

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. letter	Hillary Rodham Clinton to Janis Berman (1 page)	12/05/1996	b(6)
002. letter	Janis Berman to Hillary Rodham Clinton (3 pages)	12/05/1996	b(6)
003. note	re: meeting with Gov. Riley [partial] (2 pages)	01/28/1993	b(6)

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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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GOVERNOR BILL CLINTON
 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
 PITTSBURGH, PA
 AUGUST 12, 1992

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, President Schanker and ladies and gentlemen. It is wonderful for me to be here with you. I'm glad you still have a few rowdy people here.

You know, usually when people talk about education lately, they made fun of the Vice President's unusual spelling of potato. But

I want you to know the other day there was an illusion to it. I think to what Mr. Schnaker said but the President Bush said, "That I came from a small state somewhere between Texas and Oklahoma." Now, I want the AFT to do something for this administration. I want you to promise that as soon as the November election is over, that you will personally offer the finest course in geography available to former President George Bush.

The Republicans are having their trouble today. They're trying to write a platform and they can't agree on how to characterize their record. The President said, "Read my lips," in 1988. Then in 1990, he signed that huge tax increase. Then earlier this year he said it was a mistake. And so the platform writers thought that they suppose to say it was a mistake. And then they decided it might be embarrassing to say that it was mistake to make, to break the principle promise of the 1988 campaign. So they just said it caused a recession.

They took out their no-new-taxes pledge in this platform. But that wasn't enough for the right wing. They want them to promise to add four or five hundred billion dollars to the deficit over the next four years with another round of trickle-down economics where you've get a little and the wealthiest Americans would get a loud. And they can't figure out what to do with that.

Well, Al Schanker was right, I haven't always agreed with the AFT on all issues. I once had a very bracing debate in Chicago at an AFT sponsored event on some issues relating to the testing question. And Joyce Elliot whose here from our chapter in Arkansas can tell you that. But we both believe in education and we both believe in the laws of mathematics. And we pretty much learned to add and subtract. And I wish I could say the same for our adversaries in this election.

I will say this, no serious student of the last decade, and our common efforts in education, could doubt the steadfast commitment of the AFT for higher standards in our country for students and our teachers. For the belief that all children can learn. For the commitment to try to maintain a qualified and committed and highly motivated core of teachers who know they'll never be rich but ought not to have to be poor to pursue their vocations.

My opponents on the other side, many of whom have worked with me for years in the cause of education reform, are trying to convince the average American taxpayers and parents that because you are for me and because the NEA has endorsed me. And because most people who have worked in education are for me that somehow I am not for reform. They think the only way you can be for reform is that nobody who teaches kids supports you.

Now, I think we all recognize that none of us has all the answers, that our problems are highly complexed. And that we ought to have a continuing and vigorous debate over what we should do. But there are some things which are perfectly clear. Some tests that we ought to have for someone who says that he wants to be an education President. And that applying those standards, we need to make a change in the White House so that we can make some changes in the school houses of the United States of America.

If I were you with all the problems of your work and they are many more violence in our schools, more poor children, more children from poor, more children from troubled homes with difficult circumstances in their lives. The changing composition of our society and the increasing burdens on our school. The financial problems of some many school districts. By the way, let's have a parentheses here and correct one misapprehension that this Administration continues to push.

The United States does spend a higher percentage of its income on education than any nation in the world. If but only if you include higher education. In kindergarten through twelfth grade education, we are nowhere near first. There are eight or nine or ten countries that spend a higher percentage of their income than we do on education. And it does not serve our debate on what we ought to do and what changes we ought to make.

Very well, to have this Administration continuously say that we are over spending on public education compared to other nations. The numbers simply don't bare it out. I think we're misspending a lot of the money we have and so do you. So do you. But let's have a debate on that without clouding the issue.

Well, what is the President's job in education? What is the responsibility of the President? To lead. He ought to go down to Houston next week, maybe they'll listen to you.

We all know that the real magic of education is what goes on between the teacher and the students in the school. That's where

the magic is . And we all hope that the magic is reenforce by what goes on between the student and the parent at home. And that sometimes they are all together in the school.

We all know that most of the money for education comes from the state and local level. Regrettably, a much higher percentage now that was the case a dozen years ago before this crowd got in. But there is a national responsibility to lead, to set standards, to create opportunity, to resolve the incredibly complex issue of pursuing excellence and equity at the same time. These are the things that the President must take a lead in.

Now, this President has got some pretty good people working in the Department of Education. But there whole deal in life is to tell the rest of us what we ought to be doing and to minimize their own responsibility or accountability for any of the results. And that is consistent with what they do in every other area . Maddest I've been in the last several weeks was when Mr. Darmon, the Head of the Office of Management and Budget went up to the House Budget Committee the other day and ask why do we have the poorest economic performance in fifty years, the worst economy since the Depression?

The first decline in industrial output in the history of the country? The worst job growth rate and economic growth rate in fifty years? Why do we have it? And do you know what he said? He said, "Well there are four reasons, the banks aren't loaning enough money and the federal reserve didn't lower interest rates quick enough and Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait." Somebody else paid for that war. I don't know where he got that but anyway, that's what he said. And he said Congress won't do what we want them to.

So the Chairman of the Budget Committee said, "Well, how about the President?" Are you the President? Do you have any responsibility for what has happened?" Silence. He said what about five percent. You know, just anything.

And they refused to accept any responsibility. Can you imagine where this country would be today if Harry Truman would have had a sign on his desk that said, " The buck stops somewhere else." If Franklin Roosevelt had said to a nation beleaguered by the Great Depression would have said, " The only thing we have to fear is my opponent and their nutty ideas."

This crowd has been in the blame game so long they can't imagine what it would be like to take responsibility and establish partnerships and binds up the wounds and heal the division of the country and move us ahead together But that's exactly what we're going to do in 1993.

2 I believe in the national education goals that I work so hard to write. I believe in the call for national standards of what I children should know and a meaningful way of measuring whether those kids know it or not. You know it as well as I do that most of the national testing we have today is a hoax. And that once you

give these test, these so called norm reference tests...two or three years, every child in America is making above the national average and we go around blubbering happy talk about it.

But that does not mean we shouldn't have standards. It does not mean we shouldn't measure them. It doesn't mean that we shouldn't know the hard truth about whether we are providing the kind of educational environment and producing the kind of learning that our people will need to go into a global economy. Where its far more important to be able to learn than even to be able to know. Where memorization is not as important as the ability to be literate an reasoning to write and discuss, and to grow, to have basic mathematics and calculating skills, to understand the world we're living in.

So we do know have to know what the target is. And we have to recognize that its a moving target and we have to be willing to summon ourselves to the rigor of achieving it. But we have to also, be very honest about what the best strategists are for doing that.

We do need less bureaucracy and more school-based management, more decision-making for teachers, and principles, and parents in the school.

It is true. It is true that the administrative costs of public education are too high in most districts. It is true and you believe that too. But it is also true that some of those costs which look so bad when compared to private schools are directly related to the fact that we take everybody, with all their problems. And that we have to deal with them.

So, let us have an honest debate about how we can cut these administrative costs. How we can put that money back into programs back into program, and teachers, and services for children. Let us say, "We know we're not spending all this money as well as can be spent. Let's have some hard analysis and some cold truths. And some real political pressure to change the spending priorities within public education." We can do that. And I think the teachers of this country want that to be done.

I think you ought to have a Department of Education that supports reform at the state and local level. And that recognizes that people ought to have some measure of choice in the public schools they attend. Most every big city school system in the country, now, provides a wide range of choices for children and their parents. But that doesn't mean in the present circumstances with the school system that is already under-funded with radical inequalities among school districts in this country that we ought to go to the private voucher system. I am oppose to that.

And I. Let me say. I love that. Let me say that I'm glad America has a strong system of private school. I glad that people who have religious convictions can send their children to religious schools that also can teach them.

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When I moved. When I was a small boy, I moved from Hope, Arkansas to Hot Springs. We were living way out in the country and my folks didn't know anything about the schools that were out there. For two years I went to a Catholic school. It's an experience that I will always treasure. I'm glad I did it. I learned a lot. We didn't have much money. But I'm darn glad the taxpayers didn't have to foot the bill for me going. My parents paid. That was a choice they made. A choice they made. And we were not wealthy people.

I have signed a bill in my state that gives parents the opportunity under rigorous conditions of accountability to home-schooling because it exist in every state in the country anyway. And we thought we ought to have standards for it.

I am not opposed to competition for public school systems. I think that's a healthy thing. But I do not believe in a country which already is straining the financial resources of the public school system that we ought to divert them when we know we can make reform work in the system if we got the discipline to do it. That's my position and that's the position, I'll stick with as president.

I want to give you an Education Department that really works more helping you to promote reform and spurring you to reform and seeing that reform ideas travel across district and state lines. And just as an engine of paperwork and regulation.

I feel very, very strongly. And you know this as well as I do. and maybe better that there are examples after examples after example of people solving problems in American education today, virtually every problem you can mention has been addressed extremely effectively by somebody somewhere in America.

Let's tell the truth. What the real reason we don't need vouchers is there is public schools taking difficult situations and doing the best job of educating kids anybody has done anywhere. But the problem is. Let's identify what the problem is that we have not yet found a way to make ideas that work travel very well across district and state lines. We haven't done that. And that is our burden and our responsibility.

I have seen stunning things in schools....in Chicago, in Boston, in Los Angeles, in the District of Columbia. All across this country, I have seen things that any American, parent of any income, of any racial background, any social condition would be proud of. But we don't do a very good job of making those ideas travel. The bureaucracy, the resistance to change is profound.

And one of the things that the Department of Education ought to do is provide incentives for continued teacher training, continued principal training. Have an extension service to help these ideas travel across district and state lines, really work, so that all of us are comfortable in embracing the notion that we can learn from one another.

We should be proud to learn from one another. The Founding Fathers of this country set up state governments as laboratories of democracy. And I remember once a couple of years ago, I told a reporter, I was always prouder to be the second state that adopted a reform, than the first. Cause that meant that I was stealing somebody else's ideas first and that was what the laboratories of democracy what was all about. And that's the way we ought to view our schools. That is our challenge.

We ought to have answer to our parents and our taxpayers. If someone solved a problem we haven't solved, with a group of kids with the same level of problems that our kids have, in whatever district to the country, the burden is on us to change but your national government should be helping to facilitate that. That is the sort of change that I seek and that I will push.

And that regard, let me say that I have grave reservations about raising all this money for five hundred and thirty five star schools which is the administration main initiative in the education 2000 program. The idea that we ought go out here and put one new school in each congressional district and then two others in every state---one for each senator, I guess. One for every Congressman and one for each Senator. And build them up from the ground up. It'll be interesting, but it's going to take a lot of time, a lot of money, a lot of energy.

When we know today, that there are strategies that work, why should we be trying to have bottom up education reform instead of trickle down education reform.

There are clearly some areas of federal responsibilities to provide opportunity equity in excellence. One recognized by the President but not fully funded is Headstart. Still only thirty-six percent of the eligible kids are in it. But I want to do more than fully fund that program, I want to do what I can to spun environment in which every child in this country which needs to be in preschool program can be in one--either Headstart or school-based program or parent-based program. One that is most appropriate.

I want to try to do what we can at the national level to alleviate those savage inequalities that Jonathan Codezel wrote about to refunding the Chapter I program in ways that focus on smaller classes in the early grades and greater flexibility for the teachers to spend the money in the most effective way.

I want a safe school initiative that will help all of our schools to be safe and drug-free and gun free in orderly environment. One of the things we're going to do is provide an initiative that will put another hundred thousand police officers on the streets to prevent crime from reoccurring not just to catch criminals. To help schools--areas around schools to be safe. To provide security equipment to schools but also to try to help people to do those thing that will make children want to be in a school that is a good school.

I visited a school in Chicago in the primary and made a profound impression on me--The Beasley Academic Center, a junior high school in Chicago. I want you to know, the fact that the principal was my from my home state had nothing to do with my going there.

Here these kids in the neighborhood with the highest murder rate, in the state of Illinois, consistently in the top ten percent in all their test scores. No drop-out rate. No drugs. No violence. Dress code. Seventy-five fathers in that school every week volunteering. Fathers, not just mothers. And we had a little meeting there and asked the kids. I said, "Well, many guns in this school? They said, "No." "Any drugs in this school?" "No." Any drop-outs?" "No." I said, "Why?" "We like coming here. If we bring drugs or guns, we have to go. Nobody wants to get kicked out of this school." We like being here. We want to be here." They also had security outside and support. We can do that and we have to it everywhere.

And one other thing I like to say about the schools. Our children today are under more threat and more temptation and more duress than any generation of children before them. And some of the things are a matter of life or death. There have been many number of studies in the last few years which have shown that youthful sexual activity is not measurably greater in the United States than European countries but our teen pregnancy rate is twice as high.

And there, now over one million Americans who are HIV positive with the number going up extensively, and more among traditional American populations rather than its no longer confined to IV drug users and gay men, In fact, the rate is going up fastest among women.

Two chilling cover stories in two of our major magazines just in the last month on this. We have got to have an aggressive program of health education and prevention in our schools. We have got to provide basic health services in our schools. Its the only place a lot of these kids can ever, ever get basic health services. And this is not just a city problem. In some of our poorest counties in my state, an enormous percentage of the children go to school with infected teeth or gums because they have never seen a dentist.

We're trying to get those clinics out there to them. It is not just an urban problem its an American problem...in the rural areas, in the suburbs, in the small towns. We've got to do it. And I want to ask you to think about just three things that go beyond public schools which will involve the public schools.

First, we got to do something for the majority of the American kids who either don't go on to or don't graduate from four year colleges. We've got to do something for them.

The countries in which we compete against for high wage, high growth jobs, almost all of them keep up with all of their students and they try to see that they get at least two years of further training after high school.

If you look at the census data, our country, our young people who got at least two years of training after high school in the community colleges or vocational programs are working on the job in a training program, tended to get jobs where their incomes went up. Those who dropped out of high school or graduated from high school but went no further got jobs where their incomes went down, markedly. Markedly.

We owe it to the children of America and to our own economy to establish the linkages necessary between the public school system and the vocational and community college network and the employer community can have a world class apprenticeship system that restores the dignity to blue collar work in this country. We've got to do that.

And for those. And for those who do want to go on to college, I say we ought to the doors of college education to everybody. We ought to make access to college universal.

Perhaps the most exciting idea that I have propounded in this election in terms of how it might effect other people's lives has been my notion of a national trust fund...kind of a domestic Peace Corp..out of which anybody can borrow the money to go to college and then pay it back with two years of a service to our country here at home.

Think about it. Everybody. Everybody could borrow the money and pay it back... as police officers, as nurses, as teachers working with kids in trouble. I mean we can solve the domestic problems of America with the brightest of our young people and educate a whole generation of American. People could began to think of college as a right. And you can start telling kids in the fifth grade in the sixth grade, in the seventh grade, in the eighth grade, hang in there, looks what ahead for you. You can have a future. Do this. It can be yours. We could really, profoundly change the attitudes of our young people.

We could restore hope to millions of children who can not even imagine the life that we want them to live now. And I want you to support that.

Last point I want to make about that, is if we really want to raise per capita income in America in a hurry, quickest and cheapest thing we could do is teach every American with a job to read and give every American with a job a chance to get a GED. (Inaudible....) You would raise the per capita income in the country You would raise the productivity of the work force. WE have invested an enormous amount of money in that in my state.

I have only two point four million people in Arkansas and it does border Texas but it's not between Oklahoma and Texas. And we now spend as much money on adult education as Texas does because its money well spent. And I know its beyond the (inaudible..) education but it will lift the productivity of the country as well as restoring dignity and esteem to millions of American workers.

Now let me say that, that's my agenda....if you embrace the agenda. And you know that and I know that and we're going to have a wonderful time if I win this election....even when we debate and disagree we're going to have a good time because you're going to know that everyday I'm going to get up with a burning desire to improve education in America. But that's what I care about.

But one of the challenges we're all going to have in this election, and this is what I want you to think about as I close is to get over the enormous dimensions of skepticisims, cynicisms, and disbelief that exist in this country. There are so many people out there who live in your school districts, who basically don't think things can't be better. Isn't that right? And who are going to be very vulnerable to candidates who play on their fears instead of their hopes, who try to puncture any agenda that really offers the prospect of change.

Let me tell you something, I've worked for a dozen years in my state. When we put in those new standards, we became the first state for example, that required eighth graders to pass an exam to go onto to high school, they said, "Boy, this'll balloon your drop-out rate." Guess what? The drop-out rate went down and we got the highest graduate rate in the region. I know we can make a difference.

I've seen the college-going rate go up by thirty-five percent. I've seen just by scratching and clawing a poor state like ours, we're fifth in the country now in the ratio of computer to kids in the public schools. I have seen the enrollment in foreign languages and computer science triple, advance mathematics, triple, physics and chemistry go up. I know change can occur. And what I want to ask you to do, cause I know how easy it is for teachers to get- burn out and beat-down and ground-down and come to these meeting and wonder what's going to happen to help me just get through tomorrow. What's going to help me to feed my children? What's going to happen to help me educate my children? I know how easy it is for all of us to be so ground-down and so defensive that we just look right here, just in this far in front, of our noses.

I want to ask you to leave this convention today with a commitment to go back home and talk to your friends and neighbors who aren't teachers about the possibility of change in America.

I don't care what these polls say today. What these polls mean that people long for change. They ache to believe in America again. But you know what's going to happen. Down in Houston--at that Republican Convention, they're going to say, "If you elect Bill Clinton and Al Gore, those two kids are crazy. They're going to tax all your income away. They're going to take your guns away. They're going to stomp on traditional American values." Oh I know, "They're from Tennessee and Arkansas, but they're just great fakers, they're hiding their true feeling for twenty years, waiting for this moment when they can burst upon the American, political seen and crush the traditional values under some left wing radical

scheme of theirs. They're just be hiding." You know that's what they're going to do in Houston, Don't you?

It'll be ridiculous. You know, its kind of funny. They don't even know what to say. They just got to say their same old deal, they're too liberals too (inaudible...) But, the American people, if they do not believe that things can not be better. If they will not permit themselves to hope, then they will be vulnerable to the fear tactics.

I talked yesterday at the Southern Legislative Conference about this and Mr. Bush said my health care plan had the compassion of the KGB and the competence of the House Post Office. You know as a politician, I appreciate a good speech line, and that's a good one. But it's just full of bull. And, But, I'm telling you, they're a lot of Americans you can not imagine we could have an affordable health care system that covers everybody but other country's do it and I don't think we're dumber than everybody else in the world. I think we can do it.

Don't kid yourself. There are a lot of Americans who have never been in any inner city schools, that works. They can not imagine that poor children, that African-American children and Hispanic children and that other minority children can really learn, can master the complexities of modern life, can go on to win Nobel Prizes, can lift this country up.

They don't belief that and I'm telling you, if you really want to do something to help the Clinton/Gore Ticket prevail in November, you go home and tell people progress is possible. You go home and make sure you believe progress is possible because on election day if the American people believe that we can do better, we will win. That's what I want you to do. Thank you. And God Bless you all.

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Education
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A Call to Action For American Education

In the 21st Century

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S CALL TO ACTION FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

To prepare America for the 21st century, we need strong, safe schools with clear standards of achievement and discipline, and talented and dedicated teachers in every classroom. Every 8-year-old must be able to read, every 12-year-old must be able to log onto the Internet, every 18-year-old must be able to go to college, and all adults must be able to keep on learning.

We must provide all our people with the best education in the world. Together, we must commit ourselves to a bold plan of action:

- ✓ **Set rigorous national standards, with national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math to make sure our children master the basics.**
- ✓ **Make sure there's a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom.**
- ✓ **Help every student to read independently and well by the end of the 3rd grade.**
- ✓ **Expand Head Start and challenge parents to get involved early on in their children's learning.**
- ✓ **Expand choice and accountability in public education.**
- ✓ **Make sure our schools are safe, disciplined and drug-free, and instill basic American values.**
- ✓ **Modernize school buildings and help support school construction.**
- ✓ **Open the doors of college to all who work hard and make the grade, and make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as high school.**
- ✓ **Help adults improve their education and skills by transforming the tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant.**
- ✓ **Connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and help all students become technologically literate.**

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S CALL TO ACTION FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In his State of the Union address tonight, the President will make clear that his number one priority for the next four years is to ensure that Americans have the best education in the world. He will issue a 10-point call to action for American education in the 21st Century to enlist parents, teachers, students, business leaders, local and state officials in this effort:

- ✓ **Set rigorous national standards, with national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math to make sure our children master the basics.** Every 4th grader should be able to read; every 8th grader should know basic math and algebra. To help make sure they do, the President is pledging the development of national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, and challenging every state and community to test every student in these critical areas by 1999. These tests will show how well students are doing compared to rigorous standards and to their peers around the country and the world. They will help parents know if their children are mastering critical basic skills early enough to succeed in school and in the workforce. Every state and school should also set guidelines for what students should know in all core subjects. We must end social promotion: Students should have to show what they've learned in order to move from grade school to middle school and from middle school to high school. We must make sure a high school diploma means something.
- ✓ **Make sure there's a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom.** In addition to the talented and dedicated teachers already in the classroom, two million new teachers will be needed over the next ten years to replace retirees and accommodate rapidly growing student enrollments. We must take advantage of this opportunity to ensure teaching quality well into the 21st Century by challenging our most promising young people to consider teaching as a career, setting high standards for entering the teaching profession, and providing the highest quality preparation and training. We should reward good teachers, and quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up. The President's education budget will make it possible for 100,000 master teachers to achieve national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards over the next ten years.
- ✓ **Teach every student to read independently and well by the end of the 3rd grade.** Reading is the key to unlocking learning in all subjects. While America's 4th graders read on average as well as ever, more than 40 percent cannot read as well as they must to succeed later in school and in the workforce. Research shows that students unable to read well by the end of the 3rd grade are more likely to become school dropouts and truants, and have fewer good options for jobs. The President's "America Reads" challenge is a

nationwide effort to mobilize a citizen army of a million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by the end of the 3rd grade. Parents, teachers, college students, senior citizens, and others can all pitch in to give children extra help in reading during the afternoons, weekends, and summers. At the same time, schools must strengthen the teaching of reading in the school day, and the President's budget invests more in programs that address reading achievement in school.

