

Educ - Goals 2000

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 25, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Michael Cohen *mc*

SUBJECT: Goals 2000 Update

I noticed you talked about Goals 2000 in your interview with the Washington Post, and I thought you should have a very brief update on that program.

Goals 2000 is working basically as intended. Evidence from the state and local level is that it is being carried out as intended. Virtually every state is working on raising academic standards, and many are using Goals 2000 funds to support the development or implementation of the standards. States are taking advantage of the flexibility in the program to focus the funds on their most important priorities. For example, Texas and California are using the funds to support early reading initiatives, and Wyoming on the use of technology. Ohio is using some funds to provide extra support to low performing schools, and some funds as venture capital for schools willing to take risks and innovate. Gov. Romer is using Goals 2000 funds in Colorado to support local development of academic standards and assessments, and Delaware is using the funds to help local schools develop model curriculum tied to state standards.

Congress made some changes to Goals 2000, with Administration support, as part of the 1996 Omnibus Appropriations Bill. With the support of the Administration, a series of amendments were passed which addressed some of the more controversial parts of Goals 200, without in any way changing its basic foundation of high standards, improving teaching and learning, flexibility and accountability for results. Highlights of these changes include: (1) the National Education Standards and Improvement Council was eliminated; (2) opportunity-to-learn standards were eliminated; (3) allowing local school districts in states that refuse to participate to apply directly to the federal government for Goals 2000 funds, subject to the approval of the state; and, (4) instead of submitting a state education improvement plan to the Secretary for approval, states can simply assure the Secretary they are meeting the requirements of the law, make the plan widely available to the public, and report annually to the public in the state on progress being made. This places greater emphasis on accountability to the public within the state, while maintaining necessary accountability to the federal government. These and other changes have made it easier for Goals supporters around the country to fight the attacks on the program.

All states except Virginia are now participating in Goals 2000. Last Thursday, the

Alabama State Board of Education voted to participate in Goals 2000, reversing a position it had taken in late June. As a result, Virginia is the only state now refusing to participate in the program. More significantly, the experience in a number of states shows that when there has been a real battle with the far right about Goals 2000, our supporters have won. Here are a few examples:

- **New Hampshire.** Despite the withering attacks on Goals 2000 throughout the primary season and Gov. Merrill's opposition, New Hampshire has permitted its local school districts to participate in the program. A coalition of education and parents organizations, together with the state AARP, the state Council of Churches and the state Medical Society (a coalition originally formed around the school readiness goal) succeeded in getting legislation passed that required the State Board of Education to apply for Goals 2000 funds. The Republican House passed the legislation by a 2-1 margin last February (immediately before Bob Dole came to speak to a joint session of the legislature). Gov. Merrill vetoed the legislation last June despite considerable pressure -- but did so knowing that the state board would permit local districts to participate. Goals 2000 is now getting very favorable press in New Hampshire.
- **Alabama.** The Eagle Forum and its allies conducted a well organized, highly visible statewide campaign against Goals 2000 over the past year. Gov. James has been opposed to Goals 2000, and announced last Fall that he was ending the state's participation which had begun before he was elected. Last June, under considerable pressure from the right, the state board of education voted not to participate in the program. The education community made no effort to lobby in favor of participation. Once the decision had been made, and as a result of criticism from the press, the education and business community woke up, started working, and got the Board to reverse the decision.
- **Indiana.** Last February, the Indiana Senate passed an amendment to the state budget bill prohibiting the state from continuing to participate in Goals 2000. The education and business communities mobilized, worked closely with the Republican State Superintendent of Education and Republican leadership in the House, as well as Gov. Bayh, and defeated that amendment.
- **Virginia.** In the last legislative session, the legislature included in the state budget bill a provision directing the state board of education to apply for Goals 2000 funds, if 2/3 of the local school districts petitioned the state to do so. Within a month, more than 2/3 of the districts petitioned the state, and every major education, parent and business group expressed strong support for Goals 2000. Unfortunately, Gov. Allen vetoed that provision and the state continues to stay out of the program. Polls in Virginia show that the public opposes Gov. Allen's decision by a wide margin.

There are more stories from other state, though the point in each case is the same. When there has been a public fight about Goals 2000, it has ultimately mobilized supporters of public education, clarified myth from reality, and left Goals 2000 in a stronger position than before -- and perhaps stronger than in some states without the opposition and the fight.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
FAX TRANSMITTAL

*Eric -
Goals 2000*

TO: Bruce Reed

ORGANIZATION: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

FAX NUMBER: 456-5557

FROM: Michael Cohen
Senior Advisor to the Secretary

PHONE NUMBER: 202 401-3070

MESSAGE: _____

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9 PAGE(S) TO FOLLOW



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

May 2, 1996

Dear Chief State School Officer:

I am writing to inform you of some important developments regarding the Goals 2000: Educate America Act that have occurred as a result of the 1996 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which President Clinton signed into law on April 26, 1996.

Most importantly, Congress, with President Clinton's strong support, has continued its bipartisan support for this very important program. In FY 1996, Goals 2000 is funded at \$350 million, just slightly less than current funding levels. These funds will be available to states beginning July 1. For your information, I have enclosed a table that shows the allotment for each state.

Second, Congress passed a package of amendments to the Goals 2000 Act as part of this appropriations bill. These amendments were authored by Senator Arlen Specter. Senator Specter's amendments were offered to respond to concerns raised in states that were not participating in Goals 2000. As Senator Specter said when he introduced the amendments in October 1995, "It is my view that there are no excessive intrusions at the present time. But in order to eliminate any concern about that issue, it was my thought that legislation might ease the concerns of some in the country who think there are too many intrusions."

I strongly believe that Goals 2000 is already being effectively implemented in most states and could continue to be implemented without any changes to the legislation. I also recognize that some provisions in Goals 2000 have been widely misunderstood.

I supported Senator Specter's objective in introducing his legislation and found the amendments he proposed acceptable. They make adjustments in the operation of Goals 2000, without in any way altering its fundamental purpose of helping local communities and states improve student achievement. They honor the fundamental principles on which Goals 2000 is based:

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challenging academic standards for all students as the basis for state and local education improvement strategies, state and local control of education, broad-based involvement in education reform, and accountability for results.

I have enclosed a brief summary of these amendments, as well as the specific legislative language. Briefly, these amendments:

- o eliminate the authority to establish the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC), which was never established;
- o eliminate all references to opportunity-to-learn standards;
- o maintain the requirement that states and local school districts participating in Goals 2000 establish broad-based planning panels, while eliminating more detailed requirements for their composition or operation;
- o provide states with an alternative to federal review and approval of state education improvement plans, while maintaining appropriate accountability;
- o permit local school districts in states that were not participating in the Goals 2000 program as of October 20, 1995 to apply directly to the U.S. Department of Education for part of a state's share of Goals 2000 funds, subject to the approval of the state education agency; and
- o clarify that Goals 2000 does not require outcomes-based education, school-based health clinics, or other controversial practices.

