

Course: Secondary Education (8624)

Level: B.Ed (1.5 Years)

Semester: Autumn, 2018

ASSIGNMENT No. 2

Q.1 Discuss the short comings of internal and external exnation and certification system at secondary level in Pakistan.

Answer:

Public examinations are conducted in many countries of the world and have been considered to play a significant role in determining what goes on in the classroom in terms of 'what' and 'how' teachers teach and students learn, and can have an impact on both teaching and learning (Gipps, 1994 & 1996 in Little and Wolf; Black, 1998; Greaney and Hasan 1998; Mirza, 1999; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Kellaghan and Greaney 2001). Gipps (1994) suggests that the major purpose of assessment is to support the teaching and learning process, but some forms of assessment can clearly impede deep learning (Rehmani, 2000 a). If the examination stresses understanding and critical approaches to learning, it is likely that students would adopt deep approaches to learning (Entwistle, 1993; Marton, Dalla'Alba, & Beaty, 1993; Marton & Saljo, 1984 in Marton et al (ed. 1997). Due to the socio-cultural norms and authoritarian attitudes of parents, teachers and elders in Pakistan, children in general are emotionally and psychologically suppressed. They are expected to be passive and blindly obedient which leads to a lack of confidence in them. School culture loads them with lots of homework and poor quality of teaching forces them to take private tuition in addition to formal schooling. Learning, especially in public schools, is mostly curriculum-based and teacher-centered.

Children tend to do better in subjects requiring rote memory but do poorly on basic comprehension and understanding. Moreover, the concepts in textbooks are often at a much higher level than the cognitive level of the children for which the books have been written, leaving pupils no choice but to rote-learn them (Hayes, 1987; National Education Policy, 1992; Report on National Textbook Conference, 1994; Warwick and Reimers, 1995; Farooq, 1996) Public examinations in Pakistan have more demerits than merits. A number of issues related to the examination system have been discussed here which need to be addressed to improve the quality of teaching and learning and education as a whole.

Education Monitor Assessment System in Pakistan: Consideration of quality, effectiveness and use', was launched by the Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE).

The report covered primary, secondary and higher secondary levels of the examination system in detail.

The report said that almost all of the BISE, which deals with secondary and higher secondary examination, lack technical and professional staff with skills to effectively design and score examinations and analyse the data generated.

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"All paper development and scoring activities are outsourced and research staff is virtually nonexistent. Paper setters, head examiners, and examiners are public school teachers with considerable experience either from secondary schools or colleges with appropriate subject specialization," the report said.

The report said that paper setters are typically selected from an existing pool, and the recruitment criteria across the BISE is similar – with some exceptions, such as the Karachi Board of Secondary Education (BSE) – where examiners must have five years teaching experience at the secondary level, along with the Bachelor of Education or a masters-level degree.

The BISE were established at a time when national education policies reflected a need to reform secondary education, and were envisioned to manage all the aspects of this stage – of which examinations were just one aspect.

The report noted the role of examinations in transforming teaching, and emphasised external and internal, school-based, exams. "The government chose to establish the BISE as statutory bodies, formed on the basis of an act authorized by the provincial legislatures," it said, and added that the BISE became solely associated with the function of organizing external examinations.

The report said the policies recognised the need to improve examination systems and institutions early on, and a task force appointed by the education ministry in 1985 noted the need for alignment between test content, curriculum objectives and teaching and learning processes.

It said the education policies of the 1990s sought to improve the capacity of examination staff, mechanise the process of preparing and declaring results, redo the format of examination papers to include objective type, short answer and essay type questions, and discourage rote learning.

The National Education Policy 2009 and the consequent education sector plans echoed many of these points in relation to assessments, and the police specifically discussed reducing differences in quality between examinations conducted by the BISE, reducing the number of such boards.

"Despite these policies there has been very little political will for reforming the BISE. At most, the emphasis has been on attempting to curtail cheating, while improving practices related to design and use of examination data remains outside the realm of efforts made," the report said.

