Session #1: September 4, 2013

Introduction, Course Overview and Expectations; State Approaches to ESEA Flexibility (Exercise)

Reading:

2. Kimberly Heffling & Ben Feller, No Child Left Behind: 10 States Receive Waivers from Education Law’s Sweeping Requirements, AP, Feb. 9, 2012

Discussion Questions:

1. How do the NCLB and ESEA Flexibility requirements differ? Why do you suppose the U.S. Education Department offered ESEA Flexibility option? Is ESEA Flexibility, including as it will be implemented in New Jersey, a weakening or a strengthening of prior requirements? Do the differences between NCLB and ESEA Flexibility reflect divergent understandings of how government can work to influence behavior and solve public problems? How comfortable are you with the U.S. Education Department’s decision to offer this option instead of waiting for Congress to act?

2. New Jersey’s approved application for ESEA Flexibility says that its “central goal . . . is to ensure that all children, regardless of life circumstances, graduate from high school ready for college and career.” The application acknowledges that “[c]urrently, New Jersey is far from accomplishing this mission.” How likely is it that the steps New Jersey proposes in its application will succeed in this mission? As far as you can
tell, what is the New Jersey Department of Education’s understanding of how government can work to influence behavior and solve public problems?

3. Seven field-based Regional Achievement Centers (RACs) are an important feature of New Jersey’s plan for turning around the state’s lowest performing schools, called “Priority Schools.” Suppose that you are a member of a cross-functional team of leaders and managers from the New Jersey Department of Education and from some of the RACs themselves, and that the team is charged, among other things, with developing a mission statement for the RACs’ interactions with Priority Schools. The mission statement is supposed to be congruent with the Department’s more general mission quoted above. The task is important, and New Jersey Commissioner of Education Christopher Cerf has asked to review the statement himself. Initial discussions have indicated that the task is not straightforward. For example, various suggestions have been made to frame the statement around the following or cognate words, many of which appear in the approved request for ESEA Flexibility, but may reveal conflicting understandings of the tenor of the RACs’ work with Priority Schools: supervise, facilitate, collaborate, serve, direct, recommend, compromise, not compromise, negotiate, empower, achieve, teach (educate, instruct), learn, adults (principals, teachers), children. What process would you propose the team use to develop the mission statement, given the many directions it could take? Although the task at hand is to come up with a process for developing the statement, not to develop the statement itself, you might give a moment’s thought to which of the listed words, or which unlisted alternatives, you would use to describe the RACs’ mission as to Priority Schools.

Exercise in Class: New Jersey Regional Achievement Centers
- You are a member of a cross-functional team with leaders and managers from the New Jersey Department of Education and from some of the state’s seven field-based Regional Achievement Centers (RACs).
- Your team is charged, among other things, with developing a mission statement for the RACs’ interactions with failing schools, designated “Priority Schools.”
- The mission statement is to be consistent with the Department’s general mission “to ensure that all children, regardless of life circumstances, graduate from high school ready for college and career.”
- There seem to be divergent views about the RACs’ mission in this regard, as is suggested by the following word cloud derived from the state’s ESEA Flexibility application and very preliminary discussions about the RACs’ role vis-à-vis Priority Schools: supervise, facilitate, collaborate, serve, direct, recommend, compromise, not compromise, negotiate, empower, achieve, teach (educate, instruct), learn, adults (principals, teachers), children.
- **Your team has allocated 15 minutes to coming up with an agreed upon process for developing the mission statement? Please do so now.**
Writing Assignment (after class):
In one page or less, please reflect on the New Jersey Regional Achievement Center exercise:

- What plan did your team come up with (bullets/summary)?
- What went well for your group?
- What could have gone better?
- What was your role in the team’s deliberations?
- How did your role contribute to the team’s accomplishment of its goals or any challenges it encountered?

Due as a MS Word attachment emailed to CPRL@law.columbia.edu by Monday September 9 at 9:00 a.m.

Sessions #2: September 11, 2013

When Bureaucracy (Technology-Based Regulation) Works and Fails, and What that Suggests about What Ails U.S. K-12 Public Education

Reading


3. Cary Coglianese & David Lazer, Management-Based Regulation: Prescribing Private Management to Achieve Public Goals, 37 L. & Soc. Rev. 691 (2003), at 691-706 (read through the preamble to Part III only; the rest of Part III is optional)

4. Examples from the New York City and other school systems, 1965-2012:
      [Note: Professor Ravitch describes competing 1960s proposals for decentralizing the NYC schools. Shortly after the period she discusses, the state legislature adopted a decentralization plan similar to the one supported by the UFT (see p. 335). A quarter century later, the following op-ed was published giving a contentiously stated but widely shared view of the result of the new arrangement.]

      [Note: Doubts whether large public school systems have solved these problems in the ensuing decades are addressed or suggested by the next three readings.]


Discussion Questions

1. What is bureaucracy, understood as a form of organizing concerted activity? How does bureaucracy manifest itself in public agencies devoted to delivering services? Agencies devoted to regulating private behavior?

2. What are some examples of bureaucracy working well? What are examples of bureaucracy working poorly? What accounts for the differences?

3. How would you characterize the current state of public education in the US? To what extent is bureaucracy responsible for the problems facing US public education? What other causes are important?

4. Focusing on the Ravitch excerpt, how was the decentralization of the New York City school system proposed in the 1960s expected to improve conditions for school children? Why else was decentralization proposed? How did the decentralization proposals differ, and what accounts for the differences?

5. Based on the Youngblood and later pieces, did decentralization in New York City schools alleviate bureaucracy and its harmful effects? Did decentralization benefit poor and minority children? Who did it benefit?

6. What relationship is there, if any, between bureaucracy and
   a. the New York City-UFT Collective Bargaining Agreement?
   b. difficulties big city systems are having today in addressing declining enrollments?
   c. failings of court-ordered school desegregation, finance equity and “adequacy”?

Session #3: September 18, 2013

A Menu of Alternatives to Bureaucracy, Including “Experimentalist” or “Public-Learning” Arrangements
Reading

1. Review from session 1: Cary Coglianese & David Lazer, Management-Based Regulation: Prescribing Private Management to Achieve Public Goals, supra

2. Charles F. Sabel & William H. Simon, Minimalism and Experimentalism in the Administrative State, 100 Geo. L.J. 53 (2011) [Note: in this and other articles, footnotes are for your information only; you are not required to read them.]

