
What Canada needs is a comprehensive strategy to better align education and training with the skills employers need.” — John Manley

Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

Dr. William Spady, a sociologist and founder of the Network for Outcomes Based Schools, is widely credited with founding Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

OBE is a student-centred, results-oriented, standards-referenced system of education premised on the belief that all individuals can learn. According to Spady, outcomes could be written with “traditional, transitional, or transformational goals in mind”. A scan of the literature suggests that most outcomes are used to meet traditional goals.

An OBE system is learner centered in that:

- what is to be learned is clearly identified;
- each learner’s progress is based on demonstrated achievement;
- each learner's needs are accommodated through a variety of instructional strategies and assessment; and
- each learner is provided time and assistance to realize her or his potential.

Outcome statements always include an action word that identifies the performance to be demonstrated; some OBE users consider assessment criteria part of the outcome while others treat assessment as a separate issue.

Outcomes for PEI school courses can be found on the PEI Department of Education website. Parents may find it useful to review curriculum guides and outcomes for the courses being taken by their children; students may find a copy of the outcomes helpful in orienting them to their program and courses.

Skill training in Britain

The Manchester Guardian, June 9, 2013 reports a new push by Labour in the UK to upgrade vocational qualifications with “rigorous courses accredited by employers, high-quality work experience and all students doing English and maths to 18.” Citing a need to rebalance the economy, Labour proposes high quality apprenticeships, improving standards in colleges of further education, technical updating of teachers through first-hand experience in the workplace, and new centres of excellence,

Year-round schools

The New York Times, June 10, 2013 reports that a Dutch foundation, O4NT, is calling for a change in the way schools work including longer days, year round operation and greater flexibility. Longer days are intended, not for academic purpose, but to make more services, especially child care, available to families in the district. The idea is being piloted in Sneek, the water-sports capital of northern Holland.

Project HIPPY

President Clinton in his book, *Giving*, tells about Project HIPPY – Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters. The idea was developed in Israel in 1969 by Dr. Avima Lombard. HIPPY empowers parents as their children’s first teachers, with tools, skills, and confidence to work with their children at home. A coordinator and 12-18 part time volunteers can serve up to 180 children and parents.

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