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Chicago State University

From the Dean's Desk:

Chicago State University College of Education is one of the oldest professional schools in Illinois and has housed one of the oldest Illinois education journals, the *Illinois Schools Journal* (ISJ). ISJ is a peer-reviewed journal in the field of education which we hope will be attractive to our colleagues worldwide who care about issues in P-16 settings. We hope that ISJ will be a venue for research that addresses issues that plague our educational system. ISJ provides a useful forum where education professionals from around the world can share educational research, ideas and developments.

I am delighted to welcome all readers and potential contributors to ISJ. This is ISJ's first issue that will be published completely online. We are excited about this new format and know that our readers and contributors will also appreciate this new format. ISJ will continue to publish the latest research, policy and topics in education from an urban perspective. We publish a range of topics from a variety of authors nationally and internationally. ISJ focuses on urban issues, from across the globe.

We thank you for your continuous support of the journal and hope to continue to provide you with high quality articles.

Enjoy this edition!

Satasha Green, Ph.D.

Chicago State University

A Note from the Editor:

Welcome to the spring 2014 issue of *Illinois Schools Journal*. This issue is the first one to go fully online. By the end of 2014, our goal is to have all of the issues, that are under my editorship, online. We cover a wide variety of educational topics, from pedagogy, research, school law, book reviews, and subjects that foster dialogue among our readers. Online, there will be greater accessibility to our articles.

Like all of our issues, this one has a diversity of articles. First is a critique of lesson planning design methods as compared to the Madeline Hunter Model. Second is an article about school vouchers at the federal and state levels. Third is an article on myths and realities of allergies in the school building.

The strength of this journal is our range of topics and authors. We have expanded nationally, with authors and peer reviewers from across the country. Originally, *Illinois Schools Journal* focused on urban issues, primarily in Illinois. Over the years, we have welcomed manuscripts from as far as Great Britain to as close as Chicago. All of them were rigorously peer reviewed by 2-3 reviewers, so each issue is of the highest quality.

If you would like to submit a manuscript, please review the submission guidelines on page 63. All educational topics are welcome, and while many of the submissions have focused on research, *Illinois Schools Journal* is open to pedagogical manuscripts, book reviews, and informed opinion pieces. Every manuscript is blind reviewed by 2-3 people, and authors receive the feedback from the reviewers. If you have any questions, please contact the Editor-in-Chief, Byung-In Seo, at bseo@csu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Byung-In Seo, Editor-in-Chief

After 100 Years: Have We Come Full Circle in Lesson Design?

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Abstract

Beginning in the late 19th century and continuing into the 21st century, this article presents the development of major lesson designs. Lesson planning models introduced by other educators are compared and contrasted to the Hunter Model. Concluding with a confirmation that the Hunter Model may be the framework upon which other models are based, it shows that the Hunter model is flexible and relevant, and the backbone of lesson designs introduced since its inception.

Key Words: Hunter Model, history of lesson planning,

> *Tuesday afternoon: Undergraduate class in Reading in the Content Areas: Undergraduate: "Why do we have to learn all this stuff when teachers in the "real" world just write: 'do pages 42-56 or read chapter 4 and do the questions at the end?'"*
> *Wednesday night: Masters level class in Reading and Writing Instruction: Graduate student: "I've never heard of any of this and I've been doing lesson plans for years. Why do we have to do this?"*

Both are sound questions and may be a sad commentary on what is really happening in classrooms around the country.

Few issues are more important in the teaching-learning process than the lesson design and/or the lesson plan itself. Planning what is to be done during a lesson must be more than writing consecutive numbers of pages to be read or the assigning of questions at the end of a chapter. Unfortunately, this "planning" is happening in American classrooms. Teachers have become so tied to curriculum time lines and pacing charts that no thought except to keep pace with the guides is what drives instruction.

In both classes where the previous comments were made, a short lecture concerning lesson design and lesson planning had occurred. After introducing a variety of lesson

designs, the Madeline Hunter Lesson Plan (Hunter, 1982) was introduced and explained step by step. The Hunter design consists of seven steps: The anticipatory set, objective and purpose, input, modeling, checking for understanding, guided practice and independent practice. To this design, the steps of assessment and closure were later added.

After reviewing the steps again, sticky notes were distributed to each student. Students were asked to write the name of each step of Hunter's plan on a separate sticky note. Using a teacher's edition from one of the more popular social studies textbooks projected for the class to see, the "anticipatory set" was located in the teacher's edition (although it had a different name) by the instructor. At this spot, the "anticipatory set" sticky note was placed. The "objective and purpose" of the lesson were then sought by the group. Once located, the appropriate sticky note was placed on the page. Both lessons then continued through all the Hunter lesson design steps. For homework, each student was assigned to use the teacher's edition they had been given to work with as a supplementary text and, using the sticky notes, identify the Madeline Hunter steps in a self-selected lesson, which was the "independent practice" in both classes.

During the next class meeting, two follow-up activities occurred. First, the students were asked to recall the last class and write what the instructor had done in sequential order. Then, students labeled the list of activities using the Hunter design designations. As discussion ensued, this activity was completed as a group. At its completion, the students realized that the instructor had used the Hunter design during the previous class, modeling effective lesson design, planning and delivery. Following this activity, the class was asked to complete the assignment of putting sticky notes in their Teacher's Edition. They all reported that they could find most, if not all of the steps. As they shared their findings, their "textbook teacher edition vocabulary" grew, and they could soon all find all the steps in their personal Teacher Edition.

Having only examined the Social Studies Teacher's Edition used in the first lesson, the instructor had hypothesized that, based on familiarity with Reading/Language Arts Teacher's Edition, most current publications would use a similar design, if not the same vocabulary. This informal survey completed in two college classes began a search of the

literature for information regarding the history and growth of lesson designs.

In the early 1980s, Madeline Hunter introduced her work which was to become known as the "Seven Steps of Mastery Teaching" (Hunter, 1982). Hunter outlines steps that consequently led to effective teaching and more effective learning. These steps were clear and inclusive. Hunter claimed she was only bringing to the conscious level what effective educators already knew when she proposed her Seven Steps for Mastery Teaching. Together, these steps encapsulate an effective plan for learning. Today, her design continues to be the backbone of successful instructional design.

The "Hunter Design" took the American education system by storm. "Disciples" learned her methods in her California classrooms. Then, their cohorts and advocates spread out across the country to share the wisdom and the plan. Indeed thirty years after its debut, the Hunter design is still relevant. Marzano (2007) wrote of the Hunter lesson design as being "well-articulated and quite useful. Indeed, the fact that Hunter's design is still relevant today is a testament to her understanding of research and theory and her insights into the teaching-learning relationship" (p. 180). However, Marzano went on to state that Hunter's design does not work well in all situations, since it has limitations. "It is best suited for lessons that address procedural knowledge, such as learning how to solve a specific type of mathematics problem…{and} additionally, {it} is not suited for lessons involving hypothesis generation and testing, during which students might operate quite independently while gathering information for their projects or working in small groups" (Marzano, 2007, p. 180).

Hunter's design is closely associated with typical behaviorist/cognitivist instructional design models like Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction. Marzano (2007) noted there is no simple correct way to plan. "There are however, planning techniques and analytical tools which can be borrowed from established models and applied to …improve the finished product and which should be part of the toolkit of any competent designer" (Gagne & Merrill, 1990, p. 24). Looking at lesson planning as it relates to students, "A strongly structured lesson plan can reach and engage the

toughest students while challenging the most gifted. The lesson plan is the blueprint and sets up the foundation for educators to reach students with different learning styles" (Welch, 2010, p. 1).

Similar to other educational concepts which may be considered "fads," Madeline Hunter's "Seven Steps of Mastery Teaching" appears to have lost popularity as other researchers and textbook authors have developed newly configured designs. In order to understand current designs, it is necessary to examine the history of lesson designs and how they come full circle to the Hunter Design.

History of Lesson Designs

During the 1880s, professors at the combined Columbia University and Teacher College of New York City began the quest to find a scientific approach to lesson planning that would be useful to students and academically sound enough to merit scholarly study (Schimmels, 2010). In 1892, the students of German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart developed a five-step lesson plan that included: 1. Preparation, 2. Presentation, 3. Association, 4. Generalization, and, 5. Application (Schimmels, 2010, pp. 1-2). This method of lesson planning was *the* method of choice throughout John Dewey's era (1916) and the 1920s and the 1930s. During the 1940s and 1950s, a four-step lesson planning system became popular. The four steps included: 1. Aim, 2. Material, 3. Method, and 4. Evaluation (Schimmels, 2010). *Individualized instruction* became the buzzword in American education during the 1960s until the pendulum swung in the 1970s to the rigors of accountability. It was then that Kapfer's (1978) work on behavioral objectives originally based on Tyler (1949), once again resurfaced, took hold, and began an innovative competency-based approach to lesson planning.

The Hunter Design

Hunter's lesson plan "template" derives from her *Seven Steps of Mastery Teaching* (Hunter, 1982) and other works (Hunter, 1994). The steps as outlined by Hunter (1982) are:

1. The Anticipatory Set: The "grabber" that draws in children and connects the new information to be presented with the last lesson's information.

2. Objective and Purpose: Letting the students know what they are going to be learning about and why this information is important.

3. Input: The new knowledge, process, or skill to be presented. The methodology of input varies and depends on both the learning styles of the students and the teaching style of the teacher. Input can take the form of lecture, discussion, silent or oral reading, the watching of a video, or the observation of a presentation.

4. Modeling: Teacher demonstration of what the students should be learning. He or She may model writing a sentence using one adjective versus using many adjectives to describe and clarify the noun more clearly. For example, in math, the teacher does a long division problem on the board describing its steps and giving a rationale for the procedure.

