'Magna Carta' WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 4, 1968 PRESS-HERALD Local School Boards Win More Control of Classes

By LEONARD KREIDT

California's Legislature this year handed local school districts authority, opportunity and a challenge year when it enacted SB 1, the dents hard - fought, controversial curriculum flexibility bill— often called the "Magna Carta" for education.

About Our

DOUBLE

But what does it mean to students?

According to the law's out obsolete and unneces-author, State Sen. George E. Miller Jr. (D-Martinez), it can, at the option of the bocal school board, m e an local school board, m e an better education for stu-

unt Savings in this ad!

Real? Don't take our

FOR THE 16 mandates retained, SB 1 eliminates time elements specified in the SB 1, passed after several other unsuccessful tries, drastically revises Division 7 of the Education Code. It reduces Division 7's bulk, clarifies its terms, throws old Division 7, with one exception:

Physical education is still subject to a legislative time

. . .

minutes in any 10 school days for high schol students. Since the PE mandate was the hardest fought issue of the battle, it will serve as an example of how the legis-lation will affect students, depending on how individ-

ual school boards decide to

UNDER THE old Division elementary students had 7, elementary students had to spend 20 minutes per day in PE. The mandate for high school students was one 50-minute period per day. Out of these periods at the high school level had to come time for underse to come time for undressing, showering and dressing,

project study

Assume that a school board decided to require high school students to take PE 4 days out of 10, thus giving them 100 minutes per PE period. Only 25 minutes would be required for the dress-shower activity, leav-ing 75 minutes for PE. Over

which took up half of the the 4 days, 300 minutes available time, according to would be devoted to exer-statistics from one pilot cise, whereas 10 days of 50cise, whereas 10 days of 50-minute periods, each losing 25 minutes to locker room

activities, would give only 250 minutes of actual PE. If classes with set-up and take - down requirements, such as chemistry, shop home economics or art op-erate similarly, equivalent time savings in on-instructional activities may be de-voted to educating the stu-

dents.

. . . EXPERTS say some pu-pils cannot profit from foreign language instruction. SB 1 eliminates the mandate that foreign language be taught all students in grades 6 through 8, and allows districts to offer such instruction in this area as they feel

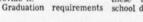
is locally appropriate. If the makeup of a com-munity indicates the desira-bility of a greater emphasis on vocational education, for instance, the new law gives the local board the tools to provide it

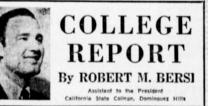
are also left in the local board's hands. This author ity, however, is less broad than might be indicated. It is restricted by college and unversity entrance require-ments plus the standards set for accreditation of high schools.

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A MAJOR benefit forseen bv Sen. Miller is the new flexibility to program stu-dents into studies appropri-ate to their individual abilities and needs,

He lists "more involve-ment of citizens in develop-ment of curricula" as anment of curricula' as an-other advantage. With most mandates removed, citizens may advocate changes, with confidence that a local board now has the freedom to make them, and fit them to local needs. The law does not eliminate requirements not eliminate requirements that schools teach morals, manners, patriotism, conver-sation, driver education, about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and so forth, but gives flexibility in fitting these subjects into the school day.





It's rather tragic, I believe, when education is being accused of responding to, rather than taking the lead, in social change, Edu-cation should lead in civil rights reform rather than respond to it. Education should law the groundwork

for major changes in tech-nology, in the economy, or in our social patterns, rather than simply react to them; yet, except perhaps in the area of technology, we simply have not seen this process taking place to a reassuring degree. Posscibly, an examinations

of these pressures, or better yet of the source from which most of them spring, can give us some insight into the problems which education today stem from struggles throughout our so-ciety to cope with a torren-tial flood of knowledge.

UP TO A few decades ago UP TO A few decades ago we were geared to a more leisurely pace in the han-dling of problems. Today, however, we can no longer plan and act as though the knowledge of revolution does not exist. There have been such changes in the guantity and nature of what quantity and nature of what we know, that new mater-

year2 ,000 there will be over a thousand times as much knowledge of all kinds to record, to sift, to store, to search out, to teach, and hopefully to use with some discrimination and effectiveness.

NONE OF US foresees any halt in the increasing rate in the production of know-ledge. The fact of the mat-ter is that an increasing number of people are work-ing at the job of producing k n o w l e d g e. More than 75.000 scientific and techni-cal periodicals alone are cal periodicals alone are currently being published in some 65 languages. This adds up, incidentally, to about two million articles per year. Finally, the realiz-ation of a fantastic and continuing rate of increase in knowledge has burst upon us with explosive force. A combination of changes

in society from new know-ledge and pressure to pre-pare people to utilize effectively an even greater flood of knowledge in the future carries the main thrust of pressure to education.

Consider the impact upon subject matter and upon the learning process. We the learning process. We have begun to sense the im-possibility, for example, of encompassing within a sin-gle course all that a student should know. We have come to face the fact that we simply cannot teach everything to everyone and have begun to embrace Whitehead's definition of the aim of education as being broad enoug's to teach people to utilize knowledge and not be limited to simple organization of

California Schools Enroll 5.5 Million

ment in California's public schools, junior colleges, adult and special education,

• Enrollment in grades one through eight, an esti-mated 2,830,000, a 2 per

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Estimates on special stu-dents, such as various cate-gories of mentally retarded, physically handicapped, and so forth, plus adults taking

night courses were not fi-

versity of California, an ex-pected 95,000 "with qualifi-cations." It was 92,000 last

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