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68TH STORY of Level 2 printed in FULL format.

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FDCH Federal Department and Agency Documents

April 30, 1998; Thursday

LENGTH: 488 words

AGENCY: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

SIC-MAJOR-GROUP: 07 - Justice

HEADLINE: ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO TO URGE GREATER USE OF MEDIATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION, ON LAW DAY

CONTACT: (202) 616-2777

BODY:

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- To celebrate Law Day, Attorney General

Janet Reno and Associate Attorney General Ray Fisher will travel to California Friday to urge lawyers to make greater use of appropriate dispute resolution as a way to settle disputes. Law Day, which occurs every May 1, is a time to commemorate the value of the law and the freedoms that flow from it.

Recognizing that the federal courts are saddled with hundreds of thousands of cases, Reno will highlight the benefits of mediation and arbitration over costly, time consuming litigation. She will also emphasize that dispute resolution can be used in our classrooms and communities as well.

Reno will conduct a roundtable discussion with children who have experienced a mediation program at a county courthouse in Monterey Park, deliver a luncheon address on the role of lawyers as peacemakers and problemsolvers in Los Angeles, and give remarks and participate in discussion at California Western School of Law in San Diego.

Los Angeles County Juvenile Dependency Court

TIME: 11:00 AM - 11:20 AM

Federal Department and Agency Documents, April 30, 1998

DATE: Friday, May 1, 1998

SITE: L.A. County Juvenile Dependency Court

1st floor

201 Centre Plaza Drive

Monterey Park, California

* The Attorney General and the Associate Attorney General will participate in a roundtable discussion with two teenagers, who will discuss their experiences in the "Children's Courthouse."

This will be pool coverage only. CONTACT: Thomas Mrozek (213) 894-6947

Los Angeles County Bar Association Luncheon

TIME: 12:00 PM

DATE: Friday, May 1, 1998

SITE: Hotel Inter-Continental

251 S. Olive Street

Los Angeles, California

* The Attorney General and the Associate Attorney General will be the featured speakers at a luncheon sponsored by the Los Angeles Bar Association and the Federal Bar Association. Reno will deliver a speech entitled, "ADR and the Role of Lawyers as Peacemakers and Problem Solvers." CONTACT: David Fong (213) 896-6450.

California Western School of Law's McGill Center for Creative Problem Solving

TIME: 4:30 PM

DATE: Friday, May 1, 1998

SITE: California Western School of Law

350 Cedar Street

Federal Department and Agency Documents, April 30, 1998

San Diego, California

* The Attorney General will make remarks and lead a roundtable discussion on creative problem solving at the McGill Center. The Center trains its students to seek innovative solutions when they graduate and are working to serve both their clients and the broader community. U.S. Attorney Alan Bersin will also be in attendance. CONTACT: Katherine Curridan (619) 525-7645.

REGION: 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals - Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington, D.C.

INDUSTRY-CODE: Justice, public order, and safety

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 1998

LEVEL 1 - 14 OF 487 STORIES

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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October 3, 1998, Saturday, AM cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 424 words

HEADLINE: Kentucky deputy is among first trainees of anti-terrorism center

DATELINE: FORT MCCLELLAN, Ala.

BODY:

Chad Carpenter has a grim job.

As one of 30 people taking the first advanced operations class at the new Center for Domestic Preparedness at Fort McClellan, he is learning what to do in case his community - Boone County, Ky., - is attacked by terrorists.

"In the world that we live in today, there are a lot of dangers out there," Carpenter said. "If something happens, this is helping give me the training to be ready."

The training includes walking around in a hot, heavy hazardous materials suit along with gas mask, rubber boots and gloves. The protective gear is necessary because the students work with live chemical agents as they learn to investigate a chemical weapons attack, clean it up and minimize its effects.

The center's first series of classes, attended by more than 450 people, were "advanced awareness" classes consisting mainly of classroom exercises. Participants learn how to deal with biological, chemical, nuclear and conventional attacks, but don't have the hands-on experience with live agents that the advanced operations class does.

Officials from the Justice Department attended a ceremony inaugurating the new course on Thursday.

The Center for Domestic Preparedness, which opened in June, is aimed at teaching local law enforcement and emergency workers like firefighters how to cope with terrorist attacks. Those trained at the center are supposed to go back and show others what they have learned.

"In Washington, we approve money, we talk about programs like this," said Raymond Fisher, associate U.S. attorney general and third-ranking official in Justice. "Making them happen, making them real is what it's all about."

The bombings of the World Trade Center in New York and the federal building in Oklahoma City taught the country an important lesson: that it is vulnerable to terrorism, domestic or foreign, said Assistant Attorney General Laurie Robinson. Now there is bipartisan support in Congress to ensure that first responders have the tools and training to deal with a terrorist incident, she

The Associated Press State & Local Wire, October 3, 1998

said, and some cities already have programs in place.

"I think you'll find there's a real diversity of preparedness," she said. But, "there are a number of rural areas and cities that don't yet have the tools they need."

