

YOUNG MINDS, BIG CHALLENGES

OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE FUTURE!

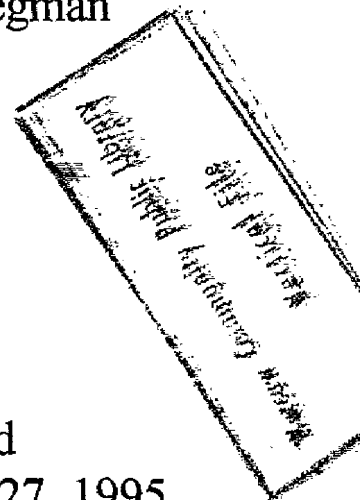
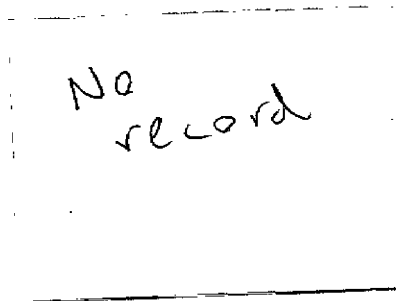
KLA White Paper Project

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Presented
Thursday, April 27, 1995

Young Minds, Big Challenges: Our School System in the Future!

How Did Our School System Get Where it is Today?

It all began in 1893 when a group of Ivy League college presidents came together for the purpose of reshaping America's schools. They called themselves The Committee of Seven. This group felt some structure needed to be given to the small, locally controlled schools that had appeared all over the country. Their basic premise was putting a system in place that would sort our children based on their academic ability. They accomplished their goal, and year out we get a graduating class of seniors that fit the Standard Bell Curve. That is, 10% will have A's and B's, 40% will be average, and 30% will be below average.

The problem with this -- it is not the purpose of our education system to select our children on any criteria. The purpose of our educational system is to educate our children. Our educational system is to help our children learn what they will need to know to perform productive roles in our society.

You might ask why do we need to consider change? Our system has worked for over 100 years. Why then should we think it will not work for another 100 years? The economy is changing; therefore, the type of worker needed is changing.

The United States must maintain a global competitive advantage. We are in the Industrial Age and entering an age driven by information and knowledge. Mass production using people as robots to perform routine tasks are being replaced by mass production

people to program and run robots performing those same routine tasks. Demand highly skilled, creative thinking employees.

The low skilled, high paying, routine jobs of the Industrial Age are disappearing. Of the new jobs created in America between 1990 and the year 2000, only 4% will be for the low skilled worker. Of all jobs available in the year 2000, only 13% of those will be for the low skilled worker. Our school system, as we know it today, continues to produce a disproportionate number of "Information Age" ready adults to "Industrial Age" ready adults. We must produce more "Information Age" ready workers.

So, what has this got to do with our competitive advantage? Our ancestors through the 17th, 18th, and most of the 19th centuries prospered by taking natural resources and turning them into usable products. It is how they made their living. As late as 1890, 80% of the workers were self-employed. These workers used physical labor and basic tools. Schools were small and locally controlled. Based on the needs of the American economy at that time, the schools met the demands of the time. Most jobs required little education.

At the turn of the century, the world and our economy began to change. Our competitive advantage was changing too. We were changing from an agri-based economy to an industrial-based economy. Assembly lines were refined. Their purpose was to increase productivity, standardize products for global distribution, and reduce the costs in production. The majority of American workers now hired out their labor to perform these tasks instead of being self-employed.

A few management people were paid to think while the average worker did what. The system worked. The United States was second to none in economic wealth. The system provided the correct numbers of "thinkers and doers." People prospered.

Now, our understanding of our competitive advantage is changing again. In the past, our competitive advantage was based on natural resources. It has moved from natural resources to technology. Today, our competitive advantage is not based on technology but on people. We live in the Post-Industrial Age. We live in a global economy where we must compete worldwide in virtually every market. Our students must be prepared for this global challenge. Our schools must change to help the students meet this global challenge.

Business leaders have realized the United States must move from "the old method of mass production to flexible, just-in-time delivery of high quality products and customized services" (Jamie Vollmer, President Local Control Project). In order to do this businesses are restructuring and moving from low skilled, high controlled systems to high performance companies. High performance companies are identified by having combined or integrated what were once separate functions. They have a decentralization of responsibilities resulting in greater employee involvement and empowerment.

