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system would lead to a better workforce and would be vital for a country dependent on an informed democracy.⁴

Horace Mann held six main principles:⁵

9. Society cannot remain both ignorant and free.
10. Education should be paid for, controlled, and maintained by an interested public.
11. Schools must embrace children from a variety of backgrounds.
12. Schools must be nonsectarian.
13. Instruction must embrace the spirit, methods, and discipline of a free society.
14. Instruction must be provided by well-trained, professional teachers.

For the first three-quarters of a century⁶, the McGuffey's Readers⁷ provided standardized spelling, pronunciation, and grammar instruction, and illustrated such virtues as honesty, charity, thrift, hard work, courage, patriotism, reverence for God, and respect for parents. Over 120 million sets were sold and used by four-fifths of all American school children students

A. The educational system underwent a fundamental change in the early 1900's when "Scientific management"⁸ was brought into the public school system with introduction of the Carnegie Unit⁹, which sought to improve administrative efficiency of schools. A Carnegie Unit is defined as 120 hours of contact time with an instructor, which translates into one hour of instruction on a particular subject per day, five days a week, for twenty-four weeks annually (basis for today's credit hours).¹⁰

New Educational Practices and Schools of Choice

Alternative schools have broken the mold and offered students a different way of learning;

- Magnet schools were formed in the 1960's and became a movement toward public schools of choice¹¹. They were based on a premise that not all students learn in the same

⁴ American Passages: A History of the United States, Brief Forth Edition, By Edward L. Ayers, Lewis L. Gould, David M. Oshinsky, and Jean R. Soderlund, Wadsworth Cengage Learning,

⁵ [Online] Available: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Horace-Mann>

⁶ McGuffey's Readers – 1836, <http://www.alphaphonics.com/guffy.htm>

⁷ A set of 7 reading books first published in 1836.

⁸ Scientific management is based on the principle of continued improvement to gain greater efficiency. This management approach was introduced with the Industrial Revolution and guided large-scale manufacturing and assembly-line production to eliminate waste and improve productivity.

⁹ The Carnegie Unit was developed in 1906 and brought into the public school system shortly thereafter.

¹⁰ The Carnegie Unit, A Century-Old Standard In A Changing Educational Landscape, Elena Silva, Taylor White and Thomas Toch, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 51 Vista Lane, Stanford CA 94305

¹¹ A Brief History of Magnet Schools, Dr. Donald Waldrup, [Online] Available: <http://www.magnet.edu/resources/msa-history>

way. Application of a unifying theme or appropriate learning structure will lead to students learning more in all areas. This new premise assumed students and teachers voluntarily choosing to be at a specific school would obtain better results. Magnet schools have demonstrated that other ways of educating children is possible.

- Over time a number of alternative forms of education have developed including Montessori, Waldorf, Sudbury Model, Knowledge Is Power Program, and International Baccalaureate.
- Charter schools¹² are publicly funded and operate under contract (or charter) within a school district. Charter schools are exempt from certain state or local rules and regulations, which allows for greater flexibility and autonomy. Charter schools tend to focus on specific courses of study and attempt to create a unique learning culture.

The CGJ met with senior leadership from selected school districts, United Teachers Los Angeles, California Charter Schools Association, XQ Super School Project, University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Community School, and a former elected member of the Los Angeles Unified School District's Board of Education to discuss current trends in education and seek opinions on how to best prepare our children for the economy of the future. We found there was consistency from all these various viewpoints; change is needed to better prepare our high school students for college as well as entry into the job market.

Several interviewees made reference to Math and English proficiency levels. They felt the mediocre performance levels demonstrate the need for change.

Math and English proficiency is conducted at the secondary level by the California Department of Education using California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress testing. Testing is conducted at grade levels 3-8 and 11. The results for the 2015-16 school year for grade 11 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Math and English Proficiency – Grade 11, School Year 2015-16¹³

Grade	Number of Students Tested with Scores	Percent of Students who Exceeded Standards	Percent of Students who Met Standards	Percent of Students who Nearly Met Standards	Percent of Students who Did Not Meet Standards
Grade 11 - English	433,920	26	33	22	19
Grade 11 - Math	432,108	13	20	25	43

¹² The first charter school legislation was passed in Minnesota in 1991.

