ROSE|
MANAGEMENT

Systemic Transformation:
Quality Choice within 21ˢᵗ Century American High Schools

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Quality Choice within 21st Century American High Schools

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We come together in an absolutely historic time in which we can transform public education in our country.

- Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

Investing in Choice AND Pride

The Obama administration has allocated a great deal of financial resources to "fix" failing schools via Title One. Infusion of resources led us to examine possibilities offered for education in America. This *Race to the Top* piqued our interest at Rose Management Group. School districts would be motivated to look for change that will last, regardless of what that means to the current way of doing the business of schooling. Now, states and school districts feel a real need for systemic change. Obama and Duncan's *Race to the Top* is the new challenge to obtain a share of the Title One allocations. This Race offers us an opportunity to release what is **the** most promising reform that can be used in a turnaround, transformation or restart. In fact, it will work for all high schools, failing or not!

The Rose Operating System for Education® (R.O.S.E.®) has been developed in our three charter high schools, the Rose Academies, in Tucson, Arizona, for 10 years now. R.O.S.E.® has proven to be successful as a systemic approach that gives choice to the parent-student customer, while maintaining compliance with all federal and state requirements. In addition, R.O.S.E.® pushes the envelope of educational methodologies.

 Charter high schools in Tucson and Pima County, Arizona, find themselves in a highly competitive educational marketplace with districts and other charter high schools. Leaking a trade secret is like shooting yourself in the foot at the OK Corral; something you just don't do here out west! Yet, Obama's Race offers us, an Educational Management Organization (EMO), an irresistible opportunity to shoot

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Rose Management Group is a for-profit Educational Management Organization (EMO) that serves the three Rose Academies in Tucson, Arizona.

The Rose Operating System for Education® (R.O.S.E.®) is a solution available for **all** citizens in our democracy.

ourselves in the foot, or expand into a broader, open educational marketplace. National investment in educational success merits the risk of helping our competition stay in business. And competition is keen. One of the charter schools right here in Tucson is enjoying *2 Million Minutes*, not just 15 seconds, of fame, as it offers a 'model' that has its basis in European education. Yet, the most recently posted Arizona Report Card for the "model" school reveals the only ethnicity as white, no students with disabilities, no Limited English Proficient students, and none that are economically disadvantaged.

In contrast, the Rose Academies use a system offering education to all citizens in our democracy. Our student demographics for 08-09 show diversity; in terms of ethnicity, family income level, even special needs. In addition, R.O.S.E. students include many learners ages 18 to 22, who continue schooling in hopes of achieving their high school diploma. With this in mind, we set out from our "red" state of Arizona to visit the state that is perhaps the "bluest" of the blue, the Illinois of Obama and Duncan.

In July, we visited a number of Illinois schools in Chicago and in East St. Louis. We conducted a fact-finding tour to see how our Rose Operating System for Education® could help high schools "turnaround" their failing status, perhaps by opening a Rose Academy in their district. We researched several schools, labeled as failing, in Chicago and in the suburbs, comparing demographics, test scores, teacher unions, and methods of education. Even though the data pointed to obvious failing outcomes, we were not convinced that draconian measures, ones that would make drastic change, wouldn't have

Community pride and educational choice can coexist.

Systemic change must include… pride, values, and goals of the community…

unintended consequences - of say, ripping the soul out of the community! As we drove south to visit the East Saint Louis School District, it became obvious that if a "turnaround,"* or "restart,"* as described by Secretary Duncan, was launched, the cure may be worse than the cause. The East St. Louis School District, all alumni, and the community have legendary pride in their sports and fine arts programs, as well as the Jackie Joyner-Kersey facility. A restart or turnaround would leave a huge void. Not only would there be a lack of available personnel for a restart or turnaround, but with the sole academic focus demanded by Title One requirements, there would be a chilling effect upon the possibility of resurrecting a community.

