

Goodling endorses reading, math tests

They must be voluntary, he cautions

By Susan Ferrechio
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Clinton's plan to introduce national tests in reading and mathematics is gaining support from a House Republican leader on education.

Rep. Bill Goodling of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, told The Washington Times yesterday he will back national testing in public schools, as long as it is not mandatory and is first approved by Congress.

"I support producing the tests as long as everybody understands it is strictly voluntary," Mr. Goodling said. "I want teachers to know exactly what students need to learn about in [math and reading]."

Mr. Goodling, a former teacher and school superintendent, made the comments after the committee's hearing yesterday on the president's education initiatives, which include spending \$90 million to develop and implement national testing by 2002.

The plan also calls for spending \$5 billion on school construction and \$260 million on training reading tutors, and offering \$1,500 tax credits to college students with a B-minus average.

Mr. Goodling said that he has some doubts about the testing plan because he has not seen details about how it would be implemented.

"What it can lead to if we're not careful is rating and ranking school systems based on those tests and that is totally unfair," he said.

If Mr. Clinton's plan is implemented, fourth-grade students would be tested in reading and eighth-grade students in mathematics.

Mr. Clinton yesterday touted his school standards plan in Raleigh, N.C., part of a state-by-state effort to convince lawmakers to adopt the national tests. He ordered the Pentagon to require standardized tests in classrooms for children of military personnel.

The reading test would be modeled after the National Assessment of Education Progress test, or NAEP, which is now administered randomly on a voluntary basis. The math test would be based on the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which recently compared U.S. students' performance with those in other developed countries.

Mr. Goodling said the plan is "doomed" if the Clinton administration tries to implement it without the support of Congress.

Opponents to the national testing plan argue that the federal government has no business interfering in local education-reform.

Cheri Yecke, a member of the Virginia State Board of Education appointed by Republican Gov. George Allen, testified before the committee yesterday that such tests, and the standards they would set, would harm the state's success with its own reform initiatives.

"I do not see national testing as a legitimate role for the federal government," Mrs. Yecke said. "If the nationalization of education is allowed to occur, then in 30 years we will have a disaster on our hands."

Hatch joins Democrats, backs cigarette-tax rise

By Brian Blomquist
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Democrats who want the government to help provide health care coverage to uninsured children picked up a conservative advocate yesterday in Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, Utah Republican, who threw his weight behind a 43-cent-per-pack tax increase on cigarettes to pay for the program.

"I don't like tax increases, but really there's an added advantage here," Mr. Hatch said. "Everybody knows that one of the biggest causes of health disability is smoking."

Mr. Hatch, who is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, joined Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat and one of the Senate's most liberal members, to propose nearly tripling the federal tax on cigarettes, from 24 cents to 67 cents per pack.

Their bill would raise \$30 billion over five years in higher cigarette taxes, with \$20 billion going to pay for children's health insurance and \$10 billion going to reduce the deficit.

It's not clear how the Republican-controlled Congress will greet the tax increase, even if the money goes to help children and the bill has Mr. Hatch's support.

Tobacco-state lawmakers plan to oppose it by attacking just the tax increase and leaving alone the issue of uninsured children.

Mr. Kennedy denied it was a tax increase at all. "I don't consider it a tax," Mr. Kennedy said. "I consider it a user fee. If you don't smoke, you don't pay."

The conservative Mr. Hatch and liberal Mr. Kennedy tried to write the bill so that it would appeal to both sides. The tax increase on tobacco attracts many Democrats, and their plan to send the money to states in the form of "block grants" — with few strings attached — appeals to Republicans.

They said they would reject any effort to expand or restrict the bill.

"I know not everyone will be happy with what we're proposing," Mr. Hatch said. "I know some people will be asking why I am doing this — with Senator Kennedy no less."

"It's a horrible idea. This is incremental Clinton-care," said Audrey Mullen, executive director of Americans for Tax Reform.

"Anyone familiar with the notes of Hillary Clinton's health care task force knows that the Clintonites thought this would be the fallback position if their plan failed — forcing children to shill for them."

Mr. Hatch said he decided to back the bill because it would help provide insurance to about 5 million children who are not covered now. The senators said about 10.5 million children overall don't have health insurance, even though about 3 million of them could qualify for Medicaid if their parents simply applied for it.

They said the amount of money the government would send states would depend on how many uninsured children each state had. States choosing to participate could put up some of their own money and enter into agreements with private insurance companies to provide health coverage for children only.

ENC - Sds

The Washington Times

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1997

Aid package blasted on Hill

Norton sees problems with Clinton's plan

By Vincent S. Morris
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton yesterday declared President Clinton's \$3.9 billion aid package for the city "in serious jeopardy," after the city's top leaders said the plan isn't all it's cracked up to be.

After a three-hour hearing before the House and Senate government oversight subcommittees on the District, Mrs. Norton, a Democrat, said concern about the plan's impact on the city's finances is too serious to ignore.

"I'm not going to say you can't put Humpty Dumpty back together again but I will say he's pretty broken up," said Mrs. Norton. "I'm not mincing any words here. The testimony puts the plan in serious jeopardy."

The testimony was offered by D.C. financial control board chairman Andrew F. Brimmer and Chief Financial Officer Anthony A. Williams, both of whom were offering their first detailed views on Mr. Clinton's massive proposal.

In frank and critical terms, the two — especially Mr. Brimmer — highlighted a series of failings in

the plan, particularly a provision to yank the \$660 million annual federal payment.

"The [control board] is very concerned with the prospect of the federal payment's elimination. The federal payment is not a gift," said Mr. Brimmer, who like the other four control board members were appointed by Mr. Clinton. Mr. Brimmer raised his eyebrows with his strong criticism of the president's offering.

Mr. Brimmer provided an analysis that he said shows Mr. Clinton's plan will cost the city money after 1998.

"Even assuming that the president's plan is implemented, the District . . . would not be out of the woods," said Mr. Brimmer.

He also poked a hole in Mr. Clinton's \$300 million economic development package for the city, which received gushing reviews in a White House ceremony on Tuesday.

Mr. Williams was not as critical as Mr. Brimmer but said that losing the federal payment could create cash-flow problems for the city and make it harder — and more expensive — to borrow money.

Mr. Clinton's plan calls for the federal government to take over



Photo by Kenneth Lamberl/The Washington Times

Rep. Thomas M. Davis III (left) talks with financial control board Chairman Andrew F. Brimmer before the hearing on the District.

the city's tax-collection system, as well as court and prison operations. The federal government would assume pension liability, would boost its contribution to Medicaid expenses and establish a \$125 million fund to repair roads and bridges.

In exchange, the city would forfeit its federal payment, as well as make unspecified management improvements.

Mr. Brimmer said the government should pay a larger share of Medicaid costs and consider taking over St. Elizabeths Hospital, the mental health facility whose operations costs the city \$113 million yearly. And he questioned why the president made no provision for paying for un-

employment compensation and welfare management jobs, which the city currently provides but which are typically state responsibilities.

Franklin D. Raines, director of the federal Office of Management and Budget, says the federal payment has to be dropped in order to minimize the plan's impact on the budget. It's also being dropped, though Mr. Raines hasn't said this publicly, to assuage conservatives on Capitol Hill who are not eager to offer the District too much generosity at once.

While the hearing included testimony from Mayor Marion

Barry and D.C. Council Chairman Pro Tem Charlene Drew Jarvis, the bulk of the questions were directed at Mr. Brimmer and Mr. Williams — both of whom are highly regarded in Congress.

But Mr. Barry was forced to defend himself from questions from Rep. Thomas M. Davis III, a Virginia Republican and chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight subcommittee on the District. Mr. Davis peppered Mr. Barry with questions about his failure to implement management reforms, such as renegotiating expensive city leases and monitoring heating fuel costs.

Mr. Davis, who is generally on good terms with the mayor, also quizzed him about a lack of cooperation in dealing with Mr. Brimmer and at one point referred to Mr. Barry's testimony as "wandering all over." Earlier, Mr. Davis checked his watch and stifled a yawn during Mr. Barry's testimony.

The mayor objected to Mr. Davis' use of the word "wandering" and said so loudly, before launching into a defense of his relationship with the control board. "We have excellent cooperation," said Mr. Barry.

But "I have certain constituencies . . . I have promises I made during the campaign," he added, to explain his recent split with the control board over its decision to order him to come up with deeper budget cuts.

Clinton's Initiatives Gain Approval, But People Split on a National Test

By JUNE KRONHOLZ
AND ALBERT R. HUNT

Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Educational tests are an idea whose time has come—as long as they're not too tough.

Forty-eight states today either have mandatory tests or are drafting them. President Clinton is proposing a national test. But the vast majority of states draw the line at fashioning a curriculum for all students, and the national testing proposed by the president would be strictly voluntary—without even incentives to participate.

These policies very much reflect the public mood on the testing issue. The Wall Street Journal/NBC News national poll found that 81% of adults favor President Clinton's initiative, with almost half the public strongly in favor and only 16% opposed.

But when asked whether the federal government should establish a national test—with questions spelling out the pro and con arguments of a standard national accountability vs. ceding too much power to the federal government—the public splits 49% to 47%, barely in favor.

There are some clear demographic differences on the desirability of a national test. Whites are closely divided, but blacks give the notion strong support. There is little variance by income levels except among the very poorest adults, who favor a standard national accountability test.

The catalyst for testing was the 1989 governors summit in education that drafted a series of reading, math and science targets. Tests were called for then to ensure that kids were learning what they were supposed to be taught.

Tests were to be the engine that toughened curricula. A well-written test would outline what a child should know; teachers would teach to the test so their students would fare well compared with the rest of the state; from this competition a new, improved curriculum would emerge without the state government's dictating it.

Texas has a state-wide curriculum where most students study from the same textbooks. Most other states, however, have avoided mandating curricula. (The two states that haven't adopted any testing yet are Iowa and Wyoming.)

The issue is full of political land mines. Conservatives, especially the religious right, go ballistic at the idea of a government-mandated curriculum. Many on the right accept testing, however. But more than a few liberals claim that standardized tests are unfair to inner-city children, immigrants, the learning-disabled and students from poorer rural areas.

In reality, the problem with testing sometimes is that it's too benign. A California state test collapsed after one year because no one—employers, college admissions departments, parents, teachers, politicians—could agree on it. Maryland's current high-school assessment test is so easy that it is being given in junior high school. The state is considering a much tougher version, and requiring students pass it to get a diploma; that idea already is drawing fire from some parents who complain their children will be held responsible

for the schools—not the other way around.

And there sometimes are confusing variations in results. For example, the National Assessment of Educational Progress gives tests to a sample of kids in grades four, eight and 12 and then produces a score for the school. This year the NAEP found that only 15% of Louisiana's fourth-graders were adequate readers, but Louisiana's own standardized test claimed that 88% were. Similarly, in Wisconsin the NAEP found that only 35% of children read well, while the state claimed 88%.

But the NAEP doesn't grade individual students or tell parents how their children are doing. Instead, it grades schools, a useful-enough measure for deciding what each school is doing right or wrong. Kentucky pegs teacher bonuses to improved results on the state's standardized tests—and threatens to close schools that don't show improvement.

President Clinton's proposed national tests for fourth- and eighth-graders—for reading and math—would test individual students as well as schools. The federal government would pay to write the tests and cover the first-year administrative costs of the states, though it's still not clear where the relatively small amount of money will come from. Also, the president proposes to put both the tests and the school results on the Internet, hoping to generate pressure for school change from parents whose children fare poorly.

The administration goes to great lengths to counter claims that this is federal intrusion into what traditionally has been a local concern. The tests measure only reading and math and they are strictly voluntary, it is frequently noted.

Still, virtually every other industrialized country has mandatory nationalized tests and a standard core curriculum. But despite all the clamor for change and reform in education, Americans don't yet seem willing to go that far.

Edw-Std

Opinions Are Mixed on School Choice

By THERESA WALKER

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The clear consensus among educators and the American public is that school choice is a good thing—when it comes to public schools. When choice is extended to include private schools, however, deep divisions emerge.

Adults in the latest Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll favor public-school choice by 73% to 25%. The Clinton administration and most educators think it will strengthen the public-school system if parents are given the option of sending their children to any school in their district or to magnet schools, which build a strong curriculum around a particular area such as science or the arts.

But the real battleground is over extending choice to private schools using taxpayer dollars; 52% of Americans oppose it, while 45% are in favor. The Clinton administration, teachers' unions and most political liberals oppose using public money to fund private-school education. Most conservatives firmly support tax-funded vouchers or tax deductions to send children to private schools.

Despite the split in opinion, frustration with public education may be causing people to reconsider the issue, which they opposed 2-to-1 nearly three years ago.

"People are unhappy with the system, so they're searching for alternatives," says Fred Yang, an associate of Wall Street Journal/NBC News pollster Peter Hart. "But there is still a negative reaction [to private-school choice] because some people assume that this is just another tax break for the rich."

Educators charge these initiatives would drain much-needed financial resources from public education and cause a migration of talented and intelligent students to private schools—leaving nothing but a crop of below-average students in its wake.

But supporters, including many Republicans and conservatives, vehemently disagree. They argue that America is built on choice and want that right extended to education. Parents are already using vouchers to choose private schools in places like Milwaukee and Cleveland.

"Any choice is better than none; it's unconscionable to trap kids in bad schools," says Chester Finn, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. "When you give people choice you allow them to vote with their feet. People tend to work better in schools they want to be in than schools they're in against their will." Therefore, competition will force public schools to improve themselves—and make it difficult for bad schools to survive.

One problem is lack of information about the choice issue. "The average parent in an urban area is not well-informed enough about choice and is, therefore, at a disadvantage," says Sheila Simmons, director of the Center for the Advancement of Public Education at the National Education Association.

More important is the hot-button topic of religion. When parents choose a private school they are most often opting for religious education. About 23% of schools are private, but almost 79% of private schools are religiously affiliated. Experts cite fewer discipline problems and greater safety in private schools as reasons for their popularity. But don't count religion out. "A lot of people are starting to think that it's a good thing for kids; these schools are better at imparting values, morals, ethics and character," Mr. Finn says.

Supporters also claim achievement is higher in private schools; detractors insist there is no statistical difference. The battle of academic studies so far has been fought to a draw.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1997

Reno Dropped Attempt to Inform Lake In '96 of Alleged Chinese Moves in U.S.

By GLENN R. SIMPSON
And DAVID ROGERS

Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WASHINGTON — Unable to reach him on the phone, Attorney General Janet Reno dropped an attempt last spring to advise National Security Adviser Anthony Lake of alleged plans by the Chinese government to meddle in U.S. elections.

Ms. Reno said she thought the matter was handled at lower levels. But Mr. Lake, whose nomination to be CIA chief is being weighed by a Senate committee, says he never got the word.

The disclosure by Ms. Reno is likely to worsen an already tense relationship between President Clinton and his attorney general.

"I was not able to reach Lake," Ms. Reno told reporters yesterday. "I was told the briefing went forward." The Justice Department later said Ms. Reno was traveling at the time.

FBI agents briefed two midlevel National Security Council aides on the matter last June, but the aides say they never told their superiors because the FBI ordered them not to. The FBI insists it placed no restrictions on the aides.

'A Misunderstanding'

"I think there was a misunderstanding," Ms. Reno said. "I think what has happened is that the FBI put no limitations on advising people up the chain of command, but indicated that it was sensitive material."

The Justice Department and the FBI are investigating why President Clinton apparently wasn't told of intelligence data about the alleged Chinese electioneering, Ms. Reno said. A separate White House probe is also being conducted.

Mr. Clinton says he should have been informed but wasn't. Democrats accepted more than \$1 million in improper donations from Asian sources last year, and Mr. Clinton met with Chinese businessmen in the White House.

The intelligence from last spring about the alleged Chinese fund-raising efforts was not treated casually, Ms. Reno said: "I thought it was serious enough to make sure that we had the FBI advise the White House." White House officials have long

anonymously criticized Ms. Reno for allegedly not doing enough to help and protect President Clinton politically.

The comments detracted from Ms. Reno's announcement of the president's intention to nominate Eric Holder, currently the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, to be deputy attorney general. If confirmed, Mr. Holder would be the second-highest official in the Justice Department and the highest-ranking black. He has prosecuted a number of prominent drug cases and also directed the long-running probe of former House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski (D., Ill.) that ended in his political downfall and fraud conviction.

Ms. Reno's comments came as Senate Republicans stepped up their pressure on the attorney general to appoint an independent counsel to investigate the fund-raising controversies surrounding the White House.

Hatch and Thompson Signatures

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R., Utah) — together with nine other Republicans on the panel — signed a letter to the Justice Department triggering a provision in the independent counsel law requiring the attorney general to report in 30 days as to whether she believes the appointment of a counsel may be justified. The final decision would be left to Ms. Reno in any case, but the process would force her to identify what charges she is investigating and give more of an assessment of what allegations, she believes, are "based on specific information from credible sources."

Mr. Hatch had delayed release of the letter in hopes that he could get some support from Democrats on the Judiciary panel. He failed in this regard, but as a strong supporter of the attorney general in the past, his own signature is significant. And among the committee Republicans signing the letter is Sen. Fred Thompson (R., Tenn.), who is charged with leading the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee investigation into the fund-raising scandals. This is the first time Mr. Thompson has publicly endorsed the idea of a special counsel.

Bill Proposes Health Plan For Children

By LAURIE MCGINLEY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WASHINGTON — Efforts to extend health coverage to uninsured children got a big shot in the arm when GOP Sen. Orrin Hatch and Democratic Sen. Edward Kennedy joined forces to push legislation to expand such coverage while funding federal budget-deficit reduction and raising tobacco taxes.

The measure, to be introduced by early next week, would raise about \$30 billion over five years by increasing the federal tax on cigarettes to 43 cents a pack from 24 cents. Taxes on other tobacco products would be raised proportionately. Of the money raised, \$20 billion would go to states to subsidize the purchase of coverage for uninsured children, while the rest would be used to reduce the deficit. Sen. Kennedy of Massachusetts predicted that the measure would provide subsidized coverage to at least five million children, or roughly half the uninsured.

Even in a year when such children are a hot political topic, the bill's prospects are uncertain. But they're boosted not only by Sen. Hatch's strong show of support, but also by concessions that Sen. Kennedy

made to get the Utah Republican on board. The deficit-reduction provision was added at Sen. Hatch's insistence; it wasn't in a children's insurance bill Sen. Kennedy introduced last year.

Also, the new measure lowers and caps the amount of money the federal government would spend; last year's version would have created an open-ended entitlement. And states would get wide latitude in deciding who would be eligible for the subsidies, which parents could use to buy child-only policies or to take part in employer-based coverage. Participation would be voluntary, but states that chose to would have to help pay for the program, based on their average revenue.

"I know some people will ask why am I doing this, and with Ted Kennedy to boot?" Sen. Hatch said at a news conference. "The answer is that it's the right thing to do."

Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, yesterday embraced the measure. But it's far from clear whether Republicans will muster enthusiasm for the bill, considering its reliance on a major tobacco-tax increase. And there are other Democratic proposals, including one by Senate Minority Leader Thomas Daschle (D., S.D.).

The Tobacco Institute attacked the proposal. "Excise taxes are regressive; they impact low-income wage earners more than middle-class wage earners," said Thomas Luria, a spokesman. And, he said, "If uninsured children are an important priority, shouldn't everyone help shoulder the burden, and not just smokers?"

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1997

U.S. shifts course on plans for testing math proficiency

Will link exams to judge eighth-graders

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Clinton administration has switched channels on the development of a new national eighth-grade mathematics test.

The administration now plans to base the test on the framework of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math test, said Education Secretary Richard W. Riley.

The original plan had called for basing the test on the math framework of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which has been administered over the past couple of years to students in 41 countries.

"Our current thinking is we will link to both," said Mr. Riley.

President Clinton has launched a \$90 million, five-year initiative to develop new national tests in reading and mathematics. The tests, which would not be mandatory, would serve as a yardstick for measuring state, district, school and individual progress toward attaining higher academic standards being set by the states.

The president's testing plan came in too late to be included in the Department of Education's printed budget documents released in February.

At the budget briefing, Mr. Riley said the project will cost \$8 million to \$9 million annually for test development — a total of \$40 million to \$45 million — plus first-year administrative costs of \$45 million. After that, states and schools that volunteer to use the tests will pay the scoring costs.

He said the administration plans to create the tests with money from the Fund for the Improvement of Education and does not need authorizing legislation from Congress — a sore point with GOP leaders who have warned the administration not to try to bypass Congress on national tests.

Initially, the plan called for basing a fourth-grade reading test on a shortened version of NAEP's

reading assessment and the eighth-grade math test on TIMSS because Mr. Clinton had visited a Chicago school that was part of a district consortium in which eighth-graders participated in TIMSS and scored second in math to Singapore among 41 nations.

The change of mind was prompted by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, which saw problems with the TIMSS content and pointed out that NAEP's math framework closely parallels the widely accepted NCTM math standards developed in 1989.

The administration will develop a mathematical relationship among scores on the national test, TIMSS and NAEP, said Sharif M. Shakrani, NAEP program director at the National Center for Educational Statistics.

That would let parents and teachers know how their students are mastering math. It would also disclose how they compare with eighth-graders in other countries. American students scored lower than the international average on the last TIMSS math test.

NAEP uses a sample of public and private school students to serve as a barometer of how the nation and, more recently, public school students in participating states are performing. No child now takes a NAEP test in its entirety.

National tests, although touted as voluntary, are much debated.

"Whoever controls the test will control the curriculum of all the kids in the country," said Monty Neill, associate director of the National Center for Fair & Open Testing. "When President Clinton claims the test will be voluntary, look out! This is really a slippery slope."

"I hope they're not thinking about a national curriculum," said Rep. Bill Goodling, Pennsylvania Republican and chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. "It would be a disaster here."

educ - stats

The Washington Times

★ THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1997

FBI warns Atlanta minorities bomber might strike again

ATLANTA (AP) — The FBI has warned minority communities and other groups that have been targeted by hate crimes that the person responsible for bombing an abortion clinic and a homosexual nightclub may likely strike again.

"I don't think we have evidence that the person is going to strike again, we're just being cautious," FBI spokesman Jay Spadafore said yesterday.

The FBI told Georgia lawmakers about the warning last week, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported yesterday.

"We've been attempting to do it in a low-key fashion," Mr. Spadafore said. "The goal is to be prudent and vigilant without creating alarm or a panic."

The agents offered congressional leaders no conclusive theor-

ies as to why Atlanta was targeted, although they suggested the city's international exposure from the 1996 Olympics was one possibility.

Agents said they have not ruled out that the recent explosions were tied to last summer's bombing at Centennial Olympic Park, which killed one person and injured more than 100 others.

The FBI's briefing was conducted at the request of Sen. Paul Coverdell, Georgia Republican. Several other members of the Georgia delegation and staff members attended.

Agents said their forensic work is moving slowly. They told the congressional leaders the bombs used in all of the explosions were constructed of widely available materials, making individual components difficult to trace.

State sovereignty at stake, foes of same-sex unions say

By Sean Scully
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

ANNAPOLIS — Maryland shouldn't bow to the will of other states by allowing same-sex "marriages," advocates of a ban on such unions said yesterday.

The state "should not allow other jurisdictions to make de facto policy decisions in the state of Maryland. . . . That right is reserved to our citizens and through us as their elected representatives," said Delegate Anthony O'Donnell, Calvert County Republican, at a hearing on the ban.

Same-sex "marriage" has been thrust into the national news in the past year as the Hawaii Supreme Court considers whether to legalize it in that state. Under the U.S. Constitution, other states would be obligated to recognize such "marriages" conducted in Hawaii, in effect legalizing them nationwide.

Last year, however, Congress passed a law permitting states to ignore such "marriages." So far, 18 states have done so, and most of the rest are considering it.

The Maryland bill — which was considered in a hearing yesterday before the House Judiciary Committee — would define marriage as a union between a man and a woman and invalidate same-sex ceremonies conducted in other states.

"If you can't defend marriage, I don't know why you're here. . . . It's the cornerstone of civilization," said Robert Knight, spokesman for the conservative Family Research Council.

"Same-sex unions will have very serious economic impact, legal impact, social impact and — yes — religious impact," said Delegate Emmett Burns, Baltimore Democrat and an ordained minister, in defense of the bill, which he is sponsoring for the second year in a row.

But advocates of same-sex "marriage" say the ban is unfair and discriminatory. They turned out in force during yesterday's hearing to oppose the ban and support a bill — sponsored by Delegate Sharon Grosfeld, Montgomery County Democrat — that would legalize any "marriage" between two consenting adults in the state.

The Washington Times
★ THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1997

Edw - Stds

Senate Democrats vow bill block over Herman

By Laurie Kellman
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Angry at inaction on the Alexis Herman nomination, Senate Democrats signaled yesterday that they will block other legislative business until Republicans bring up a vote on her confirmation.

"It has never been totally explained to us what the holdup is," said Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota. "So until we get some clarification, some additional cooperation on something of that import, I don't think there's much opportunity for us to move ahead on other legislation either."

Rankled by stalled budget negotiations, Senate GOP leader Trent Lott of Mississippi was in no mood for compromise. "The minority is going to say what we can consider and what we can't consider?" he asked incredulously. "Puh-leeze."

But Senate Democrats made good on Mr. Daschle's threat when they prevented a vote on an unrelated bill to protect volunteers from liability claims.

By a 53-46 vote mostly along party lines, the Senate failed to stop debate on the volunteerism measure. Sen. Richard C. Shelby, Alabama Republican, who voted with Democrats against cloture, was the only member to break party ranks.

A second cloture vote was scheduled today.

Two weeks ago, GOP leaders scheduled, then canceled a vote on Miss Herman's nomination because President Clinton had proposed an executive order Republicans say would require that federal construction contracts go to more expensive, unionized companies.

"[Miss Herman's] nomination is not the problem, the problem is that the administration wants to change labor law by executive order," Mr. Lott said. "That's wrong. We're not going to agree to it."

He has refused to schedule the vote until the administration either assures him it will not submit the proposal or takes one of several other options, including submitting it to Congress for review.

Hill hostile to closing more bases

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Defense Secretary William S. Cohen yesterday said his major review of the U.S. military may include base closings — a surprise to lawmakers still smarting from recent base shutdowns.

Mr. Cohen told reporters at the Pentagon he has made no final decisions on a sweeping review of the nation's defenses due to be released in mid-May. But Mr. Cohen did say he may propose closing more U.S. military bases.

Troop strength has been reduced by 33 percent in recent years, Mr. Cohen said, while infrastructure has been cut by only 18 percent. "It's been pretty clear for some time there's an excess capacity," he said.

An annual report Mr. Cohen submitted yesterday to the president and Congress also underscored the need to trim bases.

"Within the United States, closing facilities that are surplus to national defense is essential to reducing unnecessary defense expenses," Mr. Cohen stated in the report.

Lawmakers and local communities are still grappling with the disruption caused by 97 major base closings ordered in four rounds beginning in 1988. The idea of another round coming so close on the heels of these closures met with emphatic opposition from several key lawmakers.

"Does 'Over my dead body!' make it clear enough?" said Rep. Joel Hefley, Colorado Republican and chairman of the House National Security subcommittee on military installations.

Government witnesses before Mr. Hefley's panel this year have questioned whether base closures save as much as promised. Enormous environmental cleanup costs, for example, have cut into expected savings. In addition, Mr. Hefley said, even a smaller military still needs key bases.

Within the Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other top uniformed commanders have pushed for more base closings. They made sure the guidance for the pending study, called the Quadrennial Defense Review, included base closings among the money-saving options. Top officers, pressing for weapons modernization and reluctant to see the active-duty force shrink further, see base closings as a target of opportunity.

Work on national tests upsets GOP lawmakers

By Susan Ferrechio
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Capitol Hill Republicans yesterday signaled unhappiness with a Clinton administration decision to create national standardized tests without getting congressional approval, threatening to withhold education funding if the decision is not submitted to Congress.

Rep. Frank D. Riggs, California Republican and chairman of the House Education and the Workforce subcommittee on early childhood, youth and families, said Congress would "attempt to manipulate the purse strings" of the Department of Education, which is now creating the tests.

"If there's going to be a widespread public buy-in for these tests, the administration needs to send Congress legislation explicitly authorizing them," he said.

Education Secretary Richard W. Riley told the subcommittee yesterday the department is spending \$22 million to develop reading and math tests for use in public schools beginning in early 1999.

President Clinton has touted the tests — for fourth-grade students in reading and eighth-grade stu-

dents in math — as a way to raise national education standards by accurately gauging student performance across the states.

Mr. Riley said the plan, in which states would volunteer to participate, is being developed with existing funds in the department's budget, and therefore does not require congressional approval until 1999 when more money will be needed.

"If this thing proceeds forward, Congress will have to be a part of it. There's no question about that," Mr. Riley said.

Mr. Clinton's testing plan, one of 10 major education initiatives he vowed to tackle in his second term, received some bipartisan support at yesterday's hearing, despite warnings from Republicans that the administration is overstepping its authority.

"I am for these comparison tests," said Rep. Michael N. Castle, Delaware Republican, adding that measuring performance will inspire schools to raise standards.

Rep. George Miller, California Democrat, said national testing will give parents a sense of how their children are doing in school.

But GOP critics said national testing poses many risks.

FBI agents testify on travel-office acts

By Jerry Seper
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Whitewater grand jury in Washington yesterday heard testimony from FBI agents concerning a suspected conspiracy involving top White House officials, including President Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, to cover up the firing of seven travel-office workers.

Among the witnesses was FBI Agent Howard Apple, who — according to an FBI internal review of its handling of the "Travelgate" affair — was told by White House Associate Counsel William H. Kennedy III that the travel-office matter was being managed by officials at the "highest level" of the White House.

The grand jury has been probing the firing of seven travel-office employees and the role key administration officials played in the decision to terminate the workers to make room for Clinton cronies, under the cover of an FBI probe into alleged fraud.

The Clintons have denied having any role in the firings. Mr. Kennedy, who left the administration to return to Little Rock's Rose Law Firm, has denied ever telling Mr. Apple or other agents that the matter was being overseen by top White House officials.

In May 1993, the White House fired seven travel-office workers after accusing them of mismanagement. An FBI investigation was ordered. Five were rehired later when the charges proved unfounded, and one retired. The seventh, director Billy Ray Dale, was charged with embezzlement, but later acquitted by a jury.

According to lawyers and others close to the Whitewater probe, independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr is trying to determine if White House officials illegally used executive power and executive privilege.

Mr. Starr also wants to know if Mrs. Clinton pressured senior

Prominent people gave money to help White House files figure

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vernon E. Jordan Jr. and the first lady's chief of staff were among 55 donors who gave a total of \$9,550 to help pay legal expenses of the ex-White House aide at the center of the FBI files controversy, documents show.

The money went to the legal defense fund of D. Craig Livingstone, who resigned last year after revelations his White House office of personnel security had wrongly collected confidential background files on hundreds of former Republican administration workers.

Mr. Livingstone's role in the FBI file controversy was investigated by Whitewater independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr, who has not brought any criminal charges in the matter.

Mr. Jordan, a prominent Washington lawyer and frequent golf partner of President Clinton's, gave \$250 while Maggie Williams, Hillary Rodham Clinton's chief of staff, donated \$50.

Charlene Drew Jarvis, a member of the D.C. Council, gave \$100, the records show.

Records of the donations were given to the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, which subpoenaed them as

part of its broader investigation of Mr. Clinton's re-election fundraising efforts. The records were released this week by Mr. Livingstone's attorney, Randall Turk.

Mr. Turk previously had disclosed the existence of the trust fund, saying it had been disbanded last year.

White House special counsel Lanny J. Davis declined to comment on Miss Williams' donation. Mr. Jordan did not return a telephone call to his office seeking comment.

The terms of the trust stated that the trustees would not be allowed to solicit or accept donations from employees of Mr. Livingstone in the security office or anyone conducting official business with the White House.

Besides Mr. Starr's investigation, Mr. Livingstone was called before the House committee when it investigated the files controversy.

Mr. Turk, a partner in a high-powered Washington law firm, whose clients have included former White House Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Deaver, has declined to say how Mr. Livingstone is paying the balance of his legal expenses.

White House officials to fire the seven workers. A memo by ex-White House aide David Watkins said Mrs. Clinton and others pressured Mr. Watkins to fire the travel-office staff to win favorable press coverage. At the time, the administration was beset by embarrassments, including the Waco siege and the president's \$200 haircut aboard Air Force One.

Mrs. Clinton has said she "did not have a hand in making the de-

cision" to fire the workers, although she felt they were justified since the accounting firm of Peat Marwick had uncovered financial mismanagement. Some of her denials were made under oath to federal regulators and investigators, and she is believed to have been asked about the firings in an appearance before the grand jury.

But Mr. Watkins' memo said Mrs. Clinton demanded the firings two days before Peat Marwick was

hired to conduct an audit.

Mr. Watkins said in the memo he felt "pressure from above" to fire the workers and that pressure was conveyed to him by Hollywood producer and Clinton friend Harry Thomason. He told the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee that Mrs. Clinton gave no specific order to fire the workers but she made it clear in a May 14, 1993, phone call that that was his only option.

He said the first lady told him "We should get our people in and get those people out." His memo said there would be "hell to pay" if he did not fire the travel-office workers "in conformity with the first lady's wishes."

The FBI's internal review show that on May 13, 1993, Mr. Apple told Mr. Kennedy that an agent from the Washington field office would be dispatched to meet with him to discuss a possible investigation of the travel office, but the Mr. Kennedy "insisted that an FBI headquarters manager meet with him, noting that the matter to be discussed was extremely sensitive and being directed by the 'highest level' at the White House."

The bureau then dispatched Mr. Apple and Patrick Foran, both FBI unit chiefs, who met with Mr. Kennedy. The internal review said Mr. Kennedy repeated that discussion about the travel office "being directed at the 'highest level' at the White House" and immediate action was required."

Later that same day, according to the review, Unit Chief Richard Wade and Supervisory Special Agent Thomas Carl met with Mr. Kennedy to discuss his allegation against the travel-office workers.

It was on May 14, 1993, after briefing by the FBI, that a senior Justice Department prosecutor, Joseph Gangloff, acting chief of the department's public integrity section — decided there was a sufficient basis for the FBI to initiate a criminal investigation of the travel-office allegations.

The Washington Times
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 1997

Boles/Bales
Let's meet with the
Religious Principles Standards
Team - we should propose
tying them to the
standards (think -
need to be pulling this

PK

Copied
Reed
Emanuel
COS

By John Ritter
USA TODAY

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
4-23-97
Educ-Stds

Wynn Seale Middle School was once so dysfunctional, and its students' performance so low, that school officials did the educational equivalent of throwing up their hands. They "disestablished" the school, brought in a new principal and let him handpick his teachers.

That was three years ago, when fewer than one in four Wynn Seale students passed state math tests. Today, 60% pass. Reading and writing scores are up almost as much.

Wynn Seale's kids come from the city's most gang-infested neighborhoods, so poor that 85% of the kids qualify for free or subsidized school lunches.

Stern discipline helped turn around this knot of low expectations. But the real key to better performance was a single-minded focus on establishing tough academic standards, a focus that has made this south Texas port city virtually without equal nationwide.

"Standards took the mystery out of learning," says Wynn Seale principal Richard Peltz. "Our kids know exactly what's expected of them. And they know we expect a lot. There aren't any more excuses."

The hue and cry for higher standards has gained momentum in the last decade behind corporate leaders, education reformers and politicians, including President Clinton. But the pace of school reform and the move to curriculums based on standards have been slow.

Supporters say tough standards are a way to inject consistency and competitiveness into American schools at a time when students change schools often, when the nation's employers knock schools for turning out unemployable graduates and when U.S. students' test scores trail those of Asian and European students.

Yet, not many schools have tough standards, and even fewer enforce them. Standards are a highly charged issue for school boards and state legislatures. Conservatives often object that the government is trying to dictate what should be taught. Liberals worry about how poor kids, minorities and immigrants will fare when the academic bar is raised.

Little progress nationwide

The public seems to have no appetite for national standards. A Bush administration proposal to set national standards bombed. President Clinton is trying to jawbone the states, but progress is fitful. Of standards that do exist — state or local — few are world-class.

Corpus Christi, however, stands out as an example of what can be done when there is the will to do it. No large school district has pushed the envelope the way this city has. It has set standards for what its 42,000 students should know and be able to do in every subject in every grade — from dates, facts, trends and concepts to problem-solving, experimentation and essay-writing. And it demands that teachers teach them and students learn them.

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas

As simple as that sounds — as fashionable as it sounds — it's not happening to the degree that education reformers say it should if the nation's schools are to rise above mediocrity.

"What we still see is that it's going to take more than just talk to arrive at high-quality standards," says Matt Gandel, director of education issues for the American Federation of Teachers.

The teachers' union, behind its late president Albert Shanker, has long pushed for tougher standards, and it keeps track of progress. Its annual review last year found that only 15 states have standards in math, English, science and social studies "that are clear, specific and well-grounded in content."

Two states — Iowa and Wyoming — have no standards at all. In 12 states, standards in all four core subjects fail to meet the teachers' union criteria. The remaining 21 states and the District of Columbia have standards that fall in one, two or three subjects.

Most states that have set standards, whether rigorous or not, don't take the critical extra step of requiring students to pass tests based on them. So there's no guarantee schools will use the standards.

And many standards simply don't measure up because they're too vague, wordy or all-inclusive to be useful as practical learning guides.

An example, from Oregon, that falls short: Students are required to "demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively in solving problems." And one from Corpus Christi that measures up: "Analyze the development of individual rights in the United States from 1865-present."

Texas' standards meet teachers' union criteria in all four subjects, and students from grade three on take state English and math tests annually. But students don't have to pass the tests to be promoted. And although students must pass a high school exit exam to graduate, it is based in part on eighth-grade, not 12th-grade, standards.

Corpus Christi's standards not only are more rigorous than Texas', but students have to master them to graduate.

Pushing for change

So how is it that this oil and petrochemical hub, the nation's sixth-busiest port, a middle-sized city with a Hispanic majority, has moved to the forefront of the academic standards movement?

Employers were complaining that high school graduates lacked basic skills. More than half the graduates who enrolled in a community college were taking at least one remedial class. "Basically there was no consistency in what was being taught," says Sandra Lanier-Lerma, assistant superintendent for instruction.

"I have five Biology I teachers," says King High School principal Sherry Blackett. "There was no way to be sure that students got the same amount of instruction in the most important things."

The realization touched off a two-year crusade that brought together parents, teachers and experts. The final product: *Real World Academic Standards* — 50 pages of the stuff students must know and how they are to show they know it, from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

King and 22 other schools tested the standards in 1995-96. All 61 schools adopted them this school year, and every student was immediately accountable.

"Last year no one really liked them," says junior Morgan Switzer, 17. "This year it's a lot easier."

"You study for the performance standards, you learn the information to pass them and then you retain the knowledge much longer than if you had just crammed for an exam."

Senior Hillary Towers, 18, says, "You know exactly what you're supposed to be learning, and you know you have to learn it by the end of the year. You're prepared for it."

Some high school parents balked when their children failed to master

standards and lost sports and extra-curricular eligibility under Texas' no-pass, no-play rule.

"We told them student achievement is non-negotiable," Blackett says.

To the surprise of many, the district's overall course failure rate is down slightly this year. The presumption had been that more students would struggle under tougher standards. "Kids will rise to the expectations you set for them," Superintendent Abelardo Saavedra says.

But Corpus Christi's transition was helped by other elements of its standards initiative that experts say are crucial to success:

▶ A discipline code, which stripped away disruptions to learning. Anything that smacks of gang influence — certain caps and jewelry, untucked T-shirts with baggy pants — is banned.

▶ Regular testing that determines whether the standards are being taught. Students must show their mastery of standards as they learn them. Grades don't hinge on one big final exam.

▶ Programs that kick in quickly to help students who are falling behind — before-school and after-school tutoring, Saturday classes and "clustering" students who are struggling with the same standards. Summer school was restructured so students go just long enough to pass standards they had failed.

▶ A ban on "social promotion" allowing students to advance from grade to grade whether they pass. "On the social promotion issue, few if any places match up to Corpus Christi," says Gandel of the teachers union.

Outlining social promotion may be the best insurance that standards are met, but few districts have the stomach for it. Some experts think the emotional distress children suffer when they're held back is worse than the academic repercussions of promoting kids who fall.

They don't buy that in Corpus Christi, although the real test of the

policy won't come till the end of this school year, when for the first time students could be held back for failing standards. Linda Bridges, president of the teachers union local, says teachers are anxious to see whether the district follows through.

Saavedra says: "We're not going to socially promote."

Taking the next steps

Across the district, there's a level of cooperation that outsiders say is rare in an education bureaucracy. A key to success is that teachers had a central role in drafting the standards.

As a result, Corpus Christi has moved on to issues that aren't even on the radar screens of most other districts. Grading, for example, it became apparent that the best set of standards could fall prey to the grading quirks of teachers. Corpus Christi is now experimenting with scoring criteria for every standard.

Teachers also are shifting to more active and hands-on learning. A buzzword districtwide is "products" — charts, portfolios, displays, demonstrations, research — that students create, often in teams, as they learn. Students are more motivated.

Corpus Christi is trying to incorporate more reading, writing and math into the other subjects. Until high school, you don't take English; you take "language arts," a combination of reading, writing, speaking and listening. A reading course is required for all high school freshmen.

Teachers find that some textbooks no longer measure up to Corpus Christi standards, and that has put a premium on finding other resources. Now it's not just social studies teachers requesting maps for classrooms; language arts and science teachers want them, too.

Math gets a huge push. A goal is that all students pass algebra by eighth grade. Computation takes a back seat to problem-solving. "If students can verbalize about math, they retain it longer," algebra teacher Jerrie Barker says. "What we had been doing was not working."

The district has no meaningful data yet to prove that tougher standards are raising performance. And it may not have any for a few years, because standards are not a quick-

fix. Lanier-Lerma is quick to point out that some schools, and some principals, lag behind others.

But anecdotal evidence is encouraging. Test scores seem to be heading up. Blackett says some of last year's King High graduates who resisted standards the most have come back to tell her they were wrong, that they benefited from a single year of higher expectations.

Most teachers are believers. "Before, you closed your door and you didn't want anyone to know what you were doing," says Ann Rall, a seventh-grade language arts teacher. "Teachers used to keep their successes to themselves. Now we want to share our successes."

In just two years, standards clearly are driving public education here. They dominate school meetings. Banners and posters everywhere preach standards. Teachers laminate them and post them in classrooms. Students know what they have to master and when. Parents are becoming familiar with them.

"We're after higher-order thinking skills," says Wynn Seale principal Peltz. "We're used to hearing teachers say, 'Tell me, listen, restate.' Now we're hearing 'Evaluate, create, defend, justify, give reasons.'"

Peltz and his teachers have made a lot of progress with Wynn Seale's at-risk student population. But he thinks taking them to the next level, the district's goal of 90% passing state tests, will be much harder. "Anyone can take a school to 60% or 70%," he says. "The research says we're going to plateau next year, and the kids will slip."

"So we'll try more radical strategies. Maybe extend the day, regroup children every other day. Teach, assess and regroup. The paradigm is going to have to be broken by the parents. Maybe the parents of under-achievers will have to come to school once a week, learn how to help their kids with homework."

"We'll have to be more radical."