3. Diane Ravitch, The Death and Life of the Great American School System (2010), Ch. 9 through the flag for Footnote 11


5. New York City’s Chancellor’s District:
   a. Randi Weingarten & Michael Mulgrew, Mayor Bloomberg: Stop Closing Schools, There’s a Better Way,
   b. MassInsight, Meeting the Turnaround Challenge: New York City’s Chancellor’s District (2010),

6. Optional: For a simplified version of the Sabel & Simon piece, see James S. Liebman, Public-Sector Reform through Learning Organizations and the Supporting Role of Universities, at 1-11 (through the 1st ¶ of Part V) – or read the whole thing if you’re interested in the overall logic of the Center for Public Research and Leadership of which this course is a part

Discussion Questions

1. What variations on or alternatives to bureaucratic organization can you identify being advocated, discussed or criticized in the readings?

2. As to each variation or alternative, how if at all does it seek to mitigate common problems with bureaucracy?

3. In what ways are the variations and alternatives similar to each other, and in what ways do they differ?

4. With the caveats that many of the readings and excerpts only allude to solutions and do not present full-fledged defenses of them, and that we will spend more time addressing each of them later on in the semester, what are your preliminary thoughts about --
   a. how effectively each proposal avoids the difficulties with bureaucracy?
b. other difficulties the proposals are likely to encounter?
c. which seems most appealing to you and why?

Session #4: September 25, 2013

Some Classic Learning Organizations in Action

Reading


Discussion Questions

1. Based on Spear’s description of the organizations at the center of each of his examples, what would you say is the organization’s “secret sauce?”

2. In what ways are the organizations and their strategies that Spear describes similar? In what ways do they differ?

3. What attributes of the organizations and their strategies if any justify calling them “experimentalist” or “learning organizations” in the senses introduced in Session #3? Are any of them more or less appropriately described as examples of that approach to organizing concerted action? Are any of them more or less useful as models for organizing concerted action in other contexts, including in public-sector contexts? Why?

4. As to each example Spear gives (including each of the different strategies described for some of the entities), how would you define the actual “organization” as issue that might be thought to be experimenting or learning? How is that organization embedded within others described; how do they all relate to and interact with each other? Assuming Spear’s examples they are relevant at all, do they reinforce your sense of the value of “learning” or “experimentalist” organizations as alternatives to bureaucracies, especially public-sector bureaucracies? Do they allay any of your concerns about other difficulties those kinds of organizations may encounter? Or, do they underscore or add new concerns about those organizations?

Session #5: October 2, 2013

More Public-Learning Organizations in Action
Reading


2. New York City School System under Bloomberg/Klein:
   b. Alliance for Excellent Education, New York City’s Strategy for Improving High Schools: An Overview (Jan. 2010), at pp. 1-11 (first half of p. 11 only)
   c. Joel Klein, Yes, New York City Schools are Improving, NY Daily News Opinion, Sept. 10, 2012
   d. Optional:
      i. For a more detailed review of the student results in New York City between 2003 and 2010, see
         - James Kemple, Children First and Student Outcomes: 2003-2010, in O'Day, et al., supra
         - James S. Liebman & Jonah Rockoff, Moving Mountains in New York City: Joel Klein’s Legacy by the Numbers, Ed. Week (Nov. 30, 2010)
      ii. For discussion of how the NYC system plays itself out for two very different schools in the same building, see Daniel Lautzenheiser, A Tale of Two Schools: What New York Dep’t of Education is Getting Right, Huffington Post (July 24, 2012)

3. Case Study (one of the following three, as indicated)
   a. Students with last name beginning with A-G: Environmental Regulatory Innovations
      ii. Theordore Lowi, Frontyard Propoganda, A Response to Fung et al., Boston Rev. Oct. 1999 (included in link above)
   b. Students with last names beginning with H-R: Texas School Reform
      i. Liebman & Sabel, A Laboratory Dewey Barely Imagined, supra, at 231-50 (except #2)


c. Students with last names beginning with S-Z: Drug Courts


ii. Martha Minow, School Reform Outside Laboratory Conditions: A Response to Liebman & Sabel, 28 N.Y.U. Rev. L. & Soc. Change 333 (2003) (excerpts) [NOTE: It is important for each group of students to consider criticisms of so-called “experimentalist” reforms. Although Dean Minow’s piece responds to an article about education reform, not drug courts, see if you can see how her three criticisms (lack of capacity, resources and consensus) might also apply to the drug court context.]


iv. Optional:

Discussion Questions: All members of the class are assigned readings about Baltimore Mayor, now Maryland Governor, Martin O’Malley’s approach to organizing government’s response to social problems and about school reform in New York City ca. 2003-2010. Each of you also is assigned to read about one of three other sets of public-sector innovations in the 1990s and early 2000s: new forms of environmental regulation, Texas school reform,
drug courts. For each of the domains about which you read, consider the following questions:

1. What public problem was the arrangement described designed to solve?

2. In what sense is each of the arrangements “experimentalist” or focused on “public learning”?

3. In what ways is the arrangement similar to and how does it differ from other ways of addressing public problems such as bureaucracy, performance-based regulation or managerialism, privatization, or craft-based activity?

4. How would you define the “organization(s)” that are said to have emerged from each of the arrangements? Who are the key actors? To what extent are those actors public or private? In what sense if any do they together constitute a real “organization,” as opposed to a fleeting confederation of people who happen to be focusing on the same problem at the same time and place?

5. What criticisms would you, or do the critics whom you read, apply to the arrangements as a whole? How serious are the criticisms? Are there convincing responses?

Writing Assignment: Write a ~2-page paper, due as a MS Word attachment emailed to CPRL@law.columbia.edu by Monday October 7, 2013 at 2:00 p.m., addressing any one of Discussion Questions 2-5 above. Feel free to focus on only a single: trait of the arrangement, alternative method of addressing problems, similarity or difference between the arrangement and one or more of the alternative methods of addressing problems, organizational or dis-organizational trait, criticism, etc.

Session #6: October 9, 2013

A Conversation with Prominent District Officials - TBA

Reading

2. NY City Dep’t of Education, Citywide Instructional Expectations for 2011-12

6. Optional:
   a. NY City Dep’t of Education, Citywide Instructional Expectations for 2012-13
   b. The Broad Center, Who’s the Boss Now? Shifting the Balance of Power in New York City Schools (2011)

Discussion Questions: Please come to class with three or four questions you would like to pose to the speakers. Some of the questions should address issues you have encountered in, or concerns triggered by, our readings and discussions about the most effective ways to organize classrooms, schools, and school systems to accelerate student learning and improve student results and life chances.

