phased out.]

GRANTS AND WAIVERS

In late 1992, NCEE wrote that they envisioned a time when “. . . **most of the existing rules and regulations affecting relevant federal education programs would be waived** save for those relating to health, public safety and civil rights. . .”¹⁹ NCEE's expectations for **waivers** from existing federal rules and regulations **became a reality in 1994 when Goals 2000 became the law of the land**. That legislation contains a program called *Educational Flexibility Partnership Demonstration Act (Ed-Flex)* that allows the United States Secretary of Education to issue federal waivers **if the state is already waiving state education laws and regulations**. **Ohio was one of the first** states to achieve *Ed-Flex* status, thus both state and federal laws and regulations can be waived. Supposedly, these waivers are to remove legislative or regulatory **burdens**. Applications for waivers are often coupled with requests for money. The result is that laws and regulations that were lawfully imposed are removed and the district uses **new** money for some “innovative” program, practice, or venture. What is missing are the checks and balances that would come into play if waivers were reviewed by the legislative or rule making body who put those laws and regulations in place. **If a law or regulation was put in place by duly elected representatives of the people, and if it is no longer needed, it should be abolished by the same elected body**. At a minimum, those bodies should be notified that the legally adopted laws and/or regulations are being dispensed with. The Ohio Department of Education as earmarked approximately \$2 million of our \$52 million in Goals 2000 money to encourage “de-regulation.”²⁰ [Note: It seems reasonable that as a result of a district being relieved of the “burden” imposed by law or regulation, that the district would need to spend less money, not more.]

NCEE proposed that states and/or districts would get waivers by showing how they would do the following:²¹

- **Implement an examination system related to the new standards,**
- Empower school **staff to make the key decisions** as to ***how*** students will meet the standards (See Engaging the Public),
- Provide curricula related to the standards and examinations,
- **Reorganize *professional development* programs to focus on teaching professionals *how* to get all students to *meet the new national standards*.**

NCEE literature states that “to build the restructured system will require an enormous amount of professional development and the time in which professionals can take advantage of. . .” the research, development, and technical assistance that NCEE expects to be provided by the federal government. Professional development, and time for it, cost a lot of money.²²

[*Note:* Historically, taxpayers have knowingly and willingly agreed to pay for the education of **children** by paying taxes to support public schools. The shift that is taking place, unrecognized by most people, is toward the use of tax dollars to pay for the education of **adults** who happen to work in the field of education. And it is worthy of note, that we are not talking about occasional in-service days for faculty; professional development is a **major** focus of education “reform.”

According to NCEE, there are existing U. S. Department of Education program funds that could be redirected to support professional development.²³ I have specifically asked for a complete listing of how much federal

and state money is being spent, in Ohio, on Professional Development. To-date, I have not received this information. Putting **money and time** aside, as if we could, those resources are not being used to equip teachers to be better teachers, but to re-train them to facilitate implementation of *The System*.]

- **Reorganize health and social services to support students and faculty in meeting the new standards.**
- “Deploy” [Note: An interesting word choice] advanced technologies to support student learning “in and out of school.”²⁴
- **Restructure the organization and management of schools on the principles of *quality management*, empowering the staff, reducing the burden of rules and regulations from the state, the board of education and the unions, and holding the staff accountable for student progress.**

[Note: That means that schools will: (1) be reorganized around the philosophy of Total Quality, (2) **staff will be “empowered,”** (3) **and at the same time, local and state laws and regulations will be reduced!**

Several problems arise when **staff is accountable** for progress of students in achieving national/international standards. First is the presumption that parents want their children to achieve national/international standards. Second, *staff* is undefined. And third, parents will have no way to hold **staff** accountable. As it is, parents are, at times, hard pressed to get elected officials to take needed action, but at least elected officials can be voted out of office. What recourse will parents have if accountability for student progress is transferred from an elected board to an undefined **staff**?

The following is an example of an actual waiver/grant transaction. The current teacher certification renewal process is being replaced with teacher licensure standards. Instead of waiting for the regulations to take effect, districts can ask the state to waive the current regulations so they can begin using the new regulations ahead of time. The new standards call for the creation of local professional development committees. All schools will be required to have such committees by the fall of 1998, but prior to that time, the state will pay out \$1,000,000 to a group of districts for the development of local professional committee guidelines that, among other things, directly support the district-wide “continuous improvement plan.”²⁵ In the December 1995 draft of *Standards for Ohio Schools*, “Continuous Improvement” is defined as: **“An ongoing process measuring and documenting** progress in meeting goals.”²⁶ When asked to define **continuous**, most people would respond with a synonym such as **on-going**. Likewise, most people agree that **‘improvement’** means **‘getting better’**. Therefore, to the majority of people continuous improvement means “always getting better and better,” not “measuring and documenting.” This is but one example of **the continual re-definition of words** by policy-makers and their advisors. Some people deem such re-definitions as an attempt to deceive the public.

“QUALITY”

When speaking of quality, most people think of superiority or excellence, i.e., **quality** schools. However, in many fields, especially in education, business, and industry, *quality* has a totally different meaning. **Total Quality is a philosophy**, and its practice is called Total Quality Management (TQM), Total Quality Education (TQE), or Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). The actual label is relatively unimportant. What is important is the philosophy, principles, methods and tools, how they are applied, and to what they are being applied to. One of the tenets of *quality* is a *continuous improvement cycle*. In the field of education the *continuous improvement, data-driven cycle, links student outcomes, curriculum, instruction, assessment and rewards or consequences*. This cycle is the heart of Outcome-Based and Performance-Based education, both offspring’s of Total Quality.

In his book, *Schools of Quality: An Introduction to Total Quality Management in Education*, John Bonstingl says, **“TQM is . . . a new way of thinking and living that pervades all aspects of life.** When the TQM philosophy is fully implemented in an organization, it becomes **the heart and soul** of the organization’s way of operating.”²⁷ [Note: Bonstingl’s book is *essential* reading for anyone wishing to learn more about TQ as it relates to education reform, i.e.,

parents are suppliers of the raw material (the child). The school in turn shapes the child (the product) to the specifications required by the **customer**: business and industry. The result is that the parent is no longer the primary customer of the school; parents are merely suppliers of the material for production, i.e., the human resource.]

REVIEW

State and local school boards are no longer in the driver's seat when it comes to establishing standards for students or for the local school. Teachers will be expected to bring all students, except the severely disabled, up to international standards. NCEE states that teachers will be allowed to use their own methods and develop their own curricula to meet the standards, but most will not have the time or expertise to do so. However, they will be held accountable for whether their students reach the standards, so they will be required to work Saturdays, summers, spending whatever time it takes. Grants and waivers will be used to remove any so-called burdens or barriers that get in the way of accomplishing the goal: meeting the standards.

We have national/international general knowledge and skill standards that are the target for all basic education programs for students, dropouts, and adults. It's "all the same system."²⁸ It does not matter whether this system is called Outcome-Based Education, Performance-Based Education, High-Performance Education, Competency-Based Education, School-to-Work, School-to-Career, Tech-Prep, Vocational Education, Community College, XYZ, Mastery Learning, or any other name; they share a uniform characteristic: All represent the **continuous improvement, data-driven cycle** that links learner outcomes, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and rewards or consequences.

-
- ¹ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 12.
- ² *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 5.
- ³ *National Issues in Education, Goals 2000, and School-to-Work* John F. Jennings, (Washington, D.C.: Phi Delta Kappa and The Institute for Educational Leadership, 1995). p 32-43.
- ⁴ STANDARDS FOR OHIO SCHOOLS. *Coming Together to Build a Future Where Every child Counts*. December 10, 1995 Draft. Chapter 6.
- ⁵ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 12.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11-12.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁹ TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 4.
- ¹⁰ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 5.
- ¹¹ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 12.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p.12.
- ¹³ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 5.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ¹⁵ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 12.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ¹⁷ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 4.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ²⁰ Goals 2000, Targeted Investments. Ohio Department of Education. November 15, 1996.
- ²¹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). 21-22.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.
- ²⁵ Request for Proposals. Local Professional Development Committees. Ohio Department of Education. November, 1996.
- ²⁶ Standards for Ohio Schools. Ohio Department of Education. December 10, 1995 draft. p. 10.
- ²⁷ *Schools of Quality: An Introduction to Total Quality Management in Education* by John Bonstingl. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria VA. (1992). p. 29.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

SYSTEM # 2: YOUTH CENTERS FOR THOSE NOT CERTIFIED

A NEW SPIN ON COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

“. . . future workers” without a CIM “will be condemned to dead-end jobs that leave them in poverty even if they are working.”¹

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY WANTED

Reportedly, one of the purposes of the Certificate of Initial Mastery is to improve employment opportunities. NCEE wants **students who do not meet the standards required to receive a CIM by age sixteen will be dealt with by Local Youth Centers — often referred to as Alternative Learning Centers — or other transition programs.**

In its report *America’s Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, NCEE advocates Youth Centers “which will be legally responsible for those between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one who have left schools before acquiring a Certificate.”² According to the report, “ideally there would be a Youth Center in **every** community or neighborhood . . . to ensure that every young person attains the Certificate” in a supportive, “family-like environment.”³ In these Youth Centers, “young people would have year-round access to education in alternative settings” that include connections to the full range of community health and social services agencies, along with employment and career counseling.⁴

NCEE literature states that “some young people will not exercise their ‘right’ [to a good education]. . . thus, success must also depend on placing an obligation on young people”⁵ to meet standards. Accordingly, once these Youth Centers are established, **NCEE proposes that** “child labor laws be amended to make the granting of work permits to young people up to age eighteen contingent on either their possession of a Certificate of Initial Mastery, or their enrollment in a program leading to the Certificate.”⁶

Ohio’s House Bill 601 took effect on November 1, 1996. The law permits any two or more districts to create an alternative school for students who have discipline, attendance, academic, or other problems which cause them to be at risk.