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 7, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ON EDUCATION STANDARDS

Legislation passed by the House of Representatives this evening provides an impressive victory for American education. It moves us down the road to high national standards and voluntary national tests in the basic skills, and it invests in providing our country with better schools and increased educational opportunities.

I am very pleased that we have reached an agreement on one of my top priorities for this year and for my Presidency: making sure that America's school children can master the basics and achieve higher academic standards. America's parents, teachers, and principals can now be sure that we are going to hold children's educational skills up to the same high standard whether they live in Michigan, Maine, or Montana.

The educational agenda I have established for the nation -- from high standards and testing to making a college education possible for every young American -- is designed to give our children the tools they need to succeed in a changing global economy. Today's agreement fulfills a critical part of that agenda, and I appreciate that politics indeed stopped at the schoolhouse door.

The Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, which includes the agreement on national standards and tests, also helps meet our national commitment to expand educational opportunities for all students. It provides a \$1.5 billion increase in Pell grants to help an additional 210,000 young people attend college, and increases the maximum Pell grant to \$3,000, the highest level in history. Special education funding is increased by \$800 million, funding for technology for our schools is almost doubled, and there is \$7.4 billion to help our most disadvantaged students master the basic skills. Goals 2000 is funded at \$491 million, to continue to support school reform in every state, and funding for after-school programs is increased from \$1 million to \$40 million.

I am also pleased to see the House pass bipartisan charter school legislation to promote choice and accountability in the public schools and help achieve my goal of 3,000 charter schools.

Ed - Standards

Don't dumb down education standards

By Louis V. Gerstner

There's a story, perhaps apocryphal, that British royal archers of the last century would wait until the queen had shot an arrow at a target, then run to draw a bull's-eye around where it struck. That dramatically improved the queen's archery score, but not the quality of the queen's archery. Unfortunately, a number of people today believe it's possible to employ the same slippery strategy to the issue of academic standards in our public schools.

Simply put, we're beginning to see backsliding toward the low level of expectation that created the crisis in our schools. Forty-nine states have set appropriate educational standards and are putting rigorous tests in place to measure achievement. But when the first round of testing proved something we already knew — that many kids are unprepared to get over the higher bar — some officials, beset by public pressure, are rushing to "dumb down" the tests, delay them or, worse, walk away from them altogether.

These now are isolated decisions. But unless we speak up in support of students, there's a real danger that today's isolated events will spread.

Rather than standing strong and pressing forward with our commitments to our kids, we could start drawing arbitrary bull's-eyes of our own. That's expedient. Yet it would be unfair to American schoolchildren, who outperform most of their international peers on fourth-grade math and science tests but by the 12th grade trail behind students in other developed nations.

Near bottom

U.S. 12th-graders were outscored by most of their 21 international peers on a 1995 math test:

Top countries' scores

- 1. Netherlands: 560
- 2. Sweden: 552
- 3. Denmark: 547

Bottom countries' scores

- 19. United States: 461
- 20. Cyprus: 446
- 21. South Africa: 356

International average: 500

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

By Genevieve Lynn, USA TODAY

If only one high school sophomore in 10 passes the new math test, as was the case in Arizona, the answer is not to make the test easier, as some parents, teachers and administrators have asked the state's Board of Education to do. The answer is to focus on making changes to curriculum and instruction so more kids can succeed and to provide extra help for those who need it. If only 7% of Virginia schools currently meet demanding new accreditation standards, we should do whatever it takes to strengthen the schools, rather than back off the standards, as the Virginia Board of Education seems poised to do.

In Massachusetts and New York, states with tough new exams that high school students must pass to graduate, high initial failure rates led both state boards to draw their own bull's-eyes. The first Massachusetts students to face its new graduation requirement will need a score just a single point above "failing." In New York, a score of 55 out of 100 on the state Regents English exam will get you through. If these scores remain in place beyond the transition year, we'll be cheating our children.

From shouting to unity

Even these isolated instances are troubling, especially on the heels of this fall's National Education Summit, which ended with President Clinton, governors and education and business leaders unified on a reform agenda that would have triggered shouting matches a few years ago.

Most important, the consensus was that, without a commitment to standards, all else is wasted motion. Summit participants pledged to develop specific plans, within six months, to do what's necessary to get our kids to the higher standards: changes in teacher training, more rigorous curricula, better assessments that drive quality instruction and accountability.

Our kids aren't lagging behind much of the world because they aren't bright. We're behind because of complacent adults in and out of the school system. Yet predictably, in states where the governors are pushing to act on their commitments, special interests are sounding the call for retreat.

Bear the pain, get the gain

Those governors deserve our support. There's ample evidence that when officials have the guts to bear the pain of the transition from low standards to high standards, it pays off. In Texas, in the first round of testing with a new algebra exam, only 27% of the students passed; but that number shot up to 45% three years later. Chicago has mandated summer school for students who don't pass new standardized tests. Most of the kids who came up short on the first round of testing met the promotional standards after completing the summer program. Higher standards coupled with more funds for teachers' professional development helped students in New York City's District 2 outperform those at schools in wealthier suburban areas.

We don't have to dumb down our tests. We don't have to fall back to the status quo. The kids will deliver if we adults have the will to see our commitments through with urgency. As their parents, as future employers and as concerned citizens, we must give our kids the chance to achieve at world-class levels.

Louis V. Gerstner, the CEO of IBM, organized the National Education Summit.

Risks demand greater oversight

OUR VIEW Proposal would boost FDA authority over Net drugstores.

When it comes to online prescriptions, President Clinton is absolutely correct in charging that rogue Internet drugstores "pose a threat to the health of Americans." Such sites employ anonymous doctors to write dubious prescriptions based on unverified health claims, then fill those prescriptions with a thin conscience for a fat profit.

The results can be fatal, as in the case of an Illinois man with a history of chest pain and family history of heart disease who died last spring after taking Viagra that had been prescribed online, without a physical exam.

Other perils include adverse drug interactions and mismedication stemming from a pharmacy's inability to verify customer claims. How can an Internet drugstore offering the weight-loss drug Xenical know whether the person claiming obesity isn't instead anorexic?

Clinton is also correct when he suggests that the existing safety net against prescription error and abuse is inadequate to regulate Internet operators. Most online pharmacies are legitimate, but the rogue sites operate well outside the reach of local and federal regulations.

States can't control drugstore Web sites that operate across state lines. Nor can they regulate doctors who sign prescriptions from 1,000 miles distant. Few have even tried, notable exceptions being California and Kansas.

Beyond that, a new and highly touted industry

program to certify pharmacy Web sites is voluntary. Federally, the Food and Drug Administration has neither the power nor the money to do much.

For these reasons, the White House last week proposed strengthening the FDA's authority over Internet drugstores, giving it new subpoena and enforcement powers and an extra \$10 million to fund them. Online drugstores would have to show compliance with state and federal rules. Selling drugs without valid prescriptions would bring a new \$500,000 civil penalty.

Make no mistake: Not every online drugstore is a problem. Many provide convenient, low-cost alternatives to time-pressed, cash-strapped or homebound patients. But the proposed requirements ought not be too much work for legitimate operators. All they have to do is show that they are obeying state and federal laws.

Their unscrupulous brethren are another matter. Last fall, two Pennsylvania physicians writing in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* reported that the median cost of a visit to an Internet physician was 16% higher than a visit to a general-practice physician in Philadelphia. Researchers also found that the median Internet price for two commonly prescribed drugs was 10% higher than in local drugstores.

Plainly, rogue Internet pharmacies are gouging consumers as well as endangering their health. And they get away with it because the existing state-industry regulatory structure is unable to meet the challenges of Internet prescriptions. This is a national problem, and it deserves a federal solution.

No need to expand rules yet

OPPOSING VIEW Current laws may be sufficient to stop illegal sales.

By Craig L. Fuller

President Clinton supports a new initiative to protect consumers from illegal Internet sales of pharmaceuticals. We support wholeheartedly the ends, but when the means involve expansion of Food and Drug Administration authority over transactions regulated by the states, we respectfully urge restraint.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores represents more than 30,000 community pharmacies, most of which now have the Internet capacity to provide prescription medication to patients in a manner fully consistent with all laws and regulations. Also, there are many "dot.coms" selling pharmaceutical products, health and beauty products and over-the-counter medication solely through the Internet in full compliance with laws and regulations.

For all of us, rogue Internet operations are an anathema. However, it is an overstatement by the White House to suggest that consumers have "no way of telling" whether an online pharmacy is a legitimate operation. Indeed, chain-pharmacy customers are finding it safe and convenient to order prescriptions over the

Internet, because they trust and know the brand name of the drugstore.

We urge a careful review of existing regulatory authority at the state and federal levels. (The FDA has the authority to prohibit the illegitimate importation of prescription drugs from offshore sources and may limit unauthorized distribution of prescription drugs by unlicensed entities.) We believe enhanced enforcement of existing authority will go a long way toward remedying the issues properly raised.

The desire to end dangerous and unsound practices with regard to Internet sales is similar to the vigilance long applied to community pharmacies, direct-mail service and other state-regulated commercial activities. State-based regulation safely has served consumers with respect to community-pharmacy and multistate mail-service operations. Rushing to expand the authority of the FDA to regulate Internet pharmacies prior to any indication that current regulatory and voluntary certification programs have failed may be a bit premature. Let's use this year to find a way to achieve collectively these worthy ends articulated by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala within the already available means.

Craig L. Fuller is president of the National Association of Chain Drug Stores.

Edvc - Standards

LESSONS

Richard Rothstein

Clinton's Gamble on Education Policy

Al Gore and George W. Bush talk a lot about education in the presidential campaign. Yet the federal role in education seems minor, just 7 percent of school budgets. Are the candidates misleading the voters?

Not really. In his two terms, President Bill Clinton has shown that a shrewd chief executive can have a big impact on schools. But it is still unclear if his policy has been farsighted or reckless.

From the start, Mr. Clinton wanted higher standards but knew that resources to achieve them, like good facilities and qualified teachers, were expensive and distributed unequally. Raising standards without added dollars could cause soaring failure rates for disadvantaged children.

With huge deficits, the president initially had no hope of getting much new spending. So he chose a high-risk approach, focusing first on standards and figuring states would be forced to add their own money later, perhaps through lawsuits. This is now happening, but the process is not over.

Mr. Clinton's strategy took shape before the 1992 election. As Arkansas governor, he tried to influence President George Bush's education policy. As president, Mr. Clinton expanded reforms he had prodded his predecessor to begin.

In 1989, representing the National Governors' Association, Mr. Clinton negotiated with Mr. Bush's domestic policy aides to establish "Goals 2000," a call for higher standards.

A Clinton adviser then was Marshall Smith, dean of Stanford University's School of Education. Professor Smith urged "systemic reform," an idea that more money by itself could not improve schools. Rather, reform must combine higher standards, testing whether students reach them, and holding schools accountable.

But, he added, higher standards could spur inequality if states did not give all students an "opportunity to learn" advanced content, because poor children are often less prepared at home and have teachers who are not trained to impart more sophisticated thinking skills.

To avoid this, Dr. Smith said, systemic reform must also ensure that all teachers are well prepared and that facilities and materials for poor children are adequate.

In negotiations with President

E-mail: Rrothstein@nytimes.com



David Suter

Bush's staff, Governor Clinton fruitlessly sought financing to get poor children more ready to learn. In a joint news conference, Mr. Bush and the governors agreed that added money was desirable but said, "We understand the limits imposed on new spending by the federal deficit."

In 1993, Dr. Smith became under-

Setting standards, and hoping states follow with the financing.

secretary of education in the Clinton administration, and systemic reform became policy. But it became embroiled in disputes over "opportunity to learn" programs that cost money.

Some Democratic leaders in Congress wanted no students held to higher standards without the resources to achieve them, but congressional Republicans and governors from both parties were ready to abandon reform if new expenditures were required. So Mr. Clinton decided not to support spending programs tied to the standards.

Jack Jennings, then an aide to House Democrats, said the president and his allies were gambling. They recognized that new spending proposals would scuttle reform, but also thought that once higher standards

were in place, states would be forced, perhaps by lawsuits, to finance help for poor children to succeed.

Dr. Smith, now back at Stanford, recalled that he and other administration officials thought states would have to provide better trained teachers and resources for disadvantaged pupils, "forced by the clarity of the outcome requirements."

Reform has proceeded much as the administration urged. States adopted new standards. Failing pupils are held back. But those who fail are more often poor and minority students.

Raising dollars to remedy this is mostly a state function, but unexpected federal surpluses also help. Mr. Clinton's later budgets, unlike earlier ones, focus not on standards but on money for smaller classes, better trained teachers, and school construction and refurbishing.

Still, conflict between higher standards and inadequate resources occurs mostly at the state level. There, litigation has intensified, just as the administration expected. A New York State judge is weighing a claim that higher standards require more money for New York City schools. New Jersey's Supreme Court says the state must offer preschool to disadvantaged children and ensure that poor districts receive more state money than suburban ones.

In California, a new lawsuit demands equal access to advanced courses for poor children. An Ohio court recently ruled that standards were adopted without ensuring disadvantaged students the resources to meet them. But similar suits in Florida and Wisconsin have failed for now.

If states eventually provide enough new money, President Clinton will have been a visionary who maneuvered states into equalizing education after embracing high standards.

But if states continue to raise standards without resources to reach them, his impact will be more negative, leading to wider academic gaps between rich and poor.

Traveling?
Check the weather . . .
from Albany to Acapulco.
The New York Times

Buchanan Poised to Take Over Reform Party

By MICHAEL JANOFSKY

After months of aggressive efforts to place his loyalists on the Reform Party's national committee and as state delegates to its nominating convention, Patrick J. Buchanan is poised to take full control of a party he joined less than a year ago after abandoning his Republican roots.

His ultimate triumph depends on what happens at a previously unscheduled session of the Reform National Committee, planned for Aug. 8, the day before the party's convention is to open in Long Beach, Calif.

There, if the final pieces fall into place as the Buchanan campaign expects, the party's governing board will ratify a Buchanan ally as head of the convention's credentials committee, providing Mr. Buchanan a huge advantage in resolving disputes over the seating of delegates.

The confirmation would mark a major turning point in the Reform Party's brief and turbulent history, effectively ending Ross Perot's control, power and influence over a political organization he founded eight years ago as an alternative to the Republican and Democratic parties.

It would also clear Mr. Buchanan's path to the party's presidential nomination and the \$12.5 million in federal campaign funds that goes with it.

And it would recast the party as a home for Mr. Buchanan's own well-organized, deep-rooted, right-wing political machine to promote socially conservative causes, like opposition to abortion rights, that the Reform Party has previously left out of its platform as too divisive.

Indeed, the party runs the risk that, under Mr. Buchanan's leadership, it may be marginalized if it fails to collect at least 5 percent of the vote in the general election. By meeting that threshold in each of the past

two presidential elections, the party qualified for federal funds the following election cycle.

Critics of Mr. Buchanan say his vision of the Reform Party would, in effect, pick up where the Christian Coalition left off, but his mission could receive substantial lifts in the months ahead. His efforts, for example, would no doubt be aided if Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, the all-but-named Republican nominee, chose a running mate who favored abortion rights, alienating staunchly conservative Republicans.

For now, the key for Mr. Buchanan is the final naming at the Aug. 8 session of Frank Reed as chairman of the convention's credentials committee, a 15-member panel that decides who are seated as delegates.

These days, the panel's job is especially critical. Reflecting the polariz-

ing effect Mr. Buchanan has had on the party, the committee has received 40 challenges from 26 states, the resolution of which could affect hundreds of the 596 delegates and 164 members of the national committee, some of whom are also delegates.

Mr. Reed, the Ohio state chairman and chairman of the convention rules committee, is considered a Buchanan supporter. But it remains unclear just who is recognized as the credentials chairman because of a dispute between Gerald R. Moan, the party's acting chairman since last winter, and other senior party officials.

In recent weeks Mr. Moan replaced Russell J. Verney, a close associate of Mr. Perot, as head of the committee with Mr. Reed, over the protests of other party leaders. They favor Dot Drew, an official from North Carolina who had served for years as credentials chairman.

Mr. Buchanan's ascension follows months of contention within the party, largely as a result of his power play. While his efforts to gain control of state delegations have fortified his chances of winning the nomination, they have also offended many party members who cherished Mr. Perot's founding principles that focused on government reform and trade issues and ignored social policy.

For some time, Mr. Perot did not rule out a third run for the presidency himself. He even tried to have the primary ballot offer voters a third choice, that of "no endorsement," which was widely seen as a signal to his loyalists that nominating no one was better than the choice at hand.

After the party denied Mr. Perot's request, Mr. Buchanan was left only to defeat John Hagelin, a physicist who has twice run for president under the Natural Law Party banner.

Some Reform leaders who are skeptical of Mr. Buchanan's motives contend that the real reason for the Aug. 8 meeting, which was called by 50 national committee members loyal to him, is that the Buchanan campaign intends to orchestrate the removal of Mr. Moan and replace him with someone who campaign officials believe would project a stronger and more stable ruling style.

"Many of us think Gerry has been more than fair to the Buchanan campaign," said a top party official who asked not to be named. "But they don't trust him. He has not been with Pat long enough, so no matter what he does, they're going to dump him."

Bay Buchanan, who serves as chief strategist for her brother's campaign, denied that driving Mr. Moan from office was part of the campaign strategy. Mr. Moan, she

insisted, proved his value when he removed Mr. Verney as credentials chairman and named Mr. Reed.

"As long as the convention is run in a manner that is fair to all delegations, I don't see any need for the national committee to interfere with any officer," she said. "And there is no need to remove him."

Still, she and Mr. Moan both acknowledged that some national committee members who are ardent Buchanan backers would feel more comfortable with a chairman who has demonstrated unambiguous allegiance to Mr. Buchanan and the direction he would take the party.

"My perception is they don't have the votes, and the sentiment to remove me is not there," Mr. Moan said of any opponents, though he conceded that his days in office might be numbered.

Still, Mr. Verney predicted that if Buchanan supporters vote to replace Mr. Moan with a chairman more closely aligned with Mr. Buchanan, the Hagelin camp would file for an injunction in federal court to hold up dispensation of the federal election funds to the Buchanan campaign.

"Every judge has been appointed by a Republican or Democrat, and the Federal Election Commission is not rushing to send out any money," Mr. Verney said. "That process could take a long time to resolve."

Taking measure of U.S. education

Summit marks
progress, seeks
better ways to
make the grade

By Tamara Henry
USA TODAY

When the nation's governors meet this week with CEOs and educators, bragging tops the agenda. After all, 45 states have academic standards, and 10,000 companies require school transcripts of new hires — both key goals set three years ago when many of these same leaders met.

But the 1999 National Education Summit also will be under the gun.

"We are now facing the natural consequences of our success," says IBM CEO Louis Gerstner, who will co-chair the summit Thursday in Palisades, N.Y. "All of a sudden, people start to wonder whether the pain is worth it."

"People are saying, 'Wait a minute. Standards mean that children may be told they are not living up to what they are supposed to do.' Parents are suddenly realizing their schools aren't as good as they thought they are. Teachers are suddenly being asked to teach to a set of objectives and be held accountable. And so the system is beginning to say, 'Wow, you really mean it. This is hard.'"

Some educators, most of whom were left out of the 1996 summit, complain that politicians and businessmen treat schools as factories with production goals. Without motivating students, teachers and other front-line workers in American education, the momentum for school improvement will be lost.

Still, there's no denying achievements since the first summit in 1989, when President Bush called the nation's governors together. They set eight goals, but when national groups tried to develop ways to measure progress, the effort faltered amid fears that the goals were a backdoor way for the federal government to exert control over local school decisions. States then became the focal point in the standards movement.

In 1996, governors and 44 top U.S. corporate leaders met to set up a system to help states outline what students must know and be able to do to meet the education goals.

"What's happened in three years is staggering," Gerstner says. Some highlights:

► Today, 45 states have adopted standards in English, math, science and history/social studies, up from 14 in 1996.

► By 2000, 48 states will test students in key subjects to check progress toward state standards, up from 39 in 1996.

► 10,000 employers, ranging from many of the country's largest multinational corporations to thousands of small and midsize companies, now use student records as part of their hiring process to identify behavior and work habits. Initially, about 3,000 used transcripts.

The accomplishments were documented by Achieve, the nongovernmental clearinghouse created in response to the '96 summit.

The fallout from the successes has leaders worried, however. For example, tens of thousands of schoolchildren are either being left behind in school by the tougher standards or forced to attend summer school.

Thousands more are leaving school without diplomas because they can't pass exit exams.

Achieve officials say that when New York state released results from its new performance-based reading and writing assessment for fourth-graders this year, more than half the state's students failed. Even in some affluent suburban districts accustomed to 90% passing rates on a previous minimum-skills test, failure rates reached 40%.

Gerstner hears some educators and politicians saying, "Maybe we ought to back up."

He won't.

"We've got to give everybody a chance. . . ."

"We've got to live through the pain of transition from a bottom-of-a-barrel education system to a world-class education system."

To move forward, Gerstner and Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson, a Republican, have invited to the summit a variety of educators, including state superintendents and the two largest teachers unions.

Thompson says that in 1996 "we did not have enough of the educational establishment invited, and they got their noses out of joint a little bit. We've rectified that by inviting them all in. Everybody needs to help

push if we're going to be successful."

The summit's focus will be on "action steps" that strengthen the way states measure student performance against their standards, help students find better courses, improve teacher quality and win greater public and parental support.

The task may be difficult, says Bruce Fuller, a researcher at the University of California, Berkeley. "My own view is that corporate leaders are advancing schizophrenic views of how to reform schools."

"Half, like Gerstner, are pushing for results through stiffer accountability and awarding state governments more centralized control while eroding the authority of local school districts. The other half of corporate America pushes for vouchers, a form of radical decentralization."

In addition, Fuller says, "it's impossible to generalize across the states as to what form of education reform is actually being pursued."

Having educators at the summit will help inject humanity into the process, says Paul Houston, executive direc-

tor of the American Association of School Administrators.

Houston agrees that the last summit was a catalyst for reform. But he says the governors and CEOs were so focused on standards that they neglected those items that help "create schools that kids want to go to" and keep them "engaged in learning in a very meaningful way" — for example, offering music, art, sports and other extracurricular activities along with the required math and science classes.

"If we're not careful, we're going to squeeze all the life out of what happens to children in schools," Houston says.

"We're going to put such an emphasis on a part of what goes on in schools that the things that bring kids to schools, that motivate them, we don't have time for that. 'We can't do that because we've got to get ready for the test.'"

"To the degree that we make the mistake of moving in that direction, we're going to risk a real negative backlash from parents who say, 'Yes, we want our kids learning, but we also don't want them to be miserable automatons.'"

Leaders also may have to weather controversy as the states are moving toward uniform, national standards — albeit not standards dictated by the federal government as some feared years ago.

Ten states have become members of a \$2 million partnership to design a rigorous eighth-grade math program that allows states to compare performances.

The states will tackle math first because national and international tests show that U.S. students' achievement in math begins to drop off sharply after fourth grade.

"What makes this summit particularly urgent is that, now that everybody's moving in (the same) direction, we have got to get it right," says Robert Schwartz, the president of Achieve.

"The not-so-good news is we've got a relatively short time to really pull up our socks and get with it."

Educ Standards

Urban experts pick top factors influencing future

Survey singles out wealth disparity as biggest issue in cities' development

By Haya El Nasser
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — A growing gap between the nation's haves and have-nots, an aging population and the Internet will be key factors shaping American metropolitan areas in the next 50 years, a new survey shows.

That's in stark contrast with the past 50 years, when the national interstate system and federal housing programs played key roles, according to the survey to be released Thursday at the Fannie Mae Foundation's annual housing conference here.

Amid growing national concern over suburban sprawl, the survey of urban experts concludes that government policies and technological breakthroughs can trigger a chain of events that no one can predict.

Take air conditioning. Widespread in homes by the '50s and '60s, no one could have known that it would push people away from established cities by making the scorching Sun Belt livable and enclosed suburban shopping malls possible.

"Air conditioning helped transform the most inhospitable sites for human habitation in the country into some of our fastest-growing metropolitan areas," says Robert Fishman, a Rutgers University professor and public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Fishman conducted the survey for the Fannie Mae Foundation, a national, nonprofit community development organization. Although the foundation's sole funder is Fannie Mae, the nation's largest provider of home mortgage financing, it is an independent philanthropy. The survey results, listing the top 10 influences shaping the past 50 years and the top 10 for the next 50 years, are based on 149 responses from leading urban historians, planners and architects.

Most of those polled predict that suburbs will continue to thrive and inner cities will continue to deteriorate. They rank growing disparities of wealth as the No. 1 influence on the way American metros will develop in the next 50 years.

That will lead to growing political clout in new, far-flung suburbs, the continued crumbling of older suburbs and a perpetual underclass in central cities and closer-in suburbs.

"The suburbs rule. The suburbs will continue to rule," Fishman says.

But how suburbs will use their growing clout is the question, he says. Rather than promote rapid growth, they may limit it and encourage the resurgence of downtowns.

"You can know that these things should have influences, but you can't predict the specific forms that it's going to take," says Robert Lang, director of the Fannie Mae Foundation's urban and metropolitan research. "We can know the Internet will have

What is shaping U.S. metropolitan areas

Top 10 influences on the American metropolis of the past 50 years:

1. Interstate highways and dominance of the automobile
2. Federal mortgage financing and subdivision regulation
3. De-industrialization of central cities
4. Urban renewal: Downtown redevelopment and public housing projects
5. Levittown: The mass-produced, suburban tract house
6. Racial segregation and job discrimination
7. Enclosed shopping malls
8. Sunbelt-style sprawl
9. Air conditioning
10. Urban riots of the 1960s

Top 10 most likely influences for the next 50 years:

1. Growing disparities of wealth
2. Suburban political majority
3. Aging of the baby boomers
4. Perpetual "underclass" in central and close-in suburbs
5. Environmental and planning initiatives to limit sprawl
6. Internet
7. Deterioration of post-1945 suburbs closest to cities
8. Shrinking household size
9. Expanding superhighway system to serve new cities on the edge of old cities
10. Racial integration

an influence but not know what an Internet-driven metropolis of 2050 will look like."

Whether the Internet will push people farther away from cities by allowing them to work and conduct business from anywhere remains to be seen. Other questions arise: Will aging baby boomers stick to the suburbs or move downtown? Will smaller households make the suburban single-family home obsolete?

Experts agree the federal government will play a smaller role in the next 50 years. Only one federal policy — building superhighways to connect far-out suburbs — made the top 10 list for the future.

For the past 50 years, the 41,000-mile interstate highway program of 1956 and the dominance of the automobile rank No. 1.

Interstate highways led to the de-industrialization of central cities. Industries looked for cheaper land and labor away from the city once they could transport their goods by truck instead of rail. That caused high unemployment in the cities, which led to the urban riots of the 1960s.

Two other federal policies also rank high in shaping the past 50 years: low-interest Federal Housing Administration loans that created the postwar suburbs, and the landmark 1949 Housing Act that demolished historic buildings and entire city neighborhoods to create high-rise public housing projects in segregated ghettos.

Education Standards Gaining Momentum

Third of States to Unveil New Skills Tests

By KENNETH J. COOPER
Washington Post Staff Writer

Across the country, from New York to Alaska, students returning to school this fall will face new and harder achievement tests that are being phased in state by state, grade by grade, subject by subject. The culture of standardized testing has filtered all the way down to kindergartners in Texas and Alabama, where youngsters are being closely monitored to make sure they'll be ready for academic hurdles that lie years ahead.

During the coming school year, about a third of the states will introduce new tests for public school students at a variety of grade levels, according to "Making Standards Matter," an annual survey conducted by the American Federation of Teachers.

This year's burst of new tests in 16 states represents a gathering of momentum in what Deputy Secretary of Education Marshall Smith calls the "standards-based movement," which has seen nearly every state first adopt academic standards and then begin creating customized tests to determine whether students have met those standards.

But with experience, state and local school officials are learning that the standards movement is going to require more than just tests to get results.

"We're at the point where most of the states have got standards and are beginning to change their assessments and, hopefully, their curriculum and instruction," said Wayne Martin, a testing specialist at the Council of Chief State School Officers. "They keep discovering there are more and more pieces to add on."

Curriculum, teaching methods and even textbooks are being adjusted to fit the new state standards, with teachers receiving additional training to pull them all together. And for the students who don't pass the test, school systems are taking remedial measures such as longer school years, mandatory summer sessions and extra tutoring before, during or after regular classes.

"The biggest challenge is getting

teachers to where they feel comfortable teaching to different standards than they have in the past," said Smith, who was an education professor before coming to Washington.

For example, North Carolina, which implemented much of its testing program in the past few years, found that further training of high school teachers in reading instruction would be needed because some students still have reading problems after passing through lower grades in less academically strict times, said Marvin Pittman, the state's assistant superintendent of education.

The adoption of statewide standards also has led to tighter structuring of curriculum and greater uniformity of what is taught in each grade. In Houston, for instance, the school district has taken the Texas standards and developed more specific curriculum guides for academic subjects at every grade level.

"This is the first time we've had a common understanding of what is to be taught in each grade and in each subject across the district," said Susan Sclafani, the district's chief of educational services.

One side effect of more defined curricula, however, has been that teachers have less flexibility to wax expansively on a favorite topic or let a spirited classroom discussion race away. In Florida, teachers in Tallahassee have cut back on time students have to work on science or history fair projects and this year anticipate taking classes on fewer field trips. "The subjects and activities of a general school experience . . . in many of our schools are being diminished or eliminated," said David Clark, spokesman for the Florida affiliate of the National Education Association.

Even class textbooks are being altered to keep pace with the standards revolution. "Textbook publishers are changing their textbooks in accord with state standards in influential states: . . . California, Texas, Virginia and Massachusetts," said Gilbert T. Sewall, director of the American Textbook Council, a research organization based in New York.

School districts in California, for example, are spending up to \$250 million this year to buy new texts that will match new state standards in reading and mathematics. Those standards require that younger students be taught to read using phonics, rather than the "whole language" approach based on literature that had been in use for a decade. Similarly, the state's math standards have shifted away from solving problems related to everyday life and toward learning basic skills in the early grades and specific theorems in later ones.

But perhaps the greatest change brought about by the standards movement thus far has been a significant shift in the attitude educators hold about student failure. The gradual imposition of stricter academic standards—coupled with state threats of serious consequences for students who fall short on tests and for schools with large numbers of failing students—has made it more difficult for teachers and administrators to write off as

inevitable the failure of students with serious educational deficiencies. Instead, many of the nation's school systems are priming themselves to prevent such students from failing the all-important tests—in many places years before they will have to take them. As of last year, 20 states required local districts to intervene to help struggling students and provided funding for such programs.

"The standards and accountability being put in place across the country is making it a lot clearer that preventing failure is easier than making up for it after it happens," said Sandra Feldman, president of the American Federation of Teachers.

Starting this year, Alabama's high school juniors will have to pass four new exams in reading, writing and grammar, math, and science before they can graduate. In preparation, teachers gave the new tests to last year's sophomores in a trial run to identify students in need of remedial help, which tutors are to provide this year after school.

This fall, Alabama schools are taking that preemptive approach to a new level, testing kindergartners—who won't be taking the graduation exams for a dozen years—to determine their readiness for school. First- and second-graders will take other tests designed to spot reading problems early.

Those and other initiatives, Harris explained, add up to "finding ways we can guarantee to keep all students in Alabama on track to graduation."

Similarly, in Texas, educators have begun to focus on prepping kindergartners for a third-grade state proficiency test that kicks in in 2003, which pupils will have to pass to be promoted to the next grade. This summer, nearly all kindergarten teachers in Texas participated in four-day workshops in which they studied the latest research on reading, sampled different teaching methods and worked on diagnosing reading problems early. "Next summer, we'll be concentrating on training first-grade teachers," said Debbie Graves Ratcliffe, a spokeswoman for the Texas Education Agency.

That sort of methodical preparation and implementation has meant that the standards movement, though proceeding at a heady pace, will take years to work all the way through the nation's schools.

One of the last groups of students who will have to take new state tests, according to an AFT survey last year, will be those in Maryland. When members of the state's class of 2007 reach high school, they will have to face new exams in American history, world history and English.

By that time, more than a decade will have passed since a commission created by Congress urged that proficiency tests be aligned with academic standards.

"It takes years really to get those standards implemented," said Susan Agruso, state testing director in South Carolina. "It's ongoing forever."

Edw - Standards

The Washington Post

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1999

No Violence This Time At Black Youth March

Police, Crowd Restrained at New York Rally

By LYNNE DUKE
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Sept. 4—For all the racial recrimination, court battles and street fights over the "Million Youth March," the event was held today with a crowd even smaller than last year's and with none of the clashes that broke out a year ago when police moved to shut the march down.

Last year's melee broke out when a phalanx of officers in riot gear and on horseback moved in a few minutes after the march's permit expired. Backed by helicopters, police surged toward the stage, where march convener Khalid Abdul Muhammad urged his listeners to defend themselves by seizing police guns, batons and barricades and using them as weapons. In a brief bout of chair and bottle throwing, 28 people were injured.

This time, however, police conceded to the dictates of a court order and did not rush in to clear the crowd when the event concluded. Mimicking the voice of a nerd, Muhammad said to police today as 4 p.m. approached, "Don't get nervous, buddy. Just chill, buddy."

"The people have already said they are not going to take what happened last year. I don't have to repeat what I said last year. They remember."

He then urged the crowd to disperse "in an orderly fashion. We want you to be cour-

teous, polite, and respectful." With that, the rally ended.

The administration of Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani denied a city permit for the march this year, as it did last year, on the grounds that Muhammad and others involved with it espouse racial hatred and violence. But in both instances, Muhammad took the city to court and won. Earlier this week, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that even "bigoted, hateful, violent and frightening" speech such as Muhammad's is protected by the First Amendment.

March organizers had predicted that thousands of people would fill the six city blocks in the Harlem section of Manhattan where their event was held. But today's crowd barely filled a single block and may have been matched in size by the 1,500 police officers—down from last year's 3,000—on hand to control it.

The size of the crowd, however, did not diminish Muhammad's rhetoric. Ostracized in 1994 from Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam because of his unauthorized harsh language, Muhammad used his 75-minute speech to preach on self-respect and black upliftment. But he also ridiculed whites—especially Giuliani—as "crackers," saying they were the same as plantation overseers who cracked the whip on slaves. As for Jews, the group on which he has historically heaped his harshest words, he characterized them as biblical impostors.

Court Rules Against Immigration Statute

Law Applies to Out-of-Wedlock Births

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO—A long-standing immigration law making it easier for a child born out of wedlock overseas to become a U.S. citizen if the child's mother is a citizen is unconstitutional, a federal appeals court has ruled.

The law, passed during the Korean War, applies to children born abroad to one U.S. citizen parent and one foreign parent who are not married.

If the mother is a U.S. citizen, the child is automatically a U.S. citizen provided the mother has lived in the United States continuously for a year.

If the father is a U.S. citizen, additional requirements apply: The father must agree in writing to support the child until age 18, and paternity must be established by marriage, a sworn acknowledgment by the father or a court finding.

The law relies on "outdated stereotypes . . . the generalization that mothers are more likely to have close ties to and care for their children than are fathers," said the opinion written by Judge Mary Schroeder and issued Thursday. She said the law also "presumes that a father will not care for and support his child unless required to do so."

Judge Arthur Alarcon agreed, but Judge Andrew Kleinfeld dissented, saying the majority had misunderstood the Supreme Court ruling. He also said the law had a "rational purpose" that "may not be pretty" but should not be questioned by courts: to limit the citizenship claims of children fathered by U.S. soldiers in Korea.

The ruling overturned the conviction of Ricardo Ahumada-Aguilar, Mexican-born son of a Mexican mother and a U.S. citizen father. Ahumada became a legal U.S. resident in California at 13, after his mother married a U.S. citizen, but he was deported seven years later after a cocaine conviction.

He reentered the country twice and was charged in Seattle in 1995 with the crime of illegal entry after deportation. A judge rejected his claim of citizenship and sentenced him to a year and three months in prison.

He and other speakers also railed against the black political and civic leaders who opposed this year's march and who called for people to boycott it. Premier among them was Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.) and City Council member Bill Perkins, who said he was taunted with threats of death by Muhammad and his supporters last month because he opposed the rally.

Also missing this year were other promi-

nent black leaders, such as Al Sharpton, a popular New York activist, who spoke last year but did not today. Local churches and civic groups, which last year supported the concept of a youth march if not its organizers, also did not participate.

A sign of the difficulties his movement faces came when his supporters, wearing "New Black Panther Party" badges on the all-black coveralls they wore tucked into

black combat boots, moved through the crowd with buckets and plastic shopping bags to take up a collection to cover the cost of the stage and sound system.

Muhammad has fashioned himself as an advocate of black power, with the march as the centerpiece of his activism. He espouses black self-determination, the formation of people's militias and a conservative code of social conduct.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 4, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today's release of state-by-state National Assessment of Education Progress scores is evidence that our efforts to raise academic standards have begun to pay off. Many states have shown significant improvement in reading in the last four years, and some states that had scores well below the national average have made the greatest gains. But much remains to be done to ensure that every child in America is mastering the basics. That is why I urge the Senate to vote this week to continue funding for 100,000 new, well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. Parents and teachers across the country know that smaller classes lead to improved student performance in reading and other basic skills. We should grasp this opportunity to build on the gains we have made, so that every child in America is prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

30-30-30

Mr. Clinton's Challenge on Schools

President Clinton's education agenda, which dominated his State of the Union address, has tapped into a broad national concern about failing schools. Mr. Clinton's proposals for national standards and national tests are timely, sound and relatively inexpensive, given the results they are likely to yield. Some of his other proposals — including teacher retraining, better reading instruction, school reconstruction — are important as well.

But the price tag will far exceed the \$51 billion that Mr. Clinton seeks from Congress in his new budget. Although he gave the Federal Government an unusually large role in the mammoth task ahead, the financial burden will fall mainly on the states, which have historical and statutory responsibility for the schools. The message underlying Mr. Clinton's agenda is that while Washington can help set higher goals, the states will need to make heavy investments, in terms of dollars and political will, if America's children are to succeed.

The most recent national reading scores made it clear how serious the problem is. They showed stagnant scores in the lower grades and slipping scores among high school seniors. In addition, about 40 percent of the nation's fourth graders failed to meet even minimal reading standards. This is hardly a surprise given findings from the National Institutes of Health, which has been studying how children learn to read for more than a decade. The N.I.H. says that only a tenth of teachers know how to teach reading to children who have trouble grasping the idea.

Mr. Clinton has suggested drafting young volunteers to fill the teaching role. But before doing so he should consult the N.I.H., whose researchers say

that about 40 percent of children need instruction they do not get now in phonics, vocabulary and word recognition, provided by skilled teachers. To produce skilled teachers, states will need to restructure teachers' colleges — and pay considerably more attention to what teachers themselves are taught. This will not come cheaply.

Mr. Clinton calls for setting higher national standards, and putting in place a system of national tests in reading and mathematics. Americans will surely support this approach, despite the fact that it challenges local control. In addition, Mr. Clinton wants to increase early learning opportunities and offer school choice through charter schools. Less wise is his proposal for making the first two years of college "universal," through tuition tax credits. Tax credits are useful mainly to middle-class parents, and would direct money at students who already have access to college. Federal aid should first be aimed at students who are too poor to attend.

Public-school enrollment has reached record levels just when the schools are crumbling, diminishing their carrying capacity. Mr. Clinton was on the mark when he said "we cannot expect our children to raise themselves up in schools that are literally falling down." The \$5 billion he allots for school reconstruction is only a fraction of what is needed. New York alone could absorb \$5 billion. The real value of Mr. Clinton's offer is to show that the Federal Government has a stake in decent schools and is willing to put up at least some money of its own.

Mr. Clinton is showing leadership on an issue that sorely needs it. But the overriding message of his plan is that the states will need to ante up. The costs will be steep. But the costs of not paying will be higher still.

The New York Times

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1997

Eastern Europe's Wild Capitalism

When asked why the Albanian Government had not stepped in to end recent pyramid schemes before they swindled Albanians out of hundreds of millions of dollars, President Sali Berisha said his inaction was a sign of the Government's commitment to the free market. Even assuming that ideology, not corruption, explains his Government's failure, Mr. Berisha's view is disturbing. Such a misreading of capitalism has caused widespread misery in former Communist countries, which are still learning that the free market works best when not completely free.

The United States learned this only after decades of scandals and crashes. The first Federal regulations came only after the stock market crash of 1929. The same thing is happening now in most of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet bloc. Albania's wrenching experiences, which have sparked protests that now threaten to bring down Mr. Berisha's Government, followed the collapse of similar Ponzi schemes in Russia, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia.

Russia's experience was typical. In 1994 a gigantic pyramid scheme called MMM took \$1 billion from the Russian people before it was finally closed down by the tax police, the only agency with the legal powers to do so. After its collapse, Russia began to set up the Federal Commission for the Securities Market.

That agency currently employs only 100 people, but it is growing and would probably be able to prevent a similar scheme. Regulators, however, warn that some Russian banks and private pension funds, which are not covered by the securities commission, are in danger of collapse.

People who have spent their lives under Communism are particularly susceptible to such

schemes. Anyone who idealized capitalism from a distance for decades tends not to be wary of swindlers promising interest rates of 30 percent a month without explaining how such profits are possible. Many people watch in anger as those who thrived under Communism now get rich through shady deals. The pyramid scams seem like equalizers, opportunities for ordinary citizens to get something too. Few people living on \$20 a month would not jump at the chance.

Poland, which has suffered no major scandals, was the only newly capitalist country that started out with regulations on investment offerings. It could do so because its economy had been less deformed by Communism than others and it did not need to restructure by essentially starting from scratch and letting anyone bid for investment.

Other nations were more stunted. Some leaders assumed capitalism was simply the opposite of Communism. They knew that overregulation can stifle the economy, but they did not know about the dangers of underregulation. Many of the countries still have little administrative law to help regulators do their jobs. Citizens are accustomed to a system in which the law is ignored and the powerful are free to make deals with their friends, habits that also flourish under unfettered capitalism.

It is urgent for governments to do everything they can to punish fraud and end the widespread practice of ignoring mounting problems. But true protection for investors will probably have to wait for more modern economies. The most important regulation comes from the market itself. Companies and brokers that want long-term business need to behave themselves. So far, few companies in the get-rich-quick climate of Eastern Europe are worrying about their reputation.

Clean Up the Shelter Mess

Shamed by accounts of widespread wrongdoing at a New York City-run shelter for battered women, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has ordered changes at the facility and vows to keep a closer watch. A quick cleanup of the mess at the New Day shelter is the least the city owes to women who fled abuse only to be subjected to the same coarse mistreatment in what was supposed to be a safe haven.

City and state officials had oversight responsibility and should have discovered long ago that the shelter was badly managed. They now need to conduct a vigorous investigation of what went wrong, and that, of course, means examining their own appalling inattention. More broadly, the city must urgently review the way it is delivering services to battered women generally and come up with ways to improve those services.

Demand for domestic-violence services in New York vastly exceeds the supply. While Mr. Giuliani has expanded shelter space for victims by about 30 percent, advocates for victims say the city's current capacity of 1,110 beds satisfies only about half the need. On any given day, only a handful of those beds are available, while the city's domestic-violence hot line registers as many as 90 calls a day from women seeking shelter.