5. Checking for Understanding: To continue with the lesson, the teacher takes a few moments to ask questions to determine if the students understand what is being presented.

6. Guided Practice: Students practicing the new learning with teacher support and supervision. The teacher goes from being the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side."

7. Independent Practice: An assignment that the students work on by themselves to demonstrate their mastery of the topic learned. This step may take place in the classroom or as a homework assignment.

Through the years, two additional steps have been added to the original Hunter design as the need was identified. After independent practice, an "Assessment" step was added to remind the lesson planner to include a formal formative or summative assessment of the learning which took part during the lesson. This step may be combined with the "Independent practice" stage and be an assessment of that stage's assignment. "Closure" the last step to be added, may take place at any time during the lesson. Closure helps students know the planned lesson or the time allotted for the lesson has been reached. Ending on a positive note with a catch line about the next day's lesson, teases the student's curiosity and makes the student want to be ready for the next lesson (Pollock, 2007).

Viewed in its entirety, the Hunter's Steps of Mastery Teaching form a model for effective lesson delivery. Beginning with "grabbing" the students' attention, stating what the teacher intends to teach, and then presenting that information is a model that every teacher should realize to be effective. Modeling, or demonstrating, the learning and checking for the students' understanding are logical activities to follow the delivery of information. Having the students practice with teacher guidance and then independently, helps to solidify the learning. Assessment follows in order to determine the amount of learning and if re-teaching or reinforcement is necessary. Providing closure aids students to solidify their learning and helps set the stage for further exploration.

Other Designs

The "Hunter Design" spread across America quickly from teacher colleges and prominent centers of educational theory. It provided a form and a structure that was easy to use and to understand. Its concepts were clear, and the in-service and pre-service instruction for teachers was quick. Administrators soon found that the design with its "seven-step check list" would provide an evaluation tool, even if it was not the intent in theory or practice of Madeline Hunter. As hype spread, fewer teachers liked the whole concept. However, before other methods' quick fixes would be devised or disseminated through teacher training, teachers were "Hunter-ized". Teachers were indoctrinated and in-serviced until it appeared that all teachers in America could recite the seven steps in their sleep. Although the design was well thought out and had been proven effective in the classroom (Hunter, 1989/1990; Lindauer, 1990; Sousa, 1990), researchers and educational writers began their search for something better, something easier for teachers to use. A substitute was repeatedly found; however, they often went unused. Today, many colleges and universities have developed their own *official* lesson plan template based on the Hunter model, but varying just enough to make it their own. Among these are Syracuse University (El-Tigi, 2003), Honolulu Community College ("Lesson Plan," 2007), University of Nevada Las Vegas ("Elementary Lesson Plan Template," 2009), Hamilton College (Holtrop, 1999), and Louisiana State University (Lathon, 2013).

Beyond the models that use Hunter as a base are designs that take lesson planning to a scientific level far above most teachers' thinking and/or what is necessary for successful student learning. Using Clark and Dunn's definition of planning "as a psychological process of envisioning the future and considering goals and ways of achieving them" (Clark & Dunn, 1991, p. 183), lesson planning became a "systematic development of instructional requirements, arrangement, conditions and materials and activities as well as testing and evaluation of teaching and learning" (Panasuk & Todd, 2005, p. 215). Panasuk and Todd (2005) developed a Lesson Plan Evaluation Rubric (LPER) derived from the Four Stages of Lesson Planning (FSLP) strategy. Thus, as of 2005 there is a rubric for evaluating effectiveness of a lesson plan. However, this author found no studies which utilized this rubric. It does not mean that there is not someone who studied the FSLP; for the purposes of this paper, none were found. Stallings, Robbins, Presbrey, and Scott (1986) studied and compared mathematics scores of teachers who were trained in the Hunter model and a control group of non-trained teachers. The "findings suggest that teachers who … by training used instructional skills as defined in the Hunter model ... had students with higher test scores" (Stallings et al., 1986, p.583).

Although finding the Hunter model effective, others suggested models which mirrored Hunter's but varied just enough to put their own name on them. In the late 1980s, Keller (1987) studied the research on psychological motivation and created the ARCS model. This four-step motivational model mirrors Hunter's design in that Keller's steps are: 1. Attention (similar to Hunter's Anticipatory Set); 2. Relevance (much like Hunter's Objective and Purpose step); 3. Confidence (basically Hunter's Practice and Assessment steps); and 4. Satisfaction (again similar to Hunter's Practice and Assessment steps). Writing about the ARCS Model, Kruse stated that "the success or failure of any learning initiative can be closely correlated to learner motivation"(Kruse, 2006, p. 2). Motivation is also a topic Hunter discusses in depth (Hunter, 1994). The ASSURE Model (Heinich, Molenda, Russell, & Smaldino, 2001) which was influenced by Gagne (Gagne & Merrill, 1990) also bears a resemblance to the Hunter Model (Hunter, 1982). The acronym stands for <u>A</u>nalyze, <u>S</u>tate Objectives, <u>S</u>elect Media, <u>U</u>tilize Materials, <u>R</u>equire Participation, and <u>E</u>valuate. Stating

objectives derives directly from the Hunter Model as does utilizing materials and requiring participation which are synonyms for (guided and independent) practice. "Evaluate" in the ASSURE model is equivalent to Hunter's "Assessment."

Ornstein (1990) compared the components of lesson designs described by what he calls "lesson plan authorities." He included plans that were suggested in the writings of Hunter, Gagne, Slavin, Good and Grouwes, and Good and Brophy (Ornstein, 1990). It is interesting to note that, according to Ornstein, all these "authorities" include the same basic components as Hunter's design. Good and Grouwes, and Good and Brophy only vary from the Hunter Model in not listing an "anticipatory set." While Hunter's model ends with independent practice, the other three designs extended the lesson by including assessment performance or accountability, along with an activity to help determine retention and transfer of knowledge. These, as stated, were added to the original Seven Step Hunter model. The Slavin and the Goods' models both have a final component: to practice the learned behavior, specifying homework as the major avenue which is similar to Hunter's "independent practice".

Other recent instructional models may have also utilized the Hunter Model as a beginning point of reference. Such models as those suggested for use in early childhood classes by Morrison (2009) and those of Gardner, Kagan, and Tominson as described by Daniels (2004), Van Merrienboer's 4C/Id Model and Relgeluth's Elaboration Theory for Instructional Design as described by Clark (2004), also have portions that can be traced back to Hunter's Model.   Ryder (2009) compiled over 100 websites and references for the study of instruction design models. Here researchers can find instructional design models defined, listed by author name and/or design name. Ryder also has links to web sites which compare the different models listed.

Friedman and Fisher (1998) stated that there are five major decision-making tasks in instructional planning. These include: deriving the learning objectives, planning instructional tasks, planning evaluation, planning task assignments, and planning teaching. These researchers continue to describe each task and what failure to achieve these points would mean to the learner and student

performance. Although not a lesson design model, Friedman and Fisher (1998) outlined the key components in an effective design.

McCarthy (1987) created and researched the 4MAT System. Based on the work of John Dewey, Carl Jung, and David Kolb, McCarthy bases her system on four major learning styles (McCarthy, 1987; Huitt, 2009; St. Germain, 2002). Each of the four major learning styles is associated with left- and right-brain learners. Designated by McCarthy as quadrants, each style can be applied to lesson design. A side-by-side comparison of the 4MAT System and Hunter's Lesson Design demonstrates how similar they are. McCarthy's Quadrant I in which the teacher initiates and motivates learners is comparable to Hunter's anticipatory set. In Quadrant II, according to McCarthy, the teacher delivers information and models learning which parallels Hunter's Input and Modeling stages. Quadrant III is designated for facilitating guided information and practice which easily translates into Hunter's "Guided Practice" step. Independent Practice and Assessment from Hunter's model are included in McCarthy's Quadrant IV under the heading simply "Evaluation." Although the graphic representation of each design is different, Hunter's being linear and McCarthy's being a circular format, the basic Hunter Lesson Design is represented in McCarthy's work.

Two designs have become the mainstay of lesson planning as researchers and educators moved into the twenty-first century. They are the "5E" Model (Bybee, 1997) and the Backward Design Model (Wiggins & McTighe, 1999). The 5E's of Learning is a constructivist model that is utilized primarily in inquiry-based instruction. Each "E" is a step in the process of sequencing learning in order to connect prior knowledge with what is to be learned through inquiry. The "5E's" are: Engage (the teacher engages the student); Explore (students explore aided by teacher facilitation); Explain (students share their findings with other students and the teacher; the teacher provides feedback); Elaborate (students widen their understanding and apply their knowledge); Evaluate (authentic assessments are used to demonstrate student learning).

Although directed to scientific inquiry, it appears Bybee, a decade after Hunter introduced her design model,

applied the Hunter model to science. "Engage" may simply be a different way of saying "anticipatory set" while "Explore" may be equivalent to Hunter's "input" where knowledge is learned by the student. In the Hunter model the information is presented; in the 5E's model, the student finds the information through scientific methodology. Bybee's "Explain" and "Elaborate" are perhaps "scientific" ways of stating that students will practice what they have learned in both guided and independent practices (Hunter's terminology). Inquiry is essential, and it is often the first idea future teachers are taught when designing lessons using this model. Bybee's "Evaluate" mirrors Hunter's "Assessment."

Eisenkraft (2003) begins his article "Expanding the 5E Model" with these words: "Sometimes a current model must be amended to maintain its value after new information, insights, and knowledge have been gathered" (Eisenkraft, 2003, p. 56). This is what occurs when relating the 5E Model to Hunter's. Note how Bybee took the Hunter model from seven steps to five. Six years later Eisenkraft expended the 5E Model back to seven steps.

