
**The
Jacqueline P. Danzberger
Memorial Lecture**

Fifth Annual

**STATE-LOCAL
DIALOGUE:
FROM DISCORD TO
LEADERSHIP ACCORD**

Presented by

*Roy E. Barnes
Governor (D-Georgia)
1999-2003*

&

*Jim Geringer
Governor (R-Wyoming)
1995-2003*

*April 18, 2005
San Diego, California*

**Co-Sponsored by
The National School Boards Association
and
The Institute for Educational Leadership**

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August 2005

Dear Colleague:

It is with pleasure that the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) provide these excerpted comments from the fifth annual Jacqueline P. Danzberger Memorial Lecture, co-delivered at NSBA's Annual Conference (April 2005) by former Governors Roy E. Barnes (D-GA) and Jim Geringer (R-WY). Together, they impressed upon board members the vital leadership responsibilities and opportunities they had for profound impact on education and our society. They also stressed the need for school board members and elected state officials to learn to work together across political differences for the benefit of children and for our collective future.

While spotlighting a few different priorities and strategies for improved education and outcomes, Barnes and Geringer used the forum to reinforce common themes: the critical importance of early childhood education, and teacher quality and what it will take to achieve this goal. Both lecturers emphasized the need for people to move from discord to leadership accord.

After five years, we feel that the event, given in honor and memory of Jacqueline (Jackie) P. Danzberger, has become an established tribute to someone who left an indelible mark on the world of school governance. Jackie's work during her 17-year tenure at IEL included initiating, developing, and managing programs and activities related to education governance, management, and evaluation. The American School Board Journal referred to her as one of a handful of people composing the "intellectual core" driving school governance reform.

We are pleased that the partnership between the NSBA and IEL is strong. We remain indebted to the donors whose continued financial support makes it possible to commemorate Jackie's contributions to American education, while simultaneously providing a forum for non-partisan discourse about the key work of school boards.

Anne L. Bryant
Executive Director, NSBA

Elizabeth L. Hale
President, IEL

**Jacqueline P. Danzberger Memorial Lecture
April 18, 2005**

**State-Local Dialogue: From Discord to
Leadership Accord**

{The following is excerpted from the 2005 Jacqueline P. Danzberger Memorial Lecture co-delivered by former Governors Jim Geringer (R-WY) and Roy E. Barnes (D-GA). The concluding text provides illustrative questions raised and responses given during a robust discussion with the audience. The full text of the Governors' prepared lectures is available at www.iel.org/.

Jim Geringer:

**School Board Policy and Politics from a
Governor's Perspective**

I am honored to join Roy Barnes in a forum that honors the commitment and passion of Jacqueline Danzberger for locally elected and effective school boards. Every meeting you or I have that deals with education should address the question: "Will this raise student achievement?" My remarks center on a better understanding of what school boards do, as differentiated from how. Board members here today represent the best of America's tradition and values, understanding what it means to take a turn at public service, and understanding civic duty. You are ordinary people doing extraordinary things!

We can and should have effective elected local school boards, but with a focus different from what typifies today's boards. To put things in perspective, let's look back a century ago to the medical care a person might have received. Medical treatment was influenced more by folk wisdom than by scientific research. The transformation of medicine into a profession rooted in scientific knowledge was driven by innovation

and informed through research. Modern medicine is one of the most dramatic success stories in our nation's history. It's time we did the same for public education.

Today's education system resembles the position of our nation a century ago in health care: School calendars, classroom organization, teacher mentoring, and governance look more like century-old folk wisdom than the result of research-based knowledge of how people learn, how teachers should teach, and who should lead and manage our schools. Schools and student achievement have changed in the past 100 years, but with the challenges we face for achievement and global competitiveness, schools and school boards are being told, "It's not enough!"

In the 19th century, our public schools were set up to do three fundamental things: provide universal basic literacy; identify and sort out the top 20% of the students to go off to college and become the intellectual and business leaders of America; and socialize our diverse melting pot of people. If that were the situation today, the statistics clearly state we are on track; 18 of every 100 high school freshmen persist through a college degree. The numbers seem to say we're at least as well off today as we were a century ago. But that's not enough. With nearly universal access to information and education, we should not be content until every student has a chance to meet her or his full potential for learning and success.