- ✓ **Expand Head Start and challenge parents to get involved early in their children's learning.** A child's learning begins long before he or she goes to school. That's why the President's budget expands Head Start to cover one million children by 2002. Parents are their children's first teachers, and every home should be a place of learning. The President and First Lady will convene a Conference this spring to review recent scientific discoveries on early child learning and to show how parents, teachers, and policymakers can use this new knowledge to benefit young children. And in June, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference, and focus on the importance of parents' involvement throughout a child's education.
- ✓ **Expand choice and accountability in public education.** The President has challenged every state to let parents choose the right public school for their children. Innovation, competition, and parental involvement will make our public schools better. We must do more to help teachers, parents, community groups, and other responsible organizations to start charter schools—innovative public schools that stay open only as long as they produce results and meet the highest standards. The President's budget doubles funding to help start charter schools so that there will be 3,000 charter schools at the dawn of the 21st Century, providing parents with more choices in public education.
- ✓ **Make sure our schools are safe, disciplined and drug-free, and instill American values.** Students cannot learn in schools that are not safe and orderly and do not promote positive values. We must find effective ways to give children the safe and disciplined conditions they need to learn, such as by promoting smaller schools, fair and rigorously enforced discipline codes, and teacher training to deal with violence. We should continue to support communities that introduce school uniforms and character education, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs. We should also keep schools open later as safe havens from gangs and drugs, expanding educational opportunities for young people in the afternoons, weekends, and summers, and providing peace of mind for working parents.
- ✓ **Modernize school buildings and help support school construction.** Just as we face unprecedented and growing levels of student enrollment, a recent report by the General Accounting Office shows that a third of our nation's schools need major repair or outright replacement. To keep children from growing up in schools that are falling down, the Administration has proposed \$5 billion to help communities finance \$20 billion in needed school construction over the next four years.

- ✓ **Open the doors of college to all who work hard and make the grade, and make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as high school.** To prepare ourselves for the 21st Century, we must open the doors of college to all Americans and make at least two years of college as universal as high school is today. The President's HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, would be enough to pay for a typical community college tuition or provide a solid down payment for four-year colleges and universities. The President also is proposing a \$10,000 tax deduction for any tuition after high school, an expanded IRA to allow families to save tax-free for college, and the largest increase in Pell Grants for deserving students in 20 years.
- ✓ **Help adults improve their education and skills by transforming the tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant.** Learning must last a lifetime, and all our people must have the chance to learn new skills. Adults should take on the responsibility of getting the education and training they need, and employers should support their efforts to do so. The President's G.I. bill for workers would provide a simple skill grant that would enable eligible workers to get the education and training they need.
- ✓ **Connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and help all students become technologically literate.** Our schools must now prepare for a transition as dramatic as the move from an agrarian to an industrial economy 100 years ago. We must connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, so that all children have access to the best sources of information in the world. The President is proposing to double the funding for America's Technology Literacy Challenge, catalyzing private-public sector partnerships to put the Information Age at our children's fingertips. CEOs of some of America's most innovative technology and communications firms have already responded to the President's challenge to work with schools to get computers into the classroom, link schools to the Internet, develop effective educational software, and help train our teachers to be technologically literate.

NATIONAL STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Student achievement is not improving fast enough. Across our nation—in our cities, suburbs, and rural communities alike—far too many students are still not meeting the standards that will prepare them for the challenges of today and tomorrow. What the top 20 percent of our students typically learn in math in the 8th grade is learned by most students in Japan in the 7th grade. And while America's 4th graders today on average read as well as ever, 40 percent cannot read as well as they should to hold a solid job in tomorrow's economy.

As a nation, we do not expect enough of our students. Strong schools with clear and high standards of achievement and discipline are essential to our children and our society. These standards of excellence are important to help instill the excitement, knowledge and basic values, such as hard work, that will set our children on the right track. Unfortunately, we currently give far too many of our students a watered-down curriculum inadequate to prepare them for the challenges of the global society and information age. For too many of our children, we create a tyranny of low expectations. A watered-down and boring curriculum and low expectations are the surest way of turning a child eager to learn into an angry, high school dropout who can't read.

Every child can learn. We know that every child in America can meet higher standards, if we have the courage and the vision to set the standards, to teach up to them, and to test whether children have learned what we taught. Every state and every school must establish meaningful standards for what students should master in the core subjects. Only with a standard measure of excellence can parents hold schools accountable for improved performance, teachers and principals improve curriculum and instruction, and students have a guide for charting their own progress.

Mastering the Basics: High National Standards in Reading and Math

Every 4th grader should be able to read independently; every 8th grader should know algebra. To help make sure they do, we are going to provide states and local schools the opportunity to participate in rigorous national tests based on these widely accepted standards for reading and math. By 1999, every state should test every student in the 4th and 8th grades to make sure these standards are met. No matter where they live and no matter their background, all our students must master the basics.

- ***Reading and math are critical starting points in our drive toward higher standards.***

It is essential that our students master the basics of reading by the end of 3rd grade. At 4th grade, students are expected to read so they can learn science, history, literature and mathematics. If they can read by then, they can read to learn for a lifetime. Students who

fail to read well by 4th grade often have a greater likelihood of dropping out and a lifetime of diminished success.

It is also important that our students master the basics of math and the essentials of algebra and even geometry by the end of 8th grade. They will then have the foundation to take college prep courses in high school and compete in the world arena. The United States ranks below average internationally in 8th grade math. We must do better.

A New National Test in 4th-Grade Reading and 8th-Grade Math

- *The Clinton Administration will support the development by 1999 of rigorous national tests for use by individual students based on the widely accepted 4th-grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test and the 8th-grade Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) test of mathematics.*

Although the national reading and math tests will be based on existing tests (National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and the math portion of the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS)), new tests must be developed. NAEP and TIMSS test a random sample of students to produce estimates of overall statewide and nationwide student achievement; no one student takes the entire test. In contrast, the new tests will be expressly designed to produce individual student scores that will be useful for parents and teachers.

The new tests will be developed during 1997 and 1998, with a pilot test in the spring of 1998 and the first full administration in the spring of 1999. They will be updated annually. The US Department of Education will provide ongoing funding for the development of the test, and funding for administering and scoring it during the first year. Guidance for test development will come from the most successful math and reading teachers across the country, as well as from parents, governors, and local and state education, civic and business leaders.

- *The Administration is challenging every state and local school across the country to participate in these tests so students, teachers, and parents will know how they are progressing.*

States and school districts can administer the test as part of their local testing program. After each test's administration, the entire test (along with answers and scoring guides) will be released, placed on the World Wide Web, and widely distributed with supporting materials, so students, parents and teachers can know what is necessary to reach standards of excellence. A new test each year will keep the content of the test current.

We need a national effort to ensure our students learn the basics and achieve world-class

standards of excellence in America's schools. These tests will help show us who needs extra help and which schools need to be improved.

- *The Administration urges schools and teachers to work over the next two years to improve instruction and prepare their students for these tests by 1999.*

Preparing students for the national tests in 1999 means providing students the instruction they need to read independently and well by the end of 3rd grade. And it means ensuring that every student by the end of 8th grade has mastered the basics of mathematics and has had a good introduction to algebra and even geometry. While this will require parents, schools, communities and states to take a hard look at what teachers are now teaching and children are now learning, we know it can be done.

For example, the results on the 8th Grade Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) test showed that the United States is below average in mathematics achievement when compared with other countries. TIMSS also showed that U.S. students receive a less demanding and less focused curriculum, and instruction focused more on teaching mathematical procedures and less on helping students understand mathematical concepts. However, the **First in the World Consortium**, a group of 20 Chicago-area school districts that joined together to try to become the best in the world in math and science, defied these data, scoring among the top nations in science and second only to Singapore in math.

Developing Challenging Academic Standards in All Core Academic Subjects

Many states and school districts—along with thousands of educators, parents and business and community leaders—have been working to develop better academic standards for students. In almost every core subject, we are better off today because of their efforts in defining essential knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. But the work is not yet done.

**Places that Set High Standards Have Shown a Difference
In Student Achievement**

In 1993, the chancellor of the **New York City** Schools required all students to take math and science courses at the level of the state's Regents honors exam. In 1995, State Education Commissioner Richard Mills announced that all students would be required to take Regents-level classes starting with that fall's freshman class (the graduating class of 2000). Since the City University of New York (CUNY) began its College Preparatory Initiative with the district, the number of New York City freshman with four years of English has risen by 59 percent, the number of students passing CUNY math entrance exams has increased by 7.5 percent, and the number of Hispanic and black students who passed the science test has more than doubled. Entering freshman at the City University of New York are reportedly the best prepared academically in two decades.

Several important pieces of legislation developed by the Clinton Administration together with Congress support the efforts of local schools, communities and states to develop challenging standards and high-quality assessments and improve their teaching and learning to help all children reach those standards:

- The **Goals 2000: Educate America Act**, passed in 1994, is helping communities across the country raise academic standards, improve teaching, increase parental involvement and expand the use of technology in the classroom. Communities in all 50 states and thousands of schools have decided to participate in Goals 2000 and many more than the program currently has money to support want Goals 2000 funding to raise standards.
- The **Improving America's Schools Act of 1994** fundamentally reformed Title I—a \$7 billion program for teaching basic and advanced skills in high-poverty schools—to get rid of lower educational expectations for poor children and ensure that disadvantaged students are held to the same standards as other children. The Improving America's Schools Act also expands professional development focused on preparing teachers to help students reach the new standards, provides opportunities for waivers of federal requirements for the first time, and offers start-up funds for charter schools.
- The Clinton Administration's proposal for the **reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** reinforces the importance of higher standards for *all* children, including children with disabilities.

While the federal government can provide support and leadership through its programs, the success of this drive toward high standards rests in the hands of teachers and parents, business, community and religious leaders, and others at the grassroots level. Every community, school,

and state needs to continue its work to develop challenging standards and high-quality assessments, measure whether schools are meeting those standards, cut red tape so that schools have more flexibility for grassroots reforms, and hold schools, teachers, and students accountable for results.

States Are Making Progress in Developing Standards and Improving Achievement in Critical Areas

Since the early 1980s, the United States has made significant strides in raising standards and improving student achievement. Across the country, 48 states are developing common standards in core academic subjects, and 42 states either have or are developing assessments to measure student progress towards those standards. The proportion of students taking the core courses recommended in *A Nation at Risk* (4 years of English, 3 years of social studies, 3 years of science, 3 years of math) has increased from 14 percent in 1982 to 52 percent in 1994. These efforts are beginning to pay off. The number of students passing advanced placement (AP) exams has more than tripled since 1982. Combined math and verbal Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores are at their highest since 1974, while the number and diversity of students taking the SAT has increased dramatically. American College Testing (ACT) scores have increased or held steady in each of the last four years. Math and science achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has risen since the early 1980s. And in states like Kentucky, which established comprehensive school improvements six years ago, student achievement is on the rise: more than 92 percent of Kentucky's schools posted achievement gains in 1995-96, and 50 percent of schools in the state met or exceeded their performance goals.

Holding Students and Schools Accountable for Reaching High Standards

It is not enough to set high standards; we must be willing to hold people accountable for meeting them. Our schools and teachers must give all children the help needed to meet high expectations. But we must also say: no more free passes. Today, only a handful of states in the country require young people to demonstrate what they've learned in order to move from one level of school to the next. Every state should do this and put an end to social promotion. No one in America should graduate with a diploma he or she can barely read.

Not only students should be held to high standards. Schools must also be held accountable for results. Despite the central importance of a school principal in leading a successful school, few states hold their districts accountable for having good principals in every school and then give the principals the authority they need to do the job. Too many school districts spend much too much money on central administration and too little money on education and instruction. It is time to

hold administrators, as well as educators, accountable for results.

- **Every diploma must mean something, and students should pass tests to move from one level of schooling to the next.**

Once we set high expectations for students, we must help them believe they can learn, challenge and motivate them so they want to learn, ask them to grasp challenging subjects, assess whether or not they're learning, reward them when they succeed and hold them accountable when they fall short. Every state should require a test for students to move from elementary school to middle school, or from middle school to high school or to receive a high school diploma. These tests should measure mastery of the basics and the rigorous material expected in these tough new standards.

Some children may not measure up at first and may need extra help to lift themselves up. Give them the extra help in afternoons, weekends and summers, keep schools open as homework centers, involve their parents more—do whatever it takes to encourage and help them master the basics and perform to the challenging standards we expect of them. If we believe all students can learn, we have to give them a chance to demonstrate it. Students, teachers, and schools will all perform better once we do.

- **We must begin holding schools and their states or school districts accountable for results.**

We must insist that schools and districts have good principals, recruit and hire talented teachers, reduce administrative costs, and provide more options for parents. Moreover, we should overhaul or shut down schools that fail, and allow new charter schools to start over in their place. The Clinton Administration is urging states and districts to use their authority under the reformed Title I program to hold schools accountable for the assistance they receive, including reconstituting chronically failing schools.

TALENTED TEACHERS IN EVERY CLASSROOM

Every community should have a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom and at least one master teacher certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in every school. Our most promising young people also must get encouragement and support to become teachers.

This nation faces several challenges in sustaining and upgrading the quality of our teachers. Two million teachers will be needed over the next ten years to replace retirees and accommodate rapidly growing student enrollment. This presents an enormous opportunity for ensuring teacher quality well into the 21st Century, if we recruit promising people into teaching and give them the highest quality preparation and training.

As we demand higher levels of knowledge and skills from our students, we must honor and support our teachers in the classroom today, equipping and expecting them to help our students master the basics and be prepared for college, employment, and good citizenship. Without quality teachers and teaching, our most serious efforts to raise standards and improve schools will not succeed.

Everyone has a role to play in helping our teachers become the best in the world. Parents, schools, community leaders, universities, state leaders—and most important, current and future teachers themselves—can take many steps to address this challenge.

- **Identify and reward our most talented master teachers.** For many years, many educators, led by North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. More than 400 of these master teachers have been certified since 1995. Under the President's budget, 100,000 more teachers will be able to seek certification from the National Board as highly accomplished master teachers—enabling at least one teacher in every school to get certification from this board. States, school districts, and the private sector can also establish rewards for master teachers and other excellent teachers they identify in such ways as through teacher-of-the-year competitions. School districts can call on these master teachers to become mentors for other teachers.
- **Do more to challenge talented young people and mid-career professionals in other areas to become teachers and help them make the transition into a teaching career.** Communities can start middle and high school academies for future teachers, and states can establish centers for teacher recruitment that bring promising students into teaching. States can make it financially easier for young people to teach in high-need areas through fellowships and loan forgiveness programs. School districts can make sure that beginning teachers get support and mentoring from experienced teachers. The Clinton

Administration will continue working to make college and teacher preparation more affordable for young people who go into teaching.

- **Reinvent teacher preparation for beginning teachers and professional development for more experienced teachers so they get the training they need to help students master the basics and reach high standards in the core academic areas.**

Colleges, universities and school districts must provide current and future teachers ongoing, sustained opportunities to learn how to be more effective and upgrade their skills. The Clinton Administration has supported their efforts by increasing funding that may be used for sustained professional development, stronger teacher standards, and performance evaluation for teachers. The

Eisenhower Professional

Development program, Goals 2000,

and the National Science Foundation's Teacher Enhancement Program also provide substantial support for high-quality professional development.

Teacher Recruitment—Starting Early

School districts and universities can work together to create middle and high school programs that expose young people to the teaching profession. For example, the South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment has reached thousands of academically talented high school juniors and seniors through its Teacher Cadet Program, offered in more than 140 schools statewide. Teacher Cadets study education and have the opportunity to teach younger students under the tutelage of both school and university faculty. The center also targets minority middle school students, encouraging them to take rigorous courses in school and aspire to a career in teaching.

- **Expand efforts to help teachers become technology literate and to use technology to improve training available to teachers.** The President's technology initiatives will play a major role in helping teachers to become technology literate. For example, the President's Technology Challenge Grant program supports private-public sector partnerships to develop models for using technology in education, such as providing "electronic field trips" for new teachers to learn from expert teachers and mentors around the country. Moreover, the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund will leverage public funds to target school districts and schools committed to helping teachers integrate technology into the classroom. Finally, the Clinton Administration's 21st Century Teachers initiative will recruit thousands of technology literate teachers to upgrade their knowledge and help at least five of their colleagues learn how to use technology in the classroom.
- **Set high standards to enter teaching and find ways to help—or quickly and fairly remove—teachers who don't measure up.** School districts and teachers can help start and participate in peer assistance programs where they help identify, and then provide intensive assistance to, burnt-out or low-performing teachers. School districts can

develop fair and faster processes for holding teachers accountable and assisting or removing teachers who are not making the grade. Educators and communities should not look the other way if a teacher is burned out or not performing up to standard. The Clinton Administration will share promising strategies for recruiting talented young people and others into teaching, rewarding good teachers, and quickly and fairly improving or removing teachers that don't make the grade. The Administration also will provide guidance to schools, districts, and states on how existing federal funds can be used to address these challenges.

Upgrading Teacher Skills: An Award Winning School

The Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, in Manhattan, Kansas, was established as a "professional development school" where current and future teachers can go for assistance in upgrading their skills and knowledge in math, science, and technology. The school helps teachers understand the widely acclaimed math standards developed by the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, and prepares them to help students meet or exceed these standards. At the school, student test scores on the Kansas Mathematics Assessment Test have improved for the past three years, including especially strong gains for girls. The school recently was one of five schools to win a national award from the U.S. Department of Education for its efforts to give teachers the skills they need to help students succeed.

AMERICA READS CHALLENGE

"We ought to commit ourselves as a country to say that by the year 2000, 8-year-olds in America will be able to pick up an appropriate book and say 'I can read this all by myself.'"

Remarks by President Clinton to the Community of
Fresno, California, September 12, 1996

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 40 percent of America's 4th graders are reading below the basic level—not nearly as well as they must to keep up with the complexities of today's jobs and society. We need to do a real push toward improving our efforts to help all children read.

While teachers and schools have the critical responsibility for making literacy and the basics a top priority, study after study finds that sustained individualized attention and tutoring after school and over the summer can raise reading levels when combined with parental involvement and quality school instruction. Reading with children at the youngest age, quality pre-school, and tutoring from pre-school to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade can work to help all our children read at an early age—but certainly by the end of the 3rd grade. If families, schools, community groups, employers and religious groups make improving the reading skills of children and adults a top priority from the earliest years of a child's life at home until he or she becomes a successful reader, then America can attain the goal of being a reading, literate society.

For this reason, in August 1996, President Clinton announced the **America Reads Challenge** to ensure that every American child can read well and independently by the end of 3rd grade. And he called on all Americans—parents, teachers, libraries, religious institutions, universities, college students, the media, community and national groups, business leaders, senior citizens—to join the effort to meet this challenge. Already, groups from JumpStart in Boston to the Reading One-One program in Richardson, Texas, have responded enthusiastically to the President's challenge.

The President has pledged \$2.75 billion over 5 years toward the America Reads Challenge which includes:

- ***America's Reading Corps*** of 1 million tutors to provide individualized after-school and summer tutoring for more than 3 million children in pre-K through 3rd grade who want and need extra reading help. Thirty thousand reading specialists and tutor coordinators, including Americorps volunteers, will mobilize and support this corps of 1 million volunteer tutors who will work with teachers, principals and librarians to help children succeed in reading.
- ***Parents as First Teachers Challenge Grants*** that invest in success by supporting

effective and proven local efforts, as well as regional or national networks, that assist parents who request help for their children to become successful readers by the end of 3rd grade. Research shows that reading to children in their first three years helps children learn words and concepts and actually stimulates physical development of the brain.

- ***Expansion of Head Start.*** The President's balanced budget will expand Head Start to reach one million 3- and 4-year-olds by the year 2002, while continuing the new 0-3 year-old Head Start initiative. The priority of providing all children with high-quality preschool responds to studies stressing that literacy problems are best averted with the earliest intervention possible, including pre-school.
- ***Support for 100,000 College Work-Study Students to Serve as Reading Tutors.*** Last year, the President signed into law a budget that increased the number of work-study jobs for college students by a third—enabling an additional 200,000 young people to work their way through college while serving their communities. The President has called for half of all new work study funds to support 100,000 college students to serve as reading tutors, thereby providing a unique opportunity for college students to be involved in helping young children learn to read. To encourage this activity, the Secretary of Education has waived the matching fund requirement for those students who perform work study through the America Reads project. Also, the President has called upon college presidents to rally other students and college resources to help America read.
- ***Accountability for Results.*** The Administration will use the improvements in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to provide an annual measure of the reading performance of 4th graders and their progress toward meeting the reading challenge.

A challenge to every parent, teacher, principal, and community member

The success of the America Reads Challenge depends on the involvement of all Americans—parents, teachers, principals, libraries, religious institutions, universities, college students, the media, community and national groups, cultural organizations, business leaders, and our senior citizens.

- ***Parents should read to their children 30 minutes a day.*** Even as babies, children are learning about language from their families. Parents need to turn off the TV, take their child to the library and get a library card, talk with teachers about their child's progress, and take time to read with their child at home. Parental involvement makes a real difference. According to a recent study, 4th-grade average reading scores were 46 points below the national average where principals judged parental involvement to be low, but 28 points above the national average where parental involvement was high.