FUNDING YOUTH CENTERS

In order for these Youth Centers to succeed, “districts would be required to notify the nearest Youth Center about any student who drops out.”⁷ NCEE encourages states that wish to participate in the CIM system to **redefine dropout to mean “someone who leaves high school without meeting the CIM standard.”⁸** When a student drops out, the district would “transfer to the Youth Center the average per-pupil expenditure (including all state and Federal funds) that the school would have received for that student.” Payment would continue until the student receives a CIM or reaches age 21, whichever comes first.⁹ NCEE also proposes an added “. . . **premium of 20%** for every dropout attending a Youth Center program, and if it took two extra years in a Youth Center to attain the CIM, the Youth Center system would cost about \$8.2 billion per year.”¹⁰ Who is going to pay? NCEE believes that it would be unreasonable to expect inner cities and rural communities to pay for the Youth Centers. Accordingly, they propose that “help should be forthcoming from both state and Federal government. Some may come from “**reallocating funds that now go to wealthier districts**, but the most likely source will be new revenues.”¹¹

REVIEW

NCEE envisions Youth Centers or Alternative Learning Centers for students who have not received an CIM within the framework designed for the majority of students. Alternative Centers are often being presented as places for unruly

youths, though the NCEE literature makes no distinction between an unruly youth and someone who does not possess a Certificate of Initial Mastery. Nor does NCEE elaborate about national discipline standards that this type of environment would require, although they do mention that prisoners could have their sentences reduced by earning the CIM, as though a CIM could be equated with rehabilitation.¹² With a 20% premium, per student, there would be little motivation for Youth Centers to “release” their “students” on a timely basis.

¹ *America's Choice: high skills or low wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 73.

² Ibid., p. 71.

³ Ibid., p. 71.

⁴ Ibid., p. 71.

⁵ Ibid., p. 72.

⁶ Ibid., p. 73.

⁷ Ibid., p. 74.

⁸ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 16.

⁹ Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 75.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 75.

¹² *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 9.

SYSTEM # 3: OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION

... the National Board will not be verifying or confirming the 2,000 occupational standards that currently exist: These are not the kinds of standards we have in mind.¹

Clearly, this idea redefines college.²

OVERVIEW

Individuals who have met the Tier I - Certificate of Initial Mastery standards are "... entitled to the equivalent of **three more years of free additional education. . . So a student who meets the [CIM] standard at 16 will be entitled to two free years of high school and one of college.**"³ [Note: The idea of two years of high school being free for students who have received a CIM suggests that students who have not received the CIM by the age of sixteen may be required to pay to attend school.]

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS FOR 80% OR MORE

"Eighty percent or more of American high school graduates **will be expected to get some form of college degree, though most of them less than a baccalaureate.**"⁴ Accordingly, **national sub-baccalaureate standards** will be established with the participation of employers, labor, and higher education.⁵ [Note: Typically, a baccalaureate degree is associated with a four-year program, and associate degrees with two-year programs. Sub-baccalaureate programs would be of shorter duration, probably one year, or less.]

NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS BOARD

One item on NCEE's *legislative agenda* was the proposal in 1992 for the **creation of a national board** that would establish a system of work skill standards in approximately twenty areas for the **80% or more** people who do not earn a baccalaureate degree. The National Board's charter "specifics that the programs leading to these [sub-baccalaureate] certificates and degrees will combine time in the classroom with time at the work-site in structured on-the-job training."⁶ This agenda item was achieved when the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* was signed into law. Among other things, *Goals 2000* included the *National Skill Standards Act of 1994* which established **The National Skill Standards Board (NSSB)**. The board was directed to stimulate the development and adoption of a voluntary national **system of skill standards and assessment and certification.**⁷

Thus, the National Skill Standards Board, per *Goals 2000* legislation, was established in 1994 and given the responsibility to set up a system for the Tier II occupational standards. "Most people will get their Tier II qualification through some **combination** of high school programs, community college or other post secondary programs and on-the-job training," although they could get the needed training and occupational certificates through community agencies or through business-related programs.⁸

The re-naming of the combined classroom instruction and on-the-job-training as something other than apprenticeship, ("degrees and certificates") **is important** because "unions are very concerned that the *new* 'apprenticeships' will be confused with the established registered apprenticeships" for licensed occupations.⁹ NCEE acknowledged that the National Board would **not be verifying or confirming the 2,000 occupational standards that currently exist: "These are not the kinds of standards we have in mind."**¹⁰

By re-naming the combined “. . .classroom instruction and structured on-the-job training, [and by] **creating a standard-setting board** that includes employers and labor, . . . “all the objectives of the apprenticeship idea are achieved, while at the same time assuring much broader support . . .”¹¹ **Support is needed because:**

“Focus groups . . . show that **parents everywhere want their kids to go to college, not to be shunted aside into a non-college apprenticeship ‘vocational’ program.**”¹²

To foster needed acceptance, NCEE supported **legislation for the “reconceptualization of the apprenticeship proposal as a college-level education program” combining it with an entitlement “to a free year of higher education,” paid for with “combined federal and state funds,” for those who possess a Certificate of Initial Mastery.**¹³ Reportedly, this new apprenticeship program will capture “all of the essentials of the apprenticeship idea, while offering none of its drawbacks.”¹⁴ **“Clearly, this idea redefines college.”**¹⁵

President Clinton’s proposal for this **renamed “apprenticeship system”** is touted as “the **keystone of a strategy for putting a whole new postsecondary training system in place.**”¹⁶ This new system will alter the way postsecondary education is financed and expand a “whole new human resources system nationwide . . . **using the renamed apprenticeship idea as the wedge**” to start the process.¹⁷

SETTING UP *THE SYSTEM*

The primary task of the National Skill Standards Board is to serve “as a catalyst in stimulating the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and of assessment and certification of the attainment of those skill standards. . .”¹⁸

To that end, NCEE proposed that associations, firms, unions, and individuals be **selected to participate** in a process of identifying clusters of jobs for which standards would be set. **To be selected, one needed to have evidence of a proven “track record of concern for, understanding of, and commitment to high performance work organization.”**¹⁹ The system developed by the NSSB “will serve as a **cornerstone of the national strategy.** . . to **ensure . . . the development of a high performance workforce.** . . .”²⁰

HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK ORGANIZATION

It is impossible to understand a system of national standards and certificates, or to fully comprehend the work of the NSSB apart from understanding what the phrase high performance work organization (HPWO) means. Both NCEE literature and *The National Skill Standards Act of 1994* are replete with references to high performance work organizations. Ray Marshall, an NCEE board member, lists eight key elements of a high performance work system. The eighth, and most telling element of a HPWO, is:

“An independent source of power for workers – **a labor union and collective bargaining agreement** – that protects employee interests in the workplace; helps to equalize power relations with management; and provides a mechanism to resolve disagreements that arise because of inherently adversarial nature of labor-management relations.”²¹

So, the individuals and groups organizing the framework for the national standards had to have previous commitment to the concept of unionism and collective bargaining as a basic principle for doing business. NSSB staff, and the pro-union/collective bargaining advisory committee, were charged with blocking out the clusters [units] of skills for which standards would be set. Ultimately, the object was to find groupings that covered “up to **80%** of the front-line jobs in high performance work organizations across the whole country.”²² NCEE saw value in starting slowly, so that the methodology for doing the work “. . . could be worked out.”²³ NCEE readily admits that:

“ . . .there is no inductive or deductive logic that can yield the clusters. Forming the clusters will have more to do with alchemy^O than science . . . it will be a political process, and the test of its success is not the degree to which it fits any logic of economic analysis or of the specialist in job description but the degree to which the people who will have to use it are comfortable with it.”²⁴

According to *The National Skill Standards Act of 1994* (Title V of *Goals 2000*), which is now **the law** of the land, **the goal is to ensure that the national system of standards, assessments and certification can be used by the Nation, to ensure the development of a high performance workforce.**²⁵ The standards, assessments, and certificates **will be used** by industries, employers, labor organizations, workers, students, government, and training providers.²⁶ **Why** will all these groups be using the national standards? They will use them to **“facilitate the transition to high performance work organization.”**²⁷

In HPWOs, “layers of management” are eliminated as direct labor takes on what used to be the duties and responsibilities of management.²⁸ **“High performance work organization, and the disciplines of quality management with which it is associated, requires that the people on the front line become and be treated as professionals.”**²⁹

“This is a profound social change, not just a change in organizational arrangements and economic systems” and it “requires big investments in training.”³⁰

[*Note:* This “profound social change” is a shift from our current method of management in the workplace, to a system where management is severely curtailed or eliminated.^P **Front-line workers** (also known as direct labor) perform their traditional duties, but **also take over the duties of management.** In the field of education, *front-line* workers are teachers. Therefore, teachers are among the many recipients of the ‘big investments in training’ needed to prepare them to take on the duties and responsibilities that currently rest with management. This ‘big investment’ in re-training teachers is called Professional Development. Teachers are being retrained to carry out the NCEE agenda at the classroom level. The result of this retraining is, in part, the shift of control of all resources to teachers, with an accompanying decrease of responsibility and control of resources from management — the elected school boards.]

BUT ISN’T THIS A VOLUNTARY SYSTEM?

The **National Skill Standards Board meeting minutes** shed considerable light on the issue of whether the national system is voluntary:

“This is all about development of voluntary skill standards. It’s called voluntary . . . but somewhere along the way in the system, voluntary gets changed to required, not because you intended, but because that’s what happens with every kind of set of standards. Somewhere in the system a change from being voluntary to being required. **To be explicit** about it, **they either get incorporated in** a particular school **curriculum that you must take, or** a particular **examination that students have to pass, or** they get incorporated in specifications for a position, you must be able to **do these things or you don’t get the position.**”³¹

“ If they [the standards] are broadly accepted in the industry, broadly enough to bind, that makes the transition from being voluntary to, in effect, mandatory because you can’t get a job at

^O **alchemy** - ancient art or pseudoscience that sought to turn base metals into gold or silver through the agency of a secret substance. Emerging in China and Egypt by the 3d century BC, alchemy was cloaked in mysticism and allegory and in time degenerated into superstition.

^P Students of history may view this as a shift toward a classless society.

Motorola or IBM or whatever, not by legislation, but **by collaboration among the industry leaders** that say this is what's required to get there.”[sic]³²

THE MOTIVATION CYCLE

Business and industry, having had an integral part in developing the occupational standards, will be using those standards and the resulting certification in **making hiring decisions**. To receive the education and/or training to obtain an occupational certificate, “a student may need to pursue a program beyond the Certificate [of Initial Mastery] in a college/university, community college, apprenticeship program or other program to receive the [occupational] certificate from the National Skill Standards Board.”³³ As a matter of fact, it is considered very likely “that the **standards** to be established by the **NSSB will be designed in such a way that most students will have to have some [redefined] college in order to reach them.**”³⁴

Current and future **employees** will be motivated to **seek standards-driven training**. As a result, education and training **providers who receive state and federal funds for their programs will base them on the national standards**. The result: Students and adults who wish to secure employment **will meet** the national “voluntary” standards.³⁵ **Work is also in progress to develop certificates** for those that meet the new standards; and “people with the **right certificates [will be] given preference in hiring, promotion, and pay by employers.**”³⁶

Ohio's *School-to-Work Glossary* acknowledges that skill certificates “may assist students in finding work within their community or state, or elsewhere in the nation.”³⁷ The Governor's Human Resources Investment Council (The GHRIC) serves as the lead entity in our *School-to-Work* system “to ensure that all **skill standards and skill certificates are both industry-based and coordinated with national skill standards efforts.**”³⁸ [Note: A major issue, in regard to occupational certificates, is the extent to which they will be standardized to ensure their acceptance in different locations. Some people consider the occupational credentials nothing more than thinly disguised work-permits.]

PROBLEMS RECOGNIZED

Defining standards for general skills is controversial. Even NCEE recognizes that a person may be a consummate problem solver in one domain and quite incompetent to solve problems in another context. According to NCEE literature “it is doubtful that there exists something called domain-free problem solving that transfers across substantive areas and can be taught in a domain independent of context.”³⁹ In other words, “there is problem solving, or critical thinking, in auto mechanics, psychology, farming, etc., but **there is not a general problem solving or critical thinking skill** (See page 16).⁴⁰ [Note: The current fad in education is to teach children how to “problem-solve” as though it was a specific skill like knowing how to multiply or how to divide numbers.]

NCEE admits that they are “less than clear about how to characterize skills for the purpose of setting occupational standards.” “**There is no road map** connecting skills with the competencies needed to do work of particular kinds, and our methods for analyzing the requirements of work have serious deficiencies.”⁴¹ [Note: The object of the national standards and certificates is to certify individuals and to establish some score or level that represents mastery. Yet if there is no road map, and if no logic can be employed in identifying the *groupings*, let alone the standards for those groupings, how can mastery of anything be defined? What's more, depending on where the arbitrary cut-off scores are set, perfectly **competent people could be denied access to a job they could perform well.**⁴² Therefore, since national skill standards, assessments, and certificates will have enormous consequences in terms of employment and further advancement, civil rights issues become critically important.]

CIVIL RIGHTS

NCEE acknowledges that the issue of civil rights must be dealt with. The cause for concern is that civil rights groups sued the Duke Power Company on behalf of a man whose last name was Griggs in what became a landmark civil rights case.⁴³ Civil rights groups maintained that “Griggs and other African Americans who did low-paying, low status work outside on the grounds of the power company were kept from better paying, higher status jobs indoors by the use of an employment test,” i.e., possession of a high school diploma.⁴⁴ Because a high school diploma was **unrelated** to

the job of indoor janitorial work, the **Supreme Court**, in *Griggs v Duke Power Company*, **barred the power company** from requiring a diploma. The *Griggs* decision was **overturned by the Supreme Court** in 1989 in *Wards Cove v Antonio*, and what initially appeared to be a negative decision eventually led to the *Civil Rights Act of 1991*.⁴⁵ The Court found that the **disparate impact**^Q of such employment tests constituted *prima facie*^R evidence of **unlawful employment discrimination**, even if there was **no intent** to discriminate. Employers must now show ‘business necessity’ of any practice that plaintiffs reveal to have **disparate impact** on a protected group.⁴⁶

The NCEE acknowledges that:

“No issue will be more important for the Board” than the issues related to *Griggs v. Duke Power Company* and the resulting Civil Rights Act. No firm will knowingly use standards promulgated by the National Skill Standards Board if those standards will result in a successful suit. **The cost for a firm that is successfully sued for unlawful employment discrimination can be staggering.** Since *Griggs* was decided, firms have avoided these suits by not using such tests or examinations, or by validating the tests that they use at every plant location at which they are used, as the law requires.⁴⁷

Matching the test to the job begins with a *detailed* job analysis. The difficulty encountered in terms of national skill standards, assessments, and certificates is that the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* calls for *broad* standards rather than *detailed* ones. **A firm can screen only for the specific job for which the potential employee is applying;** not “for [broad] characteristics that might be needed for other jobs to which the applicant might be promoted at some later date.”⁴⁸ **It appears that existing “civil rights law so constrain[s] the work of the Board in its work as to make it virtually impossible to achieve its goals.”**⁴⁹

Therefore, the NSSB must persuade firms that the use of the national skill standards will either not result in disparate impact, *or* if there is disparate impact, the NSSB must *persuade firms they can still win in court*.⁵⁰ NCEE is working on the latter of the two options because, “to the extent that the Board’s certificate standards will require a high level of basic education skills, a **disparate impact is likely because African-Americans and certain other protected groups have not been well served by the education system, and, as a consequence, are less likely than other groups to score well on examinations that demand academic mastery.**”⁵¹

Recognizing the problem, the NCEE commissioned David Tatel, a distinguished civil rights lawyer, to prepare a report. In Tatel’s report, he reasoned that if the National Skill Standards Board develops certificate standards explicitly for high performance work organizations, and validates them for high performance work organizations, then such organizations should only have to make an *adequate* showing that they are, in fact, high performance work organizations in order to use the standards without fear of losing a civil rights case in court. Attorney Tatel is now Judge Tatel.

