

The Call of Sport: A Model for Educational Reform

TRANSCRIPT

Note: Given the differences between the spoken and written word, this transcript contains minor edits of the audiotape from which it was taken. Also, American Sports Institute president Joel Kirsch served as the moderator for the Forum. Kirsch's questions and statements are introduced in the text by the Institute's acronym ASI.

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ASI: Let's begin the Forum with a statement from George Leonard, a member of the American Sports Institute's Board of Directors. If you would George, please give us a brief history of the education reform movement, especially what happened in 1983, and anything you'd like to add to that.

Leonard: Thank you, Joel. On April 16, 1983, something happened. Something terrible was launched from Washington, D.C. which I'd like to credit, or rather blame, for the mess our schools are in today. That was the day the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education was released to the public with a vast barrage of publicity. The report was entitled *A Nation at Risk*, the imperative educational reform.

The report was drawn up mostly by university faculty and administration rather than people involved in elementary and secondary education. And it definitely was a Cold War document. Now, I'd like to quote just a few lines from the report. I'll try to get the right tone of voice: "Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose upon America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. We have in effect been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament."

And what did this report ask for? Longer school days, a longer school year, far more homework, more basic subjects, a nationwide system of standardized testing. Does that sound familiar? Achievement tests, etc., etc. In other words, get narrow, get narrow, get tough. Not one word about the body, or the spirit, or the emotions. Not one word about the joy of learning that everyone of us is born with. Just get

tough. And, strangely enough, in that whole *Nation at Risk* report, the student is hardly ever mentioned, and much less the magical moment of intersection between the learner and the learning environment.

How does it happen? We're learning all the time. We should be learning all the time in school. When is this magic moment? There's nothing about that, *just curriculum reform*. Curriculum reform, that's about it. Nothing at all about more effective ways for people to learn, just curriculum reform. Big deal. Four years of it instead of three years of English in high school. For example, four years of badly taught English? Hmm, actually, no real reform at all. Even if everything in the report were put into effect, teachers would still be standing or sitting in front of some 20 to 35 mostly passive students of the same age and giving out the same information at the same time to all those students regardless of their individual abilities, cultural backgrounds, or learning styles.

Now if you really looked at what these university-oriented, so-called reformists had in



ASI president Joel Kirsch (r) talks with Forum quest Evan Smith, principal of Coulterville-Greeley School.

mind, it was to make our schools just like those in one of those unfriendly powers that are so threatening us, that were overtaking us. Say, Russia, and Japan. How about that? Though we didn't know it at the time, when *A Nation at Risk* came out, the Soviet Union, with its rigid, lockstep education system, was already on its last legs. Not much of a threat at all. Six years later, the Berlin Wall came down and the whole system fell apart, collapsed. Not long after that, the Japanese economy started this long downhill slide, and that's what we were emulating in that report. At the same time, the wonderfully, wildly innovative products of the very schools that the *Nation at Risk* report condemned, our American schools, were already well on their way to creating the most spectacular technology and economy that the world has ever known. I hate to say this, but a disproportionate number of our Silicon Valley geniuses were school or college dropouts.

But the *Nation at Risk* report has had a strong effect, gradually turning us in just the wrong direction. It was on the cover of every major news magazine when it came out, on all the TV network shows. It was followed within six months by eight more

major reports all saying essentially the same thing, never mentioning the student, never mentioning any change in how we learn or any reform whatever.

Now what's happening these days? Japan is turning its schools back from the old get-tough rigidity toward a system that encourages, how about this, the joy of learning. And our kids are getting backaches and sometimes serious back problems from carrying 25 to 40 pounds of books home, and getting obese from a neglect of the body. They're getting better at taking achievement tests because that's the main thing that they're being taught, how to take achievement tests. And all of them giving the same answers. But not very much better even on that. And what a pity that is. The human brain, the body and brain, it's all one thing. It's the most complex, most highly organized, most beautifully organized entity in the known universe. There are far, far, far more ways of connecting the various parts of the brain, the neurons, even the whole endocrine system, through psychoimmunology, more ways of connecting than every subatomic particle in the entire known universe. One thing I do know is this—we are going in the wrong direction.

ASI: Thank you, George. For those of you who saw the *Marin Independent Journal* (Marin County daily newspaper) a couple of days ago, you may have read about a survey that the American Sports Institute has conducted over the last several years that was mentioned in an editorial article that ASI authored. I'd like to conduct that survey here this evening, given what George has said, and have all of you vote on our survey, including our panelists. Once you vote, I'll give you the results of the other surveys.

The survey has two questions to it. The first part is where you'll vote. And the question goes like this: *On a scale of 10, with 10 being totally excited and one being totally apathetic, how excited are middle and high school students today about going to school only for their academic courses? Not the social parts of school, not the extracurricular parts of school, the clubs, the sports, the dance, theater, things like this. Only their academic courses.* And let's have everybody vote with a show of hands. We'll start at the top with 10 and move down. How many 10's? How many 9's? How many 8's? How many 7's? Six's? Five's? Four's? Three's? (Laughter). Two's? One's? Thank you.

We've asked this question of thousands and thousands of educators, parents, students, legislators, and the general public. And the range of responses given is

2 to 5, with the response given most often a 3. As you can see, your responses are the same as everyone else's.

The second question is, and I think we all know the answer, *Are human beings, and especially kids, natural learners or unnatural learners?* How many would say natural? (Audience votes). How many would say unnatural? (Audience votes.) The response has always been that human beings are natural learners.

So then the question becomes: If human beings, especially kids, are natural learners, but their excitement level about their academic courses is between 2 and 5, with 3 being the response that's given most often, what are we saying about the educational system in America, fundamentally at its core? The conclusion is inescapable and the conclusion is obvious.

What I'd like to do now is ask Virginia Strom-Martin who chairs the Education Committee in the California State Assembly this question: Virginia, are these really the problems, the intensified coursework, graduation requirements, the homework, the cuts in electives, standardized testing, or are these possibly more the symptoms of something else that's taking place in our schools?

Strom-Martin: I think the lack of enthusiasm that we're seeing, and by the way I have a high school senior this year and another daughter who's a junior in college, has increased. I think the frustration and the disengagement of our students has increased just in the last five or so years. And I attribute that to the number of reforms that the California State Legislature has basically mandated of our local school districts. It's been absolutely overwhelming, and I know this as a former teacher and I know the impact that it has made on our local schools. They are dealing with lots of reforms that they have had to adjust to. It was class size reduction, zero tolerance, rules, the high school exit exam, the tests, the standards, the accountability and a number of other reforms that we've pretty much asked our local school districts to take care of without, by the way, a whole lot of input from those folks, which is the biggest problem.

We started backwards. When I was elected in 1997, governor Pete Wilson wanted to bring California up to par with a lot of other states and require that the state have a statewide, nationally-normed, standardized test. That was the biggest fight I had as a freshman legislator that year because I was coming right out of the classroom. I had come out of 24 years of teaching (at the same elementary school in Sonoma County). I knew that we couldn't do that without having that test

aligned with what we were teaching in the classroom. A test is a tool and, as a teacher, I knew that. A test is a tool that you use to determine how to evaluate and how to make sure that students are achieving the way they should. And it's a diagnostic tool. But simply to mandate that every schoolchild from second grade to eleventh grade take a statewide, nationally-normed, standardized test that was not aligned with the curriculum being taught in the classroom was, to me, simply absurd.

Unfortunately, despite a lot of protest and a number of us that did not vote for that bill, it did get out and the bill was signed. So we started backwards. We started with a test that was not aligned with the state board's adopted curriculum. Well, since that time, we have gradually tried to align both the curriculum and the test, and obviously the text books that would have to be adopted to teach the curriculum and, of course, teacher training. And I'll tell you, we're still not there after four-and-a-half years, we're still not there. So we have a system that I liken to a bunch of puzzle pieces thrown out on the floor with no integration. So we're playing catch up right now.



ASI Director George Leonard (l) chats before the Forum with ASI Advisor Michael Murphy.

ASI: Are you familiar with what happened in Arizona with the state test that was given?

Strom-Martin: No, I'm not.

Audience Member: The Ames Test.

ASI: Ames Test? Are you from Arizona?

Audience Member: Yes.

ASI: In Arizona they gave high school students a statewide test, an exit exam I believe. Is that correct?

Audience Member: It's a state standards test.

