

The Education Professionals

In recent times, education has increasingly become dominated by highly trained professional educators and administrators. There are now a slew of professionals that know how to teach, how to run a school, how to comply with volumes of legal text, how to budget for a school properly, and also what is important to teach. Our universities produce volumes of education research papers, and teachers must undergo far more continuous learning requirements than any other profession. And yet, our national academic scores keep plummeting. When half the nation can not read at 8th grade level after 13 years spent in one of the most expensive education systems in the world, there is enough blame to go around.

Clearly, the professionalism we are investing in as a nation does not produce the outcomes we want. For what every reason, it is no longer rational to continue down this path of what may be over-educating teaching and administration professions. Forcing teacher to ever-increasing levels of certifications and qualifications limits the pool of job-seekers, but seem to have no affect on the students themselves.

Through this transition to professionalism, the community and families are now completely left out of these processes and decisions. The community may well have opted out, happy to hire professionals to do a job for them. Unfortunately the outcomes are not as expected.

It is true that there are curriculum review boards for local school district, where parents volunteer to review curricula and make recommendations. And yet, the curricula is always pre-filtered to those choices which meet standards that are set by other agencies, written by highly educated professionals.

It is also true that parents can run for school board, and thereby have an influence on the operations of the school. There may be a few examples where a few highly-dedicated school board members are able to transform a school with very poor academic achievement into a high achieving school. The challenge is that there are just too many different stakeholders involved in a public school for that one parent, no matter how dedicated, to make a real and tangible difference on the school board.

Our institutions have grown far too complex over time, too calcified with regulations, too enamored with education expertise and too reliant of standards to deliver exceptional education. The only path forward is to restore the responsibility of education to the primary stakeholders, the families who seek their children to be educated.

The education professionals are not doing their job, but the blame may well lie at the feet of the community who has become conspicuously absent in the education of their children. And instead of taking on the weight of responsibility, we have enjoyed turning the education system into an adversary, and perhaps even a punching bag. To train up children in the way they should go, is fundamentally the responsibility of the family.

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