Waldorf Education & Public School Reform

Public School Reform’s New 3R’s – Rigor, Relevance, Relationship:

What’s The Contribution From Waldorf?

Dr. Ida Oberman
Rudolf Steiner College
January 20, 2007
Agenda

Introduction

I. The Challenge, the Goal, the Opportunity

II. What Matters A Lot: The Snap Shot
   “No Child Left Behind” Phase I
   o 2006
      Performance Data From Five Public Waldorf Schools

III. What Matters Most: The Long View
     “No Child Left Behind” Phase II
     o 1943-2005
        Survey Data From 500-Waldorf Graduates

IV. Implications & Next Steps

V. Question & Answer
First...

- Think Of One “Waldorf Strategy” Learned & Tested

- Think About Justifying It To Your Superior – superintendent, principal, mentor teacher—

- Challenge…? Opportunity…?
Outcomes Sought Today:

- Further Bridge Divide
  - Waldorf ‘Speak’, Public School Reform ‘Speak’

- Add To Our
  - Quiver Of Arrows To Argue For Public Waldorf Schools In Public Education

- Consider
  - Where Can We Learn From Other Public School Reformers

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I. The Challenge, Goal, Opportunity

- Mounting accountability pressure
II. The Moment Is Now For Public School Reform

- What Matters A Lot: The Snap Shot:
  - Challenge: The Snap Shot Data To Inform Instruction
  - Goal: All Students Supported To Reach College & Career
  - Opportunity:
    - No Child Left Behind, Phase 1
    - Signed Into Law 2001
    - Up For “Re-Authorization” 2007:

- How Have We Done?
The Moment Is Now For Public Waldorf Schools:

The Emergence of Public Waldorf Education
Urban Waldorf, 1991-You Today

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Reform
How Have We Done
...With Waldorf’s Distinctive Methods--

Five Key Waldorf Methods:

1. Block scheduling
   NOT isolated classes
2. Narrative (story telling)
   NOT just earnest
3. Developmentally appropriate experiential education
   NOT just pure theory
4. Teachers looping
   NOT every year new kids
5. Time for play, festival, theater
   NOT just work
Know Our Data...

2006 California Standards Test Performance Data
From Five Public Waldorf Schools...

- Large City: John Morse, Sacramento Unified
- Small Town Elementary: Yuba River Charter, Twin Ridges
- Urban Fringe, Large City: Novato Charter, Novato Unified
- Urban Fringe Mid Size City: Woodland Star Charter, Sonoma Valley Unified
- Urban Fringe Large City: Stone Bridge, Napa Valley Unified

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Know Our Data...

Thinking Exercise:
--Pick One School On This List
--What Do You Think:
   Looking At 2006 California Standards Test Performance Data
   By The Final Grade, Does Each School Perform (a) Below Top 10 Peer-
   Alike, (b) Equal To (c) Above Average Of Top 10

--Why?

Public Waldorf Schools, 2006 Performance on CST:
1. John Morse, Sacramento Unified
2. Yuba River Charter, Twin Ridges Elementary
3. Novato Charter, Novato Unified
4. Woodland Star Charter, Sonoma Valley Unified
5. Stone Bridge, Napa Valley Unified
I. Large City: John F. Morse, Sacramento Unified

a. Grade 2 Language Arts 2006 Results

Free/Reduced School Lunch: 38%

English Learners: 4%

Hispanic: 19%

Back: 16%

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I. Large City’s Public Waldorf School

1. John F. Morse, Sacramento City Unified
   b. Grade 8 Language Arts 2006 Results

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I. Large City’s Public Waldorf School

1. John F. Morse, Sacramento City Unified
c. Grade 2 Mathematics 2006 Results

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I. Large City’s Public Waldorf School

1. John F. Morse, Sacramento City Unified
d. Grade 8 Mathematics 2006 Results

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**II. Small Town: Yuba River Charter, Twin Ridges Elementary School District**

**a. Grade 2 Language Arts 2006 Results**

- **Free/Reduced School Lunch:** 28%
- **Hispanic:** 8%
- **American Indian:** 3%

![Bar chart showing percent of students](image)

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II. Small Town

Yuba River Charter, Twin Ridges Elementary
b. Grade 7 Language Arts 2006 Results

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II. Small Town

Yuba River Charter, Twin RIDGES Elementary
C. Grade 2 Mathematics 2006 Results

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II. Small Town

Yuba River Charter, Twin Ridges Elementary
d. Grade 7 Mathematics 2006 Results

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III. Urban Fringe Large City: Novato Charter, Novato Unified School District

Novato Charter, Novato Unified
a. Grade 2 Language Arts 2006 Result

Hispanic: 5%

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III Urban Fringe, Large City

Novato Charter, Novato Unified
b. Grade 8 Language Arts 2006 Result

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Insufficient data for analysis
III. Urban Fringe, Large City

Novato Charter, Novato Unified
c. Grade 2 Mathematics 2006 Result

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III. Urban Fringe Large City

Novato Charter, Novato Unified
d. Grade 8 Mathematics 2006 Result

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IV. Urban Fringe, Mid-Size City: Woodland Star Charter, Sanoma Valley Unified

4. a Woodland Star Charter, Sonoma Valley Unified
Grade 2 Language Arts 2006 Results

Hispanic: 12%

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IV. Urban Fringe, Mid-Size City

Woodland Star Charter, Sonoma Valley Unified
b. Grade 8 Language Arts 2006 Results

Hispanic: 12%

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IV. Urban Fringe, Mid-Size City

Woodland Star Charter, Sonoma Valley Unified

c. Grade 2 General Mathematics 2006 Results

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IV. Urban Fringe, Mid-Size City

Woodland Star Charter, Sonoma Valley Unified

d. Grade 8 General Mathematics 2006 Results

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V. Urban Fringe, Large City: Stone Bridge, Napa Valley Unified

Stone Bridge, Napa Valley Unified
a. Grade 2 Mathematics 2006 Results

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V. Urban Fringe, Large City:

Stone Bridge, Napa Valley Unified
b. Grade 8 General Mathematics 2006 Results

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Know Our Data
The Range Of Public Waldorf Grades Meet Or Outperform Top 10 Peers State:

✓ Large City – John Morse
✓ Small Town Yuba River Charter
✓ Urban Fringe, Large City – Novato Charter
✓ Urban Fringe Mid Size City – Woodland Star Charter
✓ Urban Fringe Large City – Stone Bridge
Know Our Data
The Range Of Public Waldorf Grades Meet Or Outperform Top 10 Peers State:

The Question Is WHY?
WHAT DID WE DO With Our Strategies TO MAKE IT SO when we did…

- Block scheduling
- NOT isolated classes
- Narrative (story telling)
- NOT just earnest
- Developmentally appropriate experiential education
- NOT just pure theory
- Teachers looping
- NOT every year new kids
- Time for play, festival, theater
- NOT just work
III. What Matters Most: The Long View
No Child Left Behind, Phase II

New Insights
After 5 Years Of No Child Left Behind
2001–2007

Hispanic

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What Has Changed? Voices From Bill Gates

- What Matters Most – For Life AFTER School
  - Rigor: making sure all students are given challenging curriculum that prepares them for college & work
  - Relevance: making sure kids have courses and projects that clearly relate to their lives and their goals
  - Relationships: making sure kids have a number of adults who know them, look out for them, and push them to achieve

--Bill Gates, Jr. September 2005
Common Challenge: Lack of Rigor

“Teachers who’d come to me even when I was making straight A’s and ask, when are you going to start applying yourself?

--Bill Gates, Jr, September 2005
Common Focus: Need For Relevance

“I got to apply what I learned outside of class... for me the most powerful was my learning of the computer... I got to make the school’s schedule with my computer. That got me friends. Then I got to build the most powerful computer company on the globe... What I learned was relevant. “

-- Bill Gates, Jr, September 2005
Common Goal: Relationship For Strong Action

“My classes were small...you got to know your teachers, they got to know you. The relationship that came from that really made a difference...”

Bill Gates, Jr, September 2005
What Matters Most: The Long View HOW HAVE WE DONE?

Know Our Data

1943-2005 Survey Data From 500 Graduates

--Waldorf Research Institute 2007
What Matters Most

Rigor: For Life Long Learning: Love (a)
What Matters Most: The Long View
HOW HAVE WE DONE?

Know Our Data

1943-2005 Survey Data From 500 Graduates

Thinking Exercise: Would Waldorf Grad Prefer Reading Good Book Or Watching TV…
What Matters Most

Rigor: Life Long Learning: Engagement Learning(b)

--Graph showing mean frequency of activities--

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What Matters Most

Rigor: Life Long Learning, Global (c)
What Matters Most

- Relevance: Social Intelligence (a)
What Matters Most

- Relevance: Global Citizenship (b)

![Bar Chart](chart.png)

- MEAN LEVEL OF INFLUENCE
  - 1=not at all influential; 5=extremely influential

- Interest In Different Views
- Interest In Other Cultures

- Canada
- South/West
- Midwest
- East
What Matters Most

- Relevance: Internal Strength Of Will (c)
What Matters Most

- Relationship:
  The Stark Challenge Of Bowling Alone
What Matters Most: Life Long Learning

- Relationship (a)
What Matters Most: Life Long Learning

- Relationship (b)

![Bar chart showing the mean level of influence for fairness and tolerance regarding other people's opinions and ability to empathize, categorized by regions: Canada, South/West, Midwest, East.](chart.png)
What Matters Most: Life Long Learning

- Relationship (c)

![Bar chart showing mean level of influence (1 = not at all influential, 5 = extremely influential) for interest in different views and interest in other cultures across different regions.]
What Matters Most: Life Long Learning

- Relationship (d)

![Bar Chart]

- Readiness To Share W/Community
- Environmental Responsibility

- Mean Influence (1 = not at all influential, 5 = extremely influential)

Legend:
- Canada
- South/West
- Midwest
- East
What Matters Most: Life Long Learning

- Relationship In Sum

- Waldorf Graduates Don’t Bowl Alone

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Waldorf’s 3 R’s Of Rigor, Relevance & Relationship

Rigor
1. block scheduling (not isolated classes)

Relevance
1. narrative (story telling) (not just earnest)
2. developmentally appropriate experiential education (not just pure theory)

Relationship
1. teachers looping (not every year new kids)
2. time for play, festival, theater (not just work)
IV. Implications & Next Steps

- Celebrate & Strengthen Leadership in Ability To
  - Know Our Data: Be evidence based
  - Communicate Our Successes
  - Continue To Bowl With Others, Not Alone
Finally…Think Back To That Waldorf Strategy You Picked…

- Something new you could add when explaining to another

- Something new you could add when doing it yourself?
V. Question and Answer

- What is confirming?
- What is surprising?
- Other remarks?
Conclusion & Thanks

- The question isn’t first off ‘Where are you going.’ The immediate question is, ‘What the hell are you doing here anyway.’

--Art Buchwald, January 2007