Hunter (1989/1990), in response to Berg and Clough (1990), who stated that Hunter's model could not be successfully applied to science, demonstrated how using her model in a science lesson could be effectively planned. She described how she wrote a complete lesson plan using her model step-by-step. Hunter stated that Berg and Clough had never said that her model was more suited for lecture, as was inferred. "This is another example of their practice of using part of a sentence out of context to draw a conclusion" (Hunter, 1989/1990, p. 81). Both Sousa (1990) and Lindauer (1990) support Hunter in her stance that her lesson design helps achieve the goals and essential elements of science teaching. Others agree that Hunter's model does apply to science: "Most things in math and science, especially skills, are taught in a context. For transfer to broader applicability it is necessary to decontextualize the learning. One way to do this is in guided practice…" (Lathon, 2013, p. 5)

Another model related to Hunter's is Understanding by Design (UbD) of the Backward Design Model (Wiggins & McTighe, 1999) which has had far reaching implications for curriculum development, for unit planning, or long range course planning. Instructor's use of UbD has spread

throughout the country, and has been adopted by many school districts as they develop standards-based curriculum to meet state requirements. Briefly, UbD starts with the standards of a certain grade or subject area. After the benchmarks have been selected, assessments that will measure student understanding of the standard are designed.   Having the standards and assessment determined beforehand, the instructional plan should be designed to reach the desired objectives.   The activities, projects, discussions, etc. all should lead to a greater understanding of the topic and thus prepare the student for the assessment. According to Wiggins and McTighe (1999), this backward approach from traditional teacher planning is when activities and lessons are chosen first and then how these lessons meet standards, and afterward which assessments will be used. Wiggins and McTighe (1999) suggest that after the backward design has taken place (that of determining the standards and designing the assessment to meet the chosen standards), the "WHERE" approach of lesson planning be utilized. A comparison of this lesson design and its Hunter equivalent are illustrated in Table 1:

Table 1
Comparison between "WHERE" Approach and Hunter Model (SCOE, 2008)

"WHERE" design	Description of step	Hunter Terminology
W	**W**here they are headed **W**hy they are heading there **W**hat they know **W**hat is required of them	Stating the Objective
H	Hooking the students on the topic of study	Anticipatory set
E	**E**xploring and **E**xperiencing ideas Being **E**quipped with the necessary understanding to master the standing being taught	Guided Practice
R	Providing opportunities for	Guided and Independent

	students to	Practice
	Rehearse	
	Revise	
	Refine their work	
E	Student **E**valuation	Assessment

Upon comparison it is evident that UbD entails the steps put forth in Hunter's lesson design (Hunter, 1982, 1994). Noting that only the anticipatory set is displaced, the UbD is not all that "backwards." There is an assumption that when using the Hunter design, the objective and the assessment of that objective are based on the standards for the appropriate grade level or course.

Milkova (2012) summarized her steps for preparing a lesson plan: 1. Outline learning objectives; 2. Develop the introduction; 3. Plan the specific learning activities (the main body of the lesson); 4. Plan to check for understanding; 5. Develop a conclusion and a preview; and 6. Create a realistic timeline. (Milkova, 2012, p. 1-2). These steps, presented without credit and rearranged, again mirror Madeline Hunter's. Combining the anticipatory set and closure (numbers 2 and 5) and renaming "input" (3) are Hunter's. "Creating a realistic timeline" (Mikova, 2012) is a feature that does not appear in other models examined.

Table 2 summarizes each of the designs discussed in this article and aligns the models to the Hunter Model.

Table 2
Different Lesson Plan Models

Madeline Hunter Model	ARCS Model	ASSURE Model	4 MAT Model	5 E Model	Backward Design "WHERE" Model
Anticipatory Set	Attention		Quadrant I	Engage	Hooking the student
Objective and Purpose	Relevance	State Objectives			Where, Why, What the student knows
Input		Select Media	Quadrant II	Explore	
Modeling			Quadrant II		
Checking for Understanding		Analyze			
Guided Practice	Confidence	Utilizing Materials	Quadrant III	Explain	Exploring and Experiencing
Independent Practice		Require Participation	Quadrant IV	Elaborate	Rehearse, Revise, Refine
Assessment	Satisfaction	Evaluate	Quadrant IV	Evaluate	Evaluation
Closure					

Conclusion

Over thirty years ago when Hunter first introduced what her research had shown as the components of an effective lesson, educators thought these components would be the panacea to student progress. Unfortunately, those teachers, who did not fully understand effective teaching, used Hunter's design as a peg to fill all holes. It became the course of least resistance as no other model was suggested. Hunter did not intend for her design to become the model in lesson design. She saw it as a framework by which teachers could design and deliver their own effective lessons to assist students to achieve the knowledge and understanding the students needed. She saw her design as a means to meet criteria set either by the lesson designer or the standards as set by local, state, or national organizations.

When her work was published, administrators made it a yardstick by which they could evaluate teachers' effectiveness; if one followed Madeline Hunter, then one would be effective in the classroom. Not every lesson needs to begin and have all the parts of Madeline Hunter's design. However, it should contain some of the steps.

The Hunter design was replaced by another model, because it proved to be cumbersome and time-intensive to implement into every lesson plan, day after day. Then, another model came. Eventually, there were more lesson design models than one teacher could possibly use and understand. However, most of these "new" designs were not truly original. The creators used Hunter's model as a base. Changing something here or there along the way or renaming a sub-heading made the model fresh and new and exciting. Some of these "new" designs have proven successful in certain content areas. Nevertheless, some lesson designers continue to add and subtract what they need from the Hunter design. These changes and additions are evidence that Hunter's model is both relevant and flexible.

At this time of high stakes testing, teachers need to provide clear specific lessons in order for students to comprehend material and progress. The Hunter model provides that effective lesson design. When students are bombarded with information from every direction, they need to be "grabbed" and told "this is what we are going to learn today" (Anticipatory Set and Lesson Objective). When teachers are being held accountable for student learning they need to provide information to their students, they need to model how that information can be used, and they need to continually check to make sure that their students are comprehending the material at different levels (Input, Modeling, Checking for Understanding). Once the lesson has been taught, students need time to practice under the eyes and help of a knowledgeable instructor (Guided Practice) and then permitted a time to demonstrate their newly acquired knowledge (Independent Practice). Finally, student work needs to be assessed and constructive feedback offered before the lesson concludes (Assessment and Closure). As one can see, the Hunter design provides each of these steps.

Pre-service teachers need to learn and practice the Hunter design. Professionals in the classroom need to be

reminded of this effective design suggested by Madeline Hunter in the 1980s and massaged by others through the decades. Using the Hunter Design affords teachers the solution to providing effective instruction in a meaningful and sequential manner. After 100 years, the wheel does not need to be reinvented. It is time to stop and use a proven effective model of lesson design, the Hunter Design.

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School Vouchers in Illinois

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Abstract

This article addresses the constitutional and practical issues raised by proposals in the Illinois General Assembly which would provide public monies for scholarships for children in failing schools. The controversial nature of the proposal lies in the intent of the legislators to allow parents and guardians to redeem the tuition vouchers at private and private-religious schools. Special attention is paid to the campaign by the Chicago Archdiocese and the Illinois Catholic Conference to sponsor and encourage this legislation. Commentary includes reviews of federal and state constitutional provisions regarding the separation of church and state, and reviews of federal and state case law regarding voucher proposals including private schools, with emphasis on the state of Illinois. Further commentary emphasizes the constitutional duty of the Illinois General Assembly to provide a system of efficient high quality public schools. The author concludes by indicating the quandary of the legislature attempting to achieve its goals in very difficult financial times, and the fiscal challenges which impact the climate for current legislative proposals.

Key Words: School vouchers, Archdiocese of Chicago, federal school law, Illinois school law

History

Early in 2013, Cardinal Francis George of the Chicago Archdiocese announced the closing of five Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, St Gregory High School and four elementary schools. In addition, the Cardinal indicated that 75 staff positions would be eliminated from the Chicago Archdiocese bureaucracy. These decisions were taken as part of an effort to close a $40 million operating deficit in the Archdiocese (CBS Chicago). Despite these short-term setbacks, the Archdiocese of Chicago Schools Office has announced a strategic plan for the Catholic schools of Chicago, that will begin in 2013 and conclude by 2016. Sister Mary Paul McCaughey, Superintendent of Chicago Catholic Schools, identified the major initiatives of the strategic plan: a campaign for scholarships, a merit pay program for teachers,

and a restructuring of the relationship between the schools and the Archdiocesan Schools Office including hands-on fiscal management and a centralization of power in the Archdiocesan Office (Brachear, 2013).

Also, the Archdiocesan Plan calls for a political campaign to persuade Illinois legislators to supply tax monies for tuition vouchers for parents of Catholic school children which can be redeemed at the parochial school level. Similar programs have been approved by the United States Supreme Court in an Ohio case, *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* (2002), although some state courts have rejected such proposals. School voucher proponents in Illinois have received encouragement from the positive outcome of a recent Indiana case, *Meredith v Pence* (2013). The Chicago Archdiocese campaign is intended "...to pass legislation and promote public policies that would make funds from taxes available to children in Catholic schools...Publicly supported vouchers or scholarships would make a dramatic difference to Catholic schools whose finances are strained" (Archdiocese of Chicago, 2013, p. 7).

