



VOLUME 7
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THE ATHLETE'S VIEW

CORNER

ATHLETE'S

When I'm in a bases loaded, two outs, bottom of the ninth with a one-run lead situation, I'll take a step off the mound to evaluate things and see who's coming up.

I feel a little bit nervous. It's like a sick feeling in my throat and gut. It's about fear, the fear of failing. But personally, the fear motivates me more than it hurts me. The fear locks me in. It makes me concentrate even more. It makes me focus on the batter, the guy I need to get out and win the game.

On the road, the crowd is always into the game in a situation like this, but it doesn't phase me. In fact, it gives me more energy, more adrenaline. I use the crowd's energy to pump myself up.

Once I've sized things up, I step back on the mound and look for the sign from the catcher. I'm so totally locked in, so totally focused that I don't hear anything. I visualize what I want the ball to do, what spot I want it to go to, and what I need to do to get the ball to that spot.

When I start my windup, the only thing I'm aware of is where I want my arm to be. I visualize where I want the ball to go while trying not to think of mechanics too much. If I start thinking too much, I get into trouble.

However, there are certain keys in my windup, certain key points in my mechanics where I know that if I get there, I'll have a better chance of throwing the ball where I want.

As I go through my windup, I focus on these

Educational Balance Is Needed in Our Overmentalized Schools

School throbs your head. —Eugene Johnson

Gene Johnson was a sophomore at Tamalpais High School in Marin County, California, when he made his passing statement in the spring of 1992. Figuratively and literally, Gene was speaking his mind. His remark carried with it a tone of resignation.

To his credit, Gene made it. A black student coming from a disadvantaged environment, Gene went directly from high school to a four-year university, unlike an overwhelming majority of his peers.

Back in 1992, little did Gene or anyone else know how on target his statement would prove to be.

Recently, a study conducted by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health found that the frequency of headaches in both men and women increases with the amount of education a person receives. Further, people with graduate degrees have more headaches than anyone else.

Education has the dubious distinction of being America's number one concern, and with good reason. For what may be manifesting itself within our national subconscious is an uneasy awareness that we have gone as far as we can with education (read: schooling) as we know it.

While the conventional call to deal with this concern is for educational reformation, what is needed is educational *transformation*. Education as we know it no longer meets the needs of our learners. What we consider appropriate methods and content of instruction no longer fulfill the needs of our students. And, maybe they never did.

How could this be? Hasn't education worked in the past but just isn't working now? Probably

not. Two analogies can be made here, one to cigarette smoking and another to medical treatment.

When a teenager begins smoking, the harmful effects to the heart and lungs, the addictive properties of nicotine are immediate. However, not until the teenager becomes an adult and has smoked for many years do these effects become apparent.

During the time of George Washington, a prevailing method of medical treatment for someone who was seriously ill was to bleed the person. The idea was that if the person was seriously ill, the blood must be tainted. Therefore, if the *bad* blood was removed, the person would get better. Washington, himself, was treated this way.

While this was a medically approved method of treatment 200 years ago, today we know how misguided this approach was. We're trying to treat education's illnesses by using antiquated methods that are similarly misguided. Thus, after many, many years, we're finally witnessing the cigarette-like, long-term, harmful effects of the prevailing methods and content of instruction in our schools.

A simple way to test whether or not education as we know it is working is to ask a basic question: Do kids eagerly look forward to waking up Monday mornings and going to school? We all know the answer to this question, especially parents of school-aged children.

And this is not just the case for those who may be average or below-average students. Several years ago, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article that included a study of the graduating seniors from Minnesota, annually one of the states that has an exceptionally high graduation

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Shawn Estes

SEE CORNER, INSIDE

SEE EDUCATIONAL BALANCE, INSIDE

Message from the Director...

Making changes in education is a daunting task. Some people balk at the idea of improving education through sport. For example, for years, Fireman's Fund Foundation director Barbara Friede politely declined. "We don't fund sports programs," she'd patiently explain.

