

Committing to Elegant Schooling by Adopting a Theory of Educational Energy Development: NYSFEA Keynote, 2026

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Abstract: To radicalize the field of Education beyond intrusions and inclusions of Social Foundations into schooling policy and practice I recommend *infusion* of Social Foundations' ideas and thinking into educational discourse. It is time to replace efficiency-talk in schooling with a discourse of elegance in education. Time to move towards a system which is still standardizing in its orientation but looks for elegant organizational procedure and efficacious classroom practice to emerge from contextually observed patterns of educationally significant teacher-student interaction. Elegance improves on efficiency by giving schooling an educational rather than an economic operational goal to pursue.

With this keynote address I standing in the radical tradition of NYSFEA .I develops a way to make Social Foundations an endemic part of the way we talk about and take action to improve education. NYSFEA began as a radical organization. At its founding in 1971 and for its first decade, NYSFEA took Social Foundations as the radical idea of disruptive incursions into routinized school settings – special projects, teach-ins, literacy work, anti-war and human rights education, etc. Longtime member Ron Butchart, reflecting on his early association with NYSFEA, wrote: “Overall, the organization probably had, at the time, the largest concentration of leftists anywhere!” In the 1980s and ‘90s, NYSFEA became embroiled with New York State’s Department of Education over adoption of competency-based teacher education (CBTE). When CBTE threatened to eliminate Social Foundations courses from NYS teacher certification standards, NYSFEA members, led by Richard Ognibene, took the radical approach of becoming active members on the committees developing CBTE programs for the State. NYSFEA strategy was successful enough to keep to this day Social Foundations coursework among requirements for NYS teacher certification.

To radicalize the field of Education beyond intrusions and inclusions of Social Foundations into schooling policy and practice I recommend *infusion* of Social Foundations' ideas and thinking into educational discourse. It is time to replace efficiency-talk in schooling with a discourse of elegance in education. Time to move beyond a system committed to the impossible aim of educating via imposition of an ill-fitting, pre-cut organizational pattern and curriculum design upon the work of teachers and students who are located all along a spectrum of diverse social situations. Time to move towards a system which is still standardizing in its orientation but looks for elegant organizational procedure and efficacious classroom practice to emerge from contextually observed patterns of educationally significant teacher-student interaction. Elegance improves on efficiency by giving schooling an educational rather than an economic operational goal to pursue. French aesthetician of bodily movement, Paul Souriau observes “The most agreeable movements are not, therefore, necessarily those that cost us the least effort [efficiency] but those that give us the most useful effect for the least effort [elegance]” Call the most educationally useful effect of an experience the ‘educational energy’ (E) in that experience. Change from efficiency to elegance begins with development of a theory of educational energy.

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey states a theory about teaching that helps make teaching practice intelligent in the sense of allowing teachers to understand and explain the process of teaching and learning; *and* helping teachers plan classroom activities to achieve academic outcomes they desire for their students. Here's Dewey's claim: "Continuity and interaction in their active union with each other provide the measure of the educative significance and value of an experience." Dewey's statement is of theoretical importance because it uses the word *measure*. 'Measure' is important because use of the word 'measure' permits us to use an equals sign, =, to start constructing the universal law of educational energy as an equation connecting changes in continuity and interaction in an experience to changes in the educational value of an experience. We need to construct a law-like statement, that is, a *universally testable hypothesis* about teaching to get beyond educational ideology, like efficiency, as the basis for theory about teaching. Dewey sets us up to do so when he suggests a way to *measure* the educational value of personal experience. Using the universal law of gravitational attraction (Newton's law) as a model for constructing the universal law of educational energy (Dewey's law) gives us a way to watch Dewey's law emerge as the discussion progresses. Keep an eye on the formulas fronting the next few paragraphs to see the analogy between Dewey and Newton develop. By the time we are done, the box on the left should look just like the box on the right. The variables in the two formulas will have different labels; but the form of the two statements should be exactly the same. That will create for teaching a logical analogy of Newton's law. That is, we will have an empirically testable theory about teaching that does not define teaching; but, instead, describes major variables contributing to the quality of teaching. We'll have a theory that explains scientifically (i.e., independently of anyone's ideology about teaching) what goes right when teaching succeeds and what goes wrong when teaching fails. Keep an eye on the development. Nothin' up me sleeves.... ☺ Here we go!

