

NLWJC - Kagan

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Education - Notes and Memos

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:
PRIORITIES FOR A QUALITY EDUCATION**

August 31, 1998

"I have proposed a comprehensive education agenda with high national standards, more well-qualified teachers, smaller classes, modern schools equipped with computers, before and after-school programs to keep our young people learning in the classroom, and summer job programs to give young people the skills they need to succeed once they leave school."

President Bill Clinton
August 31, 1998

Today, President Clinton discusses his education and training priorities at an elementary school in Herndon, Virginia. The President will highlight the need for Congress to pass legislation to investment in education so our children will be taught in a world-class learning environment as we move into the 21st Century.

AN EDUCATION AGENDA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. President Clinton is working to prepare students for the 21st Century by proposing increased investments in public school education, expanded access to higher education, and training to ensure success in the workplace.

- **Modernizing Our Schools.** The President continues his call for federal tax credits to help rebuild, modernize, and build over 5,000 public schools nationwide, and reduce class size and provide well-prepared teachers in grades 1-3 nationwide;
- **Education Technology.** The President has made an unprecedented commitment to bringing technology into the classroom and called for technology training for teachers and expanded access for teachers and students to computers in the classroom; however, the House appropriations bill threatens these initiatives;
- **Strengthening And Expanding Charter Schools.** President Clinton will continue to work with Congress to pass bipartisan legislation to strengthen federal support for the growing charter school movement and help meet the President's goal of establishing 3,000 high-quality charter schools by early in the next century;
- **Passage Of The Higher Education Act.** President Clinton urges Congress to pass the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which would reduce interest rates on student loans, and extend the Pell Grant and Federal Work-Study programs. This legislation should include the President's High Hopes mentoring program, and his proposal to strengthen teacher training programs and provide scholarships to 35,000 teachers who commit to teaching in underserved urban or rural schools;
- **Helping Every Eight-Year Old Learn To Read.** President Clinton will continue his work with Congress to pass an early literacy bill to ensure that children receive quality instruction from well-trained teachers and have opportunities to develop their reading skills after-school and on the weekend with trained tutors;
- **Strengthening Public Education.** President Clinton will work to restore significant cuts made by the House of Representatives to his proposed investments to strengthen public schools. **The President will fight for full funding of:** After-School programs to ensure children access to safe learning centers, Education Opportunity Zones to help high-poverty urban and rural communities increase student achievement, Head Start, and The Hispanic Education Action Plan to reduce the high school drop-out rate among Hispanic American students. **The President will fight to restore cuts made by Congress to:** Title I grants to high-poverty school districts, Goals 2000, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities;
- **Expanding Investments In Youth Education And Training.** One of the President's top priorities is fighting efforts by Congress to eliminate the Summer Jobs Program, which provides jobs to roughly 530,000 disadvantaged young people, and the new Youth Opportunity Area Initiative, which would help provide job opportunities for up to 50,000 youth in the poorest communities nationwide.

DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT
May 29, 1998

MEMORANDUM TO JOHN PODESTA

ANN LEWIS
LARRY STEIN
RON KLAIN
KAREN TRAMONTANO

FROM: GENE SPERLING
BRUCE REED
MIKE COHEN
BOB SHIREMAN

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH BOB CHASE AND SANDY FELDMAN

The primary focus of the meeting should be how we work to achieve our common agenda of increasing the Federal investment in education.

- For us, the main struggle is finding hooks for engaging the Congress and getting press attention on these issues.
- From them, we should ask for a report on their current and planned activities with Congress and in the field.

We should also touch on some of the areas where the Congress has attempted to put Democrats on the defensive.

I. The Common Agenda

The NEA and AFT are strong supporters of our efforts on education, especially:

- school modernization
- class size reduction
- increased spending on discretionary programs (we differ on special education, which our budget essentially straight-lined and Republicans plan to increase).

Status: The Republicans this year have made a greater effort to appear to be *for* something, rather than just opposed to our pro-education efforts. That has made it more difficult, at least so far, to draw the stark distinctions that have helped us to define -- and win -- the debate in prior years. Our efforts to substitute school construction for the Coverdell bill yielded strong votes, but no victory. We have been unsuccessful in getting class size as part of the tobacco deal (though the NIH funding would relieve pressure on appropriations). And the allocation for Labor-HHS-Education appropriations, while basically consistent with the BBA, will not support our investments.