But eventually, Barbara agreed to make a site visit. "What I found was an organization that gets kids to turn on to learning by applying the principles of sports to the classroom." She goes on to say, "It's really so much more than sports."

We're pleased to recognize Fireman's Fund Foundation for its fourth year of support to expand the PASS program. This past September, Hill Middle School in Novato began offering the PASS program thanks to a grant from Fireman's Fund.

Barbara adds, "I can't think of anything more beneficial to our community or nation than to get our children excited about education. Through PASS, students are given the opportunity to realize their full potential."

Besides Fireman's Fund Foundation, we salute the recent donors who support this work: Ron and Sally Boose, Elizabeth Carroll, Dexter Dawes, Scott Elrod, Saul Feldman, Trisha and Jim Garlock, Bob Griffin, Andy Heck, Sol and Sylvia Kirsch, the Marsden Starbuck Cason Foundation, Russell Maryland Foundation, McGraw Foundation, Brian McRae, Paul and Elle Stephens, Jim and Kathy Wilhelm, Margaret Williamson, The Winged O Foundation, and the anonymous donors.

We also want to thank Julie Oswald and the auditing services from Thomas J. Holden & Co., Alper & Associates Personnel Services, Planet Hollywood, and KGO-Radio for their support.

And we invite more of you to get involved. Your donations, your time, and your commitment are all very important to us as we work to help students do better in school and in life by focusing on the study and practice of sport.



Susan Kirsch is the Executive Director of the American Sports Institute.



A panel of PASS teachers answer questions at the PASS Introductory Seminar in San Francisco. (l-r) John Goulding, Janis Coblenz, PASS student Shalieu Morris, Peter Donoff, and Mike Darr.

PASS Coast to Coast

In San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami, educators learned about the *Promoting Achievement in School through Sport* program. With demonstration, lecture, and first-hand experience, participants in the half-day seminars discovered how integrating body, mind, and spirit can lead to improved academic achievement and behavior.

Chicago Bears offensive lineman Andy Heck talked about how attitude is the most important element of success. In San Francisco, Golden State Warriors vice president Al Attles praised the PASS program for its emphasis on attitude. "If you think you can win, you have a much better chance of winning," he explained. "In PASS, students learn how to bring a winning attitude to everything they do."

A Warrior for Education

Donyell Marshall of the Golden State Warriors announced that he will donate \$50 to the American Sports Institute for every rebound he pulls down from January 1 to the end of the NBA regular season. Marshall's gift will support ASI's educational programs, including PASS.

Upon first learning about PASS, Marshall said, "I wish there'd been a program like PASS when I was in school. Instead of telling students that sports don't count when it comes to doing well in school, PASS shows kids that the qualities that make them successful on the field or court can do the same for them in the classroom."

Steven Kravitz, General Counsel for CSI

A panel of PASS teachers talked about their experiences. "PASS has a track record of raising GPAs," said Mike Darr of College Park High School, "and it has been used in schools with students who have a wide mix of ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds."

"We have the pieces in place to support educators through professional development training in their efforts to motivate, guide, and challenge all students," says PASS Director Dr. Joel Kirsch. "We've got a daily, year-long curriculum that's proven that it works, a teacher training program that rekindles teachers' enthusiasm, and competent trainers—all making it possible to move toward the long-range goal of benefiting middle and high school students all across the country."

Capital Management, Marshall's financial advisors, brought the Warrior forward and ASI together.

Marshall has been an active supporter of education since joining the NBA in 1994.

THE ATHLETE'S VIEW

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WHAT WE FOUND

Teacher Results

Table 1 below shows that on almost all measures, PASS teachers met or exceeded the learner-centered guidelines. PASS teachers were high in their learner-centered beliefs about learners, learning, and teaching, and low in their nonlearner-centered beliefs. They were high in their perceptions of their learner-centered classroom practices, high in their beliefs about being able to influence the learning of adolescents, low in their beliefs about adolescence being a difficult stage, low in student control, and high in autonomy support for students.

