

Firing severely dysfunctional or hopelessly incompetent teachers is certainly a step in the right direction but it will never make a significant difference in our education system and neither will the individual evaluation of teachers for the purpose of improving student performance.

The overall system of education is flawed because it is steeped in the progressive era of Frederick Taylor Scientific Management. Scientific Management steals the joy of learning from children and places most of the responsibility into the hands of the teachers. Furthermore, teaching is not learning. No one can be taught something they do not wish to learn. Until we create a different learning environment for students that provides them with autonomy about what they want to learn, minimizes the unintended consequences of extrinsic motivators such as grades and test scores, and teach teachers to be more facilitators of learning instead of acting like "pitchers full of knowledge" that need to pour themselves into the empty unwilling skulls of our bored children. Frederick Taylor model of education is why 25% of our kids drop out, 3 million of them are on Ritalin, and only 50% are reading on grade level. Are there really that many incompetent teachers such that, if they were instantly replaced, these results would improve significantly? I find that hard to believe. Don't you?

Our schools are not factories and our children are not widgets that need to be produced. Until that changes, and that is a full culture shift still embraced by administrators and unions alike, no significant change will be achieved. Sorry if I am so negative. It is about time we start telling each other the truth and stop dancing around the edges risking the future of our children and the future of our country.

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Wally Hauck, Ph.D., Certified Speaking Professional (CSP)  
Author of [The Art of Leading: 3 Principles for Predictable Performance Improvement](#)  
and  
[Unleash Employee Engagement: 7 Initial Conditions of Outstanding Results](#)  
Optimum Leadership, Inc.  
167 Cherry Street #404 Milford, CT 06460