

Is There a Case for Choice?

Educational Leadership asked Mary Anne Raywid, an advocate of choice and an observer of its development, to critique ASCD's recent issues analysis, *Public Schools of Choice*. Here she describes her reservations about the views put forth by the ASCD panel.

Choice is rapidly becoming our most extensively proposed—and opposed—strategy for school reform and restructuring. A recent Department of Education document reports that in 1989 state legislatures considered or enacted more than 30 choice initiatives.¹ When an idea captures this sort of attention in education, it tends to be surrounded by a variety of voices in predictable chorus.

First, we begin hearing about an idea, the mentions grow more frequent (and laudable), and adoptions spread. Soon another set of voices is heard—the skeptics, whose tone is more questioning than negative, with a suspended judgment overlay. This group is supplemented, however, by yet a third, the cynics—a more sharply and openly negative contingent than the skeptics—whose contribution to the chorus is to show how the idea is fundamentally flawed. Eventually the singers tire or are drowned out by a new chorus assembled by a new idea.

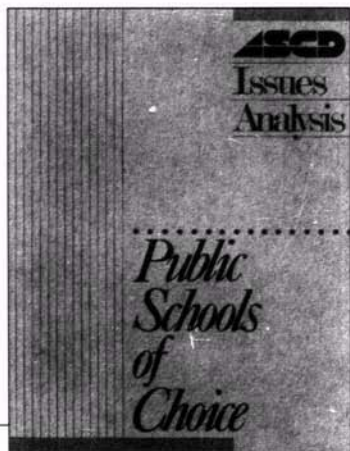
As of now, the choice chorus appears in full voice. The idea that public

education should make school affiliation a matter of choice has its practitioner advocates, prominent among whom are Sy Fliegel and Deborah Meier of Manhattan's District 4 and Walter Marks of Montclair, New Jersey, and Richmond, California.² Choice also has its policy advocates, including Joe Nathan of the Humphrey Institute

and Charles Glenn of Massachusetts' Office of Educational Equity.³ The cynic section includes at least two voices strong on clarity, Bella Rosenberg of the American Federation of Teachers and Ann Bastian of The New World Foundation, and they have recently been joined by a more strident voice, that of Mike Lieberman.⁴

The skeptics typically feature academics, and perhaps Dick Elmore's voice has been most prominent.⁵ ASCD's new issues analysis titled *Public Schools of Choice* has joined the chorus seated in the skeptics section, but visibly closer to cynics than to advocates. Indeed, it is situated at a point making it hard to tell which section is its home, skeptics or cynics, and whether the doubts of skepticism have become the certainties of cynicism. I want to explore that question, but my own vantage point must color the inquiry and is thus relevant.

I have been an advocate of choice, as well as a scholar and chronicler of its development, since the early 1970s. Of the many and diverse reasons why people currently espouse choice,



three underlie my own view and are reflected in my examination of *Public Schools of Choice*:

- a conviction that public education's future is in real doubt and that schools may not survive;
- a conviction that all schools, not just the weakest, need present and continuing revitalization;
- the belief that in public schools, as in other public institutions, power has tended to gravitate to bureaucracies in ways inconsistent with our democratic commitment.

Assessing Broad Strategies

Public Schools of Choice is one of an "issue analysis" series through which ASCD explores pending policy areas. This always means the selection of strategies among several alternatives, and that generally means controversy. I begin my analysis with some observations about strategy selection, for whether to adopt some form of choice for public schools is not a policy decision; it is a far broader decision that would entail multiple policies. We need, then, to take a broad look.

One of Aristotle's legacies was an examination of the forms of government, disclosing that different structures are by nature subject to different characteristic risks. For example, monarchies can become tyrannies, while democracies face a different challenge, that of becoming mobocracies. Similarly, the choice arrangement comes with a set of dangers to be avoided, and these differ somewhat from the particular set attached to other systems of school organization and control. Here are the particular risks that choice systems must confront and guard against:

1. Will diversification prove culturally divisive?
2. Will diversified schools provide sufficient common learnings?
3. Will diversification increase racial isolation?
4. Will schools of choice increase social class isolation?
5. Will they result in "skimming" and "dumping"?
6. Will they yield ability grouping or tracking?

