Title: The Mobilization of Music Education for the Global Economy

Author(s): Karl J. Glenn


*Visions of Research in Music Education* is a fully refereed critical journal appearing exclusively on the Internet. Its publication is offered as a public service to the profession by the New Jersey Music Educators Association, the state affiliate of MENC: The National Association for Music Education. The publication of VRME is made possible through the facilities of Westminster Choir College of Rider University Princeton, New Jersey. Frank Abrahams is the senior editor. Jason D. Vodicka is editor of the Quarterly historical reprint series. Chad Keilman is the production coordinator. The *Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning* is reprinted with permission of Richard Colwell, who was senior consulting editor of the original series.
The Mobilization Of Music Education For The Global Economy

by Karl J. Glenn

Music education faces new challenges and opportunities as world-wide economic competition forces countries to adopt internationally compared learning systems. To improve human productivity, particularly among the poor and disadvantaged, national content, evaluation, and delivery standards will re-arrange the organization and influence what is to be recognized and accepted as learning and schooling. As new paths are sought to meet these standards, music education will be affected profoundly.

We are living through a transformation that will restructure the politics and economics of the coming century. Since modern state-of-the-art technology and machinery can be installed almost anywhere on the globe, workers in one country are in direct competition with millions of workers in other nations. In the emerging global economy, everything is mobile: money, materials, factories, even entire industries. In a global economy, the only resource that's rooted in a nation — and the ultimate source of all its wealth — are its people.1 To compete fairly in an open world economy, all people should have an equal chance to win — what is known as "a level playing field." If the economic "playing field" is level, there must be among nations broadly similar taxes, regulations in safety and environment, and benefits such as welfare, health care, and education. Global budgeting is the term used to compute and then to compare nations' costs for government, health care, welfare, and education. Because these are such large expenditures in a nation's economy, they must be factored in the prices of a nation's goods in the international marketplace. If the costs of government, welfare, health care, and education in one nation far exceed that of other nations, these costs must be trimmed in order to compete in the world economy. The benefits that are now hidden in prices must become overt in a global economy because they are part of the nation's costs of doing business.

If a country wants to get-ahead economically, it starts by closely studying the compe-
While our schools are educating more students to levels attained by only a small favored group in earlier times, the pressing issue is that other countries are simply reaching levels of performance above those in the United States.

The purpose is not emulation but what the business world calls benchmarking. The basic idea of benchmarking is simple: to identify one's most effective competitors and to achieve better quality at lower costs. International benchmarking reveals that the successful business is organized so that front-line workers are given many of the responsibilities of managers, technical staff, and professionals. Because the ranks of middle management and many support functions are thinned out, very large productivity gains are created through cost reduction. While production and its workers may have been seen as second-class in the old economy, they must now be made into first-class producers in order to compete in the new global economy. The skills and insights of the people who comprise a nation are its primary assets; and the quality of a nation's workforce is what makes it unique and attractive in the world economy.

International Education Benchmarking

Twelve thousand people are added to the world's population every hour. To create the productivity and employment that can justify living wages for these people, education world-wide will have to improve. Numerous reports in the United States have sharply defined the difficulty — while the costs of education have risen dramatically, the results have declined. Our average achieving students compare poorly with their counterparts abroad. American schools produce among the smallest percentage of highest achieving graduates in the industrialized countries. While our schools are educating more students to levels attained by only a small favored group in earlier times, the pressing issue is that other countries are simply reaching levels of performance above those in the United States. Since spending on education has roughly tripled after adjusting for inflation since 1983, education in the United States represents a productivity crisis. This is especially true if one looks at performance for the bottom half of the distribution, the nation's poor children.

The signs are everywhere that America's children are losing — emotionally, educationally, and economically. Unskilled jobs have been disappearing from the American economy at an ever-increasing rate. Such jobs are less available in the inner city and rural areas, and with fewer opportunities the ladder out of poverty is not readily available to the unskilled worker. Today, American society is divided into a skilled group with rising real wages and an unskilled group with falling real wages. In 1990, the top 20 percent of the American population had the largest share of total income, and the bottom 60 percent, the lowest share of total income ever recorded in U.S. history. The bottom percentage of the population is held in low regard, has little claim on the nation's goods and services, and cannot make a decent living. Yet, they are our single most valuable — and most wasted — resource.