Session #7: October 16, 2013

Philosophical Pragmatism and Learning Organizations

Reading

1. Christopher K. Ansell, Pragmatist Democracy: Evolutionary Learning as Public Philosophy (2011), Chapters 1, 5 (pp. 3-19, 84-101)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the relationship between bureaucracy and partisan politics? How do they interact to undermine the capacity of public agencies to solve public problems? How does Ansell move from the conclusion that this interaction is responsible for the failure of “governance” to the solution of expanding the role of agencies and the breadth of public participation in them? How convincing is that solution? Does the structure of Ansell’s argument as laid out in Chapter 1’s summary of the rest of the book (pp.15-19) provide a convincing case for putting administrative agencies at the heart of solutions to paralysis in governance and obdurate partisanship?

2. How do you interpret and how useful is Ansell’s idea of “evolutionary learning,” which occurs when a “problem-driven perspective,” “reflexivity” and “deliberation” work together “recursively”?

3. Ansell distinguishes a form of evidence-based evaluation and decision making based on experimental and quasi-experimental research (which he
associates with the work of Donald Campbell) from “experimentalism” or “evolutionary learning” (p.12). What is the difference between the two strategies? Do you agree with Ansell’s preference for the latter over the former – or, more accurately, his preference for treating the latter as encompassing but going beyond the former? What difficulties do so-called “wicked,” “compound,” or “high-interaction” problems present for experimental and quasi-experimental research? Chapter 5, footnote 30 quotes a description of Dewey’s approach to inquiry as follows: “[T]he creative formation of conjectures in the absence of data is not the key to successful inquiry. Rather the interweaving of observation, conjecture, verification, and additional observation are the key ingredients of successful problem solving.” Can inquiry of this sort provide a substitute for classic experimental and quasi-experimental study methods in situations where too little is known, too much is changing too quickly, or the problems are too many and too ‘small’ to permit or justify classic study methods?

4. How enlightening did you find Ansell’s dualisms: “progressive conservatism,” “cosmopolitan localism,” “analytical holism,” and “processual structuralism”? How descriptive are they of experimentalism as you understand it, and how convincing are they as attributes of a “third way” to solving public problems that sits in between bureaucracy and interest-group politics on the one hand and market-based solutions and pure electoral politics on the other hand?

5. How well does Ansell’s description of “Pragmatist problem-solving” capture the processes you have seen at work in examples we have considered: Alcoa, Pratt & Whitney, the Nuclear Navy, Toyota, drug courts, 1990s Texas education reform, Habitat Conservation Plans, the Chesapeake Bay Plan, TRI/TURA regulation of toxic releases, the New York City and New Haven school reforms, etc.? What is missing from Ansell’s discussion to make it more descriptive of these examples? What is missing from the steps taken in these examples that keeps them from accomplishing the kind of problem solving that Ansell promotes? In what ways, if any, does Ansell understate the difficulty of his conception of public problem-solving?

Exercise in Preparation for Class

Imagine a public agency with which you have some familiarity. Before class jot down some notes for use in class identifying (1) features of the operation or outcomes of that agency that strike you as harmful to the agency’s effectiveness or evidence of its ineffectiveness; (2) which of the McKinsey & Co. “7S’s” (see framework below) those features involve; (3) steps, consistent with the Pragmatist Learning organizations Ansell discusses, that you can imagine taking to improve, or even transform, the agency; and (4) difficulties you imagine those steps and that transformation would encounter
Sessions #8 and #9: October 23 and 30, 2013

Addressing Core Difficulties of Government by Bureaucracy: Too Little Central Expertise, Too Much Street-Level Discretion; the Craft and Performance-Management Alternatives

Reading


2. James Q. Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior* (1968), at 1-11, 279-97 (end of paragraph running over from 296)
   a. Optional: To get a richer sense of the diversity of problems patrol officers and their supervisors face when bureaucratic rules are used to govern street-level activity in the order-maintenance context, read or skim pp.16-82.

3. Diane Ravitch: Why Finland’s Schools Are Great (by Doing What We Don't), http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/ravitch-why-finlands-schools-are-great-by-doing-what-we-dont/2011/10/12/gIQAmTyLgL_blog.html

4. Liebman & Sabel, *A Laboratory Dewey Barely Imagined*, *supra*, at 213-31 (excerpt #3)


Discussion Questions:

1. In private- and public-sector organizations, why is shop-floor and street-level discretion problematic?
2. How do bureaucracies try to solve the problem of shop-floor or street-level discretion? What problems does the bureaucratic solution pose for local-level employees, their supervisors, the organization as a whole? How (if at all) are those problems manifested in police departments, K-12 school systems, welfare agencies, environmental regulatory agencies, criminal courts, universities?

3. What solutions to the problem of shop-floor and street-level discretion are proposed or implied by James Q. Wilson, Diane Ravitch, the first and second iterations of the 1990s reforms in New York City’s Community School District (CSD) 2 (see Liebman & Sabel), Hanushek, Great Britain’s system for distributing public money to universities based on faculty productivity, Head’s critique of the British system, and Hess & Darling-Hammond? How is each solution similar to and different from the others – a question with particular salience when applied to the two phases of the New York City CSD 2 reforms? In what ways does each of the proposed solutions avoid problems otherwise encountered in regulating the actions of street-level government officials and in what ways does each fail to solve those problems? What additional problems does each of the proposed solutions create?

4. Simon Head attributes the travails of British university academics to “command and control bureaucracy,” the “industrial” model, and “business school” ideas such as “Total Quality Management” and “benchmarking” – as if these are the same thing? Are they? How would you characterize the driving force behind the evaluation of the productivity of British academics? What do you think of the British system? Of Head’s critique of the system?

5. Rick Hess is a conservative advocate of privatization and performance-management approaches to public education. Linda Darling-Hammond is a progressive advocate of teacher autonomy and professionalization. They argue that their ability to agree on the wrongheadedness of current federal education policy is proof that it must certainly be wrongheaded. Are there other reasons why people with their bents on school reform issues might find common cause? What do you think of their critique of federal policy and proposed alternative?