In addition, Senator Hatfield authored an amendment to the Goals 2000 Act that authorizes an additional six states to participate in the Ed-Flex demonstration program. As you know, this program enables me to delegate to state education agencies the authority to waive statutory and regulatory requirements in selected federal education programs. Six states -- Kansas, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oregon, Texas and Vermont -- have already been selected for this program. Unlike the initial selection, there is no requirement that the next six states be divided evenly between small and large states. As in the past, states must have an approved Goals 2000 plan in order to be eligible to participate.

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In the near future, the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education will provide more specific guidance on the implementation of these provisions. Until then, if you or your staff have any questions regarding the implications of these amendments to Goals 2000, please call Mike Cohen, my Senior Advisor on Education Reform, at (202) 401-3385.

Yours sincerely,


Richard W. Riley

Enclosures

AMENDMENTS TO GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT
1996 Omnibus Appropriations Act

o Authorization of Six Additional ED-Flex States

The Secretary of Education is authorized to select an additional six states to participate in the ED-Flex demonstration program. This program allows the Secretary to delegate to state education agencies the authority to waive statutory and regulatory requirements in most federal education programs. State agencies may then waive federal requirements for local districts and schools if these requirements interfere with state or local approaches to improving student achievement.

States must have an approved Goals 2000 education improvement plan in order to be eligible to apply for Ed-Flex.

Kansas, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oregon, Texas and Vermont are currently participating in Ed-Flex.

o Repeal of the National Education Standards and Improvement Council

The provisions in Goals 2000 to establish the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) are repealed. The Council would have been responsible for reviewing and approving voluntary national standards. No state would be required to use standards certified by NESIC, and no federal funding could be tied to the use of standards recognized by NESIC.

At the request of Secretary Riley and the members of the National Education Goals Panel, President Clinton agreed last year not to appoint members to NESIC, pending Congressional action to repeal the authority to establish NESIC.

o Elimination of Opportunity-to-Learn Standards

The authority to establish voluntary model national opportunity-to-learn standards and the requirement that states describe the "standards or strategies" to provide all students an opportunity-to-learn the content in state academic standards have been repealed.

o Elimination of Specific Panel Composition Requirements

The specific requirements governing the composition of the Goals 2000 state planning panels and local planning panels have been eliminated. The Act now provides simply that state plans must be developed by a broad-based state panel in cooperation with the state education agency and the governor.

o Establishment of Alternative to Federal Approval of State Education Improvement Plan Based on Increased Accountability to the Public in Each State

States are required to complete the development of an education improvement plan, based on challenging academic standards, in order to be eligible for continued funding after two years of participation in Goals 2000. As initially enacted, Goals 2000 provided that this plan be reviewed by a nonfederal panel of educators, business leaders and others involved in education reform, and approved by the Secretary of Education based on a recommendation of this panel.

States may continue to rely on this procedure. As an alternative to submitting its education improvement plan to the Secretary, a state may instead:

(1) submit an assurance from the Governor and the chief state school officer that it has a completed plan that meets the requirements of the Goals 2000 Act;

(2) make its education improvement plan, and the indicators it will use to judge progress in implementing the plan, widely available to the public within the state; and

(3) report annually to the public on progress the state is making in meeting its indicators of progress.

Twenty states have already completed state education improvement plans and submitted them to the U.S. Department of Education for review. Each of these states has received approval of its plan, and none has been required to change its plan in order to gain approval. States have benefitted from feedback and the interaction with an external review panel comprised of experts who become familiar with the state plan.

o Direct Grants to Local Education Agencies in Nonparticipating States

Local education agencies in any state that was not participating in Goals 2000 as of October 20, 1995 may, with the approval of the state education agency, apply directly to the U.S. Department of Education for a portion of their state's Goals 2000 allotment.

States covered by this provision will be notified in the next several days of the procedures that will be used to administer the local grants program. There will be only a brief period for state education agencies to determine whether to approve local participation in Goals 2000, because of the need to complete a grants competition by September 30, the end of the fiscal year.

o Clarification regarding Outcomes-Based Education, School-Based Health Clinics, or Social Services

The amendments expressly state that Goals 2000 may not be construed to require a state, local education agency, or a school, as a condition of receiving Goals 2000 assistance, to provide --

- (1) outcomes-based education;
- (2) school-based health clinics, or social services.

o Clarification on Use of Funds for Technology

The amendments clarify that Goals 2000 funds may be used for the acquisition of technology and the use of technology-enhanced curricula and instruction.

EDUCATION REFORM

Goals 2000: State and Local Education Systemic Improvement

State or Outlying Area	1995 Appro. for 1996	1996 Estimate for 1997	1997 Request for 1998
Alabama	\$5,941,766	\$5,675,986	\$7,895,690
Alaska	1,547,345	1,437,296	2,015,509
Arizona	5,450,582	5,038,557	7,220,860
Arkansas	3,650,495	3,434,819	4,800,139
California	42,111,705	39,211,219	54,798,617
Colorado	4,288,514	3,922,624	5,585,002
Connecticut	3,450,756	3,149,595	4,453,445
Delaware	1,291,544	1,242,928	1,742,164
Florida	15,861,034	14,713,635	20,880,761
Georgia	8,959,402	8,515,014	12,087,369
Hawaii	1,381,641	1,307,668	1,830,605
Idaho	1,568,397	1,478,175	2,072,739
Illinois	15,992,571	15,050,826	20,965,086
Indiana	6,557,145	6,280,894	8,734,445
Iowa	3,219,618	3,077,877	4,261,417
Kansas	3,193,916	3,099,621	4,350,864
Kentucky	5,775,274	5,549,490	7,709,898
Louisiana	7,968,128	7,642,099	10,577,254
Maine	1,647,540	1,535,403	2,147,204
Maryland	5,379,938	5,016,113	7,070,017
Massachusetts	6,990,859	6,242,461	8,845,858
Michigan	14,371,488	13,653,547	19,081,265
Minnesota	5,377,078	5,062,092	7,103,635
Mississippi	5,094,972	4,864,881	6,746,306
Missouri	6,525,935	6,132,073	8,574,360
Montana	1,560,150	1,459,814	2,044,513
Nebraska	1,986,104	1,834,350	2,661,199
Nevada	1,419,052	1,303,042	1,868,241
New Hampshire	1,290,294	1,232,612	1,728,084
New Jersey	8,792,536	7,904,169	11,130,562
New Mexico	2,782,261	2,610,240	3,691,669
New York	27,112,295	25,358,328	35,384,032
North Carolina	7,745,087	7,280,313	10,327,046
North Dakota	1,340,576	1,259,984	1,765,253
Ohio	14,833,684	14,226,873	19,844,606
Oklahoma	4,396,613	4,176,732	5,822,424
Oregon	4,012,392	3,799,963	5,312,803
Pennsylvania	15,529,194	14,464,447	20,258,933
Rhode Island	1,480,004	1,359,668	1,902,901
South Carolina	4,710,359	4,511,625	6,263,574
South Dakota	1,412,549	1,309,917	1,836,220
Tennessee	6,387,802	5,999,453	8,432,635
Texas	29,228,278	27,187,479	36,181,903
Utah	2,587,039	2,452,958	3,429,258
Vermont	1,272,847	1,225,743	1,717,476
Virginia	6,658,924	6,200,305	8,704,627
Washington	6,328,974	6,055,946	8,492,110
West Virginia	2,799,259	2,788,423	3,829,992
Wisconsin	6,582,097	6,320,177	8,806,412
Wyoming	1,262,907	1,224,150	1,715,593
District of Columbia	1,523,409	1,353,218	1,895,093
Puerto Rico	9,608,968	9,064,078	12,632,327
American Samoa	184,247	173,864	247,560
Northern Marianas	102,549	96,770	137,787
Guam	194,658	183,688	261,548
Virgin Islands	380,157	358,733	510,788
Palau	102,549	79,187	92,791
Marshall Islands	102,549	96,770	137,787
Micronesia	302,433	285,389	406,357
BIA & Alaska Federation of Natives	2,249,559	2,125,600	3,005,382
Subtotal, Outlying Area, BIA, & AFN	3,818,700	3,400,000	4,760,000
Peer Review		300,000	
Total	361,878,000	340,000,000	476,000,000