We compete economically and socially in a world context, and to compete with countries like China, India, Germany, and Hong Kong, we must enhance our ability to compete. The nations governors, New York Times reporter

Thomas Friedman, and Microsoft's Bill Gates are but a few who have expressed alarm about our slippage in world education achievement. That echoes the concerns of the oft quoted 1983 Nation at Risk report: "A high level of shared education is essential to a free, democratic society and to the fostering of a common culture, especially in a country that prides itself on pluralism and individual freedom." While discussion of education reform has centered on the economic effects of inadequate public education, we cannot and will not neglect societal and personal goals.

The Framework for Redefining the Role and Responsibilities of Local School Boards, co-authored by Jackie Danzberger, says what I believe. Local lay governing boards have an important and positive role to assure effective teaching and learning. I support the presence of locally elected boards with community input and school based leadership. At the same time, I believe boards must and can do better in terms of strategic planning. Board members should define what policy and micromanagement really mean. One goal should guide everything we do: What is best for student improvement?

Simply put, board members should stay out of process and focus on purpose. Governance is meaningful only when guided by purpose. Leaders focus on purpose; managers focus on process. Board members are in the leader category. You weren't elected to be managers. If your meetings are lasting more than two-to-three hours, you're not focused on purpose—you're focused on process. The temptation is to leave the agenda to the superintendent to write. If you don't know enough to write the agenda, then you need to learn and then hold the superintendent to it.

Roy and I dealt with a lot of tough issues during our terms as governor. Looking at the list today, the items are about the same, but the emphasis is changing. Most states still struggle over budgets and the top state budget issue is public school education, but this could soon be displaced by health care, particularly Medicaid. The average age of American citizens is increasing, as is the number of elderly. Only 30% of today's families have school-age children. How will these statistics affect funding choices in the next 20 to 30 years?

What are examples of policy issues school boards could and should influence? Let me draw your attention to a few key areas board members might consider:

KEY EDUCATION POLICY AREAS

Kindergarten - Children from disadvantaged backgrounds typically benefit from a full-day schedule according to the National Institute for Early Education Research. Not surprisingly, state funding levels influence whether or not districts implement full-day kindergarten. Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia encourage districts to offer a longer schedule by providing funding that exceeds that offered for half-day programs; not all districts have chosen to implement full-day programs. If the evidence supports full-day for better achievement, should we leave the final choice to local school boards or should the state or the federal government require districts to implement? What about your district? Would full-day kindergarten increase learning and achievement in later grades? Would you have the ability to gather data and achievement information to know what works and why? The debate over who knows best

won't be decided on this one issue, but it reflects the tension over when and whether state or national requirements would pre-empt local education policy.

High Schools - The nation's governors have decided reforming the American high school is essential to our competitiveness in the world and to our future as a nation. They have set down ten steps to a state action agenda, including such steps as to: 1) Define a rigorous college and work preparatory curriculum for high school graduation; 2) Expand college-level learning opportunities in high school to minorities, English language learners, low-income students, and youth with disabilities; and 3) Help get low-performing students back on track by designing literacy and math recovery programs. What's the role of a school board in dealing with this agenda? These are policy issues that need your participation if they are implemented in any fashion, and are the "what" that might influence student achievement.

Teacher Quality - A recent publication by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) carries the headline, "Teachers' Knowledge and Skills Are Key to Improving Student Achievement in Science, Math." It reaffirms a report issued five years ago during my term as the ECS chair. Both reports emphasize the need to change how we prepare and support the teaching profession. A good teacher is the single most important factor affecting student learning—more important than standards, class size, or money. Schools need your policy guidance on how to attract, retain and develop effective teachers, and foster a strong teaching and learning environment.

Teacher Availability - There is not a deficit of teachers in America, but of teachers who are teaching. The trends are not improving. Just to maintain current levels of service, U.S. education institutions will collectively have to hire 3.4 million replacement and expansion personnel during the coming decade. The Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts the supply of K-12 teachers will need to grow 16.6%, while the numbers of post-secondary faculty will have to increase 23.5%. But the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education expects the supply of teachers to grow by just 1.2%. This means education will need to hire 20% of the 16.8 million young adults who will enter the labor pool during the next ten years. What has to happen to place education professionals ahead of the demand for engineers, scientists, and health care workers? Part of the answer is: meet the competition. District board policy should include a basis for differentiated pay for high demand teaching skills.

