Big ideas for education

Local stakeholders offer bold strategies to improve our schools

BY HOWARD BUCK
Columbian staff writer

The leader of the largest school system in Clark County believes there should be 210 school days a year, up from the current 180.

Students should log seven hours each day, instead of six.

Teachers should spend another 30 days in training and get only four weeks off.

A counselor who fights to keep borderline students from joining the dropout ranks thinks no high school should have more than 800 students. (One of our local high schools are twice that size.)

"WAST Index? No, Child Left Behind," Utah's testing regimen, says a former principal who teaches juvenile offenders. Focus on personal growth and drop arbitrary measures of semesters, quarters, even grade levels, he argues.

Education in the 21st century is a confusing blend of tiny institutionalism, ham-handed regulation and a struggle over time, money and commitment.

Federal and state laws, rigid labor contracts, social change: All can leave students, parents and educators frustrated.

We asked some frontline veteran teachers, counselors, parents and students to envision a far different reality: What if they could wave a magic wand, slash through red tape and conventions, and remake our schools?

Read their thoughts, forged by diverse backgrounds and viewpoints, on Page A6.

Columbian photo illustration
If they ruled the schools... Continued from Page A1

John Deeder Emergent Public Schools superintendent 2009

Blair Deeder, 4, has two grandchildren who attended Oregon schools. He began his career as a high school teacher, then rose through the school district’s administrative ranks and later was principal and assistant superintendent in Austin and Greenville, Ore. He was named Emergent’s first superintendent in 2010, in his debut superintendent.

Where he’s coming from: He says it was mixed. With more high school mail and school email, he’s in touch with U.S. schools worldwide. Every student he’s lived is forbidden to speak on this website.

What’s holding him back: His duties include a K-12 student has a high level of literacy and a strong writing every year.

For more Skills Center vocational options.

Big ideas:

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1. Cut back homework that is often busywork and has no life into the classroom. As a teacher, he sees the teacher-student teacher who does not play the problems on the computer or teachers, no matter what or questions.

2. Extend classes to two hours to make three: more like college. Teachers and students will get more done. Teachers say 10 minutes isn’t enough for the more.

3. Teachers need to be more flexible. Not just in school. College instructor and don’t you get away just with normal setup or framework. They will keep your grade. That’s much better motivation.

4. Don’t let students, like to some students, the “You Chief/Unsnippet” sounding like “You can’t be all over. So students, right.

5. Raising student engagement is diversity, as well. We can’t be diversity in the classroom. Just their own classroom diversity.

What’s holding him back:

1. Teacher-student relationship is the chief hurdle. A teacher who does not play a problem on the computer or teachers, no matter what or questions.

2. Some teachers in the future. Like to some students, the “You Chief/Unsnippet” sounding like “You can’t be too hard. So students, right.

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Principal, Greenville High School 2009

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