OPPOSITION RECOGNIZED

Framers of this system of national standards, assessments, and certificates for everyone from high school to the temporarily unemployed, from the perpetually unemployed to adults who are employed, recognize that **these are massive changes** that may not be enthusiastically embraced by the majority. NCEE states that, “**The question is how to get from where we are to where we want to be. Trying to ram it down everyone’s throat would engender overwhelming opposition.**”⁵² To circumvent or overcome anticipated opposition, NCEE has extended the “opportunity” for states and large cities that are “excited” about national standards, assessments, certificates, apprenticeships, workforce development, labor boards, choice, vouchers, urban initiatives, etc., to join with one another, **and with the federal government** in an alliance, to begin laying the necessary groundwork. In other words, they

^Q disparate impact - fundamentally unequal, distinct or different in kind; entirely dissimilar.

^R *prima facie* - evident without proof or reasoning; obvious.

expect to overcome any opposition to *The System* by “inviting” enough participants to guarantee that the movement toward change reaches critical mass,^S and cannot be turned back without tremendous effort.

NCEE initially proposed that for a state or large city to be **selected** to participate, **the state or city should demonstrate a commitment to:**

- ✓ Design all programs around the CIM⁵³
- ✓ Pass legislation enacting the CIM⁵⁴
- ✓ Provide alternative schools⁵⁵
- ✓ Offer sub-baccalaureate programs, certificates, and degrees⁵⁶
- ✓ Implement the new occupational standards⁵⁷
- ✓ Institute state and local labor boards including a uniform, computer-based reporting system that combines data from the labor market board with state employment data for use by counselors and other “clients,”⁵⁸
- ✓ Develop an outcome and performance-based system for human resources development,⁵⁹ and
- ✓ Exchange information with all the other volunteers.⁶⁰

As soon as the first set of volunteer states and cities was set up, NCEE planned to invite another group to volunteer “until most or all of the states are involved . . . so that the states and cities (and all their partners) would be able to implement the new standards as soon as they become available, although they would be delivering services on a large scale before that happened.”⁶¹ All of the above indicators are in place, or in the pipeline, in Ohio at this time.

SETTING POLICY

Another offspring of the NCEE, the **Workforce Skills Program**, is charged with converting the recommendations in *America’s Choice: high skills or low wages?* [the five systems] into policy.⁶² The Workforce Skills Program is credited with the following activities:⁶³

- helping to establish the **National Skills Standards Board**,
- assisting states to craft legislation establishing a CIM policy and working with the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, to help districts to put the CIM into practice,
- developing comprehensive **school-to-work transition systems** and **labor-market systems driven by one-stop career centers**, and
- creating its own offspring, the High Skills State Consortium, a group of 12 states, to **define the central elements of a labor market system** and to identify successful models.

ONE-STOP CAREER CENTERS

Ohio is one of a few states leading the nation in the implementation of a one-stop employment and training system. The concept of a one-stop employment and training system is part of Ohio’s workforce development effort. Currently, Ohio has seven One-Stops with plans to open 23 more during the next three years.⁶⁴

^S 30% is considered “critical mass,” the point at which so much movement toward a goal has taken place that continuing toward the goal is easier than reversing course. It refers to that state when an organization has “recruited” enough of its personnel to a new idea or philosophy that the change process will now be self-sustaining. Enough people will be behind the idea and will help convert others that the new idea with “take hold.” Business Advisory Council. Ohio Department of Education. January 1995. Glossary, p. 4.

On December 6, 1996, Governor Voinovich's office announced disbursement of approximately \$3 million to assist with the implementation of one-stop employment service centers as part of a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. **Ohio plans to create 30 one-stop centers** to provide job training programs, unemployment compensation information, veteran employment services and senior community service employment programs. They may also provide vocational education and adult basic education. "Ohio has established itself as a national leader in the development of new partnerships in workforce development," the governor said. "These new one-stop systems allow us to **coordinate the efforts of many state and local agencies** to ensure that our **workers and our employers** get the most effective **training and placement programs in history.**"⁶⁵

We also have a Work Keys Service Center System that has been honored as one of the Midwest's ten most innovative state government programs. The Work Keys Service Center System is a statewide network of 37 adult vocational education centers created to strengthen workforce development efforts. It is a partnership between vocational education and American College Testing. This system promotes a "research-based workforce assessment and training program called Work Keys. The assessment and training program has three major components: (1) job profiling to assess the skills required for specific jobs; (2) assessment of existing and prospective employees; and (3) training that is customized to meet employers' needs. This network of adult vocational education centers is the first statewide system of its magnitude tied directly to workforce development. After an initial state government investment of \$114,000, the Service Center System is now fully self-sufficient."⁶⁶

REVIEW

All NCEE education and labor programs/standards are national/international in scope, and they lead eventually to occupational standards, assessment, certificates, and endorsements and then loop back to local labor market boards. Receiving a CIM is the prerequisite for enrollment in *all* professional and technical degree programs -- the last two years of high school and the first year of the redefined college. Occupational standards serve as a cornerstone of the **national strategy** to ensure that industries, employers, labor organizations, workers, students, government and training providers use the standards to "**facilitate the transition to high performance work organization.**"⁶⁷ Front-line workers, or direct labor, will take on all functions of management. NCEE readily admits that **this is a profound social change, not just a change in organizational arrangements and economic systems.**⁶⁸

High performance work organization is, in part, a euphemism for what has all the trappings of a national labor union^T Labor unions as individual entities are one thing; a national union that has been in on the ground floor of the development of national standards, assessments, certification, and endorsements is something entirely different.

The *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, included the *National Skill Standards Act of 1994* which established **The National Skill Standards Board** (NSSB). This board is currently working to establish a system of standards, assessments, and certification for general knowledge required for specific jobs. NCEE admits that developing the standards "**will have more to do with alchemy than science,**"⁶⁹ and that their "methods for analyzing the requirements of work have serious deficiencies," yet their work goes on.⁷⁰

^T *Note:* Although my father was a member of the Teamster's Union, I have had no reason to join; there are no unions for a full-time wives and mothers. Therefore, historically, I have been neutral on the topic of unions. Nonetheless, it is impossible to accurately report on the scope of standards without including this material that lends itself to a conclusion that we are moving to a national union-controlled economy. Since I have no ax to grind, I would regret it if the reporting of union involvement in national standards, assessments, and certificates casts me, in the eyes of some, out of a position of neutrality.

-
- ¹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p 12.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ⁷ *Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Title V - The National Skill Standards Act of 1994*. Section 502. Purpose.
- ⁸ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. (Dept. of Labor # F-4322-3-00-80-30). p. 30.
- ⁹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 12.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁸ *Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Title V - The National Skill Standards Act of 1994*. Section 502. Purpose.
- ¹⁹ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 12.
- ²⁰ *Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Title V - The National Skill Standards Act of 1994*. Section 502 (3)(A).
- ²¹ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 47.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ²⁵ *Goals 2000: Educate America Act - Title V - The National Skill Standards Act of 1994*. Section 502. Purpose and (3)(A).
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, Section 502. (3)(A-K).
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 3.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- ³¹ National Skills Standards Board meeting minutes February 22, 1996. pp.16-17.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- ³³ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 15.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ³⁵ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 11.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- ³⁷ *Ohio School-to-Work Glossary*. Ohio School-to-Work Office. p. 18.
- ³⁸ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 25.
- ³⁹ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 23.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25-26.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 37.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.
- ⁴⁵ *Government by the People*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. p 133.
- ⁴⁶ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy 41.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41-42.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

-
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 42.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 41.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., p. 41.
- ⁵² *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p.13.
- ⁵³ Ibid., p. 16.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 14.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 15.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 16.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 13.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 15-16.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 15.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 16.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., p. 14.
- ⁶² *Moving the Agenda Forward*. The First Annual Standards-Based Reform Conference program. National Center on Education and the Economy. (Summer 1996). p. 41.
- ⁶³ Ibid., p. 41.
- ⁶⁴ *Connections, Linking Ohio's Classrooms and Workplace*. Ohio School-to-Work. Ohio School-to-Work Office. Columbus, Ohio November, 1996.
- ⁶⁵ *State Forwards More Federal Money to One-Stop Employment Centers*. Ohio Report, Gongwer News Service, Inc., December 5, 1996.
- ⁶⁶ *Ohio's Work Keys Service Center System That Has Been Honored As One Of The Midwest's Ten Most Innovative State Government Programs*. Fall, 1996, press release. Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education.
- ⁶⁷ *Goals 2000: Educate America Act - Title V - The National Skill Standards Act of 1994*.
- ⁶⁸ *ON OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS: Early Thoughts on Organizing the Work of the National Skill Standards Board*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy. p. .32.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 11.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 25-26.