Most of the shelters are run by nonprofit agencies under contract with the city. New Day Safe Haven, a two-building complex located in the Bronx, is the only shelter run directly by the city. With about 200 beds, it is also the largest and is considered a shelter of last resort. Many of its occupants

not only suffer from the effects of domestic violence but also struggle with substance abuse, mental illness and a criminal past.

Clearly, a large facility with a troubled population demanded careful supervision. But this seems not to have been clear to the bureaucracy. The shelter did not have a full-time director during its four-year existence. According to the victims, they were abused by staff workers and treated rudely by guards from the security agency the city hired to police the place — an agency that had already become notorious for abusing people at other homeless shelters. Staff personnel allegedly used drugs and alcohol on the job, and security was so lax that former partners were allowed to sneak in at night, destroying the victims' refuge. Finally, some women had been at the shelter for a couple of years, when the goal is to move women out within 90 days.

City officials have now been moved to act. The shelter's entire 44-member staff has been removed. But these actions, and even the Mayor's forthright assumption of responsibility, should not be allowed to obscure the city's obvious failure to administer the facility properly and protect its unfortunate occupants from terrible harm.

Mr. Giuliani promises more rigorous screening of employees and a general review of services for battered women. But his first priority should be an investigation of what went wrong at the shelter and the agency responsible, the Human Resources Administration. That investigation should be conducted quickly and its findings made public.

The New York Times

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1997

By Tommy G. Thompson

Academic standards are a hot topic of discussion from the White House to the schoolhouse. But President Clinton's call for national standards for elementary, middle and high schools is cause for concern as well as comfort.

While it is helpful for the President to impress upon the nation the need for rigorous academic standards, it would be wrong for the White House or Congress to start mandating what those standards should be. There is great concern among those involved in education at state and local levels that once Washington creates national standards, mandates will follow.

It should be up to states and local school boards to decide what students need to learn. Education is a local issue. This is the way our parents and communities want it, and that is how it should be. After all, the states and local taxpayers are the ones who pay for schools.

That is why Goals 2000, President Clinton's laudable effort to improve education, has languished: It came

National tests are the wrong way to improve our schools.

from Washington, became embroiled in Washington politics and was perceived by the public as an attempt by the Federal Government to meddle in local school issues. Even though the program offered states money to pursue the national goals, state and local educators and parents were leery of Washington's involvement.

Setting world-class standards for our schools will be successful only if it is done from the ground up — by parents, teachers, administrators, businesses and local taxpayers. Indeed, when the National Education Summit, a conference of the nation's governors and business leaders held last spring, set a goal of having every state establish such standards within two years, the idea was for states and communities to take on the task.

The benefit of this approach is that it allows every state the flexibility to address the individual needs of its children and the communities they live in. States may want to see schools in different cities and towns achieve the same level of academic success, but there are different roads to the same destination.

Wisconsin is one example. Although my most recent budget requires every school district to set rigorous standards and every student to pass a graduation test, we are leaving it up to each school district to determine its standards and its tests, with the state offering assistance to communities.

So while the state is developing a model set of standards, it is up to each school district to adopt that model, modify it or establish its own standards. A community with a strong computer industry, for example, may want to have higher or more specialized math requirements. A similar approach is being taken with graduation tests.

Ultimately, the pressure for higher-quality education must come from the community — most important, from parents. Most of us agree that rigorous academic standards will help us improve our schools. It's best if the parents of Elroy, Wis., and other communities across America set those standards. □

On My Mind

A. M. ROSENTHAL

Muzzled by Beijing

Nobody can say how many millions died in the famine. For almost four decades, China's leaders have feared to find out. The figure that foreign demographers think likely is 30 million.

The famine of 1959-61 is not an episode in history finished and over.

After Deng, how much longer?

Thirty-six years on, the same Communist Party that created the famine rules China yet — the party of Mao, of Deng and of the successor dictatorship already installed.

It was an unusual famine, even for Asia, where as we know life is cheap, except for those selected to die. The victims were not killed by nature's harshness. They were murdered, as sure as if they had been shot, by the Communist Government.

Mao Zedong ordered earth and peasants to grow unsuitable crops at escalating rates. The soil turned to dust; 20 years later I saw it swirling across collectives and villages.

The Communists left barely enough food for rats to eat, and be eaten. Police and party terrorism prevented the world from knowing.

The party and its armed forces still dictate agricultural and all other policies, still govern by terrorism. And the West is their servant.

By its own will, and for coin, Western democracies beg Beijing for deals, and for partnership in shaping the 21st century. In Deng's time the West remained faithful, no matter how many students he ordered shot, pouring hundreds of billions into trade and investment that strengthen the Communists and their army.

In return, Beijing indeed made Western democracies its partners. They obeyed orders not to help the victims of political and religious oppression. Morally and practically, the West became the silent partner in their persecution.

Playing down their own countries' security interests, President Clinton and other Western leaders also muzzle themselves about Beijing's sale of missile and nuclear equipment to other dictatorships. But increasingly Americans shouting wake-up calls find they have allies. The mail on

columns urging boycotts or shareholder action is buoying.

Yesterday the Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order in Milwaukee and the Passionists, a Roman Catholic religious community, sent word that they had used their 100 shares of Boeing stock to put a resolution before the next annual meeting. It calls on the company to observe basic human rights in its China operation. If every religious person or group followed the Passionists' and Capuchins' example, business could not brush them off.

More journalists are investing their talents in exposing Chinese repression and military double dealing. Please read "Hungry Ghosts," by Jasper Becker (Free Press), about the famine, and "The Coming Conflict with China," by Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro (Knopf).

The Weekly Standard, under Bill Kristol, is reminding conservatives of their obligations to fight Communist oppression. This week: 12 clear-minded pieces on China by members of Congress, journalists and China specialists. (Copies: 1-800-983 7600.)

These people are important, as will be every American who refuses to be a servant of Beijing. We must now acknowledge that President Clinton is the prisoner of Beijing. He has not told and will not tell the truth about stepped-up Chinese repression and military defiance. He would have to admit the failure of his appeasement policies, and for this he has neither the will nor courage.

But if conservatives and liberals with reach of word persuade the public to show its anger, perhaps Al Gore will become his own man about China when he runs for President. He could start earlier, as Bill Triplett challenges in The Weekly Standard. He could demand compliance with legislation against sales of cruise missiles — the Gore-McCain act of 1992.

China sells Iran improved versions of a missile system the Iranians used before — to kill 37 sailors aboard the U.S.S. Stark.

The silence, the use of the power and creativity achieved by democracy to lift the Chinese Communists to strengths they could never otherwise have even aspired to — madness, born of greed and betrayal.

One day America will ask how it happened. Meantime Americans individually and in groups, even as small as the Midwestern Passionists, can refuse to put on the muzzle their government wears. □

Friend and Foe in Korea

It is worrisome when American diplomats complain that dealing with South Korea, a traditional ally, has grown more frustrating than dealing with North Korea, a dangerous and unpredictable foe. Such complaints are not meant literally. But only North Korea can profit from the tensions Seoul has recently been introducing into its relations with the United States. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's visit to South Korea this weekend provides a timely opportunity to set matters straight.

It now looks as if Seoul's on-again, off-again cooperation with Washington will survive the latest crisis in the peninsula, which was set off by last week's defection of a high-level North Korean official to the South Korean Embassy in Beijing. With North Korea apparently heeding Chinese advice to tone down its threatening rhetoric over this humiliating incident, the South has decided to continue its recently resumed participation in American-sponsored nuclear conversion and famine relief efforts. On Thursday, Seoul promised a new installment of food aid through the United Nations.

But South Korean officials have seized upon the incident to question, yet again, the premise that the safest way to deal with North Korea is to encourage a modicum of stability and greater interchange between the North and the outside world. Instead some southern policy makers seem to prefer pushing the wobbly northern regime toward total breakdown, a course filled with danger. A sudden collapse of North Korea could be accompanied by a huge outpouring of desperate refugees and military adventurism, including possible attacks against

the 37,000 American troops based in South Korea.

To guard against such an eventuality, Washington has designed a prudent policy that combines military preparedness with efforts to reach out to the North diplomatically and economically. Those efforts include a program designed to replace the North's current nuclear power reactors, whose by-products can potentially be diverted to bomb-making, with a safer design, along with offers of famine relief and efforts to negotiate a formal peace treaty ending the Korean War.

Unfortunately, South Korea, which claims to support Washington's approach, has often thwarted its application. Seoul has repeatedly suspended its participation in the nuclear, anti-famine and diplomatic efforts to protest northern actions it characterizes as intolerable provocations. Washington suspects that the South has been deliberately inflaming North-South relations for domestic political ends, fanning manageable incidents into major crises to distract attention from the financial scandals and political problems afflicting the Seoul Government.

Ms. Albright arrives in Seoul tomorrow at a time when increasing signs of instability in the North make it vital and urgent for the United States and South Korea to coordinate their policies closely. In previous stops of this, her first foreign journey as Secretary of State, she has been admirably straightforward about raising sensitive diplomatic issues. She should make clear to her South Korean hosts that Washington now expects them to keep domestic political concerns from disrupting the only realistic approach to the northern danger.

Don't Unionize Workfare

Long before welfare was overhauled by Congress last year, New York City had introduced work requirements for welfare recipients. Now the city's largest public employee union wants to organize the 35,000 welfare recipients working in city jobs for their benefits, and the national A.F.L.-C.I.O. is seeking to unionize hundreds of thousands of such "workfare" participants around the country.

The city union's goal is to improve the wages, working conditions and benefits for those on workfare. The union is raising some legitimate questions, but organizing welfare workers into a union is not an appropriate way to address them. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani should consider alternative means to insure that the rights of people in the workfare program are respected.

The city's workfare program is viewed by many other cities as a potential model. According to Richard Schwartz, the departing mayoral assistant who got the program started, the city may have 51,000 welfare recipients working next year, nearly half again as many as now.

Union cooperation is essential, since welfare recipients are working alongside city employees cleaning parks, streets and housing projects at wages substantially less than what city workers earn. The unions are understandably concerned that over the long run, the cheap labor provided by the workfare program will make it harder for the union to win pay increases for its rank-and-file members.

Last year Mr. Giuliani negotiated an agreement with Stanley Hill, executive director of District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, not to use welfare workers to do jobs that otherwise would be done by public employees. As a result, Mr. Hill

backed off his demand that workfare not be expanded. Now Mr. Hill and some community groups report that welfare workers are not being given proper clothing or equipment to do their jobs, and that there are inadequate provisions for them to have lunch or even go to the bathroom. They charge that welfare workers lack grievance procedures if their supervisors punish them unfairly for tardiness or other infractions.

These complaints cannot be dismissed. City Hall should figure out a way to insure that workers have the tools and conditions they need to do their jobs with self-respect. But it would be a mistake to organize welfare workers into a union, because what they are doing does not amount to a job.

Instead, in return for receiving welfare, they must show up at a work site, follow instructions and carry out tasks that the city might not even be subsidizing if it did not have to put welfare recipients to work. In addition to their welfare checks, participants also receive vouchers for day care if needed. Many also get Medicaid, food stamps and other benefits that increase their total compensation.

Advocacy groups are right to point out that the workfare program does not offer training or help in getting a permanent job. But the city cannot afford by itself to guarantee training or jobs for everyone on welfare. That is a task that needs to be shared by the city, state and Federal governments, as well as private employers.

The imposition of time limits on welfare, a step that this page has criticized, means that all levels of government have an urgent task to find jobs for people forced off the rolls. But the workfare program must be given a chance to succeed on its own terms by providing limited work opportunities for those still on welfare — under working conditions that are humane.

Education Studies

Reforms succeed in some areas, falter in others

Educators and business leaders agree that the state of education is much better than a decade ago. However, data show wild fluctuations and other barriers to student achievement. Consider:

▶ The number of high school graduates who took the recommended core academic courses jumped from 13% to 47%. The courses: four units of English, three of math, science and social studies, and half a unit of computer science.

▶ Reading scores among 12th-grade students declined from 40% proficient to 36% between 1992 and 1994, while scores inched up one point, from 29% to 30%, for fourth- and eighth-graders.

▶ Three in 10 students demonstrated a basic understanding of the world's people and places on the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress geography test. About one-quarter were at grade level, and just 2% to 4% scored at

the advanced level.

▶ 20% of states required high school students to complete two or more years of math in 1974; 86% of states had that requirement in 1992. The same is true for science.

▶ The high school completion rate of 18- to 24-year-olds stalled at 86% in 1990 and 1994.

▶ Scores on SAT and ACT college entrance exams are inching up — 5 points on the verbal and 3 points on math between 1975 and 1995.

▶ Illegal drug use is up: 24% of students in '91 to 33% in '94.

▶ Teachers with degrees in the main subject areas they teach have declined from 66% in 1991 to 63% in 1994.

▶ The percentage of children born with one or more health risks decreased from 37% to 35% from 1990 to 1992. But the proportion of young children with disabilities served by preschool programs increased in 44 states.

▶ In 1993, 63% of parents of

students in grades 3 to 12 reported that they participated in two or more activities in their child's school. These activities included attending a general school meeting or a school or class event, and acting as a volunteer at the school or serving on a school committee.

Source: Education Department, the National Education Goals Panel, The College Board and NAEP.

By Tamara Henry

Colleges chip away at core courses

By Dennis Kelly
USA TODAY

America's best colleges have dumped many of the core course requirements that once laid the foundation for students' understanding of their society's politics, history and culture, a new report charges.

"The danger is ... we're

training a generation of leaders who are not going to understand the society they're going to lead," says Stephen H. Balch, president, the National Association of Scholars, representing 3,700 professors and others with a traditional view of the curriculum.

NAS sifted through catalogs from 50 top U.S. colleges fo-

cus on the years 1914, 1939, 1964 and 1993. The research found:

▶ The portion of the graduation requirement devoted to core courses dropped from 55% in 1914 to 33% in 1993.

▶ Schools with a math requirement fell from 82% of the colleges in 1914 to 12% in 1993.

▶ 38% of schools required

some history courses in 1964; 12% in 1993.

▶ 57% of schools had some type of literature requirement in 1914; 14% did in 1993.

Now, Balch says, students may be able to satisfy a literature requirement with a specialized course on Romantic era poets or women's authors without taking a survey course of English literature that gives an "intellectual framework."

Balch blames the 1960s ethos that students should do their own thing and also the interest of professors who want to teach in areas where they're researching rather than on those big survey courses.

Some educators are skeptical or critical of the study.

The association takes a swipe at Georgetown University's decision to drop Shakespeare as a required course for

English majors. Georgetown's Alwyn Cassil says the requirement for majors has absolutely nothing to do with general education. Balch agrees the school has one of the more rigorous core programs.

Cornelius Pings, president, the Association of American Universities, hadn't seen the report. But he says many students are taking quite rigorous programs regardless of what core requirements are. "It may be the situation is not as bad as the National Association of Scholars portrays it," he says.

That may be, Balch says, "but it's very unlikely if you get rid of a requirement that the same number of students are going to take it."

Balch is confident "that in the next five to 10 years there's going to be a reasonable amount of course correction."

HOOPS LINE

A QUICK READ ON THE TOURNAMENTS

Yes, Mr. President: After Cincinnati beat Arkansas Dec. 9, President Clinton visited the locker room and encouraged Danny Fortson to work on his foul shooting after the Bearcats star forward went 8-for-18 from the line. At the time, Fortson was a 54% free throw shooter. Since then, Fortson has shot nearly 79% from the line and was 8-for-11 in Cincinnati's first two NCAA tournament games.

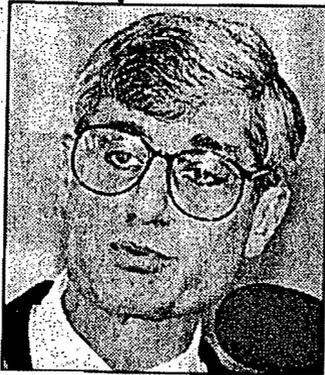
China trade status remains in jeopardy

By Rich Miller
Reuters

HONG KONG — U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin reassured Hong Kong Monday that President Clinton wants to renew trade privileges for China, but warned it would be hard to persuade U.S. lawmakers to go along.

A senior Treasury Department official, who requested anonymity, told reporters that was the message Rubin delivered in a series of meetings Monday with Hong Kong's leaders, including Governor Chris Patten.

Hong Kong has much at stake in the debate over Chi-



By Susan Ragan, AP

Rubin: Reassurance for Hong Kong, gentle warning to China.

na's most-favored-nation trading status. Officials here have

warned that a failure to renew the trade privileges could cut economic growth in half in the British colony, which acts as a transshipment point for Chinese goods. Hong Kong reverts to Chinese rule in July 1997.

Rubin's message was intended as much for China as it was for Hong Kong and was designed to send a signal to Beijing that it needs to address U.S. political and economic concerns if it wants to help ensure MFN renewal in July.

The United States and China are currently at odds over a host of issues — from Beijing's missile tests off Taiwan to its alleged failure to prevent piracy of U.S. compact discs, soft-

ware and other products.

The U.S. trade deficit with China jumped 15% last year, to \$33.8 billion, and was second in size only to USA's shortfall with Japan.

But it is the military maneuvers in the Taiwan Strait that has grabbed the media spotlight and galvanized congressional opposition to MFN.

Likely Republican presidential nominee Sen. Bob Dole has warned that China could face international isolation if it harasses Taiwan.

Hong Kong legislator Ronald Arculli said the renewal of MFN is an issue of confidence for the British colony.

If MFN is not renewed and

relations between the United States and China deteriorate, that could spark waves of emigration from Hong Kong, he told reporters.

"I won't say it (the Taiwan tension) is not a problem. It concerns all of us," said Arculli, who is deputy chairman of the Liberal Party. "But in the immediate future what will affect Hong Kong people a lot is nonrenewal of MFN."

Rubin has called Hong Kong a driving force behind Asia's rapid economic development and has argued that it is not in China's interest to change the free market and open society policies that lie at the heart of the colony's success.

Cuba sanctions face challenge

By Robert Evans
Reuters

GENEVA — The United States today could face a World Trade Organization challenge to its law designed to punish Cuba by curbing foreign investment.

WTO envoys say the European Union will raise the issue in the WTO's Council on Trade in Goods. The EU would have support from countries including Mexico and Canada. The measure was signed last week by President Clinton in retaliation for Cuba's shooting down two small planes flown by anti-Castro exiles.

EU officials indicated they would take the floor at the Council to voice concern over the law and its potential effect on trade between Cuba and countries not involved in the 35-year-long U.S. trade embargo against the island.

The measure allows U.S. citizens, including naturalized Cuban exiles, to sue in U.S. courts foreign firms or individuals who buy, lease or profit from property confiscated by the Cuban government after Fidel Castro came to power in 1959.

It is aimed at slowing the flow of outside investment into joint ventures in Cuba.

Russia's economy slips, but inflation rate cools

Reuters

Russia, still struggling to revive its economy, on Monday reported a fall in February output. But economists say the gloomy figures don't reflect the fact that many sectors now have some enterprises that are doing well.

The State Statistics Committee said February industrial output was 4% below year-ago levels and gross domestic product declined 3% from February 1995, after year-over-year declines of 4% and 6% in February 1995.

February unemployment rose to 8.5% of the workforce, vs. 7.4% a year ago.

The figures will give new ammunition to the communist opponents of President Boris Yeltsin. They want the government to do more to help companies. Yeltsin faces a strong communist challenge in June's presidential election.

But analysts say voters may be encouraged by monthly inflation of about 3%, lowest since economic reforms began. The government has promised to bring monthly inflation down to 1% this year as part of an agreement it reached for a big loan from the International Monetary Fund.

The statistics committee has been improving its methodology over the last two years, but economists say the official data still take little account of a growing private sector and a hard-to-count underground economy — untaxed and virtually unreported.

Government officials have been promising for months that Russia's painful industrial decline is coming to an end.

But output is just over half the level when economic reforms began in 1991 and Soviet-era companies have found it hard to cope with the tough conditions of a market economy.

The latest figures do show the decline in output has bottomed in some sectors, including food and electrical goods, with output up 4% and 9% from February '95 levels.

Egypt hopes for lift from privatization plan

By Eileen Ali Powell
Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — Hoping to boost private investment and modernize the economy, Egypt is stepping up efforts to sell state-owned factories, hotels and department stores, many of which are losing money.

Public Sector Minister Atef Obeid, who heads Egypt's privatization program, said the government has been slow in putting 300 such companies on the market, but he promised to do it this year. "It's like driving a car," he says. "You don't start in fourth gear, you work your way up. We're just hitting top gear."

Thirty-seven hotels and seven retail chains will be sold outright. So will 14 government-owned companies, including the Al-Ahram brewery and the Milk (Egypt) Milk and Food.

Stock will be offered in 62 companies, 46 of them for the first time. And the government will sell its holdings in scores of joint ventures.

"We are convinced that private investment will be more capable of enhancing productivity and speeding up modernization," Obeid said.

Most of the firms have been in state hands since the late president Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the economy in 1950s and '60s.

MONEYLINE

A QUICK READ ON THE TOP MONEY NEWS OF THE DAY

JAPAN TRADE: Japan reported that its trade surplus with the USA fell to \$3.4 billion in February, down 28% from a year earlier. Its overall trade surplus fell 46% to \$6.1 billion. Japan said exports declined for the first time in three years, down 3.3% to \$34.1 billion. Imports remained strong, rising 17% to \$27.9 billion.

USA TODAY • TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1996

Educ- Standards

'A' for Effort: Educators Try to Set Standards—Again

By GARY PUTKA
And STEVE STECKLOW

Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

National standards for U.S. schools covering 13 subjects have been devised by educators in the arts, mathematics, history, English and the sciences.

Easier set than done.

The standards, inspired by an educational summit of the nation's governors seven years ago in Charlottesville, Va., and largely financed by federal money, have been slammed from both sides of the political spectrum. More important, the standards have made no discernible impact on student learning. "The English standards are so remarkably vague, most of the time I don't even know what they are saying," says Michael Cohen, senior adviser to U.S. Education Secretary Richard W. Riley.

To remedy that, an educational summit gets under way today in Palisades, N.Y., at which governors and business leaders will try to develop and implement new standards for all U.S. students. Overshadowing the summit, however, are the deep structural and political problems that have made previous school-improvement efforts so difficult.

Christian fundamentalist and other right-leaning groups have bitterly fought adoption of national and state standards across the country as the imposition of a secular agenda and an infringement on

local school-district control. Academic professional groups, meanwhile, have been so wary of offending minorities, and so protective of teachers' academic freedoms, that they have often come up with guidelines that are awash in generalities and impossible to codify into a curriculum.

Take the English standards criticized by Mr. Cohen. "Standards for the English Language Arts," published this month by the National Council of Teachers of English, contains no suggested reading list of books, has no grade-by-grade definition of skills to be attained — and seems to reject the very idea of language rules. It defines standard English as "the language of wider communication" and "English as it is spoken and written by those groups with social, economic and political power in the United States."

U.S. history standards, published in 1994, similarly tilted away from a tradition regarded by many Americans as central. They ignored the work of Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein but included the founding of the Sierra Club. In a mark of how badly the authors understood the politics of education, the U.S. Senate voted 99-to-1 to repudiate the history standards last year. The Senate resolution stated that racial strife and other American shortcomings were overemphasized, while the Founding Fathers were slighted. New history standards are due soon.

Chester E. Finn Jr., a senior fellow at

Setting Standards?

Some standards for English language arts

- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
- Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

the Hudson Institute, a conservative think tank, says he originally supported the idea of national standards but changed his mind after reviewing the various proposals. "Why keep barking up that tree?" he asks. "There's no fruit up there."

The conservative, Republican majority at Palisades believes it will produce a better result than Charlottesville, based on the idea of creating strong state standards instead of national ones. Wisconsin's Republican governor, Tommy G. Thompson,

says the 1989 summit, which was organized by the Bush administration, was a case of "the federal government setting goals for the country at large." This time, he says, the push will be "from the governors" to "develop standards at the state and local level."

But skeptics — including former supporters of national standards — argue that state standards haven't been very rigorous. They also say any standards are futile without some way to ensure that students are meeting them. "If they're not tied to any consequences, then they're not standards," says Diane Ravitch, a senior scholar at New York University and former head of research in the U.S. Department of Education.

Almost alone among its major economic competitors, the U.S. has no national curriculum or test for academic promotion. About 21 states require a student to pass a high-school diploma test, but most of these certify basic competencies — not the "world class" standards sought by the governors.

An analysis last year by the American Federation of Teachers found that only 13 states had developed standards clear enough to be translated into actual classroom curriculum. The others have standards that "are too vague for teachers to use them, for parents to understand them," says AFT president Albert

Please Turn to Page B7, Column 2

Continued From Page B1
Shanker.

The report also found that only seven states plan to require students to meet the standards to graduate. "In most states, students won't in any way be affected by whether or not they can meet the standards," the report said. States typically require students to complete certain numbers of courses in mathematics, English and other subjects to graduate but have left the question of quality to local districts.

The AFT found that most states developed their standards without reviewing what high-achieving countries such as Japan, Germany and France require of students. According to the AFT, at least a quarter of all secondary-school students in Germany, France, England and Japan pass at least one advanced exam in mathematics, science or other subjects. In the U.S., only 5% of students pass one of the advanced-placement exams that can give them college credit; but the exams aren't required, and there is no penalty for failure.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1996

The Education Department's Mr. Cohen says the chief executives expected in Palisades (more than 50 of them) will commit themselves to hiring more students according to their academic performance. Among those expected are Louis V. Gerstner Jr. of International Business Machines Corp., Frank A. Schronitz of Boeing Co. and John E. Pepper of Procter & Gamble Co.

Nevada Gov. Bob Miller, a Democrat, says that in addition to speeding along the development of tougher standards, he hopes to get the business community involved in curriculum design.

But education professor Lorrie A. Shepard of the University of Colorado at Boulder, who has studied standards-based reform, is skeptical that the summit will produce much in the way of results — not because of politics, but money. Enforcing standards would take a large investment in money and time to retrain teachers to adapt to a new curriculum. "Inventing standards is the cheapest thing you can do to try to improve education," she says.

Fed Is Faulted on Its Own Bookkeeping

GAO Calls Central Bank's Operations 'Inefficient'; Expenses Rise Sharply

By JOHN R. WILKE

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WASHINGTON—The Federal Reserve, which oversees much of the nation's economy and many of its largest banks, doesn't do a very good job of keeping its own books, the General Accounting Office reported.

Largely free of the scrutiny given to other federal agencies, and of market



Alan Greenspan

forces that control costs in the private sector, the Fed has spent funds inefficiently in construction, contracting, procurement and personnel costs, according to the GAO, the investigative arm of Congress. The Fed's internal budgeting process "appeared fragmented, inefficient or lacking in inde-

pendence," the GAO added. The GAO focused only on Fed operations and didn't try to evaluate the Fed's broader mission. It acknowledged the Fed has "unquestionably played a major role in the nation's economic well-being."

The GAO also reported the Fed's annual operating expenses rose 50% to \$2 billion between 1988 and 1994, or more than double the rate of inflation for the period. By comparison, overall discretionary federal spending rose 17% during those years, the GAO said.

In addition, the GAO said the Fed has \$3.7 billion in a surplus account that "could be safely reduced or returned to the Treasury." This fund increased

sharply from \$2.1 billion during the six-year period examined by the GAO.

Sen. Byron Dorgan (D., N.D.) charged that the Fed "squirreled away" this money in "a little-known reserve fund it claims it needs to cover system losses." But he said the Fed hasn't had a loss in 79 years that required it to dip into its surplus and that future losses are "virtually inconceivable." The surplus fund is separate from the funds the central bank uses to maintain the stability of the banking system and conduct foreign-exchange operations.

A Fed spokesman declined to comment on the report, which was prepared in response to a request by Mr. Dorgan and Sen. Harry Reid (D., Nev.). The Fed spokesman said that the report was released in draft form yesterday before the Fed had been given enough time to respond, as is customary. Other officials suggested it was released early in a partisan effort to embarrass Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan, whose confirmation hearing begins today before the Senate Banking Committee.

Mr. Greenspan, who was recently renominated by President Clinton for a third four-year term, has been criticized by some Democrats for what they call an overly restrictive monetary policy that focuses too much on fighting inflation and not enough on spurring economic growth. Still, Mr. Greenspan is expected to be confirmed easily by the Senate.

Meanwhile, a separate just-completed GAO inquiry of the Fed district bank in Dallas, requested by Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D., Tex.), former chairman of the House Banking Committee, has already brought about some changes in the Fed's accounting. After that study began two years ago, the Fed quietly agreed to an independent audit of all Fed district banks by an outside accounting firm. It also agreed to the auditing of combined financial statements for the Fed system over the next five years.

Mr. Gonzalez said that GAO report shows "further evidence of waste, mis-

management and abuse" within the Fed, which he said is "long overdue for top-to-bottom, program-by-program audit and reform." Both Mr. Gonzalez and Sens. Dorgan and Reid called for congressional hearings and legislation to make the Fed more accountable to the public. But Republicans said this is unlikely while they are in the majority.

Some Fed inefficiencies identified by the GAO result from its decentralized and quasi-private structure, the investigators said. They also said many shortcomings identified in the reports are being addressed by the Fed, with some already corrected.

The Fed's most high-profile job — conducting the nation's monetary policy by setting short-term interest rates — consumes only about 10% of its annual budget, the GAO said. About 20% goes to supervision of the nation's banking system, while some 70% is for payments operations such as check-clearing and other services provided to banks and agencies.

In the inquiry requested by Rep. Gonzalez, the GAO asserts in correspondence with the Dallas Fed that it failed to use generally accepted accounting procedures to keep track of construction projects; general ledger accounts were inconsistent and outdated; and certain parts of the bank's operations — including check processing — lacked adequate internal security. The Fed also failed to account properly for \$130 million of costs related to a major construction project. These were presented by the GAO as accounting lapses; there was no suggestion any money was improperly used.

Weaknesses identified in some of the Fed's computer systems were fixed by the Richmond, Va., Fed, GAO said.

Rep. Gonzalez has been particularly critical of the Fed's check-clearing operations. In January, he released a report alleging improprieties in its paper-check-clearing operation, an overnight service

Please Turn to Page A20, Column 2

Continued From Page A3

involving scores of small jet planes provided to commercial banks. It said the Fed "may have violated" a 1980 law intended to prevent the Fed from competing unfairly with private firms offering similar services. The Fed denied the charge.

In the Dorgan-Reid report, which covered all Fed operations, the GAO said it "could benefit from a major systemwide review of operations" and found "weaknesses in some of the Federal Reserve's oversight processes." The agency also said Congress should consider whether some of the 12 Fed banks and 25 branches could be combined.

The GAO pointed out that unlike federal agencies funded through congressional appropriations, the Fed is a self-financing entity that deducts its expenses from its revenue, which comes from the interest on Treasury notes it holds backing the nation's currency, fees it charges banks for its services and other sources. In the 1988-1994 period, the Fed brought in an average \$22 billion a year, withheld about \$2.5 billion for expenses and other deductions and gave the rest to the Treasury.

The GAO said that because the Fed's cost of operations has rarely emerged as a public issue as a result of its self-financing nature, "increasing constraints on the Federal budget require increased scrutiny like all costs that affect taxpayers." As a result, "the Federal Reserve could do more to increase its cost consciousness and ensure that it is operating as efficiently as possible in its day-to-day operations."

Math test for Spanish speakers draws fire

Administration plan called 'ridiculous'

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A1

A bilingual version of a new, national mathematics test will be developed and administered to pupils whose native language is Spanish, officials in the Clinton administration said yesterday. "Ridiculous," responded Jim Boulet Jr., executive director of English First, to the administration's mandate for a Spanish-language version of the mathematics test.

"This is part of a continued attempt to justify failed bilingual-education programs," he said. "The first argument for bilingual education was that children would learn English better. That hasn't happened.

"Then they said it would help them keep up in the subject matter. Well, if they're giving subject-matter tests in Spanish, I guess that's not true either," he added.

"What are we going to do in Florida about the children who speak Haitian, Creole, Portuguese, Vietnamese?" asked Brewster Brown, spokesman for Florida Commissioner of Education

Frank T. Brogan. "Currently in Florida, we don't give tests in other languages."

Responding to a GOP request for more information on the administration's plan to have the federal Department of Education develop voluntary national tests in reading and mathematics for use by the states and local school districts, acting Deputy Secretary of Education Marshall S. Smith said that the reading test "will be a test of reading in English."

"Consequently, it will not be given in other languages," he said. "However, the mathematics test will be made

see TEST, page A18

TEST

From page A1

available in a bilingual [Spanish-language] version."

Braille and large-print versions of both tests and an audio-cassette version of the math test also will be developed, he said. States and localities voluntarily agreeing to use the new national tests will be expected to provide special accommodations at testing sites for students with disabilities. Accommodations could include extra time or one-on-one testing.

Other red flags went up as the administration responded to GOP queries for more information about the president's order to

press ahead with development of national tests in reading and mathematics:

• Early indications are that the tests will be costlier than anticipated. The cost of developing the tests, first announced at \$7 million to \$8 million for the first year, is up to \$10 million and then \$12 million in 1998. The cost of administering and scoring the tests, originally put at \$5 a head, is now estimated at \$10 to \$12.

• The new tests are likely to be easier than the rigorous congressionally mandated National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests used as their model.

For 30 years, NAEP has served as a report card on how the nation's schoolchildren are doing in various subjects. In recent years, NAEP was expanded to provide state-by-state scores on a voluntary basis.

Now, the Clinton administration is proposing to use the NAEP frameworks as models for 90-minute national tests in reading and math. The new tests would provide scores for individual students, schools and districts that could be compared with national and international benchmarks and, in theory at least, would encourage the country to strive for higher academic achievement.

The Department of Education two years ago began to push for inclusion of disabled and Spanish-speaking students in the NAEP tests in various subjects.

Many states, including Florida, are interested in participating in the national exams because they believe it is important to have an "apples-to-apples" comparison around the country.

At the same time, the states have already invested heavily in developing their own rigorous standards and assessments and don't want to have to choose between their own newly developed tests and the upcoming national tests.

Florida also is concerned about a lessening of rigor if the national tests deviate much from the current NAEP tests, Mr. Brown said.

The 90-minute tests, as currently conceived, would be "weighted more toward the bottom" of the present NAEP tests,

according to officials close to the development process. An NAEP spokesman has said the goal for the reading test is to have even a fourth-grader attain only the "basic" or lowest standard of achievement, and not the "proficient" level.

"Before they get out of the gates, they're shooting too low," said Gary Huggins, executive director of the Education Leaders Council, an organization of market-oriented chief state school officers also concerned about how the national tests will evolve.

"The standards have to be high enough that they wouldn't undercut state efforts to set their own high standards," he said.

EDUC - Standards

The Washington Times

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 1997

White House tactful in row with

McCurry is mum on China papers

By Warren P. Strobel
and Jerry Seper
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A1

The White House yesterday scrupulously avoided a public dispute with the FBI over the bureau's refusal to hand over to top-administration officials sensitive intelligence information on suspected Chinese efforts to meddle in U.S. politics.

White House Press Secretary Michael McCurry declined to confirm or deny published reports that FBI Direc-

tor Louis J. Freeh outright rejected an administration request for "sensitive counterintelligence information" on China's suspected plans to involve itself in the 1996 elections, instead ordering subordinates not to turn over the information to White House officials.

"I don't know whether that happened or not," Mr. McCurry said. "We made our request, and we've gotten back what we've gotten back."

Revelation of the incident comes two weeks after the FBI and the White House wrangled in an unusually public spat on the question of whether two midlevel National Security Council officials, after being briefed by FBI agents on the Chinese efforts, were ordered not to pass the information up the chain of command.

see FBI, page A18

FBI

From page A1

Meanwhile, the White House reiterated yesterday that Mr. Clinton does not remember making any phone calls from the White House to raise campaign money, despite new documents showing the Democratic National Committee made plans for him to do so.

The Washington Times reported yesterday that Mr. Clinton has told aides he specifically remembers making no such calls from the Oval Office, where they would be of questionable legality.

After being questioned by aides in light of the documents, the president has "more of a recollection that he did not make calls as suggested by the DNC," Mr. McCurry said.

The spokesman said that the president did not like to spend time raising money on the phone, preferring to leave that task to others, and believed he was working hard enough in other ways to raise money for the campaign.

The White House view was backed up by former Clinton political adviser Dick Morris, who said in a telephone interview that while he was not sure whether Mr. Clinton made such calls, it would not be in character.

"He's terrible at making phone calls. He hates doing them," Mr. Morris said.

"He just hates asking for money," the former adviser said, adding that Mr. Clinton is "very happy to pose with you for a picture while someone else is asking for money."

DNC spokeswoman Amy Weiss Tobe said that the committee as-

sembled "call sheets," including individuals' names, addresses and telephone numbers, that Mr. Clinton would have used in making fund-raising calls.

"We put together call sheets. There's no indication the president made the calls," she said.

The spokeswoman also said that, as far as she knew, the president was not assigned a DNC telephone calling card, which would have allowed him to make the calls without using taxpayer funds.

The request for information on suspected Chinese efforts to influence U.S. elections, as first reported by the New York Times, was made last month by White House Counsel Charles F.C. Ruff. The information was to be passed on to Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright for her recent visit to Beijing.

The White House response to the latest reported instance of the FBI withholding information from the president and his top advisers differed markedly from Mr. Clinton's public simmering two weeks ago.

Mr. McCurry went out of his way yesterday to avoid criticizing the Justice Department or the FBI. Before a Justice Department-FBI task force probe of the matter, he said, "It has to be their call" as to what information is released.

"We've accepted the information that was provided" in response to Mr. Ruff's request, "and acted on it accordingly," Mr. McCurry repeated several times.

"We don't know what we didn't get," he said. "We can't tell you what we didn't get because we don't know."

He did say, however, that "the president would be disturbed if any information necessary for the conduct of his official duties was withheld from him."

In his request, Mr. Ruff said he wanted to do nothing that would impede the Justice Department-FBI investigation, and he pledged to share whatever information the bureau provided with House and Senate investigating committees.

Mr. McCurry said that, as far as he knew, there was no similar White House request for information before Vice President Al Gore's current trip to China.

He said the president retains confidence in Mr. Freeh and asserted that the White House and the FBI have "a very good working relationship." But he acknowledged that there is a conflict between law enforcement objectives and the president's national secu-

rity responsibilities, in this case, providing Mrs. Albright with information for her trip to Beijing.

Law enforcement sources confirmed yesterday that Mr. Freeh's decision to reject the White House request was rooted in his belief that no information regarding suspected attempts by China to buy influence during the 1996 campaign should be handed over to members of Congress or the executive branch — some of whom are under investigation by the Justice Department-FBI task force looking into suspected campaign-finance irregularities.

The New York Times also reported that the FBI director was worried that whatever information was given up would be leaked and that the FBI would be criticized for sharing information with the president's aides.

The Washington Times

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 1997

Washington Wire

A Special Weekly Report From
The Wall Street Journal's
AI Capital Bureau

TAX-CUTTERS RUSH to counter Gingrich's talk of deferring proposed cuts.

Advocates hail Iowa's new 10% across-the-board tax cut. "I would hope our Republican brethren on Capitol Hill will take heart," declares Steve Forbes. GOP leaders, he says, have "been acting like whipped dogs." Iowa Gov. Branstad, who signed the bill yesterday, credits Forbes, Dan Quayle and Jack Kemp with aiding the effort. But "we're not taking sides," he adds.

In the House, California Rep. Doolittle "is committed to voting against the budget bill" if it lacks a big tax cut, an aide says. Senate Budget Chairman Domenici will seek a compromise with about \$120 billion in tax cuts over five years. That might cover a \$500-a-child income-tax credit, a capital gains tax break and some of Clinton's education tax relief.

About 70 GOP House members and many conservative Democrats back a plan to cut taxes only as part of a balanced-budget agreement.

REPUBLICANS SHY from moves to spread anti-affirmative action efforts.

Backers of an initiative passed in California boasts of a move to put a similar measure before legislators or voters in Washington state next year. The American Civil Rights Coalition also pushes for ballot initiatives in Houston, Colorado, Florida and elsewhere.

But the group's Ward Connerly complains hoped-for GOP allies are backing off. In Florida, expected 1998 GOP gubernatorial candidate Jeb Bush hasn't taken a strong stand. Republicans don't make Florida Rep. Canady's proposal to ban federal race and gender preferences a priority.

RUNNING ON EMPTY: Vacancies pile up as administration appointments lag.

The Justice Department's No. 3 post and head spots at the criminal and civil-rights divisions go unfilled; it has had an acting solicitor general since July. At the Education Department, Marshall Smith has been acting deputy secretary since summer. There is no rush to name a new FDA head amid touchy talks with the GOP on FDA overhaul.

A slew of State Department appointments back up at the White House. Albright's choices of largely white Jewish males for top posts initially raised diversity questions, but most went forward. Treasury's Rubin looks to diversify his largely white male team; of 11 top posts he has filled, three have been women; three women have left.

Despite competition from friends of Clinton, the White House picks career trade official Rita Hayes for a plum trade post in Geneva.

CHINA CONNECTION: FBI agents probing Democratic National Committee donations search for Xue Haipei, former director of the little-known Council for U.S.-China Affairs. Xue, whose group got \$10,000 from Boeing to work on China trade issues, strategized with DNC fund-raiser John Huang on influencing Congress.

ROMANCE BLOOMS at the Federal Reserve. Boston Fed President Cathy Minehan and former New York Fed President Gerry Corrigan, her former boss, leave their spouses for each other. Minehan recuses herself from one Fed matter involving Goldman Sachs, where Corrigan now is a managing director.

SEN. HELMS'S ASSENT to let the chemical-arms treaty go to the Senate floor prompts a new strategy from opponents. They will push to kill a provision that would give chemical-defense technology to any nation renouncing chemical arms. They also fight a section banning certain trade restrictions against any signer.

DEVALUED? Former Sen. Bill Bradley, a potential Gore rival in 2000, says the political-money flap weakens the impact of White House support for campaign-finance reform. He says many view Clinton's backing as a way to shift attention from his own campaign-finance woes.

COHEN STARTS FAST as defense chief, cracking the whip over the bureaucracy.

He announces "Cohen's Memo Rule"—anybody meeting with him must submit a premeeting paper by close of business the night before. He startles Air Force generals by canceling their meeting on weapons plans when they miss the deadline. He tells the services he wants hard decisions, not fuzzy option papers, on addressing the Pentagon's looming budget crunch.

The former GOP senator warns if he catches the services doing end runs around him to Congress, some top officers' heads will roll. In his first overseas trip as defense secretary, Cohen seemed tentative in initial meetings with troops but was more in command by the time he reached Bosnia. He calls his post "exhilarating, and taxing."

Cohen moves slowly to fill Pentagon vacancies, partly, aides say, because former defense chief Perry assembled a crack defense team.

MINOR MEMOS: Fore! After Bush's parachute jump, Dave the predictor on radio's "Harris in the Morning," says, "I'm just glad that if an ex-president had to try skydiving, it wasn't Gerald Ford." Oregon Sen. Wyden's call for a national reading-improvement drive might need to start with proofreading: His press release begins "Lead by Sen. Ron Wyden." In a preface to a new SEC handbook on plain English, investor Warren Buffett says when he writes his firm's annual report he pretends he is talking to his sisters. His tip: Just begin with "Dear Doris and Bertie."

