



Bits ‘n Pieces Fall 2009

For use by School Leaders

Just the Facts

Leadership

Taken from *Leadership in a (Permanent) Crisis*, *Harvard Business Review* as seen in *Fairview Learning Link* Partners of Cambridge Leadership Associates predict that when the economy recovers, things won't return to "normal" and a different mode of leadership—adaptive leadership—will be required. In the new world, leaders will need to:

- ◆ foster adaptation: help people develop the next practices even as they implement current best practices
- ◆ embrace disequilibrium: keep people in a state of productive readiness for change by creating a sense of urgency that doesn't result in great fear or paralysis
- ◆ generate leadership: cultivate leadership at all levels of the organization by providing opportunities for people to test new ideas and, sometimes, to fail

Early Childhood Education

- ◆ Research shows that by investing in early childhood development (referring to investments from prenatal to age 5), state and local governments can reap extraordinarily high economic returns: benefits that are low-risk and long lived. (Rolnick and Grunewald: *Achieving a High Return*)
 - Five keys to quality early childhood development
 - Focus on at-risk children – ideally for all children but limited resources should focus on the most in need
 - Scalability – reproducible for children at-risk
 - Parental Involvement – parent training
 - Outcome orientation – clear explicit goals and careful monitoring of outcomes
 - Long-term Commitment – financial backing and institutional support if standards and outcomes are met.
- ◆ Studies provide strong evidence of the economic benefits of high quality early childhood education as an economic investment. (Ellen Galinsky, Families and Work Institute, Committee for Economic Development *The Economic Benefits of High-Quality Early Childhood Programs: What Makes the Difference?*, February 2006)
 - High/Scope Perry Preschool Project
 - Abecedarian Project
 - Chicago Child-Parent Centers
- ◆ Resources for parents
 - www.ready4k.org
 - Getting School Ready in Minnesota
 - Parenting Counts
 - Born Learning Tips from the United Way
 - Math Tips
 - Language Tips
 - Motor Skills Tips
 - www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/
 - www.searchinstitute.org
 - mvpparents.com

After School Programming

According to Public Agenda, August 2009, given a choice of activities...

- ◆ 54% of young people would choose sports and 36% would choose an activity such as music or dance.
- ◆ 32% of students would like an after school program that provides homework help and 28% programming that focuses mainly on academics.
- ◆ 28% focus on academics
- ◆ Low income parents would like after-school programming that focuses mainly on academic programming (39% low income, 24% higher income)
- ◆ Low income parents worry about their children being productively occupied during out-of-school hours. (Only 37% feel they have this under control, compared with 60% higher income parents).

According to Public Agenda, August 2009, Parents worry a lot about...

- ◆ Protecting their child from drugs and alcohol (55%)
- ◆ Someone physically harming or kidnapping their child (50%)
- ◆ The negative influence of other kids on their child (47%)
- ◆ Low quality public schools (41%)
- ◆ Negative messages in the media (39%)
- ◆ Paying bills and making ends meet (36%)
- ◆ Juggling the demands of work and family (35%)
- ◆ Lack of time to spend together as a family (28%)
- ◆ Getting health insurance and good medical care for their child (33%)
- ◆ A lack of organized activities for their child (14%) worry somewhat (22%)

Values and Variables

Public Agenda asked parents how essential the following character values were to teach their children and to what level they have succeeded.

Character Values	Absolutely Essential	Have Succeeded
To have self control and self discipline	83%	34%
To save money and spend it carefully	70%	28%
To be honest and truthful	91%	55%
To be independent and do it for themselves	74%	38%
To always do their very best in school	82%	50%
To have good nutrition and eating habits	68%	40%
To be courteous and polite	84%	62%
To have strong religious faith	61%	53%
To help those who are less fortunate	62%	55%
To exercise and be physically fit	51%	53%
To enjoy art and literature	33%	51%

Good News

- ◆ Support for early care and education among policy makers and the public is at an unprecedented high internationally. (Roger Neugebauer, Emily Goodeve, *Global Trends in Early Childhood Education*, 2009)