Sister Mary Paul makes two principal arguments to justify the expenditure of public funds to private schools: first is that the 86,502 children enrolled in Catholic schools in the Chicago Archdiocese would have been enrolled in public schools if the Catholic schools did not exist; therefore, the Catholic schools have saved the Illinois taxpayers "an estimated 1.15 billion dollars per year" (Archdiocese of Chicago, 2013, p. 5). Sister Mary Paul's second argument is the core ideology of the school choice philosophy, namely, that by funding a competitive system, the legislature might induce improvements in the public schools because they are now no longer a monopoly and must compete with other educational institutions.

To offer a critical understanding of the arguments for a school voucher program in Illinois, which would include the archdiocesan schools as well as other private religious institutions, it is necessary to review recent state legislative activity both in Illinois and in other states. Also, recent court cases need to be examined. These court cases have tested the constitutionality of the voucher proposals in light of the United States Constitution as well as the appropriate state constitutions. After examining the school voucher statues,

proposals and pertinent court cases, an analysis and reflection is provided at the conclusion of this article.

Illinois Legislative Proposals

There are constitutional and practical concerns connected with the proposals for the use of public monies for the support of pre-school to grade twelve private schools in Illinois, including the Catholic schools of Chicago. Direct fiscal support for private educational institutions would seem to be clearly unconstitutional, and certainly would be controversial, especially given the already poor levels of support for public schools by the State. Despite these factors, and despite the State's $12-14 billion debt, former Illinois Democratic State Senator, the Reverend James Meeks introduced Senate Bill 2494 on the 29th of October, 2009. Senate Bill 2494 (2009) would have created the Illinois School Choice Program and amended the Illinois Income Tax Act by providing scholarships for children of very poor parents in District 299, Chicago Public Schools. Scholarship vouchers would be redeemable at participating Chicago elementary and secondary non-public schools, including religious/parochial schools.

After several weeks of discussion among committees, the Illinois Senate voted to pass the Bill on March 25, 2010, and the proposal was sent to the Illinois House of Representatives the same day. After several weeks of hearings, the Illinois House voted on the Bill on May 28, 2010. The bill failed to pass the House of Representatives. Instead, the Bill was referred to the House Rules Committee, and there it remained for the duration of the 96th General Assembly.

However, subsequent events indicated that Senator Meeks' idea was not dead in Springfield. First, on July 28, 2010, Representative Karen Yarbrough (D) became the Chief House Sponsor. This addition of a powerful suburban representative provided a boost to the voucher plan, taking the idea out of the restrictive area of Chicago public schools. Second, on February 10, 2011, Senator Matt Murphy (R) introduced a "School Choice Act" proposal into the legislative docket, very similar to Senator Meeks' proposal, Senate Bill 1932 (2011). Senator Murphy's version of the voucher proposal was debated in the Illinois Senate but not called for a vote in the Spring 2011 legislative session. Third, on February

23, 2011, Representative Joe Sosnowski (R) introduced House Bill 2984, which would have created the Tuition Voucher Program Task Force to study the feasibility of a statewide tuition voucher program, thus broadening the intent of the law from the poor neighborhoods of Chicago to encompass the entire state (2011). House Bill 2984 was passed by the Illinois House on April 12, 2011, and sent to the Senate, but the proposal was not called for a vote in the Senate. As of the conclusion of the Spring 2012 legislative session, no Illinois voucher program had found its way into law; and Representative Sosnowski's proposal to establish a statewide Tuition Voucher Program Task Force was sent to the Rules committee of the Illinois House on July 27, 2012. Representative Sosnowski's staff, in a telephone call on December 13, 2012, stated that the Representative did not intend to re-introduce the bill again in the Spring 2013 session, but that other similar voucher proposals were being actively discussed by the Illinois lawmakers. Despite the willingness of legislators to continue discussion of voucher proposals, the Spring 2013 legislative session yielded no significant proposals regarding school vouchers (Yount, 2013). The Spring 2013 Illinois legislative session was taken up with the contentious topics of medical marijuana, gay marriage, concealed weapons, gambling expansion, and pension reform.

Case Law

Federal court cases on the topic of public funds for private education go back more than 100 years. Focusing on current federal cases, the *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* case (2002) provides a crucial turning point in the federal courts' treatment of school funding cases which include private and/or private religious schools.

Illinois court cases on the issue of public funds for private education took place mostly in the 1970s, in the wake of the Constitutional Convention of 1970-1971. One Illinois case, *Klinger v Howlett* (1973), a significant Florida case, *Bush v Holmes* (2006), and a recent Indiana case, *Meredith v Pence* (2013)*,* which have been adjudicated since the *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* precedent will be reviewed.

Federal Courts

For two centuries after the adoption of the United States Constitution, the federal courts took a very restrictive

view of the relationship between public entities such as state and federal governments and their agencies on the one hand, and private entities such as churches, private schools, and especially church-related-or-supported schools on the other hand. This relationship was described informally by President Thomas Jefferson as a "wall of separation." It was described formally and legally by the opening words of the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution which state, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof" (Constitution of the United States: First Amendment, 1787).

In 1868, Congress added the Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution, which states in part, "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States" (Constitution of the United States: Fourteenth Amendment, 1791). This amendment extends the rights sections of the Federal Constitution to the states, thus imposing on the states the specific prohibition against the establishment of religion. In a school prayer case, *Wallace v Jaffree* (1985), the United States Supreme Court reminded Governor George Wallace and the Alabama legislature that, since the federal government had no right to initiate an established religion, the State of Alabama had no such right either.

This philosophy, which might be called the "traditional" or the "restrictive" interpretation of the First Amendment, came under challenge in 2002, in the United States Supreme Court case, *Zelman v Simmons-Harris.* The case concerned an Ohio statute, which provided state funding for tuition and after-school tutoring to children in poor areas of the state (mainly Cleveland's inner city and some rural areas). Private religious and private non-religious schools were included in the list of options for parents. The tuition and tutorial programs began in 1996, and of the 56 private schools which participated, 46 were religious schools. Of the pupils, 3700 took part in the scholarship program, and 1400 took part in the after school tutorial program. Cash vouchers were issued to parents according to financial need. Then, parents shopped for the school they desired.

Plaintiffs in the *Zelman* case challenged the scholarship program and the after-school tutorial program on the grounds that they violated the Establishment Clause of the

First Amendment because they involved a transfer of public funds to private religious entities. The U.S. Supreme Court disagreed and decided in favor of the Ohio statute. The Court reasoned that the vouchers were issued to parents, not as aid to the schools. According to the statutory guidelines, parents were free to use the vouchers in a public school, a private school, a magnet school, or a community school. Since the program was "neutral" with respect to religion, the Supreme Court argued, any benefit (more money, more students) which accrued to the private school would be from the action of the parents, not from the state of Ohio.

The Supreme Court thus set the precedent that if public monies do not go *directly* from the State to private religious schools, but first go through the hands of parents who opt for private education, then this is a form of "indirect" aid to private schools which does not run afoul of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Since 2002, proponents of school vouchers declared that the Court had "broken the monopoly" of the public schools (Rotherham, 2002). Top school law researchers David and Kern Alexander (2012) opined that after *Zelman*, "any type of government aid program, voucher or otherwise," could be approved (p. 220). The Court in *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* presented a challenge to the "traditional" or "restrictive" views of the meaning of the First Amendment by dramatically expanding the notion of legitimate "indirect" aid to private and parochial schools.

Illinois Courts

Article Ten, Section Three of the Illinois Constitution is entitled, "Public funds for sectarian purposes forbidden." It states:

> Neither the General Assembly nor any county, city, town, township, school district, or other public corporation, shall ever make any appropriation or pay from any public fund whatever, anything in aid of any church or sectarian purpose, or to help support or sustain any school, academy, seminary, college, university, or other literary or scientific institution, controlled by any church or sectarian denomination whatever; nor shall any grant or donation of land, money, or other personal property ever be made by the State, or any such public corporation, to any church, or for any sectarian purpose.

At first reading, the Illinois Constitution seems to impose more severe restrictions on public funds than does the Federal Constitution. However, Schohat (2004) stated, "If Illinois courts, like the Supreme Court in *Zelman*, find that school vouchers provide funds for *parents*, not for *religious schools,* school vouchers used to fund religious schools could be found permissible in the state of Illinois despite these constitutional provisions" [actual emphasis] (p. 3).

Schohat's interpretation finds support in the Illinois case, *Klinger v. Howlett* (1973). The Illinois General Assembly had passed three so-called "parochiaid" bills in 1971. These statutes promised assistance to private religious schools in Illinois in three areas: textbook loan, tuition, and purchase of auxiliary services. Delayed by complications derived from the timetable for Public Acts set by the Constitutional Convention, the case eventually went to the Illinois Supreme Court for a decision on constitutional grounds. The Illinois Supreme Court invalidated all three of the laws, stating that they violated Article Ten, Section Three of the newly approved Illinois Constitution with its clearly stated prohibition of public funds for religious purposes. However, a subsequent amended textbook loan program was approved and is still in force in 2014, though not currently funded.

What is crucial to note in this discussion is that the *Klinger v Howlett* Illinois court cited the U.S. Supreme Court *Lemon* case, in which the Court had rejected similar parochiaid statutes passed by the Pennsylvania legislature, and made its decision on the rationale that the Tenth Article of the Illinois Constitution means exactly what the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution means, no more and no less. With reference to the 2002 *Zelman* case, the meaning of the Illinois Constitution must be identical to the meaning of the Federal Constitution, because of the Supremacy Clause in the Federal Constitution and because of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution. If *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* says that aid to private schools could be approved via the indirect method in Ohio, then it could also be approved the same way in Illinois.

However, this expectation is still a conjecture, and uncertainty arises because recent post-*Zelman* state court cases have resulted in a variety of conclusions, and in other cases

granting approval of a state school voucher program, and in other cases indicating disapproval of a state sponsored school voucher program.