—RONALD G. SHAFER

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 1997

Clinton Is Half-Right on Schools

By Richard J. Murnane
and Frank Levy

President Clinton has proposed a two-track strategy on education. He wants to create national curriculum standards for elementary and high schools, and he wants to use tax breaks and subsidies to allow more students to go to college. Although well-intentioned, this plan raises a dangerous possibility that Congress will approve only the more popular part: Mr. Clinton's pledge to make two years of college as common as a high school education. If politicians overlook efforts to improve elementary and high schools, our students will gain little.

For 15 years, the basic skills of high school seniors have risen slowly while the skills required for a decent job have increased radically. If schools gave tests that measured students' reading, writing and math skills against employers' requirements, parents would see the problem and demand solutions. But few schools give such tests. Thus, parents, seeing that their children work with computers and know a little more math than they themselves did as students, are unaware of the se-

Richard J. Murnane, a professor at Harvard's School of Education, and Frank Levy, a professor of urban economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, are the authors of "Teaching the New Basic Skills."

Stressing college is a mistake.

verity of the shortcomings.

Parents know that in general American schools are weak, but they think the weakness is in other people's schools. In a September 1996 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll, only 26 percent of a sample of public school parents gave "U.S. public schools" a grade of A or B. But 66 percent awarded their oldest child's school a grade of A or B — this when half of the nation's 17-year-olds cannot read or do math well enough to become production workers in a modern auto plant.

While most parents are satisfied with their kids' elementary and high schools, many view college as a necessity. After all, the wages of high school graduates have fallen over the past 15 years, yet the wages of male college graduates have held steady and those of female college graduates have increased. Parents conclude that good jobs are now so complex that they all require college preparation.

In reality, employers hire many college graduates for a simpler reason. They know that a high school diploma is no guarantee that an applicant can write or do math, and they know that college students are likely to have mastered those skills in high school. Thus, employers are turning to college graduates as much for basic skills as for what is learned in college. And the public exagger-

ates the power of college to produce capable workers and underestimates the importance of improving elementary and secondary schools.

Congress should work with the states to give parents and employers the information they need through serious national curriculum standards and examinations that certify when a high school graduate has mastered basic skills. Schools should give the exams no later than the 11th grade, to give failing students a chance to catch up. Preliminary standardized tests should be given in elementary and junior high schools to let parents know where their children stand.

Yes, Government should help students who master these skills and want to go to college. But spending billions to send almost everyone to college without first improving high schools will not create a better work force. And it may force millions of young people to go into debt to receive the basic job skills that they should have been taught in high school.

Standards and exams are not all that schools need, but they will help generate demand for other changes: retraining teachers in the more rigorous curriculum, allowing parents to start charter schools and giving students incentives like work-study programs. Faced with finite resources, schools will have to make choices. By helping states to create academic standards, President Clinton and Congress can give them the information they need to choose those options that will really help students achieve. □

The New York Times

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997

Update H.I.V. Tests for Mothers, Not Babies

To the Editor:

New York hospitals recently began mandatory testing of newborns for H.I.V., the virus that causes AIDS, in the first such program in the nation ("H.I.V. Testing for Newborns Debated Anew," news article, Feb. 10).

This compromise state legislation is a step in the right direction, but its accent is on the wrong syllable. The expectant mother, not the newborn, should be the one mandatorily tested.

If expectant mothers knew their H.I.V. status, not only could the ma-

majority of infections in their newborns be prevented by offering the drug AZT during pregnancy, but these same women could receive medical care for themselves and reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to future sexual partners.

Furthermore, if the newborn is tested and found not to be infected with the virus that causes AIDS, advice against breast-feeding from an H.I.V.-infected mother could be offered. This method of H.I.V. transmission accounts for 7 percent to 15 percent of infant infections. The vast majority of H.I.V. infections in the baby occur during pregnancy and birth.

Civil rights policies have centered nearly exclusively on the right of privacy of the H.I.V.-infected mother at the exclusion and expense of the rights of their uninfected newborn babies.

SANFORD F. KUVIN, M.D.
Palm Beach, Fla., Feb. 11, 1997
The writer is a board member of Americans for a Sound AIDS Policy.

C.I.A.'s Next Leader

To the Editor:

Douglas Brinkley (Op-Ed, Feb. 10) defends Anthony Lake as the right choice for Director of Central Intelligence, saying he is not as liberal as the John Birch Society claims. There are many Americans who wish that the C.I.A.'s next director would be guilty of every charge the Birchers make of Mr. Lake, including an allegation of helping to "dismantle the covert activities of American intelligence."

Loyal Americans feel the C.I.A. is their country's most dangerous liability. In what way are covert operations, planned with tax money taken from the public, compatible with democracy? I fear for our country if we allow the C.I.A. to continue operating as it has.

DICK THOMSON
Rifton, N.Y., Feb. 10, 1997

NATO Expansion Is Critical to a Free Europe

To the Editor:

Henry Ashby Turner Jr. (letter, Feb. 10) claims that eventual admission of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would be equivalent to Canada's joining a military alliance with Russia, which would be threatening to Americans. Let's add some

Rewriting History

To the Editor:

Ambassador Ahmed Maher El Sayed, in his Feb. 10 letter on Egypt's role in the peace process, asserts that "no solution will be viable unless it includes the return of land acquired by force."

Can he provide an example of land illegally secured by Israel by force?

Five times since 1948 Israel had to defend itself against the onslaught of at least five Arab nations. Is self-defense, military victory and subsequent conquest of land by Israel considered "acquired by force" and therefore to be condemned?

It is time that history stopped being rewritten. Only then can economic, political and social progress be made.

E. MAGNUS OPPENHEIM
New York, Feb. 10, 1997

Crown Heights Verdict Was Victory for Truth

To the Editor:

The conviction of Lemrick Nelson Jr. and Charles Price in Federal court for depriving Yankel Rosenbaum of his civil rights — and of his life — in the 1991 civil disturbances in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, was a victory for the truth. Your Feb. 11 editorial ignores the facts in a display of high-minded balance.

Plainly put, the acquittal of Mr. Nelson at his state murder trial in 1992 was a mockery of justice, not a good-faith expression of "reasonable doubt." The first jury ignored the recovery of the murder weapon from Mr. Nelson's pocket, his unequivocal identification by the victim and his confession to the police.

The jury then celebrated its subversion of the criminal justice system by joining the defendant at a party after the trial. Federal civil rights prosecutions are rightly aimed at just this sort of jury nullification, wherever it occurs.

The state's case, prepared over a year's time by two highly competent career prosecutors, was properly and convincingly presented. Your characterization of this office as "botching" it relies on the 1993 report to the Governor of Richard H. Girgenti, then State Director of Criminal Justice. Mr. Girgenti is not and has never been a trial lawyer. He conceded that he never watched any part of the video

tape of the trial — the only way to evaluate the prosecutor's performance. Worse, he relied principally on the jurors' self-serving accounts of the trial and took at face value their denial that they were influenced by a pervasive mistrust of the police.

You rightly call for "civic healing." The healing process can best be advanced by a forthright acknowledgment that justice has finally been served.

CHARLES J. HYNES
District Attorney, Kings County
Brooklyn, Feb. 11, 1997

historical perspective to Mr. Turner's hypothetical Russian-Canadian alliance.

What if 50 years ago the United States forcibly annexed Canada, rounded up and executed Canadian officials and deported hundreds of thousands of Canadians to slave labor camps in Alaska, where most perished?

Concurrently, Canada is flooded with hundreds of thousands of colonists who have privileged status while Canadians are deprived of human and political rights. For half a century Canada must suffer the brutal dictates of Washington's imperialist rule.

For the Baltic nations, this history is no fantasy. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania aspire to join NATO because as free and democratic nations, they wish to join other such nations in maintaining European security. If the West refuses, Europe will again be divided into areas that are free and those that are not.

MARGERS PINNIS
Sleepy Hollow, N.Y., Feb. 11, 1997

A Gay Voice of Reason

To the Editor:

Thomas B. Stoddard, the gay activist lawyer, is recalled as "quotable and telegenic" in your Feb. 13 obituary, but his quotability was not limited to providing the blurbs of our modern sound-bite era. Mr. Stoddard was the voice of reason, wise in his youth and consistently to the point.

If he "alienated some of the more outspoken gay-rights advocates," as you say, his integrity and intelligence motivated and made proud countless others of us. Mr. Stoddard was a hero whose successor has yet to be identified.

TOM CRISP
New York, Feb. 13, 1997



The New York Times Company
229 West 43d St., N.Y. 10036-3959

ARTHUR OCHS SULZBERGER, *Chairman*
Chief Executive Officer

RUSSELL T. LEWIS, *President*
Chief Operating Officer

DIANE P. BAKER, *Senior Vice President*
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

KATHARINE P. DARRROW, *Senior Vice President*

LEONARD P. FORMAN, *Senior Vice President*

JOHN M. O'BRIEN, *Senior Vice President*

DONALD S. SCHNEIDER, *Senior Vice President*

SOLOMON B. WATSON IV, *Senior Vice President*

LAURA J. CORWIN, *Secretary*

The New York Times

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997

Educators grade Clinton highly on school plans

By Pat Ordozensky
USA TODAY

ORLANDO, Fla. — President Clinton's plans to improve public schools are drawing praise from the nation's school administrators.

Educators applaud Clinton's efforts to focus attention on education, they like his idea of national tests and — despite the federal government's minor role in school funding — they think his initiatives can have an impact.

A poll of 673 educators at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention here shows:

▶ 78% are pleased Clinton is moving education near the top of the national agenda with his State of the Union message and school reform proposals.

"The president is clearly recognizing the significance of education for the future of this country," says John O'Rourke of Pittsford, N.Y., national superintendent of the year.

▶ 59% support Clinton's move toward voluntary tests of fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math.

▶ 53% think his efforts will affect school improvement.

"Most of us think the president's initiatives are right on target," says Paul Houston,

AASA executive director. "When he explained his support for national standards and tests, he made it clear that many children could suffer unless we are equally committed to helping children reach those standards and pass those tests."

Clinton's plea for national testing was brought to the AASA convention by Gerald Tirozzi, assistant secretary of education. He told school officials the feds will pay the first-year cost of administering the tests for all who volunteer.

"This will give you an opportunity," Tirozzi said, "to take a snapshot of how your students are doing compared to the rest of the country."

The survey of convention-goers also shows:

▶ 26% think higher standards are the top priority for improving schools; 21% say school funding is most important; 20% say the No. 1 need is better teacher training.

▶ 57% say they would not require school uniforms even if their state laws permit it.

Of the 673 poll respondents, 370 are school superintendents. The rest are other administrators, principals and school board members.

▶ Superintendent of the year, 4D

USA TODAY

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997



By Emile Wamsteker, AP

Unity: NAACP President Kweisi Mfume and Chairwoman Myrlie Evers-Williams in New York Saturday.

NAACP outlines agenda, says its books balanced

The NAACP has unified, balanced its books and is focused on the battle for civil rights, board members said Sunday as the NAACP closed its annual meeting in New York.

NAACP President Kweisi Mfume used the meeting to launch a five-year, \$50 million endowment effort and said the group, \$4 million in debt two years ago, finished 1996 with a \$2 million surplus. Mfume listed police brutality, substandard education and bank red-lining among top concerns, and he promised to press for confirmation of Alexis Herman as Labor secretary. "I feel very good about the direction we are headed in," board member Julian Bond said. "We can get back to the business of civil rights."

SPACEWALK ADDED: NASA ordered Discovery's astronauts to conduct a fifth spacewalk tonight to patch peeling insulation on the Hubble Space Telescope. Astronauts will cover the damaged thermal insulation with swatches of spare material carried on the space shuttle. The extra work will push Hubble's release from the shuttle from tonight to early Wednesday, but Discovery still is scheduled to land at Kennedy Space Center in Florida on Friday after the 10-day mission, NASA said.

SIMPSON CASE: O.J. Simpson is planning to leave Los Angeles and the lead lawyer in his civil trial is off the case, *Newsweek* reports today. The magazine says Robert Baker is leaving Simpson's legal team and Dan Leonard will handle the appeal of the \$33.5 million judgment against Simpson for the deaths of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman. Simpson has until midweek to post \$50 million in collateral if he wants to stay the judgment pending an appeal. The magazine also said Simpson is planning to move, possibly to south Florida, but he might wait until his children's school year ends.

CATHOLIC CLASH:

Liberal Roman Catholics called on church leadership to relax its stand against homosexuality and the ordination of women and to end the celibacy requirement for clergy. Members of Fairfax, Va.-based We Are Church stood outside churches nationwide, beginning a push for 1 million signatures in three months. "Jesus was open to dialogue with anyone, including people with whom he



By Emile Wamsteker, AP

Dialogue: Sister Maureen Fiedler with two churchgoers in New York

vehemently disagreed," said group leader Sister Maureen Fiedler.

In Denver, where former Archbishop J. Francis Stafford has banned the group from church property, the We Are Church representatives could gather only 25 signatures at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

"I don't see one thing about it that's radical," said Margaret Dubbins, who signed the petition on her way into Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York.

JONBENET RAMSEY CASE: Six-year-old beauty queen JonBenet Ramsey had never shown "any hint of emotional abuse or physical abuse" says her pediatrician, Francesco Beuf. An autopsy indicated that she was sexually assaulted and strangled hours before her body was found in the basement of her Boulder home Dec. 26. Also, city spokesman Kelvin McNeill said police were interviewing family members in Atlanta.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS: Today is Presidents Day, a federal holiday also observed by most states. There will be no regular home mail delivery. Federal offices and courts, U.S. financial markets and many banks and state and local government offices also are closed. Local services, such as garbage pickup and public transportation, may be affected.

ALSO . . .

► **NAVY OFFICER:** Jennifer Della Barbra traded her midshipman's jacket for dress blues in a ceremony Saturday aboard the USS Constitution in Boston. She had been accused of lying and threatened with expulsion just weeks before graduating from the Naval Academy, but won an appeal, her degree and officer commission.

► **MURDER-SUICIDE:** An 83-year-old man shot and killed his 82-year-old wife inside a Castro Valley, Calif., rehabilitation center Sunday, then shot himself, officials said. She suffered from dementia and a hip condition.

► **HOMELESS LOVE:** LaToyya West, 27, and Raymond Robinson, 35, Kansas City homeless people who met at a soup kitchen, married Saturday. They had a party with pizza, soup and wedding cake for their homeless guests.

Immunity for Georgian diplomat lifted



AP
Makharadze: In fatal D.C. car crash

In a rare move, the Republic of Georgia has lifted immunity for the second-ranking diplomat in its U.S. Embassy, clearing the way for his arrest in a fatal Washington car crash. George Makharadze could face involuntary manslaughter charges in the death Jan. 3 of Joviane Waltrick, 16. "We're very, very appreciative to the government of Georgia," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said. Makharadze's car slammed into the back of another car, which went airborne and landed on a third vehicle in which Waltrick was riding. Police said Makharadze, 35, had been drinking and appeared to have been speeding. Viviane Wagner, the victim's mother, has held nightly vigils at the crash site and has lobbied officials for the immunity. Wagner hailed Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze as "a man of courage" and the United States as "a country of justice."

Written by John Bacon. Contributing: Anne Sclater

Schools Taking Tougher Stance With Standards

New Emphasis on Tests, and New Penalties

By TAMAR LEWIN **A1**

No more fun and games: As children across the nation head back to school this fall, many are encountering a harsher atmosphere in which states set specific academic standards and impose real penalties on those who do not meet them.

"We are clearly moving into the phase of the standards-based school reform movement where the rubber hits the road," said Robert Schwartz, president of Achieve Inc., a nonprofit school-reform group in Cambridge, Mass., that is made up of governors and corporate executives. "Kids and schools know there are consequences looming on the horizon if they don't do well, and that gives this school season a different kind of edge in New York, Massachusetts, Virginia and a bunch of states where this is just beginning."

Much of the no-nonsense, no-excuses mood springs from an intensifying emphasis on the results of high-stakes assessment tests, whose results determine whether students will be held back a grade, stopped from graduating or sent to tutoring sessions, Saturday classes or summer school.

Just last week in New York City, the schools chancellor announced that the city would hold back more than 21,000 third, sixth and eighth graders who, because they did badly on standardized tests in the spring, were assigned to summer school and either failed the summer school tests or did not take them.

In Virginia, when the results of last spring's Standards of Living tests were announced, parents and teachers unhappily found that fewer than 7 percent of the state's schools had achieved a 70 percent pass rate — the level they will need to keep their accreditation starting in 2006 — in all four core subjects, English, mathematics, science and social studies.

In many other states, administrators and teachers are struggling to make sure that what will be on assessment tests will be in the curriculum without skewing the classroom day into a test preparation session or making children feel that test scores

are all the school cares about.

Some parents, teachers and students also fear that the focus on tests thwarts creativity and character development.

"There's a right way and a wrong way to do it," said Robert M. Hauser, a University of Wisconsin professor of sociology who co-wrote a National Research Council report last fall about the risks of high-stakes tests. "If you start with standards and link them to curriculum and teacher training and introduce them over a period of time in ways that permit kids to meet the standards, that may be great. But it won't be if you go for the quick political fix and start by flunking a lot of kids on tests that are educationally damaging and increase the dropout rate."

Wisconsin may be the only place to turn back the testing trend. The state originally adopted Gov. Tommy G. Thompson's proposal for making high school graduation contingent on passing an assessment test. But after parents and legislators saw the sample questions — interpret a quotation from Robert M. La Follette, describe how laser technology changed industry and decipher a diagram of a chemical reaction equation — they balked, and the test died.

"Parents saw the test, and said they didn't care if their children learned these things before they graduated," Professor Hauser said.

Still, almost every state is moving toward standards-based programs:

¶Every state except Iowa has, or will soon have, specific learning standards for English, math and science, and all except Iowa and Montana have or are working on statewide tests to determine which schools and students are meeting those standards.

¶Thirty-six states publish annual report cards on individual schools.

¶Twenty-seven states require or plan to require students to pass a state test to graduate from high school.

¶Fourteen states — and far more individual school districts — offer financial bonuses for schools, teachers and superintendents who meet their targets for test results, attendance and dropout rates.

¶More than a dozen states have the power to take over failing schools, and many are adopting tougher standards for teacher certification and development.

Without question, the standards movement has prodded many schools to find innovative ways to help lagging students. In Charlotte, N.C., officials decided that summer school offered too little, too late, for failing students and developed an array of after-school and Saturday programs that have attracted thousands of students and improved test results significantly.

Last year, about 230 of the 1,100 students at Northridge Middle School in Charlotte showed up every Saturday morning from October to May. For the first time, the school exceeded its state target, with 65 percent of students reading at grade level, an achievement that carries a \$1,500 reward for every teacher.

"If you set a standard, people rise to the occasion," said Don Turner, the assistant principal who runs the Saturday Academy. "Some kids came because their parents made them, some because they wanted to, but I really believe it made the difference. We're starting again the first Saturday in October, and we're expecting just as many kids. Of course, the enrollment goes up right after the first marking period."

In some districts, it is not just the students who are held accountable. Top officials in the Philadelphia schools, for example, can have their pay increased or decreased depending on whether students meet targets. Teachers rated unsatisfactory are denied raises, and those whose schools do well earn extra money for the school.

Politically, in a year when education is a top priority, Democrats and Republicans are falling over themselves to endorse higher educational standards. Gov. George W.

Bush of Texas, considered the front-runner for the Republican Presidential nomination, is getting substantial attention for his state's record on improving student performance. On Thursday, in a back-to-school address, Mr. Bush proposed requirements to test disadvantaged children each year and strip Federal money from the lowest-scoring schools.

Texas and North Carolina are often cited as the exemplars of standards-based programs. In both states, student achievement is rising even while per-pupil spending remains below the national average.

"What you used to have in public education was a belief system that the educators were not responsible for results, that they

were responsible for teaching and not learning," said Darvin Winnick, a retired management consultant who helped push through the Texas program. Under the program, schools are responsible for improving test scores not only over all, but also within specific groups like Hispanic, African-American and low-income students.

"At the beginning, we'd hear disheartening comments that if you were teaching and some kids didn't learn it, well, those kids can't learn," Mr. Winnick said. "This has been a major shift in belief, that educators share the responsibility for results, that we're responsible for seeing that every child learns."

Many Texas teachers have been won over.

"I like the tests," said Debra K. Thomp-

Educ -
~~Standards~~
Standards

The New York Times

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1999

1/2

she said. "It is a provoked, planned and orchestrated chaos by military forces. They want to scare the international community — the observers and the journalists — to get them out and massacre the East Timorese."

Residents said part of the Mahkota Hotel, where most journalists stayed until they were evacuated on Sunday, had been burned. They said the territory's main human rights organization, Yayasan Hak, had been attacked with stones and gunfire.

There were several reports this morning of sustained automatic-weapons fire overnight.

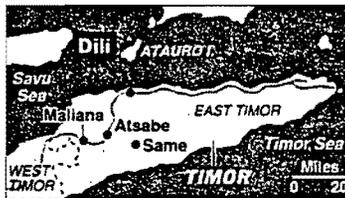
Given the serious damage that is being done to Indonesia's international standing, with the eyes of the United Nations and the foreign press focused on East Timor, a number of Indonesian and foreign analysts said they found the Government's motives difficult to understand.

"I can't imagine anything more damning to the image of Indonesia than this sort of thing," said James J. Fox, director of Pacific and Asian studies at the Australian National University, who was in East Timor for the vote.

"It wouldn't take much to provide law and order," he said. "There is obviously an unwillingness to do it. Either they don't realize the cost that this will entail or they have decided they'll pay that cost."

The Indonesian military has a long and intense attachment to East Timor, where thousands of its men have died and others have made their careers. The military recruited and armed the militia groups early this year after President B. J. Habibie suddenly announced that he would let East Timor go free if it voted down his offer of more autonomy within Indonesia.

With some members of the military viewing the possibility of independence as a defeat, their aim in creating the militias appeared to be to influence or derail the vote through a campaign of intimidation and terror.



Associated Press

Militias in Dili were reported to have fired at people taking refuge.

Some analysts also say the military, which traditionally has helped keep together the diverse 13,000 islands that make up Indonesia, fears that if East Timor gains independence, other parts of the nation will seek to do the same.

In the last two days, since the result of the vote was announced early Saturday, the militias have run wild. "To what end?" Mr. Fox said. "This is so counterproductive and self-defeating. It has to be stubbornness and upset."

The chaos drove some 5,000 East Timorese to flee on Sunday aboard inter-island ferries, according to reports from Dili, although militia thugs reportedly prevented some people from departing.

Another 2,000 people took shelter at the compound of the territory's Roman Catholic prelate, Bishop Carlos Belo, who in 1996 shared the Nobel Peace Prize with the pro-independence activist José Ramos Horta.

The police said as many as 15,000 people were crowded into the grounds of the main police headquarters. More than 1,000 broke their way into the United Nations compound,

where most of the remaining United Nations workers and a handful of journalists also took shelter.

Hundreds more journalists, aid workers and United Nations officials who had completed their electoral work fled on Sunday aboard chartered aircraft. As their planes took off, they could see flames and smoke rising from fires burning within and around the outskirts of the capital.

But David Wimhurst, the chief spokesman for the United Nations in East Timor, said no United Nations staff members were leaving before their time was up.

"We plan to stay put," he said by telephone from within the besieged compound. "All this violence is clearly an attempt to intimidate us out of here, and we have resisted this intimidation."

He added, "The United Nations is obviously doing everything it can to put pressure on the Indonesian Government to maintain law and order, but it is increasingly apparent that these appeals are falling on deaf ears."

Among those calling for quick intervention by the United Nations was Mr. Ramos Horta.

"We are facing an imminent, extraordinary humanitarian catastrophe right under the eyes of the Security Council, and they are not acting promptly to stop the killings," he said. Whole villages have fled for safety into the barren hills, and Mr. Ramos Horta said that in the coming days "thousands will be starving and dying."

Bishop Belo echoed his call for help. "This is the time that we badly need some peacekeeping troops in this region to protect ordinary people who have no weapons, such as children, women and the elderly," he said.

Australian officials said they had prepared an intervention force, but Prime Minister John Howard said on Sunday, "You can't go into the territory of another country without that country's approval."

2/2

son, a fifth-grade reading teacher at Briar-grove Elementary School in Houston. "A lot of people say it's ridiculous to test kids too much, but you need to know if they are meeting minimal requirements."

In many ways, the education accountability movement echoes the restructuring process American businesses went through in the late 1970's to address lagging productivity. Educators prefer the term "result oriented" to "bottom-line oriented," and in schools, the bottom line is learning, not profit. But the strategies are the same: setting specific targets but giving workers great latitude in deciding how to meet them, and rewarding those who achieve their goals but taking quick action against those who do not.

In education, though, the accountability movement is still new, and many parents, teachers and students argue that it forces teachers to spend too much time teaching to the test, which crowds out creative thinking, arts education and character development and puts excessive weight on the regurgitation of facts.

"The test changed the whole school around," said Alex Sommerfield, a junior at Danvers High School in Massachusetts who was one of seven students suspended in the spring for refusing to take the 10th-grade test. "It was everywhere, teachers teaching the test instead of the regular curriculum. In 10th grade, I took a philosophy course, but now they're only going to let juniors and seniors take the course because they want all the 10th graders to take American history because it's on the test.

"It's made everything worse. And when I said I wouldn't take it, they said the realty people were relying on our test results to sell houses. I don't think that's what school should be about."

A group of students at Cambridge Rindge and Latin, a top-ranked school in Massachusetts, also refused to take the exams, saying no one test can gauge how much a student has learned. They said the tests took too

much classroom time and altered how they were taught. And in Chicago, several juniors at the high-performing Whitney Young High School boycotted the state test, sending the principal a letter saying that they would not "feed into this test-taking frenzy."

The emphasis on test results poses special dangers for students who are not native speakers of English, have learning disabilities or are in bad schools. Next month, when the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund's case against the State of Texas goes to trial, the group will try to show that the requirement that high school students pass the state test to graduate is unfair to Hispanic and African-American students, who make up 85 percent of those who fail.

In Oregon, a California legal advocacy group, Disability Rights Advocates, has filed a lawsuit challenging the state's new assessment tests on behalf of learning-disabled students for whom the test's focus on spelling presents a serious obstacle.

There are other concerns about the tests, too. Many quirky small schools experimenting with new teaching methods worry that the focus on test results will imperil their ability to try the innovations that give them their energy and appeal.

Even the strongest supporters of standards-based programs are quick to acknowledge that the movement is still in an early phase with many questions to be resolved.

"These are uncharted waters, and a lot of states are flying kind of blind, so it's inevitable that there will need to be midcourse corrections," said Mr. Schwartz, the president of Achieve, the school-reform group. "We don't yet know whether it's better to take the Texas path of raising the bar incrementally and risking that the tests will be too basic at the start, or taking the New York path of setting the bar high and risking that a lot of kids won't make it at the start. And inside the profession, there are still plenty of people who have been through various waves of reform, and think this too shall pass."

2/2

The New York Times

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1999

HISPANIC LEADERS SCOLD FIRST LADY

Call to Retract Clemency Offer Is Met Harshly in New York

By JONATHAN P. HICKS **AI**

With sentiments ranging from exasperation to bewilderment, several New York Hispanic political leaders sharply criticized Hillary Rodham Clinton yesterday for calling on her husband to withdraw his offer of clemency to 16 imprisoned members of a Puerto Rican terrorist organization.

The most outspoken reaction was from United States Representative José E. Serrano, a Bronx Democrat who is one of three Puerto Rican members of Congress. Mr. Serrano said he felt "grave disappointment and anger" at what he called her "intervention" in the issue, and said he was withdrawing his support for Mrs. Clinton's all-but-announced candidacy for the United States Senate.

In his criticism, Mr. Serrano echoed the concerns of several other Puerto Rican politicians in the city. The politicians chastised Mrs. Clinton not only for taking a position contrary to one they hold passionately, but also for doing so without consulting any of the state's Hispanic political leaders, who are expected to be a bulwark of her campaign for the Senate.

"I'm rescinding my encouragement of her candidacy," Mr. Serrano said in an interview. "Because to me, this is as important as Ireland is to the Irish, Israel to the Jews. The First Lady did not take one minute to try to understand the pain. This is an action that will make people go out and make sure that she's not our next Senator. Maybe it's time to go out and find out who else is interested."

Assemblyman Ruben Diaz Jr., a Bronx Democrat, did not go so far as to reject a Clinton Senate bid, but he, too, expressed dismay: "It's disheartening to see her take this position," he said. "I hope, at the very least, that the support of the Puerto Rican leadership is not being taken for granted."

"I hope that they don't think that Puerto Ricans are automatically going to come out and vote for her just because she is a Democrat. I think there needs to be some dialogue."

That was a point made forcefully by Mr. Serrano. "I am the longest-serving Puerto Rican official in the history of the state of New York," he said. "That merits a call to say, 'This is what I was planning to do.'"

Over the weekend, Mrs. Clinton called on the President to immediately withdraw his offer of clemency for 16 members of a Puerto Rican organization, the Armed Forces of National Liberation.

Last month, Mr. Clinton offered to reduce the sentences of the group. The organization is commonly known as the F.A.L.N., the initials for the Spanish rendering of its name.

The organization was involved in more than 100 bombings in the United States during the 1970's and 1980's. But the 16 members at issue were never linked directly to crimes involving death or injury, and the White House has said Mr. Clinton considers their sentences, some of them prison terms of more than 50

years, to be out of proportion to their offenses.

The White House said it had set a deadline of 5 P.M. Friday for the prisoners to meet the conditions set by the President. But Mrs. Clinton said that those conditions were too generous.

Howard Wolfson, a spokesman for Mrs. Clinton's Senate exploratory committee, said that the First Lady "has great respect for Congressman Serrano, but she believes that three weeks is more than enough time for the prisoners to accept the terms of the clemency and to renounce violence."

It was clear, however, that there was widespread dissatisfaction among Hispanic politicians to Mrs. Clinton's position. Many said they were bewildered about her willingness to engage in a public disagreement with the President and to enter the thorny topic of Puerto Rican politics.

While Mrs. Clinton said she had no involvement in or prior knowledge of her husband's decision to offer clemency, several Hispanic politicians nonetheless criticized her for taking what they called a political position

aimed at courting more conservative voters.

Several criticized the First Lady for taking her position several weeks after the clemency offer and further criticized her for belatedly espousing a view similar to that of Mayor Ru-

dolph W. Giuliani, who is expected to be her Republican opponent in next year's race.

"Hillary Clinton is following Rudy Giuliani's lead," said City Councilman José Rivera, a Bronx Democrat, in a telephone interview from Puerto Rico. "If she is doing that, she might want to consider — when she does move in to the state and registers to vote — voting for Giuliani for senator."

Some criticism of Mrs. Clinton was more measured. A spokesman for Fernando Ferrer, the Bronx Borough President, said that Mr. Ferrer "believes that Mrs. Clinton has acted prematurely."

The spokesman, Clint Roswell, said that Mr. Ferrer's position was that the prisoners "should be given an opportunity to respond formally to the President's offer of clemency."

"Once they respond," he said, "then we'll see what will happen."

The President's offer of conditional clemency had been hailed by some the most vehement supporters of her Senate candidacy, among them United States Representative Charles B. Rangel of Harlem and Dennis Rivera, the head of 1199, the 150,000-member National Health and Human Service Employees Union, in addition to Mr. Serrano.

Still, that offer had been the object of a countervailing arc of criticism from Republicans and some Democrats, most prominently from Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, whose retirement from the Senate will create the opening for which Mrs. Clinton is vying.

The New York Times

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1999

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Passing on Failure

How is it that some students enter high school—and even go on to graduate—without being able to read or do simple math? John Cole, president of the Texas Federation of Teachers, says he is often asked that question, and he doesn't have any trouble with the answer. It happens, because the students have been passed from grade to grade without being able to do the required work.



Social promotion, as this practice is known, is less popular than it used to be. It is even against the law in some places. Nevertheless, polls of teachers show that social promotion is alive and well in schools across the country. For example, according to a recent survey of Texas teachers:

- 68 percent of elementary school teachers had students who were promoted to the next grade level even though they had failed the class.
- 61 percent of middle school and junior-high teachers had students who failed the course and were allowed to move on without repeating it.
- 40 percent said that a student they had recommended for retention was promoted.
- 78 percent *disagreed* with the statement that students in their school are not promoted unless they have earned the necessary passing grades.

Social promotion is alive and well in schools across the country.

These figures are stark, but other surveys, both national and state, tell a similar story of promoting students who are unprepared.

Supporters of social promotion justify it by talking about the stigma attached to being "kept back." They say that students who do not go on with their peers from grade to grade suffer a disastrous blow to their self-esteem and are likely to drop out of high school. Indeed, many people who went to school in the days before social promotion became standard practice remember the hulking 14-year-old who sat in the back of their sixth-grade class. Did being kept back do him any good? (And, if he was a discipline problem, as was often the case, how did having him repeat the grade affect the learning of other students in the class?)

Recently, an economic argument for social promotion has also been put forward. It is very expensive to fail students and thus add a year or more onto their schooling. Undoubtedly this accounts in part for the willingness of some administrators to promote students whom teachers have tried to fail.

But if we are talking about the costs of retention to the students themselves and to society, we should also look at the costs of promoting students who have not met the minimum standards that most schools require. How hard are students likely to work when they learn from the earliest grades that they will pass no matter how little they do? What kind of preparation are they getting for real life, where bosses seldom reward substandard performance with promotion? And what about the cost to classmates who might be inclined to work if they didn't see that meeting the standards for promotion was unnecessary?

The harm of social promotion is compounded for children who make a slow start in school. If we promote elementary school students who have not learned to read, saying they will "catch up," they are likely to fall more and more behind until, by the time they reach middle school, catching up is nearly impossible. Will they feel good about themselves when they sit in class, as sophomores or juniors, unable to follow what is going on? If they hang around long enough to get a high school diploma, have they any hope of getting a permanent job that pays a decent wage? We are not doing these students a favor by passing them, even if they have not learned the work; we are cheating them.

The truth is, social promotion is a lousy idea. Standards only work if everybody can see that they mean something. If you have many, many failures, there will be tremendous political pressure to return to social promotion. To sustain the ability to hold students back, you must have a system of supports to keep failures low. But you must be willing to fail the students who don't meet standards, despite all you can do to help.

The best way to keep this from happening is to identify children who are not learning basic skills very early in their school career and offer them extra help before they fall behind and get used to failure. There are various ways of doing this. One-on-one tutoring with an expert teacher can turn children who were unable to sound out a word into confident readers. There are also full-scale programs that combine excellent in-class instruction with frequent diagnostic testing and daily tutoring sessions. Do interventions like these cost money? Of course, but even if you want to look at the issue in strictly economic terms, the dollar cost is far less than holding students back—or sending them out into the adult world without the basic skills they need.

[NYTimes 3/24/96]

Can the Schools Stand and Deliver?

By PETER APPLEBOME

THE answer to all our national problems comes down to a single word: education," Lyndon B. Johnson said in promoting his vision of the Great Society in the 1960's.

In that same spirit — the eternal American faith that schools can solve all the nation's ills — the nation's governors and top corporate executives are gathering this week in Palisades, N.Y., for what is being grandly billed as the Second National Education Summit. President Clinton is to address the governors Wednesday.

The gathering itself, occurring at a time of faint progress toward the "new era of education reform" that George Bush hailed after the first summit in 1989, reflects the prevailing belief that the nation needs to demand more from its struggling schools, teachers and underachieving students.

Too Much or Too Little

But some historians and educators are offering the heretical notion that it can be as shortsighted to expect schools to do too much as it can be to accept when they do too little, particularly when enormous social and economic problems are seeping into the classroom and disagreement is rife over how the schools should respond. The critics argue that President Johnson got it wrong; that the nation's educational ills are more the result than the cause of its economic problems, investment decisions, violent culture and urban decay. And without adequate funds and realistic expectations and planning, periodic promulgations on how bad things are or how wonderful they can be will not improve education.

"Americans have always had very utopian expectations of what the schools can do," said David Tyack, a professor of education at Stanford University. "That can be a very positive way of recreating democracy. The problem comes when you promise too much and people get cynical. The danger with the utopian view of education policy is that it's a short jump from seeing education as the ark of the covenant to becoming cynical and disappointed enough to see schools as failures that don't matter at all."

Thus, this second summit is provoking two key questions: Is its agenda of higher standards and better technology the right one? And is America's faith in education realistic?

High expectations, as well as high achievement, have long been a central element of public education. From Horace Mann's millennial view of schools in the

to the nation's economic future, Americans have put so much faith in learning that a recent book, "Tinkering Toward Utopia" (Harvard University Press, 1995), by Mr. Tyack and Larry Cuban, calls education "almost a secular religion."

President Bush and the governors adopted ambitious national goals for improving schools over a 10-year period.

Since then, however, there has been little real progress in test scores or graduation rates and, worse, there have been some signs that education is sliding farther down in the national priorities. To revive momentum, the governors, each bringing along a major corporate executive, will try to move from the general goals of 1989 toward the establishment of specific, rigorous standards of what students must learn in different subject areas. The intent is to link mastery of those subjects with promotion to the next grade, something that is missing from many state systems. A high school diploma would be more than the worthless scrap of paper that many fear it has become. The other item on their agenda is to bring better computers and technology into the schools.

"The strength that standards have in other countries is that this is what your whole society expects of you," Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, says in materials put together for the conference. "It's so universal that it's not questioned."

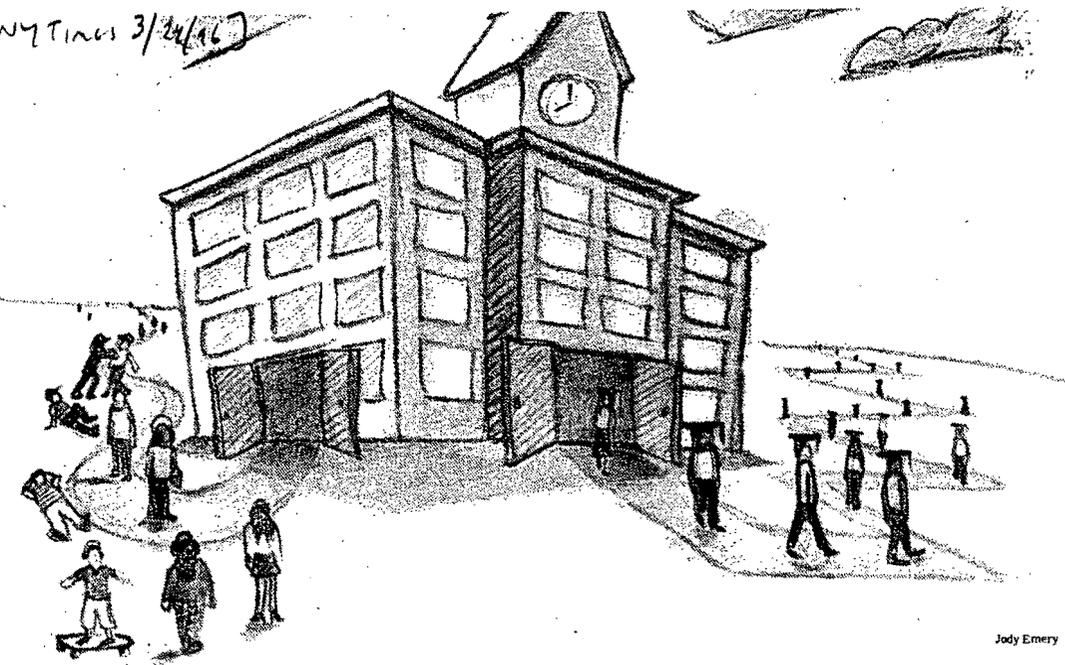
School for Citizens

Proponents of setting specific standards and holding children to them say they would be one antidote to grade inflation, so-called social promotions and institutionalized assumptions, including the widespread belief that many poor and black children cannot learn.

At a time of economic uneasiness and worries that the schools are failing to turn out adequately educated graduates for the workplace, the conference has an unapologetically utilitarian stance, and includes more corporate executives than educators.

Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado said: "The executives are saying, 'We're the customers for your products, meaning the graduates of the schools. We have something to say about what kind of products they ought to be.' And what in the world do you go to school for other than to become good citizens and get a job and raise a family?"

To some educators, that viewpoint, students as little more than future employees-in-training and the conference's emphasis on standards reflects a distressingly mechanistic image of education. Many see the



Jody Emery

myriad social and cultural impediments to learning.

"The public debate and the political debate is mainly about all the wrong things," said Edward Miller, editor of the Harvard Education Letter. "People who actually work in schools are talking about completely different things than governors and politicians are."

While politicians are talking about vouchers and standards, Mr. Miller said, teachers are concerned about motivating children unprepared for and uninterested in learning, teaching disabled ones once routinely excluded or educating students unable to speak English well. Many say that a more useful approach to standards is to specify what money, technology or other materials should be available to all schools.

Few educators argue against standards, but there has been such a strong anti-Washington current since 1989 that few of them are advocating national standards. Many educators share a widely held belief that the sense of educational crisis and failure today represents a curious disconnect between what is wrong with education and how that fits into broader problems of American life.

It's the Culture, Stupid

"The intellectual level of the schools can be no higher than the intellectual level of the culture in which they float," said Richard Gibbonney, an education professor at the University of Pennsylvania and the former Vermont Commissioner of Education. "You look at TV: You look at our commercial

Teachers, Teach Thyselves

THIS month the National Council of Teachers of English released "Standards for the English Language Arts," which outlined, in mind-numbing terms, what students from kindergarten to 12th grade should learn. Tucked in it was a glossary that defined obscure words like "listening" and "spelling." Below are excerpts. **SARAH BOXER**

appreciation Thoughtful awareness of value; personal understanding and respect for; judgments made with heightened perception and understanding.

audience The collection of intended readers, listeners or viewers for a particular work or performance.

fiction Imaginative literary, oral or visual works representing invented, rather than actual persons places and events.

grammar The means by which the different components of language can be put together in groups of sounds and written or visual symbols so that ideas, feelings and images can be communicated; what one knows about the structure and use of one's own language that leads to its creative and communicative use.

inquiry A mode of research driven by the learner's desire to look deeply into a question or an idea that interests him or her.

listening Attending to communication by

any means; includes listening to vocal speech, watching signing or using communication aids.

punctuation An orthographic system that separates linguistic units, clarifies meaning and can be used by writers and readers to give speech characteristics to written materials.

reading The complex, recursive process through which we make meaning from texts, using semantics; syntax; visual, aural and tactile cues; context, and prior knowledge.

speaking The act of communication through such means as vocalization, signing or using communication aids such as voice synthesizers.

spelling The process of representing language by means of a writing system or orthography.

vocabulary The words known or used by a person or group, including the specialized meanings that words acquire when they are used for technical purposes, regional usages and slang.

writing 1. The use of a writing system or orthography by people in the conduct of their daily lives to communicate over time and space. 2. The process or result of recording language graphically by hand or other means, as by the use of computers or

SCHOOLS OVERHAUL

READIN', WRITIN'

Crew can prepare for target practice with new powers

By **LAWRENCE GOODMAN** and **LAURA WILLIAMS**
Daily News Staff Writers

Agreement on school reform legislation means city Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew inherits tremendous new power — and awesome responsibilities — in running the country's largest school system.

"It is a great day for real accountability," said William Thompson, president of the central Board of Education. "It's a major step forward for our kids."