- ***Schools should provide a high-quality reading program for all students***, including making sure teachers know how to teach kids to read and have the support they need to do so. They must also identify those students who need extra help. The America Reads Initiative is not a substitute for in-school reading programs. Instead, it is designed to build on the work of teachers and schools to improve their in-school reading programs, as well as on the Administration's investments in Title I, Even Start and other in-school programs to strengthen in-school teaching and learning.
- ***Community members*** should start an America Reads Challenge reading tutoring program at the local school, library, or community center or become a reading tutor after school, on weekends, and in the summer. The Clinton Administration, through the summer Read*Write*Now! effort, already has begun working with organizations like the Boys and Girls Clubs, the American Association of Retired People, and Reading is Fundamental to mobilize reading partners for children during the summer months.
- ***Businesses should work with schools and libraries***. The Administration also is working with the private sector in helping parents help their children learn to read, through the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. Employers can help start a summer reading program in their community as part of the Read*Write*Now! effort to avoid the summer drop-off in reading.
- ***Colleges and universities*** should use half of their new funds for work study to provide reading tutors, and if all colleges meet this challenge, 100,000 work-study students in 1998 would be tutoring young children in reading. Already 60 college presidents have pledged almost 10,000 work-study slots in support of this goal, as well as thousands of other students to do community service as reading tutors.

AmeriCorps SLICE Corps, Simpson County, Kentucky

In this program, 25 AmeriCorps members provided intensive tutoring in reading to 128 2nd graders, helping the students improve their reading comprehension by an average of 2.8 grade levels over nine months. One-third of the students improved by more than three grade levels. Members visited each student's home every other week to show parents their children's reading materials, update them on the child's academic progress and offer tips on how to help their children read. The key is consistency. AmeriCorps SLICE members tutor students for the entire school year. As a classroom teacher said about one student: "[The student] is in his second year of being tutored by a SLICE Corps member. Last year he was very shy and withdrawn. He was very adept verbally but not so at reading and writing. This year his reading is better and he really enjoys writing. He's a real worker and seems to enjoy school much more. [The student's] parents are very interested in his school progress. They are willing to come whenever you call them and they spend time working with him on his school work. He has thrived on the individual attention that only a SLICE Corps member could give him."

Samuel W. Mason Elementary School, Boston, Massachusetts

Mason School, once cited in a 1990 *Boston Herald* article, with its then enrollment of 133, as "The Least Chosen Elementary School In The City", turned itself around through a variety of innovative approaches. The school has 296 students (43 percent African-American, 23 percent Cape Verdian, 14 percent Latino, 13 percent white, 3 percent Asian-American, 2 percent Native American). Twenty-four percent of the homes are non-English speaking. Reading has been a primary emphasis of Mason's improvement efforts. Teaching teams include Reading Recovery and Resource Room teachers. These teachers work with grade-level clusters in the morning to reduce the student-teacher ratio from 26:1 to 13:1. In the afternoon, the team works with the kindergarten and early childhood teachers in the early literacy program, "Bright Start," in groups of nine students. Title I reaches all students and doubles the time in reading instruction. Special attention is paid to learning styles, with emphasis on accelerated reading instruction and problem-solving activities. In 1995, Boston College's Urban District Assessment Consortium Project found that Mason's reading performance exceeded the average score for the City of Boston and for the other 11 urban school systems in the project.

What It Means to Read Well by 4th Grade

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) defines three main levels of 4th-grade reading: basic, proficient, and advanced, and they help explain what it means to read well by the 4th grade. The following sample passage is from *Charlotte's Web*, by E.B. White. While not from the actual NAEP, it helps illustrate the kinds of skills expected of students at each level of comprehending a work of fiction:

Having promised Wilbur that she would save his life, she was determined to keep her promise. Charlotte was naturally patient. She knew from experience that if she waited long enough, a fly would come to her web; and she felt sure that if she thought long enough about Wilbur's problem, an idea would come to her mind. Finally, one morning toward the middle of July, the idea came. "Why how perfectly simple!" she said to herself. "The way to save Wilbur's life is to play a trick on Zuckerman. If I can fool a bug," thought Charlotte, "I can surely fool a man. People are not as smart as bugs."

- Students at the **basic** level are able to read the passage and tell what Charlotte promised Wilbur.
- Students at the **proficient** level are also able to describe why Charlotte thought she could fool Zuckerman.
- Students at the **advanced** level recognize that Charlotte compares waiting for ideas to entrapping a fly.

The following sample item from the 1992 NAEP exam helps illustrate the kinds of skills expected of students at each level in a text that presents information. The passage is from *Amanda Clement: The Umpire in a Skirt*, by Marilyn Kratz.

It was a hot Sunday afternoon in Hawarden, a small town in western Iowa. Amanda Clement was sixteen years old. She sat quietly in the grandstand with her mother, but she imagined herself right out there on the baseball diamond with the players. Back home in Hudson, South Dakota, her brother Hank and his friends often asked her to umpire games. Sometimes she was even allowed to play first base. Today, Mandy, as she was called, could only sit and watch Hank pitch for Renville against Hawarden. The year was 1904, and girls were not supposed to participate in sports.

- Students at the **basic** level are able to read the passage and tell what Mandy wanted to do.
- Students at the **proficient** level are also able to describe what was getting in the way of Mandy's dream.
- Students at the **advanced** level are able to generalize about how Mandy's experience might differ from a girl's experience today.

President Clinton's America Reads Challenge asks all Americans to pitch in and help children read so that by the time they reach the 4th grade, they can at least read at the "basic" level and many more than now are reading at the "proficient" level.

EARLY LEARNING

The latest research on the human brain and its development confirms what we have known for decades -- that the early years of children's lives are critical to their cognitive, emotional and physical development. Parents need to be their children's first teacher if their children are to start at school ready to learn.

Since the beginning of the Clinton Administration, early childhood investment has been a top priority. Over the last four years, the federal government has invested heavily in effective programs, increasing funding for Head Start by 43 percent. The Clinton Administration is committed to building on this progress to ensure that every parent is their child's first teacher and every child arrives at school ready to learn.

Expanding Head Start

- ***Head Start Helps Children Get Ready to Learn and Ready to Read.*** For more than 30 years, Head Start has been one of our nation's best investments in helping low-income parents be their children's first teacher, and in making sure that children start school ready to read and ready to learn. Head Start provides hundreds of thousands of three- and four-year old children cognitive, social and language development, comprehensive health services and healthy meals and nutrition. Head Start offers parenting skills, support, education and training to parents seeking to improve their circumstances and their children's chances of success.
- ***President Clinton's Budget Expands Head Start Participation to 1 Million Three and Four Year Olds.*** Today, 800,000 low-income children and their families -- but not all of those who are eligible -- have a chance to benefit from Head Start. The President's budget plan continues to expand enrollment so by the year 2002, one million of this nation's most disadvantaged children and families will have the chance for a Head Start.
- ***Head Start Works.*** Research findings overwhelmingly show that Head Start works. Last year, a Packard Foundation study reviewed nearly 150 separate studies of the Head Start program and concluded that it not only had the immediate impact of raising reading scores, but had the lasting effect of making students less likely to be held back a grade, less likely to be placed in special education classes, and more likely to graduate from high school. Even later in life, former participants were less likely to go on welfare or enter the criminal justice system.

- ***Parental Involvement Is The Bedrock of Head Start.*** Last year more than 800,000 Head Start parents demonstrated their commitment by volunteering in their local program. And they get a great deal in return: Head Start staff work closely with parents to help them build their skills, not only to become better parents but also to become contributing members of their community. Parents are taught the importance of reading to their children. When parents have difficulty reading, Head Start programs work with them to improve their literacy skills.
- ***Early Head Start and Quality Improvements Under the Clinton Administration.*** In 1994, the Clinton Administration established the **Early Head Start** program, providing tens of thousands of children ages zero to three and their families with family-centered and community-based services. Over the last three years, the Clinton Administration has also invested significantly in improving program quality, providing local programs with the resources they need to attract and retain high quality teachers and to improve the quality and safety of the Head Start centers.
- ***Family Literacy is a New Priority in Head Start.*** Under new standards developed by the Clinton Administration, family literacy is a new priority in Head Start -- all parents will be offered training to help them be involved in their children's education and to help them be their children's first teacher.
- ***The America Reads Challenge Will Build on the Strong Foundation Provided by Head Start.*** After-school and summer tutoring for young school-age children and for their older siblings and parents builds on what Head Start begins. Through the Head Start Transition Initiative, Head Start programs will dedicate at least one part-time staff person to work with local school systems, parents, child care providers and other members of the community to make sure children successfully make the transition from Head Start to public school.

Other Early Learning Opportunities

- ***America Reads Parents As First Teachers Challenge Grants:*** To make sure that every child can read well by the end of 3rd grade, the President's America Reads Challenge includes Parents as First Teachers Challenge Grants that will invest in proven efforts to provide assistance to parents who want to help ensure their children will read well. The grants will fund national and regional networks to share information on how parents can help children to read, and fund the expansion of successful local programs, such as the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) or the Parents as First Teachers (PAT) program. The President's proposal includes \$300 million over 5 years for these grants.
- ***White House Conference on Early Learning and The Brain.*** Thanks to the latest scientific research and discoveries, we now know much more about a child's cognitive, emotional and physical development in the first few years of life. For example, we now

know that reading to children in their first three years not only strengthens the emotional bonds between a parent and a child and helps children learn words and concepts, but that it actually stimulates their brain growth. The President and First Lady will convene a White House conference this spring to explore the implications of these scientific discoveries and research for parents and policy makers.

- ***National Prescription for Reading Campaign.*** In December 1996, the First Lady announced, along with representatives of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Booksellers Association, the American Library Association, and the Reach Out and Read program a national campaign to put books in the hands of parents who bring their young children to the doctor, and to get doctors to prescribe daily reading. Doctors and nurses across the country are beginning to “prescribe reading” to infants and young children because they know the impact reading has on babies and young children, and they have a unique opportunity at every check-up to encourage parents to read to their children daily.
- ***Vice President’s Conference on Family and Learning.*** In June, Vice President and Mrs. Gore will hold their sixth annual family conference, this time on families and learning. We know that children learn best when their parents are active partners in the process. The conference will bring together leaders in the field of education, parents, teachers, and policy makers to build on successful examples of partnerships between families, schools and communities, including those that help children learn before they start school.
- ***Partnership for Family Involvement in Education:*** Over 2,000 family, school, community, employer and religious groups have joined with Secretary of Education Richard Riley to create the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. The Partnership’s activities include strengthening at-home activities that encourage reading, promoting and adopting family-friendly business practices such as providing leave time to attend parent-teacher conferences and volunteer in schools, and supporting learning communities through organized before- and after-school and summer activities.
- ***Goals 2000 Parent Resource Centers:*** In addition to involving parents in the development of state and local Goals 2000 education plans, the President’s Goals 2000 program provides funding for each state to establish parent resource centers that help parents learn how to help their children achieve high standards. The centers coordinate existing programs, provide resource materials, and support a variety of promising models of family involvement programs. In fiscal year 1997, \$15 million in funding is available for support centers in 42 states, 14 more than in 1996.

CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

One size does not fit all in American education. All students and their families need to be able to choose a public school that meets their needs, and schools must be given more flexibility in return for greater accountability to parents and the public for high standards. Public school choice and public charter schools are especially promising strategies for expanding options and accountability in public education.

Public School Choice

- ***States and school districts should provide public school choice plans*** that give every parent the ability to choose their child's public school. States and communities can provide parents with their choice of school within a district, state, or even of smaller schools-within-schools at their neighborhood public school. Local and state boards of education can encourage and support the development of charter schools, magnet schools and other choice strategies and undertake careful reviews of charter proposals to be sure they are of the highest quality. The President has challenged states to provide parents with more choice in their children's public education, and states and communities have been responding.
- ***Provide report cards on every school.*** States and school districts can publish in print and on the Internet report cards on every school, providing parents the information they need to choose their child's school. This can help parents compare things such as reading scores, graduation rates, class size, courses offered, number of teachers with advanced certification, safety records, and other key measures, with schools across the school district, state, and country.

Public Charter Schools

- ***Every state should pass a charter school law that enables parents and teachers to start new public charter schools that stay open only as long as they do a good job.*** These schools can be created by teachers, parents, community groups, businesses, universities, museums, and others. Done right, they can be tailored to meet the needs of their students and promote healthy competition within public education. State legislatures must enact solid charter school laws to support the creation of a sizable number of high-performing public charter schools, providing these schools with real flexibility while holding them accountable for reaching high standards for all children. Five years ago, there was only one charter school in America. Today, there are more than 400, and half the states have charter school laws.
- ***To support these efforts, the Clinton Administration, together with Congress, is expanding start-up funding for charter schools.*** The Administration has proposed nearly

doubling the charter school start-up grant program to \$100 million in FY 1998. The President initiated this fund in 1994 to address the most commonly cited obstacle to creating these schools—lack of access to start-up funding. The President's budget plan sets aside enough funding to quickly bring more choices in public education to students and their families, helping to start 3,000 charter schools over the next several years. The funding requested for FY 1998 alone would support the development of about 1,000 charter schools by teachers, parents, community groups, and other responsible organizations.

The Nation's First Charter School: A Teacher's Vision Becomes Reality

City Academy, in St. Paul, Minnesota, was the first charter school in the nation to open its doors. Founded by two teachers with assistance from many of the first year students, the school focuses on youth who have dropped out of school. City Academy, placing a heavy emphasis on student responsibility and decision making, is a small school with a personalized learning environment and has had significant success. Most of the students, all former drop outs, have graduated and gone on to some kind of postsecondary education. Like most charter schools in Minnesota, this school was started "from scratch," rather than converted from an existing school. The school's director is also helping teachers in other states to create charter schools.

- *The Clinton Administration will assist local teams of parents, teachers, community leaders, and others to develop successful public charter schools.* The Clinton Administration will support regional meetings, helpful guidebooks, summer institutes, and a World Wide Web site to help provide the information and assistance needed to start high-quality schools, including developing the rigorous performance benchmarks by which schools may be held accountable.

Accountability

- *Fix failing schools quickly and directly—even if it means closing them and then reopening them in a way that meets the needs of students, parents, and communities.* Clear standards can be set to evaluate the success or failure of schools, and school districts and states can intervene when schools are not meeting these standards. These efforts should take advantage of the new approach to accountability in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—the largest federal program in K-12 education—which now requires states and school districts to intervene in low-performing schools with such strategies as intensive technical assistance, mentoring, reconstituting failing schools, or

creating new charter schools.

School districts can support and reward principals and teachers who establish an atmosphere of learning, a system of accountability, and a spirit of adventure that help students learn. At the same time, school districts can find ways to improve or remove teachers or principals who are not making the grade. In return for greater accountability, principals and teachers, in turn, should be given the authority and support they need to do a good job.

Holding Schools Accountable for Results

Maryland has held its schools accountable for results by putting in place a system for taking over schools with low student attendance rates and achievement on state assessments. Low-performing schools are first given the opportunity to improve based on a state approved plan. Though no schools have yet been taken over yet, the focus on accountability is making a difference. After being identified as low-performing, Patterson High School in Baltimore hired a new principal who focused her team on increasing student achievement by reorganizing instruction and the school day. As a result, attendance has risen, more students passed the state's graduation test, and more seniors graduated than in prior years.

Greater flexibility

- ***In return for accountability, the Clinton Administration has pressed for greater flexibility and local decision making in the use of federal program funds.*** Drawing on their experiences as former governors, both President Clinton and Secretary of Education Richard Riley came to Washington strongly committed to increasing flexibility for states and communities, cutting red tape, and supporting states and communities in their own education improvement efforts. Since 1993, they have implemented the Goals 2000 program with no new regulations, cut nearly 80 percent of elementary and secondary education program regulations, approved over 140 waivers of requirements of major federal education programs, and cut the required paperwork to receive student loans. In addition, they have given nine states the authority to grant waivers of federal requirements for their own school districts and made over 20,000 schools eligible to combine most of their federal funds to support schoolwide reform, freeing them from most federal requirements.

SAFE, DISCIPLINED, AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS

We cannot educate our children in schools where weapons, gang violence and drugs threaten their safety. For students to learn well, their schools must be disciplined and feel safe. While most schools do provide a secure learning environment, a growing number of schools in all types of communities—urban, suburban, and rural—are experiencing problems with violence and with alcohol and drug use.

Fortunately, schools, parents, and communities are finding practical ways to provide children the safe and disciplined conditions they need and should expect to find in school, such as by promoting smaller schools, respectful communities, fair and rigorously enforced discipline codes, teacher training to deal with violence, school uniforms, and after-school programs that keep kids productive and off the streets.

As a nation, we too must do everything possible to ensure that schools provide a safe and secure environment where the values of discipline, hard work and study, responsibility, and respect can thrive and be passed on to our children. We have a basic, old-fashioned bottom line. We must get drugs and violence out of our schools, and we must put discipline and learning back in them.

Ensuring Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free Schools

The Clinton Administration challenges all schools to have in place high standards of discipline and behavior with tough measures to keep guns and drugs out: a “zero tolerance” policy. In October 1994, the President signed into law the **Gun-Free Schools Act**, and issued a Presidential Directive later that month to enforce “zero tolerance” in our schools: If a student brings a gun to school, he or she does not come back for a year.

In last year’s budget, the President successfully protected the **Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program**, which now provides school security, drug and violence prevention and education programs in 97 percent of America’s school districts.

We must continue working to ensure that every child, every teacher, and the community can feel safe in and around the school building.

- *Schools should consider adopting uniform policies.* School uniforms are

In 1994, the Long Beach, California School District implemented a mandatory school uniform policy for nearly 60,000 elementary and middle school students. District officials found that in the year following implementation of the policy, overall crime decreased 36 percent, fights decreased 51 percent, sex offenses decreased 74 percent, weapons offenses decreased 50 percent, assault and battery offenses decreased 34 percent and vandalism decreased 18 percent.

one way to deter school violence, promote discipline and foster a better learning environment. The Administration sent a *Manual on School Uniforms* to the nation's 16,000 school districts last year. The manual is a road map for communities and schools that want children in their schools to wear uniforms and is a vital source of information about successful programs.

- ***Communities should enforce truancy laws.*** One of the most effective ways to reduce juvenile crime is to crack down on truancy. The Administration has also provided every school district in the country with a *Manual to Combat Truancy* to help communities establish fair and effective laws to reduce truancy and keep kids in school and off the streets.
- ***Keep schools open late.*** The President's budget includes a new initiative to provide additional safe havens and extended learning opportunities for children and their families at schools around the country. The initiative will help highlight how after-school, summer and weekend programs in Community Learning Centers can get us "back to basics" and foster active community involvement. Keeping schools open late can help give young people a safe haven from gangs and drugs, and provide peace of mind for working parents.

Bringing in Parents to Increase Safety

Fathers at Beech Grove City Schools in Indiana have joined together to be "Security Dads" attending school-sponsored sporting events, dances and other student activities. "Security Dads" ensure proper behavior, evict troublemakers when necessary, and generally keep the peace. As a result of this effort, parental involvement in their children's education has increased and student behavior has improved.

Making Schools Places for Values, Not Violence

Schools are a place for values, not violence. They must teach the basic American values of respect, hard work, and good citizenship.

- ***Promoting character education as part of every curriculum.*** We cannot raise standards in every other subject if we fail to teach our children good values and how to be good citizens. Toward this end, the President has hosted two White House Conferences on Character Education and has encouraged the development of character education through the Improving America's Schools Act.

- ***Protecting the religious freedom of students and reaching out to America's religious community to support the learning of young people.*** With the support of a diverse group of religious and school leaders, Education Secretary Riley issued guidelines in August 1995 making clear that students' religious rights do not end at the schoolhouse door. As a result of these guidelines, the National School Boards Association has reported a dramatic drop in the need to help school officials clarify what is allowed in public schools when its students practice their religion. In addition, 33 religious communities representing 75 percent of religiously affiliated Americans signed onto the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. Two successful religion and education local summits also brought together religious leaders, school officials, and the leadership of community organizations and businesses.
- ***Promoting greater parental involvement.*** Thirty years of research shows that greater parental involvement in children's learning is a critical link to achieving a high-quality education for every student. Through the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, the Department of Education has played a critical role in helping schools to be more welcoming and inviting to families; encouraging employers to provide ways for parents and employees to be involved in education, including volunteering in their local schools; and expanding the support that youth, community, cultural and religious groups are giving to back greater family involvement in education. Over 2,000 employers, schools, religious, and community groups—including the Urban League, Hadassah and Pizza Hut—have joined the Partnership and have pledged to support the education of children and the involvement of their parents.

Service in Support of Safety

In Los Angeles, AmeriCorps members are working with thousands of students to reduce school violence. AmeriCorps members mentor and tutor 2,000 community youth, train them in conflict resolution skills, and help establish after school programs.

- ***Promoting community service by high school and college students through Learn and Serve and AmeriCorps.*** AmeriCorps is the new domestic Peace Corps that involves Americans of all ages getting things done to meet community needs. In just two years, AmeriCorps has given more than 50,000 Americans an opportunity to serve their country. The vast majority of AmeriCorps members are working on the critical problems of children and youth. They tutor, mentor, organize after-school programs, teach violence and drug prevention, and organize safe havens and safe corridor programs. National service promotes core values of hard work, self discipline, and personal responsibility. It

encourages people to give something back to their country. And it teaches its members to take responsibility for others, not just for a year, but for a lifetime.

Through Learn and Serve America, more than a half million students from kindergarten through graduate school are helping their communities and proving their academic skills in the process. They are learning citizenship in a direct and vital way, not by textbooks, but by service, by working on real problems in society. The skills and habits they develop—teamwork, self-discipline, initiative—will help them become productive workers as well as responsible citizens. We must spread and develop this idea in every school, college and university, to engage an increasing number of students in America.

