

ORGANIZATION OF THE AMERICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW ECONOMY

Elena GROZA*, Oana Camelia IACOB**

***Abstract.** The U.S. system of education is organized to accommodate education at any level. The students have many choices and types of schools. The schools can be online through online materials students can be homeschooled by their parents. Students can go to public schools or charter schools such as "I learn" based on iPad and computer software but also classroom instruction. The variety of schools presented in this article can be a good inspiration for the new economy.*

***Keywords:** U.S. system of education, new economy, curricula, postsecondary career, technical schools.*

1. Introduction

The responses of the educational systems to the new challenges of the contemporary world, of the new economy have materialized in the emergence of "new education": Intercultural Education, Education for Democracy and Human Rights, Ecological Education. The new educations carry new objectives, new content that offers educational solutions for the new realities. The new educations carry new objectives, new content that offers educational solutions for the new realities.

The new economy integrates the activities considered separate from the economic process: the research-development-innovation activity and the education-training-learning activity. [1]

Therefore, under the impact of the explosion of information technology, education and research undergo important changes: education becomes continuous and interactive, and research becomes multidisciplinary and applied globally. [2]

* Ph. D. Student, Valahia University, Targoviste, ggrozaelena@yahoo.com

** University lecturer, University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest, oanacamelia.i@gmail.com

Content

1. EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

- **Educational Laws and Regulations**

The U.S. education system is not based on one, or even a few, framework laws (USNEI). Historically, through various Constitutional amendments (Bill of Rights), judicial decisions (Supreme Court), and the US Civil War, US States are legally able to make its own laws within its borders while respecting Federal laws or statutes. This is also true for its educational framework. Since 1787, the US Government has provided land grants for educational establishments. Municipalities within a US State are also able to make its own educational parameters, in terms of policies, regarding education, while it respects both State and Federal laws.

While the federal government has a very limited role in running the U.S. education system, it does provide important policy leadership and provides assistance in support of education throughout the nation (USNEI). Federal money, for example, is earmarked for specific programs that are of national importance, such as literacy. Often time, federal money have stipulations as to its use and consequences when money is misappropriated. The federal government often provides assistance when results can be attained as well as accountability ensured.

In terms of money distributed by the US federal government, the following provides a window of insight originating from the US Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

According to FY 2002 estimates, \$46.3 billion or about 43 percent of the \$108.0 billion spent by the federal government on education came from the U.S. Department of Education (OMB). Large amounts of money also came from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (\$22.9 billion), the U.S (OMB). Department of Agriculture (\$11.9 billion), the U.S. Department of Labor (\$6.4 billion), the U.S. Department of Defense (\$4.7 billion) and the U.S. Department of Energy (\$3.6 billion) (OMB). Fiscal year 2002 estimates calls for federal program funds for elementary and secondary education to be \$53.3 billion; for postsecondary education, \$22.8 billion; for research at universities and related institutions, \$25.7 billion; and for other programs, \$6.2 billion (OMB).

- **National Education Policy**

While the federal government has a very limited role in running the U.S. education system, it does provide important policy leadership and provides assistance in support of education throughout the nation (USNEI). This

leadership is supported through executive orders, press releases, federal initiatives and programs, formal legislative hearings, and testimony,

Instead, there are a wide variety of federal, state and local laws, plus court decisions and regulations that define various aspects of our decentralized system (USNEI). As mentioned above, American history, politics, judicial decisions, and wars have both guided and established its formation. The US Dept. of Education has no interest in becoming a watchdog of its appropriated money, unless necessary. In addition, there are rules and policies adopted by educational associations and individual schools and institutions that often have legal status with respect to matters within their competence (USNEI).

Non-governmental associations provide much of the leadership and activity on issues of nationwide importance in education (USNEI). Often times, they can be found on municipality school district policy boards. Individuals are selected, appointed or even elected to represent citizens, the private sector, student body organizations and employee organizations. They also function as representatives of various constituencies and stakeholders, ranging from citizens' groups to professional and technical organizations (USNEI). Further reading will explore the above mentions.

- The Role of National Associations

Non-governmental associations provide much of the leadership and activity on issues of nationwide importance in education. They also function as representatives of various constituencies and stakeholders, ranging from citizens' groups to professional and technical organizations (USNEI). Following is a list of national associations:

- Achieve
- American Association of School Administrators
- American Educational Research Association
- American Federation of Teachers
- American Society for Engineering Education
- American Association of School Personnel Administrators
- National Educational Research and Statistics.

An important role of the federal government is the collection, analysis and publication of national education statistics. The federal government also supports some educational research activities. Educational research is also supported by private organizations, universities, and foundations (USNEI). Following is a list of research organizations:

- Institute of Education Sciences
- National Center for Education Statistics
- The Digest of Education Statistics
- National Education Data Resource Center

- FEDSTATS
- American Education Research Association
- Association for the Study of Higher Education.

2. State role I – primary and secondary education

U.S. state and territorial local governments' exercise direct oversight over most aspects of education at all levels (USNEI). This includes US State legislative appropriations (money), U.S. State Governors, US State agencies, and municipality educational board policy making entities. They perform the political, administrative, and fiscal functions that are often the work of ministries of education in countries with centralized education systems (USNEI). Education is the largest budget item for each of the 50 states and 5 territorial and commonwealth governments within the United States (USNEI). The degree to which both States and Territories control education depends upon their constitutions, statutes, and regulations (USNEI). Listed below are some of the duties or responsibilities of US State authorities (USNEI).

- Financial support for public education at all levels
- Private and public schools licensing and chartering
- Private and public institutions of higher learning licensing and chartering
- Guidance and oversight to municipal or local school boards
- Setting broad policies for school-level curricula, texts, standards, and assessments (USNEI)
- Certifying or licensing school teachers and other educational personnel
- Overseeing the provision of educational services for persons living with disabilities, adults needing basic education services, and other special needs populations (USNEI)
- Setting the standards for examining and licensing persons seeking to work in any regulated professional occupation (USNEI)
- Electing or appointing some or all of the members of the governing boards of public
 - Higher education institutions and state boards of education (USNEI).
- General State Resources
- ❖ State and Local Government Internet Directory.

The State and Local Government Internet Directory provides convenient one-stop access to the websites of thousands of state agencies and city and county governments at <http://www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm>

- State Governors

- ❖ The National Governors' Association (NGA)

The National Governors' Association provides information about education policy and initiatives in the U.S. states and territories at <http://www.nga.org/cms/home.html>

- Multi-State Education Policies

- ❖ The Education Commission of the States (ECS)

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is an example of multi-state education efforts. Verbatim, ECS mission is to help states develop effective policy and practice for public education by providing data, research, analysis and leadership and by facilitating collaboration, the exchange of ideas among the states and long-range strategic thinking (ECS). And its vision, to be the leader and key resource in the process through which the states continually learn from one another as they work to improve teaching and learning for their citizens (ECS).

