

genuine interest in the success of each student; where teachers teach, not "instruct"; where there is an overwhelming desire to establish an environment in which students can be creative.

My teacher training enhanced my professional skills and my students have provided me with the opportunity to put theory into practice. Goodlad failed to mention programs that are not "debilitating and stifling."

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OBE—Same Old Top-Down Model

I take issue with Spady and Marshall that transformational outcome-based education "gives schools a profoundly different means of restructuring themselves." ("Beyond Traditional Outcome-Based Education," October 1991). As King and Evans make clear ("Can We Achieve Outcome-Based Education?"), OBE has its origins in the positivist-behaviorist, accountability-driven paradigm that has controlled education for several decades now.

Although it seems to offer exciting new ideas for assessment, curriculum, and school organization, transformational OBE offers the same old rationalistic, linear, top-down model that reduces education to "doing business" and "bottom lines." An administration-appointed strategic planning committee decides exactly how success looks for every student, exactly how teachers should proceed.

Most alarming, OBE allows for no debate about what kind of human beings we want our children to become or what kind of different society we might create. Transformational OBE is a high-tech version of

"management by objectives." Emphasis is on clarity of focus on outcomes, not on the idiosyncratic and serendipitous ways humans learn. Emphasis is on "high expectations for all to succeed," not on the multiple meanings of success to students and teachers. OBE is not capable of propelling a true paradigm shift, one that questions current values and purposes.

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Response: OBE Is Genuine Paradigm Shift

Professor Schwarz's points are inconsistent with what we know about the continuing evolution of transformational outcome-based education.

Transformational OBE is a radical departure from the time-based, calendar-driven, some-can-learn model. It is a marked shift from the century-long obsession with covering curriculum for predefined lengths of time and grading students permanently the first and only time they are tested. In short, transformational OBE does require a major conceptual and operational shift for schools.

To compare transformational OBE with the OBE portrayed by King and Evans is to miss the central message of our article and the historical and conceptual limitations of theirs. Transformational OBE is a new and still emerging approach that transcends the linearity of older forms of OBE. Transformational OBE practitioners view learning in a holistic way, resist breaking it into micro-curriculum segments, and believe in fostering interactive learning environments. Professor Schwarz's interpretation to

the contrary, transformational OBE is closely aligned with developmental learning.

Finally, Schwarz's representation of OBE's design process does an injustice to the vision of the parents, teachers, community members, students, and administrators who frame exit outcomes. These design groups view students as self-directed human beings, and they view the projections of futurists as presenting young people with challenges fundamentally different from the realities on which the prevailing curriculum is based.

We invite Professor Schwarz to get in touch with authentic transformational OBE firsthand by visiting districts in her state (for example, Chickasha, Purcell, Putnam City, and Woodward).

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Papers on National Standards Requested

The Journal of Curriculum and Supervision is issuing a call for papers on the topic of national curriculum standards. Papers should address questions like: How are national curriculum standards to be defined? What historical, educational, and political perspectives might help us deal with this issue? Are national standards substitutes for local or state graduation requirements? What values underlie the attention to national standards? Send manuscripts to the address below.

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