The Clinton Administration challenges all students, schools, parents, communities, religious and other groups to do what they can to make all our schools safe, disciplined and drug-free environments to engage and motivate students to learn, and to teach the values of hard work and respect.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION

American schools face the twin pressures of rising enrollment and deteriorating buildings. To be ready for the 21st Century, our children's schools should be safe and spacious places to learn. The schools of the future should be equipped with computers, new media and state-of-the-art science labs. Clean, well-maintained, up-to-date schools send every student a clear message: you are important to us. We take your education seriously. In order to keep faith with our children, we must ensure that our schools are prepared for the next century.

Distressingly, today our nation's schools, many built 50 years ago, are increasingly run-down, overcrowded and technologically ill-equipped. Too many school buildings and classrooms are literally a shambles. According to a report of the General Accounting Office, one-third of our schools need major repair or outright replacement; 60 percent need work on major building features—a sagging roof, or a cracked foundation; and 46 percent lack even the basic electrical wiring to support computers, modems, and modern communications technology. These problems are found all across America, in cities and suburbs and one-stoplight towns.

We have high expectations of our students, teachers and schools. But we cannot expect our children and our teachers to build strong lives on a crumbling foundation. In order to keep faith with our children, we must ensure that our schools are prepared for the next century. This is a matter of real urgency. This year our schools opened their doors to the largest number of students in the history of our republic—51.7 million. And enrollment is expected to continue to rise over the next ten years, breaking all previous enrollment records.

Because of the unique circumstance of record enrollments and often run-down school buildings, the President has proposed that the federal government for the first time join with states and communities to modernize and renovate our public schools. The President's budget calls for \$5 billion over the next four years to help pay for up to half the interest that local school districts incur on school construction bonds, or for other forms of assistance that will spur new state and local infrastructure investment. This financing assistance can help to spur \$20 billion in new resources for school modernization—a 25 percent increase above current levels over the next four years.

The Broward County, Florida, Public Schools already ranks among the largest school systems in the nation with more than 218,000 students, and it continues to grow at a phenomenal rate (the district estimates it is adding 10,000 more students a year). Although the district added 37 new schools and refurbished many existing schools over the past seven years, the district's projected capital needs over the next seven years total \$2.4 billion. Funding from identifiable sources to date totals only \$1 billion, leaving a shortfall of \$1.4 billion. The county's use of 2,144 portable classrooms has earned it the nickname "the portable capital of the world." Thousands of other students attend classes in areas intended to be music and science rooms, labs or auditoriums. Meanwhile, the space crunch is impeding the system's efforts to make greater use of technology in the classroom, including meeting the superintendent's goal of providing a minimum of four computers in every classroom for student use and one computer for teacher use.

This school construction initiative is flexible. It will give communities and states the power to decide how to use the new resources. It will help those who help themselves—requiring local communities to take responsibility for this effort. And it will focus on sparking new projects, not merely subsidizing existing ones.

The federal government will do its part by subsidizing the interest that communities incur on school construction bonds or other financing mechanisms — making it cheaper and easier for communities to finance school construction.

Communities— with appropriate assistance from states—must do their part by making a commitment in investing in their schools. They must approve and pay for local bond issues needed to repair old schools and build new ones. And they must provide adequate maintenance for today's schools so that they can continue to serve students into the next century.

OPENING WIDE THE DOORS OF COLLEGE

Today, more than ever before in our history, education is the fault line between those who will prosper in the new economy and those who will not. Most of today's good jobs require more skills and training than a high school diploma affords. Over half the new jobs created in the last three years have been managerial and professional jobs requiring higher-level skills. Fifteen years ago the typical worker with a college degree made 38 percent more than a worker with a high school diploma. Today, that figure is 73 percent. Two years of college means a 20 percent increase in annual earnings. People who finish two years of college earn a quarter of a million dollars more than their high school counterparts over a lifetime.

One of the great challenges of our time is making the dramatic economic changes occurring all over the world benefit our young people and open opportunities for our older adults as well. While many people were managing to find education and training that prepared them for high-skilled jobs without a college degree, too many young people lost their way between high school and the world of work. And for those who are academically prepared for college, the cost limits access for many working families and middle-income families, just as it does for low-income families. The average cost of a public college increased from 9 percent of the typical family's income in 1979 to 14 percent in 1994.

We must make two years of college—the 13th and 14th years of education—as universal for young Americans as the first 12 are today. And, we must make college more affordable for all Americans. To support these goals, the President has already initiated an unprecedented college opportunity strategy that will make college more accessible and affordable to Americans than at any time in their lives, while also reducing fraud and abuse and reducing costs to taxpayers.

Over the next five years, the **President's budget will more than double the federal commitment to postsecondary education from the time he entered office—going from \$24 billion a year in 1993 to \$58 billion in 2002—opening up the doors to college for millions of students.**

The Direct Lending Program

The Direct Loan program, signed into law by President Clinton in 1993, gives student loans directly to people who need them, with new flexible repayment plans. This dramatic change is making loans to students and their families more affordable and debt more manageable, providing borrowers and participating schools with a simple, more automated and accountable system, while saving taxpayers billions of dollars. In its third successful year, the program will provide \$10 billion in loans at over 1,600 schools. More than 2.1 million student and parent borrowers have received direct loans since the program began. During the 1996-97 academic year, it is expected that Direct Loans will make up approximately 36 percent of federal student loans.

An important aspect of the new Direct Loan program is that it provides students the ability to repay their loans as a percentage of their income -- **income-contingent repayment** -- to encourage community service, and to make debt more manageable and to reduce defaults. As of November 1996, nearly 100,000 borrowers with loans totaling \$1.5 billion have consolidated into direct lending. About three-quarters of these borrowers are selecting non-standard repayment options with 52 percent selecting income-contingent repayment.

Through the legislation that created the Direct Student Loan program we were able in 1993 to **reduce by 50 percent (from 8 percent to 4 percent) the student loan fees** that lenders and guarantee agencies were allowed to levy on student borrowers. But we need to do more. We propose to further reduce these fees in both the new Direct Student Loan and the older Federal Family Education Loan programs, cutting loan fees from 4 percent to just 2 percent on need-based Stafford loans, and to 3 percent on other loans for students and parents. Furthermore, because the Congressional Budget Office and other analysts have noted that lender costs are very low during the in-school period, when students are not required to make payments on their loans, we propose to reduce the interest rate paid to lenders during that period by one percentage point.

Increasing Grant Aid Available to Students -- Pell Grants

The Administration has worked hard to increase funding for student financial aid programs. Aid available to students increased by \$12 billion between 1993 and 1997—an increase of 48 percent. This year, aid available to students will increase by an additional \$3.4 billion for a record total of \$36 billion (excluding consolidation loans) benefiting an estimated 8.1 million students in 1998.

Pell Grants are the most important form of student financial aid for the nation's neediest students. In the decade preceding 1992, funding for this critical program did not keep pace with inflation, which seriously eroded the Pell Grants' purchasing power. The Clinton Administration began immediately in 1993 to restore fiscal integrity to this program at a time when it had been allowed to accumulate a projected internal program deficit of over \$2 billion. After eliminating that program deficit, the President secured bipartisan support for the largest Pell Grant increase in recent history, a \$230 increase (9 percent) in the maximum grant to \$2,700 by FY97. This represents a full \$400 increase, more than 17 percent, in the maximum grant since 1993.

We now are proposing to increase the maximum award from \$2,700 to \$3,000, as well as greatly expand eligibility to older independent students. Increasing the maximum award to \$3,000 provides more aid to currently eligible students, and makes an additional 130,000 students eligible for the grants. The President's budget also expands the eligibility of low income students age 24 and older. This change will make an additional 218,000 students eligible for Pell Grants, and expand aid for over 890,000 students by an average of \$800. These changes, contained in the President's balanced budget, will increase Pell Grant funding by \$1.7 billion in fiscal year 1998, a more than 25 percent increase over current funding levels.

HOPE Scholarship and Other Tax Benefits: Making the 13th and 14th years of education—at least two years of college—as universal in America as high school is today.

The President's plan includes five tax benefits for middle-class students and families that accept the responsibility to pursue additional education for their children and themselves. We believe that not only will these students and families reap substantial personal and financial benefits from these education incentives, but these investments will also pay a huge long-term dividend to the country. For much of the 20th century, tax policies included incentives to invest in capital and equipment. At the beginning of the 21st century—the education and information age—we must create incentives to invest long term in education and human capacity.

HOPE Scholarships. A centerpiece of President Clinton's HOPE and Opportunity Agenda for higher education is the proposed **HOPE Scholarship tax credit**, which offers two years of tuition at the typical community college for any student enrolled at least half-time. It provides students with a maximum \$1,500 tax credit for tuition and required fees in their first year, and another \$1,500 in their second year if they work hard, stay off drugs, and earn at least a B minus average in their first year. This \$1,500 tax credit will pay the full cost of tuition at a typical community college—essentially making community college free or nearly so for every student. In 1998, this credit is expected to help 4.2 million middle-income students pay for college.

Although the HOPE Scholarship tax credit is priced to pay the full cost of two years of tuition at a typical community college, the credit can be applied to tuition at any college, including four-year public and private colleges. The credit would be a substantial down payment for parents sending their children to four-year colleges with higher tuition. Students receiving tax credits would still be eligible for other federal student aid, including student loans, Pell Grants, and Work Study. However, the maximum tax credit would be \$1,500 minus any federal grants awarded to the student.

The proposal builds on the enormously successful HOPE Scholarship program in Georgia, which guarantees any student in the state of Georgia free college as long as they have earned a B average and stay off drugs. This year the scholarships are helping 80,000 students—including 70 percent of the freshman class at the University of Georgia.

The HOPE scholarship tax credit will help open the doors of college opportunity to every American who works hard and makes the grade, regardless of that student's ability to pay, since education at the typical community college will now essentially be free. The program also makes it clear that with opportunity comes the responsibility to work hard and achieve at a high level. This benefit will initially be available without restrictions tied to previous academic performance but the continued benefit will be reserved for those people who, by definition, are willing to work for it. It's America's most basic bargain: we as a nation will help create opportunity if you'll take responsibility.

\$10,000 Tax Deduction for Education and Training. We have also proposed a tax deduction

of up to \$10,000 per family per year for tuition and fees (minus grants) for college, graduate school, community college and certified training and technical programs. In 1998, 8.1 million students stand to benefit from this proposal for tax relief in 1998.

Students eligible for both the tax credit and the tax deduction would choose one or the other, although students benefiting from the tax credit in the first two years would still be eligible for the deduction in later years. Because the tax proposals are meant to help working families and low- and middle-income students pay for college, eligibility for both the tax credit and the tax deduction would be phased out for joint tax filers with incomes between \$80,000 and \$100,000 and for individual filers with incomes between \$50,000 and \$70,000.

Tax-Free Education Savings Accounts. We have proposed greater flexibility in using Individual Retirement Accounts so that all funds saved in these accounts can be used for postsecondary education expenses free from early withdrawal tax penalties. In addition, our proposal makes more than 20 million families eligible for tax-deductible IRA contributions by substantially extending the income cutoffs for IRA participation. Currently, if an individual or spouse participates in an employer's retirement plan, eligibility is phased out for taxpayers filing a joint return with adjusted gross income between \$40,000 and \$50,000 (between \$25,000 and \$35,000 for single taxpayers). The proposal would expand the phase-out ranges to match the ranges described for the HOPE Scholarship tax credit and \$10,000 deduction. Families who save through an expanded IRA, and then use the savings for higher education, can deduct up to \$10,000 of their withdrawals a year, making savings for college virtually tax free for middle-class families.

Tax-Free Forgiveness of Educational Debt for Public Service and Income-Contingent Student Loan Repayment. We propose that the tax law be changed to allow that the forgiveness of a student loan extended by a charity or educational institution not be counted as income, if it is forgiven as part of a program that enables graduates to work in public service professions. We also plan to apply the same tax treatment to forgiveness provided through our income-contingent repayment plan.

Extension of Tax Benefit to Employees Who Receive Employer-Provided Education Assistance (Section 127). We propose reinstating through the year 2000 the current exclusion from an employee's income of up to \$5,250 per year of postsecondary educational assistance provided by an employer for undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, for 1998-2000, small businesses would be given a new incentive to provide educational assistance to their employees through a 10 percent tax credit for amounts paid under an employer-provided educational assistance program for education provided by a third party.

Other Forms of Aid

National Service Corps. Through creation of the National Service Corps, more than 70,000

AmeriCorps members have been able to provide service throughout the country to work on projects to tutor children to read and learn and to improve the environment, health services, and community policing. This creative new program is helping to regenerate an ethic of community service in this country, particularly for a generation of young adults who were at risk of becoming further alienated from the powerful societal needs of a sense of community and commitment to those communities. The participants also receive scholarships or loan forgiveness for postsecondary education, in return for their service.

Work-Study helps students earn money while they are in school. The President proposed a multi-year plan to increase funding for this valuable federal program by 50 percent by the year 2002, so that 1 million students will be able to attain part-time employment. With strong bipartisan support from the Congress we received an exceptional one-year increase of 35 percent for FY 1997. This increase is substantial enough to allow an increase in the wages for student workers, an expansion of traditional work study opportunities, and, perhaps most important, to expand higher education's commitment to community service activities. To this end, the President has challenged the higher education community to use one-half of the college work study increase for community service, including to tutor young children in reading. Indeed, the Secretary of Education has issued regulations to waive the match for those who use work-study funds to help tutor young children to read.

Presidential Honors Scholarship. We propose a Presidential Honors Scholarship that further emphasizes the importance of student achievement. This program would award one-year, \$1,000 scholarships to the top 5 percent of graduating high school students in every high school in the nation. We need to send a message to every high school in America that we are serious about excellence.

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Reducing Fraud and Abuse. The Administration has made aggressive accountability and oversight efforts to remove ineffective schools from the student financial aid programs, both protecting students and ensuring accountability for taxpayer funds. The U.S. Department of Education's efforts, along with new statutory controls and lender and guarantor efforts, have cut the student loan default rate by more than *one-half*, from 22.4 percent for the FY90 cohort to 10.7 percent for the FY94 cohort. About 700 institutions have been eliminated from eligibility to participate in the federal student assistance programs, in an effort to assure that students benefitting from these valuable programs receive a good education as well. At the same time, the U.S. Department of Education has reduced the administrative burden on participating institutions by streamlining our regulations and by reengineering our administrative processes to make them less intrusive and more effective.

A call to parents, schools, colleges and universities to help students take advantage of these expanded options.

Although the federal government can expand options for paying for college, it will be up to students, parents, families, communities, colleges and universities, and states to make them work.

- **Students** must work hard, play by the rules, and assume responsibility for obtaining the education they will need to get a job and succeed in life.
- **Parents** must make sure their children have the classes they need to get into college and take advantage of the savings afforded by the tax policies to help support their children once there.
- **Schools** can make sure students (as early as in middle school) and their families understand the options available for paying for college and make sure students take the classes and obtain the skills they need to enroll and succeed in college.
- **Colleges and universities** must contain costs of postsecondary education to assure that the benefits of these increases in federal support accrue to the intended beneficiaries—students and their families.
- **States** can build on the HOPE Scholarship plan by making scholarships available for four years of college for students who maintain a B average.

LIFELONG LEARNING

A G.I. Bill for America's Workers

A centerpiece of President Clinton's G.I. Bill for America's Workers has been our proposal to fundamentally reform the current federal job-training system. We have proposed consolidating at least 70 separate job training programs, replacing them with an integrated system that minimizes red tape and maximizes individual choice in each local community. Unemployed workers and workers in transition from one job to another would receive Skill Grants of up to \$3,000 to use as they choose to learn new skills to find new and better jobs.

We would provide these workers access -- through computerized networks open to all and One-Stop Career Centers already operating in many states -- to reliable information on jobs, careers, skill sets required for those jobs, and the success records of various training institutions, so that they can make informed choices about how best to improve their futures.

For our youth, federal education, training, and employment programs will be reshaped to support the community-based school-to-work activities that have evolved in response to the innovative School-to-Work initiative we began in 1994. These programs enable high schools, colleges, and the private sector to offer all youth academically rigorous school- and work-based learning opportunities and so that all youth graduate with the skills and habits of mind to benefit from college education, lifelong learning, and rewarding careers.

Preparing Academically for College

To get ahead and navigate these changing times, our middle and high school students today need to be preparing to go to at least two years of college and probably go back to college, postsecondary training programs, and universities, several more times in their lifetime to continually upgrade their skills and knowledge. That means our elementary and secondary schools need to raise their standards for promotion and graduation. They need to make mastering the basics universal and strengthen all of their core subjects from science to American history and from the arts to foreign languages. Students can get on the path to college by mastering successfully not only basic math but the essentials of algebra and geometry by the eighth grade. High schools need to eliminate their general track and replace it with advance placement and tech-prep classes. Students need to be preparing for college courses. That's why the President in his 1998 budget is supporting expansion of advanced placement courses, raising standards for students, teachers and schools and continuing support for tech-prep.

The **School-to-Work Opportunities Act**, signed by President Clinton in 1994, also creates a pathway for many young people who cannot see the relevance of what they're doing in the classrooms to the world of work and thus get bored and tune out. When the barrier between

academic learning and vocational education is broken, when work-based learning and school-based learning are linked, these students not only stay in school, but they become engaged in learning and do better and continue on to college.

Students at the **Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy in Oakland, California** learn all aspects of the health care industry. Their knowledge of health care includes planning, management, finance, technical and production skills, technology, labor issues, community issues, safety, and environmental issues. They gain this broad understanding through a variety of learning experiences and teaching techniques. Interactive career explorations and a 200-hour hospital internship in the 11th and 12th grades expose them to the business, administrative, and clinical departments of a health care facility. Students also create work-based learning portfolios, which include reflective journal entries and works samples keyed to health career standards. Projects offer an opportunity to explore different aspects of health care and their relationship. Projects may simulate the decision-making processes of a health care provider—for example, reading a case study of a lead-poisoned child, interpreting the results of lab tests, and creating a medical management plan. Student teams may explore health care delivery systems by planning a school-based clinic, and operating a student-run health education center.

All 50 states have received grants under School-to-Work to plan comprehensive training and education and apprenticeship systems. By late 1996, 37 states had made sufficient progress in their planning efforts to receive 5-year grants for implementing their plans. Over 500,000 young people in 1,800 schools throughout the nation are participating in school-to-work systems that integrate academic and vocational instruction and provide work-based learning, preparing them for one to two years of college or more and careers. Over 135,000 employers have been involved in these efforts.

The support of the business community and state and local governments is essential to maintain local and state school-to-work systems that will help ensure a pathway to the middle class for most Americans.

TECHNOLOGICAL LITERACY

Just as 100 years ago the nation struggled with the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy, today we confront the transition from an industrial to a global, technological economy. Technology — the World Wide Web, computer-aided design, word processing, data processing, electronic transfers — has become an engine of our economic growth and has fundamentally changed the ways we learn, how we do business, and the skills students in America need to flourish in the world of work. States, communities, business, families and teachers need to ensure that by the dawn of the next century every classroom in America is connected to the information superhighway with high-quality computers, creative software, and well-trained teachers.

Today, technological literacy—computer skills and the ability to use computers and other technology to improve learning, productivity and performance—is a new basic that our students must master. Preparing our children for a lifetime of computer use is now just as essential as teaching them to read and write and do math. Every major U.S. industry has begun to rely heavily on computers and telecommunications to do its work.

Technology also enriches education. Children with access to computers and trained teachers can learn faster and learn better. In some cases, scores on standardized tests of basic skills for children taught with computers rise by 10 to 15 percent compared to the scores of those taught using conventional instruction. With computers, students can learn at their own pace and practice as much as they need to. For students with disabilities, technology such as word processing and speech recognition can give them the tools they need to participate fully in challenging academic courses. Children master basic skills in 30 percent less time than would normally have been the case. Using technology, quality software and good teachers, students can also learn differently. For example, instead of reading about the human circulatory system in a book and seeing textbook pictures, students can use technology to see blood moving through veins and arteries, watch the process of oxygen entering the bloodstream, and experiment to understand the effects of cholesterol on blood flow, gaining a better understanding of these processes.

Despite the importance and promise of technology, America's schools are not yet prepared for the technological era. About half of all teachers have little or no experience at all with technology in the classroom. Only 4 percent of schools have a computer for every five students—a ratio that allows regular use by each student. Only 9 percent of classrooms have connections to the Internet.

The goal we have presented cannot be set and cannot be achieved unless we all work together. It can only be met with communities, businesses, governments, teachers, parents and students all joining together—in a sense, a high-tech barn-raising.

Technology in Support of Reform

A partnership between the Union City, N.J. school district and Atlantic Bell turned around a failing middle school. Christopher Columbus Middle School demonstrates how technology can improve student performance. Every classroom has several computers and students and teachers have computers at home so that they — and parents — can communicate with each other, get assignments and do homework. As a result of intensive use of technology, reading, math and writing scores are up significantly. Moreover, the school, which had a high absenteeism rate, now has the best attendance record in the district.

Beginning in 1995, President Clinton challenged the nation's parents, teachers, government, community, and business leaders to work together to ensure that all children in America are technologically literate by the dawn of the 21st century—equipped with the communication, math, science, and critical thinking skills essential for the 21st-century economy. He established the four pillars of his technology literacy agenda:

1. Connect every school and classroom in America to the information superhighway;
2. Provide access to modern computers for all teachers and students;
3. Develop effective and engaging software and on-line learning resources as an integral part of the school curriculum; and
4. Provide all teachers the training and support they need to help students learn through computers and the information superhighway.

The response to the President's challenge was immediate and came from all parts of the American community. While much remains to be done, an enormous amount has already been accomplished and steady progress continues to be made.

