
Reaction and Resolution: Response to Dowhower

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I have mixed feelings about Sarah's excellent paper. On the one hand, she identifies a problem that apparently exists in the schools she sampled; on the other hand, excellent teaching of reading and writing does exist in many schools.

Her data are collected by college students still rather wet behind their proverbial ears, with no proof provided as to the accuracy of their perceptions, while at the same time no opportunity is given to cooperating teachers to express their perceptions of the future teachers.

These feelings/reactions do not in any way detract from Sarah's fine study, in that they go beyond its present scope and point the way to the future.

Along the way we might consider the following in light of the fact that, in general, the best teaching tends to occur in elementary schools, the next best in secondary schools, and the worst in colleges/universities.

- Colleges and universities can improve teaching by increasing contact with excellent elementary and secondary school teachers through exemplary inter-exchange programs, such as the one in Boulder, CO.
- Conferences, workshops, and publications can be developed to encourage the exchange of ideas between and among teachers, principals, and professors.
- Students in elementary and secondary schools, and in colleges and universities often make thoughtful comments to improve education

when invited to do so in small groups and panels. (Some schools invite elementary and secondary school students to participate on textbook-selection committees.)

· Mechanisms for school teachers/principals to inform college professors/researchers instead of the other way around can be built into the educational network.

When all else fails, schools/colleges/universities might consider the creation of The Loyal Opposition, a small group of teachers/professors whose responsibility it is to ask relevant questions about the educational rationales for decisions/actions of the administration—similar to the important responsibility of the Official Loyal Opposition, the party that receives the second highest number of votes, which is an integral part of the governments of Israel as well as Canada and other countries in the British Commonwealth.

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