



The following thumbnails of recent journal articles was assembled by the National At-Risk Education Network (www.NAREN.info) to provide up to date information regarding the increasing privatization of American public schools. PURPOSE: To investigate and display recent publications focused on the increasing entry of for-profit corporations into curriculum-impacting endeavors of public education, i.e. those private organizations receiving public education dollars and students, but whose #1 priority is more with private shareholders than with the public's children.

PRIVATIZATION of PUBLIC EDUCATION

The National At-Risk Education Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap and pipelining quality education to those who need and deserve it the most: The At-Risk Students who normally have no special funding, staffing or programs specifically aimed at the compensatory needs they have.

If anyone deserves extra help and a curriculum/school sensitive to their needs it is the children who did not ask to be placed at-risk and cry out for assistance by exhibiting their symptoms like Red Cross banners. We are the adults. We are the professionals. If we cannot see through the symptoms to address the causes then shame on us.

--Anthony S. Dallmann-Jones, National Director of NAREN September 15, 2011

The PRIVATIZATION of PUBLIC EDUCATION

A NAREN Sponsored Study of Recent Publications – September, 2011

The school privatization movement is one of unparalleled genius. It proposes free-market solutions to a problem created by the free market: wealthy taxpayers refusing to adequately fund poor people's schools and a de-industrialized service economy that has eliminated good jobs for the working class.

The movement has led to more testing and more charter schools. It has not, however, led to poor students getting a demonstrably better education. And the minority of charters that do work have proven impossible to scale up.

As Dana Goldstein describes it: "Campbell's Law states that incentives corrupt. In other words, the more punishments and rewards – such as merit pay – are associated with the results of any given test, the more likely it is that the test's results will be rendered meaningless, either through outright cheating or through teaching to the test in a way that narrows the curriculum and renders real learning obsolete. In the era of No Child Left Behind, Campbell's Law has proved true again and again."

In a telling gaffe last week, President Obama criticized the excessive emphasis on standardized tests. He noted that his daughters, enrolled at the elite Washington Quaker school, Sidwell Friends, were able to engage in intellectual exploration without high-stakes exams hanging over their head.

"One thing I never want to see happen is schools that are just teaching the test because then you're not learning about the world, you're not learning about different cultures, you're not learning about science, you're not learning about math [...] All you're learning about is how to fill out a little bubble on an exam and little tricks that you need to do in order to take a test and that's not going to make education interesting."

Ironically, it is Obama's very own department of education, under Secretary Duncan, that is pushing for more tests at higher and higher stakes.

Denvir, D. (2011, April 7). *Cathie Black and the Privatization of Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/apr/07/schools-school-funding>

The public-private partnership would authorize school management organizations to operate five schools, and would target some of the 100,000 New Jersey students now enrolled in 200 chronically failing schools, the governor's office said.

School management organizations are involved with 700 schools in 31 states, according to Christie's office.

Honan, E. , Goldberg, B., & Norton, J. (2011, June 11). *Chris Christie Announces Plan to Privatize New Jersey Public Schools*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/11/chris-christie-schools_n_875262.html

Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce has formed a coalition with 40 businesses and community groups to raise awareness and promote education reform in an effort to improve Indianapolis Public Schools.

The coalition, called IndyEducation911, was announced on the same day the State Board of Education voted to turn over control of the four poorest-performing IPS schools to private companies.

Hunsinger Benbow, D. (2011, August 30). *Promoting Education Reform*. <http://www.indystar.com/article/20110830/LOCAL/108300321/Promoting-education-reform?odyssey=tab|mostpopular|text|LOCAL>

Private companies will take over five public schools in Gary and Indianapolis that a state official called in "various stages of dire situations"...

Associated Press (2011, August 29). *Indiana Board of Education OKs takeovers of 5 schools*. Retrieved from <http://www.ibj.com/indiana-board-backs-schooltakeover-plans/PARAMS/article/29218>

The children of Indianapolis and Gary are now revenue-generating assets for Edison Learning, Inc., Charter Schools USA, and EdPower.

Voucher-eligible, Christian options in Gary only go to grade 8, so parents at Gary Roosevelt High School will have to stick with Edison Learning, Inc. Those retrograde folks who still believe in community-driven, public interest activity will just have to get with the program and accept their new corporate overlords.

