

 THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING

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Cynthia Carter
Executive Editor
Education Daily
1101 King Street
P.O. Box 1453
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Dear Cynthia:

This nation has committed itself to a system of public schools, believing that education is for all children, not just the privileged few. At the same time, we have encouraged a system of private schools. The nation has been well served by this arrangement, one that affirms not just access to education but choice as well.

The private sector must not be viewed as "a threat to the public schools." Private schools now enroll roughly the same percentage of students as they did twenty-five years ago. They are sure to exist long into the future, and they have a crucial role to play. In short, we don't need a public relations war, we need high quality education in both systems.

At the same time, it is the public schools that demand special attention at this crucial moment in our history. These institutions serve the vast majority of school age children and remain our best hope for achieving a fully democratic and economically progressive society.

Public school administrators, school board members, and teachers need to concentrate their energies on assuring for all students the highest quality education that is possible--not to compete with private schools, but because they have an urgent and challenging mandate to fulfill.

Serving children well--whether in the public or private sector--is an educational task that needs clarity of purpose, a focus on learning, a coherent curriculum, and high expectations. It needs also careful documentation and timely public accounting. The challenge we confront is to educate well all children regardless of where they go to school. And I'm convinced that public and private schools, in the fulfilling of this mandate, can learn from one another.

Best wishes,


Ernest L. Boyer
President

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