National Content Standards and Assessment Systems

International benchmarking in business tells us that no one turns out a high-quality product until quality performance standards are defined and used. Education reformists believe that there are many attractive features to performance standards that should be applied to education. First, standards can act as an external benchmark to define the subject-matter to be taught and the behaviors required to reach desired levels of achievement. Second, standards can help to define the goals for what is needed in teaching and learning to achieve the best possible efforts. Third, these standards can inspire a host of remedial strategies to help those who are not able to meet the standards. Education reformists in the United States contend that
Education reformists believe that there are many attractive features to performance standards that should be applied to education.

Education can be improved by replacing our input system of course specifications and credit requirements with a system of performance standards. It is believed that content and achievement standards can be used as a framework for reforming not just the schools, but a whole new system of education and training throughout the United States. The main thrust toward a national standards framework in the United States came from the nation's state governors in the fall of 1990. The goals program, the National Education Goals for America 2000, was crafted during the second half of President Bush's term of office. America 2000 was heavily influenced by concepts that Margaret Thatcher had implemented in Britain in the 1980's: national academic standards for what children should know and be able to do, national testing of students on what they had learned of this content, and parental choice of schools.

The Re-organization of Schooling to Create More Paths in Reaching National Content and Achievement Standards

Global budgeting, which compares national costs of doing business in a world economy, reveals that schooling is one of America's biggest enterprises and expenses. The nation spends over $274 billion on public elementary and secondary education. With the end of the cold war and the scaling back of military spending, businesses from the military-industrial complex are shifting their horizons and looking at education as an education-enterprise-economy. Already, the major players in American business have become movers and shakers in school policy and their presence has added political heft and respectability to the pressures for change. Indeed, the various campaigns to advance national standards and assessments demonstrate how these new forces are coming to influence, even to dominate, the domains of education. The leadership of the America 2000 was drawn from outside traditional sources, especially representatives of business and executives of various organizations, and skewed away from current school-based practitioners. The low representation of school people was no accident. If content and achievement standards are joined together with school-choice for students and their parents, the opportunities will be far greater for private innovation, intervention, and involvement in schooling. The private sector in schooling will become more prominent and will flourish in the years ahead.

Education critics from corporate America contend that the main reason for the inertia and complacency in public education is the captive audience that we guarantee every tax-supported school. They complain that major barriers to better schooling are lack of choice and a start-from-scratch fresh approach. Competition and privatization would take care of both. A Gallup survey (September, 1992) indicates that 70 percent of Americans polled support a voucher system that would allow equal public tax money to be used to send children to any public, private, or parochial school. Along with the states equalization of school per-pupil funding (a given equal amount of tax money for each child residing in the state for K-12 education), reformists and politicians now are looking at the need for local school districts and the traditional American view of local control of schools through locally elected officials. Now in the United States, state-collected tax funds are being used to provide incentives to establish new schools outside the traditional state-supported school districts (local education authorities). Although the measures vary considerably from state to state, charter school legislation allows for the creation of new public schools that are more or less self-governing. These schools are cre-
It is believed that content and achievement standards can be used as a framework for reforming not just the schools, but a whole new learning system of education and training throughout the United States.

The charter school concept — its birth and continued existence — depends on student outcomes based upon content and achievement standards because these are the only measures of its successes or failures. The charter school concept — its birth and continued existence — depends on student outcomes based upon content and achievement standards because these are the only measures of its successes or failures. With the charter school initiatives, a state withdraws the local district's exclusive franchise to own and operate schools. This opens the door for entrepreneurs, including teachers in private practice, or outside agencies that provide instructional services, either in full or part-time, reducing costs by paying only for those services as needed. An educational service is a good candidate for being privatized if it meets the following criteria:

1. the nature of the service can be precisely defined;
2. the end result of the service is important, not who provides it;
3. the results can be accurately measured;
4. there is a mechanism for readily replacing incompetent providers; and
5. there is likely to be improved service at the same or lower costs.