Dewey's law

E =

Newton's law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

Educational Energy (E): When Dewey talks about what the variables in his model measure, he talks about the educational value/educational significance of an experience. I am going to call the educational value of an experience the 'educational energy' in an experience. Use the label E to signify educational energy. Educational energy may sound strange. However, it expresses how most people talk about teaching and learning already. Teachers say students had "aha moments" when "the light bulb came on." Expressions like "being hit by a ton of bricks" when learning important facts or encountering life-changing ideas express the physicist's formula for energy in which energy is equal to the mass of an object times the square of the velocity at which the object is moving. Finally, the philosophical observation, "Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel," expresses the warm glow that often accompanies coming to know new things. Since everybody already uses the idea of educational energy, it makes sense to talk about educational energy in the context of the universal law of educational energy, too. Think of E as an epistemic emotion, like surprise, curiosity, or (un)certainty. 'E' describes a kind of aesthetic energy brought about by the emotional intensity and emotional quality with which students study curriculum. Fundamental for all teachers is: How do I optimize E among *my* students? That teacherly question guides construction of a theory of educational energy development. For teachers, it's all a matter of how brightly lessons make students' light bulbs glow.

Dewey's law

$$E = -$$

Newton's law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

The seemingly safe assumption of Dewey's thinking about a science of education, his "permanent frame of reference," is: Everything we learn we learn from personal experience. This assumption about the connection between personal experience and learning allows Dewey to use continuity and interaction, two universal features of personal experience, to develop his theory. Dewey says continuity and interaction are in active union with each other. I use a horizontal line, indicating division or a fraction, to mathematically describe the relation between continuity and interaction in Dewey's law. Continuity is the numerator in the fraction and interaction is the denominator. This makes sense because Dewey says interaction influences continuity; but not *vice versa*. That's like in a fraction. If you change the numerator of a fraction, the fraction gets bigger or smaller; but remains the same kind of fraction. For example, 1/3 and 2/3 have "like" denominators. However, if you change denominators in fractions, you create an entirely new kind of fraction. For example, 1/3 and 1/5 have "unlike" denominators. They are different kinds of fractions. Likewise, changes in interaction indicate change towards an entirely new kind of experience. Changes in continuity indicate changes in intensity of the same kind of experience.

Continuity is the fact about personal experience that every experience comes out of the past, occurs in the present, and carries over into the future. That experience continues over time means that we'll have to make room in the equation for variables describing the past, the present, and the future of students' personal experience, especially the personal experiences students have in school when they try to learn the required curriculum. I'll use the label P to describe the past in personal experience. The label for the present in experience is c_1 . Finally, the label for the future is c_2 . There are three variables describing continuity because continuity is a three-part concept: past, present, and future. Reasons for choosing these labels for the three different parts of continuity are presented in the next three paragraphs.

Dewey's law

$$E = P -$$

Newton's law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

Stocks of Knowledge (P): Ideas and ways of thinking students bring to lessons are students' stocks of knowledge. Philosophers talk about two kinds of knowledge: propositional (facts you know) and generative (processes you use to create new facts). P involves both knowledges. When lessons use language students understand, $P_{\text{propositional}}$ is well-served. When lessons accord with how students make meaning (what Kieran Egan calls students' level of imaginative development), $P_{\text{generative}}$ is well-served. Egan distinguishes five stages of imaginative development: Somatic, Mythic, Romantic, Philosophic, and Ironic. Somatic imagination, tied to bodily feelings, is primarily operative prior to full development of orality and literacy from birth to about two and one-half years of age. Mythic imagination, in which meaning is made in terms of abstract binary concepts such as good and evil, big and little, safe and dangerous, predominates from ages two and one-half to eight. The years eight to fifteen see the Romantic imagination, which focuses on extremes of experience, come to the forefront of meaning-making. In their late teens and early twenties, humans exhibit a tendency to think in terms of general processes and theories, a type of meaning-making Egan labels the Philosophic imagination. Finally, in their early twenties and beyond, humans develop Ironic imagination by light of which they come to see that all general understandings of the world (even, we may be