The Private Sector Response. CEO's of some of the nation's largest and most innovative technology and telecommunication companies have responded to the President's challenge by contributing resources and energy to work in partnership with schools and communities in meeting all four of the President's goals.

In October, the President announced the U.S. Tech Corp, a volunteer organization which enables high-tech workers from the private sector to assist teachers and schools to put the information age at the fingertips of their students.

America's Technology Literacy Challenge. In his 1996 State of the Union Address, President Clinton asked Congress to fund a \$2 billion, five-year Technology Literacy Challenge designed to catalyze state, local, and private sector partnerships in each state to achieve the four educational technology goals and to spur substantial additional private, state and local investment in education technology. Congress supported the President's request for first-year funding and

appropriated \$200 million for grants to states to launch this challenge. States will develop a strategy for using the funds to achieve the President's four goals and for ensuring that no students—especially students in low-income areas and students with special needs—are left behind. The Challenge builds on the Secretary of Education's National Plan, *Getting America's Students Ready for the 21st Century, Meeting the Technology Literacy Challenge*. The President's FY 1998 Budget calls for more than double funding to \$425 million.

The Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program is a national and international hands-on environmental science and educational program that officially started on Earth Day 1995. GLOBE uses scientific instruments and state-of-the-art technology to make science relevant to today's K-12 students. Through GLOBE, students conduct an array of measurements and observations at their schools and share their data via the Internet with other students and scientists around the world to detail an environmental picture of the globe. Vice President Al Gore articulated his vision of the GLOBE program in his book, *Earth in Balance*. He proposed a program "involving as many countries as possible that will use school teachers and their students to monitor the entire earth..."

The Technology Innovation Challenge Grants. This component of the technology literacy challenge invites school systems, colleges, universities, and private businesses to form partnerships to develop creative new ways to use technology for learning. These local innovation grants focus on integrating innovative learning technologies to improve teaching and learning. Each federal dollar is matched by more than 3 to 1 by local and private funds. The 19 consortia funded in FY95 out of 500 proposals are reaching schools with 1.2 million students and involve partnerships with businesses, museums, libraries, and parks in school systems around the nation. An additional 24 partnerships funded in FY96 will allow 24 school districts to work in partnership with a total of 153 other school districts and 130 businesses in 34 states. Another \$57 million will be available for the program in FY97 to support a third round of grants and FY98 will call for \$75 million -- a more than 30% increase.

Universal and Affordable Access to Advanced Telecommunications. President Clinton signed into law the Telecommunications Act of 1996 which ensures that all U.S. schools, libraries, hospitals, and clinics have affordable access to advanced telecommunications services. The President called on the Federal Communications Commission's regulators to ensure that every school and library has access to the information superhighway and in November 1996, the Federal/State Joint Board on Universal Service unanimously recommended that schools and libraries receive discounts for telecommunications services, Internet access, and internal connections. If approved by the FCC, the average discount would be about 60 percent, and one-third of all schools and libraries will receive discounts of 80 to 90 percent.

NetDays. The President and Vice President launched an historic effort to mobilize communities of volunteers to connect classrooms to the Internet. As a result, on March 9, 1996, the President and Vice President and more than 20,000 volunteers laid 6 million feet of cable connecting thousands of California schools with the technology needed to link classrooms, libraries, and laboratories to the information superhighway. This effort sparked an enormous response around the nation and in the fall of 1996 over 40 states organized and participated in NetDays, wiring over 25,000 schools, using over 250,000 volunteers. More NetDays are scheduled for this year.

21st Century Teachers. The new technology cannot make much of an impact on learning unless teachers help find creative new ways to exploit its power and make the new tools an integral part of their teaching. The teachers, and the organizations that support teachers, all stepped forward earlier this year to work together to meet the President's challenge. The National School Boards Association, the National PTA, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and many other business and professional organizations have launched this initiative to recruit thousands of teacher volunteers who will improve their own understanding of how to use education technology and share their expertise with at least five of their peers during the coming school year.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. letter	Hillary Rodham Clinton to Janis Berman (1 page)	12/05/1996	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 20030

FOLDER TITLE:

Education [2]

2013-0534-S

rc1477

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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BOBBIE GREENE

Mr -

Secy. Riley
gave this
to me, and
for sharing
it with you
for what it's
worth.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



free education
standards
NEWS

Remarks by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

What Really Matters in American Education
National Press Club, Washington, D.C.
September 23, 1997

Good morning. I am pleased to be back in Washington after completing the first leg of my annual 'America Goes Back to School' campaign. In the last few weeks, I have visited with parents and teachers and students in about a dozen states from Alaska to Florida including Wyoming, Colorado, and Ohio.

I find these trips very worthwhile. I always come back to Washington with a much better sense of what really matters and what is really going on in the classroom. I want to make some comments about my impressions and then speak to several of the issues in the background paper that we are releasing today entitled, 'What Really Matters.'

One of the strongest impressions I have is that we have some very crowded schools. Right now we have 52.2 million young people in our schools, a new national record. I was in Florida on Thursday and Friday, and I can tell you that the school construction issue is alive and kicking. I believe the Congress needs to revisit this issue within a balanced budget framework.

A second impression is that a new American consensus has now developed about how to improve education. It has taken us over a decade since Ted Bell issued his report, "*A Nation at Risk*" to develop this consensus but everywhere I go I see the core elements of this consensus being put in place.

There is a growing emphasis, for example, on early childhood and the importance of pre-k and kindergarten for all children. I attended the President's Conference on Brain Research last year and I can tell you that the research is really galvanizing people.

A second element is a commitment to high standards linked to challenging assessments. The American people recognize that progress is only going to happen if we make sure that every child has mastered the basics once and for all. That's the third element; a clear focus on the fundamentals. This is a very conservative idea so it always surprises me that some on the right attack the President's proposal for voluntary national tests in the basics of reading and math. As W. Edwards Deming, a leading management expert said, "You can't improve something you can't measure."

The President is on a national crusade to lift up American education starting with these two basics. This is why 79 % of all Americans support these voluntary national tests according to the latest Wall Street Journal poll, and why the American people have made education the number one issue that should concern the federal government.

I believe that the two voluntary national tests in reading and math, coupled with our strong investment in

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education, can shake-up the status-quo and help drive American education forward.

As I travel around the country I see four other elements to this new education consensus falling into place. These include a stronger focus on more parental involvement; teacher quality; a greater investment in technology; and growing recognition -- even among young people -- that taking the tough core courses pays off.

Another element to this consensus is the willingness of school leaders to get on with the job when it comes to turning around failing schools. We know how to fix failing schools, and we have a new and tougher breed of superintendents who are willing to hold people accountable; Paul Vallas in Chicago, Rudy Crew in New York City, Bill Rojas in San Francisco, David Hornbeck in Philadelphia -- just to name a few -- are all 'no nonsense' leaders who are committed to turning around failing schools, ending social promotion and raising standards.

They are not willing to put up with mediocrity or failure and neither am I. If a school is failing, don't let it drift. You have to be willing to close it down or reconstitute it. If a principal is slow to get the message, superintendents and school boards need to be willing to replace them.

If teachers are burnt out, counsel them to leave the profession in a fair but speedy process or make sure they get the extra help they need from master teachers --what educators call peer review. We know how to fix failing schools, and as this report indicates, there are school districts that are making things happen.

The new American consensus on how to improve education is a pragmatic, mainstream consensus, and we are starting to see steady and positive results. Math and science scores have been rising for a decade. SAT scores are up, particularly in math, and ACT scores have gone up in four of the last five years. And one-third of this year's college freshmen class took Advanced Placement courses.

Public education is beginning to improve. We are not where we want to be, but we are headed in the right direction. This is why we need to stay focused on what really matters and not get side-tracked by divisive issues like vouchers. Let's remember that almost 90% of all of our young people go to public schools and the great majority of our public schools are successful.

I can tell you this -- if you gave the American people a choice today between using federal dollars to renovate and build new public schools or using public tax dollars to pay for private school vouchers, there would be no question how the American people would vote.

It could cost roughly \$15 billion just to pay the tuition of the 5 million children already enrolled in private schools in this nation. The last thing we should be doing at a time when so many of our schools are bursting at their seams is to be draining public tax dollars from public education to subsidize private education.

The President in his Saturday radio address indicated his determination to veto any legislation that includes the Gorton Amendment on block granting or the Goodling Amendment that would block the voluntary national tests. I will also urge the President to veto any legislation that includes the DC voucher proposal now moving through Congress or the Coverdell IRA proposal -- which is a voucher by another name.

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I am not satisfied with the status-quo when it comes to public education, but I will not stand by and see public education run down every chance that some people get. The American people believe in public education and that's where they want to make the improvements.

This is why the President has made education his top priority and why he released \$40 million in charter schools grants last Saturday. Charter schools are creative schools that are making things happen but they are still public schools that are accountable.

Vouchers are wrong for many reasons and we need to be clear about what is at stake. Vouchers undermine a 200-year American commitment to the common school -- a commitment that has helped America keep faith with our democratic ideals and become a beacon of light for people all over the world.

Let's remember that public education has always been and continues to be the open door to American success and good citizenship -- the American way to achievement and freedom. Vouchers would begin the unraveling of this uniquely American fabric -- the common public school that is open to all and gives everyone a fair chance to succeed.

Every state in this nation provides for a free, public education and a great majority of them have written this idea into their state constitution. The ideal that every child in this country has a constitutional right to a free, public education is not to be dismissed lightly. I do not think that voucher proponents have thought long and hard about the very negative consequences of 'balkanizing' public education.

The background paper we are releasing today notes that vouchers would reduce public accountability and make private schools less private and less independent -- and make parochial schools less parochial.

There is little certainty that religious schools that now make up 79% of all private schools would be willing to give up their religious mission in order to overcome constitutional barriers. The paper also notes that private schools simply do not have the capacity to absorb additional students, much less those children with special disabilities.

I worry, too, that those who support vouchers have become almost myopic in their insistence that public education is failing across-the-board. Tell that to the parents in Montgomery County, or in Louisville, Kentucky or in Charlotte, North Carolina or in countless school districts across the country where parents and community leaders support public education.

Two years ago, *Money* magazine did a survey of the top 100 school districts in the country. The survey found out that the two defining factors that led to the creation of what *Money* magazine called "super schools" were community and family involvement, not income or family status. Vouchers, on the other hand, divide communities.

The background paper also provides research evidence -- and this is very important -- that the most important choice students can make is not the type of school they go to -- public or private -- but the academic courses they take.

This is the first choice that parents should be making -- making sure their children take the tough academic

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courses like algebra, geometry, chemistry and other core courses. This is why I am always perplexed that voucher advocates almost never talk about how to improve reading, how to improve teaching, how to raise academic standards or how to fix crumbling schools.

Their solution for every issue that confronts American education is vouchers. It is a very simplistic world view -- a silver bullet solution -- and it is just dead wrong. If a school is failing, the solution isn't to give scholarships to 50 children and leave 500 behind, but to fix the whole school.

The current \$7 million DC voucher initiative in Congress, which offers vouchers for 2,000 low income D.C. public school students, is a case in point. It targets 2,000 children and leaves another 75,000 behind. Is this fair?

If Congress has an additional \$7 million to spend on education in the District, let me tell you how it could be spent. You can spend it to support additional reading programs. We have already recruited 450 work-study college students from six local colleges to be reading tutors. Or you can spend it and help a lot more young people get ahead. Let me tell you how.

Under my proposal \$3.5 million would be used to match up 58 schools with proven education reformers like Robert Slavin's 'Success for All' program at John Hopkins University -- the New American Schools effort -- or the Laboratory for Success at Temple University.

These are programs with a solid track record that are specifically designed to turn around failing inner schools. This effort would impact 29,000 District children -- not 2,000 children -- but 29,000 children. Each of these programs is based on solid research that will help local schools redesign themselves with a program of high academic standards, professional teacher development, and real parent involvement.

We need to respect home rule here in the District and let every parent in D.C. know that all of their children deserve the best education possible. Our challenge is not to help 2,000 students move out, but to help all 78,000 students in the District move-up academically.

My proposal would also set aside \$3.5 million to support 70 new after-school programs in the public schools to help 7,000 children. The FBI tells us that the after-school hours -- from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. -- are the most dangerous for children. Let's give these young people safe-havens where they can be safe and get the extra tutoring help they need.

Does public education need to be improved? Of course it does and there is a consensus about how it can be done. Public tax dollars ought to be spent to improve reading and math, to improve the skills of America's teachers, to get computers into the classroom, to renovate and build new schools -- to make sure that high school diplomas really mean something.

I believe that if we focus in on what we agree on and what really matters rather than on what divides us -- we can make the next ten years the 'golden era' of American education. The American people have made the improvement of public education a national priority. We know how to fix our schools. Now is the time to roll-up our sleeves and get it done.

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What Really Matters in American Education

White Paper prepared for
U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley
for speech at the National Press Club, Washington, D.C.

September 23, 1997

U.S. Department of Education

PUBLIC SCHOOLS, DEMOCRACY, AND FREE ENTERPRISE

Quality public schools are the foundation of a democracy and a free enterprise economic system. The public school concept is fundamentally American: most of the fifty U.S. states have a provision in their state constitution for free, public education. These statutes reflect a commitment to the idea that all children, regardless of their academic readiness, race, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or special education needs, have equal access to a quality K-12 education, and a chance to develop to their maximum potential. State constitutions describe this most essential purpose as:

“A general diffusion of knowledge being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to establish and make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools.” (Texas)

“The General Assembly shall provide for a system of free public elementary and secondary schools for all children of school age throughout the Commonwealth, and shall seek to ensure that an educational program of high quality is established and continually maintained.” (Virginia)

“It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person...The legislature shall provide a basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools.” (Montana)

Therein lies the power of the American system of education — it is truly *public*. The “common school” — the concept upon which our public school system was built — teaches children important lessons about both the commonality and diversity of American culture. These lessons are conveyed not only through what is taught in the classroom, but by the very experience of attending school with a diverse mix of students. The common school has made quality public education and hard work the open door to American success and good citizenship and the American way to achievement and freedom.

VOUCHERS THREATEN THE FUNDAMENTAL MISSION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Using public tax dollars for private school vouchers fundamentally undermines 200 years of public education in America. As Neil Postman has suggested in his book The End of Education, “...public education does not serve the public. It creates the public. And in creating the right kind of public, the schools contribute toward strengthening the spiritual basis of the American Creed. That is how Jefferson understood it, how Horace Mann understood it, how John Dewey understood it.” Private school vouchers strike at this ideal because they would:

- **Divert attention from the need to improve the public schools.** Providing private school vouchers for a few children will not help to improve the quality of education for most of America's children. Expanded choice in public schools through magnet schools and charter schools, coupled with a focus on the basics, increased parent involvement, improved teaching, and high standards for achievement and discipline, can do far more to improve the education of all children than private school vouchers for a few. The purpose of any school improvement idea should be to invite effective innovation in more schools, particularly those schools that are lagging behind.
- **Add to the public cost of education.** A voucher system would substantially increase the public cost of education by providing public funds to pay private school tuition for children who are already enrolled in private schools. If a voucher program open to all students were implemented today, it would cost American taxpayers over \$15 billion to pay the tuitions of the 5 million students already enrolled in private schools.¹ This enormous cost would drain resources from public schools at the same time that billions of dollars are needed just to accommodate the 1.9 million additional students projected to be enrolled in public schools in 2007² [NCES, The Condition of Education, 1997].
- **Reduce accountability.** Vouchers could create a situation at the elementary/secondary school level analogous to that at the postsecondary level; in the last four years, 700 for-profit schools in our nation's higher education system were removed from the federal loan program by the U.S. Department of Education because of their misuse of federal tax dollars. Private schools operate outside of the scope of public authority, and therefore have no public accountability for providing a quality education to all students.
- **Force private and parochial schools to become less private and less parochial.** If a systemwide voucher program were adopted, the influx of public dollars into these unregulated schools would result in increased pressure for greater public scrutiny and accountability for these public expenditures. Quality private and parochial schools are valuable parts of the educational variety in our democracy, and these pressures would ultimately interfere with their unique missions and curricula.
- **Possibly violate State and U.S. Constitutions.** Using public tax dollars to pay tuition at religious schools could violate the constitutional separation of church and state. Indeed, publicly funded voucher programs in Milwaukee and Cleveland have been legally challenged for their inclusion of religious schools in their programs, as judges in both Wisconsin and Ohio have ruled that the participation of religious schools violates federal and state constitutional provisions barring government aid to religious institutions. Voucher program advocates in both states have consistently appealed these decisions to higher courts, but no court has yet to overturn this basic ruling.

¹ Based on average private school tuition of \$3,116 in 1993-94.

² Estimated total additional costs in 2007 (in constant 1995-96 dollars).

Expanding the options available to students and families is a worthy goal, as long as this is not done in a way that undermines a quality education for all children. But private school vouchers are too small, too costly, and too divisive to have any potential for improving the public school system.

IMPACT OF VOUCHERS ON SCHOOLING

A voucher program which served a substantial number of public school students would suffer from serious implementation problems related to private schools' capacity and mission, and would violate basic principles of equity and a quality education for all students. Specifically:

- **Private schools have little capacity to absorb a substantial number of additional students.** According to a California study, less than 1 percent of public school students in that state could expect to find spaces in existing private schools. [Corwin and Dianda, "What Can We Really Expect from Large-Scale Voucher Programs," Phi Delta Kappan, 1993] The study found that most private schools that were interested in participating in a voucher program were already operating at 85 percent or more of their capacity. Although some private schools might be created or expanded, a voucher system would do little or nothing to address the needs for educating the 89 percent of students in public schools (46.5 million students).
- **Most private schools are religious in nature, and few are likely to give up their religious mission in order to overcome constitutional barriers to receiving public funds.** Religious schools account for 79 percent of all private schools and 85 percent of private school students. A recent survey found that most associations of religious schools believe their schools would not participate in a voucher program if they were required to permit exemptions from religious instruction for students transferring from public schools [Muraskin et al., Barriers, Benefits, and Costs of Using Private Schools to Alleviate Overcrowding in Public Schools: Preliminary Report, 1997]. In addition, government officials should not be expected to choose which private and religious schools merit taxpayer support. For a religiously diverse country like the U.S., this is a road to onerous problems.
- **Private schools could select the best and the brightest students.** As Representative Bill Goodling (Pennsylvania), then ranking minority member of the Education and Labor Committee, said in 1991, "If you have 500 students in a school and 250 of them are the 'thousand points of light' and decide to go to a school of choice, that leaves 250 fallen angels behind." [Congressional Quarterly, 1991, p. 379] Research shows that private school vouchers do skim more advantaged students — those whose parents have more education, higher expectations for their children, and higher incomes. This finding holds even for programs where vouchers are restricted to low-income families. For example:

— In San Antonio, mothers of low-income voucher students were three times more likely to have had some college education than mothers of comparable public school students (55 percent vs. 19 percent). [Martinez, V., et al. (1995). "The Consequences of School Choice: Who Leaves and Who Stays in the Inner City," Social Science Quarterly, September.]

- In England, researchers found that parents who expressed preferences for schools outside their immediate neighborhood tended to be more highly educated and have more prestigious occupations than those who expressed a preference for their neighborhood school. Moreover, in the most competitive areas, “schools are more likely to choose students than students are to choose schools.” [Stearns, School Reform: Lessons from England, 1996]

When a school is failing, providing an escape hatch for a few students will do nothing to improve the quality of education for the majority of students who remain in that school. Indeed, vouchers could hasten the deterioration of the public school system by creating a two-tier educational system in which the motivated, pro-active families and students — those who have the potential to make the school system better — would attend private schools and the less involved families and students would attend the public schools. Instead of giving a few students a way out, we need to give all students a way up by improving the quality of all schools.

IMPACT OF CHOICE AND SCHOOL TYPE ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

In addition to the negative effects of a voucher program on schooling, there are also basic, unanswered questions about the benefits of vouchers and the comparative advantage of private schools for student learning. A growing research base enables us to examine the impact of choice and school type on student achievement. Although they come from different perspectives and may arrive at different conclusions, these studies do share some common themes:

- Evaluations of existing voucher programs provide no conclusive evidence of the benefit of these programs for student achievement, while public school choice programs show promise for raising academic proficiency; and
- Differences in student achievement can often be explained by coursetaking and high standards.

Descriptions of studies that support these themes follow.

Impact of Private and Public School Choice Programs on Student Achievement

Research on the impact of existing private school voucher programs has not demonstrated substantial achievement benefits for these programs. In fact, most differences between performance in public and private schools can be explained by the family background of the students (i.e., family income, parents' educational attainment). [Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore, High School Achievement: Public, Catholic and Private Schools Compared, 1982] Even when studies control for these factors, they probably still overstate achievement differences because they usually cannot control for “self-selection bias” — the fact that parents and students who choose to attend schools other than their neighborhood school may have higher motivation and place a higher priority on education than similar families who do not exercise choice.

Three separate evaluations of the longest-running publicly-funded voucher program (in Milwaukee) found vastly different results. The first evaluation found voucher students'

achievement *did not* improve significantly from their previous achievement in public schools [Witte et al., Fourth-Year Report: Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, 1994], but a second evaluation of the same data *did* find evidence that the Milwaukee voucher program had a substantial positive impact on the achievement of students who remained in the program for 3-4 years [Greene, Peterson, and Du, "The Effectiveness of School Choice in Milwaukee: A Secondary Analysis of Data from the Program's Evaluation," 1996]. This second analysis, however, has serious methodological flaws, including the attrition of 85-95 percent of voucher students in the two years in which significant results were found, and a failure to account for student family background and prior achievement. Yet a third analysis [Rouse, "Private School Vouchers and Student Achievement: An Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program," 1997] repeated Greene, et al.'s analysis, and found that voucher recipients *did* significantly outperform non-enrolled voucher program applicants and a random sample of Milwaukee public school students in math, but *did not* in reading. These conflicting results provide more of a lesson in the art of statistics than in the effectiveness of voucher programs. The one clear implication of these studies is that the impact of voucher programs on student achievement remains unproven.