ROLL CALL, May 13, 1996 P-3

Goals 2000 Helps States and Localities Meet Their Individual Education Needs While Improving Standards

By Richard Riley

If you listen carefully through the shouting matches and the heated ideological debates swirling about education lately, you can hear clearly the points upon which virtually all Americans agree.

First, our education system still has a long way to go before it provides the levels of education excellence Americans want and need for the future. Together as a nation we have made important gains in some areas, such as mathematics and science performance, in the past decade.

However, we must judge education quality by the needs of the future, not just by our accomplishments of the past. And while there are indeed outstanding schools all across America, we need many more. By this light, we cannot accept the status quo. We must raise the ceiling of academic performance for our best students, and we must dramatically raise the floor for our lowest achieving students.

Second, the single most important step to improve our schools is to set challenging academic standards for basic and advanced skills in core academic subjects — and then to hold students, schools, and educators accountable for progress toward reaching those standards. We must end the tyranny of low expectations and a watered-down curriculum that has needlessly depressed the academic achievement and aspirations of too many of our students.

Students will learn more if we expect more of them, and they will learn the meaning of hard work as well. On this point, agreement among Americans is broad and deep. Governors, business leaders, and President Clinton agreed on this point at the 1996 National Education Summit held several weeks ago, just as the governors and President Bush did at the 1989 Charlottesville Education Summit. Parents, educators, and business groups have provided strong support for raising academic standards. Raising standards is not a partisan issue; it is a common-sense American approach to improving our schools.

Third, education is a state responsibility and a local function. States have the constitutional responsibility to provide for elementary and secondary education, and therefore to lead the

effort to improve education. States and local communities are responsible for determining academic standards, and for deciding what students should learn. Local control of education is not a recent discovery, but part of the basic fabric of our American democracy. As a former governor, I don't believe this point has ever seriously been in question.

Fourth, education is a national priority, the foundation for our nation's economic security and for each family's. Employers draw their employees from multiple communities and across state lines. An uneducated dropout may leave his community and wind up unemployed in another state. And today's families are mobile. Parents and grandparents know that children who go to elementary school in one state may go to high school in another, and to college in a third.

States need help meeting the education challenges they face. Federal support for state-designed education reform is in the states' interest and in the national interest. The nation's governors and President Bush explicitly recognized this at the Charlottesville summit, and nothing that has occurred since alters this reality. We as a nation have an interest in helping states, local communities, and schools — as well as a responsibility to do so.

Goals 2000 provides the help states and local communities need. The toughest money to find is money dedicated to making improvements in education. That is what Goals 2000 provides. In exchange for added resources, it

simply asks states to set their own rigorous academic standards and to develop their own approaches to improving education. It is explicitly predicated on the assumption that states and local communities are already moving in the right direction. Federal support helps states and communities move faster in more schools.

The program is already beginning to make an important difference. Ohio is using its Goals 2000 funds to assist schools with large

numbers of students failing to meet state standards, providing needed assistance as part of its overall approach to accountability. Colorado focuses its funds on assisting local school districts to set their own standards. In Wyoming, Goals 2000 funds are helping local school districts develop ways of using education technology to help students reach academic standards.

Texas and California are using Goals 2000 funds to focus on improving early reading skills. In Delaware, Goals 2000 funds underwrite local school efforts to develop model curricula that reflect the tougher state academic standards. In Rhode Island, Goals 2000 funds support teacher training. Michigan, Massachusetts, and Minnesota used some of their funds to help launch charter schools. Kentucky has used Goals 2000 funds to promote greater parental involvement in the states' efforts to improve student achievement.

These are just some examples of how Goals 2000 funds support state and local approaches to improving education. The decision regarding the use of these funds is made at the local and state levels, not by federal officials.

Despite this broad-based mainstream approach to education improvement, some have worked hard to make Goals 2000 controversial. Its critics inaccurately alleged that Goals 2000 is a vehicle for federal intrusion into local education matters, and that participation in Goals 2000 will require "outcomes-based education," school-based health clinics, or lead to federal inspection of child-rearing practices.

None of this is remotely accurate. It neither reflects an informed reading of the Goals 2000 Act, nor the track record of its implementation, nor its bipartisan, mainstream beginnings. None of these or other charges is reflected in

More...

GOALS/RILEY, continued....

the experience of the states and thousands of individual schools involved in Goals 2000. Those who are actually participating in the program are not complaining of federal intrusion. The most vocal and persistent criticisms in fact come from those without any firsthand knowledge of how the program actually works.

It is important to lower the heat and reduce the noise. Ideological fights — especially about fictitious problems — don't help our students learn and achieve.

Last month, when President Clinton signed the 1996 Omnibus Appropriations bill (including \$350 million for Goals 2000), he also

Goals 2000 critics inaccurately alleged that it is a vehicle for federal intrusion into local education matters.

signed into law a series of amendments to Goals 2000. These amendments were originally proposed by Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa), a supporter of Goals 2000. These changes sought to increase bipartisan support for this effort to improve local schools. They responded to the most frequent criticisms raised about Goals 2000, while leaving in place the fundamental principles that provide the foundation for Goals 2000: higher standards, enhanced flexibility, state and local control, and accountability for results.

These are some of the most significant changes to Goals 2000 made by the Specter Amendment:

• **Eliminate the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC).** This council had the authority to review and approve voluntary national standards, as well as state standards voluntarily submitted to it. It would have provided a non-binding "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval," signifying those standards that were internationally competitive, and providing a benchmark for states and local communities establishing their own standards. The law made quite clear that the

council had no authority over state or local decisions, and that no federal funding could be tied to the use of standards recognized by this council.

Nonetheless, critics of Goals 2000 portrayed this council, even before it was named, as an intrusive "national school board." Last year, at the request of a bipartisan group of governors, I asked the President not to appoint the council, and supported Rep. William Goodling's (R-Pa) efforts to repeal the authority to establish NESIC.

Eliminating NESIC doesn't eliminate the need for some mechanism to provide the information needed to help states establish competitive academic standards. In the aftermath of the recent education summit, business leaders and governors are now working to set up a different, non-governmental entity to accomplish these and other related purposes.

• **Provide an alternative to federal review of state educational improvement plans.** There needs to be a level of accountability in any federal program. We owe this to the taxpayers. The Goals 2000 Act has provided for this accountability by requiring that a state submit to the Secretary of Education for review and approval a state-wide education improvement plan, within two years of initial funding. The plans are reviewed by educators, policymakers, and business leaders — not by federal officials — in order to determine that the state has a plan worth the continued investment of federal funds. The criteria are that the plan (1) holds a reasonable promise of success; (2) provides for local flexibility; and (3) enjoys broad support within the state.

These broad criteria are designed to give states the best permit — federal review and approval of academic standards or curriculum. There is no attempt made to determine if these state reform strategies meet some federal model.

Some see federal approval of some education plans as the basis for federal intrusion. But let's look at the facts. Twenty-seven have submitted plans. All of the plans have been approved. There has been no requirement that the plans be changed as a condition of approval, and no federal intrusion.

In practice, the review of state education reform plans has simply allowed for a responsible assessment that the state in fact has a plan that can work.

Specter's amendment provides an alternative to this approach, as it builds on the provisions in Goals 2000 that emphasize accountability to voters, taxpayers, parents, and educators in the state, while still providing adequate accountability to the federal government.

• **Local participation in Goals 2000.** Local communities in states that are not participating in Goals 2000 are being denied the opportunity to benefit from resources they may want and need to address problems in their schools. Often, local education officials find that the purposes of Goals 2000 match their local needs well, and do not agree with the concerns expressed by state officials.

• **Another change in Goals 2000** permits local school districts in the few states not participating as of last October to apply directly to the Department of Education for a share of the funds allocated to the state — if the state education agency approves of local participation.

As under current law, local participation requires a local determination. However, this change places greater emphasis on local control, and challenges state officials to do the same.

These and other changes in the Goals 2000 legislation sought to reduce the needless controversy over this bipartisan initiative. It is time to go beyond the fighting and move forward with Goals 2000 in support of education reform.

Richard Riley is Secretary of Education.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

*Edw Goals
2000*

FAX TRANSMITTAL

TO: BRUCE REED

ORGANIZATION: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

FAX NUMBER: ~~456-7431~~ 456-5557

FROM: Leslie Thornton, Deputy Chief of Staff and
Counselor to the Secretary

PHONE NUMBER: 401-3001

MESSAGE: *Bruce - The Secretary would
like comment for as soon as
possible. He's comfortable with it
but always appreciates your input.
Please call me directly at 401-3001*

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J

Draft

To the editor:

I agree with David Broder's assessment of the potential of Goals 2000, but I disagree with his analysis that recent changes have watered down its benefits.

Goals 2000 retains its focus on raising standards in America's schools, encouraging states and communities to improve their schools, and promoting more grass-roots involvement in making schools better. These basic principles remain unaltered after recent Congressional action.

Mr. Broder's analysis is based on three misunderstandings. First, he assumes that as Goals 2000 was originally enacted, states were required to use nationally developed academic standards in their education improvement plans, but that they no longer are. In fact, Goals 2000 has always been anchored in academic standards that each state sets for itself. There was never any requirement that states use national model academic standards as a condition of participating in Goals 2000 or receiving any federal funds.

Second, he assumes that there was originally a federally-sponsored review of state academic standards as a condition of participating in Goals 2000, but there no longer is. In fact, there never was such a review. Goals 2000 maintains a long standing and appropriate prohibition on federal control over state curriculum and instructional matters. From the Charlottesville Summit forward, there has been widespread, bipartisan agreement among elected officials, business leaders and educators that academic standards ought to be set by states, without federal review or interference, and without federal funds tied to approval of these standards.

While the federal government should not review and approve state curriculum standards, there must be accountability along with the investment of federal funds. Goals 2000 originally provided for that accountability through U.S. Department of Education review of state education improvement plans. An amendment included in the appropriations bill retains this approach, but also gives governors and state education officials another option to provide public accountability.

It requires governors and state education officials to make their state education improvement plan widely available for public review and comment, and to report to the public each year on the progress they make in improving student achievement.

Third, he assumes that under Goals 2000 as originally enacted, states and schools could not use Goals 2000 funds to purchase education technology, but now they can. In fact, states are accountable for how they use Goals 2000 funds. States and schools could always use Goals 2000 funds for technology, so long as this fit into an overall plan for raising academic standards and improving student achievement. Wyoming has been focusing its Goals 2000 funds entirely on the introduction of computers in classrooms since last year. School districts in Kentucky have been using technology to help students and parents learn together, and schools in Illinois and many other states have been using these funds to train teachers in the use of technology and for a wide range of other technology-related purposes.

Other states and communities are using Goals 2000 funds in other positive ways. In Windsor, Colorado, the local school district has used Goals 2000 funds to enable parents, educators and school staff to be deeply involved in establishing local academic standards. Delaware is using Goals 2000 funds to enable local schools to develop model curricula based on state academic standards, and to develop assessments tied to those standards. Ohio uses Goals 2000 funds as an integral part of its overall accountability system, targeting the funds to assist schools with large numbers of students who don't yet meet state standards.

There are scores of other examples of states and local communities using Goals 2000 funds to accelerate their drive to set and meet tough academic standards. Mr. Broder's pessimism is unwarranted.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Riley

Education -
Goals 2000

RESPONSE TO BRODER COLUMN ON GOALS 2000
5.15.96

In today's Washington Post, David Broder claimed that the Administration and Congress gutted Goals 2000 in the recent budget agreement. He mentioned two changes -- that states will now be able to vouch for the worthiness of their own reform plans in order to receive Goals 2000 money (instead of needing point-by-point federal approval), and that states can now spend Goals money on computers in the classroom because of an Istook amendment to that effect.

The second claim is just wrong -- states have always been able to use Goals money for computers in the classroom, if that was part of their reform plan. In fact, Wyoming is doing exactly that. The Istook amendment has no practical impact -- and in any case, we see educational technology as an important element of reform.

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Our response to these charges is simple:

1. We saved Goals 2000. If the Republican budget plan had prevailed, the program would have been eliminated. But the President drew the line and restored the program.

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3. The President has challenged every state to go further than any state has gone in establishing standards for students, teachers, and schools. In his speech to the NGA Education summit, the President called on states to insist that students meet standards before advancing from one level of school to the next. He also endorsed the idea put forward by several governors and Lou Gerstner for a private entity outside government that would hold states accountable for results and issue report cards on every state's progress.

EDUC -
GOALS 2000

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS

**These goals were adopted by the members of the
National Governors' Association
on February 25, 1990.**

INTRODUCTION

At the historic education summit in Charlottesville five months ago, the President and the Governors declared that, "the time has come, for the first time in U.S. history, to establish clear, national performance goals, goals that will make us internationally competitive." The six national education goals contained here are the first step in carrying out that commitment.

America's educational performance must be second to none in the 21st century. Education is central to our quality of life. It is at the heart of our economic strength and security, our creativity in the arts and letters, our invention in the sciences, and the perpetuation of our cultural values. Education is the key to America's international competitiveness.