ASI: It was interesting because they administered the test and 84% of the students failed it, including thousands of straight A students. It was devastating. They've pulled the test since that time.

Let's move on here. Except for the McREL report (a report on one of ASI's educational reform programs produced by researchers at the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory in Aurora, Colorado. McREL is one of 10 research labs administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement), there's been no mention ever about sport or physical education in dealing with all these issues. And we have with us several people from the sports and the physical education disciplines. Roberta Park, why is it that physical education has not been mentioned in any of the educational reform literature, programs, reports, things like that? What's happening here?

Park: Well, this is a complex question, and I'm not trying to make it simple when I say that fundamental to our problems is we still live in the world of René Descartes.

The body doesn't count in Western culture, and if we don't realize that the Cartesian dualism underlies all of our thinking and doing, we make a serious mistake. Now this doesn't mean that we can't endeavor to do something about it. People in my field have been endeavoring to do something about this since the time of Plato. I'm a good enough historian to know that Plato was a long time before René Descartes. So let me take the period of professional physical education in the United States, which really starts about 1885, with the formation of an organization that exists today with a different name.

I spent the first 60% of my life, well, I spent the first 5% of my life in French, the next 55% of my life in physical education, and the remaining portion in history. And so, sorry, but you're going to have to have a little historical discourse here. The nice thing about history is that if we really look at it, it can help us inform ourselves about the present, and if we understand that matrix, maybe we can make an informed or more informed future.

It's astonishing how, over the years, many physicians, educators, psychologists, and sociologists have really been interested in physical education because they're interested in the whole child. John Locke was not wrong: *mens sana in corpore sano*, "a sound mind in a sound body" is a short but full description of a complete life. And important educators have been saying this for a very long time. As I was

saying to a person who is visiting here from New York, and I thank someone for coming from that far away, like health, which is really my research area for the last 15 years, physical education is something that kind of cycles. We kind of get it right for a considerable period of time. Then, for a number of reasons, it declines. And I can tell you the reasons why I personally think it declines, both from research and from our own lived experiences.

I'm probably the oldest person here in the room, so I probably have been living longer than any of you. But to me, the recent demise, by which I mean about the last 40 years, is not very difficult to find. I think you're right, George, about the *Nation at Risk* report. But actually, we can trace this back another 25, actually 26 years, to when the Soviet Union put Sputnik up and the United States was, to say the least, a little bit malcontent because we hadn't put Sputnik up first. Be that as it may, there are all sorts of political reasons for these kinds of things. But if you look at what happened at that time to the public school curriculum in a lot of places and in California, which arguably had not only the best education system but the best physical education in the entire United States, it was going to be science and math. And there were groups of men and commissions and all sorts of stuff, and the curriculum was changed dramatically.

One of the things that was changed was there was a push toward flexible scheduling. Well that ate at the heart of daily physical education. So the first thing that happened was that it was no longer daily. And then very shortly after that, it wasn't in the 12th grade, and then it wasn't in the 11th grade, and then in some places it wasn't even in the 10th grade. But some other things happened in the sixties.

I'm really glad to see that there are some wonderful opportunities for young women and older women, too, in athletics. But Title 9 was a mixed blessing, and if we don't understand that Title 9 was a mixed blessing, we are doing ourselves a grave disservice. Because there was a time, and I was a part of it, when comprehensive programs for all young women and all girls were a real part of physical education. Yeah, there were programs for boys as well, but it was harder for the male physical educator because he usually had to deal with intercollegiate or interscholastic athletics as well. Now don't misunderstand me. I like intercollegiate athletics. I go to the football games. There is a place for intercollegiate athletics. But if we think that physical education and athletics are the same thing, then the Greeks were wrong because *egymnastici* (sp?) which comes from the Greek was tantamount to our physical education. And *athlein*, which is our root word for athletics and means *to*

contend for a prize, was what the Olympic and Nemean and all those Panhellenic contests were about. We've never gotten that straight in this country. We keep conflating those kinds of things, and as long as we conflate them, we'll have trouble. There's one other problem, but I'll save it for later. It is something that my profession did to itself in the 1970's and 1980's, and if you don't understand that, you don't understand the third part of the puzzle.

ASI: Thank you, Roberta. Bob Kanaby, why nothing about sport in the educational reform literature? What is it about sport? Why is it being left out?

Kanaby: I think what's probably being left out is the perceptions amongst the general public and probably, unfortunately, amongst too many educators that interscholastic sports are an adjunct, an "extra," activity that is not related to the educational process of young people. I'd have to agree with all the previous speakers in terms of some of those problems. I was going to raise Sputnik. I was in school at the time, and we focused everything on science at that point and the Russians beat us into space.

Picking up on George's comment, we've had a much closer pointing towards keeping and developing educational goals without using educators to do so. I'll remind everyone about something called *Goals 2000*, which basically began under the leadership of then-Arkansas Governor Clinton, which was an attempt to develop educational goals for this nation state-by-state, goals which were not achieved by Goals 2000. All the governors came together on two occasions to develop the goals and monitor the objectives that they had. But one of the problems was that at least at the first gathering, the only people who were invited were the governors from around the United States and businesspeople, the corporate sector. There wasn't a single educator invited to participate in the initial drafting of Goals 2000. So we shoot ourselves in the foot a lot.

To get to your question more specifically, we just don't think of sports in our schools as having any educational purpose from the standpoint of the same kinds of academic goals and objectives that we have for young people. We're focused on achieving certain standards relative to test scores because we want to compare well with other young people all across the world. There's a tendency to always do that, and America always wants to be first. It really led to our beginning to coin the phrase or emphasize the phrase that these things should really be looked at as co-curricular in nature, that they bring to young people certain experiences that are not as easily duplicated in the regular classroom situation. And I say that not to

be critical of our academic programs in terms of what happens. I really say that in the context of it being much easier for a youngster to learn competition, which all youngsters must learn in order to be productive citizens in this country, to deal with all of those key concepts of handling agony and defeat and so on.

Joel, you and I talked about this earlier. It's a very different thing from an



Panelists Robert Kanaby (m) of the National Federation of State High School Associations and Marie Ishida of the California Interscholastic Federation are greeted by Joel Kirsch.

educational experience to test yourself in an academic sense and not do well, and then deal with a teacher who's going to come to your desk and give you a face-down test paper that might have a failing grade on it. And basically, unless you choose to share that with your friends, both you and the teacher are the only ones at that point that know it. That's far different from a young person standing at that free throw line with the gymnasium packed with people, there are double zeros on that scoreboard but the horn hasn't gone

off yet, and the score is tied or your team is down by one point and you're shooting a one-and-one and you miss the first one. That's a learning experience. And it's a learning experience that has great impact on young people, needed impact on young people so that when that young person leaves this setting and goes out into the world of work, perhaps that experience is going to help him or her deal with the obvious tragedies and the obvious disappointments that life holds for all of us. So basically, I think the problem has always been as far as sports are concerned that they were considered to be something extra. And I'm not saying that they should be as important as English and math and science, etc., not the least. But they have to be recognized by educators in America as being very, very supportive instruments to help young people reach that totality of experiences that we hope to provide them with as they go out in the world.

ASI: Okay, thank you, Bob. Marie Ishida, what about you? Why isn't sport involved in this whole picture of educational reform?

Ishida: Well, I think that for those of us who are involved in the sports arena, we do view academics as an important part of our program. In fact, those of you sitting out there that are familiar with CIF, the California Interscholastic Federation, realize that a very important component of one's eligibility to participate in high school athletics is academic.

If I can birdwalk for just a little bit, we're dealing with a very, very complex issue here. The discussion is beginning this evening, and I think that in itself is worthwhile. But the complex issue that I'm referring to is that, when I was born, way back in 1947, things were quite different. Our society was different. The issue that we're dealing with now is complex. I think a few years ago, 10, 15 years ago, those of us that are baby boomers out there, which seems to be most of the crowd this evening, we were involved in things, we were involved in schools for the intrinsic value. We got something out of that experience, whether it was sport, whether it was an activity, drama, speech, music. It was something that we felt and we were rewarded intrinsically. I think because of how our society has changed and our culture has changed dramatically, the rewards now that are out there are all extrinsic. When A-Rod (Alex Rodriguez) makes \$15 million and a teacher makes 50,000 dollars a year, something is wrong with that picture. The value, I think, that I see in sport is the fact that it is a conduit, it's a connectedness for our students to be connected to school. Obviously, the survey that we did earlier this evening indicated that the students aren't in school just for academics. Yes, that's a primary role of our institutions. But in this day and age, we also need to hook kids in and I think the athletic programs and our activities program is that connector, that conduit that helps keep kids in school, helps keep kids focused.