- Early Childhood Education

“Early Childhood Education” is the U.S. name for preschool (prior to kindergarten) education at the nursery and kindergarten levels and “early learning” is the name of the associated research field (USNEI). Much of early childhood education is based on Jean Piaget concept of “power of play.” It can also encompass the first year or two of primary education. Early childhood education involves issues of maternity, health, day care and human development as well as formal education, and is widely recognized and licensed as a specialized career field in education. Following is an excerpt from the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).

Twenty-eight percent of America's 4-year-olds were enrolled in a state-funded preschool program in the 2010-2011 school year, indicating the importance of ensuring quality in existing programs and expanding access to all children. The National Institute for Early Education Research has developed the State Preschool Year book series to provide information on the availability and quality of services offered through these programs to children at ages 3 and 4 and serve as a resource to policymakers and educators seeking to start all young learners on the right foot. [3]

Preschool & Kindergarten has been both state-funded and major success story. Enrollment has continued to grow dramatically as well as quality. Many states continue to serve children via programs concentrated at preparing them to succeed at both academics and social aspects.

But according to a report called The State of Pre-School 2011 depicts statistics that many US States assistance or commitment to young children are slowing. Cuts in budgets have limited enrollment while family incomes have

dropped. This is troublesome the report mentions because research clearly states that “only high-quality pre-K programs significantly help prepare children for school. This in turn leads to a more educated population with higher-paying jobs, fewer social problems like crime and delinquency, and a strong economic return on the dollars invested in pre-K (Southern Early Childhood Association).

- Child Care and Health Services

- ❖ The State Child Care Licensing Office

The State Child Care Licensing Office regulates the health, safety, and well-being in out-of-home care; provides support and quality control services to child care providers. [4]

- ❖ The State Director of Maternal and Child Health

The State Director of Maternal and Child Health provide leadership, partnerships, and resources to advance the health of all our states' mothers, infants, children, and adolescents. [5]

According to a report by National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), in 2011, the average annual cost of full-time child care for an infant in a center ranged from about \$4,600 in Mississippi to nearly \$15,000 in Massachusetts. The average annual cost of full-time care for a 4-year-old child in a center ranged from about \$3,900 in Mississippi to nearly \$11,700 in Massachusetts. In New York, parents of school-age children paid nearly \$11,000 a year for part-time care in a center. The report also found that in 2011, the average annual cost of full-time care for an infant in a family child care home ranged from \$4,500 in South Carolina to nearly \$10,400 in New York. The average annual cost for a 4-year-old in a family child care home ranged from \$4,100 in South Carolina to about \$9,600 in New York. [6]

- Primary and Secondary Education

State governments have the authority to regulate public preschool, primary and secondary education; license private preschool, primary, and secondary schools; and license or otherwise regulate parents providing home schooling. They also, in many cases, establish and oversee curricula, standards, and procedures. Most state governance occurs via state departments and boards of education, but certain other aspects are often regulated through specialized agencies.

- ❖ National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) states that is the national organization that represents 55 state, territorial, and commonwealth boards of education. The State boards of education are represented usually by active and prominent individuals. They are either appointed by governors or legislatures or at times elected, depending on local

law. They are to conduct statewide education policies and operations statewide. They are also to determine budget priorities, approve new policies and guidelines (such as for curricula), approve certain professional appointments and new schools, consider requests from local education agencies, and investigate problems.

In some cases the state board is responsible for all levels of education, but in most states the board concentrates on education at the primary and secondary levels. State boards exercise close governance of state education agencies and the state superintendent or chief school executive usually reports to them (NASBE).

❖ The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is the national membership association representing the head officials of state education agencies. The Chief State School Officer is also known as the State Superintendent. The CCSSO offers a clearinghouse of professional resources, including state agencies. State superintendents or commissioners are the highest education officials in state government, and are usually appointed by the state board of education or the governor (a few states elect the superintendent).

CCSSO is the key organization to lead comprehensive change in state education policies and practices, as chiefs often oversee a majority of the components of state human capital systems. Through state leadership, collective action, and collaborative partnerships, we are examining every aspect of developing the education workforce through the lens of research, best practices, and policy. Our goal is to create aligned, coherent, and outstanding state systems of educator development and support (CCSS).[7]

❖ State Education Agencies (SEA)

State departments of education, also known as state education agencies (SEAs), administer state programs and enforce state regulations. While many SEAs deal with all levels of education, others concentrate primarily on early childhood, primary, and secondary education plus vocational education and special needs services. The head of an SEA is generally the chief state school executive (SEA).

3. State role II –tertiary education

• Career and Technical (Vocational) Education

States, territories and commonwealths exercise oversight over vocational education and private career training in a variety of ways. Vocational and career education assistance to students is provided by Preschool through

twelfth grade authorities. Community colleges also assist vocational efforts of individuals. Private career training providers are regulated via a variety of authorities depending on the state or territory (USNEI)

❖ A State Tech Prep Coordinator

Highly skilled, technical occupation that allows either direct entry into the workplace as a qualified technician or further education leading to baccalaureate and advanced degrees. Tech Prep is a 4-year sequence of study from the 11th grade through 2 years of postsecondary occupation education culminating in a certificate or associate degree. [8]

❖ Career Technical Education (CTE)

Career Technical Education (CTE) programs emphasis is to prepare students of any age to assist in driving America's success and vitality. Innovation is also at the helm of CTE to ensure that market needs are met vs. continuing a vocation is either phased out or slowing being eroded by technology. As CTE states:

CTE is leading this change, transforming expectations and making a difference for students, for secondary and postsecondary schools, for businesses and industry – for America. [9]

• Higher Education

Public and private higher education institutions enjoy more autonomy and are more internally self-governing than are schools. Nevertheless, state governments exercise oversight and coordinating authority over higher education within their jurisdictions, issue corporate charters to institutions, regulate standards and quality to varying degrees, and may have regulatory authority over various aspects of the operation of public institutions (USNEI).

A degree is valid if it is properly granted (that is, not fraudulently or mistakenly granted) by an entity that has the legal authority to do so. There are three sources of authority to issue college degrees in or from the United States. A college can obtain that authority from Congress, a state government, or a recognized sovereign Indian tribe. Tribal authority is not quite the same as federal authority, because although only federally recognized tribes operate colleges, once a tribe is recognized there is no apparent barrier to its chartering a college, though funding one is another matter.

The three-source theory derives primarily from the Tenth Amendment, commonly referred to as the “Reserved Powers Clause”, 12 which recognizes that the Federal government’s powers are limited to those granted by the Constitution; all other powers remain with the States or the people.

Historically, education has been considered one of the most sacrosanct of these “reserved powers:” the states early acquired and have maintained a firm grip on education, about which the Constitution is entirely silent. Except

with regard to requirements wrapped around the provision of Federal funds, the Congress has (at least until relatively recently) generally avoided asserting significant direct authority in this area. [10]

- State Director of Community Colleges

- ❖ American Association of Community Colleges

Exchanges information on issues, trends, and projects, including state and federal legislation as well as finances relating to community colleges; shares data from the state and national levels to provide a perspective on community colleges; promotes research and legislation at the national level in concert with the American Association of Community Colleges; provides programs of assistance to members.

- ❖ Association of Community College Trustees

The Association of Community College Trustees is a non-profit educational organization of governing boards, representing more than 6,500 selected and appointed trustees who govern over 1,200 communities, technical, and junior colleges in the United States and beyond.

These community professional, business official, public policy leaders, and leading citizens offer their time and talent to serve on the governing boards of this century's most innovative higher education institutions-community, junior, and technical colleges-and make decisions that affect more than 1,200 colleges and over 11 million students annually. [11]

- Oversight of Student Financial Assistance

States provide financial assistance programs for students who are residents and who seek to attend higher education institutions, and they also help to administer federal funds provided to state residents and institutions. These assistance programs are required to be administered by public authorities that can account for the monies distributed as loans and grants and for the repayment of loans issued to residents of each state (USNE).

- State Grant Agency

State Grant Agencies provide information on grants, scholarships, and other financial aid for college students from the state, including federally-supported state programs such as Byrd scholarships and LEAP (Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership) grants. [12]

- State Guaranty Agency

Private, non-profit corporations designated to administer the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). [13]

- ❖ National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs'

The National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs' (NASSGAP) membership is drawn from single agencies in each state or territory that are responsible for state-funded student aid programs. NASSGAP

is dedicated to the promotion, strengthening, encouragement and enhancement of high standards in the administration and operation of student grant and aid programs so that these programs shall be available to students in all states to expand and further postsecondary opportunities. [14]

4. State role III – other educational services

States oversee a variety of educational services in addition to the regular school system, career education, and higher education. These include special education services for persons with disabilities that affect learning, services for homeless and migrant families, adult education services, and educationally related services such as libraries.

- **Special Education**

Special education is closely regulated in the United States and state programs are significantly supported by federal funds, as is research in special education. Students are mainstreamed, or placed in regular schools and classrooms; to the extent possible and all persons with diagnosed disabilities have a right to special education services under federal law.

- ❖ **Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)**

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is committed to improving results and outcomes for people with disabilities of all ages. OSERS provides a wide array of supports to parents and individuals, school districts and states in three main areas: special education, vocational rehabilitation and research.

The mission of OSERS To provide leadership to achieve full integration and participation in society of people with disabilities by ensuring equal opportunity and access to, and excellence in, education, employment and community living.

In implementing this mission, OSERS supports programs that help educate children and youth with disabilities, provides for the rehabilitation of youth and adults with disabilities and supports research to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. [15]

- **State Director of Special Education**

Ensure appropriate services and opportunities for children and youth with disabilities. [16]

- **State Director of Children with Special Health Needs**

Addresses issues related to innovative managed care arrangements, Medicaid managed care, policies, access to care, epidemiology of chronic childhood conditions, and the identification of children with special health care needs. [17]

- Educational Services for the Homeless

Educational services for the homeless and migrant workers are also significantly supported by federal funding.

- ❖ State Coordinator of Education for Homeless Children and Youth

State Coordinator of Education for Homeless Children and Youth ensures that all homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, provided to other children and youth; develops, reviews, and revises policies to remove barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and success in school of homeless children and youth; provides them with opportunities to meet the same challenging state content and state student performance standards to which all students are held. [18]

- ❖ National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) provides research, resources, and information enabling communities to address the educational needs of children experiencing homelessness.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the Center serves as a clearinghouse of information for people seeking to remove or overcome educational barriers and to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Center also supports educators and service providers through producing training and awareness materials and providing training at regional and national conferences and events. [19]

- Migrant Education Services

- ❖ The Office of Migrant Education (OME)

Migrants are defined in the United States as seasonal workers who travel back and forth across the U.S. border on a temporary basis to pursue employment, usually in the agricultural or services industries. Migrant workers are often accompanied by their families and thus require social, educational, and health services. The federal government and the states cooperate in the provision of migrant education services, as do the neighboring countries of Canada and Mexico.

The mission of the Office of Migrant Education (OME) is to provide excellent leadership, technical assistance, and financial support to improve the educational opportunities and academic success of migrant children, youth, agricultural workers, fishers, and their families. The OME administers grant programs that provide academic and supportive services to the children of families who migrate to find work in the agricultural and fishing industries. The OME also administers several contracts and special initiatives. [20]

- ❖ The Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL)

The Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) promote programs that help American adults get the basic skills they need to be productive workers, family members, and citizens. The major areas of support are Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English Language Acquisition. These programs emphasize basic skills such as reading, writing, math, English language competency, and problem-solving.

The DAEL office provides funds to states for adult education and literacy programs. The amount each state receives is based on a formula established by Congress. States, in turn, distribute funds to local eligible entities to provide adult education and literacy services. Individuals and local providers should check with their state offices for more information on how to obtain funding for adult education programs.

The Division provides assistance to states to improve program quality and capacity by taking a lead in providing resources to guide the improvement of adult education and literacy services. [21]

- State Director of Adult Education

Provide students with opportunities to develop skills needed to qualify for further education, job training, and better employment. [22]

- State Correctional Education Coordinator

Provides services to those inmates who participate in education activities so that they may become responsible and productive persons who can effectively manage their incarceration and make contributions to their community upon release. [23]

- State Coordinator for National History Day

Provides history teachers with an innovative teaching tool; assists teachers and schools in meeting educational standards that require outcome-based learning activities; encourages the study of history by guiding students to express themselves creatively through presentations of historical topics and materials in a variety of formats; stimulates student interest in learning about history by integrating the materials and methods of social studies, art, literature, language and music into their entries; supports the development of research and reading skills and the refinement of presentation skills in writing, visual projects, and performances. [24]

- Adult Education Services

Adult education as defined here means basic literacy and educational services for persons who did not complete their educations when of school age. Special services of this type are also available in prisons and known as correctional education.

