

The World Future Society

Edward Cornish

The World Future Society, an association for the study of alternative futures and a leading source of futures information, is a nonprofit educational and scientific organization. It acts as an impartial clearinghouse for a variety of views and does not take positions on what will or should happen in the future.

The Society's bimonthly magazine, *The Futurist*, is well known to many educators. But WFS also publishes books; those of especial use to educators include *The Study of the Future*, which is an introduction to the cross-disciplinary field; *The Future: A Guide to Information Sources*; *Careers Tomorrow*; and *The 1990s and Beyond*.

The Society also publishes *Future Survey*, a 16-page monthly magazine that provides abstracts of futures-related books, articles, papers, and other literature, and *Futures Research Quarterly*, a scholarly journal for professional futurists that focuses on methods of studying the future.

For more information, write to the World Future Society at 4916 St. Elmo Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814-5089, or call (301) 656-8274.

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future. The structuralists, on the other hand, have been largely silent about the substance of school programs. Even their most influential voices virtually ignore this issue, focusing instead on the form and structure of schools and teaching.

To adequately address questions of content, we must consider them in the context of today's local, national, and global realities. To be sure, today's students need to be grounded, as the traditionalists remind us, in their own history and culture. But we live in a world where people and nations are

increasingly connected with one another economically, politically, technologically, and ecologically; therefore, today's young people also need a sense of global history, an awareness of common human aspirations, and the will and abilities to tackle the great problems facing not only our own nation but the entire planet.

The global education movement has responded to this need by attempting to influence the curriculum in elementary and secondary schools. It has focused on educating teachers and on changing their curriculums and classrooms. These strategies, often supported with funds from government or foundation sources, have helped teachers infuse global perspectives and concepts into existing programs.

The Model Schools Network

To further this goal, in 1987 the American Forum began working to develop

a comprehensive school improvement project rooted in global education. As an outgrowth of the report of the National Commission on Global Education,² we are assembling a "model schools" network. In selected communities throughout the U.S., districts are forming partnerships among local schools and their communities, institutions of higher education, and state agencies to make a long-term effort for school improvement and program development.³

The districts composing the network hold a common commitment to identifying the essential elements of an education for the 21st century, using our framework for global education as a starting point.⁴ The framework identifies four domains of student inquiry for which all school subjects should be accountable (see "Four Domains of Student Inquiry").

The American Forum's role in the network is to link school districts engaged in remodeling their programs and to support them in infusing the essential elements into all areas of the K-12 curriculum.⁵ Several of the districts have held community forums where parents, teachers, and the public discussed the role of schools in the context of local, national, and global realities. These districts are using those forums as the basis for developing curricular blueprints, setting program priorities, forming plans for staff development, and developing structures and resources for implementation.

The network is based on a shared conviction that the time is ripe to integrate concerns about both substance and school structures in the development of "model" programs. As the network matures, we hope to be able to report on the progress of schools where global education has been set as the highest priority—

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Educational Futurists Network

If you would like to join ASCD's Educational Futurists Network, contact:

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