We had come to East St. Louis with the idea that we could start a charter school that would force choice onto the community. However, after touring the high schools and two existing charter schools, it was obvious that forcing change through choice would **not** solve the problem. Currently, the high school and alternative high school are in competition with two existing charter schools. The addition of another charter would siphon off more students from all four existing entities. Another competitor school would spiral into financial hardship for the ESL district and the two existing charters. Such action would further create division, not reform.

What is needed for East St. Louis, and other school districts with schools not meeting academic performance expectations, is the ability to build in more options for students. Instead of a using a charter school to force quality change, a winning solution is additive, add choice to

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*The USDE's definition of "turnaround" is - replace the principal and at least 50 percent of the staff and also adopt new or revised instructional strategies. The new leadership needs to consider extending the school day and year, offering social services, and recruiting, placing, and developing highly effective teachers.

*The USDE's definition of "restart" is - Close the school and re-open it under the management of a charter organization or an education management organization. The school must admit, within the grades it serves, all former students who wish to attend

Thinkstorming includes "What," "How," & "Why."

Thinkstorming is a structured way to think about innovation.

Thinkstorming is a step beyond brainstorming.

what gives a community its pride! Change could integrate true choice within the district by adding quality academics; yet, continue to offer what is working and a source of valuable, community pride. Transforming the traditional high school must wrap reform around what good is happening in the community. Pride and choice can coexist! A transformational method for academic success should build on existing sources of community pride. Quality high school education is the end goal of Title One, and well educated citizens are crucial for the future success of our democracy.

Comprehensive "transformation"* involves change in all facets of schooling, especially the **systems**. The systems of schooling that are critical to address include accountability systems, program systems, professional development systems, community linkage systems, and basic operational systems. Access to *Race to the Top* Title One funds requires work in these systems. Research and/or best practice on change confirms that lasting, comprehensive transformation must be systemic. Systemic change must include the pride, values, and goals of the community, school, administration, teachers, families, and students. When changing a system, policy makers and educators need to take thinking a step beyond brainstorming. States, communities and schools, can use R.O.S.E.® to *thinkstorm*, our method for innovative thinking, systemic educational solutions.

Systemic High School Transformation

One of Peter Senge's rules for systems thinking is that change always pushes back. No matter how hard you push for an organization to change, it will push back just as hard, virtually guaranteeing the *status quo* is maintained. Transforming a school with poor student academic outcomes

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* The USDE's definition of "transformation" is - "Implement a comprehensive transformation strategy that, at a minimum, replaces the school leadership and develops and rewards teacher and leader effectiveness; adopts comprehensive instructional programs; extends time for students and staff and offers community-oriented services; and provides operating flexibility and intensive support."

Change:

1. "what" people do;
2. "how" things are organized, or systems;
3. "why" we do what we do.

must go beyond instituting a scope of changes like a new principal, new books, computers, or even a mission for a world class education. **There must be in-depth change occurring as well.** Limiting change to a change in leadership will result in a push back from a different direction; a regression to the mean, the norm of doing school like it was always done. Change will be short term.

Change must be comprehensive in **scope and depth**. By "scope," we mean comprehensively identifying all that is needed to change from a high school that offers only one style of instructional delivery to one that offers choice. "Depth" of change refers to change in three levels of complexity; changes that must occur so that the *status quo* is overcome. These levels within the organization are:

1. changes in "what" people do;

2. changes in "how" things are organized or systems that hold everything in place; the systems that 'control' the culture, personnel, programs, and financial resources; and

3. changes in the organization's purpose - its mission, vision, goals; the "why" that sits behind, above, below, and underpins *why we do what we do*.

Change must address all three of these levels in order to become **systemic** change. If we change anything less, positive results would only be by chance, serendipity honed to its finest edge.

Clarifying the school's mission, and then putting a new curriculum in place to match the new vision, is **not** systemic change. Such reform is program driven and/or value driven. It fails to address "how" the intended change coordinates with existing or other planned programs

and personnel needs. How will accountability be determined, and reported among the many aspects present in any educational system? Without consideration of this second 'level' – the "how," systemic change is not likely.