Although Congress including funding in this year's budget for \$ 12 million to help state and local governments buy equipment, Ms. Robinson said more money is needed.

The center, which opened in June, has a \$ 15 million budget funded through the Justice Department.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 3, 1998

LEVEL 1 - 11 OF 487 STORIES

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October 13, 1998 21:56 Eastern Time

SECTION: ASSIGNMENT DESK, DAYBOOK EDITOR

LENGTH: 1267 words

HEADLINE: The President and First Lady to Host White House Conference on School Safety

CONTACT: White House Press Office, 202-456-7150

BODY:

News Advisory:

President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will host the " White House Conference on School Safety: Causes and Preventions of Youth Violence" on Oct. 15. The conference will be a day-long event held in the White House Conference Center and in the East Room of the White House and will include participation by Attorney General Janet Reno, Education Secretary Richard Riley, members of Congress, and state and local elected officials. More than 100 individuals from around the country, including teachers, principals, school superintendents, members of law enforcement, experts from medical and psychological fields, clergy and religious leaders and other community representatives will attend the conference. The conference will be broadcast via satellite to more than 600 locations nationwide and cybercast on the Internet.

What: The President and First Lady host the White House
Conference on School Safety

Where: The White House

When: All Day, Thursday, Oct. 15

Schedule of Events:

- 8:30 a.m. Morning Workshop Sessions
White House Conference Center, Jackson Place
POOL PRESS ONLY (FOR OPENING REMARKS ONLY)
- 1.) "Education and Safety" -- Chair, Secretary of Education Richard Riley
 - 2.) "Early Warning Signs, Mental Health Interventions and Crisis Response" -- Chair, Margaret Hamburg, assistant secretary of Health and Human Services for Planning and Evaluation
 - 3.) "School, Community and Law Enforcement Partnerships" -- Chair, Associate Attorney General Raymond Fisher
 - 4.) "Causes of Youth Violence in Early Childhood Development" -- Chair, Attorney General Janet Reno

Note: Four Separate Pools will be formed for the morning workshop sessions. Media interested in serving as pool for these workshops should contact the White House Press Office at 202-456-7150. These workshops

will not be available via satellite or cybercast.

10:30 a.m. Morning Plenary Session
East Room, The White House
OPEN PRESS
Opening Session and Conference Overview -- The First

Lady, Attorney General Janet Reno, Secretary of
Education Richard Riley, and panel participants

12:45 p.m. Afternoon Panel I
East Room, The White House
OPEN PRESS
Discussion of the Causes and Prevention of Youth
Violence that Affect our Schools and Communities --

The President, Vice President, First Lady, and panel
participants

2:45 p.m. Afternoon Panel II
East Room, The White House
OPEN PRESS
Discussion of Initiatives and Strategies that Work
to Reduce Youth Violence -- The First Lady, Attorney

General Janet Reno, Secretary of Education Richard
Riley, and panel participants

Note: Panel participants will be available for interviews
on the White House North Lawn following Afternoon
Panel I and Afternoon Panel II. Media without White

House credentials or needing clearance should
contact the White House Press Office at
202-456-7150. Media wishing to pre-set should gather

in the briefing room at 9 a.m. for escort to the
East Room. Final escort for the morning session will

be at 10: 15 a.m.

Satellite Information:

All East Room sessions of the White House Conference

on School Safety will be broadcast via satellite.
Over 600 communities across the country will be
hosting events around this live national satellite
broadcast. Contact the White House Press Office for

locations in your communities. In addition, media can
downlink the satellite broadcast from the following

coordinates:

C-Band Coordinates:

Ku-Band Coordinates:

U.S. Newswire, October 13, 1998

Satellite: GE2	Satellite: Galaxy 3
Transponder: 1	Transponder: 17
Channel: 1	Channel: 17
Frequency: 3720 MHZ Vertical	Frequency: 12043 MHZ Vertical

Cybercast Information:

The White House Conference on School Safety Cybercast

can be accessed at the following World Wide Web
address: www.whitehouse.gov/WH/New/Safety

Panel Participants:

The following are some of the individuals who will
participate in panel discussions during the White
House Conference on School Safety:

-- Paul Kingery, Ph.D., director, Hamilton Fish
National Institute on School and Community Violence,

Rosslyn, Va.

-- Marlene Wong, director, L.A. School of Mental
Health, Valley Branch, Calif.

-- Suzanne Wilson, parent, Jonesboro, Ark.

-- Mayor Deedee Corradini, Salt Lake City, Utah

-- Tony Earles, professor, Harvard University,
Cambridge, Mass.

-- U.S. Rep. Bobby Etheridge, (D-N.C.)

-- Paul Evans, commissioner, Boston Police
Department, Boston, Mass.

-- Liberty Franklin, Everett Boys and Girls Club,
Everett, Wash.

-- Jamon Kent, superintendent, Springfield Public
Schools, Springfield, Ore.