Until now, Crew's ability to act against corrupt or dysfunctional local school boards has been limited. He has taken over three Bronx boards but faced numerous legal challenges and U.S. Justice Department hurdles.

Now, say supporters, his new powers will give him the ability to fulfill a promise to take over a dozen more.

"It's terrific," said special schools investigator Ed Stanick. "It's an historic opportunity to rid the local boards of the patronage and corruption that have robbed our children over the years."

Stanick said the legislation could make more takeovers unnecessary.

"Where the corruption comes from is the power that comes from disposing jobs," he said. "If that's taken away, you're not going to see that same sort of power-driven school board member in the future."

Officials said the legislation will give Crew not only power, but accountability.

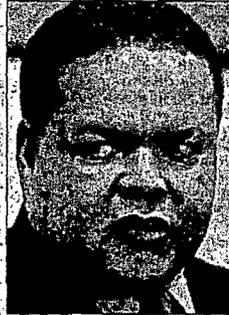
"If the school system does not improve, ultimately it's the chancellor's responsibility," said Donald Singer, president of the principals union.

United Federation of Teachers President Sandra Feldman called the bill a major weapon in fighting corruption. "In some districts, money was literally being stolen from children and classrooms," she said. "Instead of corruption, you're going to have more money in these districts for books and classrooms and furniture."

But critics said dramatic improvements were unlikely.

"Education reform takes place at the school," said Robert Berne, dean of New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. "The changes at the school level are largely cosmetic and theoretical."

And some critics said the central Board of Education — given its own history of scandals — shouldn't be trusted to improve school management.



Rudy Crew

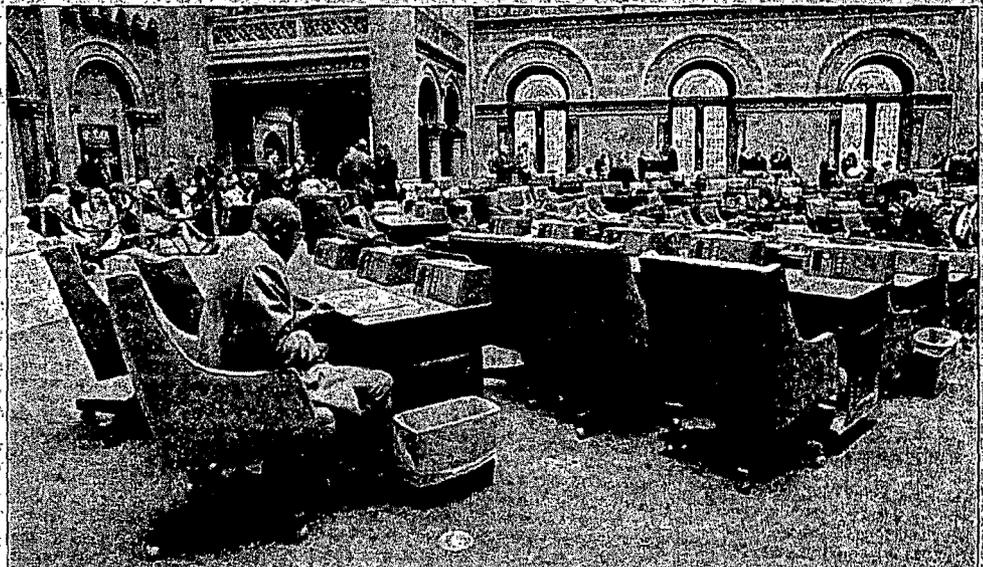
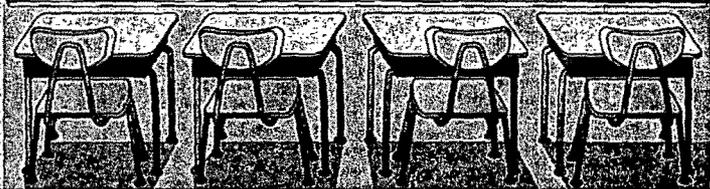
"We're taking what doesn't work today in too many school districts and replacing it with what did work 25 years ago," said John Fager, executive director of the Parents Coalition for Education.

For functioning school boards in performing districts, the legislation is an insult.

"I hope the Legislature does not throw out the baby with the bathwater," said Charles Capetanakis, board president in District 20, which covers Bensonhurst, Bay Ridge and Borough Park, Brooklyn.

KEY PROVISIONS FOR OVERHAUL

PROPOSAL	WHAT WOULD CHANGE
SUPERINTENDENTS The chancellor will get the power to hire superintendents from four candidates recommended by local school boards.	Until now, boards have had absolute authority over hiring, leading in many cases to charges of incompetence and cronyism.
PRINCIPALS The newly independent principals will be hired by district superintendents instead of the board.	Supporters say this will end a system in which corrupt board members demand bribes or favors in exchange for hiring.
FAILING SCHOOLS The chancellor will get the power to bounce incompetent or corrupt superintendents, principals and local board members.	Supporters say the change would produce better education.
CORRUPT SCHOOL BOARDS The chancellor will have authority to oust board members charged with corruption.	Supporters say the change will end disastrous management by talented boards.
BOARD QUALIFICATIONS Board members would be required to undergo education training, a process that's just a recommendation now.	Supporters say the change will produce more effective and involved boards.
PARENTS Each school will be required by 1999 to form a council of parents and staffers to advise principals and superintendents.	Supporters say the change will create a system in which parental input really counts.
BUDGET Schools would be required to prepare an annual breakdown of all federal, state and city education funds, and how the money is spent.	Supporters say the change will enable easy-to-verify financial accountability.



ASSEMBLY LINE: Albert Vann (D-Brooklyn) works in Assembly as he waits for session that will create pact on city school reform.

DAILY NEWS
Wednesday, December 18, 1996

... AND REFORM

32 boards lose power in pact

By MICHAEL FINNEGAN

Daily News Albany Bureau

Gov. Pataki and legislative leaders reached historic agreement yesterday on a sweeping education overhaul that shifts authority away from local school boards and back to the chancellor.

The change, headed for approval by state lawmakers last night, will reverse the decentralization of the 1.1-million-student public school system approved nearly three decades ago.

The reform hands broad new hiring and firing power to Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew, who has said he needs that authority to improve low-performing schools and oust corrupt school boards.

The changes are designed to stop the endless cycles of corruption in which officials at many of the 32 local boards demanded bribes or patronage as the price for hiring principals and superintendents.

Pataki, who championed the reforms with Mayor Giuliani and Crew, called the new system "a tremendous victory for the kids of New York."

Under the law, Crew for the first time will gain final say on hiring district superintendents, the key educational management job for local schools.

Decisions on that post have been left to local school members — who in some cases have sought kickbacks, school jobs or other patronage for their hiring decisions.

Now, the chancellor will select superintendents from among four nominees recommended by the boards. And he will have power to reject the recommendations and demand new candidates. The change will start with the hiring of superintendents under new contract in 1997.

Crew also will gain new power over hiring of school principals, the day-to-day education managers at city schools. Currently, principals are picked by the local boards, which in some cases have sought favors for their hiring decisions.

Now new principals will be selected by the new superintendents appointed by the chancellor.

Crew also will gain new legal authority to oust principals, superintendents and local board members for corruption, incompetence or poor academic performance at schools.

He has tried to bounce some school officials, but those efforts have been tied up by court challenges.

For the first time, school board members will be required to meet education training requirements, Crew

and other officials have called for requiring such courses but were not able to overcome board opposition.

Parents will get more say on their children's education through mandatory creation of school advisory councils. The panels, made up of parents and school staffers, will advise principals on education, curriculum, budgets and management.

Parents and the public also will get annual breakdowns of federal, state and city funding for local schools — and how that money is spent. The change is aimed at providing easily reviewed financial accountability that's now lacking.

The legislation marks the first major retreat in a generation from the 1969 school decentralization law, which created the local boards in response to demands from minority communities for more say in their children's education.

Lawmakers and officials said the reforms were keyed by an unrelenting wave of corruption scandals, a new state crackdown on low-performing schools and calls by Mayor Giuliani and Crew for authority needed to root out bad boards and speed education improvements.

The critical element here is that the hiring will no longer be controlled by the local board, Pataki said during a special session of the state Legislature.

Giuliani called the change "a great step forward."

This begins to give the chancellor the kind of administrative control that a chief executive officer needs in order to reform an organization," he said.

Crew said the legislation would free him to act without being blocked by legal challenges filed by school boards and other critics. "These landmark reforms will end the fragmentation of authority which allowed far too many children to languish indefinitely in educationally dysfunctional schools," he said.

But some local board members warned that the city's Central Board of Education — marked with its own history of scandals — shouldn't be trusted to improve schools. They said the reforms simply shift control of schools to the chancellor and mayor — a move that won't necessarily mean better schools.



GOV. PATAKI speaks to reporters yesterday after legislative leaders announced they would move to give Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew more control over system.

Truce led way for change

By MICHAEL FINNEGAN

Daily News Albany Bureau

ALBANY — The sweeping city school reform finally came together after state and city officials ended decades of grammar school-style squabbling and agreed on a common priority — school kids.

It took an eruption of school board scandals, abysmal test scores in dozens of schools and a leadership crisis over the school chancellor's office to spur officials toward compromise.

Add to the mix a new state education commissioner, who threatened to shut down the city's worst performing schools, and a reform deal was finally hammered out by Gov. Pataki and legislative leaders.

All sides agree it was a seemingly endless cycle of corruption in some of the city's 32 local school boards that started the momentum for change.

Calls for a major shakeup — including an outright abolition of the central Board of Education — intensified after

public battles with Mayor Giuliani sparked both the 1995 resignation of former Chancellor Ramon Cortines and a bruising replacement battle.

The Board of Education ultimately selected Rudy Crew — a man Giuliani found he could work with comfortably.

Nonetheless, months of negotiations over the school overhaul ended in a stalemate when state lawmakers adjourned their regular 1996 session in July.

The talks broke down because Giuliani insisted on mayoral control of the schools, an idea opposed by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan). He urged abolishing local school boards instead.

The city's state Senate delegation was divided — with some backing Giuliani, others calling for borough school boards.

The logjam finally broke in late November when Giuliani dropped his demand for mayoral control of schools and agreed to leave much of that authority with Crew. That was always

the brick wall," said Silver spokeswoman Pat Lynch. Silver, the Legislature's most powerful Democrat, dropped his demand for abolishing community school boards.

At the same time, Education Commissioner Richard Mills spurred the process by threatening to shut down scores of city schools plagued by poor performance by thousands of students.

Giuliani and Crew ultimately joined with Pataki and state Senate GOP leaders in pushing the sweeping overhaul that headed toward approval last night.

State and city officials said the deal was finally closed because it let all sides — Pataki, Giuliani and state lawmakers — claim political credit for revamping city schools for 1.1 million students.

"It was a realization that everybody couldn't get everything, and everybody would get nothing if everybody held their ground," said State Sen. Guy Velella (R-Bronx).

Educ-Stds

DRAFT Follow-up Q's and A's on the California Event -- April 4, 1997

Q: Didn't you imply that California had officially endorsed your national tests?

A: The strong support of Delaine Eastin and leading members of California's business community for national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math is an important step forward for California and the nation.

These leaders, along with the President of the California School Boards Association and the President of the California Federation of Teachers, stated their bipartisan desire to help parents know whether their students have mastered the basics and how their students and schools compare to other states and nations. Superintendent Eastin committed herself to work with others in the state, including the State Board, the Governor, and the Legislature to secure California's participation in these tests, and we look forward to working closely with the state as these tests are developed.

Q: Is the President of the State Board correct that, without a change in the law, there is no way for California to participate in these national tests?

A: The new tests of 4th grade reading and 8th grade math will be designed so California and other states can readily incorporate them into their overall standards and assessment system. California, along with 40 other states, already participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, upon which the new voluntary tests would be based. Test results would be used by local school boards, parents, teachers and principals to improve academic achievement in the state. Superintendent Eastin, the State Board, the Governor and the Legislature need to come together to determine what, if any changes will be required in order for the state to participate in 1999, and we will do whatever we can to assist them.

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

Ed Standards

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 6, 1997

March 6, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

SUBJECT: Preparing Students to Meet National Standards
of Excellence in Eighth Grade Math and
Improving Math and Science Education

Since the early 1980s, U.S. elementary and secondary school students have begun taking tougher courses, and we are starting to see the results. National Assessment of Educational Progress scores have improved in math and science, with gains in mathematics equal to at least one grade level. On the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), average math scores are at their highest in 25 years, even as the number and diversity of test-takers have increased. However, the eighth-grade results of the 41-Nation Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), released last fall, show that the United States is below average in math and just above average in science. That isn't acceptable; in this technology-rich information era, our students need to perform much better in both subjects, but especially in math, if they are to excel at higher-level math and science courses that are critical to college admission and success and to citizenship, productive employment, and lifelong learning.

The first step in raising achievement is lifting expectations and setting high standards for what students should know and be able to do. Our National Assessment of Educational Progress, TIMSS, and the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics give us a solid framework to build on. Last month, to help parents and teachers learn who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools need to improve, I asked the Secretary of Education to develop a voluntary national test for individual eighth-grade students based on widely accepted, challenging national standards in mathematics. The national test will be available to States and local school districts to give to their students in the spring of 1999, and will measure whether students have reached a high level of mathematics proficiency.

The primary responsibility for achieving high standards rests with students, teachers, parents, and schools in local communities across America. However, it is imperative that we work to ensure that Federal resources support student success as well. We must ensure that Federal programs, research, and human resources are used as effectively as possible to help improve teaching and learning.

more

(OVER)

Therefore, I direct the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Science Foundation to form an interagency working group and to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and local school systems to prepare students to meet challenging math standards in eighth grade, and for involving the mathematics, scientific, and technical communities in support of these efforts.

The action strategy should include recommendations for the use of Federal resources to help States, local school districts, and schools to improve teaching, upgrade curriculum, and integrate technology and high-quality instructional materials into the classroom, as well as motivate students and help them understand how math concepts are applied in the real world. The strategy should identify significant Federal programs, activities, and partnerships available to improve teaching and learning, ensure that these resources are appropriately focused on helping students reach challenging math standards, and determine how these resources can best support State and local reforms. In developing this strategy, the interagency group should review the current status of improvements in math education and identify and address critical areas of need, drawing on research and input from educators and professional organizations.

Because teaching and learning in math and science are so integrally related, and because success in both subjects is vitally important in this information era, the working group should also review how Federal resources and partnerships with other organizations can help improve student achievement in science.

The working group should make its recommendations and submit its action strategy to me within 90 days.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

*Edw -
Standards*

December 13, 1996

NOTE TO BRUCE REED:

Mike Cohen asked that I fax to you overview materials on standards and assessments. Attached are: (1) a state-by-state chart compiled by the American Federation of Teachers that depicts where states are in the effort to set challenging academic standards; (2) the introduction of a report on state assessments that the National Education Goals Panel compiled. The report itself has a summary on each state's assessment situation; and (3) the Executive Summary of the 1996 Goals Panel report that gives a good summary on standards and assessments.

Please call me if I can be of further assistance.


Jennifer Davis
(202)401-3049

Table 1: State Academic Standards

	State has or is developing academic standards in:			Standards are in:		Standards in all core subjects are clear and specific enough to lead to a common core curriculum		Standards are benchmarked to world-class levels		
	All Core Subjects	Some Subjects	No Subjects	Final Form	Draft Form	Yes	No	Yes	Partially	No
Alabama	✓			✓		✓+			✓	
Alaska	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Arizona	✓				✓	✓+				✓
Arkansas	✓				✓		✓			✓
California	✓			✓			✓-			✓
Colorado	✓				✓	✓				✓
Connecticut	✓			✓			✓			✓
Delaware	✓			✓		✓			✓	
DC	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Florida	✓				✓	✓+				✓
Georgia	✓			✓		✓				✓
Hawaii	✓			✓		✓				✓
Idaho	✓				✓	✓+				✓
Illinois	✓				✓		✓			✓
Indiana	✓				✓		✓			✓
Iowa			✓	-----		-----		-----		
Kansas	✓				✓		✓			✓
Kentucky	✓				✓		✓			✓
Louisiana	✓				✓		✓			✓
Maine	✓				✓		✓			✓
Maryland	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Massachusetts	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Michigan	✓			✓		✓				✓
Minnesota	✓				✓		✓			✓

Mississippi	✓			✓		✓			✓	
Missouri	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Montana	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Nebraska	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Nevada	✓				✓		✓			
New Hampshire	✓			✓		✓		✓		
New Jersey	✓			✓			✓		✓	
New Mexico	✓				✓		✓		✓	
New York	✓				✓		✓		✓	
North Carolina	✓			✓			✓		✓	
North Dakota	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Ohio	✓			✓			✓	✓		
Oklahoma	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Oregon	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Pennsylvania	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Rhode Island		✓			✓			✓		
South Carolina	✓				✓		✓		✓	
South Dakota	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Tennessee	✓				✓	✓			✓	
Texas	✓				✓	✓			✓	
Utah	✓			✓		✓			✓	
Vermont	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Virginia	✓			✓		✓			✓	
Washington	✓				✓		✓		✓	
West Virginia	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Wisconsin	✓			✓			✓		✓	
Wyoming			✓							
Totals	48	1	2	21	28	15	34	0	12	37

- † Reflects movement by a state that failed this criterion last year, but passed it this year
- Reflects movement by a state that passed this criterion last year, but failed it this year

INTRODUCTION

This *Profile of 1994-95 State Assessment Systems and Reported Results* is a response to the Panel's desire to know what states are doing in the area of assessments and how they are reporting results. It provides information on individual states' current assessment and reporting practices.

The annual *National Education Goals Reports* present student achievement information as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). They monitor progress toward Goal 3 at both the national and state levels by reporting three performance levels defined by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) -- Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The NAEP data provide comparable information across the states. The focus of this report, however, is to document what individual states are doing in terms of developing their own standards and assessments, and how they report those results (state level reading and mathematics data from NAEP are included in Appendix A).

Report Format

Two pages of information are presented for each state.¹ The data for the first page are from the Council of Chief State School Officers' and North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's Association of State Assessment Programs

1. Data are not presented for the District of Columbia and the Territories because they were not included in the Association of State Assessment Programs (ASAP) Annual Survey conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers.
2. Data were reviewed by state assessment directors during March and April of 1996. Therefore, these state data may differ slightly from data published by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory in their publication on student assessment programs for the 1994-95 school year.
3. Blank space is an indication that the question was not applicable to the state, the answer was "no," or the state did not answer the question.

(ASAP) Annual Survey and reflect the status of each state's assessment program as of August 1995,² the end of the 1994-95 school year. These surveys were filled out³ by the assessment director, or their designee, within each state. Their names and phone numbers have been listed to provide the reader with the information necessary to gather more details. Specific items used from the survey are listed in Appendix B.

Data for the second page come from individual states' assessment or accountability reports and reflect selected reporting practices. In choosing which results to display, NEGP used the following criteria:

- Tests in reading and mathematics;
- Test results that were reported using performance levels or standards; and
- Tests that measure achievement at three levels -- elementary, middle, and high school -- and closest to grades 4, 8, and 11.

We did not profile results from exit examinations because, on the whole, these assessments tend to measure basic skills and report information on a pass/fail basis. For a few states, no test results are presented because either the state had no statewide assessment system or the system had been temporarily suspended for the 1994-95 school year.

A Glossary and Technical Notes have been included (in Appendix C) to provide the reader with definitions of terms and additional information on various states' performance levels. Other documents that the reader may find useful in learning more about this subject are included in the Additional Resources list (in Appendix D).

What Have We Found?

* **Forty-five states have statewide assessment systems. (The remaining five states do not have a statewide system or have temporarily suspended their program.) Most states (38) have at least one to three different components of testing, while seven states have four or more components. [For the purposes of this report, a component is defined by its format (the type of testing method used) and/or its purpose (e.g., to determine school readiness or student achievement).]**

As expected, there is a lot of diversity in how states are measuring student achievement. This section answers key questions about the various assessment components within a state.

What subjects and grades are tested?

Testing is most frequent in the subject areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. A few states test in additional subject areas such as spelling, health, and communication. All states that do have a state assessment system test in mathematics and 39 states test in reading. For most states, some type of assessment is done at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Grades 4, 8, and 11 are the most regularly assessed, with 33 states testing in grade 4, 40 states testing in grade 8, and 32 states testing in grade 11.

What type of tests are used?

A variety of tests are used to assess student achievement across the states. Six states reported using only a norm-referenced test, while the remaining states reported using a combination of one or more of the following test types: norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, writing samples, performance testing, constructed open response, and portfolio assessment. Of all types of tests reported, the most widely reported methods used are writing samples (used by 34 states), criterion-referenced testing (used by 31 states), and norm-referenced testing (used by 30 states).

How are the results used?

Twenty-six states with an assessment system use their assessment results for student accountability purposes, with the most prevalent being to measure whether students have met high school exit requirements (in 17 states) and to provide student awards or recognition (in 9 states).

Assessment results are used for school accountability in 40 states. School performance reporting was the most widely used school accountability mechanism, being used by 36 states. States also reported using results for other purposes, including decisions about school accreditation, school awards or recognition, and as a guarantee of skills demonstrated by high school students.

What are the consequences for schools?

In 27 states, school consequences such as probation or watch lists, funding gain or loss, warnings, and accreditation loss are reported as a feature of their assessment system. Thirteen states reported funding gain or loss as a type of school consequence used, while 11 states reported probation or watch lists. Only 2 states reported any type of consequences for staff.

How are special education students (those with an Individualized Education Plan -- IEP) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) students included in assessments?

Forty-two states reported providing accommodations for special needs students, such as extra time, large print, audio-taped responses, or the use of a word processor. Twenty-seven of these states reported providing accommodations to both IEP and LEP students, while 15 of these states reported providing accommodations only to IEP students. Nine states reported providing alternative assessments for their special needs populations.

Are tests aligned with curriculum frameworks or standards? What are the future directions for assessment?

Twenty-three states reported their state standards, curriculum frameworks or state goals are aligned with their assessments, while 21 states reported that they are in the process of being aligned.⁴ More than half of the states reported adding new tests to their current system and nine states reported adding new kinds of test items, such as performance-based items or writing samples. Six states reported including staff development or training in assessment in their future plans.

How are results reported?

More than half of all states with a statewide assessment system reported results using either the percentage of students reaching 3 or more performance levels (or standards) or the percentage of students reaching a state goal. For example, the state of Connecticut has established

4. Although the terms "state standards," "curriculum frameworks," and "state goals" were defined in the Glossary of the Survey, states may have relied instead upon definitions they use within their states, making comparability across states very difficult. In addition, states were allowed to define the term "alignment" and use that definition when answering the question, "Is your state's assessment program aligned to the curriculum frameworks, state goals, or standards?"

state performance goals for each of the grades and subjects tested on the Connecticut Mastery Test and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test. Students who achieve certain scores on these tests are considered to have met the state goal. In Kentucky, four performance levels have been defined: (1) distinguished (the student has deep understanding of the concept or process, can complete all important parts of the task, and can communicate well, think concretely and abstractly and analyze and interpret data); (2) proficient (the student understands the major concepts, can do almost all of the task, and can communicate concepts clearly); (3) apprentice (the student has gained more understanding and can do some important parts of the task); and (4) novice (the student is beginning to show an understanding of new information or skills). The overall goal is to have every student at the proficient level or above.

Conclusion

At the 1996 National Education Summit, governors and business leaders from across the country committed to the challenges of setting rigorous state academic standards and creating assessments of student attainment of those standards. This *Profile* shows that currently 23 states report that their assessments are aligned to their standards, and 21 states report they are in the process of being aligned. It was designed to be a user's guide on the current status of state assessments. By representing a snapshot of where states are today, this *Profile* provides some of the necessary information for policymakers and others as they begin to address these challenges.

SETTING STANDARDS AND CREATING ASSESSMENTS AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS

What should 4th graders know about American history? What kinds of computer skills should they be expected to master? Should all 8th graders be able to solve algebra problems? Should they be able to dissect a frog and identify its major organs? In order to receive a high school diploma, should school districts require their 12th graders to design and conduct chemistry experiments? Should high school graduates be expected to play at least one musical instrument? Should they be required to speak, read, and write a foreign language? Are these expectations too high? How do they compare to the expectations held for students in other countries? In today's world, what basics should all students learn?

These are the kinds of questions that are being discussed and debated throughout the United States as states and local communities decide what they want their own students to know and be able to do so that they are prepared to enter college or the workforce when they graduate. Mounting evidence suggests that far more rigorous levels of academic achievement will be required to equip American students for the kinds of jobs that will be available in the future—jobs that will demand increasingly sophisticated levels of literacy, communication, mathematical, and technical skills. Widespread concern that we do not ask enough from either our students or our schools has led to a resounding call for more challenging academic standards that clearly define what we expect all students to learn (content standards) and the levels of performance that we expect them to achieve (performance standards).

More rigorous education standards require students to master the basics and more. Challenging academic standards emphasize a thorough understanding of subject matter, plus problem-solving skills; integration and application of knowledge across different subject-matter disciplines; and thinking skills. For example, one of Colorado's standards for reading and writing requires students to "make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in writing, reading, speaking, listening, and viewing."¹ One of Virginia's science standards requires students in Grade 4 to "plan and conduct investigations in which appropriate metric measures are used to collect, record, and report data."² And one of New Jersey's standards for visual and performing arts

More rigorous education standards require students to master the basics and more.

expects that by the end of Grade 8, students will "create, produce, or perform works of dance, music, theater, or visual arts, individually and with others."³

These are not the kinds of knowledge and skills that can be easily tested with traditional multiple-choice examinations. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that many states and local communities are also hard at work creating new kinds of tests to measure whether students are meeting the new standards.

Why should these efforts by states and local school districts to set standards and to develop new assessments be of interest to parents? What does this mean for their own children? What kinds of skills and knowledge will they be expected to learn? What will these new tests look like? And what will happen if students do not meet the standards? This chapter will address these and related questions about standards and assessments so that parents can actively participate in these kinds of discussions and decisions in their own communities.

Why do we need to set standards? Haven't we had education standards all along?

Unlike some of our international competitors, the United States has never had a common set of education standards. This is because education is considered primarily a state or local responsibility (depending on the traditions of the state). It is true that the notion of establishing standards is not necessarily new to states and local school districts, since most have long held some sort of standards for promotion to a higher grade or for high school graduation. However, these kinds of standards have usually been set at very low levels to define the minimum acceptable levels of performance, rather than at high levels to define desirable, or expected, levels of performance. In addition, these kinds of standards have usually varied widely in both their scope and their quality from school district to school district. High performance standards for student achievement have been described as "part of an overall effort to improve instruction, increase the content of what is taught, and develop rigorous tests that measure progress toward high standards."⁴

Unlike some of our international competitors, the United States has never had a common set of education standards. This is because education is considered primarily a state or local responsibility (depending on the traditions of the state).

The push to set more challenging education standards was greatly influenced by several decades of international comparisons which suggested that U.S. students lagged behind their peers in other countries in mathematics and science achievement.^{5,6} Interest in raising standards was further heightened when the National Commission on Excellence in Education warned in its 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*, that the skills and knowledge of the U.S. workforce would have to increase dramatically in order for the nation to remain internationally competitive.⁷

In 1989, President Bush and the nation's Governors met in Charlottesville, Virginia, to address this problem collectively. The participants at this first



Education Summit agreed to set National Education Goals in order to provide a common direction for educational improvement in all states. Six National Education Goals were established in 1990, and were later expanded to eight by Congress. The Goals state that by the year 2000:

1. All children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
3. All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, 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 Nation's modern economy.
4. The Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
5. United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
6. 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.
7. Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.
8. Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

The National Education Goals Panel was created in 1990 to monitor national and state progress toward these goals through the end of the decade. However, the members of the Goals Panel quickly concluded that it would not be possible to determine whether U.S. students had actually met the Goals (especially Goal 3) unless states set clear targets, or standards, to determine whether students had "demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter."

How much progress has been made so far?

Since that time, a tremendous amount of work has taken place at the national, state, and local levels to set higher standards in education and to develop new forms of challenging assessments. Over the past seven years, voluntary standards have been created by subject area experts such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics in eight of the nine core subject areas specified in Goal 3 (English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, arts, history, and geography). Draft standards are currently under development in the ninth core area, economics. These voluntary standards have served as models or resources for the development of state and local standards. Physical education, social studies, English

as a Second Language, health, industrial arts, and technology are additional subject areas in which voluntary standards have been released in final or draft form.

As the voluntary subject-specific standards were being designed, many states were conducting similar work of their own. At least 32 states have developed state standards, and an additional 14 report that standards development is under way.⁸ Forty-five states report that they have statewide assessment systems. Twenty-three states report that they have aligned⁹ their assessments with their standards, and an additional 21 report that they are in the process of doing so.¹⁰

Local school districts also report that they have been busy setting their own standards and developing their own assessments. And this work has not been limited to small or wealthy school districts. Twenty-eight of the nation's largest urban districts recently reported that they were in the process of developing or adopting their own standards. Twenty-eight districts also reported that they were in the process of aligning their local assessment systems with national, state, or local standards.¹¹

At least 32 states have developed state standards, and an additional 14 report that standards development is under way. Forty-five states report that they have statewide assessment systems.

Despite all of the work that has been done to date, policymakers and business leaders realize that a number of critical challenges still lie ahead. For example, translated copies of the standards, assessments, and curricula of the United States chief economic competitors are not readily available to states to help ensure that the standards they set for their own students are comparable to the best in the world.¹² In addition, many states that have finished drafting their standards are now struggling with the complexity and expense of designing new assessments to determine whether students have met the standards. And limited information is available to let policymakers and business leaders know how their state standards and their students' performance measure up when compared to neighboring states.

Governors and business leaders convened a second Education Summit in Palisades, New York, in March 1996, in order to confirm their commitment to standards and assessments and to address these kinds of concerns. Two of the goals that participants agreed to achieve in their own states within the next two years were "to set clear academic standards for what students need to know or be able to do in core subject areas; and to assist schools in accurately measuring student progress toward reaching these standards."¹³

What do these new standards look like?

Some states, such as California, are setting standards at every grade.¹⁴ Other states, such as Washington, are setting standards by levels rather than grades. Most states, however, organize their standards by three or four grade clusters (for example, Kindergarten-Grade 4, Grades 5-8, and Grades 9-12). All states report that the first subject areas in which they developed or are developing standards are

⁸ In other words, they are revising their assessment systems so that their tests will actually measure whether or not students have mastered the skills and knowledge specified in the standards.



009
NO. 358
05-EXECUTIVE OFFICE → 2024565557
11:32
12/13/96

English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Additional core subject areas that are frequently cited include civics, geography, the arts, history, economics, and foreign languages. There is quite a bit of variation from state to state, however, in the breadth of subject areas covered. A few of the additional areas in which standards are being developed include agriculture (Nebraska), business (North Dakota), vocational education (Alabama), environmental education (Wyoming), marketing education (Texas), workplace readiness (New Jersey), home and work skills (Hawaii), health promotion and wellness (District of Columbia), technology (Michigan), and Native American, foreign, and American sign languages (Oklahoma).

Four examples of state standards that were developed in the core academic subjects of English language arts, mathematics, history, and science follow. These examples were selected because each of the states that developed them—Virginia, Florida, California, and Delaware—met the American Federation of Teachers' criteria for "exemplary" standards.¹³ According to the American Federation of Teachers, these standards are worthy of emulation by other states. They are "all written in clear, explicit language, they are firmly rooted in the content of the subject area, and they are detailed enough to provide significant guidance to teachers, curriculum and assessment developers, parents, students, and others who will be using them."¹³

SAMPLE STANDARDS

English Language Arts

Virginia: Grade 8 Writing

Standard: The student will write in a variety of forms, including narrative, expository and persuasive writings.

- Use prewriting strategies to generate and organize ideas.
- Focus on elaboration and organization.
- Select specific vocabulary and information.
- Use standard sentence formation, eliminating comma splices and other nonstandard forms of sentences that distract readers.
- Revise writing for word choice, appropriate organization, consistent point of view, and transitions among paragraphs.
- Edit final copies to ensure correct use of pronoun case, verb tense inflections, and adjective and adverb comparisons.
- Edit final copies to ensure correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and format.
- Use available technology.

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education. (1986, June). *Standards of learning for Virginia public schools*. Richmond, VA: Author.

¹³ While not all states agree with the criteria developed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to evaluate standards, they are a starting point for discussing the quality of content standards. The complete list of states that met the AFT criteria for exemplary standards is as follows: California (social studies), Delaware (science), District of Columbia (social studies), Florida (mathematics, social studies), Indiana (mathematics), Massachusetts (science), Ohio (mathematics), Virginia (English, mathematics, science, social studies), and West Virginia (mathematics).



Mathematics

Florida: Grades 6-8

Measurement

Standard: The student measures quantities in the real world and uses the measures to solve problems.

1. Uses concrete and graphic models to derive formulas for finding perimeter, area, surface area, circumference, and volume of two- and three-dimensional shapes, including rectangular solids and cylinders.
2. Uses concrete and graphic models to derive formulas for finding rates, distance, time, and angle measures.
3. Understands and describes how a change of a figure in such dimensions as length, width, height, and radius affects its other measurements such as perimeter, area, surface area, and volume.
4. Constructs, interprets, and uses scale drawings such as those based on number lines and maps to solve real-world problems.

Source: Florida State Department of Education. (1996). *Sunshine State standards, 1996*. Tallahassee, FL: Author.

History

California: Grade 8

United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict

Standard: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principles underlying the American Revolution.

Examples of the type of work students should be able to do to meet the standard:

1. Describe major events and explain ideas leading to the War for Independence.
2. Analyze key phrases of the Declaration of Independence and explain how they justified revolution, with special emphasis on the natural rights philosophy and the concept of "consent of the governed."
3. Explain the Patriots' cause after studying passages from such sources as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, political sermons, or letters of the time.
4. Describe the arguments advanced by both Patriots and Loyalists and explain how they demonstrated different interests, beliefs, hopes, and fears.
5. Explain the contributions of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and others in establishing a new nation.
6. Explain how the principles which brought about the American Revolution influenced other nations in history and how they still have meaning today.

Source: California Department of Education. (1995). *Challenging standards for student success. Draft interim content and performance standards*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Delaware: Grades 6-8

Energy and Its Effects: Interactions of Energy with Materials

Standard: By the end of eighth grade students should know that:

1. Energy can travel as waves which are characterized by wavelength, frequency, amplitude, and speed. Waves have common properties of absorption, reflection, and refraction when they interact with matter. They are either mechanical (e.g., sound, earthquake, tidal) or electromagnetic (e.g., sunlight, radio waves); only electromagnetic waves will travel through a vacuum.
2. The resistance to flow of an electric current through a material depends on the mobility of electrons in the material. In conductors (e.g., metals) the electrons flow easily, while in insulators (e.g., wood, glasses) they flow hardly at all. The resistance to flow converts electric energy to heat energy.

Source: State of Delaware Department of Public Instruction. (1996, June). *How directions: Delaware first in education. State of Delaware science curriculum framework, content standards. Vol. I Dover, DE: Author.*

As a reminder, standards define the essential concepts and skills that we expect all students to know and be able to do. However, they should not prescribe *what* should be taught to enable students to reach the standard (curriculum), nor should they dictate *how* the material should be taught (instruction). These decisions are best left to teachers and other school staff who work most closely with students. For example, in the sample standards shown on the previous page, California distinguishes the essential concept, or standard ("The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principles underlying the American Revolution"), from sample curricular activities that students should be able to do in order to meet the standard (e.g., "analyze key phrases of the Declaration of Independence").

Does this mean that nearly all of the work on standards and assessments is already done and that there are no further opportunities for input?

No. A number of states are still in the early stages of creating standards or revising initial drafts. In addition, some of the standards that have been created are so lengthy that it would not be possible to cover them all within the course of a normal school year. It will be essential for states and local communities to seek public input to help them choose what is most important for students to know and be able to do so that the standards that are finally adopted are useful and feasible. Many states report that public participation at hearings and at town and regional meetings has been a critical component of their standards development process.¹⁶ They claim that public participation has helped build support for setting higher standards in their states and has provided needed assistance during writing and review.

Moreover, despite the work that has already been done, in most cases we have limited information to tell us:

- whether standards are of high quality;
- whether standards are set high enough;

- how standards in one state compare with the standards set in other states or other countries;
- how student achievement compares across states or internationally;
- whether a state's assessment system is truly aligned with its standards;
- how states and local school systems are using assessment results to improve both student and teacher performance; and
- whether current assessments are actually measuring the knowledge and skill that children truly need to succeed.

How can we judge whether standards are of high quality?

Several organizations such as the American Federation of Teachers,¹⁷ the Council for Basic Education,¹⁸ the National Alliance of Business,¹⁹ and an advisory group to the National Education Goals Panel²⁰ have recently developed criteria to judge the quality of standards.²¹ Although each group's criteria differ slightly from the others, common to all are the notions that standards should be rigorous, comparable to the best in the world, and should be understood and supported by parents and the general public. One example of criteria to judge whether standards are of high quality is shown on the following page (see box).²²

Standards should be rigorous, comparable to the best in the work and should be understood and supported by parents and the general public

Colorado is an example of a state that enlisted the assistance of its citizens to judge the quality of its standards. Over 3,000 copies of the first draft of Colorado's standards were mailed to groups and individuals such as parent organizations, teachers, superintendents, public libraries, presidents of school boards, college and university presidents, and the general public.²³ The standards included response forms that asked citizens to rate each standard on a scale of 1 to 5 according to five questions:

1. Is the content standard a statement of what a student should know or be able to
2. Is the content standard specific and clear?
3. Is the content standard meaningful for today's world?
4. Is the content standard inclusive (that is, something every child can learn
5. Is the content standard a worthy goal for student learning?

Between 700 and 1,300 responses were received in each subject matter area. TI responses were used to revise and improve the quality of the final set of standards.

How do we know whether standards are set high enough?

Although we may desire to be the best in the world, information is not readily available that would enable states to compare their results easily to each other, to nation, or to our international competitors. Simply setting standards does not ensure that they are sufficiently challenging. External benchmarks are needed to ensure the standards are as demanding as those found elsewhere. But how can a state or community benchmark its standards to know whether they are set high enough?



Standards Should Be:

1. **World-class:** at least as challenging as current standards in other leading industrial countries, though not necessarily the same.
2. **Important and focused:** parsimonious while including those elements that represent the most important knowledge and skills within a discipline.
3. **Useful:** developing what is needed for citizenship, employment, and life-long learning.
4. **Reflective of broad consensus-building:** resulting from an iterative process of comment, feedback, and revision including educators and the lay public.
5. **Balanced:** between the competing requirements for:
 - depth and breadth;
 - being definite/specific and being flexible/adaptable;
 - theory or principles and facts or information;
 - formal knowledge and applications; and
 - being forward-looking and traditional.
6. **Accurate and sound:** reflecting the best scholarship within the discipline.
7. **Clear and usable:** sufficiently clear so that parents, teachers, and students can understand what the standards mean and what the standards require of them.
8. **Assessable:** sufficiently specific so their attainment can be measured in terms meaningful to teachers, students, parents, test makers and users, the public, and others.
9. **Adaptable:** permitting flexibility in implementation needed for local control, state and regional variation, and differing individual interests and cultural traditions.
10. **Developmentally appropriate:** challenging but, with sustained effort, attainable by all students at elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Source: Goals 3 and 4 Technical Planning Group on the Review of Education Standards. (1993). *Promises to keep: Creating high standards for American students* (Publication 94-01), pp. iii-iv. Washington, DC: National Education Goals Panel.

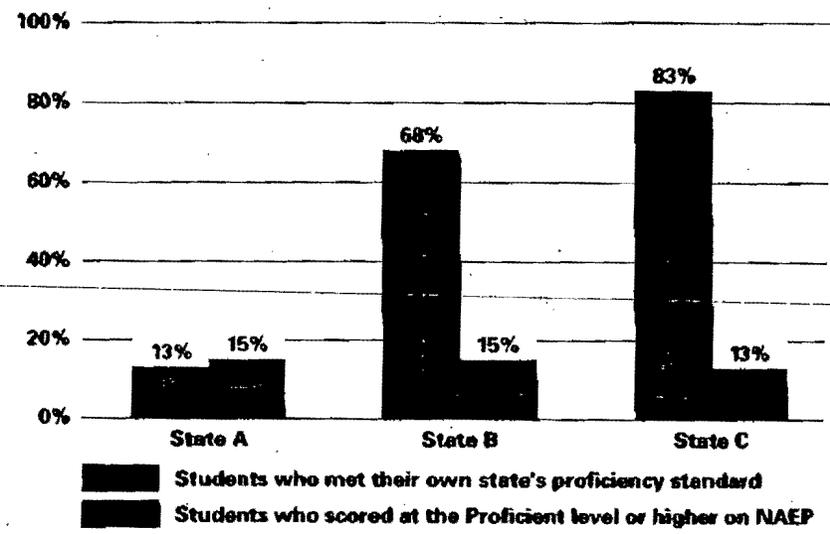
One way this could be done is by comparing the state standard with a high standard on another test. This type of comparison was recently done in mathematics and in reading, using the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).²⁴ NAEP is an assessment that is administered nationally at Grades 4, 8, and 12. Three levels are used to describe student performance: Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The percentage of students who met their own state's performance standard was compared to the percentage of students in that state who scored at the Proficient or Advanced levels on NAEP. (The Goals Panel considers student performance at the Proficient or Advanced levels on NAEP as evidence of mastery over challenging subject matter.)

The results of this comparison suggest that what is considered "good enough" for student performance varies from state to state. Exhibit A profiles results for three states in which 8th graders performed similarly on the 1992 NAEP mathe-

Exhibit A

Proficiency in Mathematics, NAEP Standard vs. State Standards

Percentages of 7th and 8th grade students in three states who met their own state's proficiency standard¹ in mathematics in 1994-95, compared with percentages of 8th graders in the same states who scored at the Proficient level or higher in mathematics on the 1992 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)²



¹ The definitions for mathematics proficiency in the profiled states are as follows:
 State A: The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the state standard (Level 1).
 State B: The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the state standard.
 State C: The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the "adequate and acceptable" performance standard.
² NAEP mathematics data have been revised.

Data source: Musick, M. (1996). *Setting education standards high enough: An open letter to educators, parents, government legislators, and civic and business leaders*. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

tics assessment—13% to 15% of the students in each state performed at the Proficient level or higher. However, the percentages of 7th and 8th graders in three states who met the standard on their own state's assessment ranged from 13% to 83%. These large differences suggest that States B and C (and many others like them) have probably set their own standards too low.

Of course, as the author of the study acknowledges, one can reasonably argue that it is the NAEP standards that are set too high. The main point that he makes however, is that unless states talk to each other about the processes they underwent to set standards, "the odds are great that 1) many states will set low performance standards for student achievement despite lofty sounding pronouncements about high standards, and 2) the standards for student achievement will be so dramatically different from state to state that they simply won't make sense



The National Education Goals Panel's Statement of Principles on State Systems of Assessment

The National Education Goals Panel strongly encourages states to:

1. Align state assessment systems with high academic state standards.
2. Report assessment results in a manner that is clear and meaningful to all interested parties—from parents to employers to policymakers—and that communicates whether all students are meeting the state's academic standards.
3. Use results for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning and for holding both the school system and the student accountable for progress.
4. Consider using the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test frameworks and embedding test items voluntarily in their own systems of standards and assessments so that NAEP data can serve as an external benchmark for state results.
5. Consider benchmarking performance levels to those at the national level (such as those developed by NAEP), and to those developed by other states and countries.