sure, Dewey's law) have limited scope and contain *aporia*. Arranging the first letters of Egan's stages of imaginative development into a playful but useful acronym permits suggestion that the variable 'P' in the universal law of educational energy asks that educators view their pedagogical practice through the lens of Egan's PRISM. P appears in Dewey's law as a counterpart to G in Newton's law because Dewey uses "stages of development" talk and insists lessons must meet students where they are cognitively to have any chance of success.

Dewey's law

$$E = P \ c_1$$

Internal Curriculum Coherence (c₁): Curriculum theorist James A. Beane makes a distinction crucial to interpreting the variables c₁ and c₂ in Dewey's law. Beane distinguishes between two very different senses in which a curriculum may be said to be coherent (or incoherent). The two types of curricular coherence are big picture coherence and life-meaning coherence. Beane uses the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle to illustrate big picture curriculum coherence. Curriculum is like a jigsaw puzzle in that both require a big picture to put all the pieces together and give meaning to individual pieces. Big curriculum pictures are best supported by development of curricular themes that connect parts or pieces of the curriculum together, especially across disciplines. Big curriculum pictures find least support under conditions in which disciplines are perceived to be fragmented or, even worse, contentious, or contradictory areas of academic activity. Big picture curriculum coherence corresponds to the variable c₁ in Dewey's law. The variable c₁ asks about the internal coherence of a given curriculum, about how well the parts of the curriculum support one another.

Newton's law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

Dewey's law

$$E = P \ c_1 c_2$$

Newton's law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

External Curriculum Coherence (c₂): Life-meaning curriculum coherence corresponds to the variable c₂ in the universal law of educational energy. Life-meaning curriculum (c₂) asks about external curriculum coherence. Life-meaning curriculum coherence deals with the capacity of a curriculum to connect school experiences to experiences had by students outside of school. Curricular "glue" is the metaphor Beane offers that perhaps best describes the c₂ sense of curriculum coherence. The variable c₂ in Dewey's law is meant to suggest that if students can use what they study in school to help them better navigate their extra-school lives then the curriculum will 'stick to them like glue'.

Beane makes the further point that when aiming for maximum curriculum coherence both c₁ (big picture coherence) and c₂ (life-meaning coherence) must be given attention. Beane connects c₁ to c₂ (and gives logical priority to c₂) when he says that "connecting pieces of the curriculum ... will promote coherence *only if they enhance the sense of purpose and meaning for young people*;" and warns that "we can systematize, align, and sequence all kinds of things without their necessarily making any kind of sense for young people." To make sure that curriculum effectively combines big picture and life-meaning coherence, Beane endorses what he calls a "variation" on curriculum integration which entails "planning an integrated curriculum with a particular group of young people who themselves identify the issues and problems that cluster

into themes.” That is why c_1 and c_2 are multiplied together in Dewey’s law. They are interconnected parts of the same idea: curriculum coherence.

While Beane remarks that an integrative approach to curriculum coherence makes the process of constructing curriculum coherence a necessarily “messy” one, describing curriculum coherence in terms of variables at work in Dewey’s law allows substitution of the word ‘experimental’ for the untidy image evoked by Beane’s choice of word. Development of adaptations of curriculum in terms of the variables of Dewey’s law is an experimental process.

Lessons are experiments in creating educational energy.