Technology and Innovation - The increased demand for engineering and science recalls to my mind that last year marked the 50th year of the 1954 Supreme Court decision on Brown vs. Board of Education. The opinion was short and straightforward in declaring that the separate but equal laws regulating schools and colleges were unconstitutional. In the summer of 2004 at the release of a special report, "Fifty Years After Brown v. Board of Education: A Two-Tiered Education System" by The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, Mary Hatwood Futrell called attention to the millions of low-income students and children of color who are still concentrated in separate and unequal schools.

Will the increasing demand for scientists and engineers help blend two systems into one? It's possible. But, we will not be able to live up to our own expectations without the participation of black and Hispanic males and females. The numbers are encouraging but the participation rates of black and Hispanic youth in science, engineering, and technology is half or less than that of white and Asian students. America's future innovation potential is measured in part by the number of scientists and engineers. The number of young people preparing for such careers has steeply declined, and a large portion of the current workforce is rapidly approaching retirement age. Technology, properly used, can be a powerful tool for teaching and learning. Properly used—what's that? Look at your budgets. Do you budget based on purpose, function, and result, or do you budget based on time and materials? Is technology a separate line item? If it is, you don't know how to use it.

Value-Added Assessment - Back in 1966, a researcher named Coleman, and in 1972 a researcher named Jencks concluded, "Only a small part of student achievement is the result of school factors, in contrast to family background differences between communities," and "the character of a school's output depends largely on a single input, namely the characteristics of the entering children." Basically they were saying what happens inside the school doesn't matter much. We know better today. The methodology, "Value-added Assessment," links the progress of individual students over time to the teachers who taught them and makes it possible to measure the impact of instruction on a student's academic growth. This assessment

separates the student environmental effects from the school effects. We can and should use data-driven approaches both in current or real time, as well as over time, following students into the future. We can and should shift from classrooms that are teacher-centered to teacher-enabled and encourage students to engage in discovery learning that is as self-initiated and self-directed as possible; learning in that context is the most enduring.

Data and Research - The National Academy of Science, through the National Research Council, issued powerful findings in 1999 and 2000 under the title, "How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School." The intention was that the results would be incorporated into teacher preparation programs, with follow-up in classroom settings to see what actually worked and why. Five years later, almost little has happened. The Academy proposed the Strategic Education Research Partnership—an initiative to develop strong partnerships between university research communities and schools centered around a site-based research program focused on the problems of practice. What do school boards do to assure connections between universities and K-12 public schools? If we are going to see a genuine improvement in education outcomes, we must understand more about how people learn effectively, and how to teach effectively through better research right in our own communities. The kind of learning we need to do about learning requires a major new commitment from higher education. Our post-secondary institutions must turn outward to K-12 education, building the kinds of partnerships between research and practice that

can improve public education and, therefore, the preparedness of college entrants.

Who's in Charge? - Who is responsible for student achievement? Teachers? Teacher preparation institutions? School boards? School administrators? Certification boards? Governors? Parents? Students themselves? Congress? Others? We all are. Who is to blame? That doesn't matter. We're here to lay a foundation, not assign blame. Can we get over who deserves blame and get on with the solution?

Education isn't something that happens to you once and is good for life. Education is like metabolism in our bodies, fueling our cells with constant energy, a process that, if it ever ceased, would result in death. It's about change. We will have to change our outdated, antiquated, often un-motivated systems. What do we need most? We need leadership. We don't need more critics. We need innovators, risk-takers. We need you. Many can define the problem. Few can carry through a solution. But it only takes a few. You are the chosen few.

Roy E. Barnes:

Lessons on School Reform—Do We Have the Will To Implement the Lessons We Have Learned?

I want to thank all of you for allowing Jim Geringer and me to come and to discuss with you our passion—the improvement of public education. As can be seen by the fact that I am a Democrat and Jim is a Republican, the improvement of public education should not be a partisan issue. In fact, it should be the most non-partisan issue of all in the public discourse of current issues.

