

## **What if Your School District's Superintendent Were a Dead CEO**

The Eduguru just re-read Todd Buchholz's *New Ideas from Dead CEOs*. The plot—learn from the strategies and tactics of famous corporate giants. Unfortunately, none was a state education commissioner, Secretary of Education, or district superintendent. But what if they had been your school district's superintendent?

### **If Ray Kroc of McDonald's ran your schools...**

The playgrounds would be great. Every school would serve up the same curriculum, prepared the same way, with no exceptions. The kids would never want to bring lunch from home. A student entering any classroom anywhere in the country would be assured of the very same curriculum and quality of instruction. Schools would run ads during children's programs on TV. Kids would beg to go to school. Every principal and teacher would have to graduate from the same university program. Every teacher would be successful and well paid before anyone at the district level would be.

The Eduguru Says: We would have the best small fries in the world.

### **If A.P. Giannini of Bank of America ran your schools...**

Schools would value the students from low and modest income homes—even recruit them. Schools would have practices designed to satisfy the parents. Schools would be in the community and part of the community—not large, cold corporate bureaucracies.

The Eduguru Says: Students would receive credit in every course.

### **If Mary Kay Ash of Mary Kay Cosmetics ran your schools...**

Principals would recruit teachers and be paid according to their performance. The superintendent would host parties and give rousing motivational speeches. Lavish incentives would be awarded to top performers.

The Eduguru Says: U.S. schools would be the Cadillac of schools (pink Cadillac, of course).

### **If Thomas Watson, Sr. or Thomas Watson, Jr, of IBM ran your schools...**

Relationships with the parents and taxpayers would be strong and nourished daily. As much emphasis would be placed on “selling the value of the schools” as on delivering quality education. Schools would be slow to see the changes occurring in their industry, but would have the resources and client base to survive until they could change.

The Eduguru Says: School colors? Blue—that's it, only blue—true blue.

### **If David Sarnoff of RCA ran your schools...**

Unlike the Watsons, Sarnoff would always be ahead of the technology. Great effort would be put into beating out the students in other countries. Tireless energy would be expected from everyone. Instead of one outstanding teacher instructing a classroom of students, that teacher's lesson would be broadcast to millions of students.

The Eduguru Says: Live from New York, it's Mrs. Watson's fifth-grade math lesson.

**If Akio Morita of Sony ran your schools...**

Everything would be smaller. Students would use a PDA to listen to or read about books, no longer hold and read books. All the electronic gadgets used would be reliable but not cheap. Every once in awhile, an Apple would fall on everyone's head and get their attention. The Eduguru Says: "Students, put on your headsets and stare at the screen. No personal interactions today—again."

**If Estee Lauder ran your schools...**

Tireless public relations and lobbying would ensure widespread acceptance and use of the public schools. Innovations cooked up at home would prove to be revolutionary—at least educators would believe they are and use them. Estee would walk right up to a set of parents and teach them something—free. Even the educated like freebees. The Eduguru Says: The complexion of public education would improve.

**If Sam Walton ran your schools...**

A retired teacher would greet everyone at the door. Schools would offer the same instruction, but for less money. Publishers would have to guarantee that the schools were getting the lowest price on everything before it was purchased. No supplies would ever run out because inventories would be automated and replacements ordered and delivered just in time. Sam's Alternative Club Schools would provide a restricted curriculum, great deals on tuition (after paying an annual fee), but students would have to take lessons in large quantities rather than one at a time. The Eduguru Says: Small private schools couldn't compete.

**If Walt Disney ran your schools....**

School would be the happiest place on Earth—or else. Students would only see the teachers at their best—never out of character. The best curriculum would be released, then removed for years, only to come back digitally enhanced and with great fanfare—for a limited time only. Millions of dollars would be invested for every minute of instructional delivery. Years of production would go into about an hour and a half of class time. Of course, class size would be large--theaters. For high school students 17 and older, the curriculum would be very dramatic and adventurous. The Eduguru Says: Every teacher would be animated.

**The Eduguru sums it all up:** I've always said the wisest CEO is a dead CEO.