The report also said development partners have provided virtually no support to the BISE. "The lack of such support is in large part due to the lack of attention paid to secondary education by development partners who have traditionally focused on the primary and elementary stages of education," it said.

The report argues that while the proliferation of all 28 boards has been justified by the increasing student population and the number of schools, given their mandate, this does not appear to be warranted. It says that, as the case of India indicates one board per state or province should be sufficient.

The report criticised the performance of the Inter-Provincial Committee of Chairmen, which consists of all the BISE chairmen. The IBCC is responsible for setting standards and ensuring uniformity in academic and evaluation standards amongst the BISE, among other duties. However, the report said that in practice, the committee does not play a significant role in setting standards or reviewing practices.

The report said intra-provincial committees such as the Punjab Board of Committee Chairmen make province specific decisions, such as those related to the choice of paper setters or the selection of examiners.

Following the 18th Amendment, these provincial bodies are supposed to expand their role, but they have not done so yet.

The report said the mandate of the BISE is beyond examinations, yet in practice their efforts are concentrated on organizing examinations at the secondary and intermediate levels. It said analysts and programmers can be found on the staff of some boards, but they do not work on data analysis.

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Q.2 Dicuss the importance of studying comparative eduation for prospective teachers. Highlight the main features of scondary education in United Kingdom.

Answer:

Historically, the field of comparative education grew from international Education which analyzes and fosters international orientation in knowledge and attitudes and brings together students, teachers and scholars from different nations to learn about and from each other (BAICES, 1973). However, comparative education itself refers to the study of various and often contrasting educational systems with a view of understanding the similarities and differences (University of Nairobi, 1993). It studies why educational systems (structure, organization, curricula and financing) and processes vary, and how education relates to wider social factors and forces. Likewise, BAICES (1973) defines comparative education as an academic and interdisciplinary subject which applies historical, philosophical and social

science theories and methods to classify and explain characteristics of different nations' educational system. The study has long based its insights on number of countries and case studies of national education systems.

Before 1950s, the study focused mainly on philosophical and cultural origins of national educational system (Carnoy and Rhoten, 2002). Today, the field of comparative education is moving towards more sophisticated examination in relation to economic, political and social forces (Arnové, 2008). Furthermore, Adick (1992) claims that, comparative education focuses much on explaining the diversity of development, processes of expansion and systematization of modern education in different countries. Bray (2007) emphasizes that, comparative educators are interested in examining the similarities and differences in the educational processes of various groups, the examination of the educational relationships obtained between the developed and developing areas.

Rationale of Studying Comparative Education

In actual fact, students in educational institutions are not prepared without the study of comparative education due to the following justifiable reasons. Comparative education provides reference for reforms. Through studying the educational systems of other countries we can discover which reforms are possible and desirable (University of Nairobi, 1993). In the 1990s, for example before adopting educational reforms for grade 7 and 8; China studied the reforms in Australia, England, Sweden, New Zealand and United States (Joong, et al, 2009). Before the reform, the Chinese educational curriculum demanded students to study the same material, memorizing text and writing examination. Therefore, China used the experience from those countries to implement the reform. In the same way, Argentina learned to Chile the decentralization reforms of Education and hence, adopted (Narodowski and Nores, 2001). Through this reference, it is essentially important for Tanzanian students to study comparative education for the same purposes. It is clear from this lesson that the education reforms in Tanzania follow the similar path.

The study helps students to improve the education in their home country. Comparative education helps students to acquire better understanding of education system of other countries and borrow some aspects for better improvement of education at home. Paige (2005) emphasizes that, comparative education contributes to the internalization of school curriculum and student learning experience, develop students' broader world views, cross-cultural and comparative analytical skills. Similarly, the study of comparative education helps students to make connection between the local and global, and the relationship between education, development and society.