Strategy: Resolution of these issues -- if any -- will occur in the final weeks of the legislative session. So far, however, observers in the press do not see education as a major item of dissention that will need to be worked out this year. Our chances of succeeding are low unless we begin raising the temperature **now** so that Congress feels intense heat on this issue. We can do that through the bully pulpit, and Democrats in Congress can help by offering amendments and using the legislative process in other ways to force the issues. *In short, we must take every opportunity to emphasize our education priorities.* Some of the opportunities include:

- **Signing of Highway Bill:** building on the President's prior statements about the need to invest in the education infrastructure, challenge Congress to pass the school modernization bill (which provides bonds worth just 10% of the highway investment).
- **House budget resolution:** Criticize cuts to education that would be required (treat Kasich's original assumptions as real); insist on investment, not just maintaining current levels.
- **Veto of Coverdell bill:** push modern schools and smaller class size as the logical, constructive approach.
- **Tax bill:** Insist on school construction as a part of any bill.
- **Labor/HHS appropriations mark-ups:** Pounce on them immediately for failing to invest.
- **Putting Class Size Reduction back in play:** With tobacco funding no longer viable, we need to put the class size proposal back onto the agenda by proposing an offset. OMB is searching for any offsets we could possibly use, though this will be difficult.
- **Finding additional cosponsors for School Modernization:** Now that there is a Republican cosponsor of the School Modernization bill (Rep. Leach, thanks to NEA's efforts), escalate our cosponsor-gathering activities.

We need help from the Democrats in Congress. In order for the above to succeed, we need Democrats to join with us in these efforts. If Democrats cut their own deals -- *e.g.* on appropriations -- then it will be much more difficult to make the case for the overall investments.

II. Defensive Efforts

Republicans will continue to press us on a number of issues, including:

- **Coverdell** (education savings accounts for private K-12 education). At some point -- but *not* to be discussed Monday -- we may need to think about versions that we might ultimately find acceptable, in exchange for other of our priorities.
- **Block Grants.** As the Republican proposals get more sophisticated, some Dems may find that they need an alternative to support. While the NEA & AFT are not thrilled with our "Ed-Flex" proposal, it does offer that alternative.
- **Special Education.** In appropriations and other battles, Republicans have essentially started a "special education first" mantra, creating the impression that they are not against education investments, they are just for different investments.

- **Bilingual Education.** Riggs bill, to be marked-up at full committee first or second week of June, will radically change bilingual education. Administration is opposed to the bill; POTUS will want to have an alternative on the table during the debate.

III. Other important issues to mention

- **National Tests:** we simply need to reiterate that this remains high priority for POTUS, and we will fight to get continued funding for it in appropriations.
- **Reading Initiative:** We will push for Congress to pass a bill before July 1, so we can use \$210 million advance appropriation before it is turned over to special education. While we are not enthused about the TAG provision (sort of an after-school tutoring voucher), it is drafted in a way that we can accept, and we hope NEA/AFT won't let it stand in the way of our getting a bill.
- **Higher Education Act/Master Teachers:** POTUS will fight hard to prevent any damage to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (In HEA, the High Hopes for College initiative and teacher training proposals are also of interest to NEA/AFT).

IV. Other issues that may come up:

- **Charter School Legislation:** Bipartisan legislation expanding current charter school program has passed the House and will be marked up in Senate in near future; neither AFT nor NEA support this legislation. No need to highlight this in the meeting.
- **Workforce Development Act/G.I. Bill for America's Workers:** A conference agreement may be on the President's desk by the end of June. We will fight any final language that would undermine school-to-work or vocational education.

JANET MURGUIA

03/18/98 12:02:13 PM

Record Type: Record

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

cc:

Subject: Bad news on the education legislation front

You missed some good news....Rep. Riggs has decided not to offer his anti-affirmative action amendment which would have been a tough vote.