7. Will they harm non-choice schools?

8. Will they harm non-choosers?
9. Will they harm poor choosers?
10. Will they undermine the forging of a public?
11. Will they give way to an undesirable stress on marketing?
12. Will they yield indifference and inequity as the best programs become over-enrolled?
13. Will they deny parents an operating base?
14. Will they compromise professional integrity?

These are serious risks, to be sure. This does not mean that they pose unavoidable dangers or insurmountable challenges. Nor does it mean that choice is a particularly fragile or precious proposal singularly fraught with danger. It does, however, mean that choice systems must recognize and confront the particular risks to which they are subject, or else, in Aristotle's terms, degenerate into corrupt forms.

In weighing the desirability of choice, however, one needs to look not only at its risk list but also at the dangers of alternative systems. Here is the list of risks for a form of school organization and control that is an alternative to choice:

1. Will uniformity bar the freedom and flexibility to meet children's needs, parents' aspirations, and schools' needs?
2. Will socioeconomic segregation be avoided?
3. Will ethnic segregation be avoided?
4. Will tracking by ability and special needs be avoided?
5. Will the school be publicly controlled, as opposed to bureaucratically controlled?
6. Will change and improvement remain possible?
7. Will schools be held accountable without stultifying them and undermining their ability to do what is needed?
8. Will incompetence be protected and preserved?
9. Will a shift from input to output accountability be possible without distorting educational purpose?
10. Will we prevent the failure and

estrangement of half or more of the student population?

11. Will we graduate young adults who are contributing citizens rather than simply consumers of social services?
12. Will we prevent the burnout and powerlessness that erode teacher commitment, effort, and efficacy?
13. Will we enable youngsters to learn and achieve at high levels?
14. Can we avoid vandalism and violence in schools?

It should rather quickly have become evident that the second list identifies the particular risks of the system we now have: hierarchical, centralized control. Those who urge school restructuring incline to the view that with respect to all or most of the dangers, the present system has succumbed, not overcome. Thus, the question of whether choice is a good idea must revolve not solely around the pros and cons of choice but around those of the alternatives as well. Otherwise, we will never be able to understand the wisdom of Churchill's adage that "democracy is the worst form of government—except for all the rest."

The present system is one of the alternatives for public schools. Thoughtful questioners, however, wonder just how much of it we would be willing to choose today, were we starting from ground zero. Indeed, a great deal of the education discussion of the past decade has consisted of documenting how the current system has fallen prey to virtually all of the risks in the second list offered earlier. Despite it all, however, in examining alternatives to the status quo, we tend to give current arrangements a considerable advantage, irrespective of their acknowledged shortcomings. Minimally, broad decisions about the desirability of proposal X must look not only at its debits but also at those of the alternatives.

Public Schools of Choice seems to acknowledge something of the sort in a two-page section, "What Other Approaches Besides Choice Could Address the Problems?" There, the authors identify four other restructuring proposals: Shanker's Incentive Schools Program, Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, Goodlad's National Network for Educa-

tional Renewal, and school-based decision making. But since no assets or liabilities are attributed to any of these, it is difficult to see how successfully they might address the problems. We are simply told, "As is the case with choice, evidence is not available" about their effectiveness (p. 30). The somewhat startling conclusion of the section, nevertheless, is, "Thus, it is clear that no single approach will solve all of the problems faced by every school . . ." (p. 31).

The Challenge of Objectivity

I want to comment here on just three aspects of *Public Schools of Choice*: its objectivity, its claims about the research base for choice, and its statements about the equity risks of choice. The objectivity question interests me partly because ASCD sponsored the report and also because objectivity is a compelling question in itself. The second and third questions are important

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because they have also been raised elsewhere and need examination.

First, it seems to me that *Public Schools of Choice* carries a substantial negative bias, moving beyond the skeptic's caution. It does so, however, in ways that would prove interesting for an advanced social studies course. One finds few openly damning formulations but a number that look like these:

- "There appears to be a rather widespread consensus that providing a program of school choice is an expensive proposition" (p. 20).

- "The experiences of some school districts with schools of choice suggest that the role of the central administration is turned upside down when choice enters the picture" (p. 22).