Dewey’s law

$$E = P \frac{c_1 c_2}{i^2}$$

Interaction (i_2): Interaction means experience involves transaction between the psychology of the person having the experience and physical/social environments where experience occurs. When students feel distant or disengaged from school, E decreases. When students feel closely engaged in schoolwork, E increases. Bateson’s idea, “complementary schismogenesis,” explains why ‘ i ’ is squared in Dewey’s law. Complementary schismogenesis occurs when groups push each other away. Doubling of social distance means ‘ i ’ must be measured from both sides simultaneously. Bateson allows mutual friendship (complementary affinogenesis) as an outcome of culture contact, too. Closeness develops when goals are set all want to achieve, when contexts of interaction elicit positive response, and when activities bring out the best in people. You risk schismogenesis when you try to improve classroom interaction without asking students what counts as high-quality engagement. Teachers who ask students what counts as quality engagement court affinogenesis and, thereby, create strong E among students.

Newton’s law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

Dewey’s law

$$E = P \frac{c_1 c_2}{i^2}$$

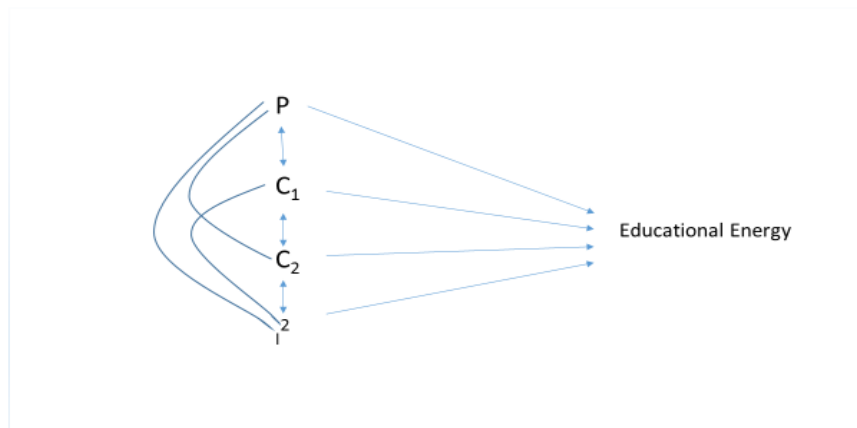
Newton’s law

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$

We did it! The analogy between Newton’s universal law of gravitational attraction and Dewey’s universal law of educational energy is complete. We constructed a law-like statement about the science of teaching. The phrase ‘law-like statement’ means two things when applied to the universal law of educational energy. First, the equation is *law-like* in that it has the logical form of a law and so, on the face of things, enjoys the logical status of a law. Second, however, the equation is *law-like* because it has yet to be tested within Education. Rigorous test, wide acceptance, and supporting evidence are stripes any claim must earn to achieve the status of law. A drawback of using Newton’s law as an analogy for Dewey’s is mapping Dewey onto Newton ties the universal law of educational energy to a pre-existing formula which may not adequately represent the relation of the educational variables to one another. So, the next paragraph offers another logical change to Dewey’s law to keep our efforts at testing it completely honest.

Here is Dewey’s law presented as a heuristic model. Call it, if I may be allowed the conceit of both an eponym and an acronym, Seals’ Theory of Educational Energy Development or STEED. A heuristic model is a general problem-solving device. STEED says teachers can

manipulate the independent variables of the model -- P (linguistic and imaginative developmental characteristics of students), c_1 (internal curriculum coherence), c_2 (external curriculum coherence), i^2 (student transaction with classroom environment) -- to change the value of the dependent variable (E). STEED puts teachers in the driver's seat when it comes to getting good results from their teaching. How exactly to represent the relations of variables in a law about teaching will emerge from teachers' use of the heuristic; but for now, the general model pictured below will have to suffice.



Responding to criticism that psychology was not a natural science, as he seemed to assert in his *Principles of Psychology*, William James claimed the criticism mistook his intent. He had not meant to say that psychology *was* a natural science. Instead, James protested, “I wished, by treating Psychology *like* a natural science, to help her become one.” We’re in the same business tonight. I’m not so much concerned to say schooling *is* a science (although I am prepared to do so) as I am wondering what happens when we, ala James, *treat* schooling as a natural science. This is an important line of inquiry. Michael Ben-Chaim demonstrates that acceptance of scientific laws depends in part, if not in large part, on their perceived social usefulness. Thus, perceived social usefulness could be a factor in STEED’s adoption as a preferred theory of schooling. So, what are some advantages of adopting a theory of educational energy development?