In Cleveland, the voucher program has only been in existence since the Fall of 1996, and no systematic research on the impact of the program on student achievement is yet available. The Ohio Department of Education is currently sponsoring an Indiana University evaluation of third-graders in the Cleveland voucher program, and a first-year report is expected in late September of this year. However, a recent, well-publicized Harvard press release on the achievement gains of Cleveland voucher students has been touted as evidence of the benefits of voucher programs. [Harvard University, "Gains in Test Scores in the Cleveland Voucher Program Found," 1997] This analysis, conducted by Paul Peterson and funded by the Olin Foundation, claims that students enrolled in two schools in the Cleveland program have realized "moderately large" gains in reading and "even more substantial" gains in math. However, even this analysis concedes that these academic results are mixed, with language scores declining by 5 percentage points overall, and declining by 19 percent among first graders. More importantly, this analysis is in no way a representation of the effectiveness of the Cleveland voucher program, as it is based on only 15 percent of participating students who are enrolled in uniquely operated, resource-intensive schools, and it suffers from severe methodological problems.³

Lastly, a Hudson Institute study [Weinschrott and Kilgore, "Educational Choice Charitable Trust: An Experiment in School Choice," 1996] of the privately-funded voucher program in Indianapolis found that the voucher students performed "as well as [public school] students in the earlier grades and seem to be doing better in the middle-school grades." However, this appears to be an overly generous characterization of their data, which showed that the voucher students' average test scores were below those of public school students in grade 2, about the same in grades 3 and 6, and higher only in grade 8.

³ Among the problems with the Peterson analysis are: (1) it does not compare the gains of these voucher students to their counterparts in the Cleveland public schools; (2) it does not control for the family background or prior achievement of the voucher students; (3) it is based on the results of an old, invalid form of the California Achievement Test; (4) it lumps together results for students in grades K through 3, suggesting that differences among grades are being masked; and (5) the researchers tested the voucher students within the same school year (fall and spring), an approach that has been widely rejected by test experts as producing artificially positive achievement gains.

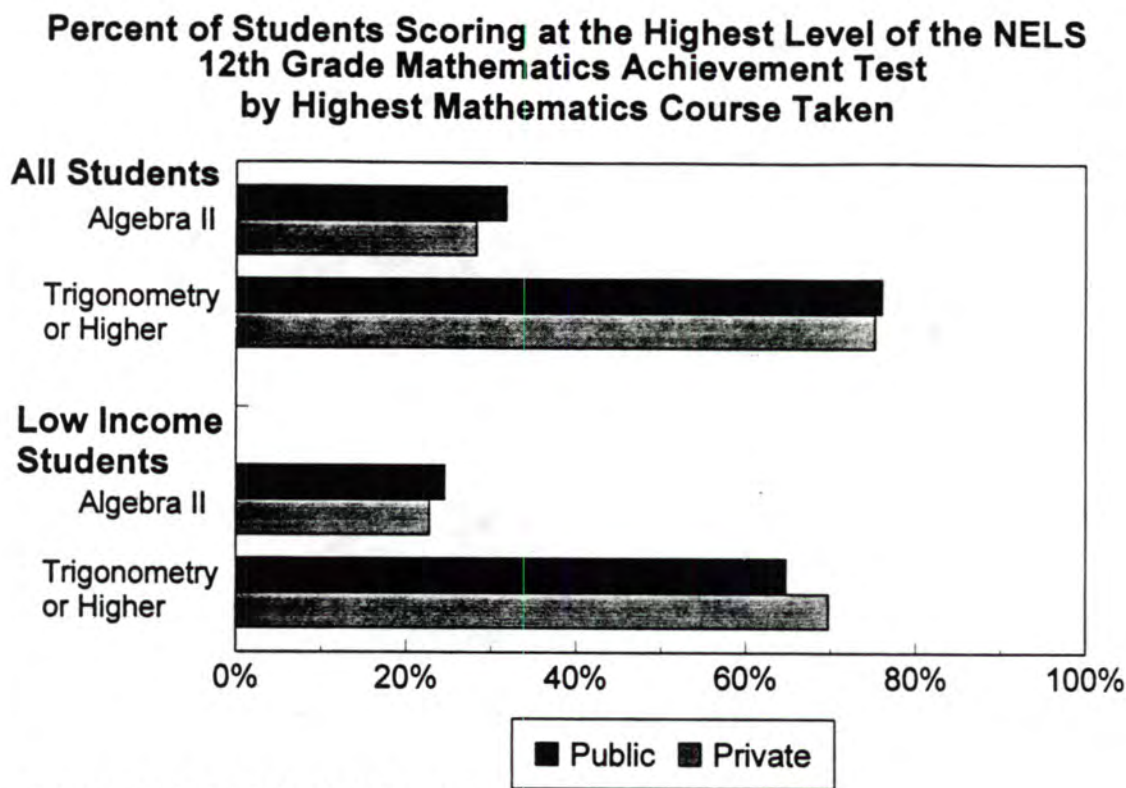
An analysis of 1991 International Assessment of Educational Progress data in 16 industrialized nations provides international evidence showing that private schools do not have significantly higher student achievement than public schools after controlling for student background. [Bishop, "Nerd Harassment, Incentives, School Priorities and Learning," 1996] This study found that, after controlling for family background, independent schools did not have higher math and science achievement (for 13-year-olds) than public schools and religiously-controlled schools had significantly lower achievement levels. In Canada, where there is no constitutional prohibition against public subsidies of religious schools and 20 percent of the schools are religiously controlled, students at religious schools scored 3.9 to 4.5 points lower on science and math tests than public school students.

Some research indicates that public schools of choice show as large a benefit (if not larger) than private schools in producing better student achievement. For example, a recent analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey [Gamoran, "Student Achievement in Public Magnet, Public Comprehensive, and Private City High Schools," Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 1996] found that magnet schools were more effective than comprehensive public high schools at raising the proficiency of students in science, reading, and social studies, while secular private schools did not offer any advantage, after controlling for pre-existing differences among students.

Impact of Coursetaking and Standards on Student Achievement

The choice of courses taken has been shown to have a direct connection to student achievement. As Figure 1 depicts, an analysis of National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) data suggests that the mathematics courses students take in high school are more important for achievement than the type of high school attended. While recognizing that a great deal of diversity exists among public and private schools, it is useful to note that when coursetaking patterns are accounted for, the mathematics achievement of students in both categories of school is very similar. Public and private school students who had taken the same mathematics courses were almost equally likely to score at the highest achievement level on the NELS twelfth-grade mathematics achievement test. This was also true for low-income public and private school students. Additionally, among both public and private school students of all incomes, students who had taken more rigorous mathematics courses were much more likely to score at the highest achievement level.

Figure 1.



Source: Analysis of National Educational Longitudinal Survey data

A growing body of evidence demonstrates that public school reform efforts like challenging standards and rigorous coursetaking can improve achievement for the majority of students who are in the public schools. States and local communities that have set more challenging standards are seeing substantial gains in student achievement. For example:

- Kentucky's comprehensive school reforms continue to result in substantial improvement in school performance. More than 92 percent of Kentucky's schools posted achievement gains in 1995-96. Fifty percent of schools in the state met or exceeded their performance goals. These schools are distributed across all grade levels, throughout every geographic region in the state, and in poor as well as wealthy communities. Elementary schools performed well above expectations, as they exceeded their statewide performance goal by 27 percent. [Kentucky Department of Education Press Release, October 1996]

- In New York City, tougher graduation requirements are spurring thousands more high school students to take and pass college-preparatory mathematics and science courses. The number of Hispanic and black students who passed the science test more than doubled from the previous year [New York Times, 5/9/95]. Entering freshmen at the City University of New York are the best prepared academically in two decades [New York Times, 12/10/95]. Grade schools in the city continue a four-year rise in test scores [New York Times, 6/21/96].

FUNDAMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The evidence provided above illuminates that our nation has made progress, but we still have a long way to go. This is particularly true in high-poverty school systems across the country. We recognize the legitimate problems in our nation's schools — especially in urban areas where voucher programs are often proposed. We are committed to focusing on turning around troubled schools and undertaking comprehensive educational reform that creates and sustains safe and high-performing schools. There are no silver bullets to improving schools and improving student learning, and that is why President Clinton emphasizes the need to focus on many vehicles for educational improvement in his "Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century."

Promoting student performance starts with a focus on the basics, safety, discipline, and parent involvement. Sustained improvement must be based on what works, and supported by parents, educators and the larger community. Research suggests that student achievement can best be improved by supporting a comprehensive set of district and school level reforms. [See, for example, Newmann and Wehlage, "Successful School Restructuring: A Report to the Public and Educators by the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools," 1995; Lein, Johnson, and Ragland, Successful Texas Schoolwide Programs: Research Study Results, 1996] These reforms include:

- **Safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools.** A prerequisite to comprehensive, enduring school reform which promotes student performance is ensuring that our children have a safe, strong, and drug-free learning environment. Providing such an environment requires a focus on strong discipline in the schools and zero tolerance for drugs.
- **A clear focus on improving learning and mastering the basics.** Effective schools are organized around a clear focus on educational excellence and equity for all students and have an academic orientation that challenges all students to master basic and advanced skills in reading, math, and other core subjects. The goal of learning is captured in the curriculum and the very atmosphere of the school. Time, resources, and energies center on enabling all students to achieve higher levels of performance.
- **Parent involvement and public commitment to improving schools.** Thirty years of research show that greater family involvement in children's learning is a critical link to achieving a high quality education and a safe, disciplined learning environment for every student. [U.S. Department of Education, Strong Families, Strong Schools, 1994] Districts and schools must reach out to parents and community members to develop a shared commitment to excellence and equity for all students and to work in partnership toward that goal.

- **High academic standards and rigorous coursetaking.** Probably the most effective educational choice that parents and students can make is to choose to take more challenging academic courses. Taking tougher courses is one factor that produces substantial gains in student achievement. Making challenging curriculum and engaging instruction available to all students must be schools' central mission.
- **Sustained and intensive professional development for teachers.** In order for students' performance to improve, teachers must be able to teach to higher standards. They must know the content of the curriculum and the best strategies for engaging students in learning more challenging content. Professional development can be supported formally through intensive training and also more informally through teachers working together on common classroom concerns and learning from each other.
- **Buildings and technology suited for learning.** Children cannot learn to high standards in schools that are literally falling down. Environments where children learn best are schools that are safe and modern, more spacious and technologically equipped, and that can be used not only during the school day but after school and during the summer, as well.
- **Reinforcement through after-school and summer programs.** Research shows that students in quality after-school programs (lower student to staff ratios, age-appropriate activities, academic and enrichment activities) demonstrate higher academic achievement and have better attitudes towards school than children left alone or under the care of siblings. [Posner and Vandell, 1994] Moreover, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, youth are most at risk of getting in trouble or being victims between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., after the regular school day.
- **Greater school autonomy and accountability.** Greater school autonomy when coupled with performance accountability also can contribute to conditions that make optimal learning possible. Unreasonable regulations can produce a compliance mentality in which no one takes ownership or is personally responsible. If teachers are to act as professionals and not as automatons, they need to be given responsibility for making professional decisions regarding classroom practice and school policy. Holding our students to high standards requires that adults take responsibility for improving student performance.
- **Expansion of public school choice options.** Public charter schools, magnet schools and open enrollment policies offer real alternatives to students and parents while maintaining the kind of accountability that is crucial to ensuring a quality education.

In some cases, drastic actions are needed to improve chronically troubled schools. For example, in San Francisco, failing schools have been "reconstituted." The district has shut down these schools and reopened them with new administrators, teachers, and programs.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS SUGGEST REFORMS ARE BEGINNING TO WORK

Trends in Improvement Nationwide

U.S. education is improving on many measures of student learning, especially in critical areas on which schools, communities, states, and this nation have focused sustained effort. A wide variety of national indicators are showing substantial gains, both short-term and long-term:

- **Students are taking more rigorous subjects and courses.** The proportion of high school graduates taking the core courses recommended in *A Nation At Risk* (4 years of English, 3 years of social studies, 3 years of science, 3 years of math) increased to 52 percent by 1994, up from 14 percent in 1982 and 40 percent in 1990. Similarly, the percentage of graduates taking biology, chemistry, and physics has doubled, rising from 11 percent in 1982 to 19 percent in 1990 and 21 percent in 1994. [NCES, High School Transcript Study, various years]

Similarly, participation in advanced placement (AP) courses has also increased, and the number of AP exams that scored at 3 or above has tripled since 1982. The number of AP examinations that received a passing score rose from 131,871 in 1982 to 523,321 in 1996. [College Board, AP Program: National Summary, various years]

- **The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has shown long-term gains in student achievement in mathematics and science**, areas that have been the focus of national attention. Average performance in mathematics and science has improved since the late 1970s and early 1980s for all three age groups tested and in every quartile. The improvement in math achievement was equivalent to at least one grade level. NAEP scores in reading and writing showed small, inconsistent changes and were stable overall. The achievement gap between white and minority students narrowed substantially over the period, although improvement has stalled since the late 1980's. [NCES, NAEP 1996 Trends in Academic Progress, 1997]
- **College admissions tests have shown increases in average scores even as the numbers and diversity of test-takers are increasing.** On the ACT, the national composite score increased to 21.0 in 1997 (from 20.6 in 1992) — the fourth year in the last five that the national average has increased. [ACT, Composite Averages by State, 1997] ACT president Richard L. Ferguson attributed the increase in scores to more students, especially females and minorities, taking higher-level courses in English, math, social studies, and science. [ACT, "Trend of Increases in ACT College Entrance Scores Continues," 1997] On the SAT, combined verbal and math scores increased 19 points from 1982 to 1997 (and increased by 15 points from 1992 to 1997) and the average mathematics score is at its highest level in 26 years.⁴ [College Board, College Bound Seniors National Report, 1997]

⁴ This figure is not affected by the College Board's recent "re-centering" of SAT scores because previous scores have been adjusted for equivalence with 1997 scores.

- **Dropout rates show similar improvements, particularly for minority students.** From 1982 to 1995, the dropout rate for persons 16-24 years old fell from 13.9 percent to 12.0 percent and has been relatively flat throughout the 1990's.⁵ For blacks, the dropout rate fell from 18.4 percent in 1982 to 12.1 percent in 1995 — a 34 percent decrease. For whites, the rate fell from 11.4 to 8.6 percent over the same period — a 25 percent decrease. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 1996]

Exemplary Efforts at Comprehensive School Reforms in Urban Districts

Across the nation, states and communities are implementing comprehensive reforms focused on enabling students to meet challenging standards, and student achievement is improving as a result. These districts reach out to teachers, principals, parents, and community members in developing a shared commitment to excellence and equity for all students and cultivating these partnerships. Their mission statements reflect in plain language the real-world concerns of parents, employers, and other citizens. Beyond that, they dedicate themselves to making that mission a reality through careful planning, efficient and equitable management of resources, and the development and recognition of instructional leaders throughout the school system. Examples of this process can be found in San Antonio, Memphis, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, New York City's Community District 2, and Chicago:

- **San Antonio** Independent School District underwent a major organizational restructuring aimed at placing maximum emphasis on instructional needs, giving more direct support to schools in matters of instruction and curriculum, streamlining decisionmaking, and strengthening intradistrict communication and collaboration. The district implemented site-based decision-making (as mandated by the state) during the 1994-95 school year by incorporating it with its broader strategic plan. Each school has an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) composed of school staff, parents, and community residents, who receive annual training provided by the district. A ten-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation supports professional development and technology for teachers, as well as promoting community involvement through monthly public town hall meetings and a community newsletter. In 1996, the district entered into a partnership with the New American Schools Design Corporation (NASDC), and half of the district's schools have committed to a whole school design through NASDC. Student achievement on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) has shown significant gains; from 1995 to 1996, the percentage of students passing the TAAS rising from 33 percent to 41 percent for 4th-graders and from 31 percent to 36 percent for 10th graders. Math skills showed even greater improvement, with the percentage of students passing the math portion of the TAAS rising from 42 percent to 55 percent for 4th-graders and from 35 percent to 42 percent for 10th graders.
- **Memphis** adopted in 1993 a comprehensive school reform plan designed to raise student achievement that includes setting higher standards for all students, implementing site-

⁵ The dropout rate is defined as the percent of 16-24 year-olds who have not completed high school and were not enrolled in school that year.

based decisionmaking and models of school reform to support students in meeting the standards, and creating a new belief system within the school system. The district developed content standards in seven core curricular areas that reflected the Lifelong Learning Standards adopted by the community and disseminated guides to show what instruction and curriculum that reflects these standards should look like in classrooms. All Memphis schools now have site-based decisionmaking councils composed of equal numbers of teachers and parents to set school policy and allocate school budgets. In addition, since 1995, about half of all schools have adopted a "break-the-mold" reform model, including several of the models developed by the New American Schools Development Corporation. In 1996, the district opened its new Teaching and Learning Academy, which coordinates professional development opportunities for all teachers in the district. The Academy offers workshops in all major areas of school reform including leadership, core content, performance assessment, and uses of technology.

- **Milwaukee's** experience in raising students' math performance to challenging standards provides a remarkable example of systemwide improvement. The impetus came out of community embarrassment over its math assessment and a requirement that students pass the assessment to graduate. While Equity 2000 provided a focus for the effort, support came from higher standards, professional development of teachers, special assistance for students who failed the test, parental involvement, and feedback on results. There has been a substantial increase in enrollment in algebra and more advanced math courses; ninth-graders' enrollment in Algebra I rose from 33 percent of all students in 1990 to 100 percent today, while the number of tenth-grade students taking geometry or more advanced math increased from 24 to 57 percent. The percent of students passing algebra has remained essentially unchanged, at about 56 percent, despite the expansion of algebra enrollment from a select group to all students.
- **Cincinnati** has injected accountability for both administrators and students into the educational system. School district administrators' pay raises are now linked to job performance. The policy change replaced automatic cost-of-living adjustments and salary rates with new criteria, including: performance on staff development, management, and community involvement; students' scores on standardized tests and on the state's graduation test; and graduation, promotion, passing, and dropout rates. At the student level, promotion is now based on specific standards that define what students must know and be able to do. The standards are designed to prepare students to pass a ninth-grade proficiency test. Cincinnati also reorganized its school system in 1991, cutting the central office staff — mostly mid-level managers — by 70 percent, in order to direct a greater share of its resources to the school and classroom levels.
- **New York City's Community District 2** is a model for local districts seeking to improve instruction in fundamental ways. Serving an extremely diverse population from the Upper East Side to Chinatown, the district implements a corresponding diversity in its approaches to teaching and learning. This particular district illustrates the powerful, participatory role that a local district can play in instructional improvement. Every decision made by the district takes instructional improvement into account. It is a group

effort and a long-term commitment based on high expectations, clear objectives, and shared expertise. The concrete strategies revolve around the idea that professional development is not a series of programs per se but rather an ongoing opportunity to build and bridge skills. Strategies include: a Professional Development Laboratory in which visiting teachers observe and practice with a resident teacher for three weeks while their classrooms are taught by a teacher who has also gone through the Laboratory; extensive use of visits across classrooms and schools by teachers and principals; and a core of consultants hired by the districts and available to the schools for one-on-one and small group assistance. With these strategies in hand, the district has a direct impact on improving its schools: on the 1996 assessment, District 2 ranked second in the city in math scores.

- **Chicago** is ensuring that promotion to the next grade reflects students' learning the content to enable them to succeed. In August 1996, the Chicago School Reform Board adopted a rigorous student promotion policy that requires underachieving students in grades three, six, eight, and nine to complete a summer school program before being promoted to the next grade. The policy sets performance standards based on test scores for third-, sixth-, eighth-, and ninth-graders. Students who score more than one year below their grade level (one-and-a-half years for sixth-graders) on the standardized tests, or who fail reading or math, must successfully complete a six- or seven-week Summer Bridge program. All ninth-graders who miss more than 20 days of school or fail to earn the required 4.5 core credits are also required to attend the summer-school programs. Students who fail the summer programs are held back. Results show that over 80 percent of Chicago students were able to meet the promotion criteria; many would not have done so without the intensive summer instruction provided through the Bridge program.

These large, urban districts face some of the most complex educational issues in the nation, yet their students are beginning to benefit from sustained school improvement efforts. We are committed to continue working for high standards of discipline and achievement and a means to assess student performance in meeting them, safe schools, technology in the classroom, quality teachers, and increased access to college. When we focus sustained effort and careful investments on critical education issues at school, neighborhood, community, and national levels, students progress and so does our nation.

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For Immediate Release
September 20, 1997

OPENING AND CLOSING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT IN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON CHARTER SCHOOLS

San Carlos Charter Learning Center
San Carlos, California

11:19 A.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. First, thank all of you for coming here today and sharing your Saturday morning. I thank the Superintendent for his really marvelous remarks. He talked about all the things that we have in common -- I saw a living symbol of his dedication to education above all else, and one thing that we have in common that he didn't mention -- if you look closely at his tie you will see it is a pattern of golf balls and tees. (Laughter.) And on this beautiful Saturday morning he's here with us. (Laughter.)

Let me thank your instructional coordinator, too, for being here, leaving her 11-day-old baby. I would like to see the 11-day-old baby, but I think it's -- where's the baby? A wise mother leaves the baby outside. (Laughter.)

Hillary and I are delighted to be here. And I want to spend most of my time just at this panel today. But I thank all of you for coming because I believe in charter schools and I

believe they are an important part of helping us to lift our standards and renew our schools and achieve the kind of educational excellence that all of our children need as we move into the 21st century.

I congratulate the San Carlos Learning Center for being the first of its kind in California, which obviously makes it among the very first in the United States.