- "In addition to the many duties they now perform, principals will become the directors of marketing and promotion for their schools" (p. 23).

Now, it shouldn't take much imagination to guess the impact such allegations might reasonably produce on board members and administrators. Yet in each case the facts are as debatable as the alarm-triggering formulations—and the ASCD monograph leaves them unexamined!

Further, *Public Schools of Choice* seems to position itself against choice advocates (never against choice opponents!) by the views it attributes to them. For instance, "Introduction of choice, advocates believe, will cause everyone in the system to examine the schools from top to bottom so that rational choices can be made" (p. 8). I have never encountered a choice advocate of such simpleminded persuasion, and I am fairly well acquainted with the roster. (Or was the statement intended as a caricature?)

One general formulation proves particularly important: the suggestion that choice threatens the traditional balance in public education between public good versus private interests. Such a contest sounds an alarm, and it proves a recurring theme (pp. 9, 23, 32). Yet such a threat is by no means integral to the choice arrangement nor its rationale. The establishment of schools of choice designed by teach-

ers, with parameters set by boards of education, need not sacrifice one bit of the public interest. And are those who look to choice as a catalyst for urgently needed change seeking to enhance the private good over the public interest? How about those who find present school governance arrangements to look more like technocracy than democracy? Would they compromise or augment public good, as opposed to private interests? Certainly one can view choice as threatening the balance between the public and the private good—but it can also be examined just as defensibly in such other terms as bringing a public institution under more democratic public control. It is such a possibility that makes the premise chosen somewhat arbitrary—and since it is an alarm-sounding premise, its selection suggests bias.

In sum, while the monograph's language remains temperate, its tone seems more given to doubt than to suspended judgment. While the ASCD voice may lack the cynical timbre of the National School Boards Association—whose director recommends formulating a negative response that doesn't sound like a negative response⁶—still, one wonders what happened to the voices of the choice advocates reportedly part of the panel.⁷

The Research Objection

That we lack sufficient knowledge about choice to trust it as a solution to school problems is a major theme of *Public Schools of Choice*. The authors seem to associate advocates with the exorbitant view that choice always works (their reading of Secretary Cavalos' statement that "choice works" [p. 9]) and that choice alone is all that is needed to assure success ("Educators and policymakers should . . . [not be] arguing about whether a single factor, like choice, explains differences among schools" and later, "While choice may be one factor in the achievement of . . . goals, it alone does not guarantee quality schools for all students" [pp. 15, 32]). Thus, the ASCD panel finds sufficient evidence to conclude that choice is not a fail-safe

proposal nor is it a sufficient condition for success. I concur. I would add that not only are some choice systems ineffective, but some are also undesirable. But, unfortunately, the authors treat choice exclusively as a single proposal.

What else do we know about choice and the way it works? Precious little, say these authors, concluding that none of the six assumptions they attribute to choice has been warranted: "These assumptions seem to make good sense. . . . Still, what do we know about how valid they are?" (p. 10). And in perhaps one of the monograph's most positive statements, they offer this:

We agree that something interesting and important is going on in these places of choice. We can't be sure, however, that what is of interest and consequence about these schools stems from the variable of choice—we do not have that kind of certain evidence. . . . (p. 6).

There is, in fact, some fairly strong evidence related to choice. What is missing, however—leaving the above statement technically correct—is that we lack *experimental* evidence. Moreover, we are not likely to get it because it is a demand that is virtually impossible to satisfy. Let's look at what it would entail.

The research ideal that skeptics seem to envision is the individual treatments approach used in psychology and in medicine. In this view, an acceptable experimental case for choice would require a design something like this: One would seek multiple carefully matched sets of students in schools willing to participate—students matched as to all the factors we believe important, such as family income levels, parent occupation and education levels, student ability and achievement levels, and so on. Then choice programs would be established in some of the schools within each set but not in all, and students would be assigned randomly to one of the two types. After some agreed-upon period (preferably a matter of several years), the two groups, choosers and non-choosers, could be compared as to multiple outcomes (academic success,

attitudes, post-graduation directions and success, and so on).