Furthermore, comparative education help students to understand how educational systems are shaped by wealth, ideology, social cultural features of the country and impacts of globalization on education policy and practice in different regions and countries (Padavil, 2009). Narodowski and Nores (2001) maintain that, the last decades were largely characterized by the amount of content of the education policies developed worldwide due to the downfall of the USSR. Therefore educational policies in Latin America and other continents were dramatically altered to reflect changed economic policies. The Tanzania Education system is shaped by the ideology of socialism and self-reliance, thus all educational polices reflect the philosophy of education for self-reliance. Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) claim that, globalization is a force reorganizing the world's economy and the main resources for that economy are increasing knowledge and information. The global economy in turn shapes the nature of educational opportunities and institutions, thus, studying comparative education is very essential since it helps students in Tanzania and the world as whole to understand how economic, social cultural and ideological factors affect the education system in a particular nation/country.

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Q.3 Highlight the important feactures of Quaid-e-Azam's adress on 1st Education conference of Pakistan. Point out some gaps in the existing educational policy at secondary level in Pakistan?

Answer:

Quaid-e-Azam was a visionary leader having a deep insight and unrivalled vision for Pakistan on many fronts. He had a clear vision as to what sort of educational system we should have developed in our country. The Quaid believed that education was the key factor in

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safeguarding the national independence and moulding the character of a people. The system of education must be truly national in order to meet the needs and aspirations of the people in national education and here lies the only sure and permanent guarantee of national defence and national strength.

"You must concentrate on gaining knowledge and education. It is your foremost responsibility. Political awareness of the era is also part of your education. You must be aware of international events and environment. Education is a matter of life and death for our country."

— **Quaid-e-Azam Muahmmad Ali Jinnah**

Quaid-i-Azam Muahmmad Ali Jinnah attached great importance to education. He was convinced that education was the only effective means to liberate the masses and weld them into a strong nation and also to bring about social, political and economic development in the country. He was aware that under the political subjugation and servitude of the British, the character of the Muslims as a nation had been completely destroyed. They had lost respect for character, for knowledge and even for wealth, and were taught to respect nothing but power. Following is a brief analysis of Quaid's vision on education:

Pakistan Educational Conference, held in Karachi on 27th November, 1947

I am glad that the Pakistan Educational Conference is being held tomorrow in Karachi. I welcome you all to the Capital of Pakistan and wish you every success in your deliberations, which I sincerely hope will bear fruitful and practical results.

You know that the importance of education and the right type of education cannot be over-emphasized. Under foreign rule for over a century, in the very nature of things, I regret, sufficient attention has not been paid to the education of our people, and if we are to make any real, speedy and substantial progress, we must earnestly tackle this question and bring our educational policy and program on the lines suited to the genius of our people, consonant with our history and culture, and having regard to the modern conditions and vast developments that have taken place all over the world.

There is no doubt that the future of our State will and must greatly depend upon the type of education and the way in which we bring up our children as the future servants of Pakistan. Education does not merely mean academic education, and even that appears to be of a very poor type. What we have to do is to mobilize our people and build up the character of our future generations. There is immediate and urgent need for training our people in the scientific and technical education in order to build up future economic life, and we should see that our people undertake scientific commerce, trade and particularly, well-planned industries. But do not forget that we have to compete with the world, which is moving very fast in this direction. Also I must emphasize that greater attention should be paid to technical and vocational education.

In short, we have to build up the character of our future generations which means highest sense of honor, integrity, selfless service to the nation, and sense of responsibility, and we have to see that they are fully qualified or equipped to play their part in the various branches of economic life in a manner which will do honor to Pakistan.

Way Forward

The crying need of today is to study the foregoing advice by the Quaid and reform our educational system, which eventually will result in widespread prosperity in Pakistan. As the democratic government of Pakistan may be developing productive thoughts at the federal level and at the provincial levels, this piece can give to-the-point and crisp guidelines for -orientating our educational system to our advantage. Let us be committed to accomplishing this mission and revisiting our educational system and reform it in the light of his guidance as explained above.

Q.4 Why training is important for the professional grooming of the teachers? Highlight the issues regarding training through distance education in our level context.