All of this means that graduating students must be able to think conceptually, in a systems or scheme of things. They must be able to verbalize their thoughts. The new workers must be able to gather data, and analyze and apply that data to constantly changing problems. The new skills must be utilized to identify new products and services before our worldwide competitors. And, they must be able to function within a team structure. All of this used to be reserved for a few, not the average worker. Today, these skills are required in the world of work of our graduates.

We must change our schools and improve student performance. Our students a competitive advantage. The system of education must change and become a f expectation learning organization, with clear cut goals that allow students to reach t potential.

Now, let us look at how what is expected of our schools has changed over the ye 1640 the first schools were formed. They were expected to teach reading, writing, ar some basic American values. And, that is all schools taught until about 1900. Societ to change and with it, what we expected our schools to teach our children began ch following is an overview of what our schools must deal with. The breakdown is not As you review the table, keep in mind that the amount of time in school has not chang

Our Schools Have a Plateful

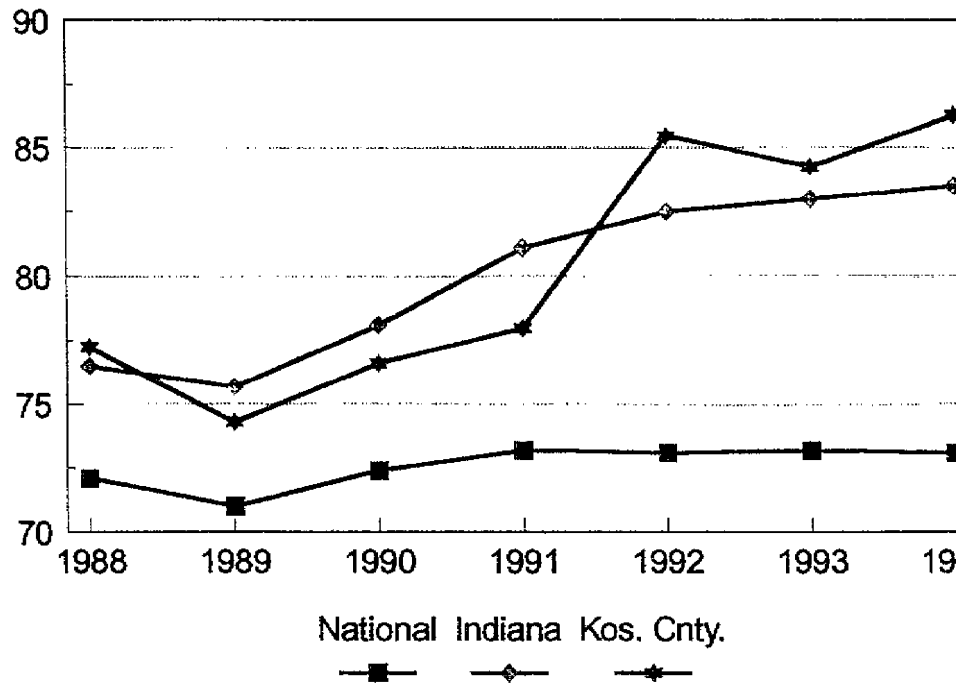
1640 - 1900	1900 - 1910	1920 - 1940	19
Reading Writing Arithmetic Basic American Values	Added: Nutrition Immunization Health	Added: Vocational Education Practical Arts Physical Education School Lunch Program	Added: Driver Educa Safety Educat Foreign Lang Sex Education
1960s	1970s	1980s	19
Added: Consumer Education Career Education Peace Education Leisure Education Recreational Education	Added: Special Education Drug and Alcohol Abuse Parent Education Character Education School Breakfast Programs	Added: Keyboarding and Computers Ethnic Education Multicultural/Nonsexist English as a Second Language Bilingual Education Early Childhood Full day Kindergarten Pre-School Programs After School Programs Stranger/Danger Sexual Abuse Prevention Child Abuse Monitoring	Added: HIV/Aids Ed Death Educat Gang Educat

Information Source: Local Control Project

As our society evolved the schools became the central point -- the way to reach our children. Our society is expecting the school system to raise our children. We must determine for our community what it is that will make our children successful, productive members of society. We must help our school system focus on their true purpose. Again, that purpose being to educate our children, helping them to learn what they will need to know to assume productive roles in our society. Wow! What a big assignment. But, it is necessary to all of us that we succeed.