Today, a new standard for an educated citizenry is required, one suitable for the next century. Our people must be as knowledgeable, as well trained, as competent, and as inventive as those in any other nation. All of our people, not just a few, must be able to think for a living, adapt to changing environments, and to understand the world around them. They must understand and accept the responsibilities and obligations of citizenship. They must continually learn and develop new skills throughout their lives.

America can meet this challenge if our society is dedicated to a renaissance in education. We must become a nation that values education and learning. We must recognize that every child can learn, regardless of background or disability. We must recognize that education is a lifelong pursuit, not just an endeavor for our children.

Sweeping, fundamental changes in our education system must be made. Educators must be given greater flexibility to devise challenging and inspiring strategies to serve the needs of a diverse body of students. This is especially important for students who are at risk of academic failure -- for the failure of these students will become the failure of our nation. Achieving these changes depends in large part on the commitment of professional educators. Their daily work must be dedicated to creating a new educational order in which success for all students is the first priority, and they must be held accountable for the results.

This is not the responsibility of educators alone, however. All Americans have an important stake in the success of our education system, and every part of our society must be involved in meeting that challenge. Parents must be more interested and involved in their children's education, and students must accept the challenge of higher expectations for achievement and greater responsibility for their future. In addition, communities, business and civic groups, and state, local, and federal government each has a vital role to play throughout this decade to ensure our success.

The first step is to establish ambitious national education goals -- performance goals that must be achieved if the United States is to remain competitive in the world marketplace and our citizens are to reach their fullest potential. These goals are about excellence. Meeting them will require that the performance of our highest achievers be boosted to levels that equal or exceed the performance of the best students anywhere. The performance of our lowest achievers must be substantially increased far beyond their current performance. What our best students can achieve now, our average students must be able to achieve by the turn of the century. We must work to ensure that a significant number of students from all races, ethnic groups, and income levels are among our top performers.

If the United States is to maintain a strong and responsible democracy and a prosperous and growing economy into the next century, all of our citizens must be involved in achieving these goals. Every citizen will benefit as a result. When challenged, the American people have always shown their determination to succeed. The challenge before us calls on each American to help ensure our nation's future.

NATIONAL GOALS FOR EDUCATION

Readiness

Goal 1: BY THE YEAR 2000, ALL CHILDREN IN AMERICA WILL START SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

Objectives:

- o All disadvantaged and disabled children will have access to high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school.
- o Every parent in America will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day helping his or her preschool child learn; parents will have access to the training and support they need.
- o Children will receive the nutrition and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies, and the number of low birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.

School Completion

Goal 2: BY THE YEAR 2000, THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE WILL INCREASE TO AT LEAST 90 PERCENT.

Objectives:

- o The nation must dramatically reduce its dropout rate and 75 percent of those students who do drop out will successfully complete a high school degree or its equivalent.
- o The gap in high school graduation rates between American students from minority backgrounds and their non-minority counterparts will be eliminated.

Student Achievement and Citizenship

Goal 3: BY THE YEAR 2000, AMERICAN STUDENTS WILL LEAVE GRADES FOUR, EIGHT, AND TWELVE HAVING DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCY OVER CHALLENGING SUBJECT MATTER INCLUDING ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, HISTORY, AND GEOGRAPHY, AND EVERY SCHOOL IN AMERICA WILL ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS LEARN TO USE THEIR MINDS WELL, SO THEY MAY BE PREPARED FOR RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP, FURTHER LEARNING, AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT IN OUR MODERN ECONOMY.

Objectives:

- o The academic performance of elementary and secondary students will increase significantly in every quartile, and the distribution of minority students in each level will more closely reflect the student population as a whole.
- o The percentage of students who demonstrate the ability to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge, and write and communicate effectively will increase substantially.
- o All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, community service, and personal responsibility.
- o The percentage of students who are competent in more than one language will substantially increase.
- o All students will be knowledgeable about the diverse cultural heritage of this nation and about the world community.

Mathematics and Science

Goal 4: BY THE YEAR 2000, U.S. STUDENTS WILL BE FIRST IN THE WORLD IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT.

Objectives:

- o Math and science education will be strengthened throughout the system, especially in the early grades.
- o The number of teachers with a substantive background in mathematics and science will increase by 50 percent.
- o The number of U.S. undergraduate and graduate students, especially women and minorities, who complete degrees in mathematics, science, and engineering will increase significantly.

Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning

Goal 5: BY THE YEAR 2000, EVERY ADULT AMERICAN WILL BE LITERATE AND WILL POSSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO COMPETE IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY AND EXERCISE THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENSHIP.

Objectives:

- o Every major American business will be involved in strengthening the connection between education and work.
- o All workers will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills, from basic to highly technical, needed to adapt to emerging new technologies, work methods, and markets through public and private educational, vocational, technical, workplace, or other programs.
- o The number of quality programs, including those at libraries, that are designed to serve more effectively the needs of the growing number of part-time and mid-career students will increase substantially.
- o The proportion of those qualified students, especially minorities, who enter college; who complete at least two years; and who complete their degree programs will increase substantially.
- o The proportion of college graduates who demonstrate an advanced ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and solve problems will increase substantially.

Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools

Goal 6: BY THE YEAR 2000, EVERY SCHOOL IN AMERICA WILL BE
FREE OF DRUGS AND VIOLENCE AND WILL OFFER A
DISCIPLINED ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO LEARNING.

Objectives:

- o Every school will implement a firm and fair policy on use, possession, and distribution of drugs and alcohol.
- o Parents, businesses, and community organizations will work together to ensure that schools are a safe haven for all children.
- o Every school district will develop a comprehensive K-12 drug and alcohol prevention education program. Drug and alcohol curriculum should be taught as an integral part of health education. In addition, community-based teams should be organized to provide students and teachers with needed support.

NECESSARY CHANGES AND RESTRUCTURING

These goals are ambitious, yet they can and must be achieved. However, they cannot be achieved by our education system as it is presently constituted. Substantial, even radical changes will have to be made.

Without a strong commitment and concerted effort on the part of every sector and every citizen to improve dramatically the performance of the nation's education system and each and every student, these goals will remain nothing more than a distant, unattainable vision. For their part, Governors will work within their own states to develop strategies for restructuring their education systems in order to achieve the goals. Because states differ from one another, each state will approach this in a different manner. The President and the Governors will work to support these state efforts, and to recommend steps that the federal government, business, and community groups and educators should take to help achieve these national goals. The nature of many of these steps is already clear.

The Preschool Years

American homes must be places of learning. Parents should play an active role in their children's early learning, particularly by reading to them on a daily basis. Parents should have access to the support and training required to fulfill this role, especially in poor, undereducated families.

In preparing young people to start school, both the federal and state governments have important roles to play, especially with regard to health, nutrition, and early childhood development. Congress and the administration have increased maternal and child health coverage for all families with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty line. Many states go beyond this level of coverage, and more are moving in this direction. In addition, states continue to develop more effective delivery systems for prenatal and postnatal care. However, we still need more prevention, testing, and screening, and early identification and treatment of learning disorders and disabilities.

The federal government should work with the states to develop and fully fund early intervention strategies for children. All eligible children should have access to Head Start, Chapter 1, or some other successful preschool program with strong parental involvement. Our first priority must be to provide at least one year of preschool for all disadvantaged children.