SYSTEM # 4: ACQUIRING TRAINING

*Providers of education and training for individuals currently employed will be paid as a result of a taxation requirement that "their employers spend an amount equal to one and one-half percent of their salary and wages."*¹

GUARANTEED FUNDING

In 1990, NCEE envisioned that the years of education beyond the Certificate of Initial Mastery would be financed through a system similar to the GI Bill, *or* through a "self-financing scheme" in which "the government would loan all students the funds . . . and then recoup the loan through a small surcharge on an individual's income taxes over many years."² Just two years later, NCEE saw merit in "federal and state governments match[ing] funds to guarantee one free year of college education to everyone who meets the new national standards for general education. . . so a student who meets the standard at 16 would be entitled to two free years of high school and one of college."³

Government loans for those seeking education *beyond* the two free years of high school and one free year of college would "be forgiven for public service."⁴ According to NCEE, "loan defaults" will be "reduced to a level close to zero . . . because **the new postsecondary loan system uses the IRS to collect what is owed from salaries and wages as they are earned.**"⁵

FREE MARKET ECONOMY UNDER ATTACK

NCEE believes that the small minority of companies that do train their employees beyond normal on-the-job training "are not being treated fairly."⁶ Believing that our nation "will not compete effectively unless *all* employers participate," NCEE recommends "that the **Federal government require all employers to spend a minimum amount** of funds annually to send their workers through certified education and training programs. In unionized workplaces, companies and unions should jointly negotiate and administer the training program."⁷

NCEE acknowledges that "everything we have heard **indicates virtually universal opposition** in the **employer community** to the proposal **for a 1½ percent levy on employers** for training to support the costs associated with employed workers gaining these skills, whatever the levy is called."⁸

"Initially, employers would be **required** to spend approximately one percent of payroll on education and training (**with the amount increasing progressively over the decade**)."⁹ Although NCEE states that "**compulsion is never a popular approach to public policy**," they still recommend that "employers failing to meet this target would be required to contribute approximately one percent of payroll to a national Skills Development Fund."¹⁰ NCEE recommends that "**all** companies, organizations and institutions, regardless of size or type of business, including local and state governments and schools," be required to participate.¹¹

Initially, employers will be **allowed to use their training allotment** for tuition and instructional costs for **any type** of organized instruction . . . **After the occupational certification programs are established [NCEE recommends] that only accredited courses** that form part of a formal certification program or a college degree **program be counted toward the employer's minimum training obligation.**"¹²

[*Note:* Currently, employers decide whether they will use corporate dollars to train their employees. Such decisions are based, in part, on need and on whether individual companies can afford to educate their employees. Some employers, recognizing that their investment would be wasted when employees move on to other employment, may

choose not to invest in employee education and training programs. But, in *The System*, in order to level the playing field, **all employers must participate** in national employee training, near universal opposition notwithstanding]

COMPULSION

NCEE has a solution to the universal opposition by employers:

“The President may choose to press forward with this proposal nevertheless. Alternatively, he could take a leaf out of the German book” and use some good old-fashioned arm-twisting: “One of the most important reasons that large German employers offer apprenticeship slots to German youngsters is that they fear, with good reason, that **if they do not volunteer to do so, the law will require it**. The President could gather a group of leading executives and business organization leaders, and tell them straight out that he will hold back on submitting legislation to require a training levy, provided that they commit themselves to a drive to get employers to get their average expenditures on front-line employee training up to two percent of front-line employee salaries and wages within two years. If they have not done so within that time, then he will expect their support when he submits legislation requiring the training levy.”¹³

WHY IS UNIVERSAL PARTICIPATION NEEDED?

Suppose a company, *Captive of The System*, bears the financial burden of training or re-training an employee. The company could recoup the cost of the training by increasing the costs of the goods or services, or as a result of an improved workforce, increase productivity. Suppose that another company, *Independence*, did not invest in employee training programs, but instead, hired *System* trained employees and paid them just a little more money. *Captive of the System*, having lost their trained workers, would need to replace and retrain them. Meanwhile, *Independence* enjoys the benefits of a trained workforce without having had to incur the cost of, or the down-time for training. As a result, *Independence* would have a lower cost of doing business, and as a result be able to sell their goods and services at a lower price. In the mind of some people, this would be an unfair advantage. To eliminate the perceived unfair advantage, **all** companies, firms, business, and industry entities **must** participate in the forced employee education and training programs; the programs that are based on national standards, assessments, and certification.

REVIEW

Further workforce training for those who have a CIM will be made available. It appears that funding will come from state and federal **taxes** and/or a **levy** placed on employers. Employers can volunteer or be coerced, via legislation, to participate. Initially, training programs can be independent, but over time it is expected that individuals will receive workforce training only from accredited providers. Despite employer opposition, NCEE is determined to press forward with their socialistic plan for training workers. The next section focuses on the competition for the local, state, and federal workforce training dollars.

¹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 8.

² *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 80.

³ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 82.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

-
- ⁸ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 18.
- ⁹ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 82..
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ¹³ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 18

SYSTEM # 5: A LABOR MARKET SYSTEM

*This is not a system for the poor, or for the unemployed;
it is “for everyone.”¹*

- National Center on Education and the Economy

THE BACKBONE OF *THE SYSTEM*

NCEE states that the “backbone” of *The System* is a new system of labor market boards^U and a “rebuilt” employment service combined into a single employment program.² These new labor boards will supervise an upgraded Employment Service. The **system is fully computerized**; it lists job seekers (with their qualifications), job openings, institutions that offer Certificate of Initial Mastery training, and the institutions with programs for occupational certification. NCEE envisions that, “**All available front-line jobs — whether public or private — must be listed in it by law.**”³ In addition, ideally “**all trainees in the system** looking for work are entitled to be listed” at no charge.⁴ This is not a system for the poor, or for the unemployed; **it is “for everyone.”**⁵ According to NCEE, states will need to “work with each other, perhaps through an **interstate compact**, and with the Federal government, to make the **national system** work smoothly.”⁶ **Labor market boards will receive the local, state and federal funds and contract with providers for needed services.**⁷

SEAMLESS WEB

NCEE laments that the nation lacks a “means of joining all the pieces together into one seamless web.”⁸ “The fragmented services we now provide should be replaced by a uniform system.”⁹ NCEE proposes that the Labor Boards be the “means of joining all the pieces together. [Labor boards are known by many names including Workforce Development Boards and Regional Economic Development Boards.] Labor boards will: ¹⁰

- ✓ Take responsibility for **School-to-work**,
- ✓ Manage and oversee the **Youth Centers**,
- ✓ Manage and oversee a system for **adults who are seeking a CIM**,
- ✓ Manage and oversee the system for awarding **occupational certificates**,
- ✓ Manage a labor market information system (**the databases**),
- ✓ Manage a service to provide **counseling** for individuals seeking jobs, and
- ✓ Coordinate existing **job placement, vocational education**, the Job Training Partnership Act, and welfare related job training.

COMPETITION FOR THE MONEY

NCEE “would make individuals, their families and whole communities the unit of service, not agencies, programs and projects. Wherever possible, we would have service **providers compete with one another for funds that come with the client.** . . .”¹¹ NCEE envisions that their new national education and training **system** for employed and unemployed adults will be **funded in four different ways.**¹²

^U *Note:* The word “board” has many definitions, one of which refers to a board of trustees, or board of directors, i.e., an organized body of administrators or investigators. Neither reference fits within the context of *The System*. Instead these boards appears to be a *place* – a place that collects and produces data, among other things.