Answer:

Teachers are the fulcrum of teaching-learning process. They are the catalyst to empower future generation with the skills that are required 10 years down the line. This implies that they need to understand and have those skills in them right now so as to inculcate them in

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students. This also means the teachers need to be groomed if they have these skills. Contrary to this fact, grooming of teachers in schools has not been skills-focused which means that we are not sure if they have those skills required for future building. Current grooming is majorly focused on different types of teaching methods and the teaching processes prescribed by the academic board. This in general has hindered the overall growth of the school as the current grooming does not empower teacher with the right skills.

In addition to this, schools generally spend close to 70% of their annual operational expenses on teacher salary. If teachers are not groomed on the right skills, they are may not able to bring required proficiency for the investment schools are making in them.

Teacher learning is a continuous process that promote teachers' teaching skills, master new knowledge, develop new proficiency, which in turn, help improve students' learning. Previous studies have indicated that when teachers are effective classroom managers, their students achieve at a higher level (Freiberg et al. 1995; Omoteso and Samudara 2011; Stronge et al. 2011; Stronge et al. 2008) and display more interest in the class subject matter (Kunter et al. 2007).

Classroom management is essential to both teachers' education and teachers' professional development, it is crucial to keep teachers knowledge up to date, so they can deliver high quality teaching (e.g., Emmer and Sabornie 2015; Pianta 1999). Interestingly, we know very little about teachers leaching, considering that, teachers themselves are experts in teaching and learning. My thesis explores this area, in order to shed a light on the problem of teachers' learning.

Classroom management influence student learning environment and student learning outcome

A growing body of research in classrooms has demonstrated that teachers do make a tangible difference in student achievement (Vescio et al. 2008; Ronfeldt et al. 2015). According to Vermont (2014), high quality teacher learning influences student-learning outcome as a result. Teachers must undergo cognitive and metacognitive learning processes in order to achieve learning outcome in the form of changed believes about their practice or, even better, change in behavior.

These processes are cognitive thinking activities that are used to process learning content, for example classroom management. Teacher outcomes in terms of improved knowledge and skills in a field of classroom management influence student learning environment and student learning outcome because of changed student learning processes (Vermut 2014).

According to Pianta and colleagues (2012), teachers should concentrate on emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support aspects of classroom interaction among teacher and students. To be able to do that, it requires that the teacher, possesses a certain set of knowledge and skills to understand how these three domains work, what difference they can make for a teacher in the classroom and why they are so important. It is a research proven knowledge that classroom interaction is a tool for any teacher, which will support him/her in any classroom situation.

Professional development should be implemented in teachers' schedules

Teachers with high quality teaching tend to do and find out more about their own craft, pushing out the boundaries of their learning and teaching, looking for the new topics and ways to teach. However, in order to achieve their maximum potential, ongoing professional development should be implemented in their schedules.

Teachers provided with proper training on up-to-date information and new research on classroom management, on emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more, could become a successful factor to their schools. The best professional development is ongoing, collaborative, and connected to and derived from working with students and understanding their culture (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017; Borko 2004).

My PhD thesis indicates a positive link between teacher learning in classroom interaction and student outcomes as perceived by the teachers themselves. Effective teacher learning and professional development is important for student achievement.

Challenges in Grooming the teachers

The current grooming that happens in school is not skill-focused. It is more focused on subject matter expertise, teaching methods, practices and processes prevalent in the school and for the academic board. They are all required; no doubt about it. But the result of this

limited scope is that the current grooming is not motivating or relevant enough to teachers because it is not mapped to their performance and accountability. It doesn't help in giving relevant feedback to teachers. It is also not mapped to teacher's salary and recognition. This is one of the biggest reasons why teachers don't generally participate actively in grooming programs. Due to this, despite spending lot of money and efforts, schools don't see the desired results coming out of the grooming programs.

