

Suspending Disbelief

World-Class Public Schools for All

Key Findings

Basic Competencies:

Students should have the ability to: Use all forms of information, especially current media and technology; develop a greater cultural awareness of their country and others; have the ability to work with others of different backgrounds; and develop skills to analyze multiple sources of information that can be used to solve real problems.

Curriculum Standards:

A world-class standards curriculum would focus on fewer topics in greater depth. Flexible pathways to a diploma would acknowledge that a four-year college degree is not necessary for every high school graduate, but a more rigorous curriculum is needed for those going directly into the workforce. Regardless of a student's path after high school, the curriculum should stress digital literacy, global perspectives and second language instruction each and every year.

Assessment and Testing:

Continuous classroom assessment would be more important than annual high-stakes exams in multiple topics. More responsibility would fall to teachers to assess students' strengths. Teachers, in turn, would be held accountable for sharing successful learning strategies with each other. Local tests would eventually be modified to include questions that allow the public to gauge how average student performance compares to international standards.

Time:

Schedules within the current school day would be redesigned to increase the amount of time that teachers and students spend in direct, engaged learning. Teachers would need more time for preparation, which will likely mean a new approach to school duties for all adults. The report anticipates a longer school year or even school day, but specifically does not call for changes in that area until the time now available is put to better academic use.

For a copy of the full report, go to www.wakeedpartnership.org

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