The National Education Goals Panel strongly encourages states and local communities to hold these kinds of discussions. To aid in these discussions, the Goals Panel has developed a set of principles to serve as guides to states and local communities as they develop and revise their own academic standards and systems of assessment (see box above).

How can we tell whether standards are as challenging as those set in other states or other countries?

This is one of the most important questions that policymakers, business leaders, and parents should be asking. A state that demands little from its graduates creates few incentives to attract businesses, create jobs, and boost its economy. Moreover, a state that demands little from its graduates provides scant assurance to parents that their sons and daughters will be able to compete successfully for good jobs or for admission to college, especially when compared to students who have been held to much higher standards.

States have used a variety of formal and informal approaches to determine whether their standards are as challenging as others', but these efforts have been largely uncoordinated. At present, there is no single place where states and local communities can turn for help to see whether they have set their standards high enough, what they can learn from the experience of others, and how their standards compare to the best in the world. Participating Governors and business leaders at the second National Education Summit are in the process of establishing an independent, nongovernmental organization that can provide this very type of assistance.²⁶

In the meantime, the majority of states have consulted standards documents developed by other states or by subject area experts when drafting their own standards. A more direct approach was tried by the North Dakota State Department of Education, which sent its standards to all 50 state departments of education for feedback.²⁷ Yet another approach is being studied on an experimental basis in 10 states that are working with the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.²⁸ The purpose of the study is to develop a methodology link individual state assessments to NAEP. If successful, it will enable states to report their own assessment scores in NAEP equivalents, and thus to compare student performance across states and to the high standards established for NAEP.

Other states and local school districts have formed collaboratives that allow them to pool resources and develop common standards and assessments that will permit state-to-state comparisons of student performance. One such example is the New Standards Project, developed by the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh and the National Center on Education and the Economy. The New Standards Project is working with 17 states and urban districts representing nearly one-half of the students in the United States to develop a national system of standards and assessments that will allow state and local customization.²⁹ Another example is the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS), which was created by the Council of Chief School Officers in 1991 to link states with common student standards and assessment needs, and to assist them with assessment design and development projects.

While it is fairly common to find that states have reviewed standards and assessments developed by other states to see how theirs compare, few states have attempted any type of international comparisons. Only 12 states report that they actually examined standards, tests, or curricular materials from other countries when designing their own standards.³¹ And those states that did attempt to review materials from other countries were generally limited to information from English speaking countries, since translated materials were not readily available.

One state that has benchmarked its standards internationally by administering its own assessment to students in other countries is Maryland. Maryland did this in Germany and Taiwan to see whether the standards for student achievement on the Maryland School Performance Assessment were set too high, as some critics had argued.³² The conclusion was that they were not. The state is also considering testing Maryland students with translated versions of student assessments that are given in Germany to see how Maryland students' performance compares.³³

States that have benchmarked their standards, tests, or curricular materials from other countries when designing their own standards.



Another approach is being tried by Colorado, Delaware, and Massachusetts, in collaboration with the Council for Basic Education.³⁴ These states have begun working together to see how closely their standards align with each other's, and with the frameworks developed for NAEP and for the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).³⁵ If the standards developed independently by the three states are fairly similar, the states hope to develop common test items so that eventually they can compare their students' performance across states and to national and international benchmarks.

Why do we need new types of assessments?

Testing is certainly one of the most common activities in U.S. schools and is used for a wide variety of purposes: for instruction; to screen students for disabilities or language differences; to hold students accountable for meeting high school graduation requirements; to provide student, teacher, or school awards or recognition; to make decisions about school accreditation; and to hold states, school districts, and schools accountable for improving student achievement. Forty-five states recently reported that they have statewide assessment systems.³⁵ All 45 states test students in mathematics and 39 test students in reading, primarily in Grade 4 (33 states), Grade 8 (40 states), and Grade 11 (32 states). Writing, science, and social studies are also frequently tested, and some states report that they test in spelling, health, and communication, as well. With all this testing, why do we need more new assessments?

The National Education Goals Panel believes that statewide assessment systems should do two things. In addition to providing a way to see how students' results measure up to others', assessment systems should answer the question, "Have students acquired the knowledge and skills that they will need as adults?" The goal is not to add more assessments, but to revise existing assessment systems to make sure that they test whether students have reached the standards and mastered the knowledge and skills that states and local communities want all of their students to learn. Since the adoption of standards is a very recent phenomenon in the majority of states, only about half of the states that have statewide assessment systems report that their assessment systems are currently aligned with their standards.³⁶

Only about half of the states that have statewide assessment systems report that their assessment systems are currently aligned with their standards.

The good news is that many states have already moved away from sole reliance on norm-referenced tests. Norm-referenced tests tell us how well a student did in comparison to other students in the same grade, but they do not tell us whether students have reached the standard and mastered what they need to know. For example, an 8th grader can score "above average" on a norm-referenced test in mathematics, but this result is not encouraging if the average is very low.

³⁵ The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is an international comparative study of educational achievement in nearly 40 countries, including the United States. Students in Grades 3-4, 7-8, and 12 were assessed in mathematics and science in Spring 1995. Results will be available beginning in late 1996.



At present, only six states rely on norm-referenced tests exclusively.³⁷ Instead, states are supplementing norm-referenced testing with combinations of writing samples, open-ended test items that require students to produce short written responses, items that require students to explain their answers, portfolios of student work, and criterion-referenced tests (which measure student performance against established criteria that all students are expected to learn).

What do these new tests look like?

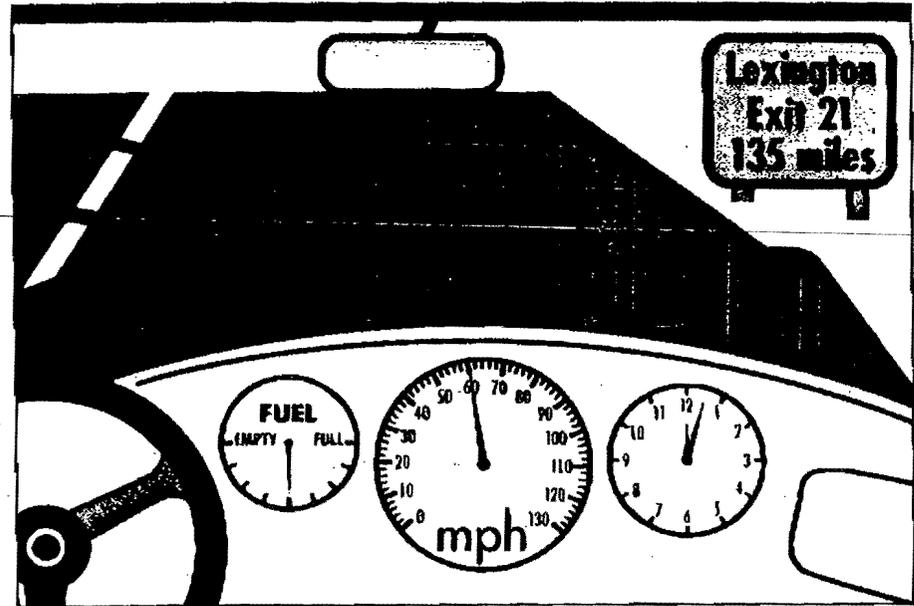
Three examples of challenging assessment items appear on the following page. These items were developed for the state assessment systems used in Maryland, Connecticut, and Kentucky, and provide real-life examples of the kinds of knowledge and skills that these states have determined that all of their students should know and be able to do. The Kentucky item tests one subject area (mathematics) at Grade 8. The items from Maryland and Connecticut are interdisciplinary, meaning that they are designed to tap student knowledge in more than one area. The Maryland item incorporates science and language arts skills at Grade 5, and the Connecticut item incorporates language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies skills at Grade 10. Both require students to spend part of their time working in small groups and part of their time working individually.

Clearly, the kinds of test items shown in these examples require more time to develop, administer, and score than traditional, multiple-choice items. But in return, they provide far richer information about students' skills and knowledge than simply measuring their ability to discriminate among several potentially correct choices. In order to solve these kinds of challenging problems, students must apply previous knowledge to new situations, think critically and creatively, demonstrate their ability to reason, interpret and explain information, use evidence to support their arguments, and defend both their approach and their solution to the problem.

NO. 358 "Trip to Lexington" Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS)

Note: Space for student responses for this item have been deleted.

Use the picture below to answer the following question.



Imagine that you live in Lexington and your parents are driving on I-75 returning from a trip to Knoxville. They would like to surprise you by picking you up at school when you are released at 3:00. On the highway their car averages 23 miles to the gallon. The gas tank holds 12 gallons of gasoline.

- a. Based on the information above and in the diagram, do you think that your parents will need to stop and buy some gasoline? Explain your reasoning.
b. If they do stop and purchase gasoline, will they have enough time to get to the school before you get out of school? Assume they average the speed shown on the speedometer. Explain your reasoning.
c. If you think that they will arrive early or late, how early or late will they be? Explain your answer.

Be sure to label your responses (a), (b), and (c).

Source: Kentucky Department of Education. (1995-96). Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) student test booklet. Frankfort, KY: Author.

How can I help my child prepare for these tests?

- 1. Set high expectations for your child.
2. Talk with your child's teachers regularly to discuss how your child is doing in school and what you can do to help your child improve.
3. Meet with your child's teacher or the school principal to discuss your child's scores or the school's scores on the test(s).
4. Read and write with your child and take time to read aloud to him or her, no matter how young or how old your child is.
5. Provide a quiet place for your child to study. Help your child with his or her homework.
6. Show interest in what your child is doing in school.
7. Limit the amount of television your child watches and discuss what he or she sees on TV.
8. Volunteer to help with school activities.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education. (n.d.). Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) parent handbook: Raising expectations for Maryland students. Baltimore: Author.

Adapted with permission.

What are the consequences if a student does not meet the standard?

The majority of Americans believe that high standards will have positive results for students: 71% say that if students are held to high expectations, they will "pay more attention to their school work and study harder." Seventy-two percent believe that students "will actually learn more." Not only does the public support higher standards, but they firmly believe that they should be enforced—81% say that students should not be passed unless they have mastered the required subject matter.³⁰

A recent state survey concluded, however, that making standards "count" by tying them to meaningful consequences for students is not receiving sufficient attention in most states:³⁹

- only three states require districts to use state standards and assessments as factors when considering whether to promote students at certain grades;
■ fewer than half of the states require students to pass high school graduation examinations linked to the state standards; and
■ only nine states require students to pass graduation examinations linked to the state standards in all four core subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Enforcement of higher standards by the public schools, higher education, and business appears to be increasing, however. While only four states currently require students to pass graduation examinations that are set at least at a 10th-grade proficiency level, eleven more states plan to do so in the future. And even though only

05-EXECUTIVE OFFICE + 2024565557 11:30 12/13/96



NO. 358 016
08-EXECUTIVE OFFICE → 2024565557
11:39
12/13/96

ten states currently require students to pass graduation examinations tied to the state standards, twenty plan to make this a graduation requirement in coming years.⁴⁰

In Minnesota, for example, students in the graduating class of 2000 must meet minimum competency requirements in reading, writing, and mathematics in order to earn a high school diploma. In addition to basic competencies, students who graduate four years later will also be required to demonstrate high-level competencies in ten broad areas, such as complex writing skills, advanced science, social studies/history, and problem solving.⁴¹

In Maryland, students may soon have a harder time getting into college if they do not meet state standards during high school. Maryland is developing new tests in core subject areas that students will have to pass in order to receive a high school diploma. As currently planned, students will be required to pass the state graduation tests at even higher levels in order to be accepted at Maryland state colleges and universities.⁴²

Oregon is another state that has recently tied its college admissions policies more closely to student mastery of essential skills in elementary and secondary

Household projects: A way to help your child learn

Helping your child prepare for new types of assessments does not necessarily mean buying the latest in computer software or other instructional materials. Household projects and family trips can help your child to learn some of the most basic problem-solving, communication, and thinking skills they will need, not only to do well on assessments, but for the future.

In the kitchen: Have your child help you cook. Cooking usually requires reading, gathering together the proper materials, measuring out exact amounts, and organizing steps in the proper order.

Traveling: When planning a trip, get out the map and have your child plot the route and determine the distance you have to travel. If you're taking public transportation, let your child help pick the best bus route. If you're taking a car, tell your child how many miles per gallon your car gets and ask him or her to figure out how many gallons of gas you will need for the trip. During or after the trip, help your child create a written travel log to share with family and friends.

Gardening: If you are planting a garden, first go to the library with your child and read more about what you might want to plant and how to do it. Together, find out about different plants and let your child help pick some seeds which would grow well in your area. Ask your child to help figure out how much space you will need depending on which seeds you plant.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education. (n.d.). *Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) parent handbook: Raising expectations for Maryland students*. Baltimore: Author.
Adapted with permission.

school. The Oregon State System of Higher Education has created the Proficiency-based Admission Standards System, or PASS, in partnership with high schools, community colleges, and the Oregon Department of Education.⁴³ This new approach to college admissions replaces grade-point averages with proficiencies—clearly specified statements of the knowledge and skills students must master to be accepted. Starting in the fall of 2001, to be admitted to Oregon's public 4-year colleges, a student must demonstrate proficiency in six content areas: mathematics, science, social sciences, foreign languages, humanities/literature, and fine and performing arts. In addition, students must demonstrate mastery of skills grounded in the required subject areas, such as reading, writing, analytic thinking, and problem solving.

Employers, too, are taking steps to make standards count. Participating business leaders at the Second Education Summit in March 1996 pledged to implement new hiring practices within one year that would require students to show evidence of high academic achievement (such as high school transcripts) when applying for jobs. Business leaders also made a commitment to consider a state's academic standards and student performance when deciding where to locate or expand their businesses.

Will higher standards and tougher assessments unfairly penalize students with disabilities or those who have limited English proficiency? What about students who attend schools with fewer resources?

Public opinion polls show that most Americans support the idea that the same standards should apply to all children.⁴⁵ After all, if standards represent the essential knowledge and skills that students will need as adults, why should some children be expected to learn less than others? In the long run, won't lower expectations for some groups of students only hurt them by diminishing their chance for success?

At the same time, valid arguments can be made that applying the same standard to all children, regardless of circumstances, is inherently inequitable. How can children who attend schools with outdated science textbooks and no laboratory equipment be expected to achieve the same level of proficiency in science as students who attend schools with state-of-the-art equipment and materials? How can a Spanish-speaking student who enters a U.S. school in 10th grade be expected to learn sufficient English and academic content within two years to pass mandatory high school graduation examinations that were written for native English speakers? Is it fair to expect students with learning disabilities to score at the same levels as other students in order to qualify for admission to college?

Public opinion polls show that most Americans support the idea that the same standards should apply to all children.

One argument that has been proposed is that if a state expects all students to achieve the same standards, then it is incumbent upon that state to devise a way to identify struggling students early on and provide them with the necessary support that will enable them to meet the standards.⁴⁶ However, only ten states currently



require and fund intervention strategies, such as after-school tutoring or Saturday school, to help low-achieving students reach the state standards. An additional eight states require intervention but provide no money to help schools and school districts implement programs.

At present, states use a variety of approaches to determine whether students with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency should participate in statewide testing. Forty-two states report that they provide testing accommodations for students with disabilities, such as Braille and large-print, audiotaped responses, the use of a word processor, or extra time. Twenty-seven of these states provide testing accommodations for limited English proficient students as well. Nine states report that they provide alternative tests to students with disabilities or limited proficiency in English.⁴⁷

Many states have indicated that providing appropriate and reliable accommodations for limited English proficient and special needs students is an important challenge. Delaware, Maryland, Minnesota, Oregon, and Pennsylvania have received assessment development grants from the U.S. Department of Education to either develop or modify their new assessment systems for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency.^{48****}

For example, Delaware's Inclusive Comprehensive Assessment System is designed to measure how well all students are meeting the state content standards in language arts, mathematics, social science, and science. Delaware has targeted its assessment development grant to design, develop, and evaluate mathematics assessments in Grades 3 and 8 and science assessments in Grades 5 and 10 for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency. Minnesota is using its grant to ensure that all students in the state can be assessed against its new set of rigorous graduation standards. Minnesota is also modifying its assessments so that students with disabilities or limited English proficiency can participate.⁴⁹

The Goals Panel strongly encourages all states to take similar steps to ensure that they, too, are designing sound policies on standards and assessments that include all students. Whether states decide to allow students extra time to meet the standards, to administer alternative assessments, to test in students' native languages, or to provide other kinds of appropriate testing accommodations, it is extremely important that parents and the general public be involved in setting these kinds of policies. And it is absolutely critical that they be involved in setting any policies about "high-stakes" testing (that is, testing that has serious consequences for students who do not meet the standards, such as denial of grade promotion, a high school diploma, or college admission).

**** In 1993, the U.S. Department of Education funded nine states and one multistate consortium to develop and field-test new forms of assessment aligned with state content standards.

How have states and local communities effectively engaged parents, teachers, and the public in the development of standards and assessments?

A recent publication by the Education Commission of the States documented some of the common obstacles that states encountered and the lessons that they learned as they moved toward standards-based education systems. At the top of the list of recommendations was "involve the public in making decisions about standards."⁵⁰

Public involvement has taken many forms across the country, from town meetings, to small focus groups, to the use of television and print media. The vast majority of states report that attempts were made throughout the different stages of the standards-development process to include teachers, school administrators, and representatives of the community, such as parents; representatives of business industry, and labor; members of the legislature; and higher education faculty. In some states, combinations of individuals from these groups served directly on teams to write the standards. In other states, they served on review panels or advisory boards overseeing standards development.⁵¹

In a number of states, regional conferences and public hearings were held to review and discuss the draft standards. A strategy used in Colorado was to recruit community groups such as the League of Women Voters to host public meetings across the state to provide opportunities for citizens to discuss draft standards.⁵²

How can parents participate in the development of standards and assessments?

1. Read the standards your school or community has drafted and encourage other parents to do so. Ask questions.
2. Attend community meetings and public forums.
3. Make sure that all voices are heard. Invite parents and other community members whose opinions you may not agree with.
4. Challenge assumptions about what we can expect from students.
5. Volunteer your services to "get the word out" (by distributing flyers, writing opinion pieces, printing documents, etc.).
6. Encourage your school or district to hold meetings to explain assessment methods and to take part in actually doing assessment tasks. Find out what work that meets the standards looks like.
7. Encourage your school or district to plan programs to help students meet high standards.

A nine-step process to create high-performance schools

- Step 1. Build demand for standards and reform.
- Step 2. Set high academic standards.
- Step 3. Conduct an "education inventory" to identify the school system's strengths and weaknesses.
- Step 4. Build community consensus.
- Step 5. Reorganize for change.
- Step 6. Develop new student assessments.
- Step 7. Build staff capacity.
- Step 8. Create an accountability system.
- Step 9. Set checkpoints and make adjustments as needed.

Source: Doyle, D.P., & Pimental, S. (forthcoming). *Setting standards, meeting standards: Creating high performance schools*. Washington, DC: Author.

In addition to public hearings and conferences, states and local school districts have used a variety of formats to make information more widely available to the public. Arkansas has sought input on its standards via the Internet and public television conferences, and Ohio has solicited public comment through the Ohio Educational Computer Network. Wisconsin plans to make its standards available on CD-ROM.⁵³ Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Diego increased the level of public participation in the development of their standards by disseminating draft standards to residents in both English and Spanish.^{54, 55, 56} And in Colorado, a cable television company helped gather public response by producing a half-hour special on the state's standards and proposed assessments.⁵⁷

What can states and school districts learn from others who have successfully involved parents and the public in efforts to set higher standards?

There are many different approaches that states and communities can take to set their own standards. While no single model will work for everyone, states and local districts can save considerable time and money by learning from others who have already been through the standards-setting process. One example of a community that has successfully involved parents and the public in efforts to set higher standards is Beaufort County, South Carolina. Beaufort was one of the first school districts in the nation to organize around world-class academic standards. Beaufort's approach is based on three principles:

- rigorous academic standards;
- clear assessments for students and schools; and
- community action.

Beaufort began by asking citizens, "Where do we want our school system to be?", "Where are we now as a school system?", "What will it take to get us to where we want to be?", and "How will we know when we are there?" Beaufort used the following nine-step process to answer these questions and to create community support and approval for more challenging academic standards and assessments. Although the steps appear in linear fashion, many can be executed simultaneously or in quick succession.⁵⁸

1. Build demand for standards and reform

One of the first lessons that Beaufort County learned was that in order to achieve change successfully, a community must be convinced that it is both necessary and desirable to have standards. Beaufort realized that building demand takes time, good will, and sound ideas. Beaufort held a series of town meetings to encourage open discussion and listen to what was on the public's mind. Holding the meetings in different places in the community and at different times helped maximize public participation, and acting on concerns quickly demonstrated genuine commitment to change.

2. Set high-academic standards

Fortunately, the tremendous amount of work that has been done to date to set more challenging academic standards has resulted in a wealth of models and resources. States and local communities can and should borrow liberally from the standards developed by other states and districts, other countries, professional associations, and universities. However, one of the most important lessons learned by the Beaufort community was that it could not borrow another district's standards in their entirety and simply add its own school district's name to them. The standards had to be customized to reflect community consensus on what Beaufort children should know and be able to do, so that parents, teachers, and the general public would feel ownership for the standards and insist upon their implementation in the schools.

Beaufort involved teachers, parents, and other members of the community from the beginning by recruiting representatives to serve on eight content-specific design teams. The design teams were composed of 19 members each: ten teachers, two parents, two community leaders, two business leaders, one school administrator, and two students. The teams met over a period of six months to draft standards in mathematics, language arts, natural sciences, social studies, foreign languages, the arts, health and wellness, and community service. The teams then presented the draft standards at community-wide meetings for public review and critique. States and districts that do not go through this kind of consensus-building process to create ownership may quickly find that their standards sit on the shelf, unused.

3. Conduct an "education inventory"

An education inventory answers the question, "How are we doing?" Beaufort identified the strengths and weaknesses of its system by analyzing a variety of



student, school, and district data such as test scores, course-taking patterns, and student absenteeism and truancy. The purpose of conducting the education inventory was to take academic stock and to set the stage for informed policy formation.

4. Build community consensus

Community consensus comes from an honest exchange of ideas and opinions about what all students should know and how well they should know it. Beaufort began by displaying the district's student achievement for all to see, through a series of focus groups and public meetings. Citizen committees were then formed to build further support in the community for establishing world-class standards and a system that holds students and schools accountable for reaching them.

Graduation requirements must change to ensure that diplomas are awarded on the basis of hard work and mastery of required subject matter, not simply the number of hours spent in school.

5. Reorganize for change

Setting higher expectations is a necessary, but not sufficient, step to increase student achievement. Beaufort realized that the school system itself must also reorganize in many ways. For example, curricula had to be redesigned to eliminate courses that required minimal student effort. Steps had to be taken to ensure that students had access to higher level courses that prepared them to meet the standards. Teachers had to be trained to teach the new knowledge and skills. And graduation

requirements had to change to ensure that diplomas were awarded on the basis of hard work and mastery of required subject matter, not simply the number of hours spent in school.

6. Develop new student assessments

It is unlikely that the assessments currently used by a school district will be appropriate once the community has decided collectively what students should know and be able to do. New assessments will have to be created to measure student mastery of the essential knowledge and skills so that the standards and assessments are aligned. Communities cannot hold their schools accountable for helping all students achieve the standards if there is no way to determine what students have actually learned. Beaufort, for example, moved quickly to construct criterion-referenced tests tied directly to the new standards to give teachers, parents, and students precise information about which essential objectives a child had already mastered and which had yet to be mastered.

7. Build staff capacity

Building staff capacity simply means training new teachers and re-training experienced teachers. Teacher professional development should not be seen as an "add-on," but should be central to the process. Beaufort's approach to professional training is highly focused and incorporated into the school day. Commitment to building staff capacity continues to be demonstrated by including educators on

committees to set standards and to create and review test items, and by designing appropriate training and development sessions. Other strategies are giving teachers time to observe one another's classrooms, critique lessons, and pick up pointers; giving teachers time to work with other teachers; and giving teachers time to plan and polish instruction.

8. Create an accountability system

Answering the questions, "How are we doing?" and "Where do we want to go?" is really just the first step in creating an accountability system. Setting ambitious long-term goals that are specific, achievable, and results-oriented is a second step. An accountability system requires communities to measure and report student progress to the public regularly. As the Goals Panel recommends, districts should report assessment results in a manner that is clear and meaningful to all interested parties—from parents to employers to policymakers—and that communicates whether all students are meeting the standards.

9. Set checkpoints and make adjustments as needed

Finally, it is important to realize that not all change may be positive, and adjustments may be needed. Furthermore, not all positive accomplishments may be moving at a pace that is satisfactory to the community. By creating an accountability system and setting checkpoints (or desired goals within a specified period of time), communities can see how much progress they have made and can use their results for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

It is important to realize that not all change may be positive, and adjustments may be needed. Furthermore, not all positive accomplishments may be moving at a pace that is satisfactory to the community. By creating an accountability system and setting checkpoints (or desired goals within a specified period of time), communities can see how much progress they have made and can use their results for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

Conclusions

The National Education Goals Panel remains convinced that the kinds of changes necessary to bring student performance in this nation up to world-class levels begin with standards and assessments. Although we have seen marked progress in some areas, we still have far to go before we can rest assured that U.S. students have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to compete in a global economy, obtain meaningful employment, succeed in college, be good citizens, and lead productive lives. Governors and business leaders have pledged to accelerate progress by setting higher standards and creating challenging assessments in all states within the next two years. With the support and involvement of parents, teachers, policymakers, and the public, these promises can be fulfilled and all students can learn at significantly higher levels. We owe it to our children to expect nothing less.

Standards Ed

National Education Standards

Perhaps the greatest gift we received on standards is the Republican opposition to the, This now guarantees us coverage of an issue that the press was ignoring.

We should run with this and continue to add events to the schedule and make clear our unwavering support for standards and testing across the board, in all schools and in all communities. Black voters are in fact very supportive of standards and while they waiver when told of negative consequences, they return to being very supportive based on positive argumentation.

However, the Hispanic community does not, and has special concerns related to language. This community is single mindedly focused on the importance of education in this country, and so having them oppose educational standards and testing can be very counter productive.

Possible compromises include having everyone take the English test and then offering a Spanish one as an option so that a student could show that he is smart but behind in this language.

Polling Data:

Awareness for the President's support of voluntary standards and testing is 56%, (43% unaware).

Does this make you much more favorable to President Clinton, somewhat more favorable, somewhat less favorable, or much less favorable toward him?

57% more favorable (20% much more + 37% somewhat)
21% less favorable (10% much less + 11% somewhat)

Unaided, 76% support national education standards and tests (19% oppose).

This is consensus support across party and race

Support/Oppose:

Party - Democrats: 79/21, Republicans 77/16, Independents 78/17

Race- White 79/15, Black 81/15, Hispanic* 65/21

Describing the specifics of the President's plan increased support 2 points (78/19)

"President Clinton has proposed a national test in reading for fourth graders and in math for eighth-graders. The tests would be prepared by a bipartisan board appointed by Congress. The tests would be voluntary, with each state deciding whether its students would participate."

Opposition arguments pull support down - to 55% when the costs are mentioned. Support returns to 69% when necessity is stressed.

Given this, do you support or oppose national education standards and tests?	Support	Oppose
Some opponents to testing argue that national tests will not be appropriate for some disadvantaged students, and may encourage them to drop out of school.	64	33
Opponents also say the national tests would cost \$22 million to develop and \$100 million per year to administer, which could be better used to hire more teachers or providing additional training for instructors.	55	40
Supporters of national tests say they are essential to gauge the performance of public schools, encourage improvement in schools and ensure that students have the basic skills necessary to move forward.	69	24

Republicans are most affected by the cost of the tests – dropping support to 48% (45% oppose)

56% believe the President should veto the Education Appropriations if Congress it bars national testing, 35% believe he should accept the bill. 62/26 would be more/less favorable (22% much more favorable) if the President vetoes it for that reason.

% saying support	Party			Race		
Given this, do you support or oppose national education standards and tests?	D	R	I	W	B	H
Some opponents to testing argue that national tests will not be appropriate for some disadvantaged students, and may encourage them to drop out of school.	68	63	34	68	44	66
Opponents also say the national tests would cost \$22 million to develop and \$100 million per year to administer, which could be better used to hire more teachers or providing additional training for instructors.	65	48	57	58	54	48
Supporters of national tests say they are essential to gauge the performance of public schools, encourage improvement in schools and ensure that students have the basic skills necessary to move forward.	72	72	70	72	76	54

The DLC Briefing

Ed. Standards

A New Democrat Perspective on the Issues from the Democratic Leadership Council

September 4, 1997

The DLC Briefing is a service providing a concise New Democrat perspective on national issues that are of immediate interest to policymakers. Please contact 202-546-0007 with comments or suggestions.

↔ URGENT ↔ URGENT ↔ URGENT ↔ URGENT ↔ URGENT ↔ URGENT ↔

NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

*New Democrats Should Oppose Effort to Gut
President's Voluntary Standards Initiative in Congress Today*

What's Happening

As early as today, Republicans in both the House and Senate will try to cut off funding for the reading and math tests the Administration is developing in pursuance of President Clinton's voluntary national education standards initiative. If successful, these amendments would effectively sabotage efforts to improve public schools by measuring student mastery of basic skills across school district and state lines.

In the House, Rep. Bill Goodling (R-PA) is offering an amendment to the FY 1998 Education/Labor/HHS Appropriations bill to prohibit use of federal funds for any testing initiative not already authorized by Congress, effectively killing the Administration's national standards initiative. Rep. John Edward Porter (R-IL) is reportedly pursuing a compromise proposal that would allow use of federal funds to develop national tests, but not to implement them. In the Senate, Sen. Dan Coats (R-IN) is offering an amendment to the same appropriations bill to prohibit funds for testing until such time as Congress authorizes the initiative.

New Democrat Principles

- ◆ Improving the performance of K-12 public schools is critical to America's economic performance in the Information Age and equally critical to restoring upward mobility and equal opportunity for all Americans.
- ◆ There are three keys to improving schools: common standards, choice and competition, and public accountability, which must all be pursued simultaneously. Standards without choice and competition and accountability (or consequences for failing to meet standards) will not spur improvements or offer a recourse to parents of children assigned to bad schools. School choice without clear standards and public accountability diffuses limited resources without giving parents or taxpayers a yardstick for measuring competing schools. Accountability without standards or choice is virtually impossible.

The Politics

The movement for clear national education standards in K-12 is popular among Americans, but not with the education establishment and many politicians of the left and right.

Educational Progress.

The conspiracy theory objections to standards advanced by many in the religious right are even more preposterous. Far from promoting fuzzy-minded liberal ideas about curriculum or instruction, the standards and tests being developed by the Administration focus strictly on educational basics: reading and math, following international benchmarks.

Above all, the conservative reflex to oppose national standards makes a mockery of Republican efforts to authorize federal vouchers and/or tax breaks for private schools. Choice and competition are but a means to spur improvements in educational performance. Without clear standards to supply public accountability for use of public funds, such means can achieve no tangible end.

The Clinton Administration has (perhaps inadvertently) opened the door to criticism of its standards initiative by moving ahead unilaterally to authorize the development of model tests for student competency without employing such existing bipartisan entities as the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB). But the Administration rightly points out that NAGB is currently prohibited by law from assessing individual students—as opposed to schools—and has announced its intention to pursue legislation to place its testing initiatives under NAGB auspices.

The Goodling amendment short-circuits standards, and rules out any congressional/Administration compromise on testing, by flatly prohibiting use of federal funds for the Administration's initiative. Goodling himself seems to embrace a combo platter of liberal, conservative, and education establishment rationalizations against standards, calling testing "a waste of money," and supporting more funds for existing federal education programs as a preferred alternative. His amendment is intended to end the national education standards movement.

Rep. Porter and Sen. Coats offer more conditional, and potentially surmountable, roadblocks to the Administration's initiatives, since both claim they will support federal funding for tests if Congress is "bought in" through legislation and the tests themselves are developed and implemented by NAGB. But their amendments have the same practical effect as Goodling's if their sponsors fail to meet the Administration halfway in its efforts to bring its current work on testing under a congressionally authorized and bipartisan process.

National standards are far too important to education reform to allow them to suffer "crib death" by a preemptive congressional strike against federally developed tests. *New Democrats should oppose such a preemptive strike, and wherever possible link Republican efforts to experiment with vouchers and other private-school choice options to the acceptance of the national standards that could make such experiments effective.*

A recent DLC poll conducted by Penn, Shoen & Berland Associates showed that 70 percent of voters favor national education standards. Forty-one percent of voters believe that these standards should actually be set by the federal government (a position far more "intrusive" than the president's, which would let states and local school districts set standards based on national testing models, and determine how testing results would be used).

Many state and local education bureaucrats oppose national standards as making "output" factors—student performance—rather than "input" factors—funding, special programs, facilities, or teacher/pupil ratios—the key measurement of educational excellence. Others consider national standards an unnecessary duplication or preemption of state-sponsored tests, goals, or standards.

Some liberal politicians and advocacy groups oppose national standards, common tests, and especially student accountability for performance (i.e., an end to "social promotions"), as having a disproportionately negative impact on poor or minority students.

But the most imposing resistance to national standards comes from conservatives, who oppose them on a combination of federalist and "slippery slope" grounds.

The most common conservative argument against national standards is that they cannot be established without excessive federal intrusion into state/local prerogatives over local schools.

A variation on this argument is often offered by the religious right, which treats national standards as a Trojan Horse leading inevitably to a federally imposed monopoly of leftist and/or "secular humanist" ideas about curriculum or instructional methods—essentially the same argument the same people have made against "outcome-based education" and other education reform initiatives in the past.

Virtually all conservative opponents of national standards view the issue as detracting attention from their preferred vehicle for education reform: public subsidies for private schools through vouchers, scholarships, or tax incentives.

The New Democrat Take

National education standards should be a public policy "no brainer." Having some universally accepted yardstick for student competency on basic skills is critical to every other education reform effort, whether it revolves around choice and competition, curriculum, teacher training, instructional innovations, or even equalization of funding.

The conventional liberal objection to national standards is in fact an objection to any approach to education reform based on outcomes rather than inputs. To the extent that liberals oppose education standards out of fear that poor or minority students will not "test well," they are in fact, and against all the evidence, accepting elitist and perhaps even racist assumptions that such students are incapable of competing successfully in American life. High expectations, and rigorous remedial action towards students, teachers, and schools that fail to meet them, are the single most important thing we can do to raise skill levels and future incomes among poor and minority populations.

The conservative arguments against national standards fare no better. The claim that states can best be trusted to set their own individual standards ignores the evidence of widely varying, and often weak, state benchmarks. In Louisiana, for example, 88 percent of fourth graders meet the state standard for reading, while only 15 percent achieve proficiency on the National Assessment of

-More-

Talking Points

- National education standards with testing are essential to national education reform. Without them, initiatives to promote choice and competition will lack accountability, and both parents and taxpayers will lack the yardstick necessary to judge the use of public funds by public or private schools.
- Widely varying state standards are not enough, since they do not offer parents and taxpayers a comparison of student performance across state or national boundaries.
- National standards are critical to judging the success of schools at getting "back to basics." So long as basic competency in skills universally accepted as important is the object of standards and testing, there is no rational basis for the "slippery slope" argument that standards will lead to a nationalization of curriculum or instructional methods.
- National standards absolutely require national testing models so that school administrators, parents, and students know exactly what children are expected to learn, and when.
- Conservatives who promote private-school choice through vouchers or tax benefits while opposing national education standards must be sharply challenged for elevating "means" over "ends." Any school benefitting from public funds must be accountable to taxpayers for their performance according to public benchmarks of success.

Ed. Standards

**NAACP Challenge to Use of North Carolina Statewide
Test as a Local School District Promotion Gate**
August 6, 1997

The NAACP Legal Defense Fund has filed a lawsuit in federal District Court against the Johnston County School District in eastern North Carolina, challenging a year-old policy which requires all students in grades 3 through 8 to achieve a specified score on the North Carolina state reading and math tests before they can be promoted to the next grade. The case is considered one of the nation's first federal court challenges involving state education standards and high stakes testing.

Under the contested policy, if a student does not pass the reading and math tests the first time, the exam is given a second time a week later. If a student fails the second test, depending on the score, he or she may, and in some cases, must, attend summer school, which is followed by a third administration of the test. If a student fails the third round, the student must repeat the grade, unless he or she succeeds in an appeal. The policy also requires high school students to meet target scores on English, math and social studies exams in order to get course credit for those subjects.

On the first two rounds of the grades 3-8 test this year the passing rates were approximately as follows:

	ROUND 1	ROUND 2
READING	[75%]	80%
MATH	85%	89%

The third round is yet to be given. Approximately 2,000-3,000 of 6,600 students in grades 3-8 did not pass at least one of the tests the first time around.

The federal suit was brought on behalf of the parents of 14 black, Hispanic, and white students who failed the tests. The parents allege that the tests, which are given statewide, violate the equal protection rights of minority students, who disproportionately obtain low scores. The suit also alleges that the district's test procedure violates the equal protection rights of special education students by failing to provide accommodations, like extra time.

The plaintiffs challenge what they claim is the district's reliance on the test as the sole criterion for promotion, regardless of how well students perform in classes during the school year. The NAACP's challenge is based in part on the argument that the North Carolina state tests were designed to measure how well *schools and*

school systems are teaching the state mandated curriculum, but are not a valid measure of *individual student performance*.

In its defense, the District states that it began early in the year trying to identify students at risk of failing the test and that it offered remedial programs, including before- and after-school tutoring and Saturday programs. The District also says that its policy allows students who earn a C or better in a course during the school year to appeal a nonpromotion decision, with principals and teachers making a recommendation based on a review of the student's work for the year, and a final decision made by a district committee. Moreover, the district has recently indicated that the nonpromotion policy can be waived for children with disabilities who do not pass the test (although another complaint voiced by the NAACP and local groups is that appeals and waivers have been handled in a haphazard manner). Overall, the District claims, students have shown considerable improvement on proficiency exams, and minority students have made the most improvement on the second round of the tests.

As a part of the suit, the NAACP has sought a temporary restraining order against using the policy to prevent any student from advancing to the next grade when school starts later in August. The first hearing in the case has been scheduled for next week. Note that the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights is not involved in this case.

Sources: 14 Children in North Carolina Sue a District Over Testing Policy, New York Times (8/6/97); Johnston Test Troubles Linked to Confusion, Raleigh News and Observer (8/5/97); Johnston Schools Sued Over Testing, Raleigh News and Observer (8/1/97); Office for Civil Rights, 8/6/97.

copy for: Erskine Bowles
Sylvia Mathews
John Podesta
Rahm Emanuel
Melanne Verveer
Don Baer
Ann Lewis

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 17, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRUCE REED
MICHAEL COHEN

SUBJECT: Long-Term Strategy for National Standards and Tests

Last week's TIMSS announcement of 4th grade progress in math and science was front-page news across the country. This memorandum provides an update on our efforts to sign up states and cities for the testing initiative, and outlines a long-term plan to secure broad support.

I. TEST DEVELOPMENT

The test development process is on track to be ready for administration as a pilot in Spring 1998 and nationwide in Spring 1999. A contract has been awarded to the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to develop the detailed specifications for the reading and math tests. This involves, for example, determining the balance of multiple choice and open-ended items for each test. CCSSO performed this same role for the development of NAEP, and this step is one signal to the education community that the new tests will in fact parallel NAEP as promised. As it did with NAEP, CCSSO has also established several advisory committees of subject matter specialists, testing experts and the education community to help guide the development of test specifications.

The Request for Proposals for the test development contracts has been let, and the contracts will be awarded before September 30. The Education Department is on schedule to award additional contracts for related research, development and evaluation necessary for the development and validation of the tests.

II. STATE PARTICIPATION

The success of this initiative is largely dependent on the voluntary efforts of states to incorporate the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests into their state testing programs. We have focused most of our efforts toward building a critical mass of states, with governors of both parties, to commit to participate in the testing program. We continue to believe that if we can achieve this objective over the next several months, we will pave the way for most remaining states to sign up over the course of the next school year.

Over the last four months, we have waged an intensive retail campaign to solicit every state's participation. Secretary Riley has written to every governor and chief state school officer, and he and Mike Cohen have worked closely with scores of state officials on ways to incorporate our tests into their state's approach to standards, testing and reform. The Vice President and Secretary Riley met with more than 40 chief state school officers in April, and secured their organization's endorsement.

We have made steady but slow progress to date. Half a dozen states are on board; another dozen are within reach of the next few months, as outlined below. But even states with leaders strongly committed to participating in the test are reluctant to commit publicly without first building the necessary support within the state. A number of factors are making officials in many states cautious. These include financial and political investments that states have already made in their own state standards and tests; skepticism from the education community about "yet another test"; concern about stimulating opposition from the far right, especially in states which experienced serious battles over state reform efforts or over Goals 2000; short-term distractions during the legislative sessions; limited understanding among governors about NAEP and the relationship between the new national tests and NAEP; and diffuse governance arrangements and tensions between governors and other state education officials. In each state we have to overcome these hurdles and take advantage of strong public support for national tests in reading and math.

States Signed Up: As you know, 6 states -- Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, West Virginia, Massachusetts, and Kentucky -- have pledged to participate in the test, with support in each case coming from the governor, the chief state school officer and the state board of education. In addition, the Department of Defense schools have also pledged to participate in the testing initiative.

In a seventh state, California, State Superintendent Delaine Eastin has pledged her support, though Gov. Wilson and the State Board of Education (Wilson appointees) have withheld theirs. They have not opposed participation in the test, but instead have chosen to oppose Delaine's independent action. These 7 states represent approximately 24% of the nation's 4th and 8th graders.

Next Target States: A number of additional states are within reach in the near future, based on our discussions with governors and chief state school officers. Over the next several weeks we will work to nail down as many of these states as possible. If possible, we would like to hold a multi-state sign-up event with a handful of states at the White House in mid-July.

Our most promising current targets are 14 states with another 20% of the 4th and 8th grade population:

Colorado Gov. Romer has indicated his intention for Colorado to participate. We are working with him to determine how soon he will be prepared to announce publicly.

Nevada Gov. Miller has indicated that he wants Nevada to participate. We are also working with him to determine the timing of the announcement.

Vermont Gov. Dean wants Vermont to participate; he is working to secure the support throughout the state for Vermont's participation. One critical step in this process is a mid-July meeting of a state task force on student achievement. No official decision will be made until after this meeting.

Missouri Gov. Carnahan and his chief state school officer are prepared for Missouri to participate in the 4th grade reading test. They have just completed the development of an 8th grade state math test (at a cost of \$6 million) and do not believe they can move forward with a separate national math test as well. We are working with Carnahan to determine the timing of an announcement.

Delaware Gov. Carper is heavily leaning toward participating in the national testing initiative; he is planning on working to secure the support of his state board of education and legislature. We will work with Carper to determine how soon he will be prepared to make a public commitment.

Utah Gov. Leavitt has expressed tentative interest in having Utah participate, pending consultation with his chief state school officer. We are following up directly and working with Romer to secure Leavitt's support.

Wyoming Gov. Berringer participated in a conference call with Secretary Riley, Mike Cohen, and a number of governors identified above. He expressed considerable interest, and we are now following up with him.