Let me just give you a little, brief personal history here. When I was governor of my state for 12 years, I spent a great deal of time working on school reform -- and so did

Hillary -- spent lots of time in the schools, talking to teachers, talking to parents, talking to students, dealing with issues of curriculum development and teacher training and all those things. And when we were active in the 1980s, the state of Minnesota became the first state in the country to pass a public

school choice law, to give parents and their children more choice among the public schools their children attended. I think we were the second state to pass that law. And we used it quite a lot.

Then when I began to run for President in 1991, Minnesota became the first state in the country again to pass a charter school law, recognizing that sometimes it wasn't enough just to give the parents and the students choices, but that we needed to give the educators and the parents and the students with whom they worked options to create schools that fit the mission needed by the children in the area; and that if you gave them options and held them accountable, we might be able to do something really spectacular. Then five years ago today, I think, California became the second state in the country to adopt a charter school law, and then you became the first of those schools.

In 1994, I passed legislation in Congress to help us support more charter schools. By the end of 1995 there were about 300 charter schools in the country. Today there are 700 charter schools in the country. Many of them have been helped by the program we passed in Washington in 1994.

The historic balanced budget agreement that we just passed into law includes the largest commitment to new investment in education since 1965 -- among other things, expansion of Head Start programs, more funds to support computers in the schools -- I'll say more about that in a moment -- our America Reads initiative to help make sure every 8-year-old can read independently, and the biggest increased investment in helping people go to college since the G.I. Bill passed 50 years ago, tax credits for the first two years of college, credits for the

remainder of college, IRAs, Pell Grants, work-study positions. All these together mean that for the first time ever we can really say, if you're responsible enough to work for it, no matter what your income or your difficulties, college is now a real option for you in America -- for every single American. And I'm very proud of all of that.

But one of the things that was in this balanced budget that didn't get a lot of notice is enough money for us to help to set up literally thousands more charter schools in America. Because excellence in education is more than money. And from my point of view, having spent years and years and years working on this, we need two things -- we need a set of national standards of academic excellence that will be internationally competitive in basic subjects. And then we need grass-roots, school-based reform, because education is the magic that takes place in every classroom, and indeed in every student's mind, involving every teacher, every student, and also, hopefully, support from home.

So that's why these charter schools are so important to me. And that's why we've tried to help a lot more schools like San Carlos get started on the path that you've been on now for some years.

For people who don't know exactly what they are, let me say that charter schools are public schools that make a simple agreement: in exchange for public funding, they get fewer regulations and less red tape, but they have to meet high expectations, and they keep their charter only so long as their customers are satisfied they're doing a good job.

As I said, we've gone from -- the day I took office, there was only one charter school in America, January of '93. Then a couple years ago we were up to 300; now there are 700. And what started as a movement in Minnesota and California now encompasses 29 states; 27 more states have passed charter school laws.

These funds in our budget, as I said, should allow us to set up several thousand more over the next four years. Today I am pleased to announce that we're going to release \$40 million in grants to help charter schools open. Start-up costs are often the biggest obstacle. And in states that can't afford to help, it's a terrible problem. I see a lot of people nodding their heads out there who have had experience with this.

So we have curriculum development costs, teacher training costs, new technology costs -- all these things can help. The \$40 million we're releasing today, of which about \$3.4 million will come to California, will help us to establish another 500 charter schools in 21 states. So we'll go from 700

to 500 in one pop here.

And as I said, pretty soon -- and if all the states will join in, we obviously can help all of them -- we'll have well over 3,000, perhaps even over 4,000 by the year 2000, which is enough to have a seismic echo effect in all the public school systems of America. So that's what we are trying to do.

Let me say that there are a couple of problems that we're going to face. Last week, the U.S. Senate, by a very narrow margin, supported an amendment that would make these charter schools funding that I just announced the last such announcement that would ever be made, because it would lump all the education funds together and arbitrarily distribute them to the state without regard to whether these programs were continued or not. And in the process, it would abolish very specific and highly successful education reform programs like the charter schools, where we work with local communities and school districts. It would abolish our highly successful effort to put computers in the classrooms -- I'll tell you how much movement has happened on there in just two years -- and to create safe and drug-free schools. I think that would be a mistake.

The House of Representatives recently passed,

although the Senate opposed them, an amendment that would prohibit us to pay for -- not to develop, but to pay for -- a non-political, private organization to develop voluntary national tests of excellence in mathematics and reading. I think that would be a mistake. This is the first time, last year, in history that our students in elementary schools scored above the international average in math and science. We're doing much better in America, but we don't test all of our kids, we just test a representative sample. I think we need to know how we're doing based on a common standard.

So we have these problems in the Congress, and if either one of these provisions makes it into the final bill I will have to veto it. So I hope that we can continue to work on moving forward in the right direction. And in that connection, I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, who I think is one of the -- absolutely -- even I would say this if I were in Washington -- she really is one of the finest, most forward-looking members of the United States Congress, and she's made a big difference in our country today. (Applause.)

Now, running these charter schools, as we are about to hear, is not easy. It's not self-evident how to do all this. It sounds great to say we'll cut you free of red tape and bureaucracy; you have to perform at a higher level, you've got to get the parents involved. There are all kinds of practical problems, and we'll hear about some of them.

The Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, is going to convene a national conference on charter schools in Washington this November to bring together teachers, administrators, parents, others who are interested in this to share best practices and look to the road ahead. But just think about where we can go with this. If we go -- we've gone from one to 700, to 500 more, with a budget that calls for funds for 3,000 more -- just this year's budget alone that will be funded starting October 1st, if we get the funds for it, will give us enough funds for another 700 -- or 900 to 1,000 schools.

So this movement can sweep the country and can literally revolutionize both community control and standards of excellence in education if we do it right. That's what the panel is about.

And before we start, let me just thank some of the business leaders who are here today for their commitment to educational excellence -- Regis McKenna, David Ellington, Brook Byers, Terry Yang, Paul Lippe. And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Larry Ellison who is up here on the platform. He's the chairman and CEO of Oracle Corporation.

Two years ago this week, I met with Larry and a number of other high-tech executives to talk about another one of my passions, which is to connect every classroom and library in every school in America to the Internet by the year 2000. And

that, like everything else, it turned out to be more complicated. It sounded great, but we not only had to connect them, we had to make sure we had the hardware, the software, and the trained teachers to do the job.

So we got this group of business people who knew about all this, who are working very hard to try to make sure that we can do that, give all the support services to every school. We got the Federal Communications Commission to give what amounts to a \$2.25 billion a year subsidy to schools, to lower the rates they have to pay to hook on to the Internet. But to give you an example of what we can do when we work together, since we made that announcement two years ago, California has 65 percent of the schools connected, which is twice the percentage you had two years ago, and four times as many classrooms connected as just two years ago. That shows you how quickly we can move.

And Larry has not only sponsored the San Carlos Learning Center, but yesterday he announced Oracle's promise to spend \$100 million in a foundation to help schools across America who need support to get the kind of connection to the future through telecommunications technology that we all want. So thank you, Larry, for doing that. (Applause.)

So this is a good news day. but what I want to do now is to turn it over to the panel and let's get into the facts of the charter school movement and see -- hopefully, by being here today, this will encourage the 21 states who do not have charter school legislation to adopt it. It will encourage the Congress to fully fund the charter schools program for the next four years. And it will help us to take what you have done here and spread it all across America in a way that will guarantee international standards of excellence in the education of all of our children.

Thank you very much.

* * * * *

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I want to thank all of you for sharing your experiences and success stories about charter schools. And I think that there are just a couple of general points that I would make. First, what the Congresswoman just said is critical, when she talked about test kitchens, because my husband I have said together and often that there is a good public school in every community in America, but the problem is they don't learn from each other and they don't get to scale in the sense that we know what works, but for too many years we have not been motivated sufficiently to do what worked in every school.

And so we are now seeing, with the charter school movement, an effort to do just that -- to take these, in some

ways, old-fashioned ideas that are now married to technology and very much motivated to be successful by the demands of the new economy, and put them into action in schools across the country.

When we talk about parental involvement, that is a very old-fashioned idea that we have had to relearn. When we talk about empowering teachers to design curriculum, that, too, is something we know will work if we unleash the creative energies of teachers. When we talk about giving students a chance to explore and learn and develop their own capacities, that's what many of us try to do with our own children, but which we deny to other children because of the bureaucratic structures and expectations of the old system.

So there are many aspects of what we heard today which would be very familiar in any setting 30 or 40 or 50 years ago in many parts of America, but which we somehow lost track of as we got bigger and bigger and schools became impersonal and anonymous, and really we lost our way in the very important connections that have to be made between homes and schools,

students and teachers, and the understanding of how community has to support that magic.

Secondly, I think that the charter school movement should not be seen as a threat to public schools. It should be seen as a liberation of public schools, and particularly teachers and administrators who for many years have known what should be done, but have felt unable to do so. (Applause.) And there is certainly nothing hidden about the President's agenda on this. He wants every school, whether it is formally called a charter school, or not, to act like a charter school.

And that is our real objective in the charter school movement -- not only to create thousands more charter schools, but to take the lessons from the charter school movement and literally infect every public school in America, so that parents are standing at the door of principals' offices, so that teachers will not feel so oppressed in their classrooms, but will join together to demand from administrators and school boards what they know their children need, and for businesses, which have in many ways the greatest stake in the future of our public school system, to be constantly be prodding for academic excellence as in many communities they now prod for athletic excellence.

So the charter school movement is really a rallying cry that we hope will not only create more charter schools like the ones we have heard about today, but encourage and give courage to public school patrons, teachers, and students around the country to say, well, you know, if Jose could find a home in a new charter school in San Francisco, why can't all the Joses in our public schools feel similarly welcomed and supported? And if Gregg can go into competition with Oracle in the 6th grade, why can't all the Greggs in America feel similarly encouraged to pursue their own intellectual excitement?

So we're very much appreciative of what all of you

on the front lines are doing from San Francisco to South Central, LA, to San Diego, to right here in this community. And we really do appreciate the zeal with which you have expressed your excitement about this, because we do want it to infect and to be contagious so that, as Yvonne said when I saw firsthand visiting her school, every child will feel that that child is special and valued and appreciated. And that's really what we're hoping to achieve with this kind of effort.

So thank you for doing what needs to be done in American public education. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, let me say I agree with everything she said. (Laughter.) I'd just like to make a couple of brief point to build on what Hillary said. I want to say, first of all, I have no hidden agenda here; I believe the

only way public schools can survive as the instrument by which we educate our children and socialize them and bring them together across all the lines that divide us is if all of our schools eventually -- and, hopefully, sooner rather than later -- are run like these charter schools. That's what I believe. I am not running for office anymore. I have no political interest in this. I am think about what our country is going to be like 20, 30, 40, 50 years from now.

And you know what Tom said about the industrial model -- that's part of the problem. A lot of our schools are organized on an industrial model -- a lot of our middle schools are almost -- are organized for when families were like Ozzie and Harriet, instead of like they are today. There are a lot of organizational problems. It's also true that our schools get money from a lot of different places and have to suffer rules from a lot of different places, and a lot of people think if they give up their rule-making, they won't matter anymore. And in some way, the most important person here is the Superintendent because he's here supporting this instead of figuring out how he can control it. And I think that's important. (Applause.)

And so Hillary and I have been working at this business for a long time now -- seriously since 1983 -- really seriously. There has been a dramatic change in the attitudes of the teacher unions, which is positive. There have been dramatic advances in the attitude of administrators, which is positive.

But I just want to say, we cannot -- there are a lot of people who believe in the information age, with things changing as fast as they are and with standards needing to be as high as they are, that we ought to just basically send everybody

money and let them do whatever they want to about education, and forget about the public education network -- let it sink or swim. The problem with that theory is that the short-term costs to people who got left behind would be staggering.

But if we want to preserve excellence and the socially unifying impact of public schools over the next generation, I am telling you, every school in the country has got to become like this one. The power needs to be with the parents, with the children, with the teachers, with the principals. And those of us who are up the lines somewhere, up the food chain, what are we interested in? We're interested in what Kim said --we're interested in results. We don't need to make rules. We're interested in results and we want to be able to measure them. We want to know our kids are going to be all right and our country is going to be all right.

Let them make the rules in the schools. Let them figure it out. And then education will be something that will get bright young lawyers to leave their more lucrative law

practices to do something that doesn't pay as much, but makes them feel good when they go to bed every night and get up in the morning. That's what we want. And until every school is run like that, you and I should not rest.

Thank you. God bless you. (Applause.)

END

12:35 P.M. PDT

Message Sent To: _____

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003. note	re: meeting with Gov. Riley [partial] (2 pages)	01/28/1993	b(6)

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Re: Meeting with Gov. Riley
1/28/93, 8AM, Carol Rasco's office
Participants from Dept of Ed: Secretary Riley, Madeline
Kunin, Billy Webster, Terry Peterson

ISSUES TO CONSIDER:

Chapter I: The Elementary & Secondary Education Act is up for reauthorization this year. It is important to give Congress some guidance so its work will reflect the objectives of the Administration. We have been receiving inquiries about our position on key components. No doubt, Riley can fill you in on his discussions so far.

Chapter 1 comprises almost 75% of the \$8billion in appropriations under ESEA. In addition to consideration of structural changes in the program, Congress will also grapple in the appropriation process with what population shifts have done to the formula funding. In the campaign, we promised an expansion in Chapter 1 funding. The funds are needed as a result of the shift to the 1990 Census figure as the basis for distributing Chapter 1 funds. The new figures result in significant losses of funds in virtually every state East of the Mississippi, and equally significant gains in the West. Current law provides for losing recipients to maintain 85% of the previous year's allocation. Without a supplemental appropriation for this fiscal year, virtually all states will be losers. The reauthorization needs to consider formula revamping, but in the meantime an emergency appropriation will also be needed.

The key issue here, however, is what structural changes ought to be made in the Chapter 1 program. In addition to the substantive recommendations, we need more intelligence on the politics of all of this. While change is always resisted, there is growing recognition that Chapter 1 is not effective and this is the time to revamp the program.

Another issue is to look at the reauthorization of the ESEA programs through the lens of the National Education Goals to ensure that program modifications get made in ways that advance the goals.

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS: There is considerable support in the Congress to pass legislation early that would codify the goals, have Congress assume responsibility for voluntary standards, create some model assessments and provide special funding to schools to meet the standards. There is a sense that it would be good to make a strong education reform statement early through such a legislative vehicle, as opposed to putting all our efforts in the ESEA reauthorization, which will take the better part of this Congress to accomplish. A GOALS bill could include several provisions that would realize campaign school reform promises, such as standards and testing and other efforts to help the states develop strategies to restructure in ways that will accomplish the education goals. A decision has to be made soon as to whether the Administration supports such legislation

that could be introduced at the earliest possible date. Obviously decisions would also have to be made as to what components would be put forward by the Administration for inclusion.

YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM: Youth Apprenticeship programs span secondary and post-secondary education, developing workplace skills and making college more accessible to a broader range of the population. Youth Apprenticeship was advanced during the campaign both in the context of education and economic competitiveness. I don't know how much work has gone into the development of a Clinton proposal. There is considerable support on the Hill to wrapping some of this into an early education vehicle. Much consensus building has already gone on and an early effort to include a skills building component would receive wide support and provide the first step to a much broader effort. A decision has to be reached as to whether the Administration wants to seize the opportunity to use an early education legislative vehicle, like the GOALS bill, to include some form of skills training. Also, given some of the hostility between Labor and Education, it would be a good signal that this Administration sees youth apprenticeship as a key education priority, not solely a jobs-related issue.

NATIONAL SERVICE TRUST FUND: the Clinton proposal includes two components - a new national service system AND the restructuring of the national education financing system. "Putting People First" promised to replace the existing guaranteed student loan program with direct federal lending and to make loan repayment contingent on income and collectible through the tax system. Last year on the higher ed reauthorization, Congress authorized the creation of a demonstration effort that was intended to lead ultimately to a direct lending program. I have attached a description of the existing program, as well as the proposed program that was prepared by the national service working group. I don't think Secretary Riley has had much opportunity to think through all of this so the meeting could provide an opportunity to start a discussion and we might want to have a briefing for him at some point by the folks who have been working on the proposal.

You probably have a number of other issues you want to raise. It would certainly be wonderful if we could seize the promise that the new Administration represents to refashion existing programs, many of which are old and tired but have vested interests behind them, and work toward making education reform a reality. The reauthorization of ESEA certainly provides a significant opportunity to bring about much-needed change in education policy.

PERSONNEL: I understand that Riley wants to raise a number of personnel issues with you.

(b)(6)

[003]

(b)(6)

STANFORD LAW SCHOOL

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copy
for edue'n

NOV 19, 1996

Hi Melanne:

See attached memo

When are you going to see for a visit?

Best

Bill

Memo to Melanne Verveer
From Bill Taylor *Bill*
Re: the Clinton legacy and education

Nov. 19, 1996

Greetings from sunny California and congratulations to you ,your bosses and all your colleagues for helping us to live to fight another day.

With all the talk about the Clinton legacy and the role that education may occupy in that legacy, I can't resist putting in my two cents. So here is a rough cut of what I would recommend.

I assume it is not necessary to make the case that education should be a priority concern during the second term. Clinton has demonstrated that he cares about education; he has devoted a good portion of his career to advancing the cause of educational reform and he is extremely knowledgeable and skilled in the area. Moreover, he has succeeded in engaging the attention of the American people on education issues and in elevating public education on their list of concerns. (I never thought I would see the day when the Department of Education would become a political asset rather than a liability, although I'm not sure what it has done to deserve this enhanced status.) So there is every reason to believe that people will be responsive to initiatives that promise to upgrade the quality of education for their children *and* even other people's children.

The question is what should go into these initiatives. I would argue that whatever else is undertaken, a central part of the effort should be for the President to use the bully pulpit for a *concerted and sustained campaign to persuade the most talented young people in the country to consider teaching as a career. Indeed, the campaign should not be limited to young people but should also encourage people who have had successful careers and are seeking a new challenge to obtain the necessary preparation to become public school teachers.*

There is no question that such an effort is needed. The eroding skills of teachers over recent years is the Achilles heel of the education reform movement (in which I consider myself an eager participant.) It is fine for us to demand that high standards be set for all students and that teachers be held accountable for helping students meet those standards, but if teachers themselves lack the ability, these exhortations will produce little. And there is little question that in this department , things are bad and getting worse. There has always been a disjuncture between the high regard Americans say they hold for teachers and the low tangible rewards that taxpayers have been willing to provide. For years the obvious consequences of the dichotomy were avoided by the availability of a talent pool of very able women and minorities made available by the discrimination against them in other professions. Now discrimination has abated enough for those talented women and minorities to move into other occupations. And survey after survey shows that by conventional measures college students majoring in education are among the least able students. This information is buttressed by the results of teacher competency exams and by other empirical and anecdotal data that is often dismaying.

What I am suggesting is that the President (and only the President) can be the catalyst for the kind of *institutional change* needed to make educational reform efforts successful. There is every reason to believe that in making a persuasive appeal based on the challenges and rewards of the teaching profession, the President will strike a responsive chord. We all know lots of talented people--young and older--dismayed by the lack of social utility of the work they are engaged in and looking for new challenges. Of course, the President's approach will need to be based on something beyond an appeal to altruistic instincts. It should be backed by a few modest but important initiatives to increase the tangible rewards of teaching.

Such initiatives might include a *college loan forgiveness program that would reward students who commit to teaching in high poverty urban and rural schools*. The commitment would have to be a real one--service for a minimum period of say 5 years. And the President could also make creative use of the provisions of the 1994 Title I renewal that *encourage the use of both federal and state and local funds to reward teachers for demonstrating excellence in helping students to meet high standards*. (I believe such an approach can be taken without taking on the thornier issue of merit pay). There may be other such initiatives that would provide tangible incentives for talented people to go into teaching. The aim should be to avoid costly new federal programs and to find ways to leverage change at the state and local levels.

In putting forward this proposal I do not mean to deprecate other suggestions that have been made. The idea of mobilizing one million volunteer tutors to help every child read by the 3rd grade is a good one but, like Teach for America, it is properly thought of as a piece of, or an adjunct to, an overall effort to upgrade teaching. What much educational research comes down to in the simplest terms is the proposition that poor and minority children have the best chance of thriving in an educational environment which provides them with the *sustained attention of a skilled and caring adult*. Tutoring programs can help (tutoring and mentoring might be an even stronger combination), but the tutors may lack the preparation needed to be effective teachers and they may not be around that long.

Nor do I wish to neglect other fundamental needs in public education. In January, 1997, the Department of Education is scheduled to release the final report of *Prospects*, a report prepared by Abt Associates pursuant to a Congressional mandate to evaluate Title I. It is expected that the final report will underline and support a fundamental conclusion contained in the interim report--*that the worst educational environment one can provide for a poor child is one of concentrated poverty and that poor children have a much better chance of achieving educational success in schools that are predominantly middle class*. This is not just another piece of research. It is the largest survey since the Coleman report in the 1960s, a longitudinal study done over several years and involving hundreds of thousands of students and teachers. Interestingly, it reaches conclusions very similar to the Coleman report--that along with the quality of teaching the socioeconomic character of the student body is the most important variable in determining student outcomes. All of this would suggest efforts to break up large concentrations of poverty by using public school choice to enable low income students to attend middle class schools in suburbs as well as central cities. As you know, we have had some success with this in my St. Louis litigation and we are working hard to preserve the remedy. I recognize, however, that attempting to legislate this kind of choice at the national level would be hard political sledding.