There are certain other reasons why grooming is not effective. Teacher's age, their experience and cultural exposure in earlier school(s), their attitude towards teaching profession, aptitude, technology awareness, and awareness of their skill gap play a vital role on how effective a grooming program can be for a teacher. Since these aspects are not measured or considered before enrolling a teacher into a grooming program, the programs turn out to be ineffective.

Another reason is that most of the schools use one-size-fit-all-approach. The programs are designed with an assumption that a particular training/grooming is needed to all teachers. But the important aspect to consider here is that teaching-learning is very subjective and human-oriented. It is not a factory environment where most of the employees may need similar set of skills. Since it is a subjective and dynamic environment with a very wide age difference between the students and teachers, everyone's skills, motivations, needs, and way of working is different. To understand this and then identify the grooming needs, it is required to understand skill profile of each teacher and then only plan grooming for each teacher. If we do not do so, that would waste lot of time, money, and efforts of the school leader, teachers, and the school without any results.

Solutions in grooming the teachers

A fear that dominates school leader's mind and counters grooming efforts is – what if the teachers leave after all this grooming. However, what would be worse is that majority of them stay back without proper grooming and add very little to make the school better. School leaders must be pragmatic to ensure tangible contribution from teachers after their grooming and not to harbor the fear of them leaving.

To make grooming effective, schools need to focus on understanding teachers, where they are coming from, what skill-set they already have, what skill-set they may need, what would motivate them to be ready for grooming, and more importantly what the school needs at this time.

Understanding this and identifying the right skills to groom a teacher require measuring skill profile of teachers. Individual grooming of teachers requires patience, time, money, expertise, and efforts. Moreover, it requires authentic and scientific way of measuring skill profile of each teacher. Unfortunately, due to lack of time this is not happening in the current school system.

Some schools, however, establish the methods to measure such skills or they take a help of external experts to measure a battery of core teaching skills. Such external help, many a times save tremendous human efforts on the part of school. It also frees up time for school leaders to effectively and strategically implement teacher grooming programs.

Q.5 Explain some of the latest trends in the scndary level education. Highlight the importance of incoporating the computer and information technology in the curriculum of secondary level education in pakistan?

Answer:

The term *secondary school* refers to the levels of schooling that follow elementary school and conclude with high school graduation. Typically, these include middle schools or junior high schools, the most common configuration of which is grades six through eight, and high schools, the most common configuration of which is grades nine through twelve. The 1983 release of the National Commission on Excellence in Education document *A Nation at Risk* focused national attention on the need for school reform. This reform movement took clearer shape in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the introduction, by the first Bush administration, of America 2000, a list of goals for U.S. education to be achieved by 2000. America 2000 was later refined and renamed Goals 2000 by the Clinton administration. So began the standards movement, which evolved throughout the 1990s and was ultimately codified by President George W. Bush and the 107th Congress in the No Child Left Behind Act

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of 2001. This act sharpened the teeth of the standards movement with accountability measures in the form of "high-stakes" standardized tests that all students must take at various points in their education. It is against this backdrop of the standards, assessment, and accountability movements that secondary schools craft their reform efforts.

Standards

By the late 1990s nearly every state had developed standards for student achievement in most content areas. Greatest attention has been focused on "core" subjects, typically English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, but "elective" courses—foreign languages, music, and visual arts, for instance—have standards as well that drive the curriculum and instruction in those subject areas. The quantity and quality of content standards vary widely from state to state, though many content-area professional organizations have developed their own national standards to provide a benchmark for rigor and appropriateness of content-area standards. Many see the standards movement as the great contemporary revolution in U.S. education: No longer is middle level or high school credit granted solely on the basis of attendance. In theory, students would not be promoted or graduated until the standards were achieved.