Public investment

- ◆ “The quality of life and the contributions a person makes to society as an adult can be traced back to the first few years of life. If a child from birth through age 5 receives support for development in cognition, language, motor skills, adaptive skills, and social/emotional functioning, he or she is more likely to succeed in school and the workplace.” M. F. Erickson & Kurz-Riemer, K. (1999) *Infants Toddlers, and Families: A Framework for Support and Intervention*. Guilford Press and C. T. Ramey, F.A. Campbell, M. Burchinal, M. L., D. M. Gardner & S. L. Ramey (2000) “*Persistent Effects of Early Childhood Education on High-Risk Children and Their Mothers.*” *Applied Developmental Science* 4(1), 2–14
- ◆ “However, if a child doesn’t have support for healthy development at an early age, the child is more at risk for negative outcomes, including dropping out of school, committing crime, and receiving welfare payments as an adult.” National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2005), *Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain*. Working Paper #3, Summer

Cause for Pause

- ◆ Several long-term studies show that high-quality preschool programs can have long term effects and a strong return on investment. However, some short-term studies show that most existing preschool programs have at best modest effects on children’s development. Lawrence J. Schweinhart, *The Early childhood Leaders’ Magazine*, March/April 2009

Red Flags

- Minnesota's economy has lagged behind the rest of the nine-state region. Only Kansas and Arkansas score lower on the "business conditions index" which measures economic growth or contraction. Minnesota remains in contraction while most others are growing.
- Child poverty in Minnesota has risen 33 percent (six times the national average) since 2000.
- Child poverty reflects many factors of children's well being—health, education, safety, social development, and preparation toward becoming a successful adult.
- Factors that are likely contributing to child poverty include the weak economy and state cuts in programs like child care assistance for low-income families.
- While Minnesota still ranks high overall it has already lost ground on four of 10 measures, including children in poverty, worsening far faster than the national average.

To Do List

- Learn more about *Minnesota's Promise* at www.minnesotaspromise.org
- Learn more about *The Bridge to Higher Learning* at www.massp.org
- Learn more about the New Minnesota Miracle at www.parentsunited.org/NewMNMiracle
- Learn more about community assets for youth at www.search-institute.org
- Learn more about the impact of media on kids at www.mediafamily.org

Quotes and Quotables

Leadership

- ◆ "The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good people to do what he/she wants done and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it." – Theodore Roosevelt
- ◆ "There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness." –Josh Billings
- ◆ It is wise to direct your anger towards problems—not people; to focus your energies on answers—not excuses." – William Arthur Ward
- ◆ "The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves." – Ray Kroc
- ◆ "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." – John F. Kennedy
- ◆ "Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and then to let him know you trust him." – Booker T. Washington
- ◆ "The desk is a dangerous place from which to watch the world." – John le Carre

Citizenship

- ◆ "Civilization is a method of living, an attitude of equal respect for all men." – Jane Addams
- ◆ "The man who lives for himself is a failure; the man who lives for others has achieved true success." – Norman Vincent Peale
- ◆ "Even the hint of prejudice of any type has no place in a well-run organization." -- Fred A. Manske, Jr.

Future

- ◆ "You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today." – Abraham Lincoln

Progress

- ◆ "Management by objective works—if you know the objectives." – Peter Drucker
- ◆ "There is more to life than increasing its speed." – Mahaatma Gandhi
- ◆ "Enthusiasm is the very propeller of progress." – B.C. Forbes

Humor

- ◆ "A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done." – Dwight D. Eisenhower
- ◆ "Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he will never be disappointed." – Benjamin Franklin
- ◆ "Remember that nobody will ever get ahead of you as long as he is kicking you in the seat of the pants." – Walter Winchell
- ◆ "Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain, and most fools do." – Benjamin Franklin

- ◆ “Jests that give pain are no jests.” – Miguel de Cervantes
- ◆ “A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.” – Mark Twain
- ◆ “I often quote myself. It adds spice to my conversation.” – George Bernard Shaw
- ◆ “The bigger a person’s head gets, the easier it is to fill their shoes.” – Henry A. Courtney

Education

- ◆ “I am a part of all that I have met.” – Alfred Lord Tennyson
- ◆ “We should take care not to make the intellect our god; it has, of course powerful muscles, but no personality.” – Albert Einstein

Communication

- ◆ “Judge a [person] by his questions rather than his answers.” – Voltaire



Bonus!

Be the **first** one to share **an innovative way** your school/district evaluates the **quality** of early childhood programs and win a \$25.00 Barnes and Noble gift certificate. Send your response to sprest@arkassoc.com

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