The first large-scale schools-for-profit effort in the United States is the Edison Project which is inventing, developing, and operating new schools. The mission of the Edison Project is to demonstrate that a high-quality education can be delivered to a cross-section of students at a reasonable price. The annual charge will be the equivalent of the annual cost per student in U.S. public schools, which was $5,500 in 1992. The schools will be built in all types of communities, "including the most desperate inner-city areas" and twenty percent of the funds will go for scholarships. According to its planners, the idea behind the Edison Project is to step outside the education infrastructure where there are rules, regulations, and traditions that seem to produce all the reasons why things can't be changed in education.

Benno Schmidt, former president of Yale University and now head of the Edison Project, says that the new schools will have pruned bureaucracy, variable class sizes, and flexible student grouping. Grade levels will be a thing of the past because students will move ahead as they complete the schools' achievement standards. Because the new schools will hook up students to world-wide electronic networks through interactive computer workstations, costs of labor for the Edison schools can be greatly reduced through the use of volunteer help and advanced technology. The Edison Project began with $60 million in seed capital from Time-Warner, Philips Electronics of Holland, Associated Newspapers (a British conglomerate), and Whittle Communications.

"A radical re-privatization of the public realm is now underway," notes Pennsylvania State University Professor Henry Giroux. Professional educators no longer call the shots in what used to be a closed, educator-dominated system of school politics. Education in the context of high-stakes global economies is filled with new, powerful influences — notably governmental policy professionals, politicians, and business people. The growing influence of these newcomers to school politics mirrors the shifting demands that society and the economy are levying on public education. As these forces strive for political power, they will drive education policies.

A sweeping new reform document prepared by the Michigan State Board of Education's policy department reflects these future changes. Unlike restructuring in other states, it is not a single, cohesive plan, but a collection of proposals guaranteed to open
If content and achievement standards are joined together with school-choice for students and their parents, the opportunities will be far greater for private innovation, intervention, and involvement in schooling. The private sector in schooling will become more prominent and will flourish in the years ahead.

up the education system to more providers and options for parental choice. Key ideas in the proposal include:

1. Schools that link students by computer, video and satellite television would receive charters. Financing would come from outside sources, especially in cases of home schooling.

2. Charter schools would be allowed to “shed, embrace, or strengthen” state mandates including curricular requirements, teacher tenure, and teacher certification.

3. School districts could choose to become self-governing or “home rule” districts declaring themselves exempt from most of the state’s school code after a vote of the community. Districts then could be transformed into nonprofit organizations in which all registered voters would become shareholders. The shareholders would possess the same powers and duties as those of other nonprofit organizations.

4. Any public school could become independent of its district after a vote of residents.30

Reflecting the new mix of institutional interest in education, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration now is involved in Michigan’s charter-school concept, with plans to open a residential (boarding) school for extremely at-risk urban youth in Detroit, Michigan. Central Michigan University, one of Michigan's school chartering agencies, contracted for the U.S.D.E.A. school, which will accept 200 students. Under the federal drug agency’s plan, the school will be an all-day, all-year boarding facility aimed at bolstering student achievement and self-esteem while strengthening students’ family connections. The school will offer parents preparation for high-school-equivalency tests and other adult-education options. The project and its concept has won overwhelming support from the Detroit Police Department and other law enforcement agencies in the state.31

Mobilizing Music Education for the Global Economy

The diverse spheres of political influence in arts education represented by business, policy-makers, and the various arts interest groups undoubtedly will result in challenges from all sorts of directions for music education. As education is defined more by those who are not educators, there will be intense competition as special interests seek attention in the school curriculum. There will be additional competition for school time and resources as the various venue (performing arts centers) and arts agencies, museums, galleries, and actors guilds enter into the everyday school agenda. There will be pressures to bring financial reality to the content, performance, and assessment standards as educators try to provide educational opportunity for all students, regardless of economic or social status.