Adult continuing education, which is considered part of postsecondary and higher education and continuing education in the professions are dealt with under the topic Structure of U.S. Education.

- State Library and Cultural Services

- ❖ The Chief Officers of State Libraries (COSLA)

The Chief Officers of State Libraries (COSLA) is an independent organization of the chief officers of state and territorial agencies designated as the state library administrative agency and responsible for statewide library development. Its purpose is to identify and address issues of common concern and national interest; to further state library agency relationships with federal government and national organizations; and to initiate cooperative action for the improvement of library services to the people of the United States. Its membership consists solely of these top library officers of the states and territories, variously designated as state librarian, director, commissioner or executive secretary. It provides a continuing mechanism for dealing with the problems and challenges faced by the heads of the state agencies which are responsible for statewide library development.

Concerns of COSLA include effective statewide planning and action to ensure library service adequate to meet the needs of all communities; the strengthening of state library agencies, library systems and effective networks; federal appropriations for library services; national library service programs; use of new technology for library and information service; state library services; availability of state and federal documents; improved library statistics programs; continuing library education programs; and state-federal responsibilities for talking book service to blind and handicapped persons throughout the nation. [25]

- ❖ Public Libraries Association (PLA)

Public Libraries Association (PLA) core purpose is to strengthen public libraries and their contribution to the communities they serve.[26]

5. The School Level

The individual school, postsecondary institution, or other provider is the competent authority in the United States for nearly all academic matters. There are nearly 130,000 individual institutions in the U.S. education system, including nearly 117,000 primary and secondary schools, nearly 6,000 postsecondary career and technical schools, and just less than 4,000 degree-granting institutions of higher education. These institutions vary widely as to type, ownership, and governance arrangements (USNEI).

- Preschool Providers

- ❖ U.S. Department of Education.

Led by Deputy Assistant Secretary on Policy and Early Learning Jacqueline Jones, the Office of Early Learning works collaboratively with various program offices to drive the Early Learning Initiative at the U.S. Department of Education.

Early childhood, or preschool, education is available in nearly every U.S. community, and most states now require that public preschool opportunities be made available by school districts. Private preschool providers also exist nearly everywhere. Preschool is considered part of what is called Early Childhood Education in the United States and it goes by several names: nursery school, preschool, and kindergarten being the most common.

The Department of Education (ED) prioritizes improving the health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes for young children from birth through 3rd grade by: enhancing the quality of early learning programs, and increasing the access to high quality early learning programs especially for young children at risk for school failure. ED's role in promoting early learning is significant and includes: administering several early learning programs; encouraging States and local districts to target resources for early learning; promoting State and local education agency partnerships with other early learning agencies and programs in the State or community; conducting research on early learning through the Institute of Education Sciences (IES); funding technical assistance on early learning topics, including early literacy and social and emotional development; and supporting the development of State longitudinal data systems that include early learning programs. [27]

- ❖ The National Association of Child Care Professionals (NACCP)

The National Association of Child Care Professionals (NACCP) is the nation's leader among associations serving child care owners, directors, and administrators. The organization's goal is to improve, enhance and strengthen the credibility of the people who lead the child care industry by providing membership services and benefits. NACCP is the only association exclusively dedicated to child care management without regard to a center's tax status and corporate sponsorship. [28]

- ❖ The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and make a difference in the lives of children and families. Founded in 1926, NAEYC has led the way toward excellence in high-quality early care and education. With more than 70,000 members from more than 300 Affiliates and more than 120 countries, including teachers, administrators, parents,

educators, and policy members, we are committed to bringing high-quality early care and education to all young children. Become a member of NAEYC to support high-quality early care and education programs that lay the foundation for school readiness, academic success and adult achievement. [29]

- Primary and Secondary Schools

Primary schools are called *elementary schools*, intermediate (upper primary or lower secondary) schools are called *middle schools*, and secondary schools are called *high schools*. Heads of public primary and secondary schools are called principals, while the heads of private schools may be called principals, headmasters, or heads of school. In addition, schools may have other administrative staff in addition to teachers and teaching assistants. There may also be teaching assistants, counselors, librarians and computer specialists, school nurses, food service staff, custodial staff and administrative staff (USNEI).

Primary and secondary public schools are governed by local school districts and their boards. Policies and regulations tend to be uniform across all schools within a district, but can vary among districts. Individual schools are administered within the confines of these general requirements, so autonomy is limited. States vary as to the curricular freedom they give local schools, but most impose a basic statewide curricular framework which local schools may embellish to a limited degree, and also issue a statewide list of approved textbooks for each grade level from which locals may select or, in some cases, require the use of a single set of approved texts (USNEI).

Schools are organized into elementary (primary) schools, middle schools, and high (secondary) schools. Primary or elementary education ranges from grade 1 to grades 4-7, depending on state and school district policy. Middle schools serve pre-adolescent and young adolescent students between grades 5 and 9, with most in the grade 6-8 range. Middle schools in the upper grade range (7-9) are sometimes referred to as junior high schools. Secondary or high schools enroll students in the upper grades, generally 9-12 with variations. In the United States these tend to be comprehensive schools enrolling students of widely different interests and capabilities who follow different educational tracks within the same school (USNEI).

- ❖ The American Association of School Administrators (AASA)

The American Association of School Administrators advocates for the highest quality public education for all students, and develops and supports school system leaders.

AASA members are the chief education advocates for children. AASA members advance the goals of public education and champion children's causes in their districts and nationwide. As school system leaders, AASA

members set the pace for academic achievement. They help shape policy; oversee its implementation. [30]

❖ National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) believes that the child is the focal point of the educational program and that education in our society must assist each child to realize his or her potential as a functioning and contributing member of that society. The Association believes that each child should have an equal opportunity to attain self-realization. NAESP further believes that the elementary and middle-level school is the foundation of all educational efforts on behalf of the child, and that the primary responsibility for the development of an effective program in each elementary and middle-level school is vested in the principal.[31]

❖ The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE)

The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) is dedicated to improving the educational experiences The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) is the leading national and international organization advancing the education of all students ages 10 to 15, helping them succeed as learners and make positive contributions to their communities and to the world. [32]

❖ National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) promotes excellence in middle level and high school leadership through research-based professional development, resources, and advocacy so that every student can be prepared for postsecondary learning opportunities and be workforce ready. We help to advance middle level and high school education by:

- Promoting high professional standards
- Focusing attention on school leaders' challenges
- Providing a "national voice" for school leaders
- Building public confidence in education
- Strengthening the role of the principal as instructional leader
- Publicizing the issues and interests of our members in the news

media[33]

• Private Schools.

Private primary and secondary schools are governed by their own self-appointed boards of trustees and raise their own operating incomes without state or local government support. They may be operated by independent boards or they may be affiliated with a religious organization such as a diocese, religious order, local church, or state or national religious organization.

Private schools make their own hiring and admissions policies and determine their own curricula and other academic policies. Private schools do, however, pay close attention to local and state school curricula and graduation policies in order to facilitate the transfer of students to and from public schools and to ensure that students who graduate from secondary programs have met or exceeded the expectations for state graduation requirements and – when appropriate – for admission to postsecondary institutions (USNEI).

- Non-Public Education Organizations

- ❖ Office of Non-Public Education (ONPE)

Office of Non-Public Education (ONPE) is *liaison to the non-public school community for the U.S. Department of Education*.

ONPE fosters maximum participation of non-public school students and teachers in federal education programs and initiatives. Since the initial passage of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* in 1965, private school students and teachers have been eligible to participate in certain federal education programs. ONPE's activities reflect this mission and direction by:

- Representing the U.S. Department of Education to the non-public school community;
- Offering advice and guidance within the Department on all matters affecting non-public education;
- Communicating with national, state and local education agencies and associations on non-public education topics;
- Communicating the interests and concerns of the non-public school community to the Department;
- Providing parents with information regarding education options for their children;
- Providing technical assistance, workshops and publications. [34]

Following is a non-exhaustive list of non-public education organizations.

- The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS)
- Association of Military Colleges and Schools (AMCSUS)
- American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS)
- American Montessori Society
- Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
- Association Montessori International, USA
- Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
- Christian Schools International (CSI)
- Council for American Private Education (CAPE)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- Friends Council on Education
- Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)

- Islamic Schools League of America
- Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS)
- National Association of Episcopal Schools
- National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
- National Association of Private Special Education Centers
- National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)
- National Christian Schools Association
- National Coalition of Girls' Schools
- National Council for Private Schools Accreditation (NCPSA)
- National Independent Private Schools Association
- Seventh-day Adventist Schools
- Solomon Schechter Day Schools Association
- Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) [35]
- Alternative Schools

Traditional public and private schools are not the only recognized types of schools in the U.S. education system. In addition to regular public schools and private schools, there are several other forms of schooling that are legally recognized and that serve as successful models for parents seeking different educational experiences for school-age children.

Charter schools are public schools established by parent groups, communities, or organizations to fulfill specific needs, serve special populations, or adhere to special curricula or instructional practices. They receive public funding and support but are freed from school district regulations and may enroll students from anywhere in a district. Charter schools operate via a performance agreement, or charter, that sets forth the mission, program, student population, and methods of evaluation and assessment. Charters usually last from 3-5 years and are renewable. Over 3,000 charter schools have been established since the early 1990s.

❖ The National Association of Charter Schools of America (NACSA)

The National Association of Charter Schools of America (NACSA) is unique in the charter school movement. It is devoted exclusively to improving public education by improving the policies and practices of the organizations responsible for authorizing charter schools. Quality authorizing leads to quality charter schools, and NACSA is creating the environment of expectations, relationships, practices, policy, and resources for authorizers to excel.

NACSA works with local experts to create the conditions needed for quality schools to thrive. We push for high standards for authorizers and help to define successful authorizer practices. NACSA believes that genuine reform

through charter schools occurs through the balanced interplay of three principles: choice, autonomy, and accountability. Good authorizers maintain high standards for themselves and their schools preserve the autonomy of the schools they charter, and protect the interests of students and the communities they serve. [36]

❖ Magnet Schools of America (MSA)

Magnet schools are regular public schools that have a special educational theme, mode of instruction, subject emphasis, or other characteristic and are permitted to enroll students from across the entire school district rather than being confined to normal school attendance boundaries.

Magnet programs have similar features but are located within regular public schools rather than being separate schools. The legal purpose of magnets is to promote equal access to unique educational opportunities by minority students who would otherwise be confined to regular schools based on residence. Examples of magnet schools and programs are frequently found in curricular areas such as science and technology, the arts, or career education; and in modes of instruction such as experimental, traditional, Montessori, or others.

MSA's Mission is providing leadership for high quality innovative instructional programs that promote choice, equity, diversity, and academic excellence for all students. MSA's guiding principles believe its national and regional structure is uniquely able to provide support, advocacy, and leadership for all magnet schools and other public schools of choice; must develop strong group and individual leadership to accomplish the goals and mission of the organization; believe in providing equity, excellence, and high academic achievement for all students; communication is a process by which MSA will educate our stakeholders to the values of equity, diversity, and academic success.

MSA'S goals and objectives are to promote goals of desegregation, equity, excellence, and the expansion and improvement of magnet schools; encourage America's businesses to become actively involved in magnet schools and to support them both conceptually and financially; encourage the federal government to finance magnet schools through competitive grants and programs and increase the amount of this support; encourage the passage of legislation at both the state and national levels that will promote the development and improvement of magnet schools; provide parents and community members information on the benefits of magnet schools as schools of choice; act as a National Clearinghouse for information dissemination on magnet schools and promote legislative advocacy for magnet schools. [37]

❖ Home Schooling

Individual instruction of children and young adults at home has a long history in North America, and was in fact the first method of education available to the European colonists prior to the establishment of schools. Home instruction was typically performed by parents or itinerant teachers called tutors. Today, there is again a popular interest in home schooling, and over 1 million students receive home schooling annually. Home schooling is legally recognized and regulated in all U.S. states. Home schooling is usually performed by parents and there is an extensive array of services, materials, and resources to assist homeschooling parents and children. Qualified home school graduates are recognized as school graduates by the states and may be admitted to U.S. higher education institutions.

❖ National Home Education Network

Homeschooling is, in its simplest definition, educating a child outside the boundaries of a formal school. It typically means that parents take responsibility for their own child's education, but many people are surprised by wide diversity of homeschooling approaches from school-at-home curriculum use to natural learning much like the "free" school movement.

Yes, homeschooling is legal in all 50 states and in many countries. Each state in the United States has its own laws regarding compulsory attendance and homeschooling.

Families choose to home school for a variety of reasons such as illness, a school that can't meet a child's needs, violence in the schools, religious beliefs, scheduling, or a variety of others.

Homeschoolers are very diverse. They come from all religions, socioeconomic statuses, educational backgrounds, races and ethnicities, and family structures.

Nobody really knows how many students being home schooled. Several government agencies and homeschooling organizations have made educated guesses, but because not all states count homeschoolers, and because home schools in some states are indistinguishable from other private schools, there are no hard numbers. Researchers currently estimate that there are 1.5 to 2 million homeschoolers in the U.S., representing 3 to 4 percent of the school age population. [38]

6. The federal role

The U.S. federal government does not have any direct authority over education in the United States. There is no national ministry of education and

any education framework law or laws in the United States. The role of the U.S. federal government is limited to the following:

- Exercising leadership in promoting educational policies and reform efforts of national scope;
- Administering federal assistance programs authorized and appropriated by Congress;
- Enforcing federal civil rights laws as they pertain to education;
- Providing information and statistics about education at the national and international levels; and
- Providing technical expertise to the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, other federal agencies and Executive Office of the President in conducting the foreign affairs of the United States as these pertain to education and within the limited scope of federal power in this area.

The federal government does not:

- Own, control or oversee U.S. schools or postsecondary institutions*;
- Inspect, accredit, or license schools, postsecondary institutions, or other educational providers;
- Set curricula or content standards for academic or professional subjects;
- Hire or license faculty or other educational professionals;
- Set educational standards for the admission, enrollment, progress, or graduation of students at any level;
- Set standards, license, or regulate professional occupations or practicing professionals (other than federal civilian and military personnel); or
- Determine or allocate educational budgets for states, localities, or institutions.

Education is primarily a State and local responsibility in the United States. It is States and communities, as well as public and private organizations of all kinds, that establish schools and colleges, develop curricula, and determine requirements for enrollment and graduation. The structure of education finance in America reflects this predominant State and local role. Of an estimated \$1.15 trillion being spent nationwide on education at all levels for school year 2011-2012, a substantial majority will come from State, local, and private sources. This is especially true at the elementary and secondary level, where about 87.7 percent of the funds will come from non-Federal sources (USDOE).

That means the Federal contribution to elementary and secondary education is about 10.8 percent, which includes funds not only from the Department of Education (ED) but also from other Federal agencies, such as

the Department of Health and Human Services' Head Start program and the Department of Agriculture's School Lunch program (USDOE).

Although ED's share of total education funding in the U.S. is relatively small, ED works hard to get a big bang for its taxpayer-provided bucks by targeting its funds where they can do the most good. This targeting reflects the historical development of the Federal role in education as a kind of "emergency response system," a means of filling gaps in State and local support for education when critical national needs arise (USDOE).

❖ The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE)

The original Department of Education was created in 1867 to collect information on schools and teaching that would help the States establish effective school systems.

The U.S. Department of Education is the lead federal agency in education. Its roles are limited to: establishing policies on federal financial aid for education and administering programs and funds; collecting data on America's schools and disseminating research; focusing national attention on key educational issues; and prohibiting discrimination and ensuring equal access to education (USDOE).

ED's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Congress established the U.S. Department of Education (ED) on May 4, 1980, in the Department of Education Organization Act (Public Law 96-88 of October 1979). Under this law, ED's mission is to:

- Strengthen the Federal commitment to assuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual;
- Supplement and complement the efforts of states, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the states, the private sector, public and private nonprofit educational research institutions, community-based organizations, parents, and students to improve the quality of education;
- Encourage the increased involvement of the public, parents, and students in Federal education programs;
- Promote improvements in the quality and usefulness of education through Federally supported research, evaluation, and sharing of information;
- Improve the coordination of Federal education programs;
- Improve the management of Federal education activities; and

- Increase the accountability of Federal education programs to the President, the Congress, and the public. [39]

7. The local role

The local level of control is the heart of the U.S. education system at the primary and secondary levels. Local communities operate schools, implement and enforce state laws and policies, develop and implement their own educational policies, hire and supervise professional teaching staffs, and raise money to pay for schools (usually through property taxes plus special bond issues) (USNEI).

Public education at the local level is organized by school districts, of which there are over 14,000. These districts are governed by school boards comprised of elected citizens who exercise broad policy oversight of operations, budgets, and staff, and may oversee local school curricula within state guidelines. Local education agencies perform operational oversight and administrative support for U.S. public pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools as well as many special education, adult learning, and vocational training centers. School boards generally oversee district operations via professional district superintendents and district administrative staffs (USNEI).

Local agencies do not usually exercise authority over local private schools or higher education institutions, except for a few municipally operated public colleges and universities (USNEI).

- School District Resources

- ❖ The National School Boards Association (NSBA)

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) is a not-for-profit organization representing State Associations of school boards and their member districts across the United States.[40]

- ❖ The School District Demographics System (SDDS)

The purpose of SDDS is to help community leadership, educators, researchers and analysts, libraries and information providers, students, and the public to access and use demographic data to help them better understand current demographic characteristics, patterns and change taking place, as well as plan for improved educational programs and opportunities. [41]

- ❖ The National Association of Counties (NACO)

The National Association of Counties (NACO) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACO provides essential services to the nation's 3,068 counties. NACO advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in

finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money.

- Urban and Rural Special Interest Resources

- ❖ Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS)

Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) is a national association of the local education authorities in the largest U.S. metropolitan areas and provides information related to issues affecting urban and inner city education.

It is the special mission of America's urban public schools to educate the nation's most diverse student body to the highest academic standards and prepare them to contribute to our democracy and the global community.

Urban public schools exist to teach students to the highest standards of educational excellence. As the primary American institution responsible for weaving the strands of our society into a cohesive fabric, we – the leaders of America's Great City Schools – see a future where the nation cares for all children, expects their best, appreciates their diversity, invests in their futures, and welcomes their participation in the American dream. The Great City Schools are places where this vision becomes tangible and those ideals are put to the test.

Educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards. To lead, govern and manage our urban public schools in ways that advance the education of our children and inspire the public's confidence. [42]

- ❖ Urban Superintendents Association of America (USAA)

Urban Superintendents Association of America (USAA) is a national organization bringing together the chief school executives of major metropolitan school districts to work on issues of common concern. [43]

- ❖ Organizations Concerned about Rural Education

Organizations Concerned about Rural Education is a coalition of two dozen education, farm, rural, technology and utility organizations that has been active since 1988. What brings us together is our common concern for the economic future of rural America, particularly, the education of rural children. Modern, effective schools are vitally important to that future.[44]

- Parental Involvement

Parent organizations are important components of education at the local level. Parental involvement is essential to U.S. primary and secondary education and is organized in every school district, as well as for individual schools.

- ❖ State PTA Office

Supports and speaks on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children; assists parents in developing the skills they

need to raise and protect their children; encourages parent and public involvement in public schools.[45]

❖ National Parent-Teacher Association (NPTA)

National Parent-Teacher Association (NPTA) is a nationwide coalition of organized parent groups in local communities that have developed formal arrangements with individual schools. The PTA provides information on current issues of concern to member chapters and extensive resources. [46]

❖ National Council for Parental Involvement in Education (NCPIE)

At NCPIE, our mission is simple: to advocate the involvement of parents and families in their children's education, and to foster relationships between home, school, and community to enhance the education of our entire nation's young people.[47]

•Community Partners

Community cooperation and support for the schools is an important resource that creates partnerships, provides student work opportunities, contributes extra funds and educational resources, provides supplemental services, and promotes support for the educational program. School-business partnerships are important resources for investment in local programs and providing learning opportunities for students.

•School Choice

School choice involves the provision of educational options for parents and students. These may be alternatives to traditional public schools, such as magnet schools or public charter schools, or they may include voucher and other programs to enable private schools to be part of school choice programs. In all U.S. states, choice also includes the legal right for parents to home school their children (USNEI).

❖ Public School Choice

If a child attends a Title I school that has been identified by the state for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, parents can choose to send the child to another public school that is not so identified. Districts must let parents know each year if their child is eligible to transfer to another school, and districts must give parents more than one transfer option if more than one exists. Districts must pay for students' transportation costs, giving priority to low-income, low-achieving students if there are not enough funds available to pay for all students (USNEI).

Low-income families can enroll their child in supplemental educational services if their child attends a Title I school that has been identified by the state as in the second year of improvement, in corrective action, or in restructuring. The term "supplemental educational services" refers to free extra

academic help, such as tutoring or remedial help, that is provided to students in subjects such as reading, language arts, and math. This extra help can be provided before or after school, on weekends, or in the summer.

❖ Charter Schools

Charter schools are public schools that operate with freedom from many of the local and state regulations that apply to traditional public schools. Charter schools allow parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs, and others the flexibility to innovate and provide students with increased educational options within the public school system. Charter schools are sponsored by local, state, or other organizations that monitor their quality while holding them accountable for academic results and responsible fiscal practices. As of 2004, 40 states and D.C. have charter school laws. Nationally, there are about 3,000 charter schools, serving over 750,000 students (USNEI).

❖ Magnet Schools

Magnet schools are designed to attract students from diverse social, economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. They focus on a specific subject, such as science or the arts; follow specific themes, such as business/technology or communications/humanities/law; or operate according to certain models, such as career academies or a school-within-a-school. Some magnet schools require students to take an exam or demonstrate knowledge or skill in the specialty to qualify to go to the school, while others are open to students who express an interest in that area (USNEI).

❖ Private Schools

Most private or nonpublic schools in the U.S. are religious, and many are affiliated with a religious faith, denomination, or local church. Many nonpublic schools without a religious identity or affiliation are private schools designed to prepare students for college. Other independent schools are based on a particular educational philosophy or approach to learning, such as Montessori or Waldorf schools; have a special needs focus, such as schools for students who are deaf or blind; or have a specific subject matter specialty, such as science and technology or the arts (USNEI).

❖ Home Schools

Homeschooled children may be taught by one or both parents, by tutors who come into the home, or through virtual school programs conducted over the Internet. Some parents prepare their own materials and design their own programs of study, while others use materials produced by companies specializing in home school resources. Accountability for homeschooling is coordinated with the state in which the family resides.

❖ DC Choice

Opportunity scholarships of up to \$7,500 are provided to eligible, low-income students in the District of Columbia to attend private schools. [48]

8. Tertiary institutions

The individual school, postsecondary institution, or other provider is the competent authority in the United States for nearly all academic matters. There are nearly 130,000 individual institutions in the U.S. education system, including nearly 117,000 primary and secondary schools, nearly 6,000 postsecondary career and technical schools, and just less than 4,000 degree-granting institutions of higher education. These institutions vary widely as to type, ownership, and governance arrangements.

❖ POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Career and technical schools provide short training courses, and sometimes specialized degree programs, in what used to be called postsecondary vocational education. The vast majority of career and technical schools are private and many of them are operated on a for-profit basis. Career and technical schools are approved and regulated by state governments and may be accredited. Accreditation is important because only schools and other providers accredited by recognized accrediting agencies can provide training that is commonly accepted in other states and by employers and licensing authorities outside the home state.

❖ The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE)

The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE) is the nation's primary agent for research in the broad field of CTE and a primary source of professional development and technical assistance for CTE professionals, particularly at state and local leadership levels. [49]

❖ The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE)

To provide leadership in developing an educated, prepared, adaptable and competitive workforce.

ACTE is committed to enhancing the job performance and satisfaction of its members; to increasing public awareness and appreciation for career and technical programs; and to assuring growth in local, state and federal funding for these programs by communicating and working with legislators and government leaders.[50]

❖ The Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (APSCU)

The Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities is a voluntary membership organization of accredited, private, postsecondary schools, institutes, colleges and universities that provide career-specific educational programs. APSCU has over 1,800 members that educate and support almost two million students each year for employment in over 200 occupational fields.

In addition, the Imagine America Foundation has provided over \$35 million in scholarships to high school graduates attending APSCU member schools, institutes, colleges and universities. The Foundation recently received the highest award from the American Society of Association Executives for innovative education and training initiatives.[51]

- Higher Education Institutions

Higher education institutions in the United States are organized and licensed or chartered as non-profit or for-profit corporations, regardless of whether they are public or private. These corporate entities are governed by boards of trustees, who are citizens appointed by a governor or legislature (public institutions) or elected by the board itself (private institutions). Institutions thus established may be single campus institutions, multi-campus institutions or systems comprising several independent institutions.

- Public institutions

Public institutions in addition to having governing boards appointed by state authorities, will also receive some annual allocation of state budget funds; some of their property may be state owned; and they may be subject to state regulations of other kinds depending on the nature of their relationship to the state as defined in their charters. Public institutions are internally self-governing and autonomous with respect to academic decision-making.

- Private institutions

Private institutions are independent of state control even though they are licensed or authorized by state governments. They may be non-profit or for-profit, and may be secular or affiliated with a religious community. Some private institutions may be authorized by state governments to receive state operating funds and to provide some public services, such as operating publicly funded academic programs or functioning as state land-grant institutions receiving federal funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Both public and private institutions may charge students tuition and fees; may receive gifts and donations and hold an invested endowment; and may earn income from research and instructional grants and contracts. Public institutions may have restrictions set by states on how much they can charge

students and may be required to keep non-state gift and other income separate, often in foundations administered by alumni.

❖ The Washington Higher Education Secretariat (WHES)

The Washington Higher Education Secretariat (WHES) was formed in 1962 to serve as a voluntary forum for Chief Executive Officers of national higher education associations. The Secretariat is composed of chief executives from approximately fifty associations, each of which serves a significant sector or function in postsecondary education. Membership is by election of current members.[52]

•Community and Junior Colleges

Community colleges are comprehensive public institutions that provide a wide variety of educational services, ranging from adult and community education services, through postsecondary career and technical education, to academic and professional studies at the university level permitting transfer to higher level studies. Some community colleges have begun to offer accredited bachelor's degree programs. Nearly all community colleges have transfer arrangements with local public and private colleges and universities (called articulation agreements) that permit qualified students who have completed approved courses of study to transfer to bachelor's level studies with up to two years of academic credit.[53]

•Public and Private Colleges and Universities

Institutions that offer the bachelor's and higher degrees are often called "senior" colleges or universities, to distinguish them from "junior" colleges and other institutions offering the associate degree as their highest qualification. However, some colleges and universities offer studies at all degree levels from the associate to the doctorate. The terms "college" and "university" are not legally protected, nor are institutional titles such as "institute," "academy," or others. An institution is permitted to use the title bestowed upon it in its state charter or license to operate. Institutions are classified according to the highest degree they award, regardless of title, as well as whether they specialize in a few subjects or offer a comprehensive range of programs, and whether they serve special populations. None of these are considered qualitative distinctions by themselves. Programs are accredited at each degree level, and accredited institutions that offer programs at the same level are considered to meet the same minimum standards (USNEI).

❖ The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)

The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE) an association of nonprofit independent colleges and universities that has worked since 1956 to support college and university leadership;

advance institutional excellence; and enhance public understanding of private higher education's contributions to society.[54]

❖ National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) serves as the unified national voice of independent higher education. Since 1976, the association has represented private colleges and universities on policy issues with the federal government, such as those affecting student aid, taxation, and government regulation.

• Higher Education Serving Specific Populations

Many private and public colleges are characterized by historical service to a particular ethnic group, race, or gender. There is a long tradition of higher education institutions being founded for these purposes. Tribal colleges founded by the American Indian nations, historically black colleges and universities and single-sex colleges are only among the most well-known of these types of institutions (USNEI).[55]

• Faith-Related Higher Education

The oldest tradition in U.S. higher education, dating to 1636 and the founding of Harvard College (then a Puritan Congregationalist institution), is the establishment and operation of higher education institutions by religious communities. Unlike seminaries and similar schools, which prepare individuals specifically for religious vocations and related occupations, faith-related institutions function similarly to secular institutions in that they offer a variety of subjects, respect academic freedom and prepare students for many different careers. At the same time, faith-related institutions offer distinctive environments for learning and for student development. Most of them qualify for recognition by the U.S. federal student assistance program and are fully accredited by recognized agencies. Many are among the most well-known and respected U.S. colleges and universities. Buddhist, Jewish, Latter-Day Saints (LDS), Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Denominations (USNEI).

9. Conclusions

The world economy evolves from a predominantly industrial society to a new concept, the information society, also known as the new economy.

Within this modern society, based on knowledge, education in general and economic education in particular, lead to the development of the most important resource of the society, human capital.

As in this type of society, which is constantly changing, the requirements regarding the level of individual training are very dynamic, the education and,

especially the economic one, must relate to the contemporary trends of globalization of the economy, of the market and of the professions.

An efficient educational system involves combining conventional methods with new teaching and learning technologies, and education is designed according to the individual needs of the students, avoiding over-specialization. Therefore, the teachers must motivate the students, transmit their knowledge, train them competent skills, and his teaching-learning activity must involve understanding the information and its awareness, in order to make it possible to use it in permanent change of society. [56]

Therefore, education must teach students to become creative, to compete with themselves while aiming to increase their degree of independence in society, to stimulate their passion for knowledge and personal development.

REFERENCES

- [1] Suciu, M. C. (2000), *Investiția în educație*, Editura Economica, București
- [2] Gâf-Deac, I. I. (2013), *Macroeconomie*, Editura FMP, București
- [3] <http://www.nieer.org/yearbook>
- [4] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SCL
- [5] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SMH
- [6] <http://www.naccrra.org/news-room/press-releases/2012/8/despite-weak-economy-child-care-costs-continue-to-rise>
- [7] http://www.cesso.org/What_We_Do/Education_Workforce.htm
- [8] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=TPC
- [9] <http://www.careertech.org/>
- [10] <http://www.sheeo.org/govern/Contreras2009-10-LegalDegreeGranting.pdf>
- [11] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SCC
- [12] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SGT
- [13] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SGA
- [14] <http://www.nassgap.org/>
- [15] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html?src=oc>
- [16] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SSE
- [17] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SCH
- [18] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SHC
- [19] <http://center.serve.org/nche/about.php>
- [20] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/ome/index.html>
- [21] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/index.html>
- [22] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=DAE
- [23] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SCE
- [24] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SHD
- [25] <http://www.cosla.org/aboutcosla.cfm>
- [26] <http://www.ala.org/pla/sites/ala.org.pla/files/content/about/strategicplan/2010plastrategicplan.pdf>
- [27] <http://www.ed.gov/early-learning>
- [28] <http://www.naccp.org/>

- [29] <http://www.naeyc.org/membership>
- [30] <http://www.naeyc.org/membership> <http://www.aasa.org/About.aspx>
- [31] http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/2012-2013NAESPPlatform_0.pdf
- [32] <http://www.amle.org/AboutAMLE/tabid/76/Default.aspx>
- [33] <http://www.nassp.org/>
- [34] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii/nonpublic/index.html>
- [35] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii/nonpublic/organizations.html>
- [36] <http://www.qualitycharters.org/about/why-nacsa>
- [37] <http://www.magnet.edu/>
- [38] <http://www.nhen.org/home.html>
- [39] <http://www.ed.gov>
- [40] <http://www.nsba.org/About/NSBAGovernance>
- [41] <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/index.aspx>
- [42] <http://www.cgcs.org/site/default.aspx?PageID=1>
- [43] <http://www.usaa.org/>
- [44] <http://www.ruralschools.org/>
- [45] http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=PTA
- [46] <http://www.pta.org>
- [47] <http://www.ncpie.org/>
- [48] <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dcchoice/index.html>
- [49] <http://www.nrccte.org/>
- [50] <https://www.acteonline.org/>
- [51] <http://www.career.org/iMISPublic/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>
- [52] <http://www.whes.org/>
- [53] <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Pages/default.aspx>
- [54] <http://www.cic.edu/Pages/default.aspx>
- [55] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html>
- [56] Tobă, D. (2002), *Teorie economică generală*, Editura Universitară, Craiova