Session #10: November 6, 2013

Using Street-Level Public Learning and Problem Solving to Increase Organizational Expertise and Harness Street-Level Discretion

Reading

1. Spear, High Velocity Edge, supra, at 56-71 and review pp. 88-91 (Excerpt from Chapter 7: Toyota)
2. Joan E. Talbert, Collaborative Inquiry to Expand Student Success in New York City Schools, in in O’Day, et al., supra, at 1-16

3. Elizabeth Chu et al., Getting Big to Go Small: Case Studies of Collaborative Inquiry Teams in New York City, Nov. 2012, at draft (not PDF) pages 2-11, 19-34 (DRAFT: do not circulate)


5. Collaborative Inquiry in Teacher Teams Data (NYC – PPT)


7. Roxanna Elden, Data-Driven and Off Course, Ed. Next (Winter 2011)


9. Optional:
   b. Carnegie Foundation Network Initiative

Discussion Questions:

1. A key feature of bureaucratic organization is the concentration of knowledge and expertise at the center of the organization, using the central imposition of and local adherence to rules to diffuse that expertise to sites where it is applied to solve problems. What is the problem with this approach to the amassing and use of expertise? How does the New Dorp High School example bear on the question of the best likely sources of expertise, and do you agree with Tyre (or Frederickson, if you read it) on the answer to that question?

2. As described in the readings, how do Toyota problem-solving teams, inquiry and data teams, and multidisciplinary rounds in hospitals (and the Carnegie network initiative, if you read about it) generate and use knowledge and expertise? What similarities and differences do you see in
these various approaches to the problem of knowledge? How do they differ from bureaucratic approaches to expertise and knowledge? (Relatedly, how do “multidisciplinary rounds” differ from traditional hospital rounds?) How likely are these newer approaches to avoid the problems of knowledge and expertise encountered in bureaucracies?

3. What is the difference between “getting small in order to go big” (as described in Talbert’s discussion of New York City Inquiry Teams prior to 2010) and “Getting Big to Go Small” (as described in Chu et al.’s discussion of those teams since 2010)? How important is that difference? What accounts for it?

4. What is the relationship between these new approaches and “professionalism”? Do they make street-level actors more or less professional – a question, you may remember, that was addressed in last week’s Liebman & Sabel reading about the Community School District 2 experience in New York City in the 1990s? Or put differently, do the new approaches change the meaning of professionalism in any way? Or put yet another way, to what extent do these new approaches to the generation of knowledge and expertise help solve, or exacerbate, the problem of enabling while controlling the discretion of “street-level bureaucrats?”

5. What would you expect to be the biggest challenges to the success of these new approaches to generating expertise and knowledge, and how might organizations respond to those challenges? How do the new approaches affect the usual routines and allocation of time at the sites where they occur? How do they keep team-based activities from degenerating into diffuse “bull sessions”? How do they assure that learning that occurs at one site is usefully diffused to other sites – and how straightforward do you imagine the diffusion process to be?

**Writing Assignment**: Write a ~2-page paper, due as a MS Word attachment emailed to CPRL@law.columbia.edu by Tuesday November 5, 2013 at 2:00 p.m., addressing one of Discussion Questions 2-5 with regard to at least one (or in the case of question 3, with regard to both) of the knowledge-generating mechanisms referenced in the relevant question.

**Inquiry Team Exercise**: To be described in class

**Session 11: November 13, 2013**

**Skilled Generalist: The Role and Skillset of Professionals in Learning Organizations**

**Reading**


5. Arne Duncan, *Teacher Preparation: Reforming the Uncertain Profession—Remarks of Secretary Arne Duncan at Teachers College, Columbia University*, Oct. 22, 2009 (text, video)


7. Skilled Generalist Handout

8. James S. Liebman, *Public-Sector Reform through Learning Organizations and the Supporting Role of Universities*, at 11-17 (or read the whole thing if you haven’t already and you are interested in the overall logic of the Center for Public Research and Leadership of which this course is a part)

9. Optional:

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Each of you is in a school defined by a profession. What major changes if any do you think are in store for that profession over the next several years or decades? What allied changes if any do you think are in store for professional schools of the sort you attend?

2. How does your professional school seem to understand the definition of a profession or a professional? How would you define a professional? If your and your school’s definitions differ, what accounts for your differing view?

3. Based on the answers to Questions 1 and 2 and also on the readings and discussion thus far in the semester, your project work, and your other professional experiences, what skills would you add to the preliminary list on the Skilled Generalist Handout, which you think reforming public-sector
organizations require of their leaders and managers? Would you omit or revise any of the skills listed on that handout?

(Informal) Writing Assignment: Come to class with a list of skills you would add to the Skilled Generalist handout (as many or few as you think are appropriate). Your list may be handwritten or typed, but please have it in a form you can hand in or email in after class.

Session #12: November 20, 2013

Part 1 (55 minutes): Student Project Presentation

Part 2 (55 minutes): The Finland (Public Elementary and Secondary Education) Rorschach

Reading for Part 2:
1. Review: Diane Ravitch: Why Finland’s Schools Are Great (by Doing What We Don’t), http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/ravitch-why-finlands-schools-are-great-by-doing-what-we-dont/2011/10/12/gIQAmTyLgL_blog.html
3. Charles Sabel, AnnaLee Saxenian, Reijo Miettinen, Peer Hull Kristensen & Jarkko Hautamäki, Individualized Service Provision as the Key to the New Welfare State: Lessons from Special Education in Finland (Sitra Studies 62 Dec. 2011), at pp. 4-15, skim 26-30, 30 (“The next national core curriculum”)-53, 57-64

Discussion Questions for Part 2:
1. What is Finland’s secret sauce vis-à-vis elementary and secondary education?
2. How does your answer to Question 1 bear on the problem of street-level discretion? On what it does or should mean for a teacher to be considered a professional? On the problem of building organizational knowledge and expertise?
3. How transferrable is the Finland success mechanism to the U.S.? What are the main challenges to such a transfer? What is the relevance to that question of differences between Finland and the U.S. in terms of social homogeneity, how much the population values public education, the commitment to “equality,” the extent to which responsibility for public education resides at the national or a more local level of government, the disposition to develop policy in this area top-down vs. bottom-up?
4. What lessons, if any, can Finland learn from current U.S. education reforms?
5. When two nations achieve different outcomes on international benchmark measures, what is the best method of explaining the different outcomes?

Sessions #13 and 14: November 27 and December 4, 2013

Student Project Presentations: What is the Project? To What Extent Does it or its Institutional Context Fit Public Learning or Another Model? What Are the Team’s Initial Thoughts on What the Project or its Context Suggest About the Possibility of Public Learning and Problem-Solving, and What Public Learning and Problem-Solving Suggest about the Project or its Context?

SPRING Semester

TBA

Session #15:

Learning “Regimes” and the Elastic Boundaries of Private-Sector Learning “Organizations”: Dis-integrated Firms, Inter-firm Collaboration, and Private Associations

Reading


Discussion Questions

1. In what ways can organizations blur or reach beyond their boundaries with other entities – and in what ways can public organizations blur or reach outside the public/private boundary – in search of better pathways to success? In this context, reconsider Ansell’s claim that institutions can be collectively controlled and revised but that, in the process, “institutional design must be closely attentive to ways that
institutions are complexly ‘scaffolded’ by webs of related institutions” (14)

2. How would you define a “regime” of the sort(s) described in the reading? What is the value of thinking about organizational and governance arrangements as “regimes” of this sort?

