

# Education

## "THE REPORT CARD"

Past, Present  
and Future

Yvonne Atkinson



As we reflect back on 1985, those of us who work in education are suddenly astonished at the successes that we have enjoyed, the difficulties overcome, and the challenges before us. I recently read an article about Greg Smith, a young student from Basic High School,

who was injured seriously in an auto accident, and could feel his courage as he comes back from this disabling accident and learns to walk again. Such courage needs to be rewarded not only for Greg, but for the students in every classroom and in every school who exhibit the same

courage every day. These are the students who face life without sight or hearing, or have a learning disability. There are parents who encourage these students and send them to school knowing that through proper training, they will have a chance for that "normal life."

This new year will bring to us new possibilities, new potentials for success, new issues to resolve, but all of these directed back towards this community's future... its children. One such possibility is the Distinguished Scholars program. Maybe you have heard about the program being developed. It is not a novel concept, but one whose time has come. Distinguished Scholars simply implies a program which will be used to challenge our secondary youth as they pursue their high school career. It is advanced training for students who can meet the challenge and by successfully meeting all of the requirements, which include a specific number of classes in each of five curriculum areas; namely, English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language, a student will be recognized for their accomplishment. Now, to add importance to this program, each student who enrolls in a Distinguished Scholars program and earns a successful grade will be offered additional grade points.

This is one new program that is being implemented to strengthen our academic offerings in the high schools, but other programs are not being overlooked. Vocational Education is under constant review and new courses are being added. Our special education program for all handicapped children serves as a model for school districts across the nation, and every student has a chance to learn at their potential.

The courage I see young people exhibit every day is manifested in the Greg Smiths of this community, and all of the other young people who strive to overcome disabling conditions and work to their potential. Economic barriers, social barriers, physical barriers, are all a part of

## SCHOOL TALK

By Dr. Marshall C. Darnell

### The Changing Face Of Occupational Education

In a number of recent articles, the vocational programs offered at the various high schools have been described. Secondary students today have an opportunity to enroll in any number of specialized vocational classes which lead to immediate job entry level skill acquisition. This simply means that once the student has successfully completed the competency based vocational education program, they have a skill which will permit them to gain immediate employment.

While we have dwelt on the type of program which is offered, there is another side to vocational education which should be reported. The labor market in this country has been changing for the past two decades. We have seen our job market move from what has sometimes been referred to as a "smoke stack" economy, or manufacturing economy into one that is geared towards services and communication. Students who will be entering the labor force in the

everyday life. Our young people are learning to cope with these and succeed. I would remind myself and all of us that as we review our children's progress, let us always encourage them to do their best, enroll in the strongest programs available, but remember that school is a place for success and also a place where a student will have an opportunity to overcome handicaps, whatever that handicap may be. We can't all be the outstanding athlete, or the outstanding scholar, but we can all be the best our potential will allow us to be. It may be that reaching this goal needs only a kind word and an encouraging thought. The year 1986 can be a time when we can make a difference. That difference will be through an improved educational program for all students. This past year has shown that through P.A.C.E., we can make a difference for a positive change. Let 1986 show the results of this positive endeavor.

next decade will find job opportunities different from those offered today. We have all seen the effect created by electronics and the mass change that has taken place in the communication systems. We have witnessed the need for increased personnel in the health care field in recreation, in sales, marketing and distribution, and supply and warehousing. Such trends are forecasted to continue with a decreased emphasis in labor supply for agriculture and manufacturing.

How does all of this translate into job opportunities for our students today? Training programs once designed are now being modified and some eliminated. The Clark County School District once experienced a high level of student interest in metals fabrication. Today, that interest on the part of students is waning because there are few employment opportunities available. To replace this area within the past five years, we have observed an increase in the number of classes needed in electronics, computer programming and computer technology. There are other examples which can be offered which describe the same set of circumstances, where one program is being downgraded and new programs created. These types of changes cannot be made in the span of just a few months. To build a new program, teachers must be retained, or new teachers hired, a curriculum developed, and a classroom

designed which will accommodate the learning. Added to this, the Clark County School District, as well as other educational agencies across the nation, must purchase highly sophisticated and expensive training equipment.

Recognizing the changes which were being required in vocational education, the 1985 Legislature, authorized \$3 million to be divided among the various counties of the state. This was to be used specifically for the purchase of new vocational equipment. Those of us who work in this educational area applaud the efforts of our assemblymen and senators who championed this cause and provided additional funds so that vocational education could be upgraded, and could meet the needs of our students. For the past two months, a concerted effort has been made by teachers and administrators to identify the equipment essential in modernizing the individual programs. Beginning in 1986, the equipment will be ordered and placed in the junior and senior high schools for future use. One condition placed on the encumbrance of these funds was a directive from the State Legislature that the district actively communicate with its business/industrial community and seek a 20 percent match of equipment or cash which could be used in the vocational program. Our district is now engaged in working with all facets of our community to obtain

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### Clark County Community College Awards Grant To Assist Small Business

Clark County Community College through the Greenspun Technology Endowment has awarded a \$5,000 grant to the College's Training Institute to assist small business owners in the planning, management and operation of their enterprises. The Training Institute will have a portable micro-computer and a consultant available to provide on-site technical

assistance to small business owners.

The Greenspun Technology Endowment has been made available to Clark County Community College from resources provided by the H.M. Greenspun family.

Interested business owners may obtain further information by calling the Training Institute at 643-6060, ext. 440.



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