Now, the difficulty and expense and social and political problems involved in such an inquiry are obviously considerable. But choice complicates the design demands by requiring that there be several choice schools within each experimental set (or else there can be no choice). And it requires some variation in the kinds of choices available (so that results cannot be attributed to a felicitous program rather than to the opportunity to *select* that program). Note, too, that the design requires random assignment that would surely prove objectionable and difficult to maintain. Further, since sets of schools are involved, obviously some youngsters would be required to travel. Even the initial challenge of finding the schools to participate—no, the *sets* of participant schools—appears almost insurmountable, even before calculating the price tag for such an inquiry.

Nevertheless, the findings of such a study seem to be the sort of evidence skeptics envision, as they maintain that we really do not know whether choice works or whether its apparent successes are due instead to something else. But the complexity of educational "treatments"—the number of variables in any school situation—make the psychological or medical model a poor one for use in educational research. And the practical difficulties such research poses make it virtually impossible to pursue.

It is for this reason that almost *nothing* we now do in education can meet the experimental research model! We do, indeed, lack experimental evidence for choice. We also lack it for everything from a disciplinary organization of the high school, to 45-minute classes, to the division of functions between and among teachers and administrators, and to the assignment of students to 12 grade levels and the organization of schools into 3. We simply have not *sought* experimental evidence for most of what we've got in schools—with the longest standing arrangements perhaps claiming the least sort of evidence of *any* kind.

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Beyond this, we might also note that perhaps *no* areas of human endeavor can meet such knowledge demands—even the areas that we most like to assume have already met them. A recent book on medicine tells it this way:

The "gold standard" of scientific proof [in medicine] is the double-blind controlled study. . . .

While double-blind studies are the most definitive, very few clinical studies are of this design. In fact, as recently as 1976, fewer than 5 percent of original research articles published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and the *Lancet* were controlled matched studies of any kind. Only a fraction of that small percentage were double-blind.

If doctors were to limit themselves to using only treatments that have been conclusively proven worthwhile through double-blind studies, doctors would prescribe very little treatment at all.⁸

This certainly does not constitute a case against strong evidence; but it does suggest the stringency of demands for certain kinds of evidence for school reform proposals. It also highlights the somewhat odd position in which such insistence leaves us:

with a set of arrangements enjoying precious little support assured indefinite tenure—that is, as long as it takes for substitute arrangements to build the most compelling of cases. Insistence on this sort of evidence might well freeze the present into the eternal. There is some comparative evidence on public schools of choice, but for one reason or another much of it is not very helpful. Skeptics and cynics often cite the Alum Rock study, which focused on one of the nation's first choice systems. Unquestionably, this is the most extensive study of choice ever undertaken. It has the disadvantage, however, of pertaining to few choice systems today—in part because others have learned from the Alum Rock experience. Few contemporary choice advocates are willing to defend the arrangements and practices adopted in that first effort, and much has been written about its mistakes.⁹

Other studies have some of the attributes of single case experiments but typically have not been of sufficient scale to attract much attention. For instance, an evaluation of the Montgomery County, Maryland, magnet program matched the achievement levels of entering magnet school students with students remaining in schools of assignment, following the progress of both groups over a period of several years. The study concluded that magnet school students achieved more than did the comparison group students and that their relative advantage increased the longer they remained in the magnet school.¹⁰

Short of experimental evidence, however, other kinds can build a case and have done so with respect to the choice arrangement. Evaluations of schools and systems in operation are a start, and quite a large number of such evaluations are now available. Their total probably numbers well into the hundreds, and while certainly not all are of high quality, perhaps 50 or more are. To cite just a few examples, those done annually in the Los Angeles schools seem very well designed, as do the reports on San Diego's magnet schools; the studies of the Peninsula Academies in California; the report on

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magnet schools in Montgomery County, Maryland, the two reports on magnets in Montclair, New Jersey, and the study of Wake County's magnet program in North Carolina.¹¹ These and a number of other evaluations suggest that schools of choice are associated with both increased achievement and more positive feelings about the school on the part of students, teachers, and parents.¹²

Other forms of descriptive research, such as surveys, provide accounts of what is, but offer no help with its antecedents or consequences. A number of these studies also have been done on schools of choice, establishing their number, location, and characteristics.¹³ Ethnographic accounts or "deep descriptions" often yield considerable insight into human groups, but they, too, preclude anything but speculations and hypotheses as to causation. There are now a number of such accounts of schools of choice, including the studies of magnet schools done by Metz and the alternative school studies by Swidler and Everhart.¹⁴