----- Forwarded by Janet Murguia/WHO/EOP on 03/18/98 10:38 AM -----



Michael Cohen
03/18/98 09:43:18 AM

Record Type: Record

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

cc: Janet Murguia/WHO/EOP

Subject: Bad news on the education legislation front

Please note the following depressing developments:

1. On the Coverdell/School Construction battle in the Senate: (1) we clearly will not have the votes to carry the substitute school construction bill; (2) we now clearly don't have 40 votes to sustain a filibuster of Coverdell (we have definitely lost Toricelli, Graham, Breaux, Feinstein, Biden, Cleland and Lieberman) and don't expect to pick up any R's. That means we only have 38 votes for filibuster--dangerously close to what we need to override a veto. Kennedy is trying to get enough signatures to demonstrate a veto-proof margin--that will tell us how strong we really are. My biggest fear is that we lose a few more Senate votes in the process (e.g., Landrieu may wind up following Breaux if she sees other Dem. defections), which then triggers Dem. defections in the House, rendering us unable to sustain a veto in either house.

2. D.C. Vouchers A D.C. voucher bill could come to the floor in the House as early as next week, though possibly not until later in April. Dems. want to use class size as an alternative; I think a DC-scale version of Zones is better (perhaps just for DC rather than a nationally competitive program). ED staff are setting up a meeting with Gephart's staff. I'll make sure that Janet Murguia and I are there. The Zones legislation is just about drafted and is in OMB clearance review. If we decide to go for the Zones as a whole, or if we decide to do a DC-size version, I'll make sure we figure out a way--formally or informally-- to get our bill up there.

If we go with the full Zones proposal, the one outstanding issue is whether to keep it targeted to high poverty communities or make it more broadly available. Clay has wanted a less targeted approach, to make it easier to attract more votes. Last week I argued we shouldn't give up targeting this early in the process, unless Clay can trade less targeting for specific bipartisan support. However, now my view is that we should design this bill in the fashion that will get us the

most votes when it is put up against vouchers.

Any thoughts on this?

3. Higher Ed Reauthorization/Title V Goodling is marking up his reauthorization proposal at 10:30 this morning; the draft was closely held until late yesterday. A few key concerns for us: Apparently the only teacher preparation piece in here is funding for Gov's to use to upgrade teacher certification and testing requirements. I've told ED we should be supportive of this in principle (and reminded them of POTUS views on teacher testing), unless a review of the details when they are available causes us some concern. We shouldn't have any problem here.

There are two big problems however. First, there is no \$ for any teacher recruitment and preparation at all--so our version of Title V isn't included, and neither are any others that have been floating around. (This actually could be a blessing in disguise for us--Dem's are likely to be more seriously supportive of our class size proposal if their proposal for teacher recruitment aren't going anyplace.) Second, Goodling pays for his teacher certification proposal by killing federal support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Democrats are going to try and save the national board funding--though unless they can enlist Castle's support, they probably won't get anyplace. The Dem. strategy on the rest of Title V is less clear--as of last night, they hadn't coalesced around an alternative.

I've talked to the National Board lobbyist this morning. They assume they will lose the vote today. Hunt is really pissed and is trying to rally Rep. Gov. support. (even Lamar Alexander still supports the board, and led the effort as Secretary to provide federal funding).

I assume Goodling is motivated by at least the following factors: (1) he has never liked the national board, and was pissed when Alexander supported it; (2) the far right hates the board and is gearing up an attack on the Hunt national commission on teaching and america's future, which has been supportive of the board. I think this continues the far right track record of opposing anything in education that has the word national in it; (3) if we are for the board, Goodling will be against it.

At some point we ought to get the President to do a high profile event and join the battle over the board. We will get easily get business and educators on our side; we should be able to get bipartisan support among gov's as well. And we can be for tough standards and better teachers, while Congressional R's are not.

Below is just an issue to resolve, not another depressing development:

4. Class size Clay is very anxious to introduce our class size bill, and doesn't want to wait until POTUS gets back from Africa. I don't yet see a specific need to rush, since its not going to go any place, and since POTUS seems to want to do a big rollout event. On the other hand, with a short legislative session it can't really be in our interest to delay sending something up there.

Bruce, is there anything in tobacco world that would impact on timing here. What do you think of letting Riley transmit and Clay introduce the bill, and then doing a big roll out with ED's white paper, state-by-state numbers, etc. --either at a legislature or someplace else?