ASI: Marie, thank you. Camille Maben, what's the position of State Superintendent Delaine Eastin on the role of sport and physical education in the California educational system?

Maben: Delaine has always been and continues to be very supportive of not only interscholastic sports but physical education for students. She believes, as we do, that we have to educate the whole child. Just as Marie mentioned, kids are connected to school in many different ways—for some it's athletics, for others it's music, for others it's art and drama. We look upon all of those things as essential for students in order to connect their academics with athletics or music.

What we know about kids is that, in most instances, those who excel in athletics, in art, in music, also do well academically because they are connected. You learn the discipline through practicing every day. That carries over into doing well, in completing homework on time. So those kids who tend to do that, and we'd like to see more kids involved in these types of activities. I think one of the hardest parts about high school athletics is, for the most part, it's limited to a team. Do you know what I mean? You used to see a long time ago more intramural sports where more kids could have that excitement and fun of competition even if it

wasn't the Friday night game. They were active and they were doing things. But now because of lack of space or because of time on fields or practices, those kinds of programs have been cut from school. So I think one of the things we realize is by limiting the number of kids who are involved, that limits those who maybe aren't your stars, but who want and desire every bit as much to be involved in those things. I think I come at it more as a parent of four children, all of whom play or have played high school athletics, and two at the college level. I've seen what that can do, what high school sports can do for children in a very positive way. The Superintendent is very committed to sports and to keeping kids healthy through physical education, and what we can do to help that along.

ASI: Thank you. This is really interesting because the statistics that are starting to come out now regarding the health and fitness of students across the country and, in particular, here in California have the word *epidemic* tied to them. Being overweight or obese is now second only to smoking as the leading cause of death in the United States. The incidence of obesity in children has doubled since the late 1970's. Dr. William Dietz, the director of nutrition and physical activity at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, says that the United States is now witnessing an obesity epidemic. This is leading to an epidemic in diabetes—one in every 17 Americans is now afflicted with diabetes. Researchers at the CDC are calling this the greatest increase in one decade of any chronic disease in the history of our country. What used to be thought of as adult-onset diabetes is now being called child-onset diabetes.

To compound this problem, the World Health Organization's cancer organization—the International Agency for Research on Cancer—just issued a report that shows that one third of all cancers of the colon, breast, kidney, and digestive tract are attributable to too much weight gain and too little exercise. Dr. David Satcher, the U.S. Surgeon General, says that physical inactivity in the United States is a major epidemic. On the other hand, in our schools, at the high school level, physical education has been cut from being mandatory for four years at high school level to two years. At the elementary level, the California Center for Health Improvement in Sacramento says that elementary schools do not adhere to the quantity of minutes for P.E., and they're even cutting back on recess or cutting it out altogether. Is it any wonder then that 80% of all California students tested for physical fitness cannot meet



Panelists Derek Van Rheenen (m) and Roberta Park, both of the University of California, Berkeley, talk with an audience

the minimum standards? And the kicker in all this is that it is mandated in California—and I testified on this issue before the Assembly Education Committee about a month ago, the committee that Virginia Strom-Martin chairs—that all fifth, seventh, and ninth graders in California be tested for physical fitness each year. Eighty percent failed to meet even minimum standards. And what's worse, 30% of the districts either did not do the test or simply didn't report their findings. Virginia, what would happen if 80% of all the students did not meet minimum academic standards? Or what would happen if 30% of the districts didn't report their SAT 9 scores?

Strom-Martin: Well, that would be considered a crisis, I'm sure, by the governor and the legislature. I should mention that the bill you're speaking of is a bill that passed with bipartisan support in the education committee just a couple of weeks ago. This is a good bill because it will increase the number of minutes for physical education for every student, seventh through twelfth grade, and it will also provide that there be content standards for physical education. In addition, every year, schools will have to report their physical education testing. This is an attempt, obviously, to look at how we have deteriorated in terms of the emphasis on physical education.

I know that when I went to junior high school, we had uniforms that we had to wash every week. We dressed down, meaning we took off our regular clothes, we put on our uniforms, we went out and played hard sports, organized sports, and then afterwards, we showered. Finding a high school or a middle school that even has a gym that provides showers is rare in California. When my daughters went to school, there was no dressing down, really. They wore what they wore to school, no showers. So we have really taken a nosedive in terms of really emphasizing sports. I grew up in the era when we—JFK was president—when there was an emphasis on sports. I remember the 50-mile hike craze when students were doing these long, hard hikes. So I think that this year, not only do we have legislation in terms of physical education, but we also have a number of bills that deal with nutrition at schools as well, because we are seeing the statistics that you just referenced. Kids really are in dire straits in terms of their physical needs and, in fact, in terms of their physical constitutions. We see that as teachers in our classrooms. So we need to step up to the plate and do something about it.

ASI: Okay, thank you. Derek Van Rheenen, I visited your class at UC Berkeley one time. You take a unique approach in the classes you teach, integrating the physical into the academic. And what was the title of your session going to be when

we first were going to do the full conference, revisioning the student body or something like that?

Van Rheenen: I can't remember, but I'm sure that it was really creative. (Laughter). No, I think it was something about reconstructing the student body.

ASI: And what did you mean by that?

Van Rheenen: I think one of the issues that a number of panelists have touched upon is that children and youth have really lost their childhood. It's been taken away from them. Some of it has to do with, of course, its intensification, but there's such supervision, such organization of everything that they do, that there is no playfulness, there's no freedom, essentially no recess.

I can remember, and I loved school, but I can remember going out at recess in my elementary school and just wanting to run around in a circle and fall down. It was a break, it was a release. There isn't that opportunity, I think, either in physical education these days or, for that matter, in the classroom. So what I try to do—I deal with freshmen at the University of California at Berkeley—I'm a real frank with them about what it is they want to get out of their education. Most of them are not interested in the intrinsic; someone mentioned the intrinsic joy of learning earlier. They're interested in the certification, they're interested in a career. The notion of looking into philosophy as Professor Park is talking about is not particularly intriguing, but rather how do I get into Haas Business School? I'm interested in making a fair amount of money. So I think that what I at least try to do is bring the body back into the classroom in other ways of learning, kinesthetic ways of learning. I teach a number of student-athletes who compete at the intercollegiate level whose bodies are immediately stigmatized once they enter a college classroom. This has to do with the mind-body dualism that was mentioned earlier.

The assumption is if the student-athletes have well, fit bodies, then somehow their minds must be atrophied. So every time they enter a room, they are seen as not being a part of it. I don't know if the middle schools and high schools have these, but even at Berkeley, they have these little desks, a chair with the desk attached to it. Try to get a collegiate basketball or football player into those. You might get them into one, but you won't get them out. (Laughter). So if you want to try to bring the body into the classroom, they can't even sit in those chairs. So we do various things to try to do, much as you do, Joel, to try to encourage both the intellectual as well as the physical role in the classroom, bring them into some sort

of union. Again, I would come back to the notion of bringing the playfulness and the playful spirit into what we do in the classroom, because why would someone enjoy doing any activity when there's no chance of play?

ASI: I'm glad you said that Derek, because when we talk about physical education, we know about the devastating health and fitness related issues. We know that appropriate forms of physical activity increase alertness, decision making, creativity, and memory retention. There's a study that I have here that was done at USC (University of Southern California) several years ago, where they put people under pressure to make difficult decisions using computer programs. When the individuals stood at their computer instead of sat, they made their decisions 20% faster. They alternately sat or stood for 15 minute periods, making rapid decisions using this computer program, and the performances of the oldest and most sedate improved the most by rising. But the tougher the task, the more everybody benefited by standing up. And yet, we spend most of our time in school sitting down. It just doesn't seem to fit, despite all this research.