-- Joanna Quintano, teacher, Coral Way Elementary
School, Miami, Fla.

-- Thomas C. Frazier, police commissioner, Baltimore

Police Department, Baltimore, Md.

-- Lt. Gary French, Boston's Operation Ceasefire,
Roslindale, Mass.

-- Mariana Gaston, director, Resolving Conflict
Creatively Program, New York, N.Y.

-- Lynn McDonald, Ph.D., founder, Families and
Schools Together, (FAST), Madison, Wis.

-- Irma Howard, FAST Graduate, New Orleans, La.

-- Sandy McBrayer, executive director, Children's
Initiative, San Diego, Calif.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 13, 1998

12TH STORY of Level 2 printed in FULL format.

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October 19, 1998

LENGTH: 5320 words

HEADLINE: THE WHITE HOUSE

Press briefing by Dick Riley and Ray Fisher

HIGHLIGHT:

The Briefing Room

BODY:

MR. TOIV: Good afternoon, everybody. As you know, ~~tomorrow here at the White House we will have going on all day the White House Conference on School Safety, Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence.~~ Here today to brief on the conference and to brief on the

- and to tell you about a report that they are issuing today on this same subject, which is the first Annual Report on School Safety, are Education Secretary Dick Riley and Associate Attorney General Ray Fisher.

SECRETARY RILEY: Thank you, Barry.

Before Ray Fisher and I talk about the report and the conference, let me make just a few comments on the current budget negotiations.

As you know, education has been and remains the centerpiece of the President's budget, and I think for very good reason. We have more children in our nation's schools today than ever before and more are on the way. There's not going to be any let-up in this enrollment increase. We need many more quality teachers. We need to reduce class size and help communities build or modernize thousands of schools. I think the time is now to do it. This is no time to wait around. Schools are over-crowded and wearing out right now, and I can't emphasize that enough.

We have put a \$1.1 billion class size reduction proposal on the table that is targeted to grades 1-3 to get average class size down to 18 to 1, 18 students to a teacher, in those early grades - teachers who are well trained in reading. And this is where we need to place our emphasis. Congress has accepted the funding, and I'm so pleased that they have done so. But Congress has not accepted the targeting, and that is an educational mistake. So I hope that's worked out. Children need to master the basics, especially reading, and that happens in those early grades when they get the individual attention that they sorely need.

And it's also why we're facing a strong focus on literacy and why I urge the Congress to fund the President's reading bill. I also urge Congress to take a serious look at our school construction initiative. I just had a call from Chancellor Rudy Crew in New York City, talking to me in very serious terms about how the critical facilities situation was there and how critical it was to quality schools.

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I'll tell you there is still time to do that. We've offered a proposal with offsets. Congress has refused to look at this offer and I think that's a mistake. But parents all over America want their children going to safe and modern schools. So I urge the Congress to come to the table on that, to support the President's request for middle school counselors, in terms of drugs and violence, to keep young people safe and away from drugs. If Congress would step up to the plate today, we can have a bipartisan budget agreement that is good for American education.

Now, let me turn to the report that we are releasing today. The report is the result - and this is what it will look like and I think all of you will be given copies of it. The report is a result of a directive issued by the President to the Attorney General and to me to develop for the first time an Annual Report on School Safety. As you know, we've issued several separate reports over the course of the last year on school safety. This report, however, is the first comprehensive effort by the federal government to give the American people a clear picture regarding safety of their children when they go to school.

We've pulled together information from all the pertinent agencies - the Department of Justice, Health and Human Services, and Education. And to my way of thinking, it makes good sense to have an annual report like this one. We have more children in school than ever before, as I mentioned. We face record-breaking enrollments. We're releasing the report, the research document entitled "Indicators of School Crime and Safety," that lays the groundwork for this first Annual School Safety Report.

Much of the data we're releasing today has been released in other reports, but this is a compilation in one document where all of this information is, and then it also contains some new data. For example, we note that 90 percent of our schools are free of serious violent crime - 90 percent. This is something we reported to you last February.

Three things, however, make this report different. It is comprehensive, and it will be an annual report, and it goes beyond just reporting data to suggest positive solutions. And that's very important. A report like this can be useful. It can reassure parents that our schools are safe and also tell us where we need to improve.

Now, let me mention this about the findings. The report tells us that overall school crime is down. Much of the crime is theft related. Young people are more likely to be in harm's way outside of the school than inside. This report also tells us where we need to pay attention. The number of gangs has almost doubled - 15 percent to 28 percent, and that's very troubling. Too many teachers are victims of violence, and we should do better at targeting our resources to the 10 percent of the schools that have to deal with serious violent crime. The President will be making some recommendations on this tomorrow at the White House Conference.

We're all sensitive to the terrible tragedies like West Paducah, Kentucky; Edinborough, Pennsylvania; Pearl, Mississippi; Jonesboro, Arkansas; and Springfield, Oregon. And that's why the Attorney General and I issued an early warning guide at the beginning of the school year in September. We sent this out to 81,000 public schools and to 27,000 private schools, as a help to them to deal with this kind of potential problem.

