

In school reform, limited goals have proven to be most successful

By N. Y. Times News Service
 NEW YORK — In her forthcoming book, "The Troubled Crusade," Diane Ravitch asks how "piecemeal change" in efforts to improve the schools got "such a bad reputation." The question asked by Mrs. Ravitch, a leading historian of education, is particularly relevant as the nation's schools reopen amid a clamor for reform.

Many demands for change are being trumpeted with the sort of hyperbole that worried Mrs. Ravitch in the past. They are preceded by charges that the schools are worse than ever, an assertion that is as misleading as the defensive reply by many educators that the schools are better than ever.

A review now of past reform tactics that have failed and others that have worked may help to discourage both a clinging to the status quo

and new efforts to seek illusory utopias. As a helpful reminder, Mrs. Ravitch recalls, "The more limited and specific the goal, the more likely was the reform to endure."

Typical of the reforms that failed were frantic efforts in the 1950s to turn to technology as the savior. In one instance, an entire school system, in Hagerstown, Md., was wired for closed-circuit television. Experts from all over the country watched in awe and admiration — and very little happened.

Elsewhere, in the Middle West, a four-engined aircraft circled over a six-state area, beaming prepackaged lessons to hundreds of schools, as a prototype of things to come. But nothing came of it.

Critics ridiculed this as "educational crop dusting," an arrogantly simple "solution" that had thought

of everything except the teachers who were trying to plan their lessons without waiting for the big bird in the sky.

Teaching machines dispensed prepackaged "programmed learning" in disregard of the children's unpredictable capacity for unanticipated mistakes and unexpected questions. Still, the machines were supposed to revolutionize learning. Within a few years, they had sunk without a trace.

Nontechnological promises of utopia did no better. Radical reformers of the 1960s, who described the public schools as pathetic failures or as oppressive and even genocidal tools of an evil political system, came up with total answers, such as "free schools" without rules or structure. Elsewhere, grades were abolished.

Even on a more rational level, promising experiments were turned into instant miracle cures and imposed on unsuspecting and untrained teachers. An example was the open classroom, in which teachers dealt with individual children or small groups of youngsters, often of different grades, with an undefined curriculum. Although effective under some conditions and with teachers attuned to the process, the reformers spurned the "piecemeal" approach and tried to turn a plausible idea into a panacea destined for failure.

By contrast, many reforms based on limited and specific goals did make the schools better.

Federal funds invested in teacher recruiting and training under the provisions of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 significantly raised the standards of science, mathematics and foreign language

instruction (until a few years later, when many of those gains were scuttled by the "anything goes" rebellion).

Science texts and curriculums carefully revised by leading university scholars, had a lasting impact. The infusion of federal funds to upgrade the education of poor and deprived youngsters paid off, not miraculously or instantly, but in the

long run. The list could be extended.

How do these past experiences square with reforms that are now promised or threatened?

Some of the proposals once again smack of a Big Brother approach. Support is building up for the extension of the school year and day, which was first proposed by the National Commission on Excellence in

Education.

The nationwide movement toward state-imposed minimum competency tests for students and teachers springs from an entirely sound desire to improve standards, but the simplistic idea all overlooks the limitation in trying to control quality by introducing more tests, without first concentrating on better teaching.



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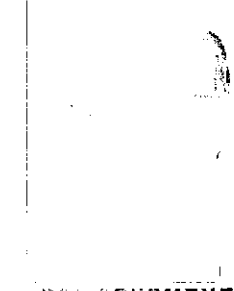
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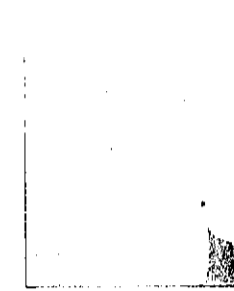