We even find this in quotes from historical figures: Einstein once said, "My primary process of perceiving is muscular and visual." Thoreau from language arts, "It seem that when my legs begin walking, my mind begins working. Any writing I do sitting down is wooden." Shakespeare, "By my body's actions, teach my mind." Kierkegaard, "I have walked myself into my best thoughts." Nietzsche, "Never trust you came upon sitting down. The muscles must be in celebration with the mind." With all of these figures, these great figures in history, with all of the research, with all that we know, what is clogging our educational arteries where people are not outraged by this and standing up and saying, "My goodness, we're the ones who are keeping the kids from excelling?" (Long pause) Anybody? (Long pause).

Strom-Martin: We're sitting down. We can't answer. (Laughter).



Panelists (l-r) Virginia Strom-Martin, Chair of the California State Assembly Education Committee, Robert Kanaby, Michael Murphy and Derek Van Phooen.

ASI: With these great figures, and the research, what's being said here? What are things that could be done in our classrooms, that would integrate, as Derek was talking about, the physical into the language arts, the physical into math and science, the physical into our philosophy courses so we can get better results from the kids? Why do we have to have physical education and sports here, and

math and language arts, social studies over there? What's going on? (Long pause) Maybe we all need to stand up.

Leonard: One thing is we pretty well knocked out the integrative subjects where you can learn by doing, learn from the Peloponnesian Wars, to act it out. I wrote a book about that. Not acting out those wars in particular, but that was part of education. That 1968 book, which is not in print now, went through 13 printings in the first year, and there was a tremendous desire to do something about education. The untimely death of Robert Kennedy, who was the first person outside of my family to read my manuscript, had something to do with that. The world exists by story. To act out a story, drama, is an integrative subject, music is integrative, art of various types. I think that should be part of the educational equation, not separate from it.

And another thing, I think feedback testing is important, testing is important, and it should be going on all the time. But the way it is now has us moving in the wrong direction. I did a story on education for *Esquire Magazine* called "Carpool." For two months, two of the most depressing months of my life, I drove in a carpool from Mill Valley (eight miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County, CA) with three teachers who happened to live in Mill Valley and taught in an inner-city high school. I'm not going to name the school, but if the teachers assigned a paper to every student they were teaching in a day, they would have 130 to 150 papers to give feedback on. That's not feedback, and of course as you know, I've thought a lot about using computers to do some of the teaching and some of the feedback given on some of the basic stuff. The computer people have really disappointed us on that. But I think that integrative subjects—we've got to there, and standing up and sitting down, that's acting it out, that's becoming the subject, that really puts it all together. Integrative learning is much more powerful than simply learning that is separated into all of its components.

ASI: Do you think this separation goes back to the body/mind split that took place some 2,500 years ago, and is a product of our way of thinking, or way of being in the culture?

Leonard: Absolutely. Michael (Murphy) can talk a lot more about this than I can, but there's no question about it. The denigration of the body, in most cultures, it's a very complex subject. I don't want to get into that now, but the body has been denigrated as a rebellious entity that's working against the imperial mind. And once we really get in touch with our bodies, we find that body and mind are really

one. In fact, to have learning take place through the medium of the body, it's a memorable learning experience, there's tremendous wisdom in the body. We learn through the body, just as you have suggested.

ASI: Michael Murphy, I use your book *The Future of the Body* for weight lifting. It is so extensive. What is it that the body, the potential of the body, offers us, that we could be using that we're not?

Murphy: It's interesting, as soon as you start to get involved physically, using your body, you necessarily rev up your emotions. You trigger your perceptual abilities, you stimulate them in some way or another. You stimulate your thought processes. It's an integral act once you get involved with some meaningful physical activity. But it doesn't work the other way around.

If you're sitting at a desk working on a mental drill, you can sit in such a way that there's a tremendous return on investment, if you will, when you engage physically. It's interesting that in so many cultures, when you get into intellectual training, like in Tibet, you move as you talk. If you look at these films of the Dalai Lama and the other Rimposhays? (I used phonetic spelling), their debate is conducted with physical movement. This has been a feature of education through history in many cultures, that it always had to involve physical activity. But how did this happen that we got to where we've gotten? It's kind of snuck up on us, that we have so divided physical activity away from education, mental activity, character development, and so forth.

There are a lot of contributing causes. And here we are, surrounded by this massive research that shows if you're physically engaged, physically healthy, you have these emotional outcomes, cognitive outcomes. We've got all this research, we've got tremendous testimony of the philosophers that you've read off. Common sense teaches us this. We all know it from our everyday experience. We've got to refresh ourselves physically, and yet, we've got the problem surrounded but we haven't broken through to the core of the problem. It's probably going to take a big movement of some type. Every one of us in this room has been involved in at least one sort of reform movement. It's probably going to take something like that, and it's going to take leadership and examples like you said because everything points that this is the right way, but yet there's this huge blind spot.

ASI: Thank you, Mike. Camille.

Maben: I think one of the things that works against us is time. The reason I say that is if you look at very young children, three and four-year-old children, who are normally very active, they have to repeat an activity physically a number of times when they're learning something and developing, brain development and everything. It's climbing a ladder and going down the slide, a hundred times in a row until you physically figure out all of how that works. It's running up and down, it's spinning and spinning until you fall over. Young children understand the physical part of learning.

And what we've done is push down further and further on very young children academic expectations, and we've taken away time, time that is essential for them to develop. And as we've done that, we've pushed it and we've put more demands where you have younger children sitting. I think there are some of us here who are old enough to remember your mother simply kicking you out of the house and saying, "Go play." For hours. And you'd run around and you rode your bike. And now, after school, when you're three, after academic preschool, you have to go to music lessons, and then you have to go to some form of, and I'm honestly not against organized sports, but when you're five, is that the best use of your time? I don't think so. I think when you're five, you should be playing outside. And I say that from working with young children for a long time. But what I think we're doing is pushing it down so far and putting so many more demands on children's time that by the time they get old enough they're burnt out by seventh and eighth grade, and they're sitting most of the time. So I think *time*, we're putting so many demands in a time way for kids.

ASI: Okay, thank you. Let's look at the issue of the validity of sports in education. Bob Kanaby, I know you've written extensively about this, and it just seems that there are so many positive aspects of sport, but yet it still doesn't get the respect that other disciplines do. Can you articulate for us or just give us a few examples of what you think those things are because we know they exist, but it just seems that they're not taken seriously.

Kanaby: We can point to study after study that shows that youngsters that participate in activities within the school, principally, let's stay with sports, we can show statistically that they have fewer discipline problems, they score better academically. In fact, we can show in studies that the more sports they're involved in, the higher the GPA of that youngster as it relates to those who are not. We can show that they have fewer discipline problems, they are more timely in their work,

and all the other kinds of things. We can go through the litany. I don't think it's necessary to go through all of those.

But despite all of that, I don't think sport is perceived as having the kinds of opportunities to teach other educational initiatives to young people that you're suggesting be taught, simply because of the nature of where sports has gone in America. I think within the next decade, if we continue to go the way we've been going with sports in this country, we will face somewhere in the 21st century the question, "Are sports good for America?" Due to the fact that if one looks at what we try to do with sports, we're, in many cases, not trying to do it for the youngster. We're primarily trying to do it for ourselves. Kids get involved in organized sports at three and four and five-years-old not for the youngster, but because of the parents. And the parents live through that amongst themselves. Unfortunately, in some segments, it's done because the parents are hoping that their kid becomes the next zillion dollar A-Rod in their family.

I will tell you that, and I didn't bring it with me, but I have a full-page ad that appeared in *Good Housekeeping* that has about a six-year-old girl dribbling a basketball and it's an ad for a nationally known company that produces crackers. Basically the ad reads, "Susie participates in basketball, Susie eats X cracker, Susie becomes All-American, Susie signs huge pro contract, Susie's parents retire". That's the ad. (Laughter). You're right, George, it is sick. But I'll tell you what, that's what's going on in our society today. Parents want their kids in sports, not for the kinds of things that we see can happen for young people, but because of the *college scholarship*. It's a problem that schools face right now. There are expectations on the part of parents that one of the coach's jobs is to not only teach that particular sport to that young person, but to get that young person a college scholarship. That was never the purpose of sports in high schools. Never. Yet that's an expectation today for parents.



Assemblymember Virginia Strom-Martin responds to a question.

