

1. What are the plan's greatest strengths?

1. As a father of 2 teens, I'm truly encouraged by the emphasis the plan places on social emotional learning. It is evident that emotional intelligence is being valued as much as traditional academic tracks which was not the case during my education.

2. As an educator and synthesizer, I'm excited by the encouragement the plan currently strives to give students in the area of synthesis. I see the plan empowering students to "identify their passions" so they can then use these as the catalysts to combining knowledge from multiple disciplines to create their own futures.

3. As a creative technologist, I'm happy to see the intention to no longer leverage technology as a tool for merely elevating existing bodies of knowledge & disciplines, but as an integral force in the creation of new bodies of knowledge and currently-unheard-of disciplines. The integration of technology with education democratizes the creation and consumption of knowledge. Treating students as creators and not just consumers will have a drastically positive impact on our future.

4. As an openminded survivor of many "prescriptions" (mental health & edu), I'm reassured by the plan's intention to similarly be openminded and lovingly smiled at your following sentence: "This plan is not a prescription" :-)

2. What might be missing from the plan?

1. A clear intention and description of how students will be enabled via a life-long "passion project" so they can feel empowered as creators of their own knowledge, empathetic towards consuming existing knowledge, and confidently excited to synthesize from both bodies of knowledge - either in collaboration or alone. I had many innovative ideas during my edu that didn't fit the offered tracks, including interactive music videos. I felt told to limit my future by choosing from the small pool of "sanctioned" ideas. This was frustratingly discouraging and I see similar frustration in my kids. Allowing students to claim a "passion project" that follows them throughout high school would be an early enabler to becoming productive members of society. They would: discover their unique gifts and confidence earlier, be more engaged across classes as they seek the relevant knowledge that will make their projects succeed, develop accountability as they carry their projects forward each year, and become more adaptable as they grow and recognize the need to modify their projects. They would be more respectful of others because respect was given to them first. The trick here is to give students entire responsibility over their projects. Mentorship/Co-Mentorship would work well here, but should never devolve into another prescriptive process based on age or seniority. As a litmus test, if we're asking any derivatives of the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?", we're doing it wrong. Ask instead and regularly: "Who are you today?" ... and then ... let THEM answer :-)

2. I see brief mention of coding and developing apps. I suggest making certain these

activities are always and easily available to all students. For those who's academic trajectory seems to be following the entrepreneurial track, this availability is paramount. I discovered code in 5th grade but it quickly became unavailable to me until 15th grade when I decided to major in CIS :-). I've recently been able to make my dream of "interactive music videos" a reality as a multimedia performance artist and speaker on topics of adversity and education. Coding levels the playing field for all learners by giving them the opportunity to transmute their inner-world ideas into external manifestations for the rest of the world to experience as well. Not everyone can become a guru programmer (I am certainly not) but anyone with access to coding can create what does not exist today. As similarly mentioned earlier about technology, coding also "democratizes the creation and consumption of knowledge. Treating students as creators and not just consumers will have a drastically positive impact on our future."

Thanks for considering my input,
ReneRafael.com

Inspirational Keynote Speaker
Multimedia Performance Artist
CXO Remnant® Records
937.260.2033