Baird Jackson, J. (2011, August 30). *Enclosure: "Private companies will take over five public schools in Gary and Indianapolis"* Retrieved from

<http://jasonbairdjackson.com/2011/08/31/enclosure-private-companies-will-take-over-five-public-schools-in-gary-and-indianapolis/>

As other examples, he cited the use of educational management organizations or EMOs, contract schools, state payment for students in residential treatment facilities and the state's College Opportunity Fund, known as COF.

EMOs, which can be for-profit or not-for-profit, contract with a district or charter school to provide services. In some cases, an EMO provides virtually all of a school's operations. An example is K-12 Inc., a Virginia-based company that contracts with the board of the online Colorado Virtual Academy charter school to provide that school's administrative staff, curriculum and technology.

Mitchell, N. (2011, August 5). *Ruling soon on Dougco vouchers*. Retrieved from <http://www.ednewscolorado.org/2011/08/05/22533-ruling-next-week-on-dougco-vouchers>.

A recent article from eSchoolNews highlights partnerships between schools and education publishers to create customized curriculum—one that caters to specific populations by using targeted materials rather than generic plans and texts—to make students' educational experience more relevant.

Pearson can modify an existing curriculum to meet local needs, or they can develop curriculum from the ground up with the help of administrators and teachers.

Customizing readings and curriculum to a school's specific students provides potential for more engagement and interest, and gets away from the one-size-fits-all standardized textbooks and workbooks...

Williams, C. (2011, June 18). *Customized Curriculum via Public-Private Partnership*. Retrieved from <http://www.learningfirst.org/customized-curriculum-public-private-partnership>

A private Christian school in Glendale violated the Arizona Consumer Fraud Act when it teamed up with a public charter school to teach its classes while also accepting tuition payments from parents unaware of the arrangement.

Read more: <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2011/07/19/20110719joy-christian-school-settles-fraud.html#ixzz1WdIR9k2r>

Kossan, P. (2011, July 19). *Glendale private school settles over charter partnership*. Retrieved from <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2011/07/19/20110719joy-christian-school-settles-fraud.html>

It's an urban school that has shown marked success, especially when compared with others in the district: 82 percent of its students graduate, 92 percent of its first graduating class in 2006 went to college, and today, 94 percent of TechBoston graduates are in college – the first in their families to attend college, for 85 percent of them.

The school is a model of private-public partnerships, working closely with a local teacher residency program and numerous business partners, including Microsoft, Google, Cisco, and IBM. Created through a collaboration between the Boston Public Schools, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Boston Foundation, this "pilot school" enjoys much more flexibility than most public schools, including the ability to have a longer school day and year. Pilot schools are part of a Boston program that allows certain schools freedoms similar to charter schools, though still run by the district and staffed with union employees.

Paulson, A. (2011, March 8). *How can US schools reinvent themselves? Look at TechBoston, Obama says*. Retrieved from <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Education/2011/0308/How-can-US-schools-reinvent-themselves-Look-at-TechBoston-Obama-says>

The following is one of the most substantiating of reports on EMOs or Educational Management Institutions. It is 110 pp. long and is MOST revealing:

Defining Education Management Organizations:

"We define an education management organization, or EMO, as a private organization or firm that manages public schools, including district and charter public schools. For-profit EMOs are <http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/EMO-FP-09-10> **2 of 110** businesses that seek to return a profit to the investors who own them. A contract details the terms under which executive authority to run one or more schools is given to an EMO in return for a commitment to produce measurable outcomes within a given time frame."

Molnar, A., Miron, G., and Urschel, J. L. (2010, December). *Profiles of For-Profit Education Management Organizations, Twelfth Annual Report – 2009-2010*. Retrieved from: <http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/EMO-FP-09-10.pdf>

An estimated 1.5 million American youth participate in online education today.

The 2012 federal budget has specially allocated \$26.8 billion for such "reform-oriented competitive initiatives" including \$372 million for charters.

Hanover, N. (2011, September 1). *Outsourcing Education: The Rise of Virtual Schools*. Retrieved from: <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2011/sep2011/virt-s01.shtml>