Advantage # 1: *STEED provides a universally testable hypothesis* about teaching and learning, a *lingua franca* of education discourse about teaching and learning. Every educator can now be said to be concerned with the same challenge: How to create lessons that do a good job of converting potential educational energy (E_P) into kinetic educational energy (E_K) among your students relative to some curriculum. Working on the same challenge and speaking in the same language about it facilitates learning from one another. We have a theory that explains scientifically what goes right when teaching succeeds and what goes wrong when teaching fails. Either way, whenever you teach you are testing Dewey’s law. Dewey’s law turns teaching into the science of experimentation with educational energy. Every lesson seeks $E_P \rightarrow E_K$.

Advantage # 2: *STEED* professionalizes teaching by providing a set of ideas good for teachers to think with, rather than a recipe to follow or a directive to remain faithful to curriculum. To see how this works we'll consider some scenes from Season 4 of the HBO drama, *The Wire*. Ed Burns, chief writer for the series and one of its producers, was a former Baltimore City police officer who became a Baltimore City school teacher. Burns has stated an interest in resolving inequities in the education system. Much of the action in Season 4 takes place in a Baltimore, Maryland middle school serving a student body made up primarily of economically disadvantaged Black students. Central to the development of the story line is a new teacher and former Baltimore City police officer, learning to be a successful career changer, Roland Pryzbylewski, a White man the students often call Prezbo. Colleagues referred to Season 4 of *The Wire* as "Ed's season." Prezbo's story is Ed Burns' autobiography as a developing teacher.

An adversarial relationship exists between students and faculty at Edward J. Tilghman Middle School, where Prezbo teaches Math. A scene in which students are walking to school for the first day of class and discussing their schedules is filled with obscenities to describe assigned teachers. A student of Prezbo's, Randy Wagstaff, when unable to pronounce 'Pryzbylewski,' shrugs and says, "Whatever. He new and white. We got it made." The first meeting with Randy and his classmates does not go well for Prezbo. Prezbo presents the students with a word problem about travel from Baltimore to Philadelphia and tells them to solve it. The approach meets strong resistance as students talk amongst themselves about the words used in the presented problem, ignoring Prezbo's directives to solve the problem. The lesson finally falls apart as two female students initiate an angry verbal confrontation in the middle of the classroom.

STEED explains the failure of Prezbo's lesson by pointing out weak scores on all variables relative to educational energy. First, there is a weak score on c_1 because word problems, by design, present the curriculum in pieces students are supposed to put together. Thus, the curriculum presents as internally incoherent. The word problem also creates a weak score on P for Prezbo's lesson. Students are at the Romantic stage of imaginative development and Prezbo wants them, without scaffolding, to use Philosophic imagination to supply the general rule to solve the word problem. Prezbo's lesson likely goes over many heads. The weak score on c_2 comes from the verbiage of the word problem. Prezbo's problem not only doesn't relate to students' lives outside of school it also offends the students by triggering local animosity towards a rival city. Finally, the weak score on a arises because Prezbo takes a didactic approach by telling students what to do and expecting them to obey. By the way students talk among themselves about implications of the way the word problem is stated, it seems clear that students prefer small group discussion to teacher lecture as a significant form of social interaction. With weak scores on all the variables in STEED weak E is the result.