We've transgressed I think in terms of having other expectations for sport in this country and we've lost touch of the reality of what Plato meant when he said, "You can learn more about a person in an hour of play than you can in a year of conversation." What he was basically saying was that there's educational value that people can acquire as a result of participating in physical activity. Will we ever

reach a point where we will get the kinds of participation figures that we want? I love to hear the word intramurals. I remember intramurals, too, and it gave an opportunity for young people to participate. But what keeps us from having intramural programs so that all young people participate in these kinds of experiences? What? Money. We refuse to pay for these kinds of things. And that's a sad indictment on where we are as well. We refuse to commit the kinds of dollars necessary to keep this place open at all kinds of hours so that all youngsters can have the opportunity to participate.

Where will it go? I think ultimately, it may depend upon how our new president rises and falls as an *education president*. We know he loves sports but then most of our presidents have loved sports. But whether or not we tie this love of sports to equating into positive educational experiences for young people is really a test that we have as yet to meet in America.

ASI: It seems that there are a lot of negative aspects to sport culture. And yet, we know whether it's in *The Ultimate Athlete*, *Golf in the Kingdom*, in physical education, the National Federation, CIF, there are things within sport culture that bring the kids there, that call to the kids—that's why we've called this forum *The Call of Sport: A Model for Educational Reform*—that call to the kids and bring them to these activities. There is something that they're getting out of these activities that despite sitting in chairs for five or six hours a day, having homework at the end of the day that they still have to do, they're willing to go out and be involved in some type of sport or physical activity for three hours, maybe even have a coach yell at them, and they still come back the very next day. There are things that the kids are getting in sports that they're not getting in the classroom because I know if a math teacher yelled at that kid, that kid would not be back the next day. So what are these things that call to us? What are the things about sport that appeal to us and how can we take these things and bring them into academia so that the next time we ask a survey question, most of the hands that go up are 7's, and not 3's and 4's. What are the things that we can take from sport, that call to the kids, that we can bring into the classroom? Anybody have any ideas? Virginia

Strom-Martin: One thing that comes to mind is just the whole idea of being part of a team and the cooperation that comes with that. The whole team has to cooperate in order to win the game, so to speak. That is something that a lot of teachers try to instill in their students. Just in defense of the whole notion that kids are required to sit in their seats for five hours a day, I think that you'll find in many elementary classrooms that is not the case. The teachers have adapted

because they realize that children of that age absolutely don't function like that. They need to get up, they need to move around, they need to interact with others, they need to use all their senses in order to reinforce what they're learning.

There has been a number of people who have written about children's learning styles. Roger Taylor comes to mind talking about visual learners and kinesthetic learners and so forth. In my experience, I have seen a lot of elementary school teachers use some of the suggestions brought forth by Roger Taylor—working in teams, doing project-based learning, doing simulation activities so kids get up and move around and interact with other children. But I would say that in terms of the values that children learn from sports, definitely team learning, team building, working together for a common purpose is, I think, one of the major ones. Also perseverance, just keeping on the keeping on until you get it right—that focus that an athlete needs to succeed at something, that is another value that can cross over into academics.

ASI: Derek, you played for the (San Francisco Bay) Blackhawks (professional soccer team). How long ago? When was that?

Van Rheenen: It's been almost ten years.

ASI: When you were growing up as a kid and you were learning your soccer skills, were there players who advanced faster than you in their skill development?

Van Rheenen: Yes.

ASI: Were there players who advanced slower than you?

Van Rheenen: Yes.

ASI: So you had to move at your own pace in order to master the skills to get to the next level. You were faster than some and slower than some.

Van Rheenen: Yes.

ASI: Okay, then let's take that into education. George Leonard, you had talked about the need for self-paced, mastery-based learning and how students are put on that education conveyor belt. By the way does anybody know what our

current educational system is based upon as far as how kids matriculate from one grade to another? What it's modeled after?

Audience Member: (Inaudible)

ASI: Henry Ford's assembly line. When the immigrants were coming into this country from Europe at the turn of the century, government officials had to figure out how to educate them. So they studied Henry Ford's assembly line. They then put the kids on the education assembly line. Back then though, there was nothing called quality control where you stop the assembly line and fix what's not right, and then put that thing back on the assembly line so it can move through. We have self-paced, mastery-based learning in sports but we don't have it in the classroom. Why not and what could we do?

Park: Joel, could I say a word about that, not your last remark, although my comments are related to that, but what's been on the table for about the last three or four minutes? And again, it sounds very simplistic, and it is in one way. But in another way, it's enormously important. We use the words teaching and learning all the time, and we sort of use them as though they're in some sort of symbiotic relationship. But we all know that you can get up there and go through all the motions and do the right things teaching and all of that, but there's nothing that's happening to those kids out there, you know, what's it all worth? You might as well be doing it in front of a mirror or something.

One of the things about a physical kind of activity, be it art or music or physical education and sport, and those things for me are on a continuum—physical education, intramurals, sport—is that unless the student is totally recalcitrant, they have to do it. So they're *doing* it in some kind of way. And, hopefully, we're good enough teachers, and by good enough I mean we're sensible enough so that if they aren't perfect, we try to find ways so that they're not embarrassed because there's always that problem—if I'm not the best it's embarrassing. Or if I'm not as good as Sally, or whatever. And to encourage them to do things. But that's one of the advantages of a kind of physical modality thing, is that the students have to do it and it ties in certainly with what other commentators have said.

But you can do a certain amount of that in the classroom. It's a lot harder for a whole lot of reasons. There are physical constraints. And then there's the whole tradition that you don't do that in the classroom. Young people don't want to learn history. It's all those dull dead guys and women, you know, who wants to do it?

So you have to find ways to try to get them engaged. I did a lot of fishing when I was young. You get the bait out there, you get the hook out there, you get the hook set and then, you know, you got the fish. So you can figure out a lot of ways, even in something that is to most people as dry as history—not dry to me—to get people engaged. And sometimes this done through doing things like trying to put yourself into the mind of someone in the 1850's and act that out.

Now that's not all that easy, and a lot of students resist this sort of thing. In some ways, anthropology is easier. I taught a class for a long period of time where we studied the games and play, not so much sport, of other cultures. We'd read about it and all of that, but then the students would have to manufacture something that looked like that drum or this or that or the other and they had to tell us something about the culture more broadly as they were dealing with that kind of entity. If you take that around and put it onto let's say physical education, what a wonderful way to teach people about anatomy, physiology, hygiene, and all of that. You've got kids. They run around the track for X period of time. They've taken their pulse, they don't know where to take their pulse, haven't a clue how the circulation goes in the body, so they do that. They finish the run, they take it again, and (gasp), "What's going on?" I'm not saying all students do that but a lot of them, "What's going on?"

Well, you know, this is a teachable moment. Because this is *my* body, this is *my* pulse. When I taught in high school which was 150 years ago, we did a lot of that kind of thing. Then, you can progress from that to, "Hey, there is a circulatory system and no, the heart doesn't look exactly like that thing you get candy in for Valentine's Day," and all of that. The point I'm trying to make, and I'm prattling on too long, is that there *are* interrelationships that can be made among those kinds of things. A teacher has got to buck the system to do it because your colleagues are likely to say to you, "Well, you must be crazy." But I didn't care whether my colleagues thought I was crazy. I cared a little if the kids thought I was crazy. So we have to remind ourselves that your point's well taken. When the body's engaged, there's a very good chance that all of it, spirit and the rest, is going to be engaged.

ASI: George.

Leonard: Back to your question, mastery learning. Mastery learning is where the time varies quite a bit, the time it takes someone to get somewhere varies, but the results don't vary because everybody ultimately gets to 95 or 100%, whatever.

With non-mastery learning, the time is a constant but the results vary wildly. Today's mass classroom was a very, sort of a lamentable expediency to try to take the very aristocratic tutor method and adapt it to mass education. There's one person doing most of the talking, trying to interact with the other person. One-to-one, of course, that's the ultimate as far as the effectiveness, the efficiency of the learning, one-to-one and a really good relationship with the single student. We can't do that. So how are we going to do that so that everybody succeeds?

Well, one of my daughters, very rebellious, she went to Tam High (Tamalpais High School where this Forum was held), but didn't like it very much. I think she was a little too fast for Tam High. She also had a horse. She was really thinking constantly of riding her horse. So we sent her to an independent learning school, which finally failed because it was not part of the accreditation world, which made it harder for its students to get into colleges, the best universities, and so forth. But the school had various systems where you get a contract at the beginning of the day, and of course they had a very favorable student-teacher ratio of about 10 to 1, and it was pretty expensive. But you sign the contract at the beginning of the day, which you've worked out as to what you're going to achieve. Every day is a test. In other words, they'd see if they'd mastered that particular segment. Well she discovered, she's pretty bright, that she could finish all of a day's work in two hours. She really loved to go to school, she would work very, very fast, get out of school, and go ride the horse the rest of the day.