1. Providers of education and training for **dropouts under the age of 21** will be paid by the same **local, state and federal dollars** that would have been available had they stayed in school.
2. Providers of education and training for **dislocated workers**, i.e., the unemployed, are to be “**funded by the federal government** through federal programs for that purpose and by **state unemployment insurance funds**.”¹³
3. Providers of education and training for those individuals who are **chronically unemployed** will be “funded by **federal and state funds** established for that purpose.”¹⁴
4. Providers of education and training **for people currently employed** will be paid as a result of a **taxation requirement that “their employers spend an amount equal to one and one-half percent of their salary and wages.”**¹⁵

The Alliance TasKit Guide says that, education and employee training will be linked to labor market boards that will oversee certification for dropouts through the Youth Centers, adults seeking the CIM, and a new system of skill certificates for job advancement. The business community and regional labor and industry groups recognize the CIM through commitments to first hire those youth and adults who have a CIM.¹⁶

OHIO SYSTEMS - A MINI-GLOSSARY

Ohio Job Net - is a job matching system, is the key element of the One-Initiative. It will become the single point of access for job matching for all employment and training programs.¹⁷

The Ohio Career Information System (OCIS) - is a computer-based guidance system that provides information on national, state and local occupations, educational training programs, teaching activities, and financial aid. It is currently available at over 1500 sites statewide.¹⁸ It is targeted for people who are in the process of planning, preparing for, or changing careers, which includes middle, junior high, and high-school students, college students, mid-career changers, parents and teachers, and out-of-school youth.¹⁹

“Ohio will investigate the possibility of enhancing and **connecting OCIS and Job Net** to meet the needs of a **School-to-Work system**.”²⁰ **These networks will provide access to labor market information for every student, teacher and counselor at various levels within The System.**²¹ [Note: Although the concept of constructing databases to help people with particular skills to find employment outside of their immediate community may have some merit, such a database leaves room for abuse.]

The Ohio Labor Market Information System (LMI) - is a “**computer-based human resource system**” geared to program planners, career counselors, and job developers and includes current labor force and employment estimates, historical and recent data on employment, employment service job opening and placement statistics, projections on employment by industry and occupation, etc.²²

URBAN INITIATIVE

NCEE refers to the combination of a computerized labor market board combined with the renamed apprenticeship idea [college] as an urban initiative.²³ All current programs for the poor, the unemployed and dropouts will be integrated into the labor market boards. Here it is important to note that NCEE proposes that the term *dropout* be redefined to mean someone who leaves high school without meeting the CIM standards.²⁴ [Note: This is significant in Ohio since the drop-out rate is one of the accountability indicators in the proposed State Performance Accountability Standards.]²⁵

Unemployed workers are to receive vouchers for education and workforce training. Case managers will “qualify” their “clients” for “benefits” and assist them in selecting a program.²⁶ This “consolidated and voucherized program

would operate nationwide.”²⁷ It appears that these “clients” will be the first of many adults who will participate in the CIM and occupational certificate system.

ELECTED SCHOOL BOARDS OBSOLETE

In it's July '96 issue, *Education Week* reported on the recommendation of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) that school boards be eliminated: ECS “ builds its recommendation around the premise **that district school boards have become such a serious impediment to school improvement that state officials might consider disbanding them in favor of new boards with new roles.**” ECS, in speaking of education reform states, “These missions are fundamentally different from those now performed by local school boards, and it is hard to imagine how a board established to run schools directly could adapt smoothly to such a profound change. State governments might at some point need to dissolve existing local school boards and central administrative offices and establish new ones with the new mission.”²⁸ [ECS participants are primarily state superintendents, legislators, and governors. It is my contention that local, city, and exempted village school boards will be merged into the Regional Economic Development Boards as put forth in Ohio's School-to-Work plan. These boards, although very important, have not been the focus of my attention. However, considerable attention needs to be given to them, and I shall do so in a future report.

¹ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 90.

⁷ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 19

⁸ *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*, The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy. (1990). p. 87.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 8-9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁵ *Human.*, p. 8.

¹⁶ TASKIT™ AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, National Alliance for Restructuring Education. National Center on Education and the Economy. August, 1996. p. 5.

¹⁷ *Building a School-to-Work System in the State of Ohio: The State of Ohio's Application for a School-to-Work Opportunities Act Implementation Grant*. June, 1995. p. 45.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

²³ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. (1992). p. 2.

²⁴ *The Certificate of Initial Mastery: A Primer*, Workforce Skills Program, National Center on Education and the Economy (Spring 1994). p. 16.

²⁵ *A Human Resources Development Plan for the United States*. National Center on Education and the Economy. p. 19

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁸ Paul T. Hill and Larry Pierce, *Bending without Breaking: Improving Education through Flexibility and Choice* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1996), 30.

POSTSCRIPT

RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTED

In 1995, NCEE affirmed that the five recommendations put forth in *America's Choice* “did not sit on a shelf.”¹ “At the national level, an impressive number of the recommendations made in *America's Choice* have been implemented.”² In all, remarkable progress has been made. Much of what the Commission recommended is now incorporated in federal law.³ NCEE reports that “The nation has been hard at work developing the standards and assessments needed to support a national certificate system. . . Seven states [Oregon, New York, Maine, Vermont, Kentucky, Massachusetts and Washington⁴] have adopted the CIM idea as state policy. More than 50 schools involved in the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, a consortium of five states and four urban school districts, are well along in piloting the CIM idea as a lever for making fundamental changes in educational practice.”⁵

During Clinton's first term, the Administration submitted legislation to Congress “that would have implemented much of what the Commission thought necessary to create a national labor market system. In its ‘one-stop-shop’ proposal, the Administration laid the groundwork for developing such a system by making some initial pilot awards to the states to create one-stop- centers where workers could learn about available jobs, the skills and credentials needed for those jobs and sign up for quality training. . . The Administration and the new Congress appear to be moving toward some combination of job training vouchers, program consolidation in block grants and new forms of further education and training entitlements as the way to reorganize the provision of job training in the United States. **If any combination of those approaches becomes law, the states will be in a position to establish the labor market system envisioned by the Commission, unencumbered by . . . the federal laws that now preclude such an outcome.**”⁶

For additional information regarding progress toward implementing *The System*, readers should read NCEE's 1995 publication, *Building a System to Invest in People: States on the Cutting Edge.*”

SHIFT IN FOCUS

The traditional purpose of education in America has been to transfer the general knowledge, wisdom and values of the previous generation to the young to equip them to realize their potential. It is well known that only in a totalitarian system is education linked directly to the workplace.

In 1983, Dr. Eugene Maxwell Boyce, professor of education administration at the University of Georgia, and author of *The Coming Revolution in Education* wrote:

“In the Communist ideology, the function of universal education is clear, and easily understood . . . Education is tied directly to jobs -- control of the job being the critical control point in an authoritarian state. No such direct, controlled relationship between education and jobs exists in democratic countries.”

There is no doubt that H.R. 1617 (known as the “Consolidated and Reformed Education, Employment, and Rehabilitation Systems Act” or “CAREERS Act”), and the Senate version of the same bill, S. 143 (The Workforce Development Act of 1995), are extensions of the 1994 School-to-Work Act. They represent the culmination of the NCEE's effort to get Congress to impose *The System* on all Americans. **However, federal control is not needed to put *The System* in place in every state. The only thing that is needed is the federal money** that will become available as a result of the legislation being passed. **As an aside, although a very important one, the proposed legislation would have sent the money to the office of the governor, bypassing the General Assemblies in their respective states.** On September 27, 1996, the NCEE plan was temporarily halted from being incorporated, as a whole, into federal law when the Careers Bill was defeated in Conference Committee. **Undoubtedly, the bills will be re-introduced in 1997.** Nevertheless, much of the plan can be, and is being, implemented under existing laws, regulations, and/or waivers. The

work goes on. Accordingly, this report is a work in progress that will be revised and expanded as additional information becomes available, and/or my understanding increases.

The National Center on Education and the Economy has been in moving their agenda forward. Collectively, the NCEE/*New Standard* partners teach more than half of the public school students in the United States. Therefore, the NCEE agenda cannot be dismissed as unimportant or irrelevant. If children are as important to us as we say they are, we must act responsibly and take corrective action immediately. To that end, groups and clubs should take the initiative to pass resolutions denouncing The System. Resolutions should be mailed to the Governor, members of the General Assembly, and Congress.

This report was created in Microsoft Word v.7 for Windows95. It is transferable via e-mail

¹ *Building a System to Invest in People: States on the Cutting Edge* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1995), 150. p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

NEW STANDARDS GOVERNING BOARD

Partial List

November 19, 1996

California

Delaine Eastin, State Superintendent, Chair. Pete Wilson, Governor

Colorado

William T. Randall, Commissioner of Education
Roy Romer, Governor

Delaware

Michael C. Ferguson, Acting State Superintendent

Illinois

Joseph Spagnolo, State Superintendent

Iowa

Terry E. Branstad, Governor
Ted Stilwill, Acting Director of Education

Kentucky

Wilmer S. Cody, Commissioner of Education

Maine

Randy Walker, Policy Director, Maine Dept. of Education

Missouri

Robert E. Bartman, Commissioner of Education
Joe Maxwell, State Senator

New York

Walter Cooper, Board of Regents
Richard Mills, University of the State of NY

Oregon

Norma Paulus, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Joyce Reinke, Lyons, OR

Pennsylvania

Eugene Hickok, Jr., Secretary of Education

Rhode Island

Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Education

Texas

Michael A. Moses, Commissioner of Education

William R. Ratliff, State Senator

Vermont

Douglas Walker, Acting Commissioner of Education
Clare Forseth, Marion Cross School, Norwich

Fort Worth I.S.D.