Correlational studies begin to give us glimpses of more, however; and when subjected to sophisticated statistical treatment like multiple regression and path analysis, they can yield

the kind of evidence often accepted as tantamount to having established causation. Such studies substitute a sociological model of inquiry for the psychological model described above. We are acquiring this kind of evidence also, bearing on public schools of choice. One such study, for example, offered strong explicit testimony to the power of choice, finding that youngsters who selected their high school were more committed to it and performed better academically than did youngsters denied this choice.¹⁵ The problem is that studies of this sort have typically been small. Indeed, until fairly recently, there have probably not been the number of choice systems that the model sociological study would require. Thus, most sociologically inspired designs have involved relatively small numbers of students and schools—and have remained fairly obscure. As a result, most of the large-scale studies bearing on public schools of choice have not directly involved such schools.

For instance, Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore are now generally conceded to have established that youngsters in schools of choice (albeit in nonpublic schools) reach higher levels of achievement than do youngsters in schools of assignment (neighborhood public schools).¹⁶ Lee and Bryk have offered strong support to the claim that the organizational properties of schools produce achievement differences.¹⁷ And Bryk and Driscoll have established that communal schools—schools marked by shared values, common activities, and particular sorts of social interaction—have powerful specific effects on teachers and on student performance.¹⁸ Not just incidentally, all three of these landmark studies represent large numbers of schools and students. They are analyses of the High School and Beyond database—which unfortunately included very few public schools of choice, and those only of a single type (alternative schools of a school-without-walls variety). A recently launched study sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement is seeking to exploit other data sets to

obtain findings directly based on public schools of choice. Until such data sets become widely available, however, the kind of evidence for choice that skeptics seek is likely to remain limited.

The Matter of Equity

I turn now to the equity question—the one *Public Schools of Choice* identifies as that upon which “the choice approach must ultimately earn its way or fail” (p. 28). Critics have charged variously that choice has not met, will not meet, and cannot meet the equity test. Yet a look at these three charges yields important counterevidence.

It is no secret, of course, that choice arrangements can be structured so as to prevent equity rather than to foster it—for example, to preserve segregation and to allocate resources unevenly. The choice arrangements established in the South in the 1960s, in response to desegregation pressures, were designed to do just that.¹⁹ There have also been choice arrangements that were set up to more acceptable purposes but which we now see as inequitable. For instance, some of the first magnet programs were charged with reversing “white flight” and enticing the middle class to leave their children in urban public schools. It is no accident that the programs designed to accomplish this include some we now criticize as segregating and stratifying. Magnets for the gifted and talented are perhaps the most striking example. From the start, their equity effects were predictable. It took some of us longer to recognize the relevant impacts of milder restrictions on admissions, however, such as limiting enrollments to youngsters whose reading is no more than two years below grade level. The widespread current criticism of such practice stems in part from its now clearly visible stratifying effects and in part from our heightened sensitivity to the demands of equity. While exclusions like the two-year requirement initially appeared mild and not unreasonable, we are more inclined today to focus on their flip side: the resulting systematic exclusion of just those youngsters

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most in need of different schools.

A recent study titled *The New Improved Sorting Machine* has done much to spur our awareness of the inequities of urban school systems.²⁰ The investigators found that choice opportunities in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Boston remain largely closed to low-income students and that these students remain tracked (although less overtly and explicitly than earlier) and are systematically denied opportunities. They drop out in huge numbers, and, even among those who graduate, a substantial percentage have not reached minimally acceptable skill levels. The indictment that the investigators deliver up is stunning and compelling, but it should not be terribly surprising. Most of the inequitable arrangements are far from new. They were firmly enshrined long prior to the current interest in choice. For instance, of New York City's 98 high schools, 22 were found by the researchers to be selective. Of these, fewer than half are magnet schools, while the rest are longstanding exam schools (like Bronx High School of Science) or selective vocational schools. And although *formally* 8th graders can select among a total of 261 options—

that is, among the city's 98 high schools plus 163 programs within schools—there is room for only one in three of the city's youngsters in the options programs.²¹ In other words, there has been no attempt to extend choice to all or most students; altogether, the selective exam and vocational magnet schools enroll only 19 percent of the city's youngsters. Most of the rest remain in neighborhood schools of assignment. Thus, it should come as no surprise that choice has not transformed things. The situation is certainly not one to defend, but it does seem legitimate to ask whether it is properly attributed to choice—or to what extent the scene represents a *new* sorting machine at all.