For a while, people considered the computer to be, among other things, a teaching machine, which turned out to be a bit optimistic, quite optimistic actually. I still think it could teach certain drill-type things like simple arithmetic or vocabulary, spelling and so forth. But one of the uses of computers that people have not considered enough is that you can go at your own rate. The computer is constantly tracking you as exactly how far you're going. They're a test, and they're built right into what you're doing and how fast you're going. That's all calibrated right within the computer so you know at any moment you can go in there and find out what progress is being made, how well the students are getting it. But the one thing that computers can do that people haven't really used enough in schools is to track each individual student's daily progress. That possibility does exist. I think we should be more experimental. I think the old method, which is an unsuccessful attempt at adapting the tutor method to mass education, simply doesn't work.

ASI: Thank you, George. I know you want to say something here, Bob. Let me interject for just a moment. How many people have questions? Okay, let's make

this the last statement from the panelists and then we'll open it up to questions from the audience. Bob

Kanaby: Let me just toss these things out because part of your question was what can the academic side possibly take from the sports side in terms of making learning more effective, etc. etc. We tossed just a few things out for discussion and this is not in any way meant to be denigrating to the classroom teacher.

I wasn't a phys ed teacher. I was a classroom teacher my entire career. But if one looks at what makes coaching, what makes sports so unique, is that you talk to most coaches and in five minutes, you'll absolutely know that they love coaching. They just love to coach. And kids know that when they walk out on the field or court or whatever else. We have to examine and maybe remind our classroom teachers that after five minutes of being with you, do the kids really know that you love teaching? Really love teaching? Another thing you can ask that is very, very clear to understand is that kids who go out for and make an interscholastic athletic team know that their coach has certain expectations of them and they are way up here. Do kids walking into their classrooms really feel from their teacher that their expectations on the part of that teacher are way up here? We have a tendency to just allow them to get by, or some of them to get by. The other thing that we do in the athletic programs is, everyone's calling now for more public involvement. We put programs in the context of sport in the public view once and sometimes twice and three times a week. You might say, well, sure they either win or they lose. But I'm not talking about that. Someone will win, someone will lose. But it's *how* the person wins. It's *how* the person loses. It's how a youngster reacts when there's a fifth foul called on him. It's how this and how that, and all those kinds of expectations in front of other groups. Classroom teachers must find some way to do this.

ASI: Thank you panelists very much. Now let's open it up to questions from the audience that our panelists can respond to. When asking your question, please be brief and direct your question to a particular panelist.

Audience Member 1: I'm changing careers. I've been building houses. I want to start teaching, which I've been doing intermittently with after-school classes and such like that. But being in a classroom with the *testocracy* and rigidity and kids sitting in chairs does not appeal to me. The kind of integrative learning that George talked about and active things project-centered learning does, where do I

plug in? George, how do I go that way instead of learning how to teach kids for the tests?

Leonard: That's a hard one. I don't know where you could go for that right now. I really don't. I honestly don't. I wrote a book about that. I put a whole model of education up in 1968. In some ways, it was extreme. But I'll tell you something funny. It's looking better to me now. For a while, I said this could never happen. But the more I see what's going on, I think that maybe it could happen. But as it is now, I don't know what you would do.

ASI: Virginia, would you like to respond?

Strom-Martin: I'd just like to say there schools that would meet your needs. I taught in a school that was a multi-age fourth, fifth, and sixth grade class. What you're talking about is what we did. We taught thematic integrated instruction, project-based simulated activities and so forth. It was very, very exciting. There are schools in the state of California that operate like that. What you need to do is find out where they are and especially find a supportive administrator. That's the key.

Audience Member 2: I'm not a person of questions but of opinions. (Laughter). I am very concerned about the narrowing of education to meet the test requirements. I'm a school secretary and I'm beginning to find, or I'm beginning to be concerned that the teachers are teaching for the test rather than for education. And I think it's narrowing the scope of education because we have tied education scores to monetary rewards, and I think that's a shame. That's my first opinion. My second opinion is that we as parents also have a responsibility to take the load off of our children. I didn't start college until I was 30. I had a wonderful life without college. When I finally decided what I wanted to do with my life, I went ahead and I finished college. I think there's so much emphasis on putting these children on some kind of deadlock step towards an endless work that it just concerns me. I don't know what to do about it. My question actually now is, is there something as parents that we could do to help that?

Maben: Yes, I think individually we do that with our own children. The other thing is to be active in your parent-teacher groups, in your school site councils where those discussions can take place. I'm sure Virginia would agree there's so much power at the local level, there really is. To make changes in a community and to influence and basically just to spend time with other parents is important because

it's amazing how we all get caught up in doing something because somehow we believe that everybody else is doing it, too, because our kids kind of tell us, "You know, so and so is doing it." But when you get together with that group of parents, you kind of all go, "Well what are we doing that for?" And so there is a lot of power in getting together and sharing ideas and discussing those things.

Audience Member 3: I started teaching in Richmond about two years ago and I wanted to say to Ms. Strom-Martin that I'm still in shock that we don't have showers in high school any more. I can't believe that. I have one comment and one quick question. My comment is that, overall, in terms of teaching there in the inner city school, I feel like one of the biggest problems that we have, and I've come back to this thought over and over again, is that we are being strangled by Sacramento and the rules and regulations that come out of Sacramento. So I just wanted to make that comment. And one question which is part real question and part rhetorical, mostly for Ms. Maben and Ms. Strom-Martin, "Why is it in California that we have probably one of the best university systems in the country, if not in the world, and yet a primary and secondary public school system that's, I think, lamentable at this point?"

Strom-Martin: Well, if you want to believe that the SAT 9 is the end all and be all.

Audience Member 3: I don't care about the SAT 9. I teach in the schools and I see what's going on there.

Strom-Martin: I believe that we do have some schools, and mostly they are urban schools, that have more challenges, I think, than some of our other schools. I think we have some very, very fine schools in the state of California. I visited many of them, believe me. There's some wonderful things going on. You don't hear about that. We don't hear nearly enough about the success stories in our schools, the wonderful programs that are being offered to our kids, and also the success of the students themselves. We've got some fantastic success stories out there but we don't hear them. So I guess I would say I disagree with you in terms of the quality of education that we provide our kids. Certainly, we do have some pockets where we really do need to work on some of those *lower performing* schools where they have lots of challenges, poverty, number of English language learners, schools that have teachers that are under-qualified that are working on emergency credentials and waivers. But that is the goal of the legislation this year. It's to

focus on those schools with the most challenges so we can level the playing field in light of the high-stakes climate that the state has obviously created.

ASI: Yes, a question from this side.

Audience Member 4: This is my eighth year of teaching. I teach elementary school, this year third grade. Joel came to our school in the beginning of the year and trained us in firstPASS (one of ASI's educational reform programs). Linda, who's with me, had been doing it the year before, piloting it for our school. In eight years of teaching, there are a few things that have come along that have really changed my classroom—the self-esteem, the focus, the respect among the students, the sense of community. I guess my question to maybe Camille and Virginia is, is that being addressed, the self-esteem among kids, the focus that they're achieving? Myself, as a student, I'm seeing this in my kids, particularly my girls. Now that the girls are playing sports more, I see how their concentration is enhanced because we do a concentration practice in class as part of firstPASS, and it really gets the students focused. We do Student of the Day where kids give each other appreciations and they come away on this pedestal. It's so crucial to the program and the way things are running in my classroom. As a student myself in high school, many years ago, I was valedictorian in a school of 1,600, but testing was a panic for me. I see that in a lot of my kids. We're testing, actually all week we tested. I guess it's a question of self-esteem, focus. Are we talking about that at all at the state level?

Strom-Martin: Yes, yes we are. I think that that is something that the local school districts can address as well if they're willing to do that. Again, there are good programs out there that deal with children's self-esteem, teaching tolerance, conflict resolution skills, and those types of things. I know we're promoting at the state level, there's lots of good programs out there. But ultimately, it's up to the local school district to adopt those programs and make them part of their priority.

