

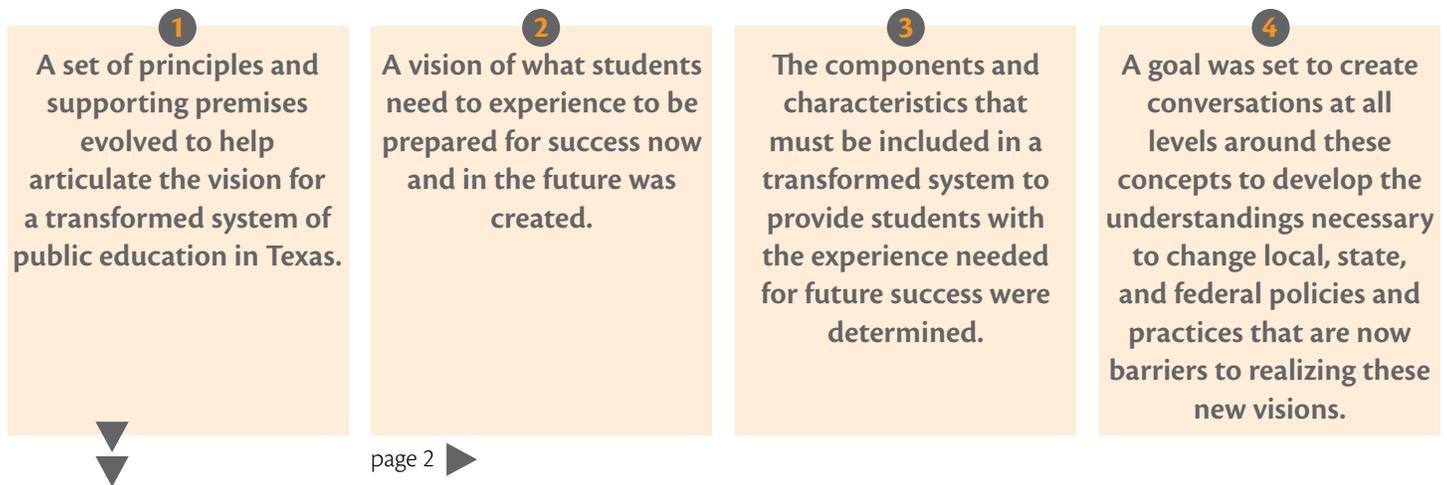


## Creating a New Vision for Public Education in Texas

A group of Texas school superintendents met over a two-year period in facilitated dialogue during 12 two-day sessions to discover the assumptions underlying the present public education system and why it needs to be transformed. Various experts guided each session to stimulate and contrast participants' thinking. The superintendents concluded that the present system does not have the capacities to develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills, creativity, and rigorous thinking that students need to meet the challenges brought about by powerful new digital, social, and economic forces now common to everyday life around the world.

### What resulted from the work of the Visioning Institute?

Four distinct products emerged as "Works in Progress":



1

#### The Principles and Premises We Embrace

1. **The New Digital Learning Environment:** "We must embrace and seize technology's potential to capture the hearts and minds..."
2. **New Learning Standards:** "The new digital learning environment demands new learning standards..."
3. **Assessments for Learning:** "Appropriate and varied types of assessment are essential for informing students..."
4. **Accountability for Learning:** "Comprehensive accountability systems...serve to create compliance and mediocrity at best...Excellence and sustained exceptional performance come from commitment..."
5. **Organizational Transformation:** The digital revolution and its accompanying social transformations and expectations dictate a transformation of schools from their current bureaucratic forms and structure that reflects the nineteenth and early twentieth century factory after which they were modeled..."
6. **A More Balanced and Reinvigorated State/Local Partnership:** "The present state-dominated partnership is inherently incapable of creating the type of schools...a return of significant authority and responsibility to local communities is the only hope."

2

### We envision schools where all children and youth:

- experience success daily and are inspired to do their best
- are prepared for life, learning, citizenship and multiple career paths
- are safe, experience belonging, community and interdependence
- have more customized experiences designed for them than the “one size fits all” approach
- value inquiry, curiosity, discovery, creativity and innovation
- know that all their talents and strengths are valued
- benefit from a purposefully collaborative environment
- understand that effort, commitment, and persistence are typically more important than ability
- are expected to learn core areas to profound levels
- cultivate attitudes of respect for democratic ideals, hopefulness and service
- develop skills of synthesis, problem solving, and teamwork
- routinely use digital tools and related resources to learn
- have their learning assessed in ways that inform and motivate them
- see their families and the communities as centers for learning and development—learning any time and any place
- experience the guidance and modeling of caring, committed and competent teachers and other adults

3

### Transformed systems for making the vision reality

- The schools are community-owned
- They are schools free of bureaucratic structures that inhibit
- Function as learning organizations
- Students advance on performance...
- Roles for all key players are redefined
- Communities are accountable for the quality
- Student engagement is the primary focus
- School board members assure system responsiveness and build communities
- Leadership at all levels is developed and honored
- Social systems provide source of high leverage work for change

4

### Parallel Tracks for Conversation



*“Beliefs create vision and drive action. Purpose-driven organizations are clear about what they believe, who they are, why they exist, what vision they seek to realize, and what missions they must accomplish. The assertions we make are the basis for our vision. They form the foundation for what we see for a new direction and future for public education in Texas.”*

(VI report page 12)



Contact the Texas Association of School Administrators at 1 (800) 725-8272 for more information. To download the full report, visit the TASA Web site: [www.tasanet.org](http://www.tasanet.org), and select Visioning Institute.