3. In the examples in Gilson, et al.:
   a. How much or little does the INPO arrangement for regulating the safety of nuclear power plants add to or detract from your confidence in the ability to generate power safely through nuclear fission? What aspects of the arrangement influence your conclusion the most?

   b. What role in the arrangement is played by the Nuclear Regulatory Agency?

   c. What role is played by secrecy in the disclosure of results?

   d. What role is played by organizational or industry “culture” and what accounts for changes in that culture?

   e. What else is the secret for success – assuming you see any evidence of success?

4. In your experience and based on prior readings, how do simulated markets attempt to engage regulated entities in regulating themselves? How do “learning” regimes try to do the same? Which works better when and why?

5. In the INPO example offered by Rees:

   a. How much or little does the INPO arrangement for regulating the safety of nuclear power plants add to or detract from your confidence in the ability to generate power safely through nuclear fission? What aspects of the arrangement influence your conclusion the most?

   b. What role in the arrangement is played by the Nuclear Regulatory Agency?

   c. What role is played by secrecy in the disclosure of results?

   d. What role is played by organizational or industry “culture” and what accounts for changes in that culture?
e. What else is the secret for success – assuming you see any evidence of success?

6. How promising is the INPO model for regulating other kinds of environmental harm, e.g., from deep-water oil drilling? Would technology-based regulation or market simulation work better?

**Session #16:**

**Learning “Regimes” and the Elastic Boundaries of Public-Sector Learning “Organizations”: From Rotten Cantaloupes to Equality Directives to the Role of Charter Schools in Systematic Education Reform**

**Reading**

1. Public Regulatory Regimes:


2. Charter Schools – the Evidence Thus Far in New York City
   a. Margaret Raymond, *Multiple Choice: Charter School Study in 16 States* (CREDO at Stanford University 2009), at 1-4 (Executive Summary excerpts)

   b. Margaret Raymond, *Charter School Performance in New York City* (CREDO at Stanford University 2010), at 2 (Summary)

   c. Caroline M. Hoxby et al., *How New York City’s Charter Schools Affect Achievement* (Nat’l Bureau of Economic Research 2010), at v (first two ¶s), vii-viii (Executive Summary excerpts)

   d. New York City Charter School Center, *The State of the New York City Charter Sector 2012*, (pp.6-11, 15-37)

3. Charter Schools as Components of Regimes
a. Paul Hill & Christine Campbell, Growing Number of Districts Seek Bold Change with Portfolio Strategy (Center on Reinventing Public Education June 2011), at 1-3.


c. The School District of Philadelphia, A Blueprint for Transforming Philadelphia’s Public Schools (May 2012), at 1-20 [Note: Apart from a plan to close approximately one-third of the district’s schools as a money-saving strategy, the reforms subsequently proposed by the new Superintendent of Philadelphia Schools in January 2013 are less radical than those proposed in the May 2012 Blueprint. If you are interested in learning more, see The School District of Philadelphia, Action Plan v.1.0 (Jan. 7, 2013), http://www.philasd.org/announcements/actionplan/APv1.0.pdf ]


4. Criticism of Charter Schools

Discussion Questions

1. Do the Hart & Sacks and other examples of legal, governance, or organizational “regimes” described in the reading clarify, or confuse, that concept, or give you a different perspective on the value of thinking about organizational and governance arrangements as “regimes” of this sort?

2. As a consumer of leafy greens, meat, and other foodstuffs, do the changes in regulation in those contexts described by Sabel & Simon give you more or less confidence that what you eat is safe? What aspects of the old and new forms of regulation account for your answer?
3. What difficulties has enforcement of civil rights norms encountered over the last several decades? In what ways, if any, do the experimentalist approaches and/or the “equality directives” described in the readings change those dynamics? How, if at all, do Professors Sabel and Simon’s and Professor Johnson’s accounts of these new approaches overlap or differ?

4. Given the evidence in the reading about how charter schools work, what do they have to offer as solutions, or contributions to solving, the problems of public K-12 education?

   a. Do charter schools harm or improve student life chances? What accounts for the different results in the two Raymond studies and the Hoxby study?

   b. Even if charter schools can improve the results of students who attend them, are they bad for “school system(s)” they affect? In what ways? What do you make of suggestions in the reading that charter schools are a right wing conspiracy or a left wing conspiracy?

   c. Can charter schools be scaled to reach 100% of urban school children as Kingsland suggests? How would you expect a “100% solution” to affect the results the Raymond and Hoxby studies reach?

   d. As far as you can tell from the reading, is the role of charter schools the same or different in Cleveland, New Orleans, New York, the Philadelphia plan as originally conceived (May 2012), the “portfolio districts” that Hill & Campbell discuss?

      i. To what extent do any of those roles qualify as “privatization”? To what extent do any of them qualify as components of a K-12 learning “regime” – and, if any do qualify, how do they contribute to such regimes?

      ii. Apart from the answer to the question just above, in what ways could charter schools contribute to a K-12 learning regime?

      iii. In what ways, if any, would you expect “privatizing” and/or “learning” uses of charter schools to maximize their positive impact on student outcomes?
Writing Assignment: Write a ~2-page paper, due as a MS Word attachment emailed to CPRL@law.columbia.edu by TBA at 8:00 a.m., on the most effective role, if any, for charter schools within a school-reform "regime." In doing so, try to use the themes and concepts of the course to extract yourself from, or to find a better way to resolve or defuse, the standard debates about charter schools. For example: Are charter schools the reform itself or only a part of it, and if the latter, what part? Are they typically designed to be used (or, from a slightly different perspective, are they best used) as a tool for performance management, institutional learning, freeing up professionals to work their magic, or marketizing school system? From an institutional learning perspective, is a charter schools best thought of as the experimentalist institution itself, as a piece of a wider experimentalist structure or regime, or both—and how so? Or are charter schools anathema to institutional learning?

Session #17:

Tools Supporting Structured Public Learning: The “Balanced Scorecard” Approach to Strategy and Accountability

Reading


Discussion Questions

1. What is the objective of the Balanced Score Card (“BSC”) and of allied measurement strategies? What role do measurement and accountability play? What role do leading and lagging indicators play?

2. How are the Kaplan & Norton and Kuzek & Rist approaches to using measurement to improve success similar and different? Do you see any basis for preferring one over the other in general or in particular circumstances?