Student Results

On student measures, the PASS teachers were particularly impressive. Students of the PASS teachers perceived their teacher's classroom practices as highly learner-centered, but even more impressive are the high levels of motivation expressed by the PASS students. Their scores indicated high self-efficacy (the variable most strongly correlated with achievement) and

high task engagement with low work and effort avoidance.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR SCHOOL REFORM

Keys to Student Motivation and Achievement

We learned that PASS meets the criteria for a learner-centered program. It supports an instructional process that PASS teachers view as meeting student needs. More importantly, however, the students in the PASS program report high levels of motivation and their achievement is at high levels. What that says to us is that PASS addresses the needs of the whole learner—intellectual needs, motivational needs, and other needs, such as students' physical and social needs. It engages students by its holistic approach and, in turn, their achievement is enhanced.

PASS as a Model for Total School Reform

The features of the PASS program are those that can serve as a model for other school programs and practices. More than that, PASS

can become a model for defining those qualities of total school reform that are needed to both engage students and help them achieve high academic standards.

We are delighted that PASS *passed* the learner-centered test! The sound, research-based practices that are incorporated in the PASS program were demonstrated to pay off for students and teachers alike, thus making it a model for total school reform.

Barbara L. McCombs is Director of Motivation and Human Development at the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory and served as co-chair of the American Psychological Association's Task Force on Psychology in Education. Patricia A. Lauer is a Senior Research Associate at McREL.

Barbara L. McCombs



Patricia A. Lauer

COMPARISONS OF PASS WITH MOST LEARNER-CENTERED PROGRAMS/PRACTICES

Teacher Measures	PASS		Learner-Centered Model	Preferred Score
	5-97 (n=4)	11-97 (n=4)	Alternative H.S. (n=19)	(n=25)
Teacher Beliefs and Assumptions:				
Learner-centered beliefs about learners, learning, & teaching	3.3	3.5	3.6	≥3.2
Nonlearner centered beliefs about learners	2.4	2.3	1.8	<2.4
Teacher Perceptions of Classroom Practices:				
Creates positive interpersonal relationships/climate	3.9	3.8	3.5	≥3.6
Encourages higher order thinking and self-regulation	3.5	3.3	2.9	≥3.2
Adapts to individual developmental differences	3.3	3.2	2.9	≥2.7
Student Measures	(n=95)	(n=83)	(n=227)	(n=483)
Student Perceptions of Classroom Practices:				
Creates positive interpersonal relationships/climate	3.6	3.5	3.4	≥3.3
Encourages higher order thinking and self-regulation	3.3	3.2	3.2	≥3.1
Adapts to individual developmental differences	2.9	2.9	2.7	≥2.6
Student Motivation and Learning Variables:				
Self-Efficacy	3.6	3.6	3.3	≥3.4
Performance-Oriented Goals	2.5	2.2	2.2	<2.6
Active Learning Strategies	3.2	3.1	3.1	≥3.0
Task Mastery Goals	3.2	3.4	3.3	≥3.1
Classroom Achievement Score	88.4	89.6	84.8	90.7

Most preferred score patterns are based on the scores of the 25 validation sample teachers with the highest proportion of students high in both achievement and motivation. For the validation sample, data were collected from 113 middle school teachers and 2,476 middle school students, 155 high school teachers and 3,136 high school students from six states: AK, CO, IL, KY, MI, NC.

rate. In the study, 60% of the graduating seniors said they were bored with school.

Current educational reform efforts to increase the number of school days, lengthen the school day, hold administrators and teachers more accountable, and increase graduation requirements—the prevailing trends in educational reform—are misguided.

We should be asking why kids don't love school and why they don't eagerly look forward to Monday mornings? Kids aren't doing better in school because they can't, but because they don't want to. For the students, school is not a place for meaningful growth and development that ultimately leads to fulfillment, but a place that gives them a headache, a place that leaves them unfulfilled.

