**K-12 School System Reform - An IOPA Tier One Policy Issue**

There are two reasons why this is **THE** top IOPA issue. 1) Inhouse Expertise; and 2) Global Importance.

1) IOPA Chief Merrifield and IOPA VP Phelps have several books and articles on different aspects of under-performing primary and secondary education systems (all schools, public and private), worldwide. IOPA Treasurer Gray has a PhD in Education Policy, and is a coauthor, with Merrifield, of *Unproductive School Choice Debates* (2023). VP Phelps just published *The Malfunction of US Education Policy*. IOPA Development Director Milena Smolinskaya is a new education policy PhD. IOPA Senior Fellow and Director of the **IOPA Center for K-12 Captivity Studies** Martha Bradley-Dorsey has a PhD in Education Policy and a forthcoming book on school violence.

2) Regarding the 51 (50 states plus DC) US K-12 school systems, there have been periodic re-affirmations of the formal *1983 ‘Nation at Risk’ declaration*. Since the world’s best K-12 systems are only slightly higher performing than the existential threat-level US system, low-performing school systems are a global threat to freedom, equity, and prosperity.

**Specific IOPA K-12-related Research Centers:**

- **Center for K-12 Captivity Studies**: IOPAs aims to fully expose the outrageously high degree to which schoolchildren are stuck in poor-fit schooling, and the many serious consequences.

- **Center for Accountability Enhancement**: Identify better ways to hold students and educators accountable for student outcomes and develop and implement ways to hold trusted information sources accountable for their claims and behaviors.

- **Center for Continuity and Enrichment**: the latter services for schoolchildren will likely include wokism, DEI, and CRT deprogramming services; related truth to be in a chapter of the under-development book, *The Virtuous Language Police*. Feedback please on this very early stage plan.

**Research projects underway:**

- Inoculation Study of Alleged Charter School Scandals
- Private Schools Access Index
- The Effect of Testing on Student Achievement, exhaustive data base and meta-analysis.

**Planned projects** (comments and financial support would be greatly appreciated), including proposals:

- Determinants of Charter School Degree of Specialization and Product Differentiation
- Determinants of K-12 School System Performance: With partners in Canada, Chile, and Spain (seeking one for Germany), we aim to use a province/state-level data set to identify performance determinants.

**Research yielding this Book: ** *Political Control of K-12 Education*

- **Purpose**: provide an objective basis for comparison of market control and political control of schooling personnel and content.

- **Last vestiges of structural racism**: Attendance area boundaries force households to compete for the housing near the better TPS, which concentrates the poorest children around the worst schools, yielding de facto segregation. That, and some other predictable outcomes of politicizing schooling policies, is responsible for the longstanding, repeated formal *‘Nation at Risk’* designation for all 51 US school systems. This is likely to come under IOPA's **Center for K-12 Captivity Studies**.
Important K-12 Reform Books, Recent Articles, and Dimensions:

**From IOPA – K-12 Publications - K-12 Blog Post Archive Forthcoming**

Attendance Areas concentrate poverty around the worst schools.

**Book Review** of Cara Fitzpatrick’s terrible *The Death of Public School*

Other - e-mail IOPAChief@policytalk.org to suggest additions. Also, Reform Strategy Options.

See also items B, C, D, M, and Q in the Why IOPA is Needed Document.

**Tools:**

A) The Nonpartisan Education Review – a peer-reviewed academic journal

B) The school choice fiscal notes calculator (coming here soon) exists because sloppy, disingenuous fiscal cost estimates (fiscal notes) often provided political cover for legislators to oppose school choice expansion. IOPA can create such fiscal notes, cheaply, on demand. Via ZOOM, we can determine what information the calculator requires, enter those numbers, and get important estimates immediately.

C) Coming soon: a Private School Access Index (PSAI). We need the Index to sustain progress beyond the early universal eligibility adopter states in 2022 and 2023, and to build on the initial steps forward achieved by the early universal expansion adopters (Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Oklahoma, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin).