



Home Delivery



Subscribe to the Express and stay informed where news matters most — your hometown!

SUBSCRIPTION SPECIAL!

Get home delivery for just 30 cents a week.



Search site

Weather



Light rain
45 °F
Humidity: 66%
Wind: N at 13 mph

Letters



Submit a letter

Hanson Links

Education forum assesses where U.S. schools are falling short

BY TRACY SEELYE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2011 03:04 PM

America's economic future depends on educating its workforce to think critically and work collaboratively — while effectively communicating innovative ideas — because jobs that involve repetition or rote work are being sent overseas or automated.

Schools, however, are not teaching those necessary skills, according to author and educator Tony Wagner, whose book "The Global Achievement Gap," addressing those issues, was the basis of the second in a series of education forums conducted Tuesday night by Whitman-Hanson schools and state Rep. Geoffrey Diehl, R-Whitman. Instead, schools are teaching to standardized tests which do not teach the necessary thinking skills, key among them being able to ask the right questions to solve problems.

Wagner is also an Innovation Education Fellow at the Technology & Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard. Diehl was unable to attend due to a late legislative session at the Statehouse.

Tuesday's forum was sponsored by Rockland Trust with additional support from the Whitman-Hanson Education Foundation. The audience of about 100 people largely consisted of teachers and parents.

"Quite simply, in the new global knowledge economy, all students need new skills," Wagner said. "I talked to a wide range of senior executives, from Apple and Unilever to the U.S. military, asking what are the skills needed today and what are the gaps that you see among recent graduates."

He found that a set of new or changed skills every young person must possess to succeed in the future job market is lacking. He listed "seven survival skills" including critical thinking; leadership by peer influence; adaptability; entrepreneurship; effective oral and written communication; accessing and analyzing information; and curiosity.

The evening featured Wagner's overview of his book along with a 15-minute segment of a documentary he made about Finland's education system — deemed the world's best by the United Nations — and an hour-long question and answer session.

The panel for the question and answer session included Wagner, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, W-H seniors Alex Winnett and Alyssa Hayes — both National Honor Society members — Anna Bradfield of Bridgewater State University and Michael Shipman, vice president/director of talent development at Rockland Trust.

Most of the questions centered on how Finland's success can be imported to the United States.

Heavily unionized Finland is a parliamentary republic. Finland's students start school at age 7 after preschool with little organized educational component. They spend fewer hours at

Latest news

- Education forum assesses where U.S. schools are falling short
- Hanson mourns 'life that lifted others'
- Region honors those who served in Veterans Day events
- They're off to see the wizard at Whitman-Hanson
- Brown named to highway post
- Pembroke wins Fisher Division Championship
- Gutsy effort by girls XC



MICHAEL KORS

now available at

Reeds JEWELERS

Halls Corner • Duxbury MA
781-934-1592



MICHAEL KORS

now available at

Reeds JEWELERS

Halls Corner • Duxbury MA
781-934-1592

- Green Hanson
- Hanson CPA
- Hanson Fire Department
- Hanson Garden Club
- Hanson Middle School
- Hanson Police Department
- Hanson Public Library
- Hanson Soccer
- Indian Head School
- Maquan Elementary
- Town of Hanson
- W-H Regional High School

Ad rates

CLIPPER PRESS
2011 Express Advertising Rates

EXPRESS SERVICE DIRECTORY
SouthshoreExpress.com

SAVE AN EXTRA 1% WHEN YOU PREPAY BY CHECK

Download our advertising rate kit (PDF)



PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

Reach our fast-growing Web audience

school with less homework and only one test, on which they may chose the subjects, given just before they go on to higher education.

One educator in the audience asked if Finland's homogeneous society can accurately be compared to the United States.

Wagner said Finland is more diverse than one might think, with 60 percent non native Finn speakers with 45 languages spoken in Helsinki alone, but added class issues are more comparative.

"The real issue here we don't want to talk about is how much our achievement gap is really about race and class," Wagner said. "There is a direct correlation between a community's median income and test scores."

Former W-H Superintendent John McEwan asked how American schools can get to that level of achievement.

Wagner pointed to the need for an alliance of business leaders, educators, parents and community leaders to arrive at a radically different accountability system and better teacher selection.

Finn students have the opportunity to take one-third of their class load as electives and only one in 10 applicants for teacher training are accepted.

"We're going to have to develop a system with a different form of accountability," Wagner said. "There is no need to test every student every year from third to eighth grade."

Digital portfolios, where students include examples of their work over time to demonstrate how they have learned and progressed are among the assessment innovations Wagner wants to see more of.

Student panelists Winnett and Hayes agreed.

"All they focus on is what is going to be on the test," said Hayes who is interested in psychology. "When we have projects to do, I feel we can actually use our skills. ... I get more into it and I want to do the project because I can use my own skills, I can do what I'm interested in."

"It seems like there's so much information that I'm learning it's hard to figure out what that information is," Winnett said. "A lot of our formal tests only test what we've memorized and not how we're learning it."

Teachers, too, could be getting more out of the time they are putting in to their work. In Finland, a teacher's work time is 60 percent classroom instruction and 40 percent collaboration and preparation with their peers. In America, 87 percent of a teacher's time is spent in class and the time they get in faculty meetings is often monopolized by administrative issues best handled via e-mail, Wagner said

"Ultimately, I think it's going to come down to what a community thinks is important," Wagner said.