¹³ California Department of Education, Release: #16-57 dated August 24, 2016, [Online] Available: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr16/yr16rel57.asp#Table1>

The California State University system requires newly admitted students to demonstrate their proficiency in Math and English before they can enroll in college-level Math and English courses,¹⁴ unless they are exempt by their scores on other specific assessment or college admissions tests. Table 2 below identifies the statewide proficiency rates for the Fall 2016 incoming freshmen class. On average, English proficiency is at 77% and Math proficiency is at 72%.

Table 2. Math and English Proficiency – Incoming California State University Students (2016-17)¹⁵.

	# of Freshman	# Proficient in Math	% Proficient in Math	# Proficient in English	% Proficient in English
Bakersfield	1,303	726	56%	934	72%
Channel Island	994	487	49%	617	62%
Chico	2,634	1,869	71%	2,325	88%
Dominquez Hills	1,264	505	40%	800	63%
East Bay	1,566	649	41%	863	55%
Fresno	3,213	1,983	62%	2,170	68%
Fullerton	4,381	3,799	87%	3,960	90%
Humboldt	1,231	774	63%	934	76%
Long Beach	4,250	3,404	80%	3,525	83%
Los Angeles	3,695	1,783	48%	1,951	53%
Maritime Academy	239	208	87%	211	88%
Monterey Bay	776	499	64%	535	69%
Northridge	4,369	2,959	68%	2,798	64%
Pomona	4,199	3,329	79%	3,623	86%
Sacramento	3,717	2,199	59%	2,392	64%
San Bernardino	2,673	1,932	72%	1,708	64%
San Diego	4,992	4,574	92%	4,644	93%
San Francisco	3,608	2,247	62%	2,834	79%
San Jose	3,166	2,483	78%	2,484	78%
San Luis Obispo	4,279	4,266	100%	4,239	99%
San Marcos	2,126	1,585	75%	1,600	75%
Sonoma	1,750	1,240	71%	1,293	74%
Stanislaus	1,332	851	64%	955	72%
Total	61,757	44,351	72%	47,395	77%

The need for remedial classes at the college level has a significant social and financial effect:

- Increases overall cost of college to students and to public subsidies.
- Extends the overall time required to complete college, thereby delaying entry into the workforce. Such delay can negatively impact repayment of student loans, extending the payback period with increased interest expense and potentially increasing defaults.
- Extends the overall time required to complete college, which can lead some students to drop out.

¹⁴ California State University Placement Tests, [Online] Available: <https://www.ets.org/csu/about>

¹⁵ The California State University, Fall 2016 Regularly Admitted First-Time Freshmen Proficiency Campus and Systemwide, [Online] Available: <http://asd.calstate.edu/performance/proficiency/2016/index.shtml>

While this investigation did not look into factors that may be influencing these testing levels or their validity in college placement, in the opinion of the CGJ, these statistics do bring into question the efficacy of the current educational approach and highlight a need for change in order to better serve our youth.

Improving the Educational Approach

The CGJ agrees with the objective within the Los Angeles County Strategic Plan for Economic Development (2016-2020) which seeks to improve high school graduation, college matriculation, and postsecondary attainment rates. The CGJ has reviewed several educational programs that are innovative and are delivering improved results. We conducted research that included interviews with various stakeholder organizations and advocates for educational reform to gain a better understanding of the educational system, thoughts on creating and delivering instruction, and the challenges facing reform efforts.

The CGJ did not investigate or attempt to determine whether our youth are better served by traditional or non-traditional educational providers, as politics play too great a role in that discussion. We reviewed educational innovations taking place and spoke to organizations with differing agendas/purposes to gain perspective relative to generating greater interest and participation by students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

We found all the educational providers (both traditional and non-traditional) to be highly dedicated, motivated, and passionate about the field of education and the preparation of our youth for future success. None of the stakeholders or advocates we spoke with appeared content with the status quo system. They all recognized that knowledge and skills for today's students are different from those needed a decade or two ago, and the business and social environment is far more dynamic than ever before. They all expressed a desire to see changes in the educational system in order to better prepare our youth.

Our investigation revealed a number of common themes:

- Community/neighborhood-based schooling is a benefit
- Providing students with career choices can spark their interest and better engage them in the educational process
- Stakeholder collaboration (administrators, teachers, and parents) builds trust and strengthens the educational process
- A significant percentage of high school students are likely to be better served with a combination of academics, vocational skills, and mentoring
- Teachers can benefit from real-world, on the job experience to better inform students on how the class information applies to the workplace