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Frank Beckmann

## 'Sustainable' curriculum teaches kids to envy success



School is about to begin again for students across Michigan and many kids are probably wondering what awaits them in the future job market.

One thing is certain. These children will not be able to follow the path of so many Michigan parents who were able to parlay a minimum of educational training into a high-paying auto industry job from the Big 3's glory days of the '70s, '80s and '90s.

The latest evidence of this came from a study released at the Center for Automotive Research Management Briefing Seminar in Traverse City.

The study queried representatives of every North American automaker -- including Toyota and Honda -- as well as executives from almost every major auto supplier.

The results showed that these corporations at the heart of America's manufacturing base, "stressed the need for very high skills standards in the education system and affirmed that the basics -- reading, writing, math, and computer literacy -- will continue to be the key to preparing the work force of the future."

While many educators are in tune with those exigencies, there is a growing movement in the academic world toward a different focus, one that is directed by the inept United Nations and extreme groups like Zero Population Growth.

This curriculum is called Sustainability Education and nowhere in the syllabus can one find any inspirational themes that use the success stories of American entrepreneurs as role models to be admired by students.

Instead, groups like Creative Change Educational Solutions in Ypsilanti emphasize the

creation of a "humane and environmentally sustainable future."

Several schools in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor have committed to Sustainability Education and crow about projects that have students compare "wages and working conditions in factories in China and Vietnam (to) corporate profits...and compensation for chief executive officers." In other words, kids aren't taught to admire and emulate success -- they're taught to envy such outcomes and "evaluate campus boycotts...and workers rights movements."

This is being taught to elementary and junior high school students, whose teachers are given suggested resources from Zero Population Growth to lower birth rates as a means to equalize economic opportunity.

The latest school to start this curriculum will be Eastover Elementary School in Bloomfield Hills, of all places, one of Detroit's wealthiest suburbs and home to numerous Big 3 auto executives through the years.

The Bloomfield Hills school board unanimously approved the change back in May with one member panting that she might consider having more children so they might have the chance to be indoctrinated by this program.

Eastover Principal Jami Wood told the board that Sustainability Education will "support our students' learning as well as our own." Huh?? Teachers learning along with the fifth-graders rather than giving instruction?

Wood issued a handout which said the new curriculum "prepares students to create a healthy environment, a fair economy, and an equitable society," whatever such non-specific rhetoric is supposed to mean.

Not a word of protest was uttered during the proposal's presentation.

Not one school board member suggested that the wealth of Bloomfield Hills was unfairly created and not one cited any inequities that they were immediately willing to correct by surrendering their own lofty status in one of America's most well-to-do communities.

We'll let China and India worry about producing more engineers and highly skilled workers to gobble up high-paying jobs in the future.

We'll let Eastover and other schools train their students to protest that success and complain about the unfairness of it all.

*Frank Beckmann is the host of "The Frank Beckmann Show" on WJR (760-AM) from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.*

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