Oregon Gov. Kitzhaber and State Superintendent Norma Paulus are both interested in Oregon's participation, with the most active leadership coming from Norma. Norma has indicated they would be willing to make a public announcement after the legislature adjourns in late June.

New Jersey Preliminary discussions with the New Jersey Commissioner of Education (a gubernatorial appointee) indicated clear interest from him and Gov. Whitman. The New Jersey Supreme Court recently ruled that the state's approach to complying with a court order to provide more equitable funding is unconstitutional, so the attention of state education officials is now heavily focused on school finance issues. But we are trying to determine if an announcement from New Jersey will be feasible in the near future.

New York Commissioner Rick Mills is working to secure New York State's participation in your testing initiative. He has discussed this privately and publicly with the Board of Regents, has solicited input from education and business leaders in the state, and has discussed it with

Gov. Pataki. There is no specific timetable for the Regents to take this issue up, but Rick is pushing to have the Regents consider this as soon as possible.

Wisconsin Gov. Thompson has moved from initial opposition (he wrote an op-ed piece in the New York Times in February) to tentative interest, in part due to several conversations with Secretary Riley which resolved some misunderstandings he had. We believe Thompson is interested in having Wisconsin participate in the tests, although a running conflict with his chief state school officer may make it difficult for Thompson to provide the necessary in-state leadership. We are reaching out to the chief state school officer in an attempt to resolve this problem.

New Hampshire Gov. Shaheen is inclined to support participation in the test, as is Commissioner of Education Betty Twomey. They are both currently preoccupied with enacting Shaheen's kindergarten initiative. Once the legislative session is over, we will approach Gov. Shaheen again.

Maine Both the Commissioner of Education and Gov. King have expressed preliminary interest in participating in the test. We are working with them to address concerns they have raised regarding how best to integrate the tests into their own standards and tests, and to explain participation in national standards and tests to the public after so much effort has gone into developing the state's own standards.

Tennessee The Commissioner of Education (a gubernatorial appointee) is very interested in participating in the testing initiative, and had secured Gov. Sundquist's agreement to participate. Unfortunately, within the past several days, as we were working toward an announcement with the Vice President prior to next week's Family Conference, Sundquist has begun to backpeddle, apparently under pressure from the far right. Sundquist has told the Commissioner that he still intends to participate, but at some later, unspecified time.

Next Steps: Secretary Riley and Mike Cohen have met with Govs. Bob Miller, Romer, Hunt, Thompson and Leavitt and discussed the possibility of a bipartisan effort between now and the NGA meeting, to reach out to and gain the support of as many governors as possible. The Democratic governors are prepared to help; we are trying to determine over the next several days which of the Republican governors will also help. We will then proceed to work with the governors to secure the commitment of as many states as possible to participate in the testing initiative.

- **Democratic States:** We are making a special effort to reach out to the seven Democratic governor not already listed above (Knowles, Chiles, Zell Miller, O'Bannon, Nelson, and Locke) We have made preliminary contact with these states, and encountered difficulties with a few. In Georgia, responsibility for deciding state testing policy lies with the chief state school officer, an elected Republican who is openly hostile to every form of federal

involvement in education. Gov. O'Bannon has indicated that the timing is not right in Indiana for him to pursue participation in national tests. And Gov. Locke's office has sent Secretary Riley a letter indicating that Washington will not participate in the testing initiative, because they believe it will disrupt their own efforts. We have asked Gov. Locke to reconsider that position, and to indicate so in writing.

- **Republican States:** We believe that a bipartisan approach led by Romer, Leavitt, and perhaps Engler will be the most effective way to reach a number of big-state Republican governors, including Govs. Ridge, Edgar, Carlson, and Rowland. It may be the only way we have of reaching out to Gov. Bush.

- **Unlikely States:** Finally, a number of states are not likely to sign up unless there is a change of leadership or political climate. These include Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Virginia. These 8 states represent about 10% of the nation's school children.

We have also been exploring the possibility of securing an NGA endorsement for the testing initiative. However, this may prove impossible, due to the opposition of Gov. Voinovich, the incoming chair. Despite the close overlap between his agenda for education reform and yours, in recent years Voinovich has generally opposed federal involvement in education (it took nearly a year to persuade him to support Ohio's participation in Goals 2000). In addition, there are two civil rights issues pending between the Department of Education and Ohio. While Secretary Riley and the Education Department are trying to resolve these issues in a cooperative fashion, they complicate our ability to reach out directly to the governor. We have also asked for the assistance of the Ohio Business Roundtable and CEO's such as John Pepper and Joe Gorman. However, we do not anticipate that this will produce quick results.

III. LOCAL PARTICIPATION

We are also trying to sign up a number of urban school districts, where the need for reform is greatest. Cities that sign up will also be asked to share with us and with their communities the steps they will take to help prepare students for these tests (in most cases, this will create opportunities for cities to highlight, enlist new support for, and integrate efforts already underway). This will underscore that your testing initiative is about preparing students to meet higher standards, not simply testing.

We have identified a pool of approximately 20 large urban school districts in which we believe there will be strong interest in participating by the local superintendent, and by the mayors that are involved heavily in the local schools. The Council of Great City Schools has made preliminary contact with each of the superintendents; at least half a dozen expressed strong interest (Boston, Broward County FL, Cincinnati, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and San Francisco), and we will follow up with all 20 superintendents over the next few weeks. We anticipate being ready to announce the cities that will participate by mid-July.

We are working to assemble a package of assistance we can provide to cities that commit to participate in the testing program. For example, the Education Department and the National Science Foundation are identifying technical assistance resources, models of effective practices, and discretionary funds that can be directed toward assisting the cities. Enterprise Zones may have funds that can be directed to assist participating schools. The Office of Bilingual Education is planning an outreach effort to involve the Hispanic community in support of reading and math, and this effort will be targeted to participating cities. America Reads can help mobilize reading tutors, and NSF will help identify local partners from the mathematics and scientific communities.

IV. CONGRESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

As you know, Rep. Goodling has backed away from his earlier support for the testing initiative and has now signaled his opposition, including an attempt to add a rider to the supplemental appropriations bill that would have prohibited the Education Department from spending FY 1997 funds on test development. If Goodling continues his opposition, we are likely to face a battle over continued funding for test development as part of the FY 1998 appropriations bill. If we can regain Mr. Goodling's support, we think it will be possible to assemble a bipartisan coalition that will ensure continued funding and the legislative authority we will need in the future.

At your request, Secretary Riley and Mike Cohen met with Goodling last week, to explore his concerns. While no specific progress or commitments were made, Goodling's opposition softened over the course of the discussion. We will keep working on him.

Beyond Goodling and selected others on the Education and Economic Opportunities Committee, your national test initiative has received little attention from most members of Congress. Consequently, it is difficult to gauge the level of support we will receive if there is an appropriations battle.

We have launched a concerted effort to firm up Democratic support. First, the Education Department has begun to provide members with information on the testing initiative on a targeted basis, starting with members from participating states. Second, we are identifying members who will actively promote the test, especially in the House. Reps. George Miller, Dale Kildee and Tim Roemer are especially strong supporters, and virtually every Democrat on the House Education and Economic Opportunities Committee starting with Clay can be counted on to support the testing initiative. In addition, Rep. Etheridge is preparing to introduce a sense of the House resolution in support of this initiative, and will work to secure broad support for it. On the Republican side, Reps. Frank Riggs and Mike Castle have been quite supportive. However, we suspect neither will want to split from Goodling on this issue if he remains firmly opposed.

V. CONSTITUENCY GROUP SUPPORT

We are working with the business groups that have endorsed your testing initiative (Business Roundtable, National Alliance of Business, Chamber of Commerce, as well as high-tech CEO's) to encourage governors to participate in the testing initiative, especially in the states we have targeted as most promising.

We are working with the AFT, which also supports the testing initiative, to encourage local union affiliates to support local district participation in the testing initiative. And we are working with the Council of Chief State School Officers to identify states that may be prepared to announce participation in the testing initiative.

We are working with other education groups to secure endorsements for the testing initiative. The American Association of School Administrators and the National School Boards Association are likely sources of support. The national organizations representing elementary and secondary principals are also potential sources of support, though they historically have not supported the idea of national tests. We will be meeting shortly with Bob Chase to discuss how best to enlist NEA's support; as you know, NEA has also not traditionally been a strong supporter of national or state testing initiatives.

Several constituency groups have expressed serious concerns about the testing initiative, especially civil rights groups. In general, their concerns focus on issues of: (1) test bias and test fairness; (2) concern that the tests will be used for high stakes purposes; and (3) the difficulties Hispanic and other students with limited English proficiency will face on the 4th grade reading test if it is given only in English. Both White House and Education Department staff have met frequently with representatives of the civil rights groups, these discussions have not yet resulted in greater support for this initiative.

The national PTA organization has long been opposed to national tests. However, we believe strongly that parents ought to be among the strongest supporters of these tests. We have met with the incoming PTA president to discuss ways of building support for the testing initiative, and will be working with that organization and its leadership to generate parental enthusiasm for these tests.

VI. BUILDING SUPPORT AND SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

The idea of national standards and tests is quite popular -- with the public, parents, business leaders and, increasingly, with educators. But translating broad public support into specific state and local actions to participate in the tests is a challenge, since state and local officials have every incentive to continue existing testing programs rather than add a new one which will demonstrate low achievement levels in most education systems. Therefore, in addition to the strategies described above to "retail" the tests state-by-state, city-by-city, and group-by-group, we need ways to focus broad public attention on the push for tests, and spur parents to apply public pressure at the state and local level.

So far, the national press has shown little interest in the standards movement. It doesn't cost a lot of money, it doesn't involve a protracted legislative battle in Washington, it has bipartisan support, and it does not have an imminent deadline or an obvious villain.

To maintain a high public profile on this issue, we will have to generate a sense of urgency and drama on our own -- and we should look for every chance we can to bypass the national press and appeal directly to parents, as you have done in your state legislative speeches and the West Virginia town meeting. We are looking at a variety of ways to raise the profile of this issue:

Creating a fight over the tests: At present there is no defining conflict over the tests in a way that would capture the interest of the press and the public, and raise the issue above the narrow confines of the policy community. This could change whether we want it to or not, especially if Goodling aggressively pursues his effort to use the appropriations process as a vehicle for stopping the development of the test. If so, we would have a clear battle over the test, and one in which you could fight for basic skills, hard work and accountability.

We could also take the initiative to create a more visible fight over this initiative in the Congress in order to create a vehicle for mobilizing support for the tests. For example, we could transmit legislation requesting specific authority to develop and implement the tests, or to provide financial incentives for states to participate in the tests. Such a battle has some advantages -- it would attract press attention and could solidify Democratic support. But it has clear downsides as well. It may create uncertainty about whether we will be able to follow through on our commitment to develop the tests. In addition, a partisan, polarizing battle will make a number of Republican states harder to sign up.

Pushing the policy envelope on standards: We can also attract public attention and debate on standards and testing by promoting new initiatives tied directly or indirectly to the tests. We have been considering several possibilities:

- ▶ **Promoting "no social-promotion" policies** through steps such as developing guidelines for school districts. Chicago attracted enormous attention last week for requiring a quarter of its 8th graders to attend summer school before receiving their middle school diploma.
- ▶ **More vigorously promoting state and local intervention in failing schools**, through steps such as providing guidelines for state and local interventions or issuing new and tougher regulations for the interventions already required under Title I; and providing new incentives for state and local efforts to close down failing schools by enabling them to use charter schools and community schools funds together, in order to reopen failed schools as charter schools that also stay open longer so that students can get tutoring and other forms of extra help.

- ▶ **Providing new financial aid for college to 6th graders in high poverty schools tied to meeting performance requirements.** As an alternative or complement to the proposal under consideration to provide a Pell Grant guarantee for elementary school graduates in high poverty schools, we could propose "education trust funds" for the same students, and provide \$500 - \$1,000 deposits tied to specific accomplishments, including graduating from elementary school, graduating from middle school, doing well on the national 8th grade math test, and graduating from high school. We could design this approach to fit with proposals for KidSave accounts currently under consideration. This approach would send a very powerful message to students -- and to the country -- that academic achievement counts and will be rewarded. We could also provide bonuses to school and/or teachers with high pass rates for Title I students.
- ▶ **Proposing the development of a national high school level test,** once the 4th and 8th grade testing initiative is on more solid footing. This could be done by creating individual level versions of NAEP in key subject areas, by asking an independent group such as the College Board to develop new high-school level assessments, or by creating a mechanism to recognize existing national or state tests.

A steady pace of events on standards and tests: We are planning a number of events over the next few months to highlight your testing initiative for the public. We are also working with the Education Department on a major Back-to-Basics, Back-to-School initiative, which will provide several opportunities starting in August and continuing through the early Fall for you to highlight the testing initiative and your entire Call to Action.

Specific plans for June and July include:

- ▶ **The Vice President's Family Conference** The conference this year will focus on families and learning. During the conference, the Vice President will announce a fund being established by John Doerr (who organized the high tech CEO's who endorsed your testing initiative) to support reforms in schools participating in the testing initiative. This will also be an opportunity to announce Tennessee's participation in the tests.
- ▶ **America Reads Event in Boston Linked to Testing Initiative.** You will be in Boston on June 30. None of the nearby states are ready to sign up for tests. We are working to develop an event to highlight your America Reads initiative at an appropriate Read Boston site. Because Massachusetts has already signed up for the test, we can use this to emphasize that your reading initiative will prepare students to meet national reading standards. This event could also focus on Work Study tutors, since new work-study funds will be available July 1.
- ▶ **Launch of Education Excellence Partnership / Major League Baseball Public Service Announcements on Standards** The Education Excellence Partnership (the Business Roundtable, the National Alliance of Business, the American Federation of Teachers, the

National Governors' Association and the U.S. Department of Education) have joined with Major League Baseball to produce a series of PSA's that use baseball players to reinforce the value of raising academic standards. The fulfillment materials for the campaign encourage parents to find out if their school will be participating in the national testing program. The PSA's will be launched in early- to mid-July at an event at Camden Yards prior to an Orioles game. This is tentatively scheduled for July 2.

- ▶ **Multi-State Sign-Up Event** We anticipate holding an event in mid-July at the White House, to announce a handful of states pledging to participate in the testing initiative. (Alternatively, this could be our news for the NGA meeting).
- ▶ **Multi-City Sign-Up Event** We anticipate holding an event in mid July at the White House, to announce a handful of cities pledging to participate in the testing initiative.
- ▶ **Announcement of Interagency Math Strategy.** Prior to your speech to the Michigan legislature, you directed the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation to work with the DPC and OSTP to develop an interagency strategy to help states and local communities prepare students for the 8th grade math test. In line with last week's 4th grade TIMSS findings, the strategy will have a particular focus on improving middle school math. The strategy will address issues such as improving the knowledge and skills of teachers, expanding access to high quality instructional materials, maximizing the benefits of technology, and motivating students to take math seriously. The strategy will include recommendations for involving the math and science community in these efforts. Announcement of this strategy could be combined with the state or city sign-up events.
- ▶ **NGA Meeting** You will be speaking to the NGA Annual Meeting on July 28. This will be an important opportunity to make case for the testing initiative directly to governors.
- ▶ **NCSL Meeting** NCSL's Annual Meeting will be held in early August. This would be an opportunity to continue the crusade you brought to three state legislatures in the spring to legislators from every state. While few state legislatures are in a position to initiate state involvement in your testing initiative, most are in a position to block it if they choose. Making the case for the testing initiative could be an important step toward clearing the path for state participation.

America Goes Back to School 1997: The Department of Education is planning the third annual America Goes Back to School effort, designed to encourage parents, community leaders, employers, employees, and other community members to become more actively involved in improving education in their communities. The effort spans August through October; last year, more than 2,000 local events occurred during this time period.

This year's effort is led by a broad-based steering committee chaired by Secretary Riley and co-chaired by Tipper Gore, former Governor Tom Kean, Michael Keaton, and Lois-Jean White,

President of the National PTA. The campaign this year will be focused on your Call to Action. We are working with the Education Department and the Steering Committee to organize a series of local sign-up events, in which local schools and communities sign-up to respond to your call to action, including the testing initiative.

The Steering Committee met last week to develop more specific plans and activities. We will develop a more specific set of events appropriate for your participation. In addition, we expect that we will be asking for the entire Cabinet and others throughout the Administration to participate in high-profile Back-to-School events with a back-to-basics theme.

At present, we are considering the following as possible Back-to-School events for your involvement:

- ▶ **Nationally Televised Town Meeting on Education** You have been invited to participate in a town hall meeting on education sponsored by PBS, which would be the culmination of a week-long series of shows devoted to education. The series will include one or two shows devoted specifically to standards. The town meeting would pose questions to you sent in by viewers in response to the first four shows. We can also organize one or more town meetings patterned after the one you recently did in Clarksburg, West Virginia. You might also consider going back on the state legislative circuit.
- ▶ **Fifty-State Business Leaders Event** We are working to organize a day in the fall when, in each state, high-tech and other independent CEO's who are supporting your education efforts join with CEO's involved with long-standing business/education partnerships through organizations such as BRT, NAB, and the Chamber of Commerce, to support a common agenda of higher academic standards, employer efforts to review academic performance in hiring decisions, and a call for state participation in the national tests.

* * *

Together, these steps should keep us on track to our interim goal of signing up 20 or more states this year, with another 20 to follow in 1998. At some point, we may need your help in making direct retail appeals to individual governors. But the most important challenge is to keep finding ways to sell the public on the value of national tests and the urgency of raising standards.

Edw - JEs

Dear [whomever]:

As America moves into the 21st Century, we must give our people the strongest education in the world. No other priority is more important for our nation. We must not hinder our mission of raising academic standards and giving every American child a world-class education. Therefore, I will veto the supplemental appropriations bill if it includes the proposed amendment that seeks to undercut national educational standards and tests in reading and math.

As I said in my State-of-the-Union Address, America needs educational standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards representing what all our students must know to succeed in the new economy. Every state and school must shape its curriculum to reflect these standards, and train teachers to lift students up to them. I have proposed that every state should test 4th graders in reading, and 8th graders in math, based on widely accepted national standards. The National Assessment of Educational Progress test is already used to measure the performance of states; what we propose are tests based on the same standards that measure the performance of every student, so parents can learn how their children are doing and how their own schools measure up. I am pleased that this effort has won the endorsement of business leaders from around the country, including the Business Roundtable, as well as Republican and Democratic state officials. ^{The} Department of Education is already funding the development of these tests. Make no mistake: The proposed amendment would stop in its tracks this national effort to develop meaningful tests.

*from Gov. John Engler of Michigan
to Gov. Jim Hunt of N.C.*

Education is the key to our future; national standards are the key to improving education; and these tests are the key to the success of national standards. The proposed amendment would effectively block these tests. It would set back the cause of education and damage the future of our children. It must not become law.

I am determined that all our young people will meet these new rigorous standards. That is why, for example, I am so pleased that the recent budget agreement funds our America Reads challenge. We must press forward with other ongoing efforts to help our children learn the basics of reading and math, and I look forward to working with you in partnership toward these critical national goals. But above all, I will not allow our nation to come to a halt as we move toward effective national standards.

As you are also aware, I have made clear that I will veto this legislation if it includes the automatic continuing resolution provision contained in the senate passed bill. While I share the goal of ensuring that Congress does not shut the government down again, such a provision is inconsistent with our recent bipartisan budget agreement, and is clearly extraneous to this emergency disaster relief legislation. *Politics shld stop at the classroom door.*

In addition, members of my administration have informed you of other seriously objectionable provisions that must be addressed before this legislation reaches my desk.

This vital legislation contains \$5.6 billion in urgently needed disaster assistance funds for hundreds of thousands of victims of recent natural disasters in 33 states. These citizens should

not be forced to wait. I urge you to pass strong disaster relief and international peacekeeping supplemental funding, without attaching unrelated and damaging provisions that can only set this legislation back.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable William S. Cohen
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Bill:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Bruce:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



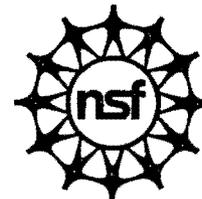
Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Daniel Glickman
Secretary of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Dan:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



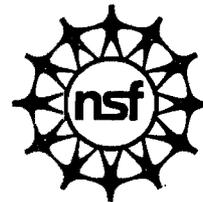
Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable William M. Daley
Secretary of Commerce
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Bill:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: ✓ John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Cynthia A. Metzler
Acting Secretary of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Ms. Metzler:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Federico F. Peña
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Federico:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Carol M. Browner
Administrator of the
Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20450

Dear Carol:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Daniel S. Goldin
Administrator, National
Aeronautics and Space Administration
Two Independence Square
300 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20546

Dear Daniel:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



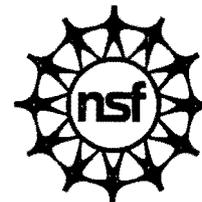
Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Rodney E. Slater
Secretary of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Rodney:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Harold E. Varmus
Director, National Institutes of Health
1 Center Drive, MSC 0148
Building 1, Room 126
Bethesda, MD 20892-0148

Dear Dr. Varmus:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

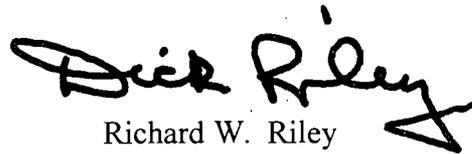
Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Dr. Thomas Lovejoy
Smithsonian Institution
Suite S-230
1000 Jefferson Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20560

Dear Dr. Lovejoy:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

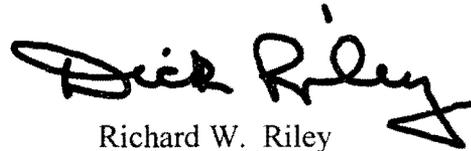
Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



April 17, 1997

Honorable Hershel Gober
Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Mr. Gober:

The purpose of this letter is to seek your support for, and assistance in, a new Administration effort to strengthen mathematics and science education in America's elementary and secondary schools.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton charged the Department of Education with developing voluntary national tests to measure student achievement in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics. These tests will serve as tools for informing parents and teachers about their students' educational progress compared to that of students in other States and countries. Subsequently, in a March 1997 Presidential Directive (enclosed), the President directed that we create an interagency working group to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and school districts in preparing students to meet challenging math standards in the eighth grade. A primary focus of this strategy will be to facilitate the preparation of students for the new eighth-grade math test, but the strategy will also more broadly address improvement of mathematics and science education at the elementary and secondary levels.

As set forth in the Presidential Directive, the main components of the new strategy will be the improvement of teacher preparation and practice, identification and dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with challenging educational standards, integration of technology into the classroom, and mobilization of resources from the entire community in order to increase student motivation to excel in mathematics and science.

The Directive assigned leadership of the interagency working group to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. We seek, however, the involvement of all Federal agencies that have a role -- or a potential role -- in the improvement of K-12 mathematics and science education, because only by mustering all available resources will a new Federal strategy achieve its maximum impact.

Toward this end, we are asking you to identify an individual from your agency to serve as a representative to the interagency group. That individual will be invited to a meeting of the group, in late April, at which time the group will ask him or her to: (1) describe your agency's

Page 2

K-12 mathematics and science programs and activities, particularly those that could help prepare students to take the new eighth-grade math tests, and (2) engage in a discussion with the representatives of the other agencies of additional activities or actions, undertaken by Federal agencies or even outside the Federal sphere, that could help accomplish our objectives. To help you think about how your agency might assist in these efforts, we have enclosed a set of questions for your consideration.

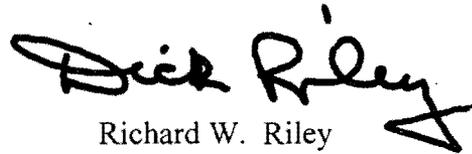
Please inform Judy Sunley at the National Science Foundation of your agency's representative to the working group, and direct any questions or comments on this effort to her. She can be reached at 703-306-1018. We would appreciate receiving your designation of a representative by April 23, 1997.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important assignment.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Director
National Science Foundation



Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

cc: John H. Gibbons
✓ Bruce N. Reed

Enclosures

Interagency Working Group Questions to Agencies

1. What existing programs do you have that explicitly address the issues of standards-based, K-12 mathematics instruction (with a focus on K-8)?
2. What evidence can you provide, if any, about their success in improving the achievement of K-12 students in mathematics?
3. What other existing programs or activities do you have that could contribute to an action strategy focused on standards-based, K-8 mathematics instruction?
4. Can your agency consider modifications to the activities identified in response to questions 1 and 3 that might make them more relevant to the action strategy?
5. An important component of the action strategy is educating and engaging the public in the effort to improve mathematics achievement. Many agencies have significant outreach efforts to the public, have employees visiting schools, or bring teachers and students into their facilities. What agency activities might be able to contribute to educating and engaging the public in this effort?
6. What suggestions do you have for objectives or action strategies?

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 6, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

SUBJECT: Preparing Students to Meet National Standards
of Excellence in Eighth Grade Math and
Improving Math and Science Education

Since the early 1980s, U.S. elementary and secondary school students have begun taking tougher courses, and we are starting to see the results. National Assessment of Educational Progress scores have improved in math and science, with gains in mathematics equal to at least one grade level. On the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), average math scores are at their highest in 25 years, even as the number and diversity of test-takers have increased. However, the eighth-grade results of the 41-Nation Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), released last fall, show that the United States is below average in math and just above average in science. That isn't acceptable; in this technology-rich information era, our students need to perform much better in both subjects, but especially in math, if they are to excel at higher-level math and science courses that are critical to college admission and success and to citizenship, productive employment, and lifelong learning.

The first step in raising achievement is lifting expectations and setting high standards for what students should know and be able to do. Our National Assessment of Educational Progress, TIMSS, and the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics give us a solid framework to build on. Last month, to help parents and teachers learn who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools need to improve, I asked the Secretary of Education to develop a voluntary national test for individual eighth-grade students based on widely accepted, challenging national standards in mathematics. The national test will be available to States and local school districts to give to their students in the spring of 1999, and will measure whether students have reached a high level of mathematics proficiency.

The primary responsibility for achieving high standards rests with students, teachers, parents, and schools in local communities across America. However, it is imperative that we work to ensure that Federal resources support student success as well. We must ensure that Federal programs, research, and human resources are used as effectively as possible to help improve teaching and learning.

Therefore, I direct the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Science Foundation to form an interagency working group and to develop an action strategy for using Federal resources to assist States and local school systems to prepare students to meet challenging math standards in eighth grade, and for involving the mathematics, scientific, and technical communities in support of these efforts.

The action strategy should include recommendations for the use of Federal resources to help States, local school districts, and schools to improve teaching, upgrade curriculum, and integrate technology and high-quality instructional materials into the classroom, as well as motivate students and help them understand how math concepts are applied in the real world. The strategy should identify significant Federal programs, activities, and partnerships available to improve teaching and learning, ensure that these resources are appropriately focused on helping students reach challenging math standards, and determine how these resources can best support State and local reforms. In developing this strategy, the interagency group should review the current status of improvements in math education and identify and address critical areas of need, drawing on research and input from educators and professional organizations.

Because teaching and learning in math and science are so integrally related, and because success in both subjects is vitally important in this information era, the working group should also review how Federal resources and partnerships with other organizations can help improve student achievement in science.

The working group should make its recommendations and submit its action strategy to me within 90 days.

William J. Clinton

Brownlee / see Bailey
Hoc

Who's top?

Be

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

4-18-97

Some countries seem to educate their children much better than others. Why? No comprehensive answer has emerged yet but plenty of lessons are being learnt from the tests which reveal the educational discrepancies

A CLASS has 28 students and the ratio of girls to boys is 4:3. How many girls are there? Which of the following is made using bacteria: yogurt, cream, soap or cooking oil? Simple enough questions in any language (the answers, by the way, are 16 and yogurt). But when half a million pupils from around the world were set questions like these, some countries, just like some pupils, did very well and some very badly.

The tests were set for the largest-ever piece of international education research, the Third International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS). Of the 41 nations participating in this first phase, Singapore was teacher's pet: the average scores of its pupils were almost twice those of South Africa, bottom of the class (see table 1).

East Asian countries have overtaken nations such as America and Britain which have had universal schooling for much longer. America came 17th in science and 28th in mathematics. England came 25th in maths and Scotland (whose pupils were tested separately) came 29th. The four richest East Asian economies took the first four places in maths.

Some former communist countries, notably the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Bulgaria, also did significantly better than their richer western neighbours, even though they spend much less on education. Six of the top 15 places in both maths and science went to East Europeans. It seems that how much a country can afford to spend has less than you might think to do with how well educated its children are. American children have three times as much money spent on their schooling as young South Koreans, who nevertheless beat them hands down in tests.

International educational comparisons like the TIMSS study have been subjects of growing academic enthusiasm and criticism since the 1960s (for the controversies, see box on next page). Teachers, though, have been almost entirely

hostile and most governments have held themselves aloof from the arguments, fearing embarrassment. A poor showing in the league table would give political opponents ammunition, while the studies might be used to accuse ministers of starving their education system (or, possibly, of wasting taxpayers' money on a grand scale).

Now, attitudes are changing, at least among politicians. Over the past ten years or so, governments' desire to know more about how their schools compare with others, and what lessons can be learned from the comparison, have begun to outweigh fear of embarrassment. More countries took part in TIMSS than in its predecessors, and the attention paid to its findings by the world's politicians, educators and the news media was much greater than for previous studies.

Politicians do their homework

President Clinton described the test in his state-of-the-union message in February, as one "that reflects the world-class standards our children must meet for the new era." America's poor overall showing has sparked calls for the adoption of a national curriculum and national standards for school tests—including from Mr Clinton himself. These calls are based on the observation that the countries which did best in the study tended to have national frameworks of this kind.

In a television interview in December, the French president, Jacques Chirac, described as "shameful" a decision by his education ministry to pull out of an international study of adult literacy which was showing that the French were doing badly. And in Britain last year, Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, brushed aside objections from officials in the Department for Education and Employment, and published the unflattering results of a study he had commissioned comparing British workers with those in France, America, Singapore and Germany—chosen as key economic competitors.

The Germans, in turn, were shocked by their pupils' mediocre performance in the TIMSS tests. Their pupils did only slightly better than the English at maths, coming 23rd out of 41 countries. In science, the English surged ahead (though not the Scots) while the Germans were beaten by, among others, the Dutch, the Russians—and even the Americans. A television network ran a special report called "Education Emergency in Ger-

2+2=?				
13-year-olds' average score in TIMSS* (Int average = 500)				
Maths		Science		
1	Singapore	643	Singapore	607
2	South Korea	607	Czech Republic	574
3	Japan	605	Japan	571
4	Hong Kong	588	South Korea	565
5	Belgium (Fl)	565	Bulgaria	565
6	Czech Republic	564	Netherlands	560
7	Slovakia	547	Slovenia	560
8	Switzerland	545	Austria	558
9	Netherlands	541	Hungary	554
10	Slovenia	541	England	552
11	Bulgaria	540	Belgium (Fl)	550
12	Austria	539	Australia	545
13	France	538	Slovakia	544
14	Hungary	537	Russia	538
15	Russia	535	Ireland	538
16	Australia	530	Sweden	535
17	Ireland	527	United States	534
18	Canada	527	Canada	531
19	Belgium (Wt)	526	Germany	531
20	Thailand	522	Norway	527
21	Israel	522	Thailand	525
22	Sweden	519	New Zealand	525
23	Germany	509	Israel	524
24	New Zealand	508	Hong Kong	522
25	England	506	Switzerland	522
26	Norway	503	Scotland	517
27	Denmark	502	Spain	517
28	United States	500	France	498
29	Scotland	498	Greece	497
30	Latvia	493	Iceland	494
31	Spain	487	Romania	486
32	Iceland	487	Latvia	485
33	Greece	484	Portugal	480
34	Romania	482	Denmark	478
35	Lithuania	477	Lithuania	476
36	Cyprus	474	Belgium (Wt)	471
37	Portugal	454	Iran	470
38	Iran	428	Cyprus	463
39	Kuwait	392	Kuwait	430
40	Colombia	385	Colombia	411
41	South Africa	354	South Africa	326

*Third International Maths and Science Study. †Flanders ‡Wallonia
Source: TIMSS

many"; industrialists accused politicians of ignoring repeated warnings about declining standards in schools.

There are more studies to come. In December the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a club of 29 of the world's richest countries, launched its own series of annual reports. The OECD already collects data on how the governments spend their combined \$1 trillion annual education budgets, and what proportion of each nation's population reaches a given level of education. The new studies will go much further, comparing how schools, colleges and universities are run in each country and analysing the implications for policymakers.

In some countries, international comparisons are already being used as a catalyst for educational reform. The poor performance of Swedish children in maths, in one study in the mid 1980s, led to the setting up of a new programme of in-service training for teachers. The initial results from TIMSS suggest that Sweden has since pulled itself up to slightly above the international average.

Although Japanese children have repeatedly gained high overall marks in maths tests, some studies have suggested that they are not as advanced in other things, such as analysing data, as they are in basic arithmetic. The Japanese government



has started using such findings to reform its national curriculum. Hungary, discovering in early studies that its children were among the world's best in maths and science but among the least literate, ordered its teachers to spend more time on reading.

Knowledge workers

Leaving aside the results of the tests, two main factors lie behind governments' increasing willingness to take part in international education studies to begin with. The first is the growing consensus that education is the key to getting rich—for countries

as well as for individuals. It is widely believed that one of the main reasons why tiger economies like Singapore and South Korea have grown so quickly is that their governments have made determined and successful efforts to raise educational standards.

The other factor is value for money. Governments everywhere have woken up to the full economic significance of education just as they are making desperate attempts to rein in public spending. OECD countries already spend about 6% of national income on education; given the pressure to trim budgets there is no prospect that governments will chuck money at schools without checking to see whether standards are improving. Hence the enthusiasm for comparisons. If governments could discover what it is about their education system that helps growth, then perhaps, they hope, they could do better without spending more.

So do the tests help? They do not provide a sure-fire formula of exactly how much should be spent on schools, how schools should be managed and precisely how each subject should be taught.

All the same, the tests are already proving useful, especially for exposing myths. A popularly-held view has it that "opportunity to learn" is the key to educational success—ie, the more time children spend on a

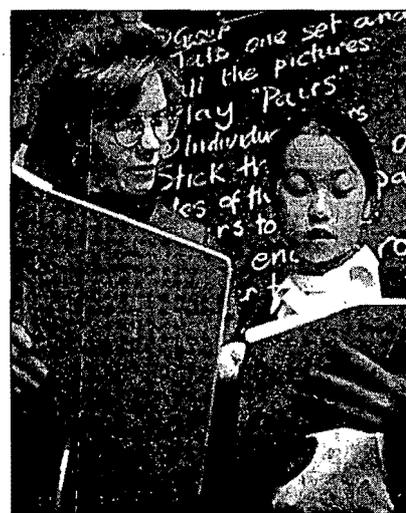
Answering the critics

CROSS-COUNTRY comparisons have long been controversial. Among the doubts: Do tests put an unwarranted premium on certain qualities—speed of recall, mental arithmetic—while ignoring hard-to-measure ones like creative thinking? Were pupils from different countries really comparable? (For instance, in countries where children are made to repeat a year of their education if they fail to reach a certain standard, tests for, say, 13-year-olds may exclude those who have been sent to join a class of 12-year-olds.) Were pupils in some countries told that the tests were extremely important, while others were not? Did the tests give an unfair advantage to countries whose curriculum for 13-year-olds happens to include more of the topics included in them?

Wendy Keys of Britain's National Foundation for Educational Research, one of the bodies that organised the TIMSS project, says that a number of measures were taken to answer such criticisms. The score for each country was adjusted to take account of any pupils who were held back a year. Teachers everywhere were given precise instructions on how to explain the tests to pupils, and indepen-

dent monitors were sent to schools chosen at random. After the results were in, experts in each country looked at how their pupils had done on those questions which most closely matched the curriculum for children of their age.

The results? Broadly, the new study confirmed the relative positions of coun-



Much to learn from each other

tries which had taken part in earlier studies. That consistency suggested the original criticisms may have been exaggerated. However, the refinements made in the recent study may overturn one of the theories that has been used to explain why America and Britain, in spite of having had universal education for longer than most nations, do so poorly. This is that they contain an unusually large proportion of pupils who perform very badly. The comforting implication would be that ordinary pupils do reasonably well but that average scores are dragged down by a so-called "long tail of low achievers".

This explanation was given a colour of plausibility by earlier tests. In those, mediocre scores in Britain and America could be explained away by the failure of the tests to take account of countries where pupils are held back a year. The new version of the test puts that problem right—and the two countries are still doing poorly. Though the mass of results from TIMSS is still being analysed, Dr Keys says there is no sign so far of the "long tail". The implication would be that the average scores of American and British pupils are mediocre because average performance is mediocre, and not because of some peculiarity at the very bottom of the class.

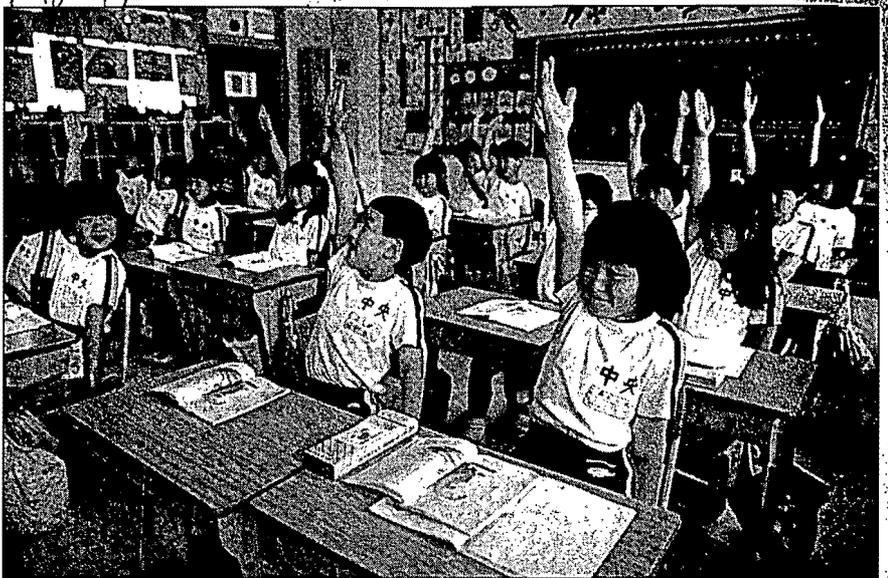
subject, the better they do at it. Alas, the evidence so far is not encouraging for the proponents of this theory. Taking the twelve countries which both took part in TIMSS and also had their average teaching hours measured in the OECD's recent study of school management, there seems little correlation between time spent on a subject and performance of pupils in tests (see chart 2). Young Austrians spend exceptionally long hours on maths and science lessons; for them, it pays off in higher test scores. But so do New Zealand's teenagers—and they do not do any better than, say, Norwegians, who spend an unusually short time on lessons in both subjects.

Next—and of particular interest to cash-strapped governments—there appears to be little evidence to support the argument, often heard from teachers' unions, that the main cause of educational under-achievement is under-funding. Low-spending countries such as South Korea and the Czech Republic are at the top of the TIMSS league table. High-spenders such as America and Denmark do much worse (see chart 3). Obviously, there are dozens of reasons other than spending why one country does well, another badly, but the success of the low-spending Czechs and Koreans does show that spending more on schools is not a prerequisite for improving standards.

Another article of faith among the teaching profession—that children are bound to do better in small classes—is also being undermined by educational research. As with other studies, TIMSS found that France, America and Britain, where children are usually taught in classes of twenty-odd, do significantly worse than East Asian countries where almost twice as many pupils are crammed into each class. Again, there may be social reasons why some countries can cope better with large classes than others. All the same, the comparison refutes the argument that larger is necessarily worse.

Further, the tests even cast some doubt over the cultural explanation for the greater success of East Asia: that there is some hard-to-define Asian culture, connected with parental authority and a strong social value on education, which makes children more eager to learn and easier to teach. Those who make this argument say it would of course be impossible to replicate such oriental magic in the West.

Yet the results of TIMSS suggest that this is, to put it mildly, exaggerated. If "culture" makes English children so poor at maths, then why have they done so well at science (not far behind the Japanese and South Koreans)? And why do English pupils do well at science and badly at maths, while in France it is the other way around? A less mystical, more mundane explanation suggests itself: English schools teach science well and maths badly; French schools teach



Please sir, why are we so brainy?

maths better than science; East Asian schools teach both subjects well.

Apart from casting doubt on some widely-held beliefs, do international comparisons have anything constructive to say? So far, the conclusions are tentative, but some answers are emerging.

Teaching the teachers

As well as getting pupils to sit tests, the TIMSS researchers monitored the way lessons were taught in each country. Eventually this should point to which teaching method tends to be most successful, though the data are still being worked on. Meanwhile, other researchers have been searching for common factors among those countries whose schools seem to turn out well-educated pupils.

Julia Whitburn of Britain's National Institute of Economic and Social Research has studied the way maths is taught in Japan and Switzerland, two countries which are different in many ways but whose pupils seem to do consistently well at in the

subject. She noted a number of common factors:

- Much more time is spent on the basics of arithmetic than on more general mathematical topics such as handling data;
- Pupils learn to do sums in their heads before they are taught to do them on paper; calculators are usually banned;
- Standardised teaching manuals, which are tested extensively in schools before being published, are used widely;
- A method known as "whole-class interactive teaching" is used widely. The teacher addresses the whole class at once, posing questions to pupils in turn, to ensure they are following the lesson. American and British schools have been criticised for letting pupils spend much of their time working in small groups, with the teacher rushing from one group to the next to see how they are doing. Ms Whitburn notes that in Japan and Switzerland this method is only used in teaching arts and crafts;
- Finally, great efforts are made to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. Those that do are given extra coaching.

Learning, though, is not a one-way street. Just as western countries are busy seeking to emulate Japanese schools, schools and universities in Japan are coming under pressure from employers to turn out workers with the sort of creativity and individuality that the Japanese associate with western education. And just as American and British politicians are demanding that schools copy their more successful oriental counterparts and set their pupils more homework, the South Korean government is telling schools to give pupils regular homework-free days, so they can spend more time with their families—just like western children. Perhaps in education there is such a thing as a happy medium.



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PETE WILSON, Governor

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

721 Capitol Mall; P.O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720

Educ Standards

April 3, 1997

Honorable Richard W. Riley, *Secretary*
United States Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, S. W.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Riley:

It is with deep regret that I must inform you that the State of California has *not* endorsed the national system of educational standards and assessment proposed by President Clinton. Any endorsement given you by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin on behalf of this state exceeded her authority. On behalf of the California State Board of Education, I must apologize for any embarrassment this causes you or the President, but respectfully I must ask that you no longer indicate that California is among the states that have formally endorsed in this effort.

We certainly appreciate the endeavor to focus attention on improvement of the public schools. However, in the area of standards and assessment, California is committed *by law* to develop and implement a comprehensive set of *state* academic content and student achievement standards (kindergarten through grade 12) and a new *state* assessment system based on those standards. Without a change in law, there is simply no way for us to entertain a commitment to a national standards and assessment process. Moreover, such a commitment would not be advisable, in my view, until we can see exactly what the national standards and assessment system would be and how it would be aligned with our state standards and assessment system.