Audience Member 5: I've been teaching a learning-to-learn program for the last 11 years and I'd like to address the question of how to integrate kinesthetics into the classroom. First of all, there's hundreds of ways to do that, and I can tell you that some of them have been tremendously successful. One, for instance, is creating a twister board for multiplication tables and having the kids jump on 7 and 8, and 5, and 6, having them see it, jump on it, have different colors, have them play a game together. Another example is creating a Jeopardy game and doing a review through Jeopardy. You wouldn't believe inner-city kids who are completely

disenchanted come alive in a classroom and get excited because they're going, "Wow, competition." All the sports guys are really fired up. Or playing musical chairs as a musical review, and having everybody review together with two people standing up, and whoever's standing, those two work together to come up with the answer. There's countless things that you can do. I've worked with crack kids and kids that have alcohol syndrome. And when they touch their body and they make this (pointing) Delta Airlines for the deltoid muscle to remind them, or they have the bicycle for the biceps or the tricycle for the triceps and they touch their body and they see it, it all works. The gastrocnemius is a tattooed gas truck on their calf muscle and it reminds them. All these wild things through association help them get excited and connected with it. There's so many different ways to bring this into the classroom. So I got so excited, I wanted to answer this question for everybody because when you do that and when you do bring that sports teamwork into the classroom, and when you do use kinesthetics, the kids light up and it makes the most amazing difference that you could ever imagine. I'm so excited to be here and that you're doing this tonight. So thank you.

Murphy: Bravo! (Applause).

ASI: Thank you. Next question, please.

Audience Member 6: I'm a teacher at Jordan High School in Long Beach, California. My question is addressed to Marie Ishida. Jordan High School is a school of 4,100 students, a large urban school. You have mentioned 2.0 grade point averages, you've mentioned progressing towards graduation as outcomes that we want our students to achieve. What is it that the California Interscholastic Federation is doing to hold coaches and administrators accountable when those types of things are not being addressed at high schools throughout the CIF in other areas, other places, other schools?

Ishida: I'm not quite sure I understand your question.

Audience Member 6: For coaches and administrators, are things being put in place where we are trying to hold people accountable to the regulations that exist today, 2.0 grade point averages, having the students move towards graduation? Is CIF aggressively seeking to maintain those standards?

Ishida: Are we actively I still don't quite understand your question. Maybe I'm not hearing it.

Audience Member 6: My question is, is CIF seeking to maintain the standards to which it has adhered to, or is trying to adhere to—2.0 grade point averages, making sure that students are moving towards graduation?

Ishida: Oh, I definitely think we are. The CIF standard of a 2.0 and moving towards or receiving enough credits to move towards graduation is really the minimum. I would hope districts would have standards that are higher than that, which they can have. And I think that it's an individual district's responsibility as the CIF sees it to make sure that their schools and their coaches are adhering to that particular standard or any standard that that district sets for its particular student-athletes.

Audience Member 7: I'm a professional martial arts instructor, and I have two comments. One, I would really love to see martial arts taught in public schools. I believe that the martial arts have some things to contribute that really should be considered at some point. They allow people to develop self-control, mental focus, courage, and perseverance in a way that I believe is exceptional. They're not team sports and they're not competitive. They allow people to progress in self-paced, mastery-learning that you discussed.

I'm working on an independent project to try and teach an enrichment after-school program. I would teach in the public school but there's no opportunity for me to do that without going back to school for two or three years. I already have a bachelor's degree, and I have 15 years of teaching experience. I don't need to take two years of classes which are not going to be relevant to what I teach to get hired. You know, the audience member who spoke earlier, for him to get hired as a full-time teacher, he needs to go to school for two more years for some stuff which I know isn't going to impact his ability in the classroom very much. So I guess my comment is, at some point, I'd like to see a move toward having some sort of inclusion of martial arts in the public schools. That would be very nice.

Van Rheenen: I have a response to this issue. One thing that we did at Berkeley, which actually addresses the Richmond teacher, in particular, and the martial arts issue here, is that I coordinated a program called Project Teamwork where we involved an eight-time heavyweight national champion Tae Kwon Do gentleman named Kim Royce. You may have heard of him. He came through the Berkeley program of martial arts, which is quite strong. What we did is we went in with the National Writing Project and we did a tutorial after school for an hour. I think it

turned out to be an hour and 15 minutes. Then we did an hour and 15 minutes of martial arts, of Tae Kwon Do, for both the girls and the boys in this fourth grade class. It was voluntary and they had to have parental permission.

I agree with you wholeheartedly. It was an amazing shift for the kids in their own demeanor, about wanting to be a part of this educational program. They wrote and they wrote about what they were learning in terms of their martial arts, and I thought it was fantastic. Kim, in fact, did not at that time have a teaching credential. He came in just to volunteer his time to actually do this, run the program. He was hired the next year as a fourth grade teacher and he's still there, at Grant Elementary School in Richmond.

Audience Member 8: I have a couple of children in the educational system. One's being home schooled, one's in the public schools. I've become very interested and have done a lot of reading about education. The people speaking on the panel, I'm so impressed with. And I find myself going, yes, I agree so wholeheartedly. I think it's absolutely shameful, as Mr. Kanaby mentioned, that goals were developed for our schools without any input from educators, people who have devoted their lives to studying these issues. I know as a parent no one in government has ever asked me what I want for my child, which may be very different. My question is how did we get in this position where a governor or any political figure, not just *the* governor or *a* governor, but political leaders who are accountable to so many different people and are handling so much money and are voted into office, how can they make these kinds of decisions without the input of educators? I cannot truly believe that anyone who's in government and is truly interested in what's best for a child would make decisions about education without the input of educators, especially when there's massive amounts of money involved in education. How did we get in this position of having people who are not educators and have many other responsibilities to many other groups in a position to make these types of decisions, and how can we take back some of this decision making into our communities and into the schools themselves?

Kanaby: Yes, it is. It's a very telling question. It might have a very simple answer, however. I think people within our communities, from the grassroots level on up, have to value teaching as a profession. We don't value it in America the way we should. We have the A-Rod situations versus what a teacher makes as a starting salary because we, as a community, have allowed that to take place. We have to get local communities valuing education as a true profession, and I'm not just saying to pay exorbitant salaries like A-Rod, etc., but to really, truly respect

teaching as a true profession. I don't think we'll ever turn it around in this country, but I believe that's what has to happen.

Audience Member 9: I'm from Seattle. I've been given this awesome responsibility to reinvent school. I have unlimited money. I have the state of Washington's blessing. No rules. I'm allowed to throw out comprehensive education. I have 1,600 students. If I want 1,600 staff members, that would be okay. I'm here because I'm also the athletic director at the school. I've been there for 28 years. I need some help. I'm not the only person with this awesome responsibility. I'm just the only person here. After reading about a Harvard study, we sent a team of us to Harvard. At the session we attended, the department head in education stood up and spoke, and in the first sentence or so asks a question to the audience, "What do you believe is the most significant learning experience that a student receives in high school?" And of course this is the hub of education in America.

All the administrators were sitting there waiting to hear some profound philosophy, or perhaps something about math or science, when in fact it was participation in high school athletics that came up. Taking that to heart then, I'm reinventing education around athletics. Every kid participates. So my question then is why do we have a 2.0 rule? I'm considering the fact that if you have under a 2.0, you still have to turn out. I watch people graduate from high school. The superintendent gives them a diploma because they exceeded a 1.0, but the kid couldn't play football because he didn't have a 2.0. We emphasize athletics more than academics, but we reward what amounts to failure in academics with a diploma. The kid couldn't participate on the football team but graduated with a handshake from the superintendent, got the highest award the school gives out, but wasn't eligible to play basketball or wrestle. (Applause). So I want to know what you think about eliminating the 2.0 policy. And, in fact, everybody that's under a 2.0, we register them in some activity. I believe the reason they're failing is because they don't enjoy being there, there's no passion. Passion curriculum is what I'm interested in.

ASI: Who would you like to respond?

Ishida: I will just answer briefly. I think there are a lot of us in the room that if we had the ability to reinvent a whole new system, we would really welcome that. One of the first things I would do if I were in your shoes, I'd go back to your 1,600 kids and ask them what they want. Ask them what they see, what the

educational system is that would draw them and keep them in school. We have a lot of young people out there and we've not asked them yet what they think. And I think that that's one group that we often miss, that we forget to ask high school students or students what they want and they need. (Applause). I'm not sure about whether we should be eliminating the 2.0. If we're going to treat the athletic program as part of the academic program, as integral to the academic program, I think we have to have high standards. I frankly think that if we raised it to a 3.0, kids would meet that standard. I think what we're seeing now is a lot of athletes breaching the 2.0. But I've also seen with an awful lot of students that if there were higher standards, they would reach those standards as well, just to be able to participate. So I'm not sure that I would be advocating or would be thinking at this particular stage, in my own personal opinion, about reducing that minimum GPA.