Thomas Tocco, Superintendent Fort Worth I.S.D.
Marsha West, Fort Worth I.S.D. Board member

New York City

Dr. Rudolph F. Crew, Chancellor
Illeana Ordonez, Public School 84, 3rd District

Pittsburgh

Louise R. Brennen, Superintendent
Paul H. O'Neill, ALCOA

Rochester

Clifford B. Janey, Superintendent

San Diego

Bertha O. Pendleton, Superintendent
Shirley Weber, VP, Board of Education

White Plains

Judith Johnson, Assistant Superintendent
Saul Yanofsky, Superintendent

Others

William E. Brock, Annapolis, MD
Marian Wright Edelman, Children's Defense Fund
Keith Geiger, National Education Association
Robert Blaser, University of Pittsburgh
Edmund Gordon, Yale
Sonia Hernandez, California Dept. of Education
Leon Lederman, Fermilab
William L. Lepley, Milton Hershey School
Arturo Madrid, Trinity University
Shirley M. Malcom, American Assoc. for Advancement of Science
Phyllis P. McClure, Education and Equity Consultant
Lauren B. Resnick, Co-Director of New Standards
Warren Simmons, Philadelphia Education Fund
Thomas Sobol, Teachers College, Columbia University
Marc S. Tucker, National Center on Education and the Economy
Raul Yzaguirre, National Council of LaRaza

APPENDIX A

A REPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S RESPONSE

[LETTERHEAD]

Date: May 1, 1997
 To: Members of the Ohio State Board of Education and Dr. Goff
 From: Diana M. Fessler, Third District
 Re: Reply to the Response

Several weeks ago I received a copy of "A Response to Mrs. Diana M. Fessler's Document, A Report on the Work toward National Standards, Assessments, and Certificates." Since the cover letter to the December report was addressed to you, my fellow board members, and to Dr. Goff, I anticipated a written reply from at least one or two of you and/or Dr. Goff. In addition, I found it quite interesting that the March *Response* was undated, unsigned, and not on ODE letterhead.

The *Response* to the Report was broken down into four themes:

The Power of an Idea
 Public Debate in Ohio on Standards and Assessments
 Linkage to New Teacher Education and Licensure Standards
 Ohio's School-to-Work Initiative: Providing an *Opportunity* for all

In my opinion, these themes minimize the debate by focusing on minor points rather than the overall theme of the Report.

THE POWER OF AN IDEA

The *Response* begins with a statement that the premise of the Report was that the agenda of the National Center on Education and the Economy *is going to be* implemented nationally. *The* premise was not that the NCEE agenda *is going to be* implemented but *that it is being implemented nationwide*, and that we, as a board, should examine the NCEE agenda in-depth and as a whole.

The *Response* states that "vortex of the debate" is whether children are being adequately prepared for *jobs*, but that is not the true vortex of the debate. What *should* be at the center of the public policy debate is the question of what is the function of our school system: Is it the function of our school system to educate youth to enable them to become productive, intelligent citizens in a free society prepared to independently chart their own course (which is part and parcel of what made our nation great); or is it the function of our school system to facilitate and fund the creation of a cradle to the grave workforce development system that produces workers for the good of the economy? Restated, should schools, with their compulsory attendance authority, be used to train children as future human resources for use by business and industry? The latter will reduce our children to dependent, intellectually stunted laborers for the future collective.

To center the education of children around workforce development presumes that government can successfully predict employment needs five to twenty-five years into the future. I know of no known proven track record of government clairvoyancy. Moreover, it is reasonable to question the sagacity of utilizing the NCEE national agenda without question.

The *Response* states that the "NCEE's recommendations have not been adopted cookie cutter style state by state" **which is not to say that they have not been adopted**, only that the adoption of them has varied state-to-state, either in the shape of the cookies or by the adoption of the entire cookie sheet.

The *Response* also states that none of the New Standards partners adopted reference exams, CIMs, or NCEE assessments without public debate. However, based on personal observation, from November, 1992, until the present, the State Board of Education has not engaged in discussion, let alone debate, on *national content, performance or assessment standards, and/or CIMs*. However, rather than addressing this, the *Response* skirts the issue by saying that New Standards states such as Iowa, Kentucky, and Oregon didn't adopt *reference exams*, establish *CIMs*, or adopt any part of *New Standards assessment system* without open public debate.

Oregonian Barbara Tension responds to that statement as follows: "That is absolutely not a true statement. I speak only for Oregon when I assure you that the Certificate of Initial Mastery was adopted in 1991 long before *parents* ever heard about it. The public comment came during the 1995 legislative session when hundreds of parents, teachers, students and concerned citizens presented over 38 (+/-) hours of public testimony asking that QEA 21 be thrown out or drastically overhauled. What did we get for our troubles? We got a revised bill, HB 2991, that only strengthened and clarified the original bill and the privilege of hearing the Chairperson of the Senate Education Committee complain because he "had to spend endless hours being subjected to the ranting and raving of parents and teachers from across the state." Thirty-eight hours of debate is no debate if it's after-the-fact.

The *Response* states that membership in the New Standards Project has fluctuated and that some partners have discontinued their membership. Although I am aware of the fluctuation in membership, that they are being phased out since the groundwork has already been completed, and the fact that most memberships expire this year, I did not mention those facts in the Report. Instead, I pointed out on page 17 that in June of 1997, New Standards, in a joint venture with Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement, will be selling their wares to school, districts and/or states. NCEE will no longer be funded through membership/partnership fees but rather through the sale of their goods and services. Membership gave states and districts access to the "Tasks" that were, and are being, developed for use in classrooms all across the nation. I find it noteworthy that standardized "tasks" show up in the proposed Standards for Schools. More noteworthy, the inclusion of "tasks" in the document was not at the request of the Standards Committee; it was simply inserted by the ODE writing team. On the surface, the inclusion of the term seems simple enough, however, the inclusion of it means that we have unknowingly laid the foundation for the use of NCEE's assessment tasks, thereby aligning us with NCEE's agenda.

The *Response* states that participation has been, and continues to be, voluntary. Be that as it may, when multiple states and districts 'volunteer' to participate in the development and implementation of national standards, assessments, and certificates, the result is the creation of a national system, and in this case, a cradle to the grave, human resource development system that links education and job training together in a seamless web. In addition, it is important to remember that the general public has no knowledge that their respective districts and/or states have volunteered their children and grandchildren to participate in the initial phases of this wholesale experiment.

The *Response* states that "concerns about the skill levels of the nation's workforce raised by the NCEE are real in the minds of many." Who are the many? The *Response* says that solutions continue to be debated. This of course, raises the point that Ohio's citizens are not engaged in an *informed* debate concerning national standards, assessments, CIMs, occupational certificates, labor boards, etc. and neither are their elected representatives. If we, as members of the State Board are not discussing these powerful ideas, and if the media is not reporting on them, how is the general public to know what is taking place?

PUBLIC DEBATE IN OHIO ON STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

The *Response* references the adoption of (1) *competency based education* program; (2) *excellent and deficient designations* for schools; (3) the *elimination of mandated achievement testing*; (4) the expansion of *proficiency testing*; (5) and the *repeal of the four-tier diploma system* as examples of the specific "actions taken or decisions made by the State Board of Education, the Ohio General assembly, and others over the past decade or more" that brought us to

"where we are now as a state." According to the *Response*, *Ohio's decision* to establish a "performance-based system" was *initiated* through legislative action in 1987. Initiated is the key word here; the system may have been initiated at that point, but did those who voted for relevant laws and regulations understand that they were merely taking first steps toward national standards, assessments, and certificates? According to the *Response*, "The performance-based *direction* proposed in the new standards under consideration by the Board are not new. . . What began with CBE requirements in the 1983 standards" has evolved over time. The phrase *performance-based system* is relatively new and to my knowledge it does not occur in Ohio law.

Considerable space in the *Response* was devoted to the topic of proficiency tests and the outcomes that are measured by them. Mention is made that the outcomes and score standards were "brought forward . . . at least *one month* prior to bringing a resolution to adopt . . . for the sole purpose of providing an opportunity for all voices to be heard . . ." Certainly, one month is not sufficient time to garner feedback from the general public; from professional societies and related organizations yes; from the general public, no. However, the focus on the Report was not on proficiency tests or outcomes. Thus, this is not a valid response to the Report, though I think it noteworthy that *the ODE has made the link* between on-going school and labor reform and the proficiency tests.