The question seems worth raising in light of the evidence to the contrary. Strangely, while the choice chorus includes voices raising the inequity charge, it also includes voices just as vigorously championing choice precisely for its equity promise. This is the argument of Charles Glenn, Director of Massachusetts' Office of Educational Equity, who has stimulated the “controlled choice” arrangement now found in a number of Massachusetts communities. The evidence to date suggests that choice has been associated with equity in several senses in these communities: it has been followed by school enhancement, and it has tended to bring both ethnic and racial desegregation.²²

Other evidence also supports choice as a tool for desegregation. On the basis of a study of 18 school districts, Royster and his colleagues concluded that choice is an effective component of a desegregation strategy.²³ More recently, after studying desegregation plans in 20 districts, Rossell and Clarke concluded that voluntary desegregation plans ultimately yield more interracial exposure than do mandatory ones.²⁴ Thus, it is no surprise when evaluations—such as that done by the Educational Testing Service—conclude that voluntary desegregation goals have been met by a district's magnet schools.²⁵

The evidence is less clear and extensive with respect to the effects of

choice on socioeconomic segregation. Some have charged that it will inevitably increase class isolation in the schools as middle-class families exercise choice opportunities and poorer ones do not. Yet, as analysts have suggested, "voice"—a democratic society's major alternative to "choice"—may well prove substantially more class-related than choice.²⁶ Whether or not that is so, there is reason to believe that poor families do take advantage of choice opportunities and that they may be doing so to a greater extent than earlier thought. A recent analysis of choice patterns in Milwaukee's 10 poorest schools refutes the claim that choice is of help primarily to middle-class students, citing that higher percentages of low-income students than of others left these schools for magnets. The study concluded that rather than substituting segregation by class for segregation by race, as some had charged, the magnet schools may actually be creating more socioeconomic diversity than had previously been the case.²⁷

Thus, there is a record to refute those who claim choice has not served and will not serve the interests of equity. But another form of the equity objection is more fundamental: the charge that choice is inequitable in principle because it contributes to differentiation. Sameness is essential to equality in this view, so that the introduction of school-to-school differences immediately means that these schools cannot be equal. Our long history of inequalities, both blatant and subtle, makes such thinking understandable—but it is tragic so far as youngsters are concerned. The evidence is clearer all the time that schools systematically advantage some youngsters—and just as persistently disadvantage others. We know that poor youngsters, and particularly minorities, do poorly in school. We also know that learning outcomes are related to the particular kind of instruction provided. The results of investigations of conventional instruction are consistent: a few learn very well, some fail to learn at all, and most fall in between. Yet instead of concluding

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that conventional instruction is not particularly beneficial for most students, we continue to assume that some youngsters are simply more capable than others and that achievement distributions in school are inevitable. The evidence shows quite otherwise:

... the inequalities we observe in the learning outcomes students obtain are neither natural nor inevitable; they are, instead, the consequences of providing students with instruction which is not adaptive to the learning needs of individuals.²⁸

This conclusion would suggest many students need schools that operate quite differently from the conventional. Yet in forcing those students to undergo exactly what others undergo, not only do we handicap them permanently, but we delude ourselves into believing that we have offered them equity.

Clark points up the lie, accusing American schools of sorting students even more drastically than the systems we call elitist:

... charges of "elitism" made in the current U.S. debate against ... magnet schools, charter schools, and other kinds of educational specialty shops have it all wrong. It is in the current structure that elitism runs rampant ... The irony is almost cruel: schools designed to be educationally different could promote equality of access better than do schools formally

designed to be the same but that thereby tie students to the great inequalities of neighborhood locations.²⁹

In Clark's view, then, choice is not incompatible with equity; indeed, it appears a far better way to achieve it than the path we are taking now. It is also, he suggests, a more honest approach than is the pretense that standardization has brought us equality.