Homework loads were also questioned by a parent in the

WINSOR HOUSE
Calendar of Events
Thanksgiving
Thursday, November 24, 6:00 - 8:00
of Green Hill Farm
Our Potluck menu
Come and enjoy the best of local food!
1400 Oak Hill Rd.
Sue McLoughlin
Thanksgiving Potluck
Saturday, November 26th
8:00 - 11:00
Join Mary Kay Hill, P.O. Callan
Nancy O'Hara Jones
Call Callan at 781-422-9999
Sue at 781-422-9999
781-422-9999
Thanksgiving Dinner
Dinner, Saturday, November 26th, 12:00 - 2:00

EMPIRE WINE & SPIRITS
Happy Thanksgiving!

Chateau de Beis Chardonnay	1.5L ... \$16.99	Kotel One Vodka All Flavors	1.75L ... \$38.99
Chateau de Beis Chardonnay	750ml ... \$9.99	New Amsterdam Vodka	1.75L ... \$17.99
Mission & Trask Pinot Noir, All Origins	750ml ... \$9.99	Dewar's White Label Scotch	1.75L ... \$33.99
Chateau de Beis Cabernet Sauvignon	750ml ... \$9.99	Canadian Club Canadian Whisky	1.75L ... \$19.99
Apollitic Red Blend	750ml ... \$9.99	Maka's Mark Bourbon	1.75L ... \$41.99
De Loach California Chardonnay, Pinot Noir	750ml ... \$9.99	Santa Tequila Gold, Silver	1.75L ... \$26.99
Remonced Winery's Blend (Pinot Noir)	750ml ... \$7.99	Bacardi Rum White Gold	1.75L ... \$22.99
Geary Head All varietal	750ml ... \$7.99	Beefeater Gin	1.75L ... \$29.99
Primero Pinot Noir	750ml ... \$13.99	Bally's Irish Cream Liqueur All Flavors	750ml ... \$24.99
Crossings Sauvignon Blanc	750ml ... \$9.99		
Yellow Tail (Pinot Noir)	1.5L ... \$9.99		
Casa Vie (Pinot Noir Cabernet Sauvignon Blend)	1.5L ... \$11.99		
Muscato Marzem	750ml ... \$9.99		
David (Pinot Noir) Pinot Noir	1.5L ... \$10.99		
Kris Pinot Grigio Pinot Noir	750ml ... \$9.99		
Organic Montepulciano D' Abruzzo	750ml ... \$9.99		
Chateau de Beis Chardonnay Wine	750ml ... \$9.99		
Ricardo Prosecco	750ml ... \$9.99		

OPEN WEDNESDAY NOV. 23RD 9AM-9PM
CLOSED THANKSGIVING DAY

Summer Hill Plaza • Kingston (next to Stop & Shop) 781-422-9999

Order Forms



Home delivery of the Express

Please use this form to order a subscription to the print edition of the Express. If you have an existing subscription your order will automatically start when the current one runs out.

All fields are required. We will contact only if there is a problem with your order.

Subscriber name

Mailing address

City

Zip Code

Phone

Email



PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

Reach our fast-growing Web audience



Click for info or call 781-934-2811



audience.

"So much of homework is busy work, it's make-work," Wagner said. "There's no evidence that its value added to their learning and it contributes tremendously to their stress."

A 20-minute online video, followed by an in-class project is often more effective, said Wagner. That point was echoed by a parent whose daughter often finds help for homework questions in online video sources.

A third forum is being considered for sometime in January.

To encourage compliance with our commenting policy we now require users to login before commenting. If you do not yet have an account there is a free one-time registration.

JComments

Confirm email

Publication

Pembroke Express

Whitman-Hanson Express

Length of subscription

1 year WEB SPECIAL INTRO: 30 cents/week - \$16

Special instructions (if any)

After you click on button you will proceed to PayPal page for payment. Your order will not be processed without payment.



Login

Log in to post a comment

Username

Username

Password

Password

Remember Me

Remember Me

- Forgot your password?
- Forgot your username?
- Create an account

- [Forgot your password?](#)
- [Forgot your username?](#)
- [Create an account](#)

\$5.00 off

any rental with this AD.*

NOW IS THE RIGHT TIME TO
GET YOUR LAWN LOOKING

GREAT!

WE RENT THE BEST QUALITY
LAWN EQUIPMENT TO CLEAN
UP AND RESTORE YOUR TURF.

- Core Aerators
- Slicer Overseeder
- Flail De-thatcher
- Tine De-thatcher
- Hand Held Leaf Blowers
- Wheeled Leaf Blowers
- Brush Clearing Saws
- Lawn Vacs
- Roto Tillers
- Powered Pole Saws
- Chainsaws
- Log Splitters
- Stump Grinders

Reservations Accepted
Pickup & Delivery
Available

FRED'S DUXBURY
FIX-IT SHOP, INC.

638 SUMMER ST. (RT. 53)
DUXBURY, MA 02332
MON. - SAT. 8AM TO 5PM

Visit us at
www.fdfsinc.com


781.585.2175

**MOST MAJOR CREDIT
CARDS ACCEPTED**

*Ad must be presented when
rental contract is written

Visitors

2532333

 Today	6343
 Yesterday	9482
 This week	35481
 Last week	44895

 This month	114108
 Last month	202874
 All	2532333

We have: 40 guests, 28 bots online
Your IP: 66.30.123.182
Internet Explorer 9.0, Windows
Today: Nov 17, 2011
Visitors Counter

Express Newspapers, PO Box 60, Hanson, MA 02341 • Editorial: 781-293-0420 • Advertising: 781-934-2811
Hanson Office: 1000 Main Street, Hanson • Main Office: 11 So. Station Street, Duxbury.

editor@pembrokeexpress.com • editor@hansonexpress.com • editor@whitmanexpress.com

Copyright 2009, All Rights Reserved. Published by Clipper Concepts, Inc. dba **Clipper Press**