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This report that we're issuing today tells us that these types of multiple homicides are very, very rare. We had two in 1992. We had six last school year, and that was terrible. We don't want any of these, obviously, and we must do everything in the world that we possibly can to prevent them from happening.

We've got to keep guns out of schools; that's an automatic need. This report notes, for example, that fewer young people are bringing weapons to school. I think our zero tolerance policy is having an impact. Some 6,000 kids plus were expelled from school last year based on that policy.

I'd like to emphasize that the budget President Clinton submitted to Congress, which is being discussed, will go a long way toward helping schools and communities get needed resources to implement effective violence prevention strategies. It's clear that there's no easy solution to improving schools, but the President's meaningful proposals - like smaller class size in early grades, modern school buildings, after-school programs, drug and violence prevention counselors, targeted funding for effective programs are all common-sense ways to help our schools.

This study emphasizes that smaller schools are better than bigger schools when it comes to safety. I pulled in all of the largest school districts' security officers, with the Attorney General. We had a couple-of-day session with them. And they came back and said the most important thing we could do to prevent the Jonesboro-Paducah-type thing to happen would be have smaller schools and smaller classrooms so you can have that personal contact with students. We've pushed hard during the budget process to build more schools, expand on after-school efforts, and that's why we want more counselors in schools for young people.

I can tell you that when young people feel connected it makes a powerful difference. The Attorney General and I have gone around to some schools. We were at T.C. Williams High School. They talked about a Ms. Finney there. She was a guidance counselor who dealt with conflict resolution. She was tough on kids, but they felt very connected to her. And several of them talked about how tough she was on them, demanded a lot of things, but they felt very close to her. And these kids, some of them told us that they didn't have the strong connections at home and in their community, but being connected to this strong, important teacher.

This report puts a strong emphasis on the fact that schools can't do this alone. Everyone has to be involved. It starts with young people, themselves. Students have to be accountable to each other. Parents have to slow down their lives and spend more time with their children and pay attention to them and listen to them. All the research tells us that comprehensive community-wide prevention strategies work.

Now, let me let Ray Fisher make some comments and we'll be happy to discuss also the White House Conference somewhat. That will be all day tomorrow here in the White House. Top people from all over the country will be here participating. There will be 600 downlinks all around the country so people can participate. So we're very hopeful that it will be a very good conference and I'm sure it will.

MR. FISHER: Thank you. Good afternoon. I have the privilege of working very closely with the Attorney General on the very important issue of school safety

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and the broader issues of youth violence and, generally, the issues of public safety throughout this country. And I'm very proud to share today with Secretary Riley as we talk to you about this first ever Annual Report on School Safety.

When tragedies occur we have to seize the opportunity to make some good sense grow out of misfortune, and that's what we have tried to do here. In response to a directive from President Clinton following the horrific shooting in Paducah, Kentucky, last December, the Department of Justice and the Department of Education have worked very constructively together to create a report that is a practical, common-sense approach that is going to be useful to all Americans.

It will allow communities to solve problems strategically, to work cooperatively at their level and with the federal government. This is a report that moves beyond the hype to define the school crime problems that we do have and also to sort out those that we don't have.

We learned, for example, that our schools are, in fact, safer - safer than they were five years ago. But, unfortunately, students are more likely to feel unsafe in their schools. We learned, too, that while students are bringing fewer weapons to school, the presence of gangs has doubled, as Secretary Riley pointed out. We learned that while the number of multiple homicide events in schools have increased, which is what triggered this report in the first place, preliminary data suggests that, over all, the number of school-associated violent deaths has actually decreased in the past two years.

It is these type of data that are critical not only because they capture the essence of the issues that we face and our communities face, but also, more importantly, probably, it informs us and the communities how to make decisions on how to confront these issues. In fact, as you, in reviewing the report will note, it provides vital information on ways that entire communities can address their own unique local issues - information on the most effective problem-solving processes and, most importantly, on individual programs that work.

The report has a section on demonstrated effective programs and those that we candidly call "promising programs." We are trying to identify where communities, so they don't have to go out and reinvent the wheel, so that they have resources available to them so they can jump-start some of these programs if they meet their local needs.

Just recently there was a meeting here at the White House that I attended, and others, with the principals, teachers, local law enforcement folks from those schools where the tragic shootings have occurred. Everyone was so absolutely adamant about the need for this kind of information. All of these schools caught these issues out of nowhere. They were confronted just like that, in the space of an instant, with these tragedies and these emergencies, and they had to find ways to deal with both the aftermath of the shootings and how to prevent them in the future.

What we have tried to do with this report is pull together data, as Secretary Riley pointed out, data that is known but not assembled in this useful form, and also add to it programs that will help folks in the local communities deal with these problems. They will deal with these problems, of course, with the support and assistance of the Department of Education, the Department of

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Justice, Health and Human Services, whatever resources we can bring to bear.