Why do we meet, talk and discuss education reform? I think I can answer that best by recalling an observation by Woodrow Wilson:

The public school system is where we become Americans just as Woodrow Wilson observed almost 100 years ago. It is the cement that holds us together as a nation, the glue that makes us one. If we fail to improve our public school system, if we stumble in our effort to ensure all people of all stations send their children to the public school system, then we will lose the essence of what it is to be an American, and we will lose the hope that for decades has established America as a beacon of light in a world often lost in darkness.

America is the only civilization in history which has refused to ration education; which says to every child regardless of color, of income or birth, come and climb the ladder of social equality and social mobility that comes with public education. This is the rea-

son Jim Geringer and I are here today to talk of the hope of America that comes with public education.

Having said all of that, it is imperative we make some changes in education if our people are to continue to send their children to that great melting pot Woodrow Wilson described. And when school boards discuss the selection of football coaches, and state legislatures discuss gay marriages, and the Congress discusses credit card debt more than they discuss raising the bar in education, the hope of America is threatened. That melting pot fades into insignificance.

What's more, we now know what it takes to improve education—and it's not rocket science. The question is whether we have the political will to carry out the needed reforms. What then are these basic reforms? There are many, but I suggest the most important are a good beginning for all children, a high quality of teaching, and an accountability for results that refuses to make excuses and sets expectations for all children. These seem to be sensible, basic facts, but the truth is it takes courage and strong leadership, particularly from school boards—where the rubber meets the road—to carry out these principles.

A SENSIBLE RECIPE FOR SCHOOL REFORM

Early Childhood Education - Some studies say only about half of the achievement gap that exists in the first grade is ever closed, so it is important that kindergartens and 4-year old pre-K programs be established and supported. In Georgia, we have a universal 4-year old, pre-K program. In the longitudinal study following these children, there is little doubt the program helps to close the achievement gap. Emphasis is beginning to

spread on to 0-to-3 programs that undertake to use the child-care experience as a learning experience rather than as a baby sitting service. I suggest these types of programs are a necessary part of educational improvement, but that is the subject of a later discussion.

In the early grades (K-3), I believe the most important factors in establishing good beginnings for children are well trained teachers and small enough classes so children can receive individual instruction. I believe we should change our teacher preparation programs and certification programs to require each K-3 teacher to have a major in reading (I think a minor in special education should be required also, but that is also a subject for another time). Why? The emphasis on reading is essential because we know if a child is reading on grade level by grade 4 the chances of finishing high school are greatly improved, perhaps as high as 70%.

In my opinion, teachers should have no more than 15-to-17 children in grades K-3 so they can give individual instruction to students in the formative stages of their learning experiences. The first reaction to this low number of students-per-teacher is there is no way we can afford it. To this I have two observations. First, many funding formulae, such as Georgia's, fund teachers at this low level, but through budget gimmicks direct instructional money can be used for non-instructional purposes. We should not allow these diversions to occur, and all of us should unite to ensure direct instructional money is used only for direct classroom instruction. My second observation is that, if it takes more financial resources to establish a good foundation for learning, we should reorder our public funding priorities so as to support a well established educational goal of getting children off to a good start. I suggest to

you there is nothing as important in our funding priorities. We know smaller class sizes produce better results at all grades. But, the greatest gains occur with smaller classes in early grades, and that is where we should put our first priority.

Great Teaching - Great teaching is the second ingredient in my education reform recipe, and content knowledge is essential to great teaching. Teaching out of field, something that some observers set at 40%, is a practice we should no longer allow. If we have to pay more for teachers in shortage fields, for differentiated pay, we should do so. We simply cannot allow a child to be shortchanged in his or her educational experience by a teacher not trained in the area of instruction. It is not fair to the child, and it is not fair to the teacher. We should follow the suggestions of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future in raising all salaries of teachers, which are still historically low especially in the context of the new high demands we place on teachers under No Child Left Behind. And, we also need to give additional financial incentives to those teachers who go beyond the call of duty—teachers who achieve National Board Certification, teachers whose students accomplish gains at a rate faster than others similarly situated should be paid more. On the other hand, we should reward teachers for advanced degrees in the area taught, not for unrelated degrees turned out by degree mills simply for the purpose of a higher salary step degree.