Let us take a look at how our schools are doing nationwide and how Kosciusko County compares to the national and state averages.

Student Graduation Rate



National Statistics - National Center for Education Statistics
 State and County Statistics - Indiana Department of Education

As you can see, our nation's school system has shown improvement over the past. The national graduation rate has improved, but is still below 75%. Indiana fails below 85% graduation rate.

Best of all, locally Kosciusko County has shown continued improvement within graduation rate has improved by 9% over the last seven years. We are not saying Kosciusko County does not do a good job within the current system, we are saying the system is in need of change to prepare our students for worldwide competition. One option is Year-Round Education or YRE.

What is Year-Round Education?

Year-round education (YRE) is a concept which reorganizes the school year so that the standard instruction period is distributed throughout the year with regularly scheduled vacations interspersed. In other words, educational instruction and vacations are organized into smaller segments and spaced throughout the year for more continuous learning and more frequent breaks.

Within the YRE concept there are a variety of ways to reorganize the year. They can be SINGLE-TRACK, MULTI-TRACK, or EXTENDED YEAR. Within the first three configurations the school year is organized into a calendar with a specified number of days in the school or "on-track" and a specified number of days on vacation or "off-track." This calendar is often referred to by two numbers such as 45-15, meaning 45 weekdays on track and 15 weekdays on vacation. However, not all YRE calendars are referred to by numbers. The extended year lengthens the school year by a significant number of days.

In the past, YRE was used primarily to reduce overcrowding, but because of its value, it is now emerging as a way to offer all students a better education, regardless of ethnic background, social status, or academic performance.

Year-Round Education Makes Good Sense!

The calendar allows a more natural learning process by following the way people learn continuously. Think about the following question asked by Dr. Charles Ballinger, Director of the National Association for Year-round Education in his annual call for change of YRE at the association's conferences:

If year-round education were the traditional school calendar, and had been for over 100 years, and if someone were to suggest a "new" calendar whereby students would be exempt from instruction for up to three months at a time, would the American public allow, or even consider, such a scheme?

An Additional Consideration

Parents need to consider and demand higher educational standards. The United States, with its 180-day school year, has the shortest school year in all but one industrialized country (Belgium has a 160-day school year.) Many European countries are on a 220-day calendar. Japan has a 240-day school year.

Time Spent in School

Nationality	1950		1990	
	Days	Hours	Days	Hours
American	180	5.5	180	5.5
Japanese	120	3.5	240	8.0
European			220	6.5
Indonesian			270	7.0

Notes: 1) 1950 - U.S. went to school longer than anyone else.

2) Forty years later:

A) U.S. - No change in days or hours

B) Japan - 100% increase in days, 128.6% increase in hours.

Information from "Why our Schools need to Change" by the Local Control Project

Our children will be competing with these same students in a worldwide market and to give our children the advantages they need to compete with these students, we need to and enhance education in this country. Careful consideration needs to be given to lengthen the school year. This concept works well with the YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION calendar.

Brief History of Year-Round Education

A four quarter schedule in Bluffton, Indiana, in 1904 is known as the forerunner of year-round education. Between 1910 and 1925 various forms of year-round education calendars were used to increase space, to improve the quality of education, to provide for students who may learn slower than someone else, to provide a setting in which children could learn English faster, and to provide twelve month access to vocational programs in states like Texas, New Jersey, North Dakota, Nebraska, Tennessee and Pennsylvania. These programs all ceased by World War II as uniformity became the symbol of a nation at war.

In more recent history a 50-15 Year-Round Education program was started in California in 1968 and is the longest running YRE program in the nation. In 1969, Howell School District in St. Charles, Missouri, began the 45-15 calendar for more consideration and has the longest running multi-track year round education program in the nation.

Gradual development continued in the 1970s in states like Colorado, Nevada, and others. In the 1980s there was renewed interest and widespread implementation. By 1991 there were more than 1,349,000 students on Year-round Education in more than 1,660 schools with interest still spreading across the nation.

According to the NAYRE, the percentage of schools using year-round calendars has increased every year for the past fifteen years (Harp, 1993). The following table will serve to illustrate the national trend toward year-round public school programs (NEA, 1987).

