

Department of Education
Youth Initiative
Nov. 2, 1995

→ Work Study

One-Line Title: Charter Schools Initiative

Substance of Proposal: Stimulate charter schools and other similar local public choice improvement strategies through a significant grant competition that starts out at \$100 million in the first year and climbs to \$500 million in the fifth year (Total 2.5 billion over seven years).

- o The federal requirements would be limited to compliance with the civil rights laws and a focus on children attaining high performance on state and local standards.
- o Grants would be used to provide "start up" funds for charter schools. The lack of start-up funds has been identified by charter school operators as the primary barrier to creation of charter schools.

Budget/Targeting: Three-year grants would be in the neighborhood of \$100 per child per year in a school. This amounts to roughly \$40,000 per year for an elementary school and \$100,000 for a secondary school. A \$100 million appropriation would cover 500 secondary schools and 1250 elementary schools. A \$200 million appropriation in the second year would provide second year grants to these schools and first year grants to an equal number of new charters. By the fifth year, we would be funding 2500 secondary schools and would have "graduated" (ie., already completed three years of grants to) 1000 secondary schools. 6250 elementary schools would be funded in the fifth year and 2500 would have already "graduated."

- o This phase-in strategy over the course of five-years would give states a chance to develop charter school provisions for their states.

Vision, FY97 Budget, Implementation: This initiative would involve a significant increase in the FY 1997 appropriation for charter schools. But simply increasing the appropriation will not be enough if the objective is to catalyze a nation-wide charter schools movement. Only 19 states have laws permitting charter schools, and most of those laws impose caps or other restrictions limiting the number of charter schools. Unless this changes, it is unlikely that there could be more than 525 charter schools by the end of 1996. With only 525 charter schools

1. Currently, ED is providing start-up-costs to some 230 schools, with approximately \$25,000-\$27,000 going to each school. At this lower per-school amount, obviously more schools could be supported.

nationwide, the maximum demand for start-up funds may not exceed \$30 million.

However, forceful use of the bully pulpit by the President and Secretary Riley could place charter schools at the center of education reform discussions, greatly accelerating both the pace of enactment of charter laws and the establishment of charter schools. This, in turn, could create a more rapidly growing demand for start-up funds from a burgeoning charter schools movement. The President and Secretary could:

- o Call for all states to consider enactment of charter school laws within 12 months.
- o Call for states with weaker laws to strengthen their charter laws, and to devise strategies for fostering the growth of many more charter schools in their states.

"Strong charter laws" are important, because they actually produce more charter schools. Currently, only nine of the 19 state charter laws are "strong" laws, and 190 out of the 200 existing charter schools are in six of those nine states. "Strong" provisions include permission for a variety of public authorities to grant charters, providing an appeals process when charter applications are rejected, providing greater autonomy to charter schools, and placing a less stringent cap on the number of charters that may be awarded.

- o Convene White House conference for teachers, parents, museums, business, universities, and others to start talking about how to establish charter schools around the nation.
- o Connect all charter schools to the internet within 18 months. Create an "electronic community" for charter schools around the nation, sharing ideas and lessons learned from one another. Include experts, and experienced practitioners on this electronic discussion.
- o Challenge the financial world to provide intensive technical assistance to charter schools in developing workable finance, budget, accounting, and payroll systems.
- o Expand the current charter start-up program to provide support for ongoing implementation, with special attention to professional development, developing effective accountability, and addressing the needs of children with special needs. Expanding the purpose of program would permit reasonable use of increased appropriation, even while the number of charter schools

is still relatively small.

- o The President can use the notion of charter schools to highlight such areas of interest as discipline, uniforms, back-to-basics, computer literacy, and character education, without actually calling on all schools to do these things. Charter schools can provide a mechanism for accommodating the variety of preferences and interests of American families and students within a particular community, while protecting the public nature of American schooling.

e. **Conclusion:** A bold appeal for more charter schools and expanded public school choice can bolster the President's calls for higher standards and improved public schools. This appeal reinforces the President's support for choice, grass-roots innovation, and competition, and it enables the president to simultaneously call for "shaking up the system" to improve education, and forcefully defend the importance of finding common ground through public schooling in America. This provides an important, and appealing, alternative to Republican plans for private school vouchers.

While the political roots of the charter schools movement are in the Democratic party, Republicans (like Governors John Engler, Tommy Thompson, William Weld) in many states have appropriated this issue. A presidential appeal can reclaim for the Democrats a promising reform strategy that was once their own.

Department of Education
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One-Line Title: Expanding Life and Work Opportunities for Inner-City Youth.

Substance of Proposal: This initiative would dramatically expand life and work opportunities for our neediest youth through intensive focus on the 1000 secondary schools located in the most needy inner city and rural areas. We would provide to each school approximately one million dollars per year. And we would have a clear set of performance goals and expectations for each of them, tied to what we know can help them succeed in life and work.

