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Student's Name

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How fast can change happen?	24

Change can only happen when we look at existing resources and allocate those resources in the most effective and efficient way. We need to be willing to restructure resources. Using technology with innovation and focusing on improving the system then we will affect the system. Remember data is information and we should use it to inform change, not end at just measuring people.

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I believe this is exemplified in the definition of insanity, so instead of “mandating the mandates”, let's examine the system and fix the problems. It is so obvious that the system is broken and rather than put a cast on it or *medicate* with mandates let's redesign the system. The word capacity has been coming to my mind regularly these

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Weighing a pig has never fattened a pig!	
Failed policy II: students are expected to achieve at their grade level.	46
If we actually believe that differentiated instruction matters, then we would be customizing programs based on a student's actually needs and strengths.	
Failed policy III: higher standards of achievement in all academic curricula.	48

Higher standards sill do not match up with student needs since we are creating standards in isolation of what the students are capable of at any given time.

Failed policy IV: state and federal mandates for school improvement 52
Mandates externally imposed cannot possibly match up with the needs of diverse populations and environments. The example of the necessity of a red-light “mandate” is used effectively in this section because it is not the coercive implication of making people follow the law but rather the safety and good sense behind it. Forcing the following of mandates will not in and of itself change anything.

Failed policy V: improving schools must require more money. 54
The operative word is “must”. Even if I could pour a truck-load of money into technology and have every state of the art device readily available, that will not improve technology education. Money alone will not do it.

Failed policy VI: reduce class size to improve student achievement 56
This alone does not determine whether a student will achieve. If a student in a 7th grade class is functioning at a 4th grade level, class size will not be the defining factor in helping that student achieve.

Failed policy VII: failure of teacher evaluation mandates 57
The problem is creating this evaluation without the input of the teachers in identifying highly effective teaching.

Failed policy VIII: failure of teacher training mandates. 58
PositiveRelationship + Eff. Programs= High achievement + good behavior

Failed policy IX: failure of the foreign language mandate in n y s 61
Rather maximize choice and not forced attention to it.

Failed policy X: learning problems must be overcome at the pre k - 3 level 62
This is contrary to developmental differences among gender

Failed policy XI: fifty years of failure of remedial education programs 63
If our programs are effective the achievement will improve. Adding on extra programs will not improve achievement alone. “Improve constantly over time...”

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Individual needs are of paramount importance paired with the essential knowledge of language. Since this is of utmost importance, but in addressing individual needs we must be identifying an individual student's functional level of language. Having special programs to address special needs (either remedial or G/T) is indicative of a lacking regular program. If we truly addressed the individual needs of students within our regular programs.

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Test critical thinking not rote memory	95

I love Einstein's words...it is even more resonating today with information access. We can find millions of bytes of information so quickly but it is how we process and synthesize the information into something new and meaningful that makes the difference. It is so much more apparent today, 2013, that recall of facts is not only antiquated it is unnecessary. When I was a teacher of the G/T program I trained my students to look at all information in the same way- as thinkers and processors. It really did not matter whether we were studying neuro-physics or a worm, the premise is the same: mindfulness, meaningfulness and maximizing individual potential. I am a firm believer in what is asserted in this chapter but getting the *world* to understand the value in such thinking...now there's the rub.

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Individualizing learning for all students is truly the ideal approach to real results in improving achievement. We have an agreed upon tenet in public education today that says we need to differentiate and all children are not the same and that we must account for diversity in the classroom. When students are not ready for learning, then they should not be required to learn it.

Quality/Quantity paradox... when I stress quantity it cost you in quality but vice versa this is not so.

Chapter 7

Alternatives to present tests and assessments 112

The tests are not taught, lack validity, and are not fair. The tests were not taught, and are testing “babies” to “track” students before they enter school.

The normal curve, kindergarten screening test and other sources of confusion 112

Constructive use of standardized tests 114

Tests in and of themselves are not bad or to be feared. All information is exactly that information and should be considered however that is layered with many “other” considerations as well.

Observe and evaluate programs not teachers and students 116

Teacher observation and evaluation need to be changed. This must be done with the goal of improvement not repudiation.

Open book tests: authentic assessments 118

Ongoing formative self-assessment is the only kind that brings excellence 120

Each level should assess them. If our policy isn’t working, maybe we need different policies. We keep doing mandates. Principals assess principals, teachers assess teachers, and students assess students. Only self-assessment can bring excellence because then there is true reflection and will to change for improvement.