It seems to me that there are several political plusses to launching a campaign to attract more talented people to teaching. One is that it can be implemented by the President without getting into a big struggle with Congress. To the extent that legislation is needed to back up the initiative, if the initial effort strikes a responsive chord, Congress would be hard put to refuse to back it up with a loan forgiveness program or other supportive measures. Moreover, there would be some in Congress like Jim Jeffords who could be enlisted with other national leaders in the presidential effort. Second, a campaign of the kind I have described may be the best way to defend against the coming drive in Congress for private school vouchers. I think that once voucher proponents get their act together better than they have in the past we are likely to face a real challenge. A teacher initiative would enable the President to say "we are engaging in a major effort to improve public school education for *all* children. This is not the time to allow ourselves to be distracted by measures that would benefit only a few and weaken the public schools." (By the way, I also think there may be areas where public-private school cooperation might be undertaken without threatening either the public schools or the First Amendment, but that is a subject for a different memo.) Finally, this kind of initiative holds the promise of energizing the whole movement for public school reform. To the extent that it succeeds, the President will not be remembered simply for passing legislation, but for moving people and helping to shape institutions.

So that's my pitch. If you and your colleagues have an interest I'd be glad to put more flesh on the bones of the proposal. Lee Shulman, the recently-named president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning is here at Stanford (indeed the whole foundation is moving out here) and I might talk with him, Rich Shavelson (the Dean of the Ed school) and others about ways to implement the proposal. Let me know.

Best from Harriett to you and Phil.

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educ'm

Melanne - FYI.
From Terri Duggan
at Ed Dept
Pearl

PROPOSAL FOR THE FIRST LADY

To Focus on TEACHER ISSUES

PURPOSE:

To motivate and assist states and communities in taking actions that will accomplish the President's goal of having a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom. Concentration on teacher issues by the First Lady would complement, give depth, and provide a substantive focus to the President's ten-point education agenda.

BACKGROUND:

The disturbing statistics below from the report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, dramatically show the urgent need for national attention on issues of teacher quality and support.

- America will need two million new teachers in the next decade due to increased student enrollment and the retirement of an aging teaching force.
- 30% of all new teachers leave the profession in the first three years because of a lack of support and a "sink or swim" approach to induction; the system is hemorrhaging.
- Although no state will permit a person to write wills, practice medicine, fix plumbing, or style hair without completing training and passing an examination, more than 40 states allow districts to hire teachers who have not met these basic requirements.
- Nearly one-fourth (23%) of all secondary teachers do not have even a minor in their main teaching field. This is true for more than 30% of mathematics teachers. In schools with the highest minority enrollments, students have less than a 50% chance of getting a science or mathematics teacher who holds a license and a degree in the field he or she teaches.

The highest standards in the world, the best facilities, and the strongest accountability measures will do little good if we do not ensure that every child has a caring, competent, and qualified teacher. Today we have a window of opportunity to get it right -- to dramatically change the ways in which we recruit, prepare, induct, and support the ongoing learning of teachers and principals. We must insist on the highest standards for our teachers and ensure that they get the best training and ongoing support to teach to world-class standards.

Title V of the Higher Education Act is currently up for reauthorization. This legislation addresses educator recruitment, preparation, and ongoing professional development. Presently only one program has been funded by Congress. ED is rewriting the legislation to help address issues that are necessary for meaningful education reform. This updated legislation will need a great deal of backing to become funded.

RATIONALE FOR THE FIRST LADY'S INVOLVEMENT:

The First Lady's concentration on teacher issues would bring clarity and national focus to many grassroots reform efforts currently taking place throughout the country. These efforts are not "glamorous," and therefore, generating sustained public attention to them is difficult. However, the First Lady is a natural for highlighting and giving national attention to teacher issues within the school reform movement because:

- She understands the complex issues of school reform and can explain them in terms that the public understands.
- She has experience in this area, having led successful efforts in Arkansas.
- She can help create a national dialogue around issues of teacher quality more easily than the President who is often attacked for being "in the pocket of the unions."
- Teacher issues are a natural extension of the First Lady's early childhood development concerns. Teachers are an important part of The First Lady's "Village" message. Next to a child's parents, a teacher may have the greatest influence on a child's life and future. It is critical that we entrust our children to caring, competent, and qualified teachers.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Use the attached list of scheduled teacher events as a bully pulpit for the President's agenda to ensure excellence and accountability in teaching. A National Forum on teacher recruitment, preparation, and support for beginning teachers will be held in conjunction with the White House ceremony honoring the National Teacher of the Year in April. We see this as the "kick off" event to the First Lady's active involvement in issues directly related to excellence in teaching.
- Spend a working morning or afternoon at the Department of Education. We would showcase for the First Lady how this administration is infusing teacher input into the daily work of the Department and supporting teacher leadership in education reform. Many of Department's teacher initiatives have been adapted at the state and local levels.
- Create public service announcements to recruit talented young people and others, especially minorities, to "the profession that makes all other professions possible."
- Visit exemplary teacher education programs and schools and districts that truly support teachers and their learning.
- Visit NEA and AFT peer assistance programs that work with struggling teachers to improve their performance or counsel them out of the profession.
- Focus on teacher issues in her newspaper column.

SCHEDULED EVENTS THAT PROVIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- 4/16 POTVS
- | | |
|------------------|---|
| April | <p>4/15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ National Teacher of the Year Ceremony and Secretary Riley's national forum on teacher recruitment, preparation, and support for beginning teachers.
Possible Focus: Title V reauthorization issues (recruitment, preparation and support for new teachers) |
| | <p>HRC
add in
1996</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Presidential Math & Science Teacher Awards
Possible Focus: Highlight the President's call for all children to take a national test in 8th grade math and to ensure that all teachers are prepared to teach to higher standards. |
| June | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Presidential Scholars - Luncheon for the scholars' distinguished teachers
Possible Focus: Quality teachers are the critical link to high achieving students |
| July | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ED Teacher Shadowing Program
Possible Focus: Importance of all policy makers understanding the world of the classroom |
| August/September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ America Goes Back to School events
Possible Focus: Visit exemplary professional development schools -- public schools that have entered into a partnership with a university to prepare future teachers and to bring cutting-edge research to experienced teachers in a "teaching hospital" model |
| September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Sallie Mae Outstanding First-Year Teacher Awards
Possible Focus: Teacher preparation and support for beginning teachers |
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ National Teacher Forum
Possible Focus: Importance of teacher leadership in school reform and involving teachers in education policy making |
| November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ American Education Week
Possible Focus: Recruiting and preparing teachers to be successful in teaching an increasingly diverse population of students to high standards |
| December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ National Awards Program for Model Professional Development
Possible Focus: Importance of linking professional development to increased student achievement; need for ongoing support for teacher training ▶ Announcement of Nationally Board Certified Teachers
Suggested Focus: Importance of recognizing and rewarding good teachers |

file early learning

Possible Structure for White House Conference on Brain Development and Early Learning

OPENING REMARKS

8:30-9:00 a.m.

President Clinton and
Hillary Rodham Clinton, First Lady

FIRST SESSION: WHY THE EARLY YEARS MATTER MOST NEW INSIGHTS FROM NEUROSCIENCE AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

9:00-10:00 a.m.

Inside the Baby's Brain—an overview of recent discoveries in neuroscience and their implications for future research and program development (brief slides and videotape footage of the baby's brain could be presented here)

Bruce Perry, M.D., Baylor College of Medicine

or

Harry Chugani, Wayne State University, School of Medicine

or

✓ Carla Shatz, University of California, Berkeley

Starting Points for Our Youngest Children—A review of child development research as it relates to family well-being and healthy development. Introduces a framework for applying the brain and child development research through quality health care, parent education, and child care/early education programs

✓ David A. Hamburg, MD, Carnegie Corporation of New York

or

Alan Sroufe, University of Minnesota

or

Marion Radke Yarrow (formerly of NIH, noted child development scholar)

or

✓ Donald Cohen, MD, Yale Child Study Center

Family Doctor

SECOND SESSION: PARENTS AS FIRST TEACHERS

10:00-11:00 a.m.

Presenters from opening session join noted pediatricians and a parent educator to respond to concerns about child rearing, the availability of good quality services and supports, and the need for more flexible workplace policies

✓ Moderated and Introduced by T. Berry Brazelton, MD, Harvard University

A group of parents would query panelists from first session,
as well as two noted early childhood experts and parent educators

✓ Barry Zuckerman, MD, Boston University and
Ellen Galinsky, Families and Work Institute

*Distinctions within
[NIH] neuroscience
NSF
with age & cognition
parent policy focus
workload. This is
known all over
the world
load based*

*How do you
put me
knowledge
to use?*

*NH
member*

*DTP experts
of development
research*

THIRD SESSION: APPLYING THE NEW KNOWLEDGE

This session would introduce the vital areas for response in the allied early childhood professions

11:00-12:30 p.m.

Planned childbearing and comprehensive prenatal care. Brief overview devoted to promoting responsible parenthood through prevention and an enriched model of prenatal care and parent education before birth

✓ Ezra Davidson, MD, Drew University of Medicine
or
Sarah Brown, Urban Institute
or
Kenneth Ryan, MD, Brigham and Women's Hospital

Preventive Health Care for All Young Children—an analysis of what it would take to assure quality health care for all young children and the expected national benefits

Karen Davis, President, Commonwealth Fund —policy?
or
Steven Schroeder, President, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Education and support for parents—How parent education programs are adapting to use new knowledge about the brain and “scaling-up” to meet community needs

✓ Gloria Rodriguez, Avance
or
Mildred Winter, Parents As Teachers
or
Bernice Weissbourd, Family Focus

Providing Decent Child Care Choices: Which program and policy directions are most useful to consider in addressing America's child care and early education dilemmas?

Edward Zigler, Yale University
or
Sharon Lynn Kagan, Yale University
or
Admiral James D. Watkins, Joint Oceanographic Research
(On the military child-care program experience)

Moderated by:

Panel Discussion
Judy Woodruff, CNN
or
Carol Simpson, ABC News

12:30-2:00 p.m.

LUNCHEON

Brief Presentation: Short Clips from "I Am Your Child," (a television special scheduled to air on ABC-TV, April 28, 1997, produced and directed by Rob Reiner and hosted by Tom Hanks)

ADDRESS: AN EARLY START FOR OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN INNOVATION AND RESPONSIBILITY AT THE STATE AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

George Voinovich, Governor of Ohio

2:00-3:30 p.m.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Panel Discussion: Mobilizing A National Response: What Should the Influential Sectors of Society Do to Advance the Needs of Young Children in the New Century?

The Business Community

Ralph Larson, CEO of Johnson and Johnson

or

Brad Butler, retired CEO, Procter and Gamble

State and Local Government

James B. Hunt, Governor of North Carolina

or

Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada

Kurt Schmoke, Mayor of Baltimore

or

Norman Rice, Mayor of Seattle

Community Leadership: The Role of Churches

Reverend Kenneth Smith, Chicago Theological Seminary

or

Reverend Eileen Lindner, National Council of Churches of Christ

or

Someone from Conservative Church Group/Christian Coalition

*Hunt
former*

2:00-3:30 p.m.

AFTERNOON SESSION, (Continued)

The Congress
Trent Lott, Senate Majority Leader
or
Senator James Jeffords, Vermont

Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives
or
Representative John Porter, Illinois

The Media
Rob Reiner, Castle Rock Entertainment

3:30-4:00 p.m.

PANEL DISCUSSION AND AUDIENCE RESPONSE

Moderated by Ted Koppel, ABC News
or
Tom Brokaw, NBC Nightly News
or
Judy Woodruff, CNN

4:00 p.m.

CLOSING REMARKS/KEYNOTE

The Challenge Ahead: Public-Private Partnerships to Enhance Early Learning

The President, The First Lady, or Vice President Al Gore

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

cc: Melanne
Dan B.
Mark Penn
Ann Lewis
Maria E.
Rahm
Geno S.

April 5, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRUCE REED
MIKE COHEN

SUBJECT: National Standards and Testing: Progress Report and Strategy

With much of our education agenda tied up in the budget debate, we continue to look for opportunities to promote initiatives that don't hinge entirely on Congressional action. This memo provides you with a progress report and strategy for the two major challenges to states -- national standards and testing, and charter schools. In the near future we will provide you with updates on other legislative and budget-related initiatives.

I. NATIONAL STANDARDS AND TESTS

Our objective is to have 30-40+ states participate in the initial 1999 administration of the national tests. To reach this objective, we are working on several interrelated fronts:

A. Developing the Tests: By the end of April, the Education Department will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests. A draft is already circulating for public comment. Contracts will be awarded by September 1. We do not yet know whether each test will be developed by a separate contractor, or whether one test developer will successfully bid to develop both. In addition, the Education Department and the test developers will establish a number of technical advisory groups and evaluation studies to assure the technical quality of the tests.

As part of the process of developing the RFP, the Education Department has held a number of public meetings with testing experts, state testing officials, test publishers, and others in the education and civil rights communities. (The Education Department has made the transcripts of these meetings, and other related documents, widely available on the Internet.)

These sessions have raised a number of important issues which will be addressed as the work proceeds.

First, virtually all groups have stressed the importance of ensuring the technical quality of the tests, and of helping parents and the public understand the nature and purposes of the tests. This is particularly important in light of experiences in a number of states in which technical problems or public misunderstandings have led to heated debate about the testing program. Some urged that the time line be slowed down to accommodate these concerns, but the Education Department continues to believe that the time line is realistic and appropriate. We agree, and see no reason to delay the Spring 1999 date for the initial test administration.

Second, a number of states anticipate a challenge in integrating these new tests into their ongoing testing programs, especially states that are now well along in developing new tests aligned with recently developed state standards. Some states would find it easier to "embed" a small number of additional test items into their existing tests, rather than administer a separate and additional test. But this approach does not appear to be technically feasible if we are to have a valid test. Other states have suggested that a 4th grade reading test would be more valuable to them if it were administered in the Fall rather than the Spring, since their goal -- like yours -- is for students to read independently by the end of the 3rd grade. The Education Department is studying this possibility.

Third, many testing experts suggested that the 8th grade math test be based on the NAEP framework rather than on the TIMSS framework. They argued that the NAEP framework is more explicit and more widely accepted among the states, and that student scores could then be reported according to the NAEP achievement levels (basic, proficient and advanced) as will be the case with the reading test. The Education Department has determined that this would be a preferable approach, and that it will still be possible to provide individual student scores in terms of the TIMSS as well, because of the very high overlap in the content of NAEP and TIMSS. Therefore, the final test will still meet your initial commitment of providing students with internationally benchmarked scores.

B. A Governing Body to Ensure the Tests Are National, Not Federal: We are working to determine how best to establish an advisory or governing body that can provide bipartisan support for this effort, and assurance that the tests measure what they are supposed to based on the widely accepted NAEP frameworks. Mike Cohen, Mike Smith and other Education Department officials have been consulting with governors of both parties, Congressional staff and others, with the aim of establishing an advisory mechanism that will garner strong bipartisan support among governors and in the Congress. Secretary Riley met last week with Gov. Thompson, and is working to set up a meeting in mid-May with a bipartisan group of 8-10 governors, hopefully including Romer, Hunt, Zell Miller, Bob Miller, Thompson, Engler, and Voinovich. Secretary Riley, Mike Smith and Mike Cohen will also continue meeting with members of Congress over the next several weeks. While the additional consultations may change our thinking significantly, our current plan is as follows:

- Create an interim, bipartisan advisory council, in consultation with governors and members of Congress in both parties. We would probably appoint governors, business leaders, and educators currently serving on related groups such as the National Education Goals Panel, ACHIEVE (the group established to follow-up last year's education summit in Palisades), and the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), as well as teachers, testing experts and others. The announcement of this council would be an opportunity to demonstrate bipartisan Congressional and gubernatorial support for the testing initiative. Staff-level conversations suggest that key House Republicans, including Reps. Frank Riggs, John Porter, and perhaps Bill Goodling might be willing to participate in a White House announcement of an advisory council if our consultations continue to go well.
- Once this council is established, we think it may be possible to gain NGA's endorsement for the testing initiative at the Summer meeting in Nevada. Both the ACHIEVE Board of Directors and the National Education Goals Panel will be meeting in conjunction with the NGA meeting. If your schedule permits, it would be possible for you to meet with both groups, to demonstrate broad support for your standards initiative and to help energize governors and business leaders behind common educational goals.
- These two steps would create a favorable climate for Congressional consideration of legislation to reauthorize the National Assessment of Education Progress and the National Assessment Governing Board, which are scheduled for consideration sometime in this Congress. At that time, we can determine if NAGB should assume policy responsibility for the national tests, with Congressional support. (At present, NAGB is prohibited by law from overseeing the development of individual-level tests.) These steps would also improve our ability to win any legislative battles we may face on this issue, such as any attempt to prohibit the Education Department from using funds for the continued development of the tests.

Please note that we are optimistic but not yet confident that we can secure this level of bipartisan cooperation. Much will depend upon how effectively we can enlist the help of a core group of Republican governors.

C. Building Momentum through State and Local Endorsements: As you know, we now have commitments from leaders in Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and California, as well as the Department of Defense Schools. A number of other states look promising, including Missouri and Vermont. However, we believe that the prospects for signing up large numbers of states will depend largely upon getting a bipartisan group of governors bought in to the right advisory body. This step will take some time to work out, but is essential to sustain this effort. In the meantime, we are pursuing three major strategies to sign up states:

1. Visits to State Legislatures: We would like to schedule trips to three more state legislatures over the next three months -- two to states that agree to sign up for the tests, and at least one to a state like Washington that is considering charter school legislation (see below). Your travel plans and upcoming adjournments in some states will make that more complicated, but we are working with the Communications and Scheduling departments to get it done. One possibility worth pursuing would be to travel to Washington State to join Gary Locke at the signing of a charter schools law. We are tracking that legislation: depending on when (and whether) it passes, a signing could take place as early as April 17 or as late as mid-May.

2. State School Officers: Last month the Council of Chief State School Officers presented the Vice President with an endorsement of your testing initiative. We are working with chief state school officers to enlist additional states. However, in many cases, even our biggest supporters (such as Rick Mills from New York) will want to secure the support of the state board of education and the governor where possible before making public commitments. Even in California, where we have broad support, Delaine Eastin and Wilson appointees on the Board of Education are already feuding over whether the state legislature needs to act before the tests can go forward.

3. Major Cities: We are also working to sign up big cities, such as Los Angeles and Boston, regardless of the respective state participation. The intent here is to further demonstrate momentum, underscore that these standards are especially important for the students and schools for which society typically has low expectations, and show that these tests can in fact be tools to lift people up, by helping to stimulate new efforts and focus existing ones to improve teaching and learning.

We believe it will be possible, over the next several months, to work with mayors, school superintendents and school boards, teachers unions, institutions of higher education, as well as parent, community and business groups in 5-10 cities. We will seek broad partnerships in each city that pledges to use the national tests, and commit to specific, locally designed efforts in each community to help prepare students to meet these standards. We will ask the Education Department to work with these cities, provide them with information on best practices, and help the cities learn from one another. Once we have a few cities in hand, a White House event announcing this partnership should generate considerable excitement and attention. It will also strengthen support for the testing initiative among core constituencies.

You can take a number of steps to add momentum to these efforts, including:

- **Hold a town meeting or other forum on reading and math standards.** We would like to create a setting in which you interact with teachers, parents and students, and use examples of student work, sample test questions and answers, or videos of teaching to high standards, as a way of helping the public come to some concrete understanding of what the reading and math standards are really all about.

- **Meet with textbook publishers and software developers.** Such a meeting would provide you with an opportunity to urge (or enlist commitments from) publishers to upgrade the quality of textbooks by aligning them with higher standards and expectations. You could also highlight the efforts of software developers to produce materials for home and classroom use that are aligned with the standards.
- **Meet with groups involved in promoting literacy and math achievement.** Through the America Reads initiative and the Education Department's previous early reading initiative, there are several national and grassroots coalitions of groups that are supporting early reading initiatives. You can meet with these groups, at the White House or elsewhere, and emphasize the connections between their efforts to promote learning and your call for national standards and tests. In addition, as a result of a directive you issued to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation last month, there is an interagency effort underway to organize federal agency resources, and to identify nonfederal resources (e.g., Nobel Laureates, math and science resources in the business community) that can be enlisted to support teaching and learning aimed at preparing students to meet 8th grade math standards. We will propose one or more events as part of this effort. Together, these will enable you to underscore that your testing initiative is not just about testing, but about mobilizing the nation to support learning to high standards.

II. CHARTER SCHOOLS

Another important goal is to foster the creation of 3,000 charter schools within 5 years, up from the current level of 500. One challenge is expanding the number of states with charter schools legislation. Currently 25 states and D.C. authorize the creation of charter schools; we would like to raise the number of states to 30 by the end of 1997. Over the past couple of months, progress in state legislatures has been slow, due in part to an absence of strong centrist leadership at the state level, partisan differences, and occasional opposition by state and local union affiliates. In addition, in at least one state (Virginia) the potential racial impact of charter schools emerged as an issue.

However, there are some bright spots. In Washington State this week, the governor, schools superintendent, and legislators tentatively reached agreement on a charter schools bill. Mississippi passed a final bill this week, although it authorizes only 6 schools. Charter legislation is also alive in Missouri (as part of a big post-desegregation package), Indiana, Maine, Oregon, and Nevada.

To move things forward in these states, we recommend an event in the next several weeks -- ideally the Washington State trip if it works out, but at least a radio address. The Education Department is ready to release two important reports on charter schools. One is the first-year report of a major national charter school study. A key finding is that the number one obstacle for new charter schools to overcome is lack of access to start-up funding. The second report is a

guidebook for school boards and other chartering authorities, which emphasizes the importance of effective accountability for charter schools -- an important issue, given problems that have emerged with loosely run schools in D.C. and elsewhere.

In addition, the Education Department will soon announce a new competition for charter schools funds. It is also planning a national charter schools conference in late Summer or early Fall. These activities will provide support both to state efforts and to your FY98 request for \$100 million for charter schools.