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Vision 2015 is on right track even if state money is not

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The Vision 2015 campaign for public school improvement is becoming an act of faith searching for investors to translate education ideals into classroom practice. The goals are good and necessary, even if state government has nothing like the \$35 million Vision 2015 originally said it needed to have an impact.

For a second year, the state education budget is unlikely to add extra money specifically for Vision 2015 enhancement projects. That's not to say that Vision 2015 is on the wrong track.

The Education Department itself is pursuing programs for young children, teacher training and online courses in high schools that overlap the Vision 2015 agenda. The changes are more incremental than dramatic, but that's financial and operational reality.

Nonetheless, Vision 2015 Chairman Marvin Schoenhals' pitches to the governor and Legislature are backed by solid demographic and education research as a basis for adapting school organization and instruction.

Though there is public skepticism of Vision 2015 as yet another business-backed group dictating to schools, that is hardly the case. Vision 2015 is expressing the same concerns about student preparation and teacher professionalism as are heard in many political and education forums. Vision 2015's diverse board members include the education secretary, union, school district and social services leaders and, yes, a few business representatives. The point is they're all working together.

Meanwhile, Vision 2015 and the Rodel Foundation, a principle backer, have been creative in soliciting involvement from eight schools statewide to launch a training academy. This grass-roots exchange of best practices could be a convincing demonstration within the system to persuade others -- including founders -- of how to run schools differently.

So keep the faith, even if the timeline stretches farther than anticipated.

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