Firing people and hiring new people is not systemic, either. Replacing teachers with "highly effective" teachers, or the principal with the "great" principal, is person-driven reform; not system driven. Person-driven reform relies solely upon finding the "right" people; it does not change the system. The problem with person-driven reform is obvious. We can have all the right people, but still fail. Change is doomed to fail because the systems in place corral people into acting OK, the way the system requires. Merit pay rewarding a teacher for student academic performance alone would be a good example. Just as rewarding poor teachers with pay raises for their longevity or a Master's degree does not lead to the desired outcome of "good" education for students; likewise, a teacher whose class of students perform well on standardized tests may, or may not, exhibit behaviors that are desirable for learners participating as citizens in a global, 21ˢᵗ century democracy.

Changing an accountability system is systemic; however, it, too, is incomplete until objectives are coordinated and adjusted to include all systems within the school. The Gates Foundation investment in teacher quality provides a current example:

> As part of its five-year, $500 million initiative to look at effective teaching methods, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will videotape 4,000 educators in selected U.S. school districts and analyze teacher practices against

Changing **how** instruction is delivered opens the opportunity for systemic change.

student performance. The foundation seeks "a fair, reliable, clear view of teacher effectiveness that both teachers and researchers can support and embrace," said the director of the foundation's education division. –ASCD SmartBrief, 9/3/2009

The Gates Foundation is looking for ways to reach the objective of teaching teachers how to teach. This massive effort seeks to find out what it takes to be a "good" teacher. Professional development and teacher education may adjust to produce "good" teachers who deliver instruction. The 'bad' ones either get better, or get out of teaching; yet, there does not appear to be consideration of changing the current system of education.

Changing *how* instruction is delivered opens the opportunity for systemic change. Electronic instruction that is engaging and creates flexibility for the student offers an alternative instructional delivery method. Adding this method to the current method would effectively create a systemic change in content delivery.

Creating change in one component of the system for 'doing school' requires change in other components of the system. Let's continue the teacher performance example. Teachers who deliver instruction would need an accountability system. Teachers who work with electronic delivery and provide one-on-one student support would need a very different system of accountability. Also, there might need to be accountability for those who provide a combination of the two instructional delivery methods.

The best of both worlds would be a high school creating real options for students. Such a system would offer the advantages of instructional delivery methods, the "Great Gates(by)" teacher and the one-on-one coach who supports electronically delivered coursework. Real choice would transform failing, and even non-failing, high schools. What a concept! Transform a conventional system of schooling into a system of choice, choice in how the learner is schooled. The Rose Operating System for Education® (R.O.S.E.®) provides transformational change that is systemic!

The Role of the Teacher in Systemic Transformation
The school's mission has power to set educational goals; yet, the systems in place within the school often determine success in achieving desired outcomes. The school's systems, how the high school "does its business," affect teaching within that school. **Understanding the role of the teacher is very important for systemic change in schools**. (The Gates Foundation research is attempting to find out what makes good teaching, but they may be videotaping the trees, not seeing the forest's ecosystem.) The school's mission may seem less of a priority for teachers once the classroom door closes. The reality of 30, 40, or more students, five to six times a day, sets in for a classroom teacher! Teachers address this reality within what is possible given the parameters of the classroom, curriculum, student placement, school disciplinary practices and promises. Teachers have to work with what they have, and don't have.

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Good Teaching

delivers quality content instruction;

makes connections that relate content, concepts, & ideas;

coaches students to learn how to learn (H_2L).

A teacher's role is complex. Teaching can be grouped into three major skill sets. To teach a class of students, a teacher must have sufficient skills to:

- consistently deliver instruction in a manner that engages students,
- make meaningful connections for students that vividly relate new to old content, concepts, and ideas, and
- make meaningful connections for students to learn how to learn (H_2L) so as to become life-long learners.

Of these three, the skill of delivering instruction well is the most emphasized by those in education, as well as those outside of education. Most of us were fortunate enough to encounter a teacher with solid command of this skill. Unfortunately for many teachers (and students), lack of this content delivery skill results in classroom management issues. When classroom management becomes a primary challenge, the two remaining teaching skills - making connections and learning how to learn (H_2L) - are not possible.

