



IN THIS ISSUE

If you will just give me your children...

April 9, 2012 | Issue #511

A special thank you to all of the AgEnders who have worked tirelessly to bring UN Agenda 21 and ICLEI out of the closet.

Education is Key... So let's get directly to the point...

The problem is the content of the curriculum. No amount of money, No choice, no voucher will do anything to fix anything as long as the curriculum stays the same. The curricula are written by people who want to destroy America. You are seeing the results. Lies, Lies, Lies

Obama Lies, why would you accept a liar as a role model for your children or President?

Apply what you read below. This concept was used on all children. When I taught in the Ghetto in Brooklyn and the Bronx, I taught math in JHS to the slower classes. I learned that every child has something they excel, once you find their passion, you can teach anything successfully

Today's lie: It is not important to learn English. What you are not

AGENDER **JOTS**

Join Karen Schoen and
Guest Roger Gangitano,
United West, Act For
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Tuesday April 10
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told is that English is the language of Business. If you can not read contracts, laws and regulations, you are a slave to your interpreter and the government. Welcome to communism. The children in these failing socialist schools have grown up to become your legislators and educators. Many teachers can not read and write proper English.

The only way someone can have power over you is if you give it to them. **STOP** accepting mediocrity. Have you noticed that the spelling of exceptionalism always come up as misspelled.

Demand a traditional American education. If you are interested in education solutions, contact me: Karen Schoen
info@agenda21today.com

Has Constructivism Increased Special Education Enrollment in Public Schools?

Thank you Niki
By Nakonia (Niki) Hayes, nakonia69@saxonmathwarrior.com

As a teacher and administrator for 28 years, I rebelled against the disastrous fad of constructivism that began in the 1980's. While its drumbeaters declared it was a higher form of intellectualism, it didn't seem all that "intelligent" to me. Frankly, I thought it would help create failures among all groups of students—regular, special, and gifted.

For those who don't know what "constructivism" is, it is an educational theory that, in practice, looks like this in America's classrooms:

It is students from kindergarten through high school "discovering" their own answers by using manipulatives, working in groups, contriving "real world" problems through "project-based" activities, moving and talking -a lot, and surviving in a hierarchy of those students who can lead and those who must follow according to their skills.

It is lots of colorful, jazzy pictures in books and on classroom walls that show many different ethnic groups, women, with gender-neutral stories, and with child-directed activities that only require teacher "facilitation." Children rule the day.

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It is feminized instruction that supports the goal of public education to provide egalitarianism or equity, especially to girls and minorities. That's the priority placed over building excellence, since excellence smacks of cognitive exceptionalism. That ability is not appreciated nor encouraged where equity is to be the norm in classrooms.

It ridicules practice and repetition as "drill and kill" and believes anything that requires memorization is a waste of time that should be used for "creative" thinking.

It focuses on process, not results. "Process" is the actual "product" of learning.

It believes that if students are having fun, according to perceived "learning styles," they will like going to school and they will learn the academics they need to prepare for the world of work.

No one will ever be able to determine how many hundreds of thousands of children, who came from dysfunctional, even chaotic, home environments and who entered the constructivist classroom with its lack of boundaries, no right or wrong answers, and the expectation to "discover" their own answers, were shuffled from the "feel-good, tolerant, and fun system" into special education programs. For some strange reason, these kids were declared "discipline" problems. Perhaps if they had been given structure and safety based on routines that established boundaries, along with consistency from adult leaders who taught them about individual responsibility, they would have learned the hidden "rules" of school. What they also deserved was the power that comes from learning proven strategies, true results every time, and a respect for the academic giants who came before them and developed universal lessons from diverse cultures.

Although I had taught journalism, English, and art for several years in the 1960's and 1970's, I returned to education in the 1980's as a special education teacher after working 17 years in journalistic fields. I came to realize that half of my students should not have been placed in that program. Those students were there because of cultural deprivation and poor curricula, not because of organically-

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caused learning disabilities. Then through the 1990's and until my retirement in 2006, I taught regular (traditional) math in grades six through twelve in mostly high-risk schools, was a middle school and high school counselor, and a K-12 principal in two very different school districts: One was an Indian reservation and the other in Seattle with a predominantly white, upper-middleclass population. No matter what the environment, however, I learned that my special education training was invaluable with all groups of learners.

For example, many exhibited, even if not diagnosed, the characteristics of ADHD, dyslexia, and SLD (specific learning disabilities). My under-performing gifted kids were in a separate category, although some states do put them under "special education."

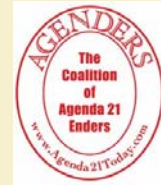
ADHD

This condition is apparent from birth and must be seen in at least two different environments, not suddenly after one month in kindergarten or shifts to the new puberty-driven warehouse of education called "middle school." (A sixth grade teacher once asked me, "When do we get to call it just 'bad behavior'?")

Nonetheless, for those who were diagnosed with ADHD, and those who weren't but who were as inattentive and wiggly, I used the same techniques:

- Act, don't yak. The more you talk to an ADHD student, the more he gets lost. That includes working in group projects.
- Assign them to men teachers, if possible, because men are usually more goal-driven and less talkative. ADHD students want to know the bottom line.
- If you want to change behavior, change the academics. Make lessons and teaching structured, short, and frequently rewarded. (Even one sticker works.)
- Keep wall decorations to a minimum. One big, interesting poster is great for discussion and focus. Forget all the ceiling mobiles, color-drenched walls, etc.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

So, since we all got familiar with Agenda 21 and we decided we would expose it far and wide, they decided to rename it, as the Communists do with everything once they are caught red handed. Now, they call it Millennium Development Goals.