LINKAGE TO NEW TEACHER EDUCATION AND LICENSURE STANDARDS

In the Report, I wrote: "Further **research** will be required to establish the *link* between NCEE and NCATE." There may be a link or there may not be a link. What I am interested in learning more about is whether there is a link between the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)). The *Response* says: "To suggest that 'further *investigation* is needed before determining *collusion* with the NCEE and NCATE belies the fact that *NCATE has been in existence since 1954*.'" The fact that NCATE has been in existence since 1954 proves nothing. However, I have recently learned that Marc Tucker, president of NCEE, was the founder of the NBPTS. The implication of collusion and the need for investigation was raised by ODE, not by me.

The *Response* included statements about the public wanting teachers to graduate from nationally accredited professional schools. I do not see a connection between the statement and the Report. The public wants teachers to be able to teach, meaning that they want teachers to be able to teach academics. If NCEE is indeed connected through Mark Tucker to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, as mentioned above, it follows that teachers are being taught to prepare future workers for the workforce. The public does not know about most of the school-to-work reform initiative, and does not realize that school teachers are becoming career counselors, facilitators, and mentors.

OHIO'S SCHOOL-TO-WORK INITIATIVE: PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

In this section, five items are covered:

- Individual Career Plan and Passport
- Certificates of Initial Mastery
- Occupational Training
- Youth Centers
- A Mandate for All

INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLAN AND PASSPORT

The *Response* pointed out that it is the **Career Passport** that provides information to employers, colleges, and training institutions for screening, interviewing, and selecting applicants rather than the **Individual Career Plan** that transmits the information. A correction has been made in the most recent revision of the Report, which is now available at: www.fessler.com on the Internet.

CERTIFICATES OF INITIAL MASTERY

In the Report, I quoted from Ohio's School-to-Work Grant dated June, 1995, that the Ohio Department of Education "will begin to explore the need for the development of a Certificate of Initial Mastery." **The Response states: "That reference is true as it reads . . . explore the need does not mean implement."** In reply, I quote the following:

"Continuation of Integration Progress - The **Ohio Department of Education** administered state system integration **projects for FY96 are listed below**. Project **managers are being assigned, partnerships developed**, and project **specifications written**. An additional \$102,000 has been added to Core Curriculum Linkage Development in FY 97 for a total of \$1,000,000.00 in FY 97." [Ten projects are listed under this heading; number six is as follows]:

"Certificate of Initial Mastery Development (Work Keys Pilot) - \$150,000 Strengthen the link between education and work by addressing workforce academic requirements and developing a comprehensive student assessment **system to certify that students are prepared** for the next education and career development stage." (*Ohio's Request for Continuation of Funds and Performance Plan/Report Form p.7*)

One might possibly conclude that we are moving beyond mere exploration.

Also regarding CIMs, the *Response* states: "Any **discussion** on this issue **would be within the context of the work** of Ohio's State Board of Education." Certainly the ODE can discuss the CIM "within the context of the work of the SBE," but that does not translate that the SBE is part of the discussion, or whether members of the SBE understand the **true nature of the CIM as being just the first of five national systems that are being implemented nationwide** while we are engaged in irrelevant discussions.

OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING

The *Response* states: ". . . clearly the 'occupational training' implied . . . in her Note on page 29 is misleading." The suggestion that my personal comments that were set apart in brackets are misleading is irrelevant to the main point of the discussion, which was occupational training.

The *Response* attempted to diminish the monumental changes embodied in the School-to-Work system by saying that we have always brought firemen and police officers into the classroom, but that's not the issue. The real issue is that School-to-Work represents a fundamental change in our historical view of education, and it strikes at the heart of basic American freedoms. No longer will we inspire our young people to pursue their goals and dreams; rather students will pursue goals and dreams identified for them by those who want their labor.

YOUTH CENTERS

The *Response* states, ". . . Youth Centers have never been discussed *as part of School-to-Work* in Ohio." That doesn't preclude that the discussion may be taking place, it just says that it hasn't taken place in the context of School-to-Work; nor does it mean that no discussion is taking place regarding alternative schools. As stated in the Report, the Ohio Revised Code does make provision for the creation of alternative schools for at-risk students. The law could easily be amended to include students of a certain age who have not received a particular credential. In addition, Section 3301-35-12 - Special Purpose Schools, of the April 3, 1997 Standards for Schools draft, makes provision for chartering special schools for "at-risk learners." I concede the point that in Ohio, we do not, as of yet, formally have Youth Centers. Nonetheless, I contend that we have knowingly, or unknowingly, laid the foundation for them.

MANDATE FOR ALL

The *Response* states that although "School-to-Work *is* for all students" (emphasis in the original), that does not mean that every student must participate in School-to-Work, Individual Career Plans, Career Passports, or work-based learning experiences. Likewise, children don't have to brush their teeth morning and night, but rest assured, positive or

negative *incentives* to do so will eventually be brought to bear on the issue.

Section 3313.607 of the Ohio Revised Code states:

"A) The board of education of any school district may provide assistance to any student to develop a written career plan. **If a school district receives any state money** appropriated for the purposes of this section, career plans developed utilizing these funds **shall** be completed prior to the end of the eighth grade year, **shall** identify career goals and indicate educational goals to prepare for those career goals, **shall** be updated periodically as students successfully complete high school coursework, and **shall culminate in a career passport** described by division (B) of this section.

"B) The board of education of any school district may provide an individual career passport to any student upon the successful completion of the coursework of any high school. **If a school district receives any state money for the purposes of this section, a career passport shall be provided to each such student.** Each such passport shall document the knowledge and skills of the student, including documentation of the student's coursework and any employment community, or leadership experiences. Each such passport shall also list the competency levels the student achieved, disclose the student's attendance record, and identify the career credentials the student gained."

Since the School-to-Work *system*, and funding, is by its very nature, for *all* schools and all students, eventually all students "**shall** be provided" with a career passport. Is the state encouraging business and industry to make hiring decisions based on student portfolios? Yes. So, if the portfolio doesn't contain the requisite career plan, a listing of work-based learning experiences, the career passport, or the phantom CIM, what are the realistic chances of being hired for a high skill, high wage job? Poor to slim. Therefore, regardless of the professed disclaimer that "participation" is voluntary, the consequence of not "volunteering" will be a low paying job with little chance for advancement, since advancement hinges on the process, i.e., career plan, career passport/portfolio, work-based learning, and the CIM.

The closing paragraphs of the *Response* state that it is "misleading to say that only *totalitarian* systems link education direction to work." The *Response* states that *democratic societies* such as England, Germany, Norway, and Denmark connect school to work. I should have included socialistic, as well, and then pointed out that Germany, even with its school to work connection, has an intractable 12% unemployment rate. "Germany has proven School-to-Work is not a formula for success. It is not about people being able to use their own creativity and initiative to improve their lot in life." (L.A. Times article *Vision 2020*, April 12, 1997.) England's school to work program has turned out an entire generation of functionally illiterate citizens.

Embedded within the *Response* were disparaging remarks such as: Mrs. Fessler . . . is misleading . . . , Mrs. Fessler's report also fails to acknowledge . . . , and Mrs. Fessler seems to be confused. Such remarks are without merit. Nonetheless, they disclose the need for the administration to reach for a higher standard of professionalism toward members of the board who are engaged in serious public policy debate on behalf of those whom we represent.

In just over 200 years, this country went from a colony of England to the Greatest Nation on Earth. We've had more Nobel prize recipients than any industrialized nation, we've sent men into outer space, pioneered open-heart surgery, and our science and technology are copied world wide. Those who accomplished these feats were the product of an education system that emphasized academics, not job-training for the good of the economy.

A complete list of the names and mailing address of the recipients of the department's *Response* to my Report is hereby requested. Please make the necessary arrangements for each recipient of the ODE *Response* to receive a copy of this reply, including all members of the board, members of the General Assembly, the press, state agencies, and key business and industry leaders. Verification of the mailing will be appreciated.

CC: Members of the State Board
All members of the General Assembly
Third District school boards, presidents and members

Interested parties

Attached: Revised "Report on the Work Toward National Standards, Assessment, and Certificates." May 2, 1997

"**A Response [by the Ohio Department of Education]** to Mrs. Diana M. Fessler's Document, A Report on the Work toward National Standards, Assessments, and Certificates" is located at <http://www.fessler.com> on the Internet.