So what is needed? What must happen for kids to want to be in school? What must happen for them to experience fulfillment?

Our educational system is out of balance, and a system that is out of balance will eventually fall or fail.

Humans are physical and spiritual beings as well as mental. However, the current educational experience for students is overwhelmingly mental and, thus, out of balance. The body and the spirit have been relegated to second-rate status in our schools.

The prevailing educational reform approach is based on the perspective that more mental activity and more paperwork will solve the problem. However, one of the major problems is that there is *too much* emphasis on the mental activity associated with paperwork. In fact, who doesn't complain about paperwork these days?

To be fulfilling, learning experiences must be integrated; they must include the body and spirit

To be fulfilling, learning experiences must be integrated, they must include the body and spirit as well as the mind.

as well as the mind. An overemphasis on any one domain will lead to cultural headaches.

An overemphasis on the mental domain leads to a culture not grounded in reality and the natural forces of life itself. An overemphasis on the physical domain creates a culture without perspective and the ability to reflect. An overemphasis on the spiritual domain brings about a dogmatic culture without individuality and the ability to think and perceive for oneself.

Because we are human beings, the learning experiences that simultaneously touch us at a physical/mental/spiritual level are the ones we naturally gravitate toward. Thus, for education to be effective, for education to be enriching and fulfilling, every learning experience must incorporate these basic domains.

Many of the current trends in the educational reform movement are really about doing more of the same thing. This is similar to rearranging the deck chairs on education's Titanic. The ship is going down but the chairs are being reconfigured to make it look like something is being done. No matter where the deck chairs are placed, it's still the Titanic.

We must let go of and transcend antiquated, unbalanced, and ineffective approaches to learning that throb the head and bleed the students of their enthusiasm for learning. We must replace these methods with a balanced and integrated body/mind/spirit approach to the growth and development of all children. This perspective must be the prevailing focus of the methodology and content in our schools to enable students to eagerly look forward to Monday mornings.

With all that is going on in our schools, one thing is certain: Our current educational system is giving everyone in America—those with and without graduate degrees—one, big headache.

Real change in the form of educational transformation where the body, mind, and spirit are balanced and integrated into the entire learning experience must take place to meet the needs of America's students, and this transformation must happen soon. If not, the time will come when our national headache will become our national migraine.

PASS Profile

I transferred into the PASS class because I saw my friends doing it last year and I thought it would be a fun and easy class. The fun part of it has proven to be true, but it is anything but easy.

The PASS class involves lots of concentration and a positive attitude. I have learned a whole lot more than I thought I would.

I play volleyball, basketball, and track. I also manage the football team. With all of this, I still managed to do pretty well in school. I had a 3.6 GPA when I transferred into the PASS class. Now I have a 3.83 and I'm aiming for a 4.0. Mr. Wilson makes you want to excel and he uses all of the different fundamentals to help you achieve your goals.

PASS is a great class. It really helps you excel in both school and sports. PASS has helped me like no other class ever has or ever will. There is no such thing as a perfect student or athlete, but with the help of Coach Wilson and the PASS program, I believe I'm getting closer.

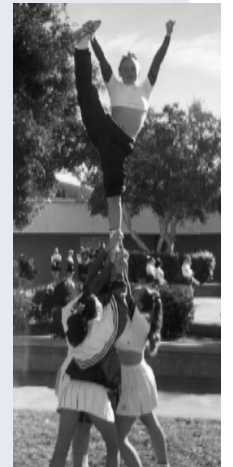


Sara Cobb

I'm involved in something that many do not recognize as a sport, but in my eyes, it is a sport. It's a tough sport. It's cheerleading.

Being the one who is frequently tossed in the air requires a great deal of concentration, balance, and flexibility. The PASS class has helped me in athletics as well as academics. I have learned how to apply all of the FAMS in everything I do, whether it be cheerleading or everyday life.

