

**Looking at the High School as a System** - This is a chart to help you examine the statement “there is only one real customer—the individual who chooses to pursue an education” ([More](#)). Using the explanations below the chart for the callouts (such as ①), how is the system working for those pursuing an education and all the other customers?

Customers (Users, Clients, Stakeholders) and Issues	Storefront Retail	... High School Education	Details in the News about High School Education
1. Customer as user?	Shopper	Student	
① a. Commitment by the user? b. Preparation of the user? c. User as part of product?	a. Almost always	a. Varies	“majority of Texas districts have policies mandating minimum grades — typically a 50” (ended by TEA)
	b. Almost always	b. Varies	
	c. If focus groups	c. Almost always	
2. Customer as who pays?	Shopper	Student, parents	70% of parents - “things ‘are fine as they are now.’”
3. Customer who may help to pay the bill?	Varies	Almost always taxpayers	
4. Customer as creator of the product/service	Business owner; vendors	Mixed—teachers, testing, vendors, districts, SBOE	“Driving a No. 2 pencil into the heart of testing monster”
② 5. Customer as the field of knowledge behind the product/service?	Never	Mixed—teachers, testing, vendors, districts, SBOE	“SBOE determines what millions of students learn in public schools”
6. Customer as the regulator (such as a certifier, accreditor, or standards organization)?	Regulators - BBB	Mixed—testing, vendors, districts, SBOE, NCLB	“Education Inc. How private companies are profiting from Texas public schools”
7. Customer as the region?			
② a. Need for qualified workers? b. Need for good jobs? c. Need for safe communities? d. Need for a solid tax base?	a. Never	a. Often to Always	- “Rate of Hispanic dropouts cause for waves of worry” - “Business group joins suit over school funding” - “...they can’t even fill out an application. They can’t spell. They can’t read and write. But yet they got this diploma.”
	b. Never	b. Often to Always	
	c. Never	c. Often to Always	
	d. Never	d. Always	
② 8. Customer as the nation’s economic competitiveness?	Occasionally (Walmart effect)	<b>All</b> customers above	- “Science a sore subject in U.S.” - “Business group wants better math curriculum”
② 9. Customer as the nation’s decision-making in a republic?	Never	<b>All</b> customers above	Justice O’Connor – “no testing”/“no funding” - NCLB’s “unintended effect” – “squeezed out civics education” –
10. The product/service is			
a. For short-term use? b. For long-term use? c. On-going but changing?	a. Almost always	a. Occasionally	Same as 7
	b. Rarely	b. Almost always	
	c. Almost always	c. Almost always	
③ 11. Measurement of the user as part of the product and of the product/service is?	Transparent, and the shoppers got what they wanted	Intransparent and in transition	- “Study: School spending tough to track” - “Clear Lake High begins crackdown on cheaters”
12. Rewards of success go to?	Business owner	<b>All</b> customers above	“Grier says cheating inquiry on his agenda...HISD links bonuses to higher scores”
④ 13. Risks from failure go to?	Depends on contract, liability	<b>All</b> customers above - <b>1<sup>st</sup> risks to</b> business and higher education	- “A Stronger nation through Higher Education” but - “The value of blue collar work” (without college)

## Explanations for the callouts:

- ① What does the news show about what has happened to decrease the commitment by the user?
- ② What does the news show about whether we are being successful in meeting the needs of the diverse customers of high school education? What has happened to things that we needed to “retain”—something that that Dietrich Dörner stresses is often overlooked when people are trying to solve problems?
- ③ What does the news show about success in measurement?
- ④ How do we protect ALL customers? How do you keep rewards and risks together? When one customer gets the reward and transfers the risk to the other customers, systems break. What happening with

**Cautions:** Systems get what they measure. Systems get what they reward even when they don't want it.

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