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Self-assessment of the system: involving all stakeholders 123

Tests tell us what happened, but not why it happened. Needs assessment surveys, properly constructed and administered/interpreted can provide information that would be needed for the change.

Action causes a reaction – synthesis. Things are lost when people change – if it’s not my idea, I am not going to do it. Critical mass – technology.

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Ongoing self-improvement requires ongoing self assessment.

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Participation, prioritize needs, inexpensive, easy to use. Gain important information..

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Rate survey – teachers and administrators. Two opinions about those items. How important is item in school 0-4, to what degree does item exist in school 0-4
Two responses, from each – so can get a discrepancy
Can see right away what the lowest is – what priorities are in the school

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Survey gives information about the importance and existence of various topics/procedures in the school district. These surveys can be given periodically to assess and provide new priorities for improvement.

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A case study in organizational self-assessment and self-improvement 136
Surveys will be used for planning and school improvement.

School improvement planning form 139
Blank spaces were put after each question. These spaces were for suggestions of what is needed – simple planning form. Five months in between survey.

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Parent assessment

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Surveying results in a reading of the proverbial barometer of climate, values and achievement in any sector of society. In gaining a measure for school effectiveness, the results are complex and layered. Your explanation of developing and administering such an instrument

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There have been so many changes in the reading programs over the past 50 years and yet the actual skill of reading has not changed in the past 500 years. Why is it that all the new *fandangled* approaches seem so plausible to educators and yet good-sense approaches are so easily dismissed? True retention should not even be an issue if we truly address level needs. Rather than benchmarking students and defining them as behind or ahead why not just address their needs? Parents may or not be a help in reaching students academically, but I consider that a non-issue since that is something we cannot control anyway.

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When we reiterate what is actually being perpetuated in the current climate with respect to literacy it sounds relevant and important. When we begin to examine it closely and deconstruct it, it actually becomes ludicrous. I am continually shocked at the way everyone is “shocked” that all of this is not working... your concepts are so sensible and simple perhaps it seems too simple.

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Learning Disabilities vs. Teaching Disabilities. Glasser discusses that the existence of disabilities is because of the methods we use to teach. We can compensate for the lacking skill. I think this is one area in which there are so many views and opinions and thoughts it is daunting. If you in any way, shape or form even appear to question this area of education you are deemed a heartless beast. I do know one thing for sure, all the added acts and mandates have not resulted in improvement for students with disabilities. If your premise is true, there are no learning disabilities only teaching "gaps" then we who are navigating this ship better change the course or there will be generational repercussions.

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Everything in moderation and if you violate it, it will cost you. Know thyself and not to confuse virtue and value. Virtues are natural laws that if we can accept, we will benefit. Values do not make one good or bad, but virtues are primary. When values and virtues conflict, always choose virtues.

Erikson...when social norms are adequate laws are unnecessary...

2C's in success- character and competence. (Covey)

Excellence is the habit of self-improvement. Freedom and responsibility must remain in balance.

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Excellence is the habit of self-improvement. Freedom and responsibility must remain in balance (This is from the previous chapter)

In listening to you speak, it all makes sense until we are faced the less than virtuous interactions with people who lack virtue. When I shared with you that the family of my dear friend who passed away was behaving in a terrible and despicable way, you said simply, "They are stupid." It was actually so simple that it took the wind out of my bloviating about how horrible they behaved. It is that simple sometimes: those who are virtuous simply are, those who are not are...stupid! That makes me smile.

I plan to display the virtues, boldly, proudly as a reminder to me and as information to the students and adults affected by my role in their lives. My husband was taken with the title to this book and has begun reading it. He is not an educator, but our 4 children have been working their way through this sad, broken system. He is enjoying it and says you are preaching to the choir. He is a natural system's thinker (perhaps his Asian genes) and has really appreciated what you are saying.

Anyway, we are discussing it and that is always constructive.

Thank you Dr. Kelly, your classes were both enjoyable and food for thought. I appreciate your work, but more importantly I appreciate your spirit. You are a great example in an age that is so desensitized to what is good and simple and real. I am grateful that you are a "voice crying in the wilderness" and I know full-well that "hope never makes us ashamed."

God Bless you Dr. Kelly, and God have mercy on us all.