So we are very pleased to be able to do this and look forward to an ongoing dialogue with the communities. And, of course, we'd be happy to answer any of your questions.

Thank you.

Q Secretary Riley, about the budget - you mentioned that the Republicans are willing to spend this \$1.1 billion, but that they don't want the money specifically earmarked for hiring of new teachers. What if a local school district said, rather than hiring new teachers we want to spend the money on a violence prevention program that's not covered under the President's budget? What would be wrong with that? What would be wrong with that school district choosing to use the money that way?

SECRETARY RILEY: Well, there wouldn't be a thing wrong with it. The problem is we have developed what we think is an important national policy. We have developed, in targeting this particular purpose - that is, class size for grades 1, 2 and 3, with teachers well trained in reading - we have identified accountability as an important feature of federal programs. And if you just send money down for general purposes, you don't end up with a national purpose being accomplished.

And that is what we're looking at. The President knows, based on what everybody says, that having smaller classrooms in these early grades affects not just education, it's very critical for the learning process. But it's also critical in what we're talking about today. As I indicated, these security people that came in and talked to us about how you identify troubled young people that really are not connecting up with school or connecting up with programs in school - small classrooms, then, in these early years can identify these young people. Teachers can work with them and help them and, if not, bring in others who can, who are professional. That's certainly true in that area.

When you look at special education, that's a very important area. Now, if you have 35 young people in a classroom, then you have two or three kids who are having trouble managing in the classroom structure, the teacher then is inclined to say, well, I've got to move these kids out, they've got to be put into special ed, or whatever. If they've got 16, 17 or 18 children, that teacher can deal directly with them and often keep them then and in the regular classroom.

So I think this deals with a lot of issues other than just improving reading and improving achievement of children. And it is a national purpose. It's very important to target that and then you can evaluate it. Just like we did 100,000 police officers in the communities, on the street - when that is done, it makes a difference. You can analyze that and evaluate it. When we put 100,000 teachers out there - and it will take seven years - you've got to recruit, you've got to bring teachers through the system, you've got to teach them specially how to handle reading - but when we have them out there, I promise you it will be very good for education in this country.

Q Can I ask another budget related question? When you were talking about the school construction money it sounded more like a plea than a demand. I mean, the White House has laid down some pretty clear markers on some issues and said, we'll veto if this isn't included; this is not just a request, it's a demand.

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Are you saying now, with regard to the school construction that you want the Republicans to get off the dime on this, but if they don't, so be it?

SECRETARY RILEY: Well, that's not exactly what I'm saying. I'm certainly saying we want them to get off the dime on it. As you know, it's on the tax side of the measures and so you don't have to have a tax bill that is out there. You have to have an appropriations bill and so we can deal more directly, the President can, on the appropriations bill.

The construction, the modernization of schools, is very, very critical for this country. And it is a high priority of ours, and we pushed on it for two years, and we're pushing right now. So I certainly hope that they will include it, but it is not anything that we can veto because it's not part of the appropriations bill. So it's a little bit of a process problem, but it is very much a priority of all of ours in the administration.

Q Either one of you can answer this. Republicans say that you're handing out paper and holding a conference, but Democrats are opposing both a juvenile justice bill that would address - seriously address the issue of serious crime by juveniles and that the Democrats are also resisting in the examination of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, the major program that addresses school violence and drugs. Can you comment on that, the resistance to looking at the Safe and Drug-Free Schools programs and the resistance to a strong juvenile justice bill?

SECRETARY RILEY: Let me speak to the education one and then Ray can to the justice one. The Safe and Drug-Free Schools program is really kind of a block grant - what I call a responsible block grant because it has to be targeted in a broad sense for safe and drug-free schools. But the money goes down and the state then develops the plan with the local school districts. We don't do that in Washington. It's done there. And there have been some concerns about - some programs were effective and some were not as effective.

We did send down what we call our principles of effectiveness, and those are now being used by the states to make sure all of these programs develop data as to what their needs are, develop goals and purposes, then develop research-based programs, and develop evaluation. And all that is taking place right now. So we think it's going to make a big difference in the effectiveness of these programs.

MR. FISHER: On the juvenile justice bill, there has been a longstanding effort on the Justice Department's part to get a good bill which will have money for and resources for prevention as well as punishment. And that has been where, up until now, the hang-up has been. There is a very, as this report indicates, tremendous amount of preventive programs that are needed out there, and that's where the obstacles have come. We are, it's my understanding, in conversations now attempting to get this dislodged. The Attorney General - none of us has given up on that yet.

Q The report says that schools are safer, but kids are more fearful. What is the source of the insecurity? What was your finding on that?