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Marketplace Extra

See The Entire Salina Journal Classified Section Beginning On Page 18

NOTICES	SERVICES	FOR SALE	FOR SALE	FOR SALE	GARAGE SALES ANTIQUES	REAL ESTATE	AUTOMOTIVE
GIVE AWAY: kettens to good home. 825-8301, 825-2418.	MATURE, RESPONSIBLE babysitter for care for 10-year-old, 3 - 12 pm. Own transportation. 823-8309, 8 am - 2 pm.	FOR SALE: 10 speed bike, men's and ladies' single speed bike, trike, gas heaters, stoves, baby furniture, 3 speed bike, grocery cart, rollaway bed. Call 825-2412.	FOR SALE: electric range, 30" continuous cleaning oven, black glass door, excellent condition. 823-1259.	FOR SALE: Artley B-flat clarinet in excellent condition, \$200, 825-7694.	MOVING SALE: 1109 Sunrise Drive, Saturday, September 17 from 8 am - 5 pm. Living room divan and chair, Singer sewing machine and other miscellaneous furniture, everything in excellent condition. Ladies' clothing, house plants, flower pots and vases, fruit jars and a lot of miscellaneous items.	FOR SALE: house to be moved. Nice 2 bedroom, living room, dining room, kitchen, sun porch and bath. Evenings, 913-436-2394.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
RICHARD WILLARD Quality Construction. New construction, additions, remodeling, repair. Residential and light commercial. Roofing, framing, sheet-rocking, taping, texturing, painting (interior-exterior), concrete, garages. Quality work, competitive price. Experienced, with references. Insured, bonded. Free estimates. 827-7066.	CUSTOM TILLING yards and gardens. Troybilt tiller. Evenings and weekends. \$10 minimum. 823-8150.	FOR SALE: tricycle, 12" and 16" sidewalk bikes, boys' 20" dirt bike and girls' 20" bicycles, men's and ladies' 26" 5 speed bicycles and men's 26" single speed bike. 823-6888.	SIDING KITS - steel, vinyl and aluminum. Save up to 50% with do-it-yourself kits. See at 614 Neal. Call 823-8150.	DINETTE SET with six chairs, excellent condition. Afternoon, 1017 North 10th.	RAINBOW VACUUM cleaner, new and complete. \$395. 827-8278, evenings.	\$2,200 CASH buys 10'x45' Great Lakes - new roof, repainted, already located on lot. Lot rent \$65 month, includes water. 823-6675.	1976 Datsun 280ZX sport, air, extras, new tires, clean condition. Call 913-254-7850, Lawrence.
BUSINESS OFFICE cleaning service done by retired couple. Very dependable, excellent references, reasonable rates, quality work, daily and weekly. Information or Interview, 823-2726.	BABYSITTING in my home, Monday - Friday, full or part-time. Have playmates, reasonable rates. Call 823-1139.	FOR SALE: bicycles and bicycle parts. We have a wide selection of most popular sizes and styles at reasonable prices. We also do repair work on bicycles. Call at 823-8886.	WINCHESTER 12 gauge shotguns, violin, guitar, C-P air impact gun and sockets. 825-2052.	FOR SALE: Getzen silver trumpet, good condition. 825-9304.	THE BOSS says: "I won't move it - you sell it!" Five families - your basic "wonderful stuff": alarm clock, bedsteads, clothes, all the way to zippers, we're cleaning it all out! 813 East Clarlin. Friday, September 16, 9 am - 7:30 pm; Saturday, September 17, 9 am - 4 pm.	FOR SALE: Five acre building sites for earth shelter homes. Rural water available. 825-1968.	1971 Nova automatic, over steering, good condition. Two dish antennas. Call 913-9191 after 6 pm.
REGISTERED BABYSITTER has openings for one or two children in her home. Sunset School area, seven years experience, reasonable. 825-7694.	RELIABLE, LICENSED babysitter has 2 openings, weekdays. References. 823-3889.	FOR SALE: exercise bike, TV, riding toys, Wonderhorse, mower, tires, 16" bike, 50" dirt bike, 20" girl's and boy's bike, dinnette set. Call 825-2412.	COPPERTONE UP-RIGHT freezer, 20 cu. ft., excellent condition. 283-4781.	RAINBOW VACUUM cleaner, new and complete. \$395. 827-8278, evenings.	RUSSIAN MATRONS - clothing, small appliances, bedspreads, toys and much more. Priced to sell!	THREE ACRES Two bedroom house with poured concrete basement. Smaller storage or shop building and larger storage building. Well water with a rural water hookup paid for. Located just north of 70 east of Niles Road. Asking higher twenties. Call Ken.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