- Give students permission to move their bodies, whether to lie on the floor, sit on a rotating stool, or stand at a bookcase as they write. The more they are in movement with others, however, they can become agitated as they “lose” their direction and perspective on what’s happening.

- In essence, be clear, direct, and honest (no phony praise). They’ll love you for it.

Dyslexia

While there are no studies to prove it, many of us in education believe the “whole language” fad of the 1980’s helped exacerbate a learning condition called dyslexia. This is an organic auditory problem where a child cannot hear the correct sounds of letters. Phonemic and spelling books were closeted during the 1980’s because they were considered too mechanical and boring in their purpose. Instead, children were to be exposed to great literature and discuss their own “personal” stories. (This made learning more “relevant” to them.) Somehow, they would absorb the rules of grammar and spelling. Instead, we produced a generation who could not spell, write simple sentences, and read. It was like teaching children to play the piano by ear rather than by learning the sounds of the notes and requiring practice to master those sounds. Since students weren’t taught phonics from a good phonemic awareness curriculum, they couldn’t read. They were then labeled “dyslexic” and shuffled to remediation/special education programs.

Most dyslexics, like ADHD students, reveal a high intelligence once they get past their processing “disability.” Interestingly, constructivists claim to focus on “processing.” Yet they have disdain for concrete, precise, and universal strategies that help correct episodic processing deficiencies.

Specific Learning Disabilities

When special education students are included in regular classrooms, they need structure, consistent rules and expectations, a sense of safety given by regular routines, and teacher-directed learning. This is not the atmosphere found in constructivist classrooms. Of course, the dynamics of a carefully selected, mixed ability classroom can indeed work with an organized and talented teacher.

If you teach your children not to lie,
WHY DO YOU ACCEPT LIES FROM OBAMA?

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THE MOST

There are such teachers out there for mixed classrooms. Mostly, there are not because there are few "carefully mixed" classes.

Special Note: The move in 1989 by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) to bring equity to girls and minorities in math classrooms meant a giant move toward feminization of mathematics instruction. This would be a major blow to boys since the majority of special education placement was already for male students, particularly those with ADHD diagnoses. The NCTM president in 1996 explained in a radio interview that girls and minorities couldn't learn math like "white males." The 2,000-year-old discipline of mathematics, created by diverse cultures around the world, was now pronounced as destructive to girls and minorities. Its "traditional" approach of linear thinking, practice, and memorization of multiplication tables, was only learnable by white boys (and Asians).

This meant new materials and methods would avoid any "traditional" teaching methods. Basic skills that required memorization (which helps build memory capacity) were also seen as unnecessary because students could use calculators and computers for short term expediency. The result has been a hatred for math among all "sub-groups" of students, a \$4 billion private tutoring industry mostly for math, and an unyielding failure rate of American students entering advanced math and science studies.

Under-Performing Gifted Students

The push for egalitarianism was also designed to ignore exceptional, or gifted, students. The all-inclusive classroom where special ed students were blended with regular and gifted students produced another fad called "differentiated learning." This is a teacher's nightmare to plan. It is, therefore, usually an unproductive environment for most students.

In the inclusive classroom, a teacher ends up focusing on the neediest children because that is the goal for egalitarians. The regular and gifted students are considered able to fend for themselves. They aren't. They lose academic opportunities and growth. And they lose their patience, as most humans do when their needs are continually dismissed or openly ignored. A gifted student will shut down as much as any special ed student because he hasn't learned basic and general strategies on how to approach a solution. Neither one wants to look dumb. "Better to be thought

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that way than prove it," they say.

One of the saddest stories I heard was from Dr. Ruby Payne, who conducts professional development training for teachers who work with students and adults from poverty. She explained that third grade African American boys who showed signs of giftedness were often labeled "emotionally disturbed" and placed in special education. (ADHD children's symptoms also mirror those of gifted children.) Part of that problem resulted from not knowing how to measure giftedness outside of scores on math and reading tests. Another part was in seeing giftedness as exceptionalism and that was to be downplayed. These children then became under-performing or major disciplinary problems as their own needs, often ones that saw them wanting to work alone, weren't met in the highly interactive, noisy, motion-filled classrooms designed, teachers thought, to meet lower-performing students' needs (girls and minorities, except Asians).

Summary

For almost three decades, I personally saw that when children were given explicit, step-driven instruction with consistent consequences of positive results, along with direct teacher support, they learned their required academics no matter what their gender, race, economic status, or intelligence level. This methodology has now been proven according to an article published this month in the American Federation of Teachers' magazine, American Educator (<http://www.aft.org/pdfs/americaneducator/spring2012/Clark.pdf>).

I therefore believe the radical and destructive implementation of constructivist ideology in education has increased the numbers of students in public schools being labeled "special education" or in the development of characteristics of special needs students.

It is unlikely that anyone can ever tally the unbelievable human and financial costs of education fads in America, with constructivism being the Big Daddy of them all. Education decision-makers grabbed onto unproven and unproductive methods with which they trained and evaluated teachers. Government entities like the National Science Foundation and U.S. Department of Education pumped almost \$100 million into the new, unproven curricula and training materials in the 1990's alone. Private businesses and more non-state government groups are now getting into the picture. Billions of dollars are at stake today, yet no one acknowledges the

importance of weak and incoherent curricula on teacher training. Meanwhile, the same members of the leadership circle that have brought American students to their knees are still in charge. The question is "Why?"

Since removal of those leaders seems impossible, local districts can at least offer parents a choice within each school: Do they want their child to follow traditional, explicit curricula or that of the constructivist/reform model? Just once, it would be great to hear an honest answer as to why this can't be done. And it's not about money.

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Karen Schoen, AgEnder

info@agenda21today.com

"All that it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." - Edmund Burke

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