National Year-Round Public School Programs

Year	1981	1985	1991	1993	1994
Number of States	15	16	23	25	32
Number of Districts	60	63	205	301	369

The table reveals that in the past thirteen years, there has been a 53% increase in the number of states offering year-round education programs and the number of districts with year-round education programs has increased five fold. Between 1993 and 1994, there was a 20% increase in the number of states and a 23% growth in the number of new school districts

year-round education programs. Furthermore, Glines (1990) predicted that by the year 2000, 50 percent of the nation's schools will be utilizing year-round calendars.

These compelling statistics and facts reveal that there is a significant trend toward year-round education across the United States. Educators can no longer ignore year-round education as a passing fad. Serious consideration must be given to the academic and economic benefits of YRE and the reasons for the trend toward YRE.

Attached are recent statistics showing Year-Round Education Involvement 1994-1995. This information was taken from The Year-Rounder, winter, 1995 edition. The Year-Rounder is the official publication of the National Association for Year-Round Education.

Distinct advantages do exist in support of year-round education. The following are some examples:

- Learning is more continual.
- Memory loss is reduced by shortening summer vacation.
- Review time is significantly reduced because of shorter breaks.
- Remediation is available throughout the year, rather than just during summer vacation. The student has a better opportunity to catch up and not feel as much frustration during the summer periods of time.
- Better utilization of facilities.
- Less burn-out to teachers and students.

In all fairness, there are some perceived disadvantages to year-round education.

- Operational and maintenance costs tend to rise.
- Startup money may be needed for conversion to year-round schooling.

- Existing facilities may need remodeling (i.e. air-conditioning).
- Shorter terms may lead to impersonal teacher-student relations.
- Transfer student likely to encounter difficulties.
- Determining what constitutes a year of attendance.
- Disputes over determination of teacher salaries for additional time will arise.
- Breaking of long-standing and well-loved traditions.
- Interfering with extra-curricular activities

We do not know that year-round education is the right way to go. We only know that a certain amount of education is required. If you are thinking, my kids are grown, or I do not have kids so it is not a concern for me. You need to think again. In 1968 for every one person on social security there were two people in the work force "supporting" that person. By 1998, it is estimated that for every one person on social security there will be two people in the work force "supporting" that person. The odds are not very inviting.

We have entered an age in which economic productivity and the quality of education cannot be separated. In fact, the United States' economic productivity is dependent on the quality of education we provide our children. We are truly all in this together.

National Statistical Summaries
Year-Round Education Involvement: 1994-95

I. U.S. NATIONAL TOTALS

Total number of states	
Total number of districts	
Total number public and private schools	2
Total public and private enrollment	1,649

II. U.S. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Number of states	
Number of districts	
Number of elementary schools	1,322
Elementary school enrollment	
Number of middle/junior high schools	21
Middle/junior high school enrollment	
Number of high schools	10
High school enrollment	
Number of special/atypical schools	
Special school enrollment	
Total number of public schools	
Total enrollment	1,64

III. U.S. PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Number of states	
Number of private districts	
Total number of private schools	
Total enrollment	