The School Years

As steps are taken to better prepare children for schools, we must also better prepare schools for children.

This is especially important for young children. Schools must be able to educate effectively all children when they arrive at the schoolhouse door, regardless of variations in students' interest, capacities, or learning styles.

Next, our public education system must be fundamentally restructured to ensure that all students can meet higher standards. This means reorienting schools so they focus on results, not on procedures; giving each school's principal and teachers the discretion to make more decisions and the flexibility to use federal, state, and local resources in more productive, innovative ways that improve learning; providing a way for gifted professionals who want to teach to do so through alternative certification avenues, and giving parents more responsibility for their children's education through magnet schools, public school choice, and other strategies. Most important, restructuring requires creating powerful incentives for performance and improvement, and real consequences for persistent failure. It is only by maintaining this balance of flexibility and accountability that we can truly improve our schools.

The federal government must sustain its vital role of promoting educational equity by ensuring access to quality educational programs for all students regardless of race, national origin, sex, or handicapping condition. Federal funds should target those students most in need of assistance due to economic disadvantage or risk of academic failure.

Finally, efforts to restructure education must work toward guaranteeing that all students are engaged in rigorous programs of instruction designed to ensure that every child, regardless of background or disability, acquires the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a changing economy. In recent years, there has been an increased commitment to math and science improvement programs. The federal government should continue to enhance financial assistance to state and local governments for effective programs in these areas. Likewise, there has been a greater federal emphasis on programs that target youth at risk of school failure and dropping out. The federal government should continue to enhance funding and seek strategies to help states in their efforts to seek solutions to these problems.

Improving elementary and secondary student achievement will not require a national curriculum, but it will require that the nation invest in developing the skills and knowledge of educators and equipping our schools with up-to-date technology. The quality of teachers and teaching is essential to meeting our goals. We must have well-prepared teachers and we must increase the number of qualified teachers in critical shortage areas, including rural and urban schools, specialized fields such as foreign languages, mathematics and science, and from minority groups. Policies must attract and keep able teachers who reflect the cultural diversity of our nation. Policies that shape how educators are prepared, certified, rewarded, developed, and supported on the job must be consistent with efforts to restructure the education system and ensure that every school is capable of teaching all of our children to think and reason. Teachers and other school leaders must not only be outstanding, the schools in which they work must also be restructured to utilize both professional talent and technology to improve student learning and teacher- and system-productivity.

The After-School Years

Comprehensive, well-integrated lifelong learning opportunities must be created for a world in which three of four new jobs will require more than a high school education; workers with only high school diplomas may face the prospect of declining incomes; and most workers will change their jobs ten or eleven times over their lifetime.

In most states, the present system for delivering adult literacy services is fractured and inadequate. Because the United States has far higher rates of adult functional illiteracy than other advanced countries, a first step is to establish in each state a public-private partnership to create a functionally literate workforce.

In some countries, government policies and programs are carefully coordinated with private sector activities to create effective apprenticeship and job training activities. By contrast, the United States has a multilayered system of vocational and technical schools, community colleges, and specific training programs funded from multiple sources and subject to little coordination. These institutions need to be restructured so they fit together more sensibly and effectively to give all adults access to flexible and comprehensive programs that meet their needs. Every major business must work to provide appropriate training and educational opportunities to prepare employees for the twenty-first century.

Finally, a larger share of our population, especially those from working class, poor, and minority backgrounds, must be helped to attend and remain in college. The cost of a college education, as a percentage of median family income, has approximately tripled in a generation. That means more loans, scholarships, and work-study opportunities are needed. The federal government's role in ensuring access for qualified students is critical. At the same time, the higher education system must use existing resources far more productively than it does at present, and must be held more accountable for what students do or do not learn. The federal government will continue to examine ways to reduce students' increasing debt burden and to address the proper balance between grant and loan programs.

ASSESSMENT

National education goals will be meaningless unless progress toward meeting them is measured accurately and adequately, and reported to the American people. Doing a good job of assessment and reporting requires the resolution of three issues.

First, what students need to know must be defined. In some cases, there is a solid foundation on which to build. For example, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Mathematical Sciences Education Board have done important work in defining what all students must know and be able to do in order to be mathematically competent. A major effort for science has been initiated by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. These efforts must be expanded and extended to other subject areas.

Second, when it is clear what students need to know, it must be determined whether they know it. There have been a number of important efforts to improve our ability to measure student learning at the state and national levels. This year for the first time, the National Assessment for Education Progress (NAEP) will collect data on student performance on a state-by-state basis for thirty-seven states. Work is underway to develop a national assessment of adult literacy. These and other efforts must be supported and strengthened.

The Governors urge the National Assessment Governing Board to begin work to set national performance goals in the subject areas in which NAEP will be administered. This does not mean establishing standards for individual competence; rather, it requires determining how to set targets for increases in the percentage of students performing at the higher levels of the NAEP scales.

Third, measurements must be accurate, comparable, appropriate, and constructive. Placement decisions for young children should not be made on the basis of standardized tests. Achievement tests must not simply measure minimum competencies, but also higher levels of reading, writing, speaking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. And in comparing America's achievement with that of other countries, it is essential that international comparisons are reliable. In addition, appropriate, nationally directed research, demonstration projects, data collection, and innovation should be maintained and recognized as a set of core responsibilities of the federal government in education. That role needs to be strengthened in cooperation with the states.

The President and the Governors agree that while we do not need a new data-gathering agency, we do need a bipartisan group to oversee the process of determining and developing appropriate measurements and reporting on the progress toward meeting the goals. This process should stay in existence until at least the year 2000 so that we assure ten full years of effort toward meeting the goals.

A CHALLENGE

These national education goals are not the President's goals or the Governors' goals; they are the nation's goals.

These education goals are the beginning, not the end, of the process. Governors are committed to working within their own states to review state education goals and performance levels in light of these national goals. States are encouraged to adjust state goals according to this review, and to expand upon national goals where appropriate. The President and the Governors challenge every family, school, school district, and community to adopt these national goals as their own, and establish other goals that reflect the particular circumstances and challenges they face as America approaches the twenty-first century.

RESPONSE TO BRODER COLUMN ON GOALS 2000
5.15.96

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Our response to these charges is simple:

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Richard Harwood

Campaign '96: No Drama in Dullsville

The talk around town is that they're already drinking champagne in the White House, toning up the old gullet for next January's inaugural parties. A rich Democrat is betting \$10,000 to \$100 that Bill Clinton will get more than 58 percent of the November vote. The Wall Street Journal tells us that "right now things look virtually hopeless" for Bob Dole.

His handlers are said to be dispirited and defeatist. A headline in the estimable National Journal catches the mood: "Doom and Gloom Plague the Republicans." It's no wonder. Clinton is methodically stealing their issues and adopting the Reaganesque ceremonial style that has demonstrated, for example, the political value of funeral orations and hand-holding with winsome tots in the Rose Garden.