Many individuals, who want to teach, do not demonstrate engaging content delivery skills. Many traditional public schools do not have a majority of teachers with artistic instructional delivery. When asked what is the biggest challenge to teachers in public education, often the answer is discipline and classroom management. The resulting professional development for teachers and administrators often addresses student behavior and motivation, rather than developing each teacher's ability to perform as professional content delivery artists. Professional development usually addresses the *symptoms* of poor

content delivery. There is a lack of focus upon the true nature of the problem, the delivery *system*. When students are faced with a boring lesson and a well-meaning, but unskilled, teacher who lacks a support system, education is derailed in learning how to make connections and becoming a lifelong learner as one who knows H_2L.

Effective instruction not only requires the knowledge of the content being taught, but even more importantly, requires the skills and talents of a performing artist when teaching five or six classes a day so that the students behave, engage, and learn. Teaching those five or six classes a day also requires teaching specific content repetitively with the same emphasis, as well as covering the entire breadth of the lesson for each class during the day. It may not be readily apparent, but the typical high school teacher wants to begin anew the next day at the same starting point for each class. If teachers are not successful doing this, they have six classes doing different things. A possible result is some students not getting to the end of the book, or series of lessons, for that school year.

Now, an entire class of students has fallen behind covering the necessary content. Not completing expected content could prove disastrous for students who must pass high stakes tests like state standards tests for No Child Left Behind. Because other subject areas rely upon skills taught in an English or mathematics class, the student falls further behind. The following year, the teacher who serves these students will be forced into the same cycle of failure. Such a cycle and failing system disenfranchises - those who drop out, and also those who may stick with it and pass, but ultimately not learn anything. The cycle of failure doesn't just affect the student and teacher; it affects the entire

high school. The high school is assigned a failing label. Then, the community is impacted. The community doesn't attract business or more people. Property values decrease.

In the field of education, there are numerous ways to address disparity of skills among students in their content knowledge for core subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. A common solution is to have students, based upon their grades and test scores, placed by "ability." This is usually referred to as "tracking." During the past century, research and best practice show that tracking has led to little success for the "slow and even "advanced" student groupings. Also, tracking has been a source of much litigation in education.

Another current solution is called differentiated instruction. "The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum."* This approach requires some very sophisticated training, planning and implementation skills on the part of the teachers and administration. It still requires the teacher to be a talented performing artist, who is capable of consistent performances five to six times a day - all year long. Furthermore, this attempt to individualize instruction still doesn't address the quality of instruction delivered to large, small, or individualized student groupings. How easy it is to become disengaged from learning!

Some students can listen to a less than artful delivery of content during the bulk of their school day, somehow be motivated enough to become engaged in instruction, and earn passing marks. Students, who can't make the necessary intrinsic jump to become engaged, manifest their decision by

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* Hall, T., Strangman, N., & Meyer, A. (2003). Differentiated instruction and implications for UDL implementation. Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum. Retrieved [insert date] from http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstructudl.html

A teacher, who is a skillful educator, can help students make connections.

An educator, who is an artful coach, can help students create ways to learn "how to learn" (H$_2$L) for themselves.

disrupting the class, or not showing up. Student disengagement leads to teacher disengagement.

A student's ability to learn is conditioned by a number of things, further affecting the delivery of instruction in any system of schooling. Yet, the initial delivery of instructional content is not an end in itself; rather it provides the starting point. A teacher, who is a skillful educator, can help students make connections. An educator, who is an artful coach, can help students create ways to learn "how to learn" (H$_2$L) for themselves.

An educator; who helps students connect new and old ideas, skills, and concepts; is critical. **Connections give content meaning**. The ability to make connections is typically overlooked in ongoing professional development because higher order thinking is held hostage by the pressing need to have students on task during the delivery of content instruction. If a teacher didn't get through in an engaging manner and maintain the students' attention while laying out the content of the lesson, chances are slim for the teacher to help students make connections for growth in ideas. Student inattention, misbehavior, and apathy decrease proportionately to the effectiveness and engaging qualities displayed during the delivery of the instructional content.