State Cases

Since *Zelman*, there have been subsequent cases in state courts, for example, Florida, Colorado, Arizona, and Louisiana which have not gone in favor of the private schools (Alexander & Alexander, 2012), and recently, a state case in Indiana went in favor of vouchers for the non-public schools. Two of these recent cases in particular deserve a closer look, the *Bush v Holmes* Florida case which disapproved the Florida voucher program, and the *Meredith v Pence* Indiana case which approved the Indiana voucher program.

Bush v Holmes

The Florida statute, which was examined by the Florida Supreme Court in 2006, resembled very closely the Meeks and the Murphy proposals in Illinois (*Bush v Holmes)*. The Florida Legislature had passed a law entitled the "Opportunity Scholarship Program." Under the stipulations of the program, a parent of a student in a failing school (one not meeting state standards), had two options: (1) remove the child to another public school which was passing state standards; or (2) apply for a state funded scholarship to be used to pay tuition at a private or private-religious school which was meeting state standards. The question addressed by the Florida Supreme Court was whether the State of Florida is prohibited by its Constitution from expending public funds to support a private school education from grades K-12.

The Florida Supreme Court found the "Opportunity Scholarship Program" to be in violation of Florida's constitutional ban on support for private schools. The Court forbade the continuation of the program but allowed parents who had already gotten vouchers and made students transfer, to continue until the end of the school year. In making its decision, the Florida court did not make reference to constitutional separation of church and state, but rather to the Florida Constitution's promise of "…a uniform, safe, efficient, secure high quality system of free public schools." The "Opportunity Scholarship Program" was banned by the Florida court because it "reduces money available to the free schools" and "it funds private schools that are not 'uniform' when

compared with each other or the public system" (*Bush v Holmes*).

The "Opportunity Scholarship Program," the court reasoned, is "fostering plural, non-uniform systems of education in direct violation of the constitutional mandate for a uniform system of free public schools." The Florida Supreme Court avoided the "indirect aid" criterion of the *Zelman* court, and did not base its decision on church-state issues.

While the 2006 Florida decision in *Bush v Holmes* provided a setback for school voucher proponents, the State of Indiana Supreme Court provided a boost to the school voucher movement in 2012.

Meredith v Pence

In 2011, the Indiana legislature passed an expansive "Choice Scholarship Program," which provided state funded tuition vouchers for children of poor Indiana parents to redeem at eligible schools, including private and private-religious schools. The state-wide program had no geographical limitations; eligibility requirements were only that the child be an Indiana resident and live in "...a household with an annual income of not more than one hundred and fifty per cent (150%) of the amount required for the individual to qualify for the federal free or reduced price lunch program" (*Meredith v Pence*). Early estimates indicated that up to 530,000 Indiana children would qualify (Simon, 2013). Each voucher could not exceed 90% of the Indiana state tuition support program. Eligible schools are public schools, charter schools, private schools, and private-religious schools which are accredited with the Indiana State Board of Education. These schools need to meet the curriculum and testing standards of the State Board, and they must not discriminate on the basis of "race, color, or national origin." The statute did not mention admissions discrimination on the basis of religion (*Meredith v Pence*).

Theresa Meredith, vice president of the Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA), filed the legal challenge on behalf of the association, joined by a committee of Indiana citizens, the statewide administrators' organizations and school board associations, and several friends of the court including the Americans United for Separation of Church and State. The

defendants are the governor of Indiana, the State superintendent of public instruction, and several friends of the court including Christian and Catholic School systems from across Indiana, as well as the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice. Plaintiffs argued that the Choice Scholarship Program violated the Indiana Constitution, specifically its provision for "a general and uniform system of Common Schools," and in its prohibition of the use of tax monies "for the benefit of any religious or theological institution" (*Meredith v Pence*, 2013*).*

The Indiana Supreme Court ruled to uphold the constitutionality of the Choice Scholarship program and to continue the voucher system. Their arguments revolved around two principle points: first, the State of Indiana would continue to support the system of Common Schools. The Choice Scholarship program, the Court argued, does not eliminate the public schools, although some estimates projected that 60% of the public school population would be eligible; second, the Indiana constitution, the justices stated, in mandating a system of public schools, does not take away the power of the legislature to promote other programs besides the public schools. In this argument the Indiana court departed radically from the thinking of the Florida Supreme Court, which had stated that a system of free uniform schools precluded the State of Florida from supporting another system (*Bush v Holmes,* 2006).

Second, the Indiana Supreme Court followed closely the reasoning of the United States Supreme Court in *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* (2002). Since the vouchers are given to poor parents who may redeem them for tuition payments at public, charter, private, or private-religious schools, any benefits which might accrue to the religious school—more money, more students—resulted from the action of the citizen-parents, not the State of Indiana. Thus, there is no violation of the Indiana constitution and its prohibition of direct aid to "religious or theological institutions" (*Meredith v Pence*, 2013*).*

Meredith v Pence is a clear judicial victory for the champions of school vouchers, most importantly in assessing the possibilities for such legislation in Illinois. However, there are some signs that the voucher battles in Indiana might not be over. *Meredith v Pence* is an extraordinary case in which one of the plaintiffs switched to become one of the defendants in

the course of the case winding its way through the Indiana courts. Glenda Ritz, an Indiana teacher who joined the case as a plaintiff, ran for and won the office of Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction (Indiana Public Radio, 2013). As State Superintendent, Ritz *ex officio* became one of the defendants and was required to withdraw her name from the list of plaintiffs. Ritz had campaigned for the office of State Superintendent on a platform of opposition to the Indiana standardized test IREAD-3, opposition to the reforms in teacher licensure, and opposition to the expansion of school vouchers. Even though Indiana's highest court endorsed the constitutionality of the voucher program, 52% of Indiana voters cast ballots for a candidate who not only opposed the program, but who was also well known as a plaintiff in the case against the vouchers.

Another indication of the unclear support for the voucher program is that the Indiana Supreme Court, in two places in the *Meredith v Pence* decision, exercised "judicial deference," specifically distancing itself from the practical application of the Choice Scholarship Program. In the introduction to the case the Court states, "...we emphasize that the issues before this Court do not include the public policy merits of the school voucher program...the desirability and efficacy of school choice are matters to be resolved through the political process." Later in the case, the court states again, "...it is not for the judiciary to evaluate the prudence of the chosen policy" (*Meredith v Pence*, 2013).

Observers in Illinois and across the nation will be watching carefully to see how the Indiana voucher program actually works in practice. Given the tepid support for the practical application by the Court and the active opposition of the new State Superintendent, it remains to be seen whether the program, though affirmed constitutionally, will actually deliver the equity in educational opportunities intended by the Indiana lawmakers.

Constitutionality of Illinois Senate Bills 2494 and 1932

To return to Senator Meeks' 2009 proposal and Senator Murphy's 2011 proposed Illinois voucher program, supporters of the Illinois School Choice Program have taken heart from the precedent of the *Zelman v Simmons-Harris* United States Supreme Court decision, and have been

encouraged by the recent Indiana Supreme Court *Meredith v Pence* decision. At the very least, a private school voucher program in Illinois modeled on the Ohio or the Indiana programs is likely to pass constitutional muster on the religious front. However, the members of any proposed Tuition Voucher Program Task Force might also review *Bush v Holmes* and other state cases which have forbidden the voucher programs by relying not on religious "walls of separation" but on state mandates for "uniform, efficient" systems of public schools. Illinois' constitution is as insistent as the Florida constitution on "an efficient system of high quality public educational institutions and services" (Constitution of the State of Illinois: Article Ten, Section 1). Given the *Zelman* and the *Meredith v Pence* precedents, the likelihood of the Illinois Supreme Court overruling a similarly-structured voucher program is difficult to predict.

Practical Concerns

Beyond the constitutional questions regarding the voucher proposal, several logistical concerns have been raised which might temper the Illinois legislators' and educators' appetites for Senate Bills 2494/1932 and similar voucher proposals. These concerns revolve around two principle issues: the financial condition of the State of Illinois, and the application of curriculum content in private schools that accept state money.

The most compelling practical arguments against the voucher proposal have to do with the severe economic downturn of the past several years and the $12-14 billion deficit facing the State of Illinois. Illinois has a state government which routinely spends more than it can afford year after year and is notorious for not paying its bills on time. Its legislative body has failed to meet its pension funding obligations for more than 20 years while distributing "legislative scholarships" for college tuition to the children of well connected political supporters. This fiscal irresponsibility has negatively affected the schools, the state universities, and the social services promised by the state. In addition, some pharmacies and other health care providers have been driven out of business because of the tardy payments of monies owed by Springfield which stretched into months and years.

As of July 2013, the federal stimulus funds have come and gone. The Race to the Top funds have faded away

in Illinois, and now public school districts have laid off teachers and other personnel by the thousands. In the Chicago Public Schools alone, 1500 teachers have been laid off since the end of the school year in June of 2013 (Ahmed-Ullah & Geiger, 2013). Senate Bill 7, passed by the legislature in 2011, restricted the teachers' right to strike and called upon the Chicago public school teachers to work more hours per day for no additional compensation. Also CPS went back on its promised 4% raise. As a result, a bitter Chicago Teachers Union strike occurred in the Fall of 2012. Because of budget shortfalls, the Chicago Public Schools closed 47 neighborhood schools in June 2013, resulting in dislocation of thousands of school children and weeks of acrimonious protests. With insufficient funds to adequately support the public schools in Illinois, the State of Illinois simply does not have the largesse to implement a voucher program for private schools. Given the State legislature's performance in providing for the public schools, it may be unwise for private schools to pursue a financial relationship with the State.