By contrast, Prezbo presents a lesson later in the year that has strong scores on all the variables in STEED. During a lunchtime conversation with students playing cards, students ask Prezbo to teach them about the odds of dice. Prezbo complies with their request and constructs a set of lessons in which students, organized into small, conversational groups, play dice, even betting with play money, and record the results of their play on worksheets affirming the odds tables for dice discussed in an earlier lesson. All goes well. Prezbo sums up the lesson when he says to a colleague who stops by his classroom, "Trick them into

thinking they're not learning and they do." STEED explains the "trick" of Prezbo's success in exactly the same way it explained the tragedy of Prezbo's failure: in terms of the variables in the universal law of educational energy. A strong score on c_1 is the result of students validating the odds tables for dice as they play the game. Students are, literally, putting the curriculum together as they complete the lesson. Prezbo's strong score on P comes from the fact that gambling is an inherently Romantic activity. Prezbo's students are Romantic thinkers whose imaginations tend to make meaning in terms of extremes of experience. But Prezbo's lesson is strong on the variable P, too, because the lesson scaffolds and promotes Philosophic thinking among the students. As they study class material, students learn luck has less and less to do with their playing dice well. Prezbo has also reorganized class activity into the small, conversational working groups his students have been asking for since, literally, the first day of class. Finally, going into the lesson Prezbo already knew the students often played dice when not in school. We also learn from a scene after the dice lesson that two of Prezbo's students, Randy Wagstaff and Duquah "Dukie" Weems join a dice game they encounter on the street on their way home from school. Randy and Dukie win enough money to fund the start-up of a candy resale business and they earn respect for the school, as well. When asked by a fellow dice player where they learned their game, Randy says, "Edward Tilghman Middle." The person with whom they are talking responds, "Shiiiiit." Scores on the variable ' c_2 ' may not get any stronger. With strong scores on each of the variables strong E is the result.

Whatever else may be said about the results of Prezbo's lesson for Randy and Dukie, Randy and Dukie "adopted" what they learned in class. They used it to make life decisions. Gert Biesta distinguishes dichotomously between learning (acquiring) curriculum and adopting (living by) curriculum. Better to distinguish continuously between two poles of learning: Curriculum Acquisition – the learning we recite – and Curriculum Adoption – the learning we live by. The difference between the two is the levels of E accompanying study. The weaker the E the more learning tends towards acquisition. Stronger E tends learning towards adoption. Teaching is most fully consummated when students *adopt* curriculum. STEED provides teachers with a set of ideas that are *bon à penser*, ideas that are good for teachers to think with. STEED explains both good teaching and bad. Neither a routinized recipe nor a top-down directive demanding fidelity to prepackaged materials, STEED provides an elegant, problem-solving heuristic. STEED professionalizes teaching by supporting teachers in making lessons that lead students towards adoption of curriculum. STEED introduces elegant experimentation with educational energy into everyday school activities. Daily use of STEED is what it means for schools to adopt a Social Foundations perspective on teaching and learning. STEED infuses Social Foundations into educational discourse by insisting on acknowledgement and use of the insight that lessons tailored to students' lives produce the greatest E.

If examples from Prezbo's performance as a TV teacher fail to resonate then examine your own teaching experiences to test STEED. I learned long ago, before developing a theory of teaching, about the value of the variable 'P'. One of my work-study jobs in college was at a daycare center working with kids 4-6 years old, Mythic thinkers on Egan's model. Daycares weren't as academic back then as now but we did some lessons each week. One week we were studying bugs. Towards closing time one day a colleague of mine, Mary, and I were sitting on the back porch watching the kids play in the yard while waiting for parents to pick up their child. A granddaddy longlegs stepped out onto the walkway where the kids were

playing. They all shouted, “Spider! Kill it!” But I said, “No! Don’t kill it.” They all looked at me and, since I had their attention and it was bug week, I told them that a granddaddy longlegs was not a spider. It was an insect and a beneficial insect at that. When I finished my lecture, the whole time seeming to hold their rapt attention, Mary said, “Kids: What did Greg tell you?” And, they all said at the same time, “Don’t kill it!” The Mythic thinkers had understood the dichotomies of do vs. don’t and dead vs. alive; but all my Philosophic lecture just went right over their heads. More successfully, and after I constructed a theory of teaching, I’ve enjoyed strong scores on both kinds of curriculum coherence when teaching courses in Social Foundations. Perhaps obviously, the preservice and in-service teachers in my classes have a vested interest in becoming as effective as they can be as teachers. STEED gives them ideas to try out.

