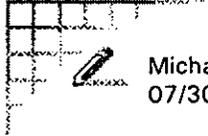


**NLWJC - Kagan**

**DPC - Box 020 - Folder 006**

**Education - Master Teachers**



Michael Cohen  
07/30/98 05:25:29 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Master Teachers

Here is where things stand on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

1. Overall, we are faced with strong opposition from Goodling and the House Republicans, a profound lack of interest from House Dems, and reasonably strong bipartisan support for the Board on the Senate side. In balance, Goodling probably has the upper hand mainly because he seems to care about this a whole lot more than any other conferee.

2. Riley is meeting with Kennedy, Dodd and Jeffords this afternoon, and with Goodling and McKeon tomorrow--to complete his meetings prior to the HEA conference. We'll see if those meetings produce any new insights--particularly if we get any indication that there is room for compromise with Goodling over the National Board--or if there are any trades over other issues we can pursue. It's a long shot, because most signals are that Goodling is as dug in on this as he was last year on the test.

3. The Board has done a good job in shoring up bipartisan support in the Senate. However, the Board staff continues to seriously underestimate the jeopardy it is in. I have made some headway on this in the past several days by bypassing the DC lobbyist and going directly to the President, Jim Kelly. On Saturday I will talk to Jim Hunt and to Bob Welling (VP of Proctor and Gamble) one of the biggest and most politically active business supporters of the board. Pending the outcome of tomorrow morning's meeting, my message will be that the board's federal support is in serious jeopardy and that it (1) must work with us and Congressional supporters on a "Board reform package" to better help its supporters carry the Board's water in conference and (2) Hunt and Welling in particular most strategically mobilize gubernatorial and business supporters to work selected conferees and leadership on this issue.

4. I've got a meeting tomorrow morning with WH, OMB, ED, Nat. Board staff, AFT and NEA, and Kennedy and Dodd's staff. In addition to assessing where we stand, the meeting will focus on:

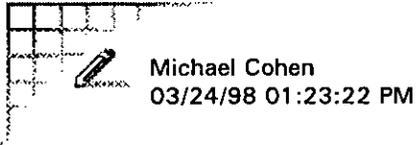
- **Shaping the responses to the attacks on the board.** I won't go into detail here, though these involve 4 key issues:
  - the salary of the director (240K) and other senior staff
  - the cost of certifying teachers
  - racial disparities in participation in board certification
  - lack of evidence that students of board-certified teachers learn more than those of noncertified teachers.

The outcome I'm looking for here is a combination of steps the board can take on its own to address concerns, and legislative language so there is can be a compromise in conference. They key question is whether we are going to have to do this with the board or around it.

- **Firming up the resolve of the Senate.** We worked and watched the Senate very closely when HEA came up there, in the event that Ashcroft or someone like that tried to add Goodling's

provision. In the process, we developed/strengthened support on both sides of the aisle (e.g., Kennedy, Dodd, Jack Reed among D's, and Jeffords, DeWine, Faircloth among R's). I'm trying to figure out how we can use the Rep. Governors who support the board (Voinavich, Branstad, and Fordice, among others) to strengthen support in the Senate, including by figuring out a way for Fordice and Voinavich to get to Lott.

- **Increasing the level of interest/support of House Dems.** While we will not convert any of the House Dems into avid supporters of the Board, the dynamics of the conference will be more favorable if House Dems are more engaged. Though they did not speak up yesterday, Kildee and Andrews have in fact been Board supporters (Andrews spoke up on behalf of the Board when Goodling introduced his amendment in April). NEA, AFT and the Nat. Association of Black School Educators (for Clay) can help on this.



Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
cc: Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP  
Subject: National Board Veto Letter



NBDVETO.W

Here is a draft of the veto letter. I've sent a copy to ED for quick comments, to make sure I haven't screwed anything up.

A couple of points, small and large:

1. I don't know who we send the letter to--Gingrich, Goodling/Jeffords and ranking members?.
2. You know I'm not big on process, but it seems appropriate to get OMB and Leg Affairs into this. Will staffing out the letter accomplish this, or is there some other steps I should take?
3. There are some key items in or about the overall Higher Education Act that need to be sorted out before we send this letter. Chief among them:
  - We expect an anti-affirmative action amendment from Riggs when this bill reaches the floor. Does a veto threat on this bill at this point change the dynamics on the affirmative action vote, by giving people a "free" vote since they will think the bill will be vetoed?
  - The bill as reported out by committee includes our High Hopes mentoring initiative--passed over Goodling's objections. POTUS and others should be aware of this before sending the letter.
  - The bill adopted the Administration's proposal to reduce interest rates on student loans, but also increased profits to banks at a cost of \$2.7 billion (I think over 5 years). This is one of the most hotly contested items in the bill--we are strongly opposed to the committee's move on this. I didn't want to cloud this particular letter up with additional issues, so I put in a general sentence about "reservations about a number of provisions in the bill" to give us room to come back to this later. Others may see this differently.
  - There is also another major higher education issue we are fighting with the R's about- regarding accountability provisions and the treatment of guarantee agencies in the student loan program. As on the above issue, my concern is that we not look like we are ignoring central issues to the student financial aid programs which are at the heart of this bill. I think we can address this concern through statements and other actions outside this letter, but everyone needs to be on board on that approach.
4. I have been working very closely with the National Board staff over the past few days, and am scheduled to meet with them at 3:30 today. They have the best handle on a legislative strategy. I would like to talk this step through with them before we act.

In general, their sense of things is that (1) they don't want a floor vote in the House because they don't have enough support to win and don't want a recorded vote; (2) their conversations with

Jeffords and others on the Senate committee lead them to believe they will not face a similar move in mark-up next week, though could when the bill comes to the floor; (3) they would in general prefer to keep things low key until they get through Senate mark-up, and would probably prefer saber-rattling from the White House after that point; (4) Jim Hunt is still the key guy for the Board, would love the President's support in this fight, and will gladly take it whenever it comes.

DRAFT:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Last week when the House Education and Economic Opportunities Committee reported out the Higher Education Act, it included a provision that prohibited continued federal support for the vital work of National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The National Board is a nonprofit, nonpartisan and nongovernmental body devoted to strengthening teaching by developing rigorous professional standards. The Board has been at the forefront of bipartisan efforts at the national and state level to strengthen teaching in America, and has received bipartisan support in the Congress and in two Administrations.

The recently released results of the Third International Math and Science Study confirm that one of the most important steps the nation can take to improve student achievement is to strengthen teaching. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is an essential tool for our nation's efforts. By defining standards of excellence for experienced teachers, the National Board helps to focus and upgrade teacher training, recognize and reward outstanding teachers, and keep our best teachers in the classroom where they are needed the most. National Board certification helps our best teachers test themselves against the toughest standards for teaching ever developed.

By ending federal support for the Board's research and development, the House Committee action jeopardizes the scheduled completion of the development of professional standards within the next 3 years. This is the wrong step to take at precisely the time when we must work to help every school in America have at least one board-certified master teacher who can help lead the effort to strengthen teaching throughout the school.

The Office of Management and Budget is coordinating a review of the Higher Education Act as reported by the Committee. I have serious reservations about a number of the bill's provisions, but I am very clear now that the provision ending funding for the work of the National Board is unacceptable. It will move our efforts to improve teaching backward when we must instead move forward more rapidly. It is early in the legislative process for the Higher Education Act, and there is still time to correct this unfortunate step. However, if the Higher Education Act eliminates continuing support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards when it reaches by desk, I will veto that bill.

Sincerely,