3. The title of this session suggests that there is an affinity between the BSC (and allied measurement strategies) and institutional learning. What affinities (or discontinuities) do you see? Why or why not might these approaches be equally or more clearly understood as
management-based or performance-based tools? Market-mimicking tools? Bureaucratic oversight tools?

4. What critique of these tools might adherents of “craft” or “professionalism” make?

5. Imagine an institution with which you are familiar and how it might go about designing a BSC to advance its objectives—and exercise you will soon be asked to undertake for a state or local school system. What value do you see to the exercise? What difficulties? How would your answers differ if the institution in question had only recently been created or reorganized versus one that has been in existence and relatively unchanged for a long time?

Session #18:

The Role of Qualitative Review in Strategically Structured Public Learning: Using Leading Indicators to Build Expertise and Harness Street-Level

Reading


4. Anemona Hartocollis, New York City Ties Doctors’ Income to Quality of Care, N.Y. Times, Jan. 11, 2013

Discussion Questions

1. What differences are there in the qualitative review procedures used in support of: nursing home regulation in the US as opposed to Australia; child welfare services in Utah and Alabama; restaurant health inspections in San Diego versus New York City; and quality of health care provided by doctors in public hospitals in New York?

2. To what extent do these differences map to differences in the governance model being implemented in each case, be it, for example,
a model driven by professionalism, experimentalism, performance-management, or bureaucracy? To what extent do they map to the dichotomy between “rules” and “standards” that is discussed in the Noonan piece?

3. Is restaurant grading as practiced in San Diego and/or New York appropriately thought of as “qualitative” review at all? Why or why not? Does the use of a numerical scoring system automatically deny an evaluation scheme the advantages of being qualitative? What are those advantages?

4. Are the outcomes of these various kinds of inspections and reviews lagging or leading indicators—or something else entirely? Do the authors make any assumptions about which type of indicator each category of review or inspection should provide under the circumstances? What type of indicator do you believe each category or review or inspection should strive to be, and why?

5. In what ways do the different approaches to review and inspection serve or disserve the values and objectives promoted by Balanced Score Cards and allied measurement schemes?

6. A chief worry of doctors contemplating pay differences based on quality of care is that “they could be penalized for conditions they cannot control, including how clean the hospital floors are, the attentiveness of nurses and the availability of beds.” Are these conditions over which doctors have no control? Consider differences in background health conditions of the patients of hospitals in different neighborhoods. Might doctors in hospitals in impoverished neighborhoods where health conditions are generally worse fear that they will be penalized because they have chosen or been assigned to work with more challenging patients who are sicker when they are admitted and thus likely to have less favorable outcomes on average? Might this have the perverse effect of encouraging “better” doctors to prefer jobs in hospitals in more affluent neighborhoods, increasing inequities already faced by patients in poor neighborhoods? (This, of course, is a problem also faced in reviewing nursing homes, child welfare services, and schools, if perhaps not so clearly restaurants.) Are there any solutions for this problem other than not evaluating doctors based on quality?

7. Relatedly, continue, as you began to do in the last session, to imagine an institution with which you are familiar and for which you have been asked to designing a BSC. What model of qualitative review, if any, might you adopt?
Session #19: Qualitative Review of Schools and Educators

Reading

1. Schools:
   b. Quality Review Rubric 1: [NYC Quality Review Rubric, Composite of 2007-2010](#)
   c. Quality Review Rubric 2: [NYC Quality Review Rubric, 2012-13](#)

2. Educators:
   a. Robert Pianta & Hamre, *Conceptualization, Measurement, and Improvement of Classroom Processes: Standardized Observation Can Leverage Capacity*, 38 Educational Researcher 109 (2009), at pp. 109 to very top of 112; very bottom of 113 to very top of 116
   d. [NYC Abbreviated Danielson Rubric](#)

Discussion Questions

1. What similarities and differences do you see when you compare:
   a. Quality review of schools in New Zealand, the Netherlands, and New York
   b. The two school quality review rubrics included in the reading
   c. The Pianta/Hamre and Danielson approaches to qualitative review of teachers
d. The two Danielson rubrics included in the reading

2. When you make the same comparisons, what links to different governance models (the usual: bureaucracy, performance management, professionalism, institutional learning, etc.) do you see?

3. Continuing the mental exercise from the last two classes, in thinking about building a balanced scorecard for an institution with which you are familiar, how valuable (or not) is each of these approaches to qualitative review as a model for a key component of your balanced scorecard? As a leading or lagging indicator?

4. Next week, we will discuss the empirical evidence on the relative value and correlation of test scores, student surveys, and observations of teachers as components of teacher-evaluation schemes. Based on what you already know, what uses, if any, would you make of qualitative review in the process of evaluating teachers?

5. How do the four rubrics in the reading fare on the criteria proposed by last week’s readings (Braithwaites, Noonan et al., Ho) for predicting the usefulness of qualitative review schemes?

6. “Validity” refers to whether measures used reflect the conditions or outcomes that are actually of interest. (E.g., thermometers provide a valid reflection of body temperature, but do not provide as valid a reflection of health; in the latter regard, that is, they are an imperfect “proxy” for health.) In your view, how “valid” (in this sense) are the measures proposed in the two school-review and two teacher-evaluation rubrics in the reading? What measures would be more valid? Can those measures be encapsulated in a quality review rubric for schools or teachers?

7. “Reliability” refers to how effectively a measurement scheme determines whether a particular condition (which condition may or may not be “valid” in the sense used above) is present. (E.g., thermometers may, in theory, provide a valid reflection of body temperature, but differences in the manufacture and use of thermometers may lead to unreliability —i.e., to different readings of the body temperature of the same person at the same time.) How “reliable” in this sense do you think the various methods of qualitative review described discussed are? This is the issue of “inter-rater reliability.” Is the likelihood of inter-rater unreliability” the death knell of qualitative review, or does it present...
some an opportunity of some sort for making particularly good use of such observations? How do the readings from last week (Braithwaites, Noonan et al., Ho) bear on this question?

**Teacher-Observation Exercise:** To be described in class. In preparation for class, please familiarize yourself with the NYC Abbreviated Danielson Rubric listed above.

