

Science

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Project 2061 Moves Into Phase II

The publication of *Science for All Americans* last year completed Phase I of Project 2061, a long-term effort of the American Association for the Advancement of Science to transform education in science, mathematics, and technology. With Carnegie and Mellon support, hundreds of scientists, engineers, and educators had written and reviewed drafts of the report.¹ *SFAA*, the product of more than three years of work, recommends what all high school graduates should understand about the nature of science, mathematics, and technology as human enterprises; what they should know about the current picture of the world that these enterprises offer; and what skills and habits of mind they should have developed. Many states, school districts, and individual schools are already using the report to shape their curriculums.

Now Project 2061 (named for the year Halley's comet will next return) is moving into Phase II, during which six teams of educators will produce alternative blueprints for improvements in public education—curriculum is, of course, central. The blueprints will not be complete curriculums but, rather, prototypes that school districts can use to create operational curriculums suited to local situations and preferences.

The teams were selected from a rich variety of American settings: San Francisco, San Diego, Philadelphia, San Antonio, McFarland (a small town near Madison, Wisconsin), and three rural districts (working as a consortium) in Georgia. Each team consists of 5 elementary teachers, 5 middle school teachers, 10 high school teachers, 3 principals (elementary, middle, high), and 2 curriculum specialists. In addition to science teachers, each team

includes mathematics, social studies, and technology teachers as well.

The teams will have more than two years to develop their blueprints. The members will meet during two six-week summer institutes, supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation, and for four days per month during two academic years. During the two summer institutes, the teams will extend their understanding of science and education through small group discussions with prominent researchers, as well as through guided projects in design, historical contexts, survey research, and interpretation of science articles. During the academic year, other resources in science and education will be available from local universities, channeled

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by one or more facilitators assigned to each team.

As Project 2061 develops these curriculum alternatives, task forces will also convene to study the implications for teacher education, instructional materials, assessment techniques and policies, organization of schools, community support, state and national education policies, and educational research. Eventually ideas from all these studies will be distilled into summary papers for school administrators, school boards, legislators, business people, and other special audiences.

Although we will consider implementation issues throughout Phase II, implementation campaigns (Phase III) will wait for the completion of the Phase II recommendations. In the meantime, however, we are encouraging the use of *SFAA* by local educators in their own curriculum reform activities. For example, we may make special arrangements to enable school districts bent on reform to collaborate with Project 2061 through our electronic network (contributed by IBM).

Many promising efforts are under way throughout the nation to develop better curriculum, better assessment techniques, and so on. All will contribute to the eventual transformation that Project 2061 envisions for American schooling. □

¹Copies of *Science for All Americans* are available for \$14.50 from AAAS Books, Dept. 2061, P.O. Box 753, Waldorf, MD 20604. (Discount prices are available for quantity orders.)

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