Moguls and barons of Wall Street and the corporate world, wily bettors in more ways than one, are now discovering Clintonian virtues where none before was seen. Women are wild about him. In that electoral market, the Los Angeles Times reports, he leads Dole by 27 points. It's not a "gender gap" anymore; it's a chasm. Even among men to whom Clinton has never been a hero, there is a softening of hostility; he's now caught up with Dole among the guys.

Dole is seen around Washington as one of those congressional-bureaucratic lifers, an old, inarticulate, unvisionary, un-charismatic pol whose fate is in the hands of a baby boom generation raised on glamour, glitz and "feelings," a generation that knows little and cares less about events of 50 or 60 years ago that formed his character and made him who and what he is. To the media, he's simply dull Dole.

This is not just a Republican problem; it's a problem for the press, too. A presidential campaign is supposed to be something special—the Super Bowl of the news business. Journalists are as much a part of the action (some would say a more prominent part) than the candidates. It's our chance to shine.

Thus, the networks give their correspondents and anchors more than twice the air time for pontification that they give to the candidates themselves. Newspapers and magazines do much the same. In recent years there have been about 15,000 people with press cards and only about 5,000 delegates at each of the national political conventions.

For the election of 1996, a great industry is again poised for the Great Race. Tens of millions of dollars, thousands of tons of newsprint and hundreds of hours of air time have been set aside to underwrite our labors and wisdom. But if it's all over before it begins, if the narrative of the campaign lacks drama and there's no climax to the tale, we're up a creek. We must improvise to protect the story line.

The first task is to deal with those embarrassing polls that point to a landslide. We may believe them, but if we were to treat them too seriously at this early date we would greatly diminish the suspense factor. The solution is to not splash these early results across the front page or give them extensive coverage. They can be handled as if they were weather forecasts in the Farmer's Almanac—always subject to great change.

A second task is to constantly remind ourselves and our readers that there was once a man named Tom Dewey who was certain to defeat Harry Truman in 1948. The press so informed the nation right up through the voting and for several hours after the polls closed. The memory still hurts and makes us nervous. Two seasoned Wall Street Journal political analysts, James Perry and Gerald Seib, have updated that cautionary tale: "It's spring in an election year, and party regulars are downright grumpy about their candidate's chances of winning the White House. 'He's a dead stone loser,' one prominent pollster says. 'The campaign isn't working,' a governor complains. 'There's no clear message.'"

You've already guessed it, I'm sure: They were writing about the Democrats four years ago who despaired of their candidate—the trouble-prone Bill Clinton. There's more lore of that kind: Carter led Reagan, Mondale led Reagan, Tsongas led Bush, Bush led everybody by a mile. Who can say it won't happen again? Well, nobody really. You can't say the Cubs won't win the pennant, either.

As a consequence, Post columnist E. J. Dionne can warn Democrats (in the argot of the gridiron) not to be overconfident: "One way to lose is to sit on a lead. Another way to lose is to throw caution overboard and blow the lead entirely." None of this is remotely a denial of Dole's perilous condition. But it serves to keep interest alive.

Another way to add drama to the race is to change the subject from hard polling evidence to the softer matter of the electoral college. There are, one can argue, X number of "Republican" states that Dole surely will carry in November and Y number of similar states he can or should carry. The simple arithmetic here (depending on your definition of X and Y) can easily add up to victory. That being the case, we must all stay tuned.

Finally, there is the "chemistry factor," the mysterious bonding between candidates and the electorate that sometimes occurs to our great surprise. Michael Kelly of the New Yorker makes the point in an article with a tantalizing lead-in: "Bob Dole is old, taciturn and stoic, and he doesn't have any new ideas. It might just work for him." Kelly took a trip with Dole and was moved by a speech in which he described his early life. "Maybe the conventional wisdom is right, for once," Kelly writes. "Maybe the obvious candidate will win in 1996. . . . But if I were running Clinton's campaign I would be a little bit worried about how curiously affecting Bob Dole is when he talks in his awkward, halting way about being a kid from Russell, Kansas."

None of this, of course, touches on the big missions of the press in a modern campaign. We promise, like grand jury foremen and auditing firms, to hold politicians "accountable" for something or other, and I'm sure that will be done. We promise to strip away the outer man and discover the inner man and his "character." We may not be famously qualified to perform these functions, but there is always considerable enthusiasm for the task.

Jean-Daniel Tauxe

A White Flag From the Red Cross

The International Committee of the Red Cross is at its wits' end because of Liberia's chaotic violence. For the fourth frightening time in that West African nation's six-year-old conflict, the Red Cross last month was left with no choice but to evacuate its foreign staff. We have evacuated staff from other African countries in the past, but never because of such uncontrolled banditry. This is the first time in our long African involvement that the Red Cross has determined that circumstances on the ground make it unrealistic to send back permanent expatriate staff.

Why? Because we now unfortunately know the scenario by heart. Teenage fighters high on drink or drugs steal our vehicles. They then drive off to bring in reinforcements who follow suit, multiplying the looting and anarchy at the expense of the ordinary Liberians we seek to help. Stolen relief agency vehicles also serve Liberia's various warlords, always short of transportation. The bandits also prize aid workers' satellite telephones, ever handy to communicate with the world's media. And they especially covet our radio equipment for communicating with their troops in the field.

Earlier in the decade, we frequently were accused of prolonging the violence in Somalia because at most 5 percent of the food we distributed was misappropriated by the warlords. But we would argue more than 1.5 million Somalis survived the famine as a result of our efforts. In Liberia, no rules are obeyed and thus no deals hold. We learned the hard way.

As part of our credo of impartially dealing with all parties to conflicts, we were the first humanitarian organization to be in touch with all Liberia's warring factions and their leaders. For our efforts, we regularly were accused by each and every side of helping its adversaries. We took that as a confirmation of our independence. Meanwhile, we remain convinced that solidarity with the victims of the conflict in Liberia remains indispensable. But a genuine effort must be made to restore stability independently of humanitarian operations.

Our hope was to have all aid agencies in Liberia strictly observe a code of security procedures in dealing with the warlords for the greater good of the civilians we all were trying to help. Unlike more pragmatic organizations unburdened by our scruples about neutrality, we never sought the armed protection of ECOMOG, the West African peacekeeping force, for our relief convoys. For us the Red Cross emblem should suffice.

If the situation has not reached the point of no return, surely we are not far off. Liberia still is without effective government. Its combatants are out of control and extremely violent. ECOMOG troops are variously unpaid or underpaid and in such conditions are peacekeepers in name only. Time is of the essence, for the record has shown that the Liberian conflict only gets worse the longer it is allowed to fester. The International Committee of the Red Cross, involved in 14 operations in Africa, has wider concerns beyond Monrovia. It cannot be sure the so-called "failed state" syndrome so visible in Liberia will not spread. Early warning systems stopped neither Somalia's atomization nor Rwanda's genocide.

Western governments, which pay the lion's share of humanitarian relief in Liberia, have been faced with the same dilemma since the botched Somalia intervention. Their constituents do not like seeing television footage of starving children but won't abide risking their soldiers' lives to bring order out of chaos. The Red Cross may be excused for recalling wistfully conflicts like Angola, a classic situation where both sides allowed our delegates to work.