Accountability - The final ingredient in my education reform recipe is accountability for results. Accountability for improvement should not be punitive. It should be positive and should have financial incentives connected with the system, and not just a pat on the back, though that helps, too. Financial and other recognitions should

reward improvements of more than a year in a year's time—a value-added approach Jim was just talking about—regardless of where the children start at the beginning of the year. Financial incentives should also be made to schools on the basis of improvement rather than individual class rooms. In this way, clustering of advanced children, or whatever the luck of the draw in one class, can be overcome.

In summary, the things of which I have spoken either evoke general agreement or vigorous dissent. I believe the things I have suggested bring about dramatic changes and improvement in public education over the long term, because where we have examined it and where school boards have had the fortitude to stick with it, it has worked.

But, what is more important than anything else is that we continue to have this discourse—this dialogue—one that is civil. Sometimes I wonder whatever happened to the American discourse and dialogue, where people could disagree, but discuss the issues without being called either unpatriotic or un-Christian in our society. I suggest we have to return to that civil dialogue and discourse, though we may disagree, so we understand we have a common goal of improving public education, though we may have different views on how to do so. Because, if we do not, the dream of Woodrow Wilson of the public school as melting pot for the world will be lost. And with that loss, the unique character of America, where social mobility is accomplished through education, will fade along with America's future.

Discussion With the Audience

Q: Public discourse has taken on a very ugly tone, especially at the state legislature level.... They seem to want to ignore school board members. How do you propose we go about getting this conversation back to where it needs to be—about the students, and not about the ugliness between each party?

Governor Barnes: In my view, you have to have leaders emerge on both sides and call for that discourse. There has been an encouragement in places like this where the discourse occurs.... Generally, if you talk to folks, there's more middle ground than we think. But, I think it has to come from leadership; from both legislative and school board folks. It ought to be a part of their agenda to create this discourse.

Governor Geringer: Not all legislatures meet all the time; in fact, most of our legislatures meet part-time. The most effective time to visit a legislator is before the session, not during—but follow-up during the session, to make sure they “stay on the hook.” When you approach a legislator in his/her hometown, particularly try to get them into a school setting—get them into the classroom, or to sit down with some teachers, or the school staff, or parents or kids. Get them mixed into the community in your home place. Get them inoculated/involved there, and it'll pay dividends later on.

Q: We need leaders who, even if it costs them elections later on, will stand up to say we can afford to fulfill our constitutional responsibilities. Many states have been ordered by courts to significantly increase funding for education, yet they say it can't be done. Everyone in this room knows it can be done. I suggest that governors and former governors stand up with their colleagues and say, 'This is about investing in the future....' I believe the governor who stands up and says 'Whatever it costs...' has a better chance of being elected President than the ones who refuse to.

G: ...The states created the federal government, not vice versa, and the states are the umbrella under which local government works. The state is the central repository of responsibility. But, the question is how do we pull those contending demands together?

B: First, I think there are a lot of misplaced priorities in state budgets (and national budgets). I think states that try to push off their responsibilities for education to the feds are misplaced. I think politicians are always going to go to the squeaky wheel. You can have a civil discourse, but to make your point, you have got to lay your soul bare on your own finances—to show you're squeezing every dollar, you've got to do a better job of informing them of that.

Q: We hear a lot about improved teaching and the quality of teachers, and I think that's all well and good. One thing I think is often left out of the equation though is support and development of our educational leadership, particularly at the administrative level. If we look at those schools that have made tremendous strides, it's always due to a strong educational leader. I think one of the crises in education is the development of educational leadership. What can be done?

B: I developed a 'boot camp' for principals, a six-week program, where they were told we wanted them to become learning leaders in the school rather than bus schedulers. I think you have to create in your systems and encourage your state to undertake great leadership programs that build that leadership. Private industry does that.

G: Every school should be identifying not only 'who,' but also build some depth there, too, for the next generation of leadership. If we are not grooming people to fill leadership roles and to take over behind them, we're always going to be playing catch-up.



The Jacqueline P. Danzberger Memorial Lecture presentation, printing, and distribution are made possible in part by a memorial fund established at the Institute for Educational Leadership in 2000 to honor her memory. The following persons have delivered the lecture:

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- 2003 Eli Broad, Chairman, AIG Sun America Inc. & Founder, The Broad Foundation
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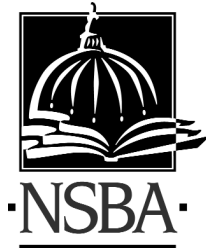
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