**Session #20:**
Building a Better State or Local Balanced Scorecard for Public Education

**Reading**

1. Example 1: New York City’s Accountability System
   
   
   c. *New York City Accountability and Results*, 2002-2012
   
   d. NY Times Room for Debate, *Making the Grade in NYC* (Oct. 9, 2012)
   


3. Example 6: *The MET Project, Ensuring Fair and Reliable Measures of Effective Teaching: Culminating Findings from the MET Project’s Three-Year Study* (Jan. 2013), at page-before-p. 1 (“About the MET Project”) and pp. 6-20
4. Other views:
   
   

**Writing Assignment**

As an MS Word or Excel attachment, prepare and email to CPRL@law.columbia.edu by TBA, an outline or sketch of a balanced scorecard for use by a state education department, school district, or school to hold school(s) and/or educators accountable for satisfying the relevant jurisdiction’s goals for promoting student learning and development. In your paper, please indicate:

   a. The school or set of schools, and/or the set of educators to which your balanced scored card applies

   b. The kinds of measures you consider to be “valid” for this purpose, as that term is defined in the Discussion Questions for Session 19.

Your outline or sketch need not address all of the following matters but should consider some of them, among other topics that you believe are important:

   c. The appropriate mix of quantitative and qualitative (e.g., test score and other) measures, in any, and of leading and lagging indicators, if any

   d. The tools you would use to determine how well schools and/or educators are performing on those measures

   e. The weights to be accorded to different measures

   f. Whether outcomes would or would not be publicly disclosed

   g. The stakes or consequences, if any, attached to particular outcomes
Discussion Questions:
(Your writing assignment is not expected to address these questions explicitly, but you should be prepared to discuss them orally in class.)

1. What considerations drove the design of your balanced score card?

2. What role, if any, did different governance models play in your design?

3. Did you follow any particular model or example (e.g., Kaplan & Norton; Kuzek & Rist; any of those in the readings for this or earlier weeks), and why?

4. How did you solve for the problem of student- and school-level differences that arise because students and teachers are not randomly assigned to schools, leaving some schools and teachers with much more challenging student populations than others?

5. How do you imagine Albert Shanker would have gone about holding schools accountable? Which governance model(s) does Shanker appear to favor?

6. How would Baker et al. hold teachers accountable?

7. To what extent do the recent findings of the MET Project answer the concerns of Baker et al. and resolve the major issues in the long-running teacher-evaluation debate?

Session #21:
Tentative: A Conversation with Experts in the Mechanics of Teacher Evaluation

Reading

1. Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman & Jonah Rockoff, The Long Term Impacts of Teachers, Executive Summary and video (40 minutes): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vh22HBZMHvM


7. **Speaker BIOs**

**Assignment:** This conversation will be partly about whether it is worthwhile, but mainly about how best, to implement a teacher-evaluation system that aims to benefit students and teachers. Please come to class with three or four questions you would like to pose to experts on the choices they have made among the different approaches to teacher evaluation addressed in last week’s and this week’s reading, the outcomes they are seeing or at least are hoping to achieve the obstacles they face in implementing teacher-evaluation systems, and the solutions they advocate.

**Session #22:**
Public Problem Solving and Democracy

**Reading**

1. The case for a problem-solving democracy:


2. Doubts:
   a. Jeffrey Henig et al., *Parent and Community Engagement in NYC and the Sustainability Challenge for Urban Education Reform*, in O'Day et al., supra, at 33-38, 43-45 (ending with first paragraph of “The Three Groups” section), 46, 48-54


3. Examples:
Discussion Questions

1. In a portion of Ansell we read earlier, he stated that, “Organizational transformation of public agencies cannot easily occur without fundamental change in the relationship between agencies and democratic publics.” (p.17) Thus far, we have spent a lot of time talking about organizational transformation of public regimes, but not so much on how those regimes interact with their “democratic publics.” What kinds of changes in politics and democracy does Ansell have in mind? How do they differ from “normal politics” that are familiar at the local, state, and federal levels in contexts such as public education, health care, deficit reduction, etc?

2. Ansell’s point suggests that for every governance model of how public agencies should be organized and administered, there is a corresponding approach to politics and democratic interaction. Taking that claim at face value for a moment, what form of politics and democracy would seem to fit best with bureaucracies? With performance management (New Public Management)? With professionalism/craft? With experimentalist regimes? In each case, what is the role of representation? Direct democracy? Interest or intermediary groups? Experts vs non-experts? Elections versus other forms of deliberation and participation?
3. Suppose, on the other hand, that, given the interplay of unevenly distributed resources, other economic realities, and divergent individual preferences, interest-group politics is the only stable or “natural” form of democratic interaction between the public and public actors and agencies. If that were the case—in other words, if “fundamental change in the relationship between agencies and democratic publics”—is not possible because one (the existing) form naturally predominates, would that mean that “organizational transformation of public agencies” of the sort Ansell contemplates is unlikely or impossible? Do you think interest-group politics are “natural” and immutable?

4. What form of politics and democracy do Professor Henig and colleagues suggest were necessary or best suited to the period during which the Bloomberg/Klein education reforms were taking in New York City (2003 to 2010)? What form of politics and democracy did Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein instead prefer? Do you agree with Henig et al. or Bloomberg-Klein about the best approach to engaging the public? Is there an alternative to those two competing approaches?

5. What forms of politics and democracy do you see being implemented in the “Traxton” example in Professor Fung’s article on community policing? In the Bridgeport, “parent working group” example? In the challenge issued by Washington, D.C. Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson to parents opposing the closure of their schools? How are these approaches to politics and democracy similar or different? How promising are these approaches (and how effective were they in the particular contexts described) and what challenges and obstacles do the approaches face? What do these examples suggest about the possibility of overcoming the obstacles Whitman discusses to authentic stake-holder participation and problem-solving?

**Spring Break: Week of March 17**

**Sessions #23, 24 and 25:**

**Student Project Presentations:** After providing the class with enough of a description of your project and its broader context to establish or reestablish a common understanding, please do one or both of the following:

1. Critically consider your project or its broader context from the perspective of experimentalism or, if you would prefer, from the perspective of one or more of the other governance models we've
discussed. If you chose to focus on the institutional "context," not just the project, you may broaden it to include anything in between your project and the outer boundary of the overall reform strategy your client is pursuing. In what ways (if any) does the project or reform strategy proceed from, or is it grounded in, one or more of the governance model(s) we have discussed in class? How could the project or the broader reform strategy succeed more fully or efficiently if it were modified in some fashion along the lines suggested by one or another or a combination of the governance models? How does the project or the broader reform strategy deviate from the relevant governance model(s), and how do those deviations impede the project's or reform strategy's effectiveness? Overall, what could the leaders of your project or the broader reform strategy learn from your understanding of the theory underlying, and the best means of implementing, the relevant governance model(s)?