MR. FISHER: I think what the data is showing, it's reflecting that this is a perception of kids. Some of this is data that's collected by asking kids how they feel, and I know from having three public school teachers in my own

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family that teach out in California, that they will have experiences that the kids read about in newspapers, their friends that are shot off campus, not on campus, but that creates a climate of fear. And I think that is what we are seeing. And I think in part it's also reflecting the increase in gangs on campus, that it creates a sense of uncertainty and fear.

Q Are the gangs a sort of response to this insecurity? Are they joining gangs for protection? Does that account for the rise, do you think?

MR. FISHER: There are lots of reasons why kids join gangs, but primarily - and it depends on the area of the country you're in. My experience is with Los Angeles; I can speak to that. There are a number of organized gangs that are reactive to insecurities that the kids feel in the neighborhoods. Some of them are out for - they deal in drugs, so they have an organization behind them which is, in fact, recruiting young kids to deal in criminal behavior.

But kids basically, I think as Secretary Riley identified, join gangs or are at risk in schools in very large measure because they aren't connected. They don't have something to anchor them, be it at home in many cases and often in the schools. And that's why they look for peer support.

Q And aside from smaller classrooms, what other sort of practical policy implications does your report suggest? I mean, what other remedies have you looked at?

SECRETARY RILEY: If you look through the report, one whole section deals about what you can do as a student, as a parent, as a community, as a school, or whatever, and very concrete suggestions. Then the final section has what works. And you can connect up

- if you're in a small rural school, you can find an example of a rural school there that has a violence prevention, drug prevention technique that works. And if you're in a big school, the same thing, big inner-city school.

So the report goes a lot further than just the data talking about what the problem is. We think that's extremely important, but it goes on to give models and examples so you can get in touch with a school principal in Miami who is having very good success, whose name and how to reach him and all is in the report. So that's a key part of it.

MR. FISHER: Just one other illustration, a major one, which is one of the things we've discovered are the kids do not know how, or are not trained in how to work out conflict in a non-violent manner. And one of the repetitive things we are learning is that if kids are given training early on, and all through their education, how to resolve conflict in a peaceful manner, kids can then turn around and train on a peer basis. But that is certainly one area that has emerged as a very, very promising activity.

Q If the schools are safer, why is there a need to have this conference and why is there a need to having new initiatives?

SECRETARY RILEY: Well, schools are safer in a slight percentage in terms of overall criminal acts. But any criminal act, any act of violence makes it worthy to improve. It still is a major concern of ours. When you look at - 47 percent of the schools say that some form of violence related incidents have occurred.

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They might be a fistfight or it might be a theft, a vandalism, or it might be a homicide.

So we say, yes, it's gotten somewhat better, but it is important now to pay more attention than ever. And, of course, these four or five terrible multiple homicides last year really caught our attention as to the important need for emphasizing this issue.

Q Secretary Riley, you were saying that these homicides last year in these schools, and this last year with the schools caught your attention. And there's been a large criticism that the government is starting to act on this because these instances were in white schools. And on page 21 of this report it shows that urban areas have been affected by this, as well as black students have been affected by the murders at schools, and suicides. And there's been a constant criticism that it's been overlooked before because of where it's happened. And now that it's happened in these predominantly white communities, it's getting more attention. What are your thoughts about that? Because what you're saying is kind of contradicting page 21.

SECRETARY RILEY: Well - and Ray might want to add this to it - I am very sensitive to homicide, wherever it occurs, whoever it involved, just as much for one as another. We did have this rash of multiple homicides over a small period of time that caught people's attention. And previous to that the average had been one or two or less in a year - this was six, all of a sudden. And so I think it's easy to understand how it did catch attention.

I'm very sensitive to what you're talking about. I, personally, and as far as our policy is concerned, I'm just as concerned about any homicide anywhere, anything in anyway related to a child, and especially at a school.

MR. FISHER: Yes, I would agree that, historically, the resources devoted to all school violence problems has been inadequate. Indeed, that's why we have been pushing the juvenile justice bill for so long, to get some of these programs funded.

But what happened - and if you'll think back to these incidents, there were people going on television talking about this as an epidemic of violence. And that is what triggered our inquiry into it. And once we got into and pulled in experts both at the Justice Department and here at the White House to analyze it, to try and get information, it began to coalesce around the need in the communities for information. There have been programs - there are the programs that we put in this report that have been out there. People are working at the local level. But what is happening is that somebody in New York develops a very good program; they don't know anything about it in Los Angeles or San Francisco, where the causes are still there.

Q They're saying it's an epidemic, but it says clearly -

MR. FISHER: No, that's what they were saying, and we're trying to find out whether it was or not.

Q It says clearly, urban 62 percent, suburban 30 percent, rural 8 percent.

MR. FISHER: Our concern was that there suddenly were going to be a lot of these copycat shootings and multiple homicides. There was no doubt - I can

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'tell you that in my experience people were quite aware that there are gang problems in the barrio and ghetto schools, inner-city schools, that needed to be addressed. And I'm not going to stand here and say enough resources are deployed to them. But what was the concern - and I think with the constructive aspect that is coming out of all of this - is having been triggered by these very tragic incidents, we are taking a look at all schools all across the country to try and bring it home so that we can deal with schools of all kinds, large urban, rural. They have different kinds of problems, but they have a common problem of needing to have resources and intelligent scientific information brought to bear on these problems. That's what we're trying to bring to it now.