In effect, we would have a performance partnership with each school. The emphasis would be on three things: academics, job preparedness through School to Work, and individual responsibility [partly through community service]. Mentors, opportunities for service, and building connections with employers and the community would be among the mechanisms used. We could emphasize what we know about improving secondary education -- small schools, personal attention, integration of academics and practical education. Title I and Vocational funds could be used to help reform the academic side of the schools. And goals and performance measurement would be looking for increases in graduation rates, college going, jobs, and services and decreases in pregnancy rates, drug use and violence.

- o The effort would be heavily coordinated with HHS, the Safe and Drug Free Schools programs, School-to-Work, vocational education, and the empowerment /enterprise zones.
- o We have developed a variety of specifications for an effort of this sort over the past three years.
- o We are already in the process of developing state and local plans, national infrastructure and models around School to Work. This work is well underway under the School to Work banner and could be very useful.

Budget/Targeting: The initiative would target 1000 secondary schools in poor communities in greatest need. It would provide \$1 million to each school for a total cost of \$1 billion per year.

Purpose for 1996: Implementation; FY97 budget.

Contribution to Overall Goal: This initiative can bring secondary school reform and school-to-work transition systems to the neediest schools and youth. If successful, it will provide every child in those schools with challenging academic content

and high-quality work-based learning experiences; forge long-lasting connections between teens and a range of adults (ie., mentors, employers or community role models); and catalyze the kinds of efforts that will lead even the neediest kids to college, the world of work, and a life of responsibility. In turn, the powerful approaches in these 1000 schools can stimulate additional reform in other needy secondary schools across the country.

Conclusion: This initiative focuses on the implementation of one of the President's critical legislative successes -- school-to-work. But it does far more. It reinforces themes frequently expressed by both the President and Secretary Riley: themes of mentorship, high academic standards, responsibility and work. And it provides a vehicle for making sure these themes become a day-to-day reality in the lives of the poorest communities and the neediest children.

Department of Education
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One-Line Title: College Work-Study Proposal.

Substance of Proposal: Increase College Work-Study by 50% over a three-year period of time.

- o Work-Study has been shown to increase the odds of students staying in college more so than grants or loans.

- o Some of the funds could be used for activities providing service to the community.

- o Our investment in Work-Study has not increased at all over the past few years as the number of eligible college students has increased.

Budget/Targeting: This would amount to three years of \$100 million increases.

Purpose for 1996: FY97 budget.

Contribution to Overall Goal: This would enable far more students to complete college. It also directly supports the President's "opportunity - responsibility" theme.

YOUTH SOS: SAFETY, OPPORTUNITY & SUPPORT

CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by: Department of Education for the Domestic Policy Council

This summary outlines what we believe are critical components for any framework aimed at youth development. As opposed to focusing on methods of service delivery (e.g., flexible funding streams, block grants, devolution), we have chosen to summarize various initiatives, including ideas that have been previously developed by this administration, into a framework that focuses on the essential elements that all youth need in order to develop into productive, contributing members of their communities.

• **A Caring & Supportive Adult in the Life of Every Child**

There is a critical need for all youth to have safe and supportive environments and long-lasting connections to adults.

Supporting parents' involvement in their children's educations and standing with families in their struggle to do the "right" thing, in order to provide a strong foundation of parental support starting in the early years of life and continuing through at least the high school years. Provide intensive support for parents, particularly young mothers, to learn how to work with their children, as well as encourage family-friendly environments in the work place and in schools to keep parents and teachers working together on behalf of students in the adolescent years.

Example: Expand the Department of Education's Family Involvement and Read*Write*Now Initiatives which stress parent/adult/community involvement in children's education.

Ensure that youth have sustained, nurturing relationships with adults by promoting mentoring in the contexts of academics, recreation, community service and work.

Example: Expand School-to-Work, service/learning and Title I in middle and high schools with after-school enhancement programs.

• **Schools that Rigorously and Effectively Teach Students the Basics and Advanced Skills**

Healthy youth development requires both learning to high standards and developing responsibility and social norms for further education or the world of work. Goals 2000, Titles I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act and School-to-Work provide the basis for reforming middle schools and high schools, targeting resources at high-poverty schools, and creating a system for bridging the school-to-work transition. Continuing to support increased funding for these initiatives is essential:

Spurring K-12 education reform: Make a substantial commitment of federal funds to go to local schools in support of their efforts to raise standards of achievement and discipline. The funds can be channeled through existing authorities: Goals 2000, School To Work, and Professional Development.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

23-Dec-1995 04:32pm

TO: Gaynor R. McCown
FROM: Bruce N. Reed
Domestic Policy Council
CC: Jeremy D. Benami
SUBJECT: thanks

Thanks for your education memos -- they were very interesting.

I would also be interested in y'all's reaction to the Charter/Choice proposal from DoEd. I wish more depts could be so candid.

We need to press them after the New Year (if they're back in business) for specific proposals on Cops in Schools and the EO on constitutionally permissible ways to fight crime and drugs and instill discipline in schools.

The President also expressed a real interest in high school ROTC, like NYC is doing under Commissioner Bratton. Can we work with Dennis to flesh something out there, too?

Thanks -- happy holidays.

work-study