After two years of no increase in General State Aid to the schools, the state budget for the 2013-2014 fiscal year showed another decrease in General State Aid for public schools for the third consecutive year. The 2012-2013 State of Illinois budget featured a decrease of $42,000,000.00 for pre-school initiatives, the elimination of $27,000,000.00 for the support of truancy/attendance programs, zero funding for new teacher and new administrator mentoring, and no funding for the state-mandated Response to Intervention program (Fritts, 2012). Some of the most important personnel and curricular initiatives implemented by the Illinois State Board of Education in the past couple of years will fail because of the lack of fiscal support from the legislature (IASB, 2012).

Bills introduced in the legislative session of Spring 2013 included proposals to force school districts to use local funds to pay for the Regional Offices of Education (passed into law), and the proposed transfer of the teacher pension obligations from the state to the local school districts. The State of Illinois is striving to reduce its fiscal obligation to education, not expanding its obligations, which would occur in a voucher program.

No recent law illustrates this state objective more clearly than Senate Bill 1, passed into law by the Illinois

Legislature in the Fall 2013 session and signed immediately by Governor Patrick Quinn (Senate Bill 1). Senate Bill 1, the so called "Pension Reform Act," addresses the $90 billion unfunded pension obligation of the State and mandates severe cuts to the pensions of current and future retired employees of the State, including teachers and professors, as well as other public employees such as nurses, police, fire, and emergency personnel. As of March 2014, four separate suits have been filed in Illinois courts on behalf of future and current retirees. The expectation is that, as these cases wind their way up through the lower courts, the Illinois Supreme Court will combine them and hear them as one. How these cases will turn out cannot be even guessed at this time, but the point is certainly clear that the State of Illinois is not in a mode of expanding or enriching the educational enterprise for the children of Illinois.

This fiscal situation is affecting educational quality. Some school boards and superintendents argue that serious deterioration has already begun. Private and private-religious school leaders may be wondering if it would be prudent to make their schools fiscally dependent on the legislature of the State of Illinois.

Curriculum Concerns

The second cluster of issues which would cloud the implementation of a voucher program has to do with curriculum content and religious identity for private schools as they enter the voucher lists. In accepting voucher candidates, the private schools could become quasi-public schools. There are parts of the Illinois School Code which do not now apply to private schools, but will be imposed on the private schools as a condition of accepting/receiving money from Springfield. Non-Catholic, non-Lutheran, non-Jewish children who might transfer into a Catholic, a Lutheran, or a Jewish school will encounter different curricular programming. For example, all of the diocesan Catholic School Offices in Illinois have signed on for the "Common Core" curriculum reform. Private school principals need to ask themselves how to infuse a "common core" curriculum with spiritual values and Catholic (or Jewish or Muslim or Lutheran) doctrine. Diversity in the midst of the sameness resulting from a "common core" may be challenged. While academic basics stay the same, the means of achieving these basics change. In a religious school, students are taught

the rites and rituals of that religion, in addition to their academic subjects. However, Catholic rites and rituals are different from Jewish ones or Muslim ones. If parochial schools accept state monies, then they must follow the state's rules, even if these rules were contrary to the core beliefs of the school. As a result, the diversity and uniqueness could be lost. Voucher and choice proponents across the country have belittled this potential conflict or not addressed it at all, but to anyone who has taught in or been a principal in a religious school, this is an extremely important issue.

It would seem that a private-religious school ought to be pursuing a diverse core in its curriculum, not a common one, a program of studies which makes the institution distinctively Catholic or Lutheran or Muslim or Jewish. Private-religious schools are attractive because of their religious identity and spiritual mission. Religious schools are not un-American nor do they have a divisive curriculum. However, when state money is exchanged, these schools would be obliged to meet state curricular requirements, even if these requirements involved a "toning-down" of their doctrines and practices.

There are also several programmatic issues which arise from Public Law 108-446, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. For example, if a potential transferee has an Individual Educational Plan, the private school is obliged to admit the youngster even if the school has no special education program available, and most Catholic schools do not have such a program. If a transferee is in need of the services of a school psychologist or school social worker and the Catholic or Lutheran parochial school has no such staff, they may be compelled to hire personnel, in order to comply with the state's rules.

These curriculum and program concerns are just a few of the logistical details that might make a private religious school administrator be wary of applying for the voucher list. An infusion of money from Springfield is what is envisioned in Sister Mary Paul's Strategic Plan for Chicago Catholic Schools, but School Finance Rule One reminds us that there is no such thing as "free" money. "Who pays the piper calls the tune," and "If you take state money, you have to follow all of the state's rules."

Office of Catholic Schools Strategic Plan

These fiscal and curriculum concerns impact the arguments put forth in the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) Strategic Plan. They boil down to the dollars argument and the competition argument. The dollars argument states that, if the Chicago Archdiocese Catholic Schools did not exist, the 86,502 youngsters enrolled in the Catholic schools would be placed in the public schools, and the Archdiocese is saving the taxpayers of Illinois $1.15 billion per year, which translates to an expense of $13,294.00 per child, per year. The latest figure available for the average per pupil expenditure in Illinois is $11,592.00 (Fritts, 2012), so the figure needs to be pared to approximately $1 billion.

This argument overlooks the fact that, should a voucher program be adopted for private schools in Illinois, there would be no additional savings. The costs would simply be shifted from the public school systems to the private schools in the voucher system. Taxpayers are getting a savings in the current system, but they would be getting no additional savings in a voucher system, so there is no motivation for taxpayers to change to such a new system.

Taxpayers are required to support the children in the public school. In a voucher system, they would then be required to support the children in the public school plus the scholarship children in the private-religious schools. Proponents of the voucher program say that the same amount of money will be spent but in different schools. However, Illinois taxpayers and legislators, as previously noted, are looking to support legislation which will reduce their tax liability, not just redistribute it. Many of these taxpayers currently do not want to support the public schools in the first place, so they certainly would not want to support as well the private and the private-religious schools.

The second argument of the OCS Strategic Plan is that by funding a separate school system the legislature will promote improvements in the public schools since they will no longer be a monopoly and will have to be competitive. This argument is the oldest line of reasoning in the lexicon of school choice, rooted in the consumer oriented philosophy of Milton Friedman and the Reagan administration. Make the system competitive, this philosophy states, and consumer choice will reward efficient organizations, which deliver high

quality at lower prices and punish organizations which deliver poor quality at higher prices. The two most glaring failures of this deregulation/choice policy are air travel and health care. Competition was supposed to reduce costs and increase quality, but the exact opposite has occurred in deregulation. Both the air travel and health care industries have seen huge increases in costs and severe deterioration in availability and quality of services.

Applying this philosophy to school choice, this argument overlooks the empirical evidence of the past twenty-five years of school choice initiatives in New York, Wisconsin, Ohio, Philadelphia, and New Orleans (Ravitch, 2010). Whatever other good, bad, or indifferent effects a school choice/voucher system might produce, the improvement of the public schools, which lose money and students, is never one of the results. As the Florida court identified (*Bush v Holmes*, 2006), the voucher program reduces the funds available for the free schools, thus placing them in a competitive situation while reducing their capacity to compete.

There are strong arguments for supporting Catholic and other religious schools, but the money trade-off argument and the competition argument are not among the most convincing ones. The late Father Andrew Greeley pointed out more than thirty years ago that the best argument for support of Catholic Schools is their alumni (Greeley, 1976). An effective public relations/fund-raising program would highlight the alumni of the schools who have served in the military, who hold public office, who are teachers, doctors, nurses, first responders, priests, religious, pastors, rabbis. Greeley's data support the narrative that the graduates of Catholic schools, for example, are more likely to be regular Church-goers, are more likely to support the parish at higher financial levels, and are more inclined to support the Catholic school with contributions and with the attendance of their children. The greatness of the religious schools lies in the spiritual and moral insights and inspiration which they provide for their students, and these are reflected in the accomplishments for peace and justice of their graduates, and in the contributions that have been made by their alumni to the good of society, and to their respective churches, synagogues, and mosques. These worthy deeds are powerful motivators for

potential donors and supporters for the private-religious schools.

Perspective

This review intent is not to frustrate Illinois lawmakers and educators who are concerned about the quality of educational opportunity. The lack of equity in educational opportunity and funding is a serious concern to the people of Illinois and deserves the very best efforts of the lawmakers. Similarly, Sister Mary Paul and the Archdiocesan Schools Office are to be commended for their efforts to stabilize the finances of the Catholic schools in very difficult financial times. Private schools, especially private-religious schools, work hard to create a climate for learning based on spiritual values and a strong commitment to social justice. It is a privilege and tremendous opportunity for a child to have access to such a learning community. However, the Illinois Constitution does not guarantee access to such a privilege. What the Constitution does promise is that the State will establish and maintain "…an efficient system of high quality public educational institutions and services" (Constitution of the State of Illinois: Article Ten, Section 1).

Former Senator Meeks' and Senator Murphy's and Representative Sosnowski's proposals, themselves, are eloquent testimony to the failure of the Illinois General Assembly to fulfill that promise. The social contract between the people of the State of Illinois and the state government demands that the legislature utilize and focus all available resources in pursuit of that constitutional goal. Only when that goal has been achieved and every public school in the state is part of an "efficient, high quality system," can funds be allocated for other purposes, including vouchers for private education. Given the record of fiscal irresponsibility in Springfield, which has precipitated the current condition of the State of Illinois, that desired goal would appear to be years if not decades away.