In fact, STEED comes with a coding sheet (available upon request) students use to measure the flow of energy throughout class periods they observe. The coding sheets allow students to put the curriculum together as they use it for observations in schools. A student told a story in one of my Spring semester classes about when she asked the teacher she was observing how she kept educational energy so consistently high. The teacher said, “You’ve got Seals, right?” When my student responded affirmatively the teacher showed her a thick notebook of completed coding sheets she used to guide her instructional decision-making and lesson planning.

Finally, in a more philosophically oriented course, I taught a lesson on existentialism in education, especially the issues presented for organizing individuals together in classrooms given a theory deeply atomistic in its view of humans. A tall order in most cases with students tending to falsely equate the dread radical freedom of existentialism with a political sense of freedom as self-determination. Teaching my class on existentialism during COVID gave me an idea. The week before the class on existentialism I told students I’d email some study questions and we would take them up in breakout rooms next week. What students did not know was that I would assign each of them to an individual breakout room. When I did, the panic of being alone spread like wildfire through the class. When we reconvened, we had a deep and serious discussion about education in light of existentialism.

Advantage #3: *Professionalized teaching resolves a host of issues* related to teacher accountability. Teachers who most reliably, validly, consistently, and optimally convert E_P to E_K in classroom contexts are the best teachers. They are the teachers we want to recruit, tenure, promote, and pay well.

Advantage #4: *STEED centers schooling on ethnographic matters.* Social Foundations thinking becomes infused into educational discourse when STEED takes pluralistic post-modernism to scale in schooling. *The Wire* supplies a metaphor for this when an older colleague tells Prezbo he needs “Soft eyes.” By “soft eyes” she means widening and extending teacherly vision to take into view, as a rich resource for strong E , the life world of students. Efficiency’s “one-size-fits-all” model is myopic and tunnel-visioned in this regard. To infuse foundational discourse into school operation more permanently, we need certification requirements for new school professionals: School Ethnographer, to strengthen organizational-level school-community relations and to strengthen classroom-level teacher-student relations.

Advantage #5: *STEED democratizes education.* As they mutually determine best curriculum planning and delivery, teachers and students enact a participatory democracy. STEED teachers and students develop a collective sense of agency as they negotiate and construct their shared academic future.

Advantage #6: *STEED schools become models of elegant government action.* Political theorist Johano Strasser is right to say: “The substance of the welfare state can only be preserved if its methods and organizing patterns are changed so as to secure greater flexibility without loss of security and to enable effective prevention and self-help.” Elegance in education exposes claims to efficiency in schooling as ideologically ironic expressions of political ill will. Models of efficiency in schooling remain biased against some groups of people. Elegance offers improved schooling for all. Thus, elegance advantages us in argument and action against the neoliberal cult of efficiency because:

1. Elegance may be tested to be more effective than efficiency; and
2. Efficiency can get brutal and ugly; but elegance, scientifically articulated and purposely enacted via STEED as graceful accomplishment of student achievement, promotes the beautiful school.

With schools acting as leading institutions of elegant government action, who knows...? Perhaps Tobin Hart is right, “Maybe beauty will save the world.”

Advantageous, elegant, efficacious, STEED is ready for and worthy of adoption as a guide to educational policy and school practice. In hopes that you agree with the promise of STEED for improving learning across educational contexts, for creating a tide of educational abundance on which all academic boats may rise, with the aim of social justice in the form of improved life chances for all students I leave you with this

Summary of the Argument

Everything we learn we learn via personal experience (Dewey’s Axiom)

Every personal experience exhibits qualities of continuity and interaction that together measure the educational energy in an experience. (Dewey’s law)

Every personal experience has some degree of educational energy because every personal experience has some degree of continuity and interaction. (Seals’ Theorem)

Teaching is the process of developing potential educational energy in an experience (E_P) into kinetic educational energy in that experience (E_K), among some students relative to some curriculum. (Seals’ Heuristic)

Every lesson is an experiment in educational energy development. (STEED)

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