Since the basis for education in the global economy will be to provide far more people with more education, there will be increasing pressure to provide more education for less money. Competition from lower-cost, entrepreneurial schools will pressure public institutions to provide fewer courses with more depth and coursework integration. All schools will not offer all subjects — many will specialize to provide education in targeted areas.32

While many will be reacting negatively to these changes and attempting to maintain the status quo, music educators must mobilize for the future. Music teaching in our time, and music education in our schools, must satisfy two quite distinct, yet interrelated
Professional educators no longer call the shots in what used to be a closed, educator-dominated system of school politics. Education in the context of high-stakes global economies is filled with new, powerful influences — notably governmental policy professionals, politicians, and business people.

goals. We must prepare professionals of high quality — performers, conductors, composers, scholars, teachers, and critics. Yet, and at the same time, we must nurture and encourage those who just want to appreciate and enjoy music on a higher level of sensitivity, appreciation, and enjoyment.

Although these goals for music education will not change, the means of delivering them certainly will change. Already, the current trend toward school choice, specialized schooling, and cost-effectiveness has led to the establishment of new models of school organization for music education. In Washington, D.C., the Fillmore Arts Center provides in-depth study in music and the other arts by taking-part in a “cluster-school” concept in which six elementary schools each develop a focus. For example, schools may focus on the arts, languages, environmental concerns, or the sciences. To save on costs, all of the schools share common administrators, support personnel, record-keeping, and maintenance operations. Because the highly qualified musicians and educators who teach at arts school also teach classes at the other five schools, Fillmore can afford to hire several specialists for advanced study in music. In a school district which is losing students and facing the closing of schools, the student population has risen 28 percent at these schools, and they have generated strong parental support because of the choice options.33

To mobilize the profession for the changes in the global economy, the profession needs to examine well-established private companies in other countries that deliver music education services to schools in general music, instrument skills, ensemble performance, opera and musical stage, composers in residence, multi-cultural experience, and collaborative musical events and festivals. When a project has been identified by the school and the company, a contract is prepared which sets forth the services to be supplied, by whom it will be given, time and dates, fees, expenses, insurance requirements, and facilities necessary. By helping client school personnel to identify needs and interests, by matching these with appropriate music programming, and by helping with providing resources from public funds, private and commercial sponsors, these companies provide for a wide variety of music education services and training that otherwise would not be possible for a local school.35

To prepare the profession for the chal-
Competition from lower-cost, entrepreneurial schools will pressure public institutions to provide fewer courses with more depth and coursework integration.

Challenges ahead, music educators must emphasize the fact that schooling serves the economic, social, and political interests of the citizens that pay to support them. Music educators must be held accountable for what is accomplished and show the results. In order to gauge our curriculum and instruction against those that are world class, music educators must develop internationally benchmarked evaluation and assessment tools. The profession needs to develop curricula that allows graduates to fulfill requirements of the various national systems of education and to devise international university entrance examinations that can be taken in any country and recognized by any country. Since the profession has no history of conducting systematic evaluations from other countries’ national content and achievement standards, music educators must begin immediately on this important task.

To mobilize for the challenges ahead, we must rethink the entire process of training and re-training teachers, our front-line workers. The newly-enacted federal Goals 2000: Educate America Act education law makes it clear that professional-development activities be linked to content and achievement performance standards. Grants are to be made directly to school districts, thereby putting the K-12 schools in the driver’s seat in seeking out partnerships with public or private agencies or higher education institutions who can meet their needs. The money also can be used for new ways of assessing teachers by providing incentives for teachers to become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

As school supervisory and management personnel are thinned out (analogous to the shift in responsibilities in business and government), music teachers will need more training in curriculum and administrative policy-making and procedures. As composers, performers, arts venue, and agency professionals become more involved in schooling, teacher-training institutions must provide alternative certification for them. These would include classroom learning and management skills, childhood safety, record-keeping, motivation, evaluation, and other skills necessary for working in schools with children and young adults. As the privatization of music education services, both in and out of school, becomes more widespread, music educators will need more training in the practices of running a business.

To many educators, the idea of concentrating on the economic successes for individuals and nations debases education, making it only an instrument for providing cogs in the wheel to make economic profit. This is a valid viewpoint, but it can be expanded to incorporate the demands of the new global economy. Only an educational system that centers on the skills of learning itself, and the development of motivated minds, can produce a workforce capable of adapting to the needs of the next economy. The skills needed the most to power a modern economy are those that music educators have always developed in students:

1. a high capacity for abstract thinking;
2. the ability to solve problems that are full of ambiguities, have more than one right answer, and change in response to a changing environment;
3. the ability to communicate in work groups; and
4. the ability to create and inspire.