In Sum, a Brighter Case for Choice

It appears, then, that on all three counts examined here—equity, the present evidence for choice, and its risks as compared to the failings of present school organization—there is much to be said for the idea of turning public schools into schools of choice. Certainly there is a great deal more to be said for such a move than one might ever guess from the sound of *Public Schools of Choice*. ASCD's voice in the choice chorus.

It is impossible to deny that education is not now working for many—and that present school organization and control arrangements seriously limit improvement possibilities. Both logic and experience yield good reason to believe that having families choose among deliberately diversified school programs could prove an effective way to change things. To the extent that we are seriously committed to equity—accepting that it is here that any system, not just choice, "must ultimately earn its way or fail"—we should be a lot more receptive to alternatives to existing arrangements. □

¹According to the Background Paper of OERI RFP-90-043 (May 1, 1990), announcing a federal competition for a study to analyze the achievement and equity impacts of public school choice policies (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education).

²See, e.g., S. Fliegel, (1989), "Parental Choice in East Harlem Schools," in *Public Schools By Choice: Expanding Opportunities for Parents, Students, and Teachers*, pp. 95-112, edited by J. Nathan, (St. Paul: Institute for Learning and Teaching); D. Meier, (June 1987), "Central Park East: An Alternative Story," *Phi Delta Kappan*: 753-757; and W. Snider, (December 13, 1989), "Cal-

ifornia District Makes Choice Initiative Centerpiece of Plan to Reinvigorate Schools," *Education Week*, p. 1.

⁵See e.g., J. Nathan, (1983), *Free To Teach: Achieving Equity and Excellence in Schools*, (New York: The Pilgrim Press); and C. Glenn, "Parent Choice and American Values," in *Public Schools By Choice*, pp. 41-54.

⁶See B. Rosenberg, (Summer 1989), "Public School Choice: Can We Find the Right Balance?" *American Educator*: 8-14; A. Bastian, (March 1989), "School Choice: Unwrapping the Package," The New World Foundation, New York; and M. Lieberman, (1990), *Public School Choice: Theory, Practice, Issues, and Prospects*, (Lancaster, Pa.: Technomic Publishing).

⁷See, e.g., R. F. Elmore, (1990), "Options for Choice in Public Education," in *Choice in Education: Potential and Problems*, pp. 21-42, edited by W. Boyd and H. Walberg, (Berkeley: McCutchan); and "Choice As an Instrument of Public Policy: Evidence from Education and Health Care," (1990), in *Choice in American Education*, edited by W. H. Clune and J. Witte (Philadelphia: Falmer Press).

⁸See T. A. Shannon, (September 1989), "Choice 'Isn't As Easy As It Sounds,'" (September 1989), *School Board Journal*: 4.

⁹The panel included advocates, opponents, and those between, according to P. Heckman, who chaired the group. See R. Rothman, (March 7, 1990), in "Choice Claims Overstated," ASCD, Panel Concludes," *Education Week*, p. 8. It should be noted that this writer was invited to be a member of the panel but was unable to attend its meeting.

¹⁰M. L. Rossman, (1987), *Healing Yourself A Step-by-Step Program for Better Health Through Imagery*, (New York: Pocket Books), p. 8. On the studies reported in medical journals, Rossman cites R. H. and S. W. Fletcher, (1979), "Clinical Research in General Medical Journals: A 30-Year Perspective," *New England Journal of Medicine* 301: 180-183.

¹¹For a brief account, see M. A. Raywid, (Winter 1985), "Family Choice Arrangements in Public Schools: A Review of the Literature," *Review of Educational Research*: 439-441.

¹²J. Larson and B. A. Allen, (January 1988), *A Microscope on Magnet Schools, 1983-1986*, Vol. 2. *Pupil and Parent Outcomes*, (Rockville, Md.: Montgomery County Public Schools).

¹³See, e.g., Los Angeles Unified School District, *Report on LAUSD Integration Programs, 1984-85*, Pub. No. 488, and *Report on District Integration Programs, 1983-84*, Pub. No. 444. For San Diego, see, e.g.,

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