SECRETARY RILEY: And I think you make a good point, and I'll see to it that your point is raised in the conference that takes place tomorrow.

Q Secretary Riley, could you talk just a little bit about the main purpose of tomorrow's conference? Are you going to be just discussing talking points in sort of a town hall fashion, or do you expect to come up with some list of things to do? Or what's the upshot of the conference?

SECRETARY RILEY: We will have some research experts here that are well-known research people who have dealt with children's violence and school violence. We'll have a lot of education people here, law enforcement people, child psychologists, mental health - all of the different areas that would be of interest - community-based groups, superintendents, and so forth.

And then, as I say, it's going to be downlinked out into 600 different areas, so a lot of places that have a special interest in violence now are connected up to it. Then we will break out into small groups and have very good discussions to hear from all of these people and to really, hopefully, come up with some sound suggestions of ways that we as a country and states and school districts can move forward.

I don't know - do you want to say anything else about that? You think that covers it pretty well? But that's kind of generally what it will be.

Q Can you clarify one point? Are you saying that parents' and students' fears about crime is misplaced, that that fear is misplaced? And do you reject the term "epidemic" that people were using?

MR. FISHER: Yes, I reject the notion of epidemic, only because of what we learned through these various conferences. And, indeed, I think that initial reaction generally has been dispelled. But the reason people were fearing for their safety is what they were seeing on the nightly news, every night. When that's drummed in, the kids begin to pick up on it, obviously. And that creates a climate. What we, and the President particularly was trying to deal with was let's find out precisely what's going on. And that's what we have been about.

Q Should they fear or not fear now? Is that misplaced, the fear?

MR. FISHER: They should not be fearful, except they should assess - and that's what the report directs them to do, as well as the earlier guidance. If they have concerns about their schools, they should get involved in their schools and get real information instead of going on suppositions, which a lot of people do. So we're trying to give them assistance and aides in how to get to that place, give them information, but ultimately the schools are a local

'issue, very local, and they need to get familiar with their own schools. And that's what we're trying to - we're trying to provide the tools and the resources so that we can dispel the myths.

Q You raised the issue of gangs has doubled - the presence of gangs. But, actually, that's the students reporting the presence of gangs, which might be something altogether different. So that doesn't - I mean, couldn't that be the product of increased awareness, or people reading some items of clothing or behavior as indicative of a gang presence when you don't have a real clear notion of what is a gang? And could you get into that number, since you raised it as one of the sources of alarm or concern? There is a difference between reporting the presence of gangs by students and the actual existence, the actual presence of gangs.

MR. FISHER: No, I take your point - are we talking about perception or are we talking about law enforcement figures? Within local jurisdictions there is good intelligence on the existence of gangs. In terms of the data that's reflected in the report, I'll have to defer to those who have dealt with the underlying data. We can get that for you and find out what it's based on.

Q Secretary Riley, what has been your impression or your findings of schools that do have a dress code and uniforms? Has that brought down crime and brought better discipline?

SECRETARY RILEY: I think generally - and you have to be general because some things work better in some places than others do - I think generally, if parents are involved in the decision to get into uniforms or something like that, and students are involved, it seems to work very, very well. If it's perceived to be put upon them by someone other than the people who are involved, normally it doesn't work as well.

As you know, the President has seen a couple of schools, like in Long Beach, that he was very impressed with. And he wants that to be considered by people as an option. But it is not a panacea. It is an option, but it is a very good option and in many, many cases causes certainly better discipline in the school and impacts violence in that way.

Q Mr. Secretary, do you disagree then with the results of an ETS study that was released yesterday that said that school uniforms did not have much of an impact on discipline in school?

SECRETARY RILEY: Well, I don't think I've seen that study, but I can show you some schools where it has had a major impact, and I can show you some where it has not had much of an impact. So I think probably, rather than trying to generalize on it is effective in all cases, as I indicated, it is not, but it usually is effective if it's gone about in the right way. So I'm not going to argue with the generalization, but I do know cases where certainly it has helped.

Thank you all very much.

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HEADLINE: School safety summit leads call to battle antigay bias;
Amid concerns about a lack of tolerance, a report shows school crime is down overall.

BYLINE: Rob Hotakainen; Staff Writer

BODY:

Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton on Thursday joined gay and lesbian leaders who accused the nation's schools of failing to do enough to address antigay bias, saying it's time for Americans to "stand up and scream and holler" and put an end to hate crimes.

"We need to do it now and be serious about it before another gay person is killed or another African-American is hung by his neck and dragged down the streets of an American city until he's dead," said Sayles Belton at the first White House Conference on School Safety.

