



Michael Cohen  
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Master Teachers

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

cc:

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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. The 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.