Assessment

To assess standards achievement, most states had begun to develop standardized tests by the start of the twenty-first century. These efforts were spurred by the No Child Left Behind Act, which requires states to test every student periodically in certain secondary content areas. Like the standards themselves, the quality of assessments varies widely from state to state, and the implementation of mandatory standardized assessments has introduced several dilemmas and controversies:

- How do schools accommodate students with special needs and English language learners in the administration and reporting of test scores? These students are not exempt from tests, and principals and teachers struggle to find the most equitable way to honor their needs while not violating the integrity of the testing process and the value of the final results.
- Do standardized tests truly address the content standards? Many standards speak to higher-order thinking skills, and educators disagree on the capacity of paper-and-pencil multiple-choice tests—where one answer and only one answer is correct—to adequately gauge problem solving and critical thinking.
- How will test scores be used? Ideally, tests will provide a wealth of data that informs the instructional program of individual students and schools. Questions remain about the capacity of the assessment instruments to provide these data and about the professional capacity of school personnel to interpret the data for instructional decision-making.

Accountability

With standards and tests in place, most states have begun to implement or develop plans to implement accountability measures for performance on standardized tests. In most cases, students who do not achieve a required score on certain tests—usually in the core subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, though some states include foreign language and other elective courses—will not be promoted to the next grade. The accountability issue casts a brighter light on the above questions and introduces other issues:

- Retention versus promotion. Educators do not agree on the placement of a student who does not achieve a required score on standardized tests. Advocates of both student retention and student "social" promotion speak with the backing of practice and research, and the argument remains unsettled in education circles.
- Teaching to the test. With principals' and teachers' jobs on the line, many educators perceive a temptation to focus on test-taking skills and test preparation rather than to teach the curriculum the mastery of which the test is intended to assess. This controversy speaks to the perception of the quality of the assessment instruments many states use. If the tests were genuinely aligned with the standards, many educators believe, teaching to the test would not be an issue.

Many states also report each school's aggregate scores and encourage low-performing schools to develop improvement plans. School accountability was codified in the No Child Left Behind Act, which calls for schools to demonstrate "adequate yearly progress," as determined

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by disaggregated test scores in mathematics, reading, and science. Schools that fail to show adequate yearly progress must take required steps to improve, or they will eventually be subject to corrective procedures.

National, state, and local education reforms have produced many positive changes, but in middle level and high schools, reform is still lagging. Although secondary student achievement has increased in some subjects for some groups, progress has been spottier and success more elusive than at the elementary level. The nation still has a way to go to ensure that all students are graduated from high school with the knowledge and skills to compete in a global economy—a challenge that will become even greater as enrollments swell.

Powerful recommendations for transforming secondary schools have come from the National Association of Secondary School Principals, in their 1996 groundbreaking report on the twenty-first-century U.S. high school, titled *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution*; the Carnegie Foundation in their 1989 and 2000 *Turning Points* reports on middle-level reform; and other groups. But the renaissance has not yet happened. The majority of high schools "seem to be caught in a time warp," noted U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley in his 1999 back-to-school address, which he devoted entirely to high school reform.

The problem is not a lack of understanding about what needs to be done. Across the country, secondary schools are demonstrating what a difference it makes when effective strategies are combined with strong commitment and adequate resources. But, regrettably, secondary school improvement has not been a high priority of the U.S. Congress or the states. Secondary schools are far less likely than elementary schools to receive funds under the Title I program, the largest source of federal K-12 aid. Seventy-seven percent of Title I funds go to the elementary level. When secondary schools are funded, they receive smaller Title I allocations per low-income pupil than elementary schools. Several members of Congress have introduced or endorsed legislation to meet the urgent educational and infrastructure needs of secondary schools.

States have raised student performance standards and are revising secondary curriculum and instruction. The public also supports school improvement: 71 percent of respondents to the 1999 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll felt that reforming the existing public school system, rather than finding an alternative system, should be the priority for education. Yet, the legislation dedicates disproportionate attention to elementary education at the expense of secondary education. Policymakers often choose to target resources on the early years to promote child development and address learning problems before they become too severe. But early intervention does not necessarily "inoculate" children from later difficulties, and many students need continuing services to cope with the more demanding middle and high school curricula and to avoid falling further behind.

Trends That Inform a Reform Initiative for Secondary Schools

Trends in achievement, demographics, leadership, and funding are among the major reasons secondary schools require additional attention and support.