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Fostering the Dialogue/In Response To:

Life-Threatening "Allergies" in Schools: A Call To Action

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By sheer necessity, the educational community at-large must be called upon to raise awareness on life-threatening "allergies" in the school environment. As a student and a teacher, it is necessary to advocate for those who have no voice in the classroom setting – particularly those with invisible illnesses caused by allergies or chemical sensitivities to biological and chemical substances in the learning environment. This story must be shared in order to speak out for social justice and equity (Apple, 1982; Giroux, 2004). The National Science Teachers Association [NSTA] calls for educators to "learn about the unique needs of students with disabilities" (NSTA, 2007). Any painful experience with an invisible disability should not be the norm for all children.

Individuals with disabilities are currently protected from discrimination by three main federal laws: (1) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112), and its sister civil rights law (2) the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; and (3) the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004. In 1973, Congress passed Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act in order to protect the disabled from discrimination. With each settlement or judgment considered by the federal courts, it is clear that "all students are protected under Section 504 even if they are not protected under IDEA. It goes without saying, however, that all students with disabilities covered by IDEA are also covered under Section 504" (Yell & Katsyannis, 2004, p. 32). However, parents and disability advocates continue to raise questions about the distinctions between those individuals who are considered disabled, as defined by federal law, and those who are not.

The 1996, Marie O. v. Edgar federal decision forced states "to establish a statewide system of services for eligible

children" to be in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Zimmerman, 2013). In addition, the Centers for Disease Control reports that the number of school-age children with food allergies has increased in the 1997 to 2007 decade to 25% (Branum, 2009). Although, Senator Dodd [D-CT] introduced Senate Bill 456 (111th): Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management Act of 2009 to establish voluntary guidelines to manage the risk of anaphylaxis incidents in schools, it was not enacted. Not only did the ADA fail to protect me – I continue to find children who are in jeopardy. I will introduce a few to you (under assumed names) after I share the essence of my story and the issues at play.

My Story

As a child, I had an accidental overdose of "fake" cinnamon in homemade apple butter. This 'allergy' incident caused me to miss school for weeks because my respiratory system swelled up and an infection took root. In my world, exposure to even a tiny amount of cinnamon raises my toxicity levels. This exposure can occur through ingestion, inhalation, or adsorption. My eighth grade teacher broke laws by forcing me to taste test snickerdoodles from home economics class under the threat of receiving a failing grade. In undergraduate and graduate school, requests were made to have "no cinnamon gum." However, because the professors did not enforce this request, my classmates continued to poison me. At one point, my reactivity level was so high, I had to consider whether to leave school and later teaching to become "the girl in the bubble."It is by sheer perseverance and the support of my family and peers that I have returned to a "near" sense of normalcy after more than 20 years as a teacher.

My teachers and professors alike did not understand that my allergy was not really an allergy at all. It was—and is—a life-threatening heath-impairment illness and an invisible disability exacerbated by a chemical sensitivity to "fake" cinnamon products produced in America. (Incidentally, I am not allergic to natural cinnamon – cassia bark.) Indeed, Denbo (2003) asserts that invisible illness disabilities are "not" easily "subject to the same level of scientific verification and understanding as physical and medical disabilities"… "which are either visible or … subject to verification by well-accepted imaging or laboratory tests." Since invisible illnesses

are generally "not directly observable" (p. 165), it is easy for those with invisible illnesses who cannot speak, or are not heard, to lose hope. Therefore, it is up to me, an expert in managing my own life-threatening invisible illness to speak up for the voiceless.

Alternative Paradigms of Disability Discourse

To fully grasp the issue at hand, three model paradigms of disability discourse that exist in the literature must be reviewed: medical, rehabilitative, and disability culture. Indeed, language choices have been shifting as understanding grows on the issue of life-threatening "allergies" and its broader topic of health-impairment disabilities. Individual and group dynamics of culture, language, social status, ability, and intelligence vis-à-vis the subject matter should shape planning and teaching (Ball &Wilson,1990; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Delpit, 1995; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1990; Little,1993; Middlecamp & Fernandez,1999; Warren, 2001). These are different ways of articulating identity and experiences (socio-cultural examination) along a spectrum of discourse levels and perceptions of tolerance.

1. *Medical Model*

The ADA and Section 504 both define disabled as a person who "(a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity; (b) has a record of having such an impairment; or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment" [42 U.S.C. § 12102(2); 29 U.S.C. § 706 (8)(B)]. Physical or mental impairments include: "(a) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech-organs; cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or (b) any mental or psychological disorder such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities" (§104.3 (j)(2)(i)(ii)). Interpretations can vary when one attempts to define the fine line between what is a *substantial limitation* on a major life activity (emphasis added)and what is not. Life activities include: "caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working" and by implication, teaching and other

kinds of work or service-performance in the educational setting (29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(i)).

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC] sets guidelines to establish whether an impairment is substantially limiting when compared to the general population (EEOC, 1987). Mitigating conditions may not qualify as disabilities. The Supreme Court has upheld decisions where protection can be forfeited if the individual fails to appropriately use their medications (Helms, Jorgenson, & Anderson,2006). This distinction is not yet clear for students; however, the recognition of life-threatening "allergies" as qualified invisible health impairment disabilities are a step in the right direction.

2. *Rehabilitative Model*

Charles (2004) states that "historically, persons with disabilities have been prevented from demonstrating the full measure of their potential because of ignorance, discrimination, or misunderstanding" (p. 87). Many people view a disability as something that is "imposed by society" (Charles, 2004, p. 87) on the individual in terms of physical, social and institutional barriers; rather than actual medical conditions or psychological issues. In effect, the lack of rehabilitative modifications (such as accessible facilities, equipment, and devices) limit or disable a segment of the society from being a full, successful participant in all aspects in their work and lives (Beauclaurier, 2002; Charles,2004; Galambos, 2004; Johnson & Lambrinos, 1985). Their personal identity is separate from the disability that society attempts to cure or rehabilitate (Gill, 1999). There often seems to be some sort of reverse barrier that is intended to exclude. For example, one child, Jerome, who had airborne allergies, was home-schooled, because addressing proper ventilation for the solvents in the art closet storage area or clean up the chalk dust became difficult to enforce. Thus, the question arises as to what extent are reasonable accommodations accommodated.

3. *Disability Culture*

This model encourages researchers to look "through a critical, postmodern framework which sees … disabilit[ies] as situated phenomena which are produced as objects in relation to power" (Heydon, 2005, p. 243). Gill's (2013) social-

cultural model expresses the identity of a disabled person as one who has been disabled by a society that treats them unfairly and unjustly. Rather than attempt to "cure or alleviat[e]" the problem, Gill (1999) encourages "a more progressive variant" called the "rehabilitation model" to "help the individual regain as much normal independent functioning as possible"(p. 281) amidst the "complex interactions between the individual and society" (p. 282).Gill (1999) encourages us to join the "disability culture movement" to explore personal "experience, identity, history, worldviews, language, and values" and to "proclaim. . .validity in a devaluing world." She calls us to embrace "our sense of pride… not in spite of disability, but partly because of it" (p. 282).Furthermore, disabled individuals are considered "experts on their particular disability" (Charles, 2004, p. 87). As such, Beauclaurier (2002), believes that we should have a voice in our treatment, care, and accommodation plans because of this unique perspective. Therefore, those who share their "insider perspective" adds to the "robustness" and "relevance of disability research" which "minority groups" indicate "should never be dismissed or oversimplified" (Gill, 1999, p. 285).

"Allergy" Themes and Implications

1. *Separating the Chaff from the Wheat: Life-threatening "Allergies"*

Percy (2001) states that "non-handicapped people have historically not understood the problems and realities in the lives of persons with . . . disabilities" (p. 63).Henderson (1999)reported that the research data for in P-12 schools and in institutions of higher education is clear in that the "disabling conditions that are most prevalent today are more likely to be invisible…than obvious" (p. iii).Experts agree that awareness levels must be raised to ensure a safe school setting (Ewan & Clark, 2001; FAAN, 2001;School Asthma Allergy, 2002). Gill (1999) states that a "disability may seem invisible, even inconsequential, in our work…until we look for it" (p. 281).

2. *Confronting Fear and Misperceptions with Knowledge*

Cicutto, Julien, Li, Nguyen-Luu, Butler, Clarke, Elliott, Harada, McGhan, Stark, Vander Leek, & Waserman (2012, p. 135) found that "the availability of completed

comprehensive individualized emergency management plans is an important element in creating supportive and safe school environments" and "was more frequently required in a legislated environment."According to Hay, Courson, & Harper (1994), the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on School Health recommends that schools be equipped to handle life-threatening reactions using identification, signing medical release forms, notations on folder, teacher/staff training, providing emergency phone numbers to all teachers, calculating emergency response time in advance, awareness of emergency medicine and procedures, and the delegation of authority for each step in the emergency response plan. Training should include awareness of early symptoms, practice in administering emergency medications, and preventive planning strategies including avoidance. High student-to-school nurse ratios indicate that a school nurse may not be available in an emergency (Barrett, 2001).Hay, Harper & Courson (1994) insists that calls be made in the following sequence: emergency medical services, parent, and then the child's physician.

Ewan & Clark (2001) and Rhim & McMorris (2001), among others, agree that avoidance is the primary key for reducing school exposures to allergen triggers. Avoidance guidelines include those outlined by Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network [FAAN] (2001)with input from the National Association of School Boards of Education [NASBE], the National Association of School Nurses [NASN], the National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], and the American School Food Services Association [ASFSA]. In addition, The New York State Department of Education [NYSDE](1994) ordered schools to develop guidelines to "reduce exposure to chemical fragrances which can cause possible adverse reactions in some individuals" (p. 13).