IV. U.S. TRUST TERRITORY (PALAU) PUBLIC SCHOOLS

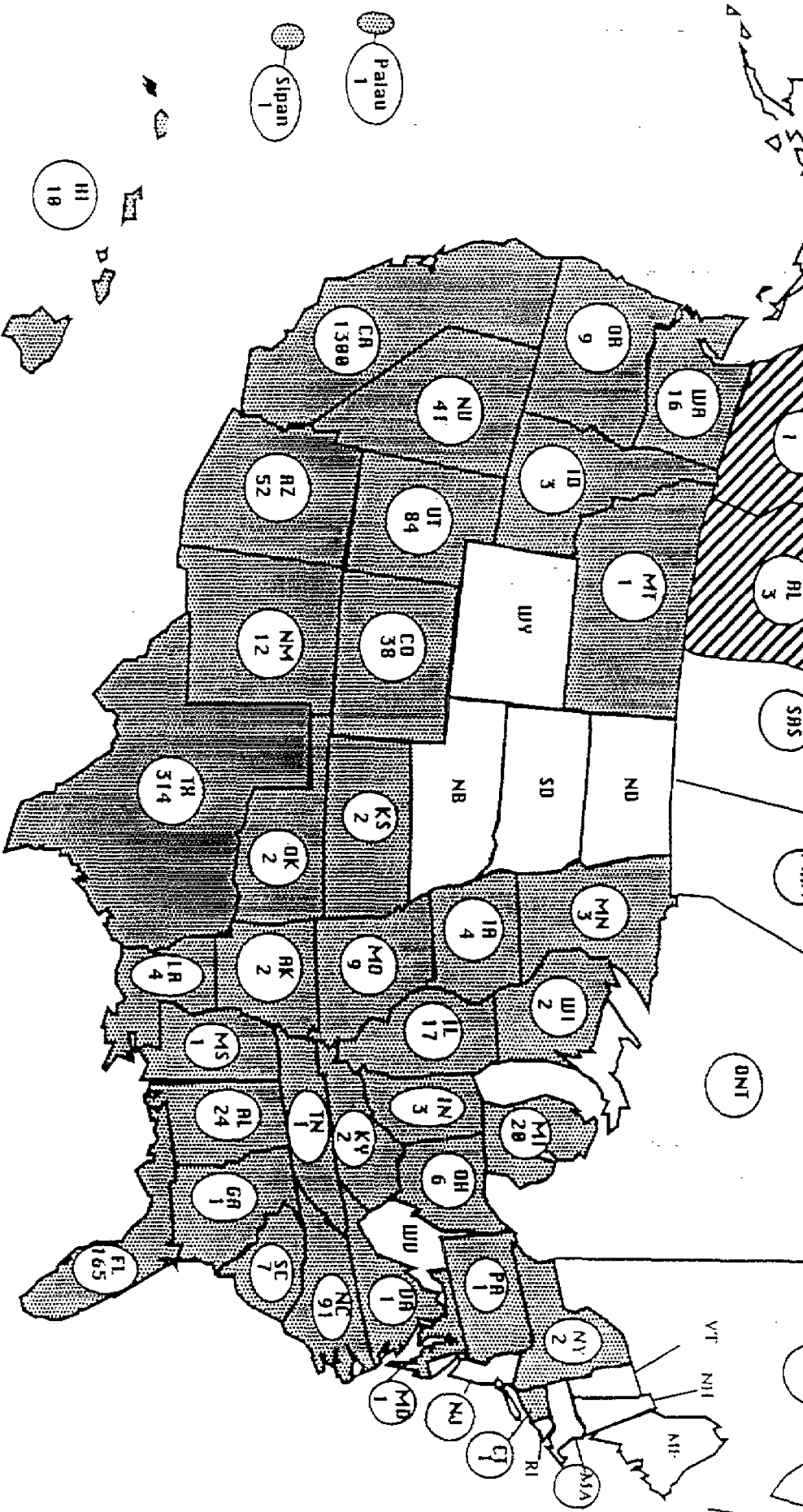
Total number of districts	
Total number public schools	
Total public enrollment	

V. CANADA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Total number of districts	
Total number public schools	
Total public enrollment	

VI SAIPAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Total number of districts	
Total number public schools	
Total public enrollment	



SOURCE: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION
December, 1994

Terminology of Year-Round Education

Year-round education has its own terminology. Knowing these terms helps in understanding the YRE concept.

Track: An organized sequence of days in school and on vacation to which a student has requested assignment or are assigned.

On-Track: The days students and teachers are in school.

Intersession/Off-Track/Vacation: These are terms that refer to the designated days when teachers are not at school.

Single-Track: All students and teachers in the school attend classes and have vacation on the same schedule.

Multiple-Track/Multi-Track: The student body is divided into several groups referred to as tracks. The instructional and vacation periods of each track are staggered so that at any one time a track is on vacation at all times. This plan is often utilized in overcrowded schools. The number of tracks on the calendar selected and the student body size, from 20-50% of the students are on vacation.

Extended Year: Most state legislatures mandate a 180-day school calendar. With the extended year, an additional 20-60 instruction days can be added.

Extended Contracts: In multi-track YRE, extended contracts may afford some states the option of teaching more days, thus extending the school year well beyond the normal contract. Contracts can be flexible to meet the needs of the school as well as the needs of the teacher. (This is a popular option for many teachers who prefer not to look for work outside their profession.)

Cross-Tracking: This occurs when a teacher teaches or a student takes classes on more than one track.

Resources:

National Association for Year-Round Education

From Parent to Parent, a look at Year-Round Education, by S. Hawkins

Year-Round Education: History, Philosophy, Future, by D. Glines

Why our Schools Need to Change, by the Local Control Project

Indiana Department of Education

National Center for Education Statistics

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