Audience Member 9: But if you moved it to a 3.0, why wouldn't we drop them from English? I think we're taking them away from the successes. We hold them hostage from athletics if they're failing math, why don't we take them out of English? We take them out of basketball.

Ishida: Good question.

Audience Member 9: I don't understand why we pick on athletics. And by the way, for me, the student-driven issue is the most important. Those are the people that are going to drive us, but they're sending me instead.

Leonard: I would kind of, I hate to say it, but I would like to get rid of that and have them go to a PASS program(ASI's middle and high school educational reform program) because success breeds success. If people are good at something, they have tasted success. Then you take away that and they've lost even that success. I think you go to a PASS program—I've seen it happen there—and they will get their grade point up. And, in fact, I have a strong feeling about that.

ASI: Thank you. We have time for two more questions if we keep them short.

Audience Member 10: I'm a college physical education teacher. I've also coached everything from junior high school through Olympic-level athletes in track and field. I wanted to make one observation. I like the idea of mixing in the different areas of learning with the activity. But I came into the field of physical education after getting halfway through my Ph.D. in history and also having an undergraduate major in English. So I'll like that broader sense of everything. What I would like a

reaction on, perhaps George Leonard could react to this one, I like the idea of helping students reclaim that joy of learning. And one of the things that I think of was used in the context of sport by sport philosopher Claus Meyer (sp?) at a conference about 20 years ago. He commented that anything worth doing is worth doing badly, which is an idea that I love. It's not saying the goal is to be bad at something, but you don't have to be good at it to get a lot out of it. If perhaps George could comment on that.

Leonard: I think a thing worth doing is worth doing the way you want to do it, do it individually to express yourself individually. It might not be exactly what the school wants.

I'll tell you a very interesting thing that I discovered. When I was with *Look Magazine*, I had an unparalleled opportunity to visit literally hundreds of schools. Of course, you always have to talk to the superintendent, and then you talk to the principal of the school you're going to, and you go through the statistics, and so forth. Many reporters in that day and time, that's where they looked, and they just glanced in a few classrooms and looked at the figures and interviewed somebody. What I would do is do my duty with the superintendent and the principal. Then I and a photographer would go sit in a classroom in a child's chair. And I could do it, I could get in a child's chair. (Laughter). I'm just kidding. And I'd come back every school day for two or three weeks. We found out a great deal of what it's like to be a student. So to be able to express, I think you're right, to be able to express yourself the way that you are, it doesn't always have to be perfect. It's the same thing in aikido and other martial arts. In the martial arts, it's self-paced to the extent that people take tests only when they think they are ready for them. Of course, they should probably get the instructor's permission to do it, but they're not pushed to take the test until they are ready for it. And they almost always succeed in that case. So, yes, I agree. Individualism is very, very important. It can be done and there are some schools that are encouraging such.

Kanaby: I think from the standpoint of a good coach and a good teacher, when someone attempts to do something, but unfortunately only does it badly, like perhaps missing that free throw that we talked about earlier, the good teacher and the good coach come up to that youngster afterwards and say something significant to that youngster that that youngster remembers for the rest of their life. I think that's what makes a good coach and a good teacher. That they not only deal with the kids who achieve success within their activity, but they also deal

with the youngster that fails in their activity. Just a moment of their time, if appropriately used, becomes a lifetime memory for that individual.

Audience Member 11: I am the mother of an 11-year-old boy who goes to Mill Valley Middle School. I'm also a movement teacher here in Mill Valley. I really appreciated Mr. Leonard's comment on the fact that the study had nothing to do with comments from the students or that sort of thing. I know that I've actually built my business and my movement practice through discussion and conversation with my clients on their perspectives. My question is, or actually a suggestion, if it's not being done, I think that the best way to get to someone's experience is to give them a lived experience of that kinesthetic awareness that we're talking about, that I hear other people here talking about, that I know that they're very passionate about. I know that they know it works in terms of learning and in terms of how the brain is connected and all of that. So what I'd like to know is who are the legislators that are making these bills about the tests? And are they being given a lived experience in their bodies so that they would know that the tests are really pretty ridiculous? Do I need to backpedal like I have for the last ten years? I'm constantly trying to explain myself. Actually, I'm very happy that I've had to do this because I've developed a language that I think is very connective for people to understand through language, through conversation, about what the kinesthetic experience is. I'd like to know what's being done in that arena, if that's making any sense. I guess I'll address anybody.

ASI: Do you mean from the legislative perspective, is that what you're talking about?

Audience Member 11: I'm asking the people who are making the decisions on these legislative things that are ruling our school system, that are causing my son to carry the 25-pound backpack home from school, are they being given a lived experience? Do they have a sense of what a movement practice is? And I say movement practice, not just sports, because I think that connects everyone. It's not just sports. It's also the connection of body and mind, not only athletics and competition but also the lived experience in one's own body. I'd like to know if that's being given to these people? Are there retreats for these people to understand what that's about? I think that that's where you could start the conversation.

ASI: Virginia, could you answer that question?

Strom-Martin: Well, the answer to your question is no. (Laughter). A lot of the decision making that takes place in Sacramento is decision making that is outside of somebody's immediate experience. The good news is there are more teachers being elected to the legislature that have firsthand experience with some of the things we've been talking about tonight. When I was elected, I think I was the first legislator that came directly from an elementary school classroom. Now, just in the last election, there are two other women who sit on the Assembly Education Committee. One has 20 years of experience as a high school teacher in Los Angeles. The other one just came out of a 28-year career in a middle school. So there is hope because what we try to do is bring it back to our own personal experience.

To be perfectly honest, though, some of these laws that are passed are just ultimately political. If some governor from one state does something, every other governor looks at what they're doing, and it's kind of like one-upmanship. They want to be part of some kind of national scheme of promoting *reform*. Well, we're not using the "R" word anymore in our committee.

What we've decided to do this year, myself and actually my counterpart, Senator (John) Vasconcellos, who chairs the Senate Education Committee, who's a very compassionate man, is do a lot of work on self-esteem. We've decided to basically kind of call a halt to all the reforms that have been trickling down into the local school districts and basically say what we need to do now, in this high stakes climate, is to make sure that all of our schools, all of our children, have the opportunity to learn. There are still great disparities from classroom to classroom in the state of California. We're focusing our efforts mostly on those kids that are in the lower performing schools, although we obviously recognize that there are kids that are low performers in every school in the state. But we simply have to create a level playing field in the state of California for our schools because of the high stakes attached to the SAT 9 test. One thing I am doing this year, I have a bill that requires other multiple measures to be part of the Academic Performance Index other than the test. So there'll be a whole slew of things that we're going to attach to that, that will basically compare school to school.

ASI: Okay, thank you. You really want to ask a question, don't you?

Audience Member 12: I have to ask a question, I'm sorry.

ASI: If you can keep it to 60 seconds and we can keep our response short because a couple of people have to catch an airplane.

Audience Member 12: First of all, the one word I haven't heard tonight is fun. I know for myself, recess was fun, sports were fun, that's why I kept coming back over and over again. I think my question at this point, this is such a dynamite panel, this is a wonderful audience but small. Where does this go from here? Are you going to reproduce this in different communities?

ASI: I will be able to answer the last question. You're about two minutes ahead of me. We're going to close this up in a couple of minutes. For review, we looked at the importance of health and fitness. We looked at revisioning physical education and how it can be brought into the classrooms. We looked at the validity of sport in academic circles. And we looked at how the positive aspects of sport culture can be used to help reform our schools.

To answer your question, there will be a transcript made of tonight's forum. It will be made available on the American Sports Institute's website. The website address is on the blue brochure that you have. So it will be available for everybody. Also, if you wish, on your way out, on the table at the top of the key on the other side of the partition, there are packets for you about the American Sports Institute and information on the concepts, ideas, and programs that were talked about tonight.

Thank you for being here this evening. And a special thanks to our panelists. Good night.