The first national report on school safety says the overall crime rate in schools is down, but concerns are mounting over gay and lesbian students' safety in the wake of Matthew Shepard's killing.

The 22-year-old gay man was beaten to death in Wyoming last week.

"It really struck home for me: I realized that I could have been Matthew Shepard," said conference participant Jamie Nabozny, of Duluth, a 23-year-old gay man who won a \$ 900,000 settlement after he was abused by schoolmates in Ashland, Wis.

President Clinton used the conference to urge Congress to approve hate-crime legislation. The president's call came after the head of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network urged the administration and school officials to step up their efforts against antigay violence.

"We view the tragic events in Wyoming as a failure of America's schools to address antigay bias," said Kevin Jennings, executive director of the New York City-based group. "Our schools not only failed Matthew Shepard. They failed his murderers. They failed to teach these young men to live in the real world."

Nabozny, a sophomore at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, agreed. "It's very important that - from the highest levels of our government - we're hearing things about gay and lesbian issues, especially youth issues," he said. "What happened in Wyoming should never have happened. And it happened because the hate and the biases and the prejudices are not taken care of in schools."

Nabozny won a \$ 900,000 out-of-court settlement from his school district, which he claimed had failed to protect him from abuse from other students who

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shoved, beat, spat and urinated on him and pushed his head into a urinal. He said the abuse occurred from the time he entered Ashland Middle School in 1988 until he dropped out of Ashland High School as a junior in 1993. Nabozny said he was kicked in the stomach so many times that he required surgery.

A plea for tolerance

"I'm lucky enough to survive, and I'm lucky enough to be a spokesperson to make sure that this doesn't happen to other kids," said Nabozny, who attended a vigil Wednesday night for Shepard. "It really scares me that something like this could happen. And it puts a fear back into me that I haven't had for a while for my own safety."

Nabozny's case was "a landmark school safety case" and the reason why he was invited to participate in the landmark conference, said Sarah Gegenheimer, Clinton's assistant press secretary. In his first trip to the White House, he met the president and spoke with U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley and Vice President Al Gore.

He is studying to be a social studies teacher and said he wants "to make changes so that gay and lesbian kids can feel safe" in public schools.

Sayles Belton, who attended the White House conference with the mayors of Detroit, Boston and Salt Lake City, said the public needs to express its outrage over the Shepard case.

"It's absolutely horrific," she said in an interview. "It's the most horrible thing that anybody would ever expect to happen to anyone."

"It hurts so much that an innocent person who didn't do anything to anybody was just singled out because he was different, because he was gay, and somebody decided that they had a right to take his life away because they didn't agree with his lifestyle. And that's wrong. America really does have to stand up and scream and holler that that's not right, that it's not tolerated, and it won't go on."

Sayles Belton said that "we have as a total society failed" to get the message across that gay-bashing and attacks against people for any racial or religious differences cannot be tolerated.

"I think schools have to do more," she said, adding that they must stand firm against criticism that they're promoting gay lifestyles by addressing the issue in school curricula.

"It's not a question of condoning or promoting," she said. "It's the idea of tolerance."

Twin Cities fare better

Twin Cities schools fared better than most of their urban counterparts in a report card released recently by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education

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Network.

The group gave the Minneapolis School District a B, while the St. Paul district received a C. Among other things, districts were ranked on whether they provided staff training on gay and lesbian issues, whether they supported curricula that reflected gay and lesbian issues and whether their policies protected staff and students from discrimination.

The nation's top-ranked districts were Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Dade County and Philadelphia. All received A rankings. Denver, Boston and Seattle were graded A-.

In Minnesota, all districts now are required to have plans that address harassment issues for students, said John Hustad, deputy commissioner of the state Department of Children, Families and Learning.

"Our department wants schools to be tolerant and respectful and safe places for all students, regardless of their background," Hustad said. "Violence is just not tolerable, under any circumstance, for any reason."

Despite a spate of publicity caused by recent school shootings, the nation's schools are safer today than they were just a few years ago, according to the report on school safety.

"The greatest problem of violence in schools turns out to be thefts and fistfights, the kinds of things you might expect in schools," said Ray Fisher, associate attorney general in the U.S. Justice Department. "Generally, what this report has told us is that the schools are safe."

Minnesota officials said they're experiencing the same trend.

"I'm very glad to know that this is happening across the nation," Hustad said. "Minnesota is parallel with the rest of the country, with violence declining."

In Washington, Clinton announced a series of initiatives to curb school violence, including a \$ 65 million program to help local communities hire 2,000 new police officers to stand guard at high-risk schools.

"Preventive policing has helped to make our streets safe. It can work for our schools, too," the president said.

The police will be hired to work at the 10 percent of public schools, mostly urban, that have been hit hardest by violence. For districts that apply, the federal government will provide the \$ 225,000 that it costs on average to hire a police officer for three years.

- This story includes material from the Washington Post.

- For Web sites on school safety, hate crime prevention and a discussion, go to <http://www.startribune.com>.

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