ADDITIONS, REMODEL concrete, residential and commercial. Licensed and bonded, references, reasonable prices. Lancaster Construction, 827-6506.	MOWERS REPAIRED - Blades, sharpened. Prompt service. No Sundays. 822-Neal, 825-0342.	OLD IRON furnace parts. hoist one, \$15, 12 volume "World Scope" Encyclopedias, \$25. Wall sink with faucet, \$3. Boy Scout shirt and backpack, \$10. 825-8379.	ELECTRONIC OMNICHORDS , pianos and organs by Suzuki. Francis Roosner, 823-8661.	FOR SALE: Artley B-flat clarinet in excellent condition, \$200, 825-7694.	HUGE TWO family garage sale. Saturday, September 17, 8 am - 5 pm. Yard, garden and hand tools, refinished ornate white iron bed frame and mattress. This is a big sale. 765 Commanche.	GOOD ASSUMABLE 921 South 10th - Four bedroom, full level, two car garage, central air and fenced rear yard. This home has a (SOLD) must see for a qualified buyer. Call for more information. Owner is anxious to sell. Priced in low thirties. Give Ken a call.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
MILLER TREE Service with aerial bucket, pruning and removal. Shrubs, bushes trimmed. Quality work. Call 825-2481 for free estimate.	HAVE TILLER , will till. Harvey Marken, 827-4620 after 5 pm.	COMPUTER PARALLEL printer for sale, Epson MX100, bidirectional with graphics. Recently purchased, cost \$1,000. Only \$595. 827-4141.	USED FURNITURE in A-1 condition, large selection. Santa Fe Buy and Sell, 420 North Santa Fe. 823-1024.	FOR SALE: okra, carrots. Albert Gorrell, 1523 North 5th, 827-1857.	GARAGE SALE: Saturday, September 17, 8 am - 4 pm. 412 West Ellsworth. Bar stools, trunk, pictures, frames, mower, nursing uniforms, much more.	KEN MATTISON REAL ESTATE Ken Mattison 823-6882 Don Mattison 823-8627 Weldon Hogan 827-4265 Woody Woodall 827-7722 Bob Hunt 827-3966 Glenn Robertson 827-3966	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
PAINTING: SPECIALIZE in house painting. Exterior and interior. Free estimates. Contact Kevin, 823-1325.	REGISTERED MOTHER has openings, all hours, any age. 827-8361.	COMPUTER PARALLEL printer for sale, Epson MX100, bidirectional with graphics. Recently purchased, cost \$1,000. Only \$595. 827-4141.	AKK YELLOW Labrador Retrievers. Pedigrees available. 316-463-2525.	FOR SALE: Pair of finches. 827-1217.	REYNOLDS REAL ESTATE & AUCTION CO. R. J. Reynolds Broker & Auctioneer Abilene, Kansas • (913) 263-7151 Your Full Service Auction Co.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
Be A Fingertip Shopper! It's Fun and Profitable Read The Salina Journal Classified Columns Daily!	OLD COLLECTABLES: Oak wall telephone, Hoosier style kitchen cabinet, cooper wash boiler, 1902 washing machine with wringer, clothes stomper brass washboard, cooper teakettle, folding clothes dryer, sad iron, White Ireadle sewing machine, Lard press and sausage stuffer, kraut board. 825-7307.	FOR SALE: men's and ladies' 26" 10 speed bicycles, ladies' 26" single speed bike, boys' 20" bikes, boys' 24" Schwinn 10 speed and ladies' 27" Schwinn 10 speed. Also clay target thrower and 12 gauge single shot gun. 823-6888.	FOR SALE: MASON SHOES at discount. For information, send name and number to Phil Swindler, 236 South 5th, No. 1.	FOR SALE: MASON SHOES at discount. For information, send name and number to Phil Swindler, 236 South 5th, No. 1.	RENTALS MOBILE HOME in Salina, good court, storm shelter, shopping area one block, close to Schilling Industrial area. 655-2351, evenings.	SEED WHEAT , registered Arkan, certified Neaton \$6.50, Tam 105, \$5. Price Farms, 827-7828, 823-8961.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
	FOR SALE: boys' 24" dirt bike, men's and ladies' 26" 3 speed bikes, boys' and girls' 20" bicycles, 16" sidewalk bike, and ladies 24" single speed bike, also men's 10 speed bike. 823-8886.	FOR SALE: AKK Labrador pups. Superb bloodline, grand sire - field and amateur champion. 6 weeks. \$75. 825-6387.	FOR SALE: AKK Sheltie puppies, one male, two females. \$65 each. 667-3852, Assaria, after 5 pm or weekends.	FOR SALE: AKK Sheltie puppies, one male, two females. \$65 each. 667-3852, Assaria, after 5 pm or weekends.	RENTALS FOR RENT: Finished three bedroom house, one car garage, fenced yard, good location. Available October 1. No pets. deposit. Call 827-7181.	19' MOBILE Villa camping trailer, good condition, two entrances. Priced to sell at \$1,395. 825-5530.	1977 Buick Wildcat sedan, sold recently. Overhauled engine and brakes, new tires, battery, exhaust, etc. Call for more information. Call 913-787-1011 or 922-6982, Chicago.
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