2. Critically consider experimentalism, or if you would prefer, one or more of the other governance models we've discussed from the perspective of your project or its broader context. Again, in what way does the project or strategy proceed from, or is it grounded in, one or more of those governance model(s)? What weaknesses, difficulties or challenges does your project or its broader context reveal about the theory of change and improvement that underlies the relevant governance model(s)? What light does the project or broader strategy shed on how easy or hard it is to implement the relevant governance model(s) effectively? How might those challenges lead you to modify the relevant governance model(s)? What do the challenges lead you to conclude about which model(s) would best facilitate the relevant reform strategy -- or about the validity and usefulness of one or more, or all, of the governance models in general? Overall, what could the proponents of the relevant governance model(s) learn from your project or its context?

Schedule:

Student Presentation Schedule TBA

PLEASE LEAVE NO LESS THEN 20 MINUTES FOR Q&A

Readings and Discussion Questions; Electronic Copy of Presentation:

1. One week prior to your presentation, please email to Professor Liebman and Faculty Assistant (TBA) a short set of background readings (no more than 20 pages) and a set of discussion questions for your presentation.
2. By 1 pm on the Sunday preceding your session, please email to Professor Liebman an electronic version of your presentation.

Session #26: Transitioning from Bureaucracy to the New Age Organization

Reading

1. Ansell, Supra, ch. 3, pp. 43-54, 61-62

2. Examples:
   a. Adeline, Texas: Heather Zavadsky, Bringing Schools Reform to Scale (2009), Ch. 2, District Approach #1 (Adeline School District)
   b. Norfolk, Virginia: Zavadsky, supra, Ch. 6, District Approach #3 (Norfolk School District)

   i. Note from Prof. Liebman: I agree with Professor Nadelstern’s retrospective judgments about how the New York City reform could have been improved, but I would add one failing of the Networks that has kept them from becoming the key intermediary Nadelstern imagines: The networks had two somewhat competing objectives that had to be kept in balance, self-consciously, in a structured way: (1) support schools operationally (fending off bureaucracy) and (2) promote and facilitate, without dictating steps schools were to take to assure, improvement of student achievement. Because the Networks were always palpably accountable for the former objective, because schools only opted into networks they trusted to serve them operationally, but Networks were not effectively held accountable for student improvement, the Networks took their service obligations more seriously than their achievement-facilitation role.

Writing Assignment: Write a ~2-page paper, due as a MS Word attachment emailed to CPRL@law.columbia.edu by TBA, on your understanding of the “transformation strategy” (as defined below) that was implemented in Aldine,
Norfolk, or New York City; what its strengths and weaknesses are (including compared to the transformation strategies used in the other cities); how you would have improved on that strategy; how useful you think the transformation strategy would be in different K-12 contexts (e.g., federal vs. state vs. local; large vs. small; urban vs. rural; collegial vs. conflictual; ones with strong or weak unions, etc.); how do Ansell's insights bear on your judgments; and what does the example you focus on suggest about the validity of, or weaknesses in, Ansell's analysis. By "transformation strategy," I do not mean the governance or instructional strategy itself that each district adopted (e.g., "empowerment" in NYC), but instead the strategy the district adopted for moving the institution and its people to give up the old ways and embrace and adopt the new ways. For example, two districts that both decide to adopt a performance-management system focused on teacher-evaluation outcomes could make the transition to that common approach in very different ways, depending upon, for example, how abrupt or gradual the change is; how the change is introduced, explained and phased-in; who participated in deciding on a strategy and on the details of its implementation; etc. It is the latter set of choices that you should address in this paper.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you characterize the transition strategy implemented in Aldine? Norfolk? New York City? What is the appropriate scale for comparing transition strategies (e.g., evolution vs. revolution; top-down vs. bottom-up)?

2. Which transition strategy seems to be most promising or to have worked best? Why?

3. One claim that is sometimes made in support of strategies based on newly created charter schools or to justify more comprehensive (“start from scratch”), less incremental approaches to school turnaround is that it is easier to build learning institutions from scratch than to transform bureaucracies into them? Do you agree with that claim? What examples from the reading over the course of the year support or contradict this view? What is an example of a successful transformation of a previously bureaucratic institution?

4. Even if it is more difficult to transform bureaucracies than to replace them wholesale, there sometimes are no alternatives to transformation. In those cases, what steps are most likely to facilitate effective transformation? Are there kinds of organizations or organizational conditions that support or impede transformation?

5. How important are charismatic or determined leaders? Can existing organizations transform themselves, and sustain the changes, without
charismatic leadership? What are the implications of your answer for the likely success of transformation efforts? Given example from the readings for this week and for the year that support your views on these questions.

**Exercise:** To be described in class.

**Session #27:**

**Re-envisioning Schools and the Technology they Need:** A Conversation with experts in the Ed Tech field (TBA)

**Reading**


10. Optional:
   c. Lawrence S. Bacow et al., Barriers to Adoption of Online Learning in U.S. Higher Education, Ithaka (May 2012)
   d. Cisco, Case Study, New York City School of One
   e. Steve Rowley, Christensen's Curve & The Digital Learning Revolution, Getting Smart, July 11, 2012

Discussion Questions: Come to class with four or five questions for the panelists based on the readings and on your aspirations and concerns about changes in the design of schools, the role of educators, and the expected contributions of technology.

Session #28: Summing Up; Looking Forward

Reading

1. Catherine Gewertz, Districts Gird for Added Use of Nonfiction, Education Weekly, March 14, 2012


5. Walter Russell Mead, Blue Civil War: The Battle for California (March 6, 2013)


7. Students first Policy
Informal Assignment and Discussion Questions:

1. When we interviewed each of you in connection with your application to join the course, we asked what you would do if you were given the “keys to the kingdom” and invited to use all levers reasonably at hand to improve public education in the US, or any segment of US K-12 education (or, for that matter, public education elsewhere in the world). Before coming to class, please jot down some notes for discussion with colleagues in the class on how your answer to that question has changed, if at all, based on the readings, discussions, and project work for this class.

2. Which of the reform strategies discussed in the readings for today’s class do you find most convincing or unconvincing? How does that evaluation connect to the evolution of your own views over the last year? What governance model(s) do the strategies in the readings represent, particularly those in Gewertz, Hill, Kahlenberg, Students First, Whitman, and the Louisiana initiatives discussed in the Wall Street Journal article? What challenges would each strategy face?

3. Mead’s “Blue Civil War” blog post, Professor Liebman’s Ed Week op-ed, and the Students First Policy Statement present or reflect different views on K-12 education politics. Which view do you think represents the best path forward to mobilizing public support for real improvement of K-12 education in the US – or how, alternatively, would you propose to move forward politically?