Graduation rates. To succeed in the workplace, further education, and adult life, all students should obtain at least a high school diploma and have a solid base of knowledge and skills. The percentage of young people completing high school rose during the 1970s and early 1980s and has hovered around 86 percent since then. But too many students—more than 380,000 students in grades ten through twelve—continue to drop out each year. As states raise their requirements for graduation, the challenge of keeping students in school and educating them to high levels will become more daunting.

Achievement. The average scores of secondary school students on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)—the only national measure of trends in student achievement—increased in science and mathematics during the 1990s but showed mixed results or declines in reading and writing. To assess how much academic growth students made between elementary school and the end of middle school, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) analyzed average gains in students' NAEP scores between the fourth and eighth grades. By this measure, ETS concluded, academic growth from the mid-1970s to the late 1990s was flat in science, reading, and writing and went down in mathematics. Regardless of whether one views the NAEP data with optimism or concern, it seems clear that further improvements in student achievement are necessary.

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International comparisons. In the 1999 Third International Mathematics and Science Study, which compared achievement in more than twenty nations, U.S. secondary students performed at lower levels for their grades than U.S. elementary students and were outperformed by students from a number of other countries. In science, U.S. fourth graders scored in the very top tier of nations and U.S. eighth graders achieved above the international average, but U.S. twelfth graders performed below the international average. In mathematics, U.S. fourth graders achieved above the international average, whereas U.S. eighth graders performed below average and U.S. twelfth graders scored among the lowest tier of nations.

The baby boom echo. Between 1999 and 2009, U.S. secondary school enrollments were expected to grow by 9 percent, or about 1.3 million students. Minority students and children from different language backgrounds will constitute a greater share of enrollments. The nation will need many more well-trained teachers to educate this diverse and growing population.

Inadequate facilities. A 1999 report by the Campaign to Rebuild America's Schools revealed that about 14 million children attend severely dilapidated public schools with leaky roofs, inferior heating, broken plumbing, and other threats to health and safety. Schools in many communities are over-crowded, a problem that will worsen with rising enrollments. The nation will need a projected 6,000 new schools to keep pace with a decade of enrollment growth; this will require substantial resources, as well as creative approaches for using existing facilities.

Teacher needs. Federal and state actions during the 1990s to strengthen teacher supply and quality are promising. But it will take more concerted and continuing efforts to fill the demand for well-prepared teachers in secondary schools, where shortages of teachers for particular disciplines are serious and where teachers must be prepared to teach advanced courses, integrate technology, and inspire young people to do their best. More than the supply of new teachers, research shows that teacher retention remains a critical issue in schools, as many teachers leave within their first five years on the job. The problem is exacerbated in secondary schools by the problem of out-of-field teaching—which is most pronounced in urban and rural areas. Again, with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, which calls for a "highly qualified teacher" in every classroom, there is a renewed focus on providing all teachers, new and veteran, the support and professional development they need to do their jobs well, as well as salaries commensurate with the value of their work.

Leadership shortages. Urban, suburban, and rural districts in every region of the country are experiencing shortages of qualified candidates for principals' jobs, yet this issue has met with near silence. While the responsibilities of the principalship have escalated considerably, there has been no comparable increase in incentives (not the least of which is a commensurate salary) to attract highly qualified candidates. Few school districts have structured recruitment or training programs to find the best candidates or groom their own, or to encourage minorities and women to enter leadership positions. Promising candidates are dissuaded from applying for principals' positions by such factors as mounting job stresses, inadequate school funding, and reluctance to give up their tenure as teachers.

Secondary school programs. Federal programs of special importance to secondary schools are significantly underfunded. These include: the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998, which prepares students for the workforce by integrating academic and technical education; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, which requires school districts to provide a free and appropriate education to children with disabilities up through age twenty-one, but which covers only a small portion of the costs; and the GEAR UP program (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), which encourages disadvantaged middle school students to prepare for college.