The demand for a highly educated workforce is, in fact, a call for us to realize what has always been among our highest aspirations. Music education has always been a profession consisting of: improvers, uplifters, and raisers of standards, especially for those who may be poor or otherwise disadvantaged.
In order to gauge our curriculum and instruction against those that are world class, music educators must develop internationally benchmarked evaluation and assessment tools.

Since the very nature of learning is a changing one, it follows that our ways and means of learning will change with the times. Given the history of music throughout the centuries in all parts of the world, and the fact that music forms much of the bedrock upon which the world's cultures exist, there is no reason to believe that people will suddenly drop their love of music or remove it from the education of their children. What is important here is that we begin to find new opportunities that exist within the larger contexts of social, economic, and political change. Our success depends upon the willingness to have an open mind and keen sense for mobilizing music education in this new, global economy.

Notes


4. See Thurow, 47, 273 and Reich, 3, 264.


8. Inflation-adjusted family incomes are falling for about half the American population (median income dropped from $38,710 in 1989 to $36,812 in 1992. Front-line workers weekly earnings fell from an average of $432.59 in 1959 to $364.30 in 1993 with infla-


10. See Marshall and Tucker, xviii.

11. Thurow, 262.


13. National content and assessment standards in the United States are described as follows:

1. The purpose should be to raise the performance of virtually all students to reach the same high standards of performance when they graduate from high school. The standards of performance to be met should be the same nationwide, though many different examinations should be available to measure student performance.

2. The examinations should provide students with many ways to demonstrate their competence including demonstrations, projects, and portfolios. The examinations and their administration should be free of any cultural or racial bias.

3. The whole process of standards and assessments should be open and public. The public should be broadly involved in setting performance standards. These standards should be widely disseminated, along with examples of student performance that meet the standards.

4. The standards and examinations should be designed so that teachers can teach to them and help students reach the new standards.

5. Other mandated testing requirements [at the state or local level] should be eliminated or greatly reduced. Local school staff must be given the information and resources they need to build effective programs to meet the standards. School professionals should be accountable for the results of their work, and parents must also be made effective partners in the education of their children.

6. All students must have a fair opportunity in reaching the new standards of performance. This means, at a minimum, that there will be an equitable distribution of the resources the students and their teachers need to succeed. See Marshall and Tucker, 145-148 and 152-153.


17. See Kaplan and Usdan, 670.


19. Proponents of school privatization and competition point out that traditional schools assign bureaucrats much of the control of education; while the people they serve have little control. The idea of a school choice system which gives equal money to each student would allow parents to shop for the program that best meets their needs. This arrangement offers more control to parents by fostering competition among schools.

Proponents of competition point out that in traditional schools, monopoly is often the rule. Such monopolies often are regimented, regulated, and resistant to change. Pushing responsibility for what is taught and how it is taught down to teachers and parents, and away from educational bureaucracies, is one step toward giving parents more control over
what is taught and learned.

Proponents also contend that competitive schools are more cost-effective. A competitive school would pay only for the services and subjects which prove most effective. "User fees" would be charged on an "as needed" basis for educational services outside of the curricular priorities of the school.


28. Kozol, 278.


The Third International Mathematics and Science Study, sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement [I.E.A.] will involve more than 50 countries and one-million students worldwide and take six years to complete. 20,000 U.S. students will participate. See Debra

37. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) offers Early Adolescence/Generalist and English Language Arts assessment packages to teacher candidates. The package meets the National Board’s criteria to provide the basis for awarding National Board Certification. Other assessment packages are being developed by the NBPTS. Some states are in the legislative process of providing funds to pay the fee for teachers who complete National Board Certification; allowing released time for candidates to work on their assessments; and awarding an annual bonus of teachers’ state-paid salary to those who achieve and maintain National Board Certification. See Ann Bradley, “Teacher Training A Key Focus for Administration,” Education Week, 13 July 1994, 20. Also see report “State Action Supporting National Board Certification,” National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 300 River Place, Suite 3600, Detroit, MI 48207.


39. ibid.