Indeed, the state of Michigan established groundbreaking legislation that requires the training of school personnel to administer epinephrine in case of emergency (Rhim & McMorris, 2001; Hay et al., 1994). This legislation was based on a study by Rhim & McMorris (2001)to determine the readiness of schools to manage and prevent food allergic reactions. For example, 109 Michigan schools representing 66,598 children, only 1.7% children/parents self-reported prevalence of food allergy. Few schools reported

individual emergency plans (16%). Methods of food allergy education included giving information to parents of students and in-service workshops for school staff. Avoidance strategies, food substitution, and "no-sharing" policies were common. Food-label teaching was uncommon (21%). A minority of schools had epinephrine immediately accessible, and it was the principals, nurses, and teachers were most often trained to administer the epinephrine. Researchers concluded that "there appears to be a need for schools to formally educate staff…"(Rhim & McMorris, 2001, p. 176) including how to treat anaphylaxis in students. Independent studies by Cicutto et al. (2012), Hay et al. (1994), Sampson, Mendelson & Rosen (1992), Sicherer & Mahr (2010), Sicherer, Burks& Sampson (2001), and Nowak-Wegrzn, Conover-Walker& Wood (2001) concur with these findings. All emphasize the failure to recognize early symptoms (Landau, 1994) as a key to addressing the concern. After all, failure in the school setting has unsettling consequences.

3. *Legal Protection and Accountability*

Enacted in 1866 during Reconstruction, the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution required states to provide "equal protection of laws" to all citizens in their jurisdiction. This law was originally intended to "enfranchise blacks" by defining "all native-born or naturalized persons, including blacks, as citizens" (McPherson,1992, p. 513). This law also contained a provision to give "due process of law" whenever actions by the state "could adversely affect life, liberty, or civil property" (Thomas, 2000, p.249). In addition, a companion Federal Law (FL 42 U.S.C. Section 1983), also known as the U. S. Civil Action for the Deprivation of Rights, was enacted to allow individuals who believe that a state action "is responsible for a violation of federal constitutional or statutory rights" to seek redress (Thomas & Russo, 1995, pp. 10-15).

However noble its intent, the 14th Amendment's use of the conjunction *and* instead of *or* in the phrase "citizens of the United States *and* of the State wherein they reside" allowed a loophole that gave states inalienable rights over federal jurisdiction regarding civil rights. Federal courts in recent years rectified this omission and, thereby, enabled the federal government to "broaden vastly" its "powers for the enforcement of civil rights" in lieu of previously acceptable

"state abridgments of the rights of state citizenship" (McPherson, 1992, p. 514). This premise of "equal protection of laws" led to a long history of civil rights laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; among others (i.e. race or gender) designed to prevent discrimination (Baker & Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001). However, Thomas (2000) asserts that" these laws failed to provide persons with disabilities specific protection" (p. 249).Therefore, advocates were able to follow a "civil-rights approach" to solving the issues of disabled persons which ultimately led to legislation to "legally protect" individuals seeking an opportunity to equal access to educational opportunities. This breakthrough has been lauded across the world, in contrast to other countries, who are following a "special-needs" or "service-provision approach" with mixed results (Konur, 2000, p. 1056). Schubert (1986) echoes this concern by stating, "education for equity needs to be treated as a major area of education in its own right" (p. 39) especially on behalf of those who are treated unfairly and unjustly.

4. *Action Through Advocacy and Education*

Rapaport, Manthorpe, Hussein, Moriarty, &Collins (2006) proclaimed, "rights to advocacy should be universally available to everyone with learning disability, especially people with profound impairments and complex needs" (p. 206). People with disabilities are often excluded from full participation in social activities (MENCAP, 2004). The type of advocacy work falls into five broad areas: (1) self-advocacy, (2) collective advocacy, (3)peer advocacy, (4) citizen advocacy, and (5) legal advocacy (Beart, Hardy & Buchan, 2004;Cantley, Steven, & Smith, 2003; Rapaport et al. 2006). The focus of advocacy has shifted over the years from primarily "citizen advocacy" to "issue-based" schemes to address needs "when things go wrong" (Rapaport et al., 2006, p. 196). The mental health community continues to advocate "reasonable accommodation" cultures for "otherwise qualified" individuals seeking employment and schooling. Indeed, the history of advocacy work on behalf of the disabled has been thoroughly explored in the work of Rapaport, Manthorpe, Moriarty, Hussein, and Collins (2005).

Common misconceptions continue to persist such as the belief that cold, heat, barometric pressure, humidity,

seasons, activity, and exercise cause an allergic reaction. These factors are not causes but conditions that may provoke the reaction to push forward in a similar mechanism as a catalyst would in a chemical reaction. There may be a delayed response that can result in a synergistic or additive impact on the reaction that is set to occur (Gershwin & Klingelhofer, 1998). To address this problem, Welch (2000, p.47) teaches about common misperceptions through "The Asthma Fables":

> Fable 1—Asthma comes and goes,
> Fable 2—Asthma is an emotional disorder,
> Fable 3—Only use medications at attacks,
> Fable 4—Asthma is only an annoying condition, not a real disease,
> Fable 5—Children grow out of asthma, and
> Fable 6—Asthma clears up when you move to a warm, dry climate. (p. 47)

These fables are often used to justify the beliefs of the uninformed. Gershwin and Klingelhofer (1998) indicate that "the popular belief that some forms of allergic disease are psychologically caused is without foundation" (p. 145). A causal link has not been determined and psychotherapy has not been proven to cure or alleviate the symptoms (Caccappolo-van Vliet, Kelly-McNeil, Natelson, Kipen, & Felder, 2002). For example, one student, Marea, who had a history of being bipolar and known to be allergic to strawberries, started acting out and claiming she was having an allergic reaction. Her outburst was perceived as misbehaving in order to avoid a test. After she collapsed and subsequently treated for anaphylaxis, it was discovered that she had borrowed a contaminated pencil from a friend.

Another misconception involves anxiety or panic attacks. Although anxiety *has not been shown* to cause an allergic reaction, an allergic reaction can intensify the psychological response and, thereby, exponentially increase the effects of the ongoing allergic reaction. Medical treatment to minimize the responses to the fear (i.e. anxiety, depression, panic, etc.) is considered in some medical circles to be a worthwhile management strategy (Caccappolo-van Vliet et al., 2002; Gershwin & Klingelhofer, 1998).

Another misunderstanding is a belief that "just a little" of the allergic agent will help the individual "grow out" of a reaction. Rapp (1996) states: "It is not always how much

of a substance an individual is exposed to but how sensitive that particular individual is to the substance that can cause illness. For example, one heavy exposure to a pesticide can cause a sensitivity to develop, so that afterward even a miniscule exposure to any chemical in the future can cause an incapacitating illness" (p. 117). One drop of an allergic substance can be fatal. It is imperative that children learn to be their own monitors, supplemented by a supportive educational community (Erlich & Chiaramonte, 2003; Rapp, 1996).

To answer this call, Dr. Thomas Plaut (2000), the author of the *Five Degrees of Asthma Management*, published a summary of awareness stages for asthma that apply equally well for chemical sensitivities and other invisible triggers:

- Stage 1: No Knowledge—cannot recognize an episode, knows nothing about medications;
- Stage 2: Beginner—can recognize an episode but not judge severity, needs help deciding when to start medication, cannot communicate clearly with doctor or nurse by phone;
- Stage 3: Intermediate—can handle an episode well with doctor's help, knows how to judge severity of an episode and use a peak flow meter, knows when to start medications, can communicate clearly by phone, has made environmental changes to reduce triggers;
- Stage 4: Advanced—has a good understanding of signs, triggers, and treatments, skillfully analyzes peak flow and symptoms, knows when to start/stop medications, can handle most episodes safely at home without consulting a doctor or nurse, has made major environmental changes to reduce triggers;
- Stage 5: Expert—fully understands symptoms, triggers, and medications, can accurately judge symptoms and knows when to seek help, understands course and pattern of episodes, can assess episodes and use this information to discuss ways to improve treatment, needs doctor's help only if

symptoms are unusually severe, reviews treatment with doctor at regular intervals (3 months to 12 months)(p. 160-161).

In addition, advocacy groups such as FAAN and the Voices for Illinois Children, among others, are vital to this effort.

Answering the Call to Transform "Blame" into "Action"

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) continues to advocate for healthy school environments and acknowledges that "biological or chemical agents" may "affect the well-being" of students and staff and ultimately, impact the ability to participate in meaningful learning experiences (Basch, 2010; Igoe, 1998; Kataoka, Zhang & Wells, 2002; NASBHC, 2012; Voices for Illinois Children, 2007). For example, Grace nearly died because her school did not follow the procedures outlined on her signed consent form. The school erred by not following the procedures in place (Ewan & Clark, 2001; FAAN, 2001; School Asthma Allergy, 2002).

Britzman (1997) states that "if educational discourse positioned [an individual]'s sense of self-blame, then [that individual] can transform this blame into a desire to change the system" (p. 15). For me, I have transitioned from blaming the "other" to a mindset in which I forgive because "they know not what they do." However, I know that I cannot fight every battle alone. This battle requires "systemic change at a deep physiological level involving attitudes, actions, and artifacts that have developed over substantial periods of time" (Vaill, 1989, p. 167). Evans (2001) cautions that "…culture change can occur, but it is a vastly more difficult, lengthy undertaking than most people imagine" (p. 187). Everyone must work together in unity, despite differences, in order to ensure that all children "have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education" (Smith, 2002), including those with invisible illnesses. As a teacher educator, I

am in a position to enact change. Will you join me?

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The editor welcomes comments and feedback from its readers in this section: **Fostering the Dialogue/In Response To**. Please refer to page 64 for the guidelines.

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