Just as the second key teaching ability is usually dependent upon engaging and fun content delivery; likewise, is the **third key ability**, coaching students to learn *how* to learn. Helping students learn how to learn has swung with the pendulum of American educational fads over the past 30 years; however, it still undergirds the most important aspects

21st century learning initiatives culminate with the importance of learning how to learn, being innovative, being creative.

of thinking and learning. Teaching H$_2$L as a subject matter is similar to helping students learn how to grow their fishing business, rather than teaching them how to fish or simply giving them a fish. 21st century learning initiatives culminate with the importance of learning how to learn, being innovative, being creative. H$_2$L gives students a competitive edge in our 21st century world, and it can be taught**!**

H$_2$L is an intelligence ability that can be grown; it is a true yardstick to measure growth that generates growth. H$_2$L is the future of intelligent education; yet, poor instructional delivery holds it hostage for many students.

Some students do well in the "traditional" system of classroom instruction. They succeed despite boring or poor presentations. But a significant percentage of students need an individualized, self-paced delivery of instruction, where the teacher's role is now that of an educator and coach. Transforming the current traditional high school system of classroom instruction into one that includes individualized, self-paced, instructional delivery allows the proper use of teacher talents. Professional development can now focus on all three of the teaching skills a teacher should have, without losing students along the way. Such a transformation in understanding the role of teaching has the added value of keeping what is good and working well for a number of students, rather than potentially losing it in a 180 degree turnaround, as outlined in the new Title One requirements.

Turnaround the Problem:

The problem is systemic, *how* content is delivered and *how* people are professionally developed into teachers, educators, and coaches.

Change the System

The problem is a **systemic** need for professional development that focuses upon the three key teaching abilities <u>plus</u> providing students with an alternative method for content instruction. This perspective, the need for systemic transformation goals, leads to an understanding of the real problem. It is the *system* of schooling that keeps the players playing the same old game. The problem should not be reduced to the misconception that all blame should fall upon 'poor personnel.'

We have turned around our understanding of the problem. The problem is systemic, *how* content is delivered and *how* people are professionally developed into teachers, educators, and coaches. A systemic transformation plan for high school addresses:

- engaging instructional delivery,
- connections to meaning, and
- H_2L.

Now, there is solid hope for a quality, 21ˢᵗ century high school. Choice is built in the system for this new high school model, transforming the traditional high school model into a systemic transformation model that matches the needs of more students to the abilities of teachers.

R.O.S.E.®

- An innovative blended approach for instructional delivery
- Professional development that grows teachers to make connections for learners as they learn *how to learn*
- Systems approach

R.O.S.E.® as Systemic Transformation Model

R.O.S.E.® is the Rose Operating **System** for Education®. As a **System**, R.O.S.E.® offers a transformation approach to high schools that could keep what is working while addressing the problems of what doesn't work in current, traditional systems.

R.O.S.E.® is a cohesive, comprehensive system of growth for students, an institution, and the community. In contrast to an acclaimed charter 'model' that offers exclusionary enrollment and is only available to students who can perform in the existing educational system, R.O.S.E.® is inclusionary and scalable, applicable in various communities.

R.O.S.E.® is an innovative blended* approach for instructional delivery, combining individualized electronic content delivery with effective people who are teachers, educators, and academic coaches. A R.O.S.E.® education is self-paced; yet not self-taught.

R.O.S.E.® provides professional development that grows individuals as content teachers who educate by making connections and coach learners to learn *how to learn* (H_2L).

R.O.S.E.® offers a systems approach to high schools wanting to transform and use their financial resources with 30% more efficiency.

The *Race to the Top* is this generation's opportunity to make a giant leap for education in the United States. R.O.S.E.® would like to be part of the steps, both large and small, that schools, districts, and states take as they participate.

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* "Blended" instruction – combining elements of online and face-to-face instruction – has a larger advantage relative to purely face to face instruction or instruction conducted wholly online. *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies*, (2009), U.S. Department of Education, http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/ppss/reports.html#edtech.