PASS is different from any other class I have. Everyday has something fun, something new to learn.



Kristen Bell

Sara Cobb and Kristen Bell are students in Bob Wilson's PASS class at Hilltop High School in Chula Vista, California.

ATHLETE'S CORNER

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

keys. It's something I feel as I go through my motion. Then, at the last second, I pick up the catcher's glove again.

At the point where I release the pitch, I'm not thinking about or feeling anything. There's just this release of energy. That's it.

Shawn Estes is an All-Star pitcher for the San Francisco Giants.

PASS Passes the Learner-Centered Test

Editor's Note: This article is excerpted from a more lengthy report that includes references. The full report is available upon request. Also, due to the length of this article, ViewPoint does not appear in this issue of The Athlete's View. It will resume with the next issue.

In early 1997, we began a research collaboration between the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) and the American Sports Institute concerning ASI's *Promoting Achievement in School through Sport* (PASS) program. A colleague in Illinois who had seen the program in action contacted us with the news that this was "a true model of learner-centered principles in practice." That was exciting to us as we are continually looking for examples of programs that enhance motivation and achievement for all students because they are based on sound principles of learning.

The basis for connecting PASS's instructional model with our work on learner-centered practices at McREL is a project begun in 1990 with the American Psychological Association's (APA) Task Force on Psychology in Education that defined the research base on learning and learners. The tools for this connection were teacher and student surveys from McREL's Learner-Centered Battery (LCB). Both are briefly described below.

McREL'S LEARNER-CENTERED MODEL

The Learner-Centered Psychological Principle

One project of the APA Task Force was to integrate research and theory from psychology and education in order to surface general principles that provide a framework for school redesign and reform. The task force

identified twelve principles that are the basis of a learner-centered model and that provide the foundation for sound teaching practices. The principles are categorized into five domains that impact different aspects of learning. The domains cover (1) intellectual aspects of learning; (2) motivational influences; (3) individual differences in intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development areas; (4) personal/social factors, such as the individual's own self-assessments as well as the assessments of others; and (5) differences in family background, culture, and other contexts that influence learning.

Defining Learner-Centered from an Empirical Perspective

A central understanding that emerges from the *Principles* is that educational systems to serve the needs of *all learners*, it is essential to have a focus on the individual learner as well as an understanding of the learning process. Thus, we have evolved the following definition of learner-centered:

Learner centered is the perspective that couples a focus on individual learners—their heredity, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs—with a focus on leaning—the best available knowledge about learning and how it occurs, and about teaching practices that are most effective in promoting the highest levels of motivation, learning, and achievement for all learners.

The Learner-Centered Self-Assessment Tools for Teachers and Students

The LCB is a set of teacher and student self-assessment surveys for grades K-16. The Teacher Survey measures two primary variables:

Teacher Beliefs and Assumptions and Teacher Perceptions of Classroom Practices. The Student Survey measures students' perceptions of their teachers' practices with items that are parallel to those in the Teacher Survey, but from the student's perspective.

OUR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT

The Research Question

The research question of interest to both ASI and McREL was: "How learner-centered are

PASS teachers, as measured by the LCB?" For ASI, this question's answer could validate the premise that the eight Fundamentals of Athletic Mastery, on which PASS students receive intense education, are also fundamentals of academic mastery. From McREL's viewpoint, if a program such as PASS, which purports to incorporate learner-centered classroom practices, is demonstrated to be learner-centered by our LCB surveys, there would be additional support for the validity of those surveys.

The Research Study

Two male and two female high school teachers from the Chicago area volunteered to participate. There was a balance between suburban and urban, and all four were veterans of teaching PASS. In May, 1997, each completed a Teacher Survey and one class of their PASS students completed the Student Survey. To provide additional reliability, the four teachers each resurveyed themselves and a different class of PASS students in November, 1997.

The sound, research-based practices that are incorporated in the PASS program... make it a model for total school reform.

The students in the PASS program report high levels of motivation and their achievement is at high levels.