But what do we do in atomized Liberia, where the warlords know how to live off humanitarian organizations, but we do not know how to operate? It's time to speak frankly and throw the problem back to the U.N. Security Council. Its members must not limit their response to funding emergency operations. More efforts are urgently needed to work out a comprehensive political solution and to take practical actions no matter how controversial and difficult they may be.

The writer is the delegate general for Africa of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Edna
Goals 2000

Franklin L. Smith¹

In D.C., Closing Schools But Opening Doors

This week the District of Columbia's school board will vote to determine the fate of six schools I have recommended be closed as a result of a control board mandate. This vote will determine if the D.C. public school system is a collection of buildings or an organization dedicated to providing the best possible education for students. As the budget tightens, we must make tough decisions about what can be curtailed or made more efficient to save money that will continue to raise student achievement.

While our student population of 79,802 does not require us to maintain the current number of school buildings, the decision regarding school closings cannot be based solely on decreasing student enrollment. This is because curricula and community needs require us to use space differently to create more computer labs, parenting centers and special-education classrooms. But we need to redirect resources to ensure that we can move forward with improvements while still meeting our budget targets.

This means consolidating our schools to shed our oldest, most dilapidated buildings. We pay twice as much to heat and repair two underutilized schools as it costs to run one after consolidation. And for the past few years, our maintenance budget, spread over 164 schools, has only covered emergency patchwork repair. It is far more efficient to get a smaller number of schools in top shape than to maintain a fleet of aging, half-empty schools sinking under their own weight. We already have reduced the system by more than 2,000 employees, but we still face a budget cut of \$31 million (nearly \$100 million has been cut during the last five years). Consolidation is simply the best alternative.

Closing these schools not only will save money but will also create an opportunity to provide students with better facilities. After all, the Fillmore Arts Center was built in the 19th century, and the Armstrong Adult Education Center would reach its century mark in just six years. Parents do not want their children sent to outmoded schools when room is available in newer ones.

We selected buildings in areas where other nearby schools have room for their students. Two are adult education centers, and while adult education is not part of the school system's mandated mission, we realize its importance to this community. Therefore, these programs must be moved into existing K-12 buildings.

Chamberlain and Burdick are career high schools whose enrollments have dwindled and whose programs can be incorporated within comprehensive high schools under the federal School to Work Opportunity Act. This will enable more students to participate in career education. Langley, the oldest junior high school building, is more than half empty, and Hardy Middle School, with a top capacity of only 201 students, lacks a cafeteria, gymnasium and auditorium.

In addition to sending students to neighborhood schools, the school system is exploring other options—including charter schools, enterprise schools and schools designed and run by third parties—to offer all D.C. students additional choices. We will locate these schools and programs where the demand is greatest, including areas formerly served by the schools now being closed. Furthermore, since these students will still be in our system and will need the same level of service as before, teachers need not fear for their jobs. When a school is closed, the staff will be transferred to other schools.

The savings from this consolidation are significant. The money that would have been required to bring these schools into a state of good repair (\$5 million to \$7 million each) can now be applied to the complete renovation of a smaller number of schools. Closing these schools will save the District millions of dollars a year in maintenance and other costs, not to mention the tens of millions in deferred maintenance costs. Also, the school system strongly encourages the D.C. government to sell or rent these buildings, as well as the previously closed schools, to provide additional funds for our children's education.

Quality schools and a stable school district make a difference to everyone who lives or works in the District or who visits the city, not just the parents of children in our schools. I believe our schools are strong enough not just to survive these closings but also to improve our services. Despite the new budgetary realities, we will not abandon our school improvement programs, which have already begun to yield higher standards, better teaching and greater student achievement. We may be closing schools, but we will never shut down our hopes for our children.

The writer is superintendent of the D.C. Public Schools.

David S. Broder

Coming Up Short On Goals 2000

When President Clinton addressed an education summit of governors and business executives in Palisades, N.Y., late in March, he won headlines by challenging the states to set rigorous requirements for promotion and graduation of all their students.

Calling for "meaningful standards" in the schools, he said, "While I believe they should be set by the states... we shouldn't kid ourselves. Being promoted ought to mean more or less the same thing in Pasadena, Calif., as it does in Palisades, N.Y."

The thought was not a new one for Bill Clinton. A decade earlier, he had led a bipartisan effort, along with such Republicans as Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and Carroll Campbell of South Carolina, to raise the standards of American education across the board.

In the late 1980s, those governors got their colleagues to set out a half-dozen ambitious national goals for school reform and said they wanted to be held publicly accountable for reaching them by the end of the century. President Bush embraced them at an education summit in Charlottesville, Va., in 1989 and made them the centerpiece of his 1990 State of the Union Address. With urging from Clinton, Congress put them into legislation in 1994 and voted funds to help states achieve "Goals 2000."

Last month, almost unnoticed, Congress scuttled that grand plan, and the same President Clinton signed a bill that may make Goals 2000 a toothless tiger. Both the Republicans who forced the changes and the Education Department officials who told Clinton it was okay to acquiesce, insist that nothing has been lost in the process—that individual states will continue to press for better results from their schools. But for a reporter who watched the birth of the effort to create national goals and standards—so our kids measure up to international competition—this looks like quite a comedown.

Under the old plan, groups of scholars were given federal funds to develop national standards for core subjects. The English panel produced what many have called useless jargon. The history panel's first try was highly controversial; its second, much better. Math, science and civics standards were almost universally acclaimed. The standards were voluntary, but the Goals 2000 program—adopted by 46 states—encouraged competition in standard-

setting by having all the state plans sent to Washington, where panels of educators from other states could rate them.

Now each state will vouch for the worthiness of its own plan, without reference to the national standards. And if it chooses, it can bail out of the standard-setting exercise and instead use its share of the \$350 million appropriated for the program to buy computers for classrooms or other high-tech equipment.

In fact, that is the ardent hope of the man who wrote the classroom-computer option into the bill, Rep. Ernest Istook (R-Okla.). "My desire was to zero out [kill] the money for the program," Istook told me. He was delighted when the House Republicans did just that last year. But Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), his opposite number on the Senate Appropriations Committee, got the money restored in the Senate, and when they went into conference to meld the bills, the two men had to cut a deal.

Under pressure from his own party leaders, Istook agreed to fund Goals 2000 for another year. But he insisted on new language explicitly giving states the option to divert their Goals 2000 grants into classroom computer purchases, and he wrote the governors personal letters urging them to spend their dollars for computers, not standards and tests. If, as Istook predicts, most states go that way, the whole federal standard-setting exercise that Clinton helped launch a decade ago may end. But the White House signed on, knowing that few would recognize how far the president had moved from his original position.

That is how the system works in Washington these days. And what of the governors who started all this standards-raising effort a decade ago? Veterans such as Wisconsin's Tommy Thompson (R) and Colorado's Roy Romer (D) say they couldn't care less. They have a new scheme in mind. They are attempting, with corporate support, to put together a private clearinghouse for individual state reform efforts. The structure, the staffing and the financing are not yet in place, but Thompson and Romer say they will be soon.

I hope that is true, but for now, the United States remains one of the very few advanced nations with no national standards for its schools. And parents still must guess whether their children are really getting a 21st century education.