Our apologies again for any embarrassment that Superintendent Eastin's action may cause you or the President. As any national effort on standards and assessment proceeds, the California State Board of Education will look forward to evaluating it in comparison with our state effort and recommending any changes in state law that may be appropriate based on that analysis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Yvonne W. Larsen".

YVONNE W. LARSEN, *President*cc: Members, California State Board of Education
Honorable Delaine Eastin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Honorable Pete Wilson, Governor, State of California
Marian Bergeson, Secretary of Child Development and Education



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

600 Independence Avenue, SW
FOB-10, Rm 6261
Washington, DC 20202-0500

Telephone Number: (202) 401-1000

Fax Number: (202) 401-3095

FAX COVER SHEET

TO: Bruce Reed / Ray Cortines
FAX: 456-2878 / 219-1402
FROM: Mike Smith

NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW, INCLUDING COVER SHEET: 2

IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE THE COMPLETE TRANSMISSION, PLEASE CALL
(202) 401-1000.

MESSAGE:

DRAFT

Edw-Stds

STATEMENT BY SEC. RILEY

240

The letter from Yvonne Larsen, President of the California State Board of Education, regrettably misinterpreted an important announcement this week by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin, prominent business leaders from California, and the association of local school boards from throughout the state.

use the official name for this group

These leaders indicated ^{had bipartisan} their interest in giving California's students the opportunity to participate in a fourth grade national reading test and an eighth grade national math test so that California's parents and teachers would know if their students had mastered the basics and how their students and schools compared to other states and nations. Certainly California, as a state on the Pacific Rim, has every interest in finding out how well prepared their students are to meet the economic challenges of the twenty-first century.

It is inaccurate to portray this announcement as an endorsement of a "national system of educational standards and assessment." These voluntary national tests are not unfamiliar to California. They will be based on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), which has been widely used and is well accepted, ^{and has been widely used in more than 40 states, including California.}

~~delaine eastin~~

The results from these national tests would be used by local school boards, parents, teachers, and principals in California as they see fit to improve academic achievement in the state.

No Excuses

~~While I believe the people of California would benefit from their state's participation in these tests, it is important to point out that Delaine Eastin has made very clear that she was not committing the state but was committing herself to work with others in the states, including the State Board, the Governor, and the Legislature, to secure California's participation in these tests at these two critical points in a student's education.~~

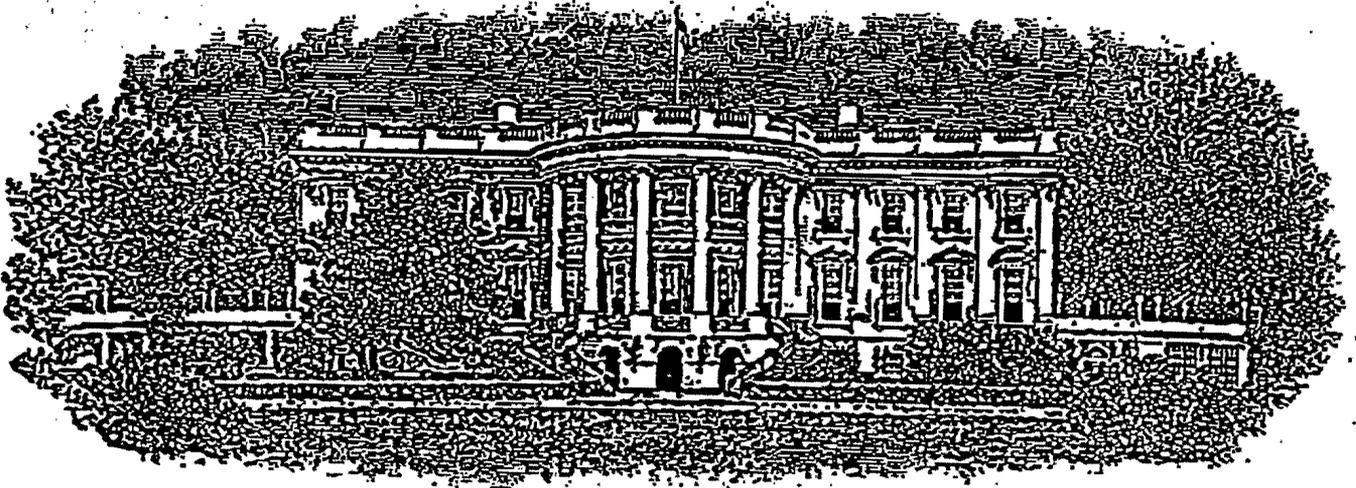
~~Delaine Eastin cannot commit the state, but I am proud of her commitment and foresight on this issue. We should listen to what the state's employers and locally elected school boards need and want to build a strong future for their state, and we look forward~~

to working closely with the state as the tests are developed.

~~Delaine Eastin's~~
~~we are confident~~ ^{The strong}
~~with the strong leadership and support of Delaine Eastin and~~
California's business community ~~are confident~~
for national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math
is an important step forward ~~forward~~ for California
and the nation.

The White House

ed-stds



DOMESTIC POLICY

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

TO: Bruce Reed

FAX NUMBER: 456-2878

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

FROM: Bill Kincaid

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

PAGES (INCLUDING COVER): 3

COMMENTS: LA Times story - looks
like no big deal for us
Bill



PAGE 2

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1997 Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times

April 5, 1997, Saturday, Home Edition

SECTION: Part A; Page 21; Metro Desk

LENGTH: 409 words

HEADLINE: EASTIN REBUKED FOR ENDORSING NATIONAL TESTS

BYLINE: RICHARD LEE COLVIN, TIMES EDUCATION WRITER

BODY:

The president of the State Board of Education on Friday issued a sternly worded rebuke of California's top elected school official, accusing her of exceeding her authority in an appearance this week at the White House.

The criticism of state Supt. of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin had to do with her endorsement of a Clinton administration plan for national tests of fourth-graders' reading skills and eighth-graders' math skills.

"Any endorsement given you by Eastin on behalf of the state exceeded her authority," board President Yvonne W. Larsen of San Diego wrote in a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. ". . . I must apologize for any embarrassment this causes you."

Eastin was among a delegation of California parents, educators and business leaders who met Wednesday with President Clinton, and she said she made it clear that she did not have the final authority on whether the state eventually would participate in the pioneering testing program.

But some press accounts and even some comments by Clinton did not explain that it was the state board, not Eastin, who would make the decision whether to give the tests when they are available in 1999.

Larsen's letter said California is developing its own set of academic standards and tests and some staff members at the State Board of Education said it was issued partly in response to concerns that that process is falling behind schedule. Some in Gov. Pete Wilson's office, as well as members of the state board, are concerned that Eastin's endorsement of the Clinton plan could divert attention from the state's efforts.

Eastin said Friday that she "never committed the state" to participating in the Clinton program. She said the letter was "a bomb from the governor's office and I'm not going to pick it up."

More than anything, the letter, as well as the apparent confusion over Eastin's role, exposed the complexity of the mechanism for making education policy in the state. Although the state superintendent is elected statewide, she must take a back seat on some issues to the Board of Education, which is appointed by the governor.



Los Angeles Times, April 5, 1997

Beyond that, the letter demonstrated the tenuous working relationship between the state board and Eastin. Despite their differences on some issues, notably some aspects of reading and math instruction, Eastin and the board have worked hard to maintain civility and calm in their working relationships.

LANGUAGE: English

OAD-DATE: April 5, 1997

File
1) Educ Stds
2) POTUS memos

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 5, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRUCE REED
MIKE COHEN

SUBJECT: National Standards and Testing: Progress Report and Strategy

With much of our education agenda tied up in the budget debate, we continue to look for opportunities to promote initiatives that don't hinge entirely on Congressional action. This memo provides you with a progress report and strategy for the two major challenges to states -- national standards and testing, and charter schools. In the near future we will provide you with updates on other legislative and budget-related initiatives.

I. NATIONAL STANDARDS AND TESTS

Our objective is to have 30-40+ states participate in the initial 1999 administration of the national tests. To reach this objective, we are working on several interrelated fronts:

A. Developing the Tests: By the end of April, the Education Department will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests. A draft is already circulating for public comment. Contracts will be awarded by September 1. We do not yet know whether each test will be developed by a separate contractor, or whether one test developer will successfully bid to develop both. In addition, the Education Department and the test developers will establish a number of technical advisory groups and evaluation studies to assure the technical quality of the tests.

As part of the process of developing the RFP, the Education Department has held a number of public meetings with testing experts, state testing officials, test publishers, and others in the education and civil rights communities. (The Education Department has made the transcripts of these meetings, and other related documents, widely available on the Internet.)

These sessions have raised a number of important issues which will be addressed as the work proceeds.

First, virtually all groups have stressed the importance of ensuring the technical quality of the tests, and of helping parents and the public understand the nature and purposes of the tests. This is particularly important in light of experiences in a number of states in which technical problems or public misunderstandings have led to heated debate about the testing program. Some urged that the time line be slowed down to accommodate these concerns, but the Education Department continues to believe that the time line is realistic and appropriate. We agree, and see no reason to delay the Spring 1999 date for the initial test administration.

Second, a number of states anticipate a challenge in integrating these new tests into their ongoing testing programs, especially states that are now well along in developing new tests aligned with recently developed state standards. Some states would find it easier to "embed" a small number of additional test items into their existing tests, rather than administer a separate and additional test. But this approach does not appear to be technically feasible if we are to have a valid test. Other states have suggested that a 4th grade reading test would be more valuable to them if it were administered in the Fall rather than the Spring, since their goal -- like yours -- is for students to read independently by the end of the 3rd grade. The Education Department is studying this possibility.

Third, many testing experts suggested that the 8th grade math test be based on the NAEP framework rather than on the TIMSS framework. They argued that the NAEP framework is more explicit and more widely accepted among the states, and that student scores could then be reported according to the NAEP achievement levels (basic, proficient and advanced) as will be the case with the reading test. The Education Department has determined that this would be a preferable approach, and that it will still be possible to provide individual student scores in terms of the TIMSS as well, because of the very high overlap in the content of NAEP and TIMSS. Therefore, the final test will still meet your initial commitment of providing students with internationally benchmarked scores.

B. A Governing Body to Ensure the Tests Are National, Not Federal: We are working to determine how best to establish an advisory or governing body that can provide bipartisan support for this effort, and assurance that the tests measure what they are supposed to based on the widely accepted NAEP frameworks. Mike Cohen, Mike Smith and other Education Department officials have been consulting with governors of both parties, Congressional staff and others, with the aim of establishing an advisory mechanism that will garner strong bipartisan support among governors and in the Congress. Secretary Riley met last week with Gov. Thompson, and is working to set up a meeting in mid-May with a bipartisan group of 8-10 governors, hopefully including Romer, Hunt, Zell Miller, Bob Miller, Thompson, Engler, and Voinovich. Secretary Riley, Mike Smith and Mike Cohen will also continue meeting with members of Congress over the next several weeks. While the additional consultations may change our thinking significantly, our current plan is as follows:

- Create an interim, bipartisan advisory council, in consultation with governors and members of Congress in both parties. We would probably appoint governors, business leaders, and educators currently serving on related groups such as the National Education Goals Panel, ACHIEVE (the group established to follow-up last year's education summit in Palisades), and the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), as well as teachers, testing experts and others. The announcement of this council would be an opportunity to demonstrate bipartisan Congressional and gubernatorial support for the testing initiative. Staff-level conversations suggest that key House Republicans, including Reps. Frank Riggs, John Porter, and perhaps Bill Goodling might be willing to participate in a White House announcement of an advisory council if our consultations continue to go well.
- Once this council is established, we think it may be possible to gain NGA's endorsement for the testing initiative at the Summer meeting in Nevada. Both the ACHIEVE Board of Directors and the National Education Goals Panel will be meeting in conjunction with the NGA meeting. If your schedule permits, it would be possible for you to meet with both groups, to demonstrate broad support for your standards initiative and to help energize governors and business leaders behind common educational goals.
- These two steps would create a favorable climate for Congressional consideration of legislation to reauthorize the National Assessment of Education Progress and the National Assessment Governing Board, which are scheduled for consideration sometime in this Congress. At that time, we can determine if NAGB should assume policy responsibility for the national tests, with Congressional support. (At present, NAGB is prohibited by law from overseeing the development of individual-level tests.) These steps would also improve our ability to win any legislative battles we may face on this issue, such as any attempt to prohibit the Education Department from using funds for the continued development of the tests.

Please note that we are optimistic but not yet confident that we can secure this level of bipartisan cooperation. Much will depend upon how effectively we can enlist the help of a core group of Republican governors.

C. Building Momentum through State and Local Endorsements: As you know, we now have commitments from leaders in Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and California, as well as the Department of Defense Schools. A number of other states look promising, including Missouri and Vermont. However, we believe that the prospects for signing up large numbers of states will depend largely upon getting a bipartisan group of governors bought in to the right advisory body. This step will take some time to work out, but is essential to sustain this effort. In the meantime, we are pursuing three major strategies to sign up states:

1. Visits to State Legislatures: We would like to schedule trips to three more state legislatures over the next three months -- two to states that agree to sign up for the tests, and at least one to a state like Washington that is considering charter school legislation (see below). Your travel plans and upcoming adjournments in some states will make that more complicated, but we are working with the Communications and Scheduling departments to get it done. One possibility worth pursuing would be to travel to Washington State to join Gary Locke at the signing of a charter schools law. We are tracking that legislation: depending on when (and whether) it passes, a signing could take place as early as April 17 or as late as mid-May.

2. State School Officers: Last month the Council of Chief State School Officers presented the Vice President with an endorsement of your testing initiative. We are working with chief state school officers to enlist additional states. However, in many cases, even our biggest supporters (such as Rick Mills from New York) will want to secure the support of the state board of education and the governor where possible before making public commitments. Even in California, where we have broad support, Delaine Eastin and Wilson appointees on the Board of Education are already feuding over whether the state legislature needs to act before the tests can go forward.

3. Major Cities: We are also working to sign up big cities, such as Los Angeles and Boston, regardless of the respective state participation. The intent here is to further demonstrate momentum, underscore that these standards are especially important for the students and schools for which society typically has low expectations, and show that these tests can in fact be tools to lift people up, by helping to stimulate new efforts and focus existing ones to improve teaching and learning.

We believe it will be possible, over the next several months, to work with mayors, school superintendents and school boards, teachers unions, institutions of higher education, as well as parent, community and business groups in 5-10 cities. We will seek broad partnerships in each city that pledges to use the national tests, and commit to specific, locally designed efforts in each community to help prepare students to meet these standards. We will ask the Education Department to work with these cities, provide them with information on best practices, and help the cities learn from one another. Once we have a few cities in hand, a White House event announcing this partnership should generate considerable excitement and attention. It will also strengthen support for the testing initiative among core constituencies.

You can take a number of steps to add momentum to these efforts, including:

- **Hold a town meeting or other forum on reading and math standards.** We would like to create a setting in which you interact with teachers, parents and students, and use examples of student work, sample test questions and answers, or videos of teaching to high standards, as a way of helping the public come to some concrete understanding of what the reading and math standards are really all about.

- **Meet with textbook publishers and software developers.** Such a meeting would provide you with an opportunity to urge (or enlist commitments from) publishers to upgrade the quality of textbooks by aligning them with higher standards and expectations. You could also highlight the efforts of software developers to produce materials for home and classroom use that are aligned with the standards.
- **Meet with groups involved in promoting literacy and math achievement.** Through the America Reads initiative and the Education Department's previous early reading initiative, there are several national and grassroots coalitions of groups that are supporting early reading initiatives. You can meet with these groups, at the White House or elsewhere, and emphasize the connections between their efforts to promote learning and your call for national standards and tests. In addition, as a result of a directive you issued to the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation last month, there is an interagency effort underway to organize federal agency resources, and to identify nonfederal resources (e.g., Nobel Laureates, math and science resources in the business community) that can be enlisted to support teaching and learning aimed at preparing students to meet 8th grade math standards. We will propose one or more events as part of this effort. Together, these will enable you to underscore that your testing initiative is not just about testing, but about mobilizing the nation to support learning to high standards.

II. CHARTER SCHOOLS

Another important goal is to foster the creation of 3,000 charter schools within 5 years, up from the current level of 500. One challenge is expanding the number of states with charter schools legislation. Currently 25 states and D.C. authorize the creation of charter schools; we would like to raise the number of states to 30 by the end of 1997. Over the past couple of months, progress in state legislatures has been slow, due in part to an absence of strong centrist leadership at the state level, partisan differences, and occasional opposition by state and local union affiliates. In addition, in at least one state (Virginia) the potential racial impact of charter schools emerged as an issue.

However, there are some bright spots. In Washington State this week, the governor, schools superintendent, and legislators tentatively reached agreement on a charter schools bill. Mississippi passed a final bill this week, although it authorizes only 6 schools. Charter legislation is also alive in Missouri (as part of a big post-desegregation package), Indiana, Maine, Oregon, and Nevada.

To move things forward in these states, we recommend an event in the next several weeks -- ideally the Washington State trip if it works out, but at least a radio address. The Education Department is ready to release two important reports on charter schools. One is the first-year report of a major national charter school study. A key finding is that the number one obstacle for new charter schools to overcome is lack of access to start-up funding. The second report is a

guidebook for school boards and other chartering authorities, which emphasizes the importance of effective accountability for charter schools -- an important issue, given problems that have emerged with loosely run schools in D.C. and elsewhere.

In addition, the Education Department will soon announce a new competition for charter schools funds. It is also planning a national charter schools conference in late Summer or early Fall. These activities will provide support both to state efforts and to your FY98 request for \$100 million for charter schools.



COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

One Massachusetts Avenue, NW • Suite 700 • Washington, DC 20001-1431 • tel. (202) 408-5505 • fax. (202) 408-8072

CONTACT: Paula Delo
(202) 336-7005

For immediate release

COUNCIL BOARD SUPPORTS BENCHMARKING OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

To open new ways for students to strive toward world class performance, The Board of Directors of the Council of Chief State School Officers states its support for development of voluntary tests which can enable students to benchmark their 4th grade reading and 8th grade mathematics achievement to scores of students throughout the nation and internationally.

The Board's action is based on the judgement that availability of these tests could enhance state efforts to expand assessment and accountability systems now in place or planned. The action is based on the understanding the tests would be used only at state discretion. Any state's decision would be taken only after extensive consultation with key stakeholders.

For more than a decade, members of the Council have promoted development of achievement tests in reading, mathematics and other subjects, which enable states to compare their performance with one another and with the nation as a whole. During this period, the states have made extensive efforts to develop their student standards and individual student tests and worked to link their tests with the National Assessment of Progress (NAEP). In 1988 the NAEP was opened up to enable state-by-state comparisons based on samples of students; more than 40 states have participated in these tests which provide the best available information on achievement trends. These NAEP tests, however, are not designed to yield individual student scores -- the 4th and 8th graders who take them cannot benchmark their own performance to either state or national NAEP results or to state and local test results.

President Clinton proposes to develop individual student tests of reading and mathematics based on the content and design of NAEP tests. These tests can open new options for the states. Each state's choice about using the tests will depend on whether they are aligned with the state's standards and have the technical merit to satisfy the state's assessment objectives.

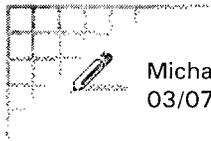
State decisions to use the tests can be made only after test design and administrative procedures are completed. Our Council needs to be involved deeply in the design work. In particular, we need assurance the use of these tests does not duplicate state testing efforts or erode commitments to state testing; the schedule for development is sufficient to yield high quality tests; the cost of the testing is manageable; and the long term test schedule sustainable. These tests must genuinely complement state assessment efforts.

We look forward to working with President Clinton and Members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives in the development of these tests. Together we must make certain the tests are of highest quality and serve our students well.

March 16, 1997

Edw-
Stds

Educ-Standards



Michael Cohen
03/07/97 08:17:25 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Donald A. Baer/WHO/EOP, Kevin S. Moran/WHO/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Department of Defense Schools



Here 030710B6.W is what I have found out about the Defense schools in relation to North Carolina:

1. In general, the overseas and stateside schools are good, and they are doing things world-wide (though not necessarily in NC, that could be pointed to as models. Chief among these are: (1) technology--getting all schools wired by 1998; (2) translating national math standards into classroom curriculum; (3) school report cards and accountability. They are also beginning to talk about providing incentives for teachers to undergo National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification, though this effort will look weak in comparison to Gov. Hunt's proposal in NC.
2. The Defense schools, especially stateside, are basically invisible according to the Defense people. They operate below the radar screen, have tremendous difficulty getting any attention, and feel that most of America, including almost all of the education community, doesn't even know they exist.
3. There are several potential downsides to a defense schools announcement from their point of view:
 - The school at camp Legune (sp???) is in a terrible state of disrepair, especially with leaking roofs. There is a plan to fix it, but, in the meantime, their comment was "I wouldn't want the President to visit while it was raining without an umbrella." Not exactly a strong endorsement for the notion that these are model schools.
 - The Defense Department is working on a congressionally mandated study of the desirability of turning stateside defense schools over to local school systems, and getting Defense out of that business. The report is at least 6 months late, and will not be completed until June at the earliest. The head of the defense schools did not know the original impetus for this study, and no one from the hill has been bugging them for the report. The Department apparently has not yet taken a position on this, though military families and leadership believe that the defense schools are generally superior to neighboring schools and will want to keep the current situation. So will neighboring local school boards, who will not want to get more students and no additional tax base.
 - April is the "Month of the Military Child" and would provide an additional opportunity for this message if we did not make an announcement in North Carolina.
 - Marsha Hale was to call Hunt's staff; as of late afternoon she had not done so, and I do not yet know if Hunt is on board with our testing proposal, or what he might think of this announcement overall. As we have discussed, it would be awkward to announce Defense

participation if we don't get North Carolina's.

Finally, I've attached a couple of pages of suggestions from ED about how we might approach the teaching portion of this speech, since Hunt's main education proposals before the legislature center on improving teaching. The centerpiece of Hunt's plan is a call for a 13% salary increase for master teachers -- teachers who receive National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification -- as a concrete way to reward excellent teachers. The President could challenge every state to take similar steps.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

8:00 a.m.

DATE: 3/12/97

ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 3/13/97

SUBJECT: Presidential Memo - Participation of DOD Dependents Schools & Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools in National Testing

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McCURRY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BOWLES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McGINTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
McLARTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NASH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PODESTA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	RUFF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MATHEWS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RAINES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	REED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SOSNIK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ECHAVESTE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LEWIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMANUEL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YELLEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIBBONS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STRETT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HALE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPERLING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HERMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HAWLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIGGINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WILLIAMS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HILLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	RADD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KLAIN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Clerk</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BERGER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LINDSEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Comments to this office.

RESPONSE:

Educ-Standards

97 MAR 12 PM 7:27

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

**SUBJECT: PARTICIPATION OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS
SCHOOLS AND DOMESTIC DEPENDENT ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NATIONAL TESTING**

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools overseas and the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools here at home play an important role in enhancing the quality of life and overall readiness of the Armed Forces of the United States. They provide military families deployed overseas and within the United States with outstanding educational opportunities, and they play a vital role in preparing the children of military and civilian personnel in the Armed Forces for the future.

Students in these schools deserve the best we can offer, starting with the highest expectations and most challenging academic standards available. Drawn from all racial and ethnic backgrounds, located in 15 countries throughout the world and in 7 states and Puerto Rico here at home, and highly mobile, no group of students better underscores the need for common national standards and a uniform way of measuring progress.

That is why I am pleased the Department of Defense Dependent Schools and Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools have accepted the challenge of benchmarking the performance of their students against widely accepted national standards in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, using voluntary national tests aligned with these standards. This step will ensure that students, parents and teachers in the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools will have honest, accurate information about whether students are mastering the basic skills. Along with states of Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina, the DoDEA schools are among the first in the nation to commit to participate in this testing program, beginning in 1999.

Today I am directing the Department of Defense Education Activity schools to use all available resources to prepare every one of its students to meet these standards, in 1999 and each year thereafter, and to report annually on the progress being made toward this objective, and on the effectiveness of the strategies and approaches the DoDEA school system use to achieve it.

Accepting this challenge of meeting national standards means much more than administering new tests. It means beginning immediately to prepare students to meet these standards. This will require steps such as providing parents with the information and assistance they need to be their child's first teacher, upgrading the curriculum, implementing proven instructional practices and programs, making accessible new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, supporting and rewarding good teaching, and providing students who need it with extra help and tutoring.

The DoDEA schools have already begun this task, but much more needs to be done. And the lessons the DoDEA schools learn from these efforts can be valuable for other schools throughout our Nation.

RAISING STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

DRAFT March 12, 1997

MASTERING THE BASICS: NATIONAL STANDARDS AND TESTS FOR 4TH GRADE READING AND 8TH GRADE MATH

Department of Defense Schools Respond to the Challenge. Last month, the President challenged states and school districts to measure the performance of their students against widely accepted national standards in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, using voluntary national tests based on those standards. Today, the President will announce that the overseas and stateside school systems operated by the Department of Defense have accepted this challenge, ensuring that the students, parents and teachers associated with the Department of Defense will have honest, accurate information about whether students are mastering the basic skills.

Accepting the challenge means not only taking the new tests, but preparing students to succeed. Therefore, the President will announce today that he is directing the Department of Defense Education Activity schools to use all available resources to prepare every one of its students to meet the national standards, in 1999 and each year thereafter. This will require steps such as providing parents with the information and assistance they need to be their child's first teacher, upgrading curriculum, implementing proven instructional practices and programs, taking best advantage of new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, supporting and rewarding good teaching, and providing students who need it with extra help and tutoring. The schools will report annually on the progress being made, and on the effectiveness of their strategies and approaches.

The Department of Defense schools include both the Department of Defense Dependent Schools and Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools. Altogether, the schools serve approximately 115,000 students in 233 schools in 14 countries, 6 states, and Puerto Rico. In North Carolina, there are 16 DoD schools serving close to 8,000 students in 16 schools at Camp LeJeune and Fort Bragg.

North Carolina Responds to the Challenge. Today, Governor Hunt will announce that North Carolina also accepts the President's challenge and will participate in the new national tests. This makes North Carolina the third state, after Maryland and Michigan, to make this commitment. The President will note that North Carolina is already making good progress in its school reform efforts, with the state's math scores on the National Assessment of Education Progress the most improved of any state in the U.S.

REWARDING OUTSTANDING TEACHING

In his Call to Action for American Education, President Clinton challenged the nation to reward outstanding teaching, and called for 100,000 teachers to seek and achieve certification as master teachers by the independent National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, after completing a rigorous evaluation process. This would enable every school in the country to have one master teacher. Today, President Clinton will challenge every state to provide significant and meaningful rewards for master teachers, such as the 12% salary increase proposed by Gov. Hunt in North Carolina.

The President Clinton will also call on Congress to do its share, by supporting his proposal to devote \$105 million over five years to support the work of the NBPTS, assisting the board to complete assessments in 25 academic areas covering the fields of 90% of the nation's teachers. The funding would also help to defray the costs of teachers taking part in the rigorous certification process. The President's proposal is designed to help reach the target -- set by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, chaired by Governor Hunt -- of certifying over 100,000 teachers within the next ten years. The President will note that North Carolina boasts the most board-certified teachers of any state.

REMOVING INCOMPETENT TEACHERS FROM THE CLASSROOM

Noting that our students can only reach high standards if their teachers do, the President will strongly renew his call to counsel burned-out teachers to improve, and quickly and fairly remove those who don't measure up. The President will challenge teachers and local school boards around the country to come together and agree on ways to insure that every classroom is lead by a competent teacher -- no excuses, no exceptions. As an example, he will point to a program in Cincinnati, Ohio, which pairs struggling teachers with experienced mentor teachers to help them improve. After two years of mentoring, the Lead Teacher either rates the teacher as satisfactory or recommends contract termination.

RECRUITING AND PREPARING GOOD TEACHERS

Last month, Secretary Riley announced that he would host a national conference on recruiting and preparing good teachers, drawing on the nation's 50 top teachers, along with 50 leading university presidents and deans of teacher's colleges around the country. Today, the President will announce that this conference, to be held next month, will serve as the focal point for a national conversation on how to improve teaching around the country, by linking via satellite to discussion sites in

every state in the Union. The conference will focus on effective ways to inspire talented young people to enter the teaching profession, and will help shape future Administration proposals, to be included in the Higher Education Act reauthorization, for federal support to attract the best into teaching, and to strengthen teacher education.

GETTING MORE RESOURCES INTO THE CLASSROOM

Today, the President will announce that he has asked the Vice President to lead a national effort to challenge states and school districts to shift more education resources to the classroom, where they can improve teaching and learning, and away from administrative overhead. The Vice President will elaborate on these themes in a speech to the California legislature later today.

CONTINUING TO BUILD SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONWIDE EFFORT TO IMPROVE READING

The President also announced today that 13 colleges and universities in North Carolina had committed work study students to serve as reading tutors as a part of the America Reads Initiative.

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE LEGISLATURE
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA
MARCH 13, 1997**

Acknowledgments and Introduction: Sec. Cohen; Sec. Riley; Gov. Hunt, TK. Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, not there today; the Bowles' family's contribution to North Carolina can be summed up in something Skipper Bowles, Erskine's father, used to say: "Once you have the tools, you've got to spend some time to add to the woodpile."

I want to start by thanking you all for inviting me to speak to you today. I'm happy to see so many of you here. To be honest, I thought a lot of you would be off watching the NCAA tournament. And while I know that none of you would be tempted to slip out during my speech, I have taken the precaution of having the doors locked.

Today marks the very first time that a sitting President has addressed the North Carolina State Legislature, and I am honored to be here. I am especially honored because North Carolina has always been a home of determined and visionary leadership even in the face of great obstacles -- generations of leaders in education, economic development, and racial progress who have moved this state forward. When I was a young man, I always looked to Governor and former Senator Terry Sanford as a beacon of the progress throughout our region. And Governor Hunt has been such a strong and determined leader on the issue I believe must be our nation's top priority, education.

Throughout your long and rich history, North Carolina has always looked to the future. In Kitty Hawk, man first took to the skies; in Chapel Hill, the cornerstone was laid at America's first publicly funded university. Today, North Carolina is an aeronautics force and an air travel hub for millions of Americans. Your state universities receive the highest level of funding for research and development in the country. North Carolina has connected more of its communities than any other state to the Information Superhighway. The "Research Triangle" has one of the highest per capita concentration of PhD's in the world. And North Carolina has become one of America's most dynamic centers for business and finance.

This progress was not predestined -- you had to work hard to make it happen. We had to overcome a lot of the same problems in Arkansas, and so did states throughout the South. But we recognized that education and training were the key to success in a competitive domestic economy, and we committed precious resources to pay for them. It was the best investment we could have made, and your remarkable success here in North Carolina proves it.

Now, our country faces the new challenges of a competitive global economy, and two things above all will determine whether we succeed or fail: the quality of the education we give to all of our children, and the tools we give all of our people to help them take advantage of the opportunities of the 21st century. And that is what I have come to talk to you about today.

We are living in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity. In only four years time, we have produced nearly 12 million new jobs -- more than any other presidential term in our history. Family incomes are going up and the poverty rate is going down. Not since World War II have we experienced an era of such great possibility for all of our people. Here in North Carolina, thanks to your hard work, there are more than 350,000 new jobs . . . your unemployment rate has dropped to only 4.2% . . . there are more than 75,000 fewer people on your welfare rolls . . . your student achievement has risen dramatically. All around the country, things are good and getting better. And the choices we make and the priorities we set will determine whether this progress continues.

This is a moment of rare opportunity for every American, and we cannot afford to squander it in complacency or division. We must take action **now** to build a new American century.

The message I bring today is the same one I carried to the State Legislatures in Michigan and Maryland -- the same one I will carry to other state legislatures, communities and forums in the months to come -- the same one that Vice President Gore will take to the California legislature today. To build a new century, I am asking for a new kind of partnership -- with the people of this chamber, and people all across America. The era of big government is over, but the era of big challenges for our nation is not. National leadership can and must point the way to meet those challenges, but the real responsibility is one we all share.

We must never forget that one of our greatest sources of strength throughout the Cold War was a bipartisan foreign policy. Because our future was at stake, politics stopped at the water's edge. Now we need a non-partisan commitment to education, because education is the critical national security issue for our future, and politics must stop at the schoolhouse door.

Here in North Carolina, you have done what we must do everywhere: you have reached across party lines and made education your central mission. From the moment he was sworn in at Needham-Broughton High School, Governor Hunt has made clear that school standards and teaching excellence will be his top legislative priorities for the next four years. You have already made tremendous progress: to cite just one example, this year North Carolina has the most improved math scores in the nation. Every member of this body, and every student and teacher in the state, should be proud.

You know already that in the new knowledge economy, education will matter more than ever before. Between 1992 and 2000, 89% of the new jobs created in this economy will require post-high school levels of literacy and math skills. But today, only half of the young people entering the work force are prepared for these high-paying jobs. Our schools are still turning out millions of young people who simply are not equipped for the new world of work.

That is why our number one priority must be to make our public education the best in the world. Our goals must be: every 8 year old can read; every 12 year old can log onto the Internet; every 18 year old can go to college; and every American can keep on learning for a lifetime.

In my State of the Union address, I laid out a ten point plan -- a Call to Action for American Education -- that describes the steps that we must take to meet these goals.

We must make sure that all of our children come to school ready to learn. My balanced budget proposal will expand Head Start to include 1 million more children. In North Carolina, the Smart Start program works with local communities to get children ready for school -- mentally, emotionally and physically, and you know that it works.

Scientists have already discovered that learning begins in the very first days of life; now we must explore how parents and educators can best use these new findings. Today, the First Lady and I announced that we will host the first White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning in Washington. It will focus on what new research on the brain tells us about our youngest children.

We must open more charter schools that stay open only as long as they meet high standards. The 30 new charter schools you are creating here -- the most any state has created at one time -- will foster innovation and competition to renew our public schools.

We must rebuild our schools with a first ever federal commitment, because we cannot raise our children up in buildings that are literally falling down.

We must meet our national goal of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the Year 2000.

We must make the 13th and 14th years of college as universal as high school is today. My balanced budget plan proposes a \$1500 Hope Scholarship . . . a \$10,000 deduction . . . and the biggest increase in Pell Grant scholarships ever.

And we must make sure that learning continues throughout a lifetime. My GI Bill for workers would collapse the national government's training programs into a single, simple skills grant that workers could decide how to use to get the education they need.

But to prepare our country for the 21st Century, the first and most basic step we must take is to make sure that our children master the basics. To do that, we must raise our expectations and our standards, not only for our children, but for our teachers and for our schools. Without the basics as a foundation, our children can never move on to learn the skills they will need to succeed in the workplace of the 21st century.

I have challenged every state to adopt high national academic standards, and by 1999, to test 4th graders in reading and 8th graders in math -- the basics -- so that all of our children, no matter where they live or what their backgrounds, will have the same chance to make the most of their lives and their futures.

Raising standards will not be easy, and some of our children may not be able to meet them at first. But the point of national standards is not to put our children down, but to lift them up. And every one of us -- our national government, every state and every school in the country has a responsibility to help us do that.

That is why Governor Hunt's announcement today of support for these standards is so significant. North Carolina is the third state within the last month to endorse our national standards and testing plan. And I hope that every state and every school authority with the power to do so will step forward soon to do the same.

Setting standards is not a partisan issue. Maryland has a Democratic Governor; Michigan has a Republican Governor -- and both states have also endorsed these standards, and committed to test their children to meet those standards. All across our country, reading is reading, and math is math. From North Carolina to Maryland to Michigan to California, we need to know that all of our children are learning what they need to know to succeed in the 21st Century. By holding your students to high standards and insisting they master the basics, North Carolina will once again help lead the nation. And I thank you for doing your part.

The national government must do its part, too. [The single largest school system under its control, and in fact under my control, are the schools that serve our children on military bases.] At 66 schools across the country and 167 more around the world, the Department of Defense educates 115,000 of our children every year -- a school system as large as that of Memphis, Baltimore or Milwaukee. Sixteen of those schools are at Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg here in North

Carolina -- and nearly 8000 students attend them.

It is important that we give these children the best possible education, for so many reasons. They and their families sacrifice, living far from home, and of course, risking their lives for their country. And it is important for another reason as well: The students at our Defense schools come from every racial and ethnic background. They move from place to place as their parents are transferred from base to base. Especially because of this mobility, no group of students better underscores the need for common national standards and a uniform way of measuring progress than these. If standards can work in these schools, they surely can work everywhere.

So I am pleased to announce today that the Department of Defense schools have stepped forward and asked that their students be among the first to take the new tests when they become available. Secretary of Defense William Cohen and Education Secretary Dick Riley are here with us today to stress their commitment to this step. Starting in 1999, students in classrooms from Wiesbaden to [Seoul] to Camp Lejeune will learn the same rigorous material -- and take the same national tests -- as students throughout this state and, I hope, states throughout the country.

We must make our schools like our armed forces the best on earth

And we must make sure that every one of these students is ready to meet these new standards. That is why today I am directing the Defense Department to use every resource at its disposal to prepare these students -- so that in 1999, when the new math and reading tests are ready, our students will be ready.

Beyond Defense schools, we must make sure that all our children can master these basics. Our America Reads initiative will mobilize an army of one million reading tutors to help every 8-year old learn to read independently. Thirteen North Carolina college presidents have pledged commit a portion of their work study students to serve as reading tutors -- and I thank them.

We should be clear about something else. We cannot expect our children to meet high standards until we demand that our teachers meet high standards of their own. It is time for us to do whatever we must to make sure that our teachers measure up.

As you know, in this area, too, Governor Hunt has been a driving force. Last year, the report of his National Commission on Teaching and America's Future laid out a blueprint for what we have to do to. And you have come together across party lines to develop a comprehensive legislative agenda that implements the report's recommendations.

We must start by recognizing and rewarding our best teachers. The

National Board for Professional Teaching standards, also led by Governor Hunt, has encouraged teachers all over the country to improve their skills and seek board certification as master teachers. North Carolina has 118 of these highly trained professionals in their public schools -- more than any state in the country.

Rewarding teachers who become Board certified with 12% bonuses, as Governor Hunt has proposed, would send a strong signal to our best teachers that we value what they do . . . and it gives our good teachers a reason to be even better.

So I call on state legislatures around the country to reward your teachers when they become master teacher certification. My balanced budget proposal includes \$100 million in funding to help 100,000 teachers achieve this important credential. But even before Congress has acted, we need to urge all of our teachers to try to become master teachers.

The next thing we must do -- and what you are determined to achieve here in North Carolina -- is improve the way we train our teachers so they can achieve the kind of excellence we expect. In April, Secretary Riley will hold a national forum on teacher recruitment and training with 50 of our nation's best teachers, and thousands of others, who will join the Secretary via satellite.

Finally, we must refuse to close our eyes any longer to the fact that some of our teachers simply do not belong in the classroom . . . and we must take steps to get them out of the classroom. As Governor Hunt said to you in his State of the State Address: Good teachers should get a raise. Bad teachers should get a pink slip.

Today, removing a bad teacher from the classroom is often time-consuming and costly. In some states, it can cost as much as \$100,000 to remove one bad teacher. That same money could be used to reward 100 or more good teachers. But we can change this, like they have in Cincinnati, where communities and teachers unions are working together in partnership to find more efficient and fair ways to remove bad and burned out teachers.

Encouraging our teachers is not easy, and it is not cheap. But we know what a phenomenal difference one good teacher can make in the life of a child. We expect our teachers to challenge our children to do their very best -- now we must challenge our teachers to do the same, and reward them when they do.

To elevate teaching to the place it deserves in our system, we must reform the way we spend money in our schools -- and we must give parents the tools to demand accountability.

Today, in California, Vice President Gore is addressing the state legislature in Sacramento. As you know, his reinventing government initiative has helped shrink the national government to the smallest it has been in 3 decades, making it work better as it costs less. He will be announcing a national effort to reinvent public education across America and make sure that our resources are going to quality teaching, not bureaucracy.

This effort by the Vice President underscores the commitment of my entire administration to education reform.

I will continue to speak out across the country, challenging our nation to adopt standards. Hillary, who has devoted so much of her life to children and education, will continue to highlight "what works" -- those best practices in schools and communities that can help all our children meet those standards. And Tipper Gore will continue life's work and focus on the role of parents in education.

Throughout my career in public life -- as a Governor, and as President -- I have worked harder on education than on any other issue. That is because renewing education, raising our standards, and lifting up our schools is the embodiment of everything we must do to prepare for the 21st Century -- to promote opportunity, demand responsibility, and build community.

When it comes to providing the tools to succeed, our other great challenge is helping to lift the permanent underclass into our growing middle class. And here, too, the only way to do it is by reaching across party lines and working together, Democrats and Republicans, national government and state government, business and labor and religious institutions.

Working together, we ended the old welfare system. Over the past four years, we worked with 43 states to launch welfare reform experiments, which helped move a record 2.25 million people off our nation's welfare rolls. Here in North Carolina, Work First -- Governor Hunt's comprehensive program to move families from welfare to work -- is achieving excellent results. Since Work First started in 1995, North Carolina's welfare rolls have declined by more than 17%, and 30,000 families have moved from the dependency of welfare to the independence of work. And Governor Hunt's Crackdown for Children program and other efforts have increased child support collections by 48%.

But this is not the end of welfare reform, it is a new beginning. Now that we have demanded that those on welfare take responsibility, we must all take responsibility to see that the jobs are there, so people on welfare can become permanent members of the workforce. Our goal must be to move people from welfare to work so that two million more Americans are off the welfare rolls by the year 2000.

I have challenged the nation's businesses to join in this effort, and I have a offered a plan to help them: Tax credits and other incentives for businesses to hire people off welfare; incentives for job placement firms and states to create more jobs for welfare recipients; training, transportation, and child care to help people go to work. Here in North Carolina, Work First is encouraging private employers by subsidizing paychecks and holding job fairs that match employers with welfare recipients. Each and every one of us must fulfill our responsibility -- indeed, our moral obligation -- to make sure that those who now must work, can work.

Fed govt.

The most direct and effective steps must be taken by the states. The legislation we passed gives states the authority, for the very first time, to take the money that had been used on welfare checks, and subsidize private sector paychecks. Missouri began doing this under one of our waivers -- and it is working. Now I challenge every state to follow their example. Use the new flexibility you have been given. Turn those welfare checks into paychecks. That is what we need to do to help welfare recipients find jobs and keep them.

Second, I urge you to use the money saved from moving people from welfare to work to make sure that even more people can make that transition. Here in North Carolina, Governor Hunt has proposed to use some of the \$90 million savings to invest in child care to make it easier for people to go to work. I urge you to help him do that . . . It will be worth every penny.

Finally, I urge every state and every Governor, Republican or Democrat, to join with me to get Congress to restore basic health and disability benefits when misfortune strikes immigrants who came to this country legally, who work hard, pay taxes and obey the law. To do otherwise is simply unworthy of a great nation of immigrants.

We passed historic welfare reform -- giving states the authority and flexibility they had sought for years. We were right to do it. Now states must live up to their responsibility, and help us finish the job. You're off to a great start here in North Carolina, and I commend you for your efforts.

On education reform, on welfare reform, on all our major challenges, let us build new partnerships across old lines of responsibility. Preparing for the 21st Century is not a job for any one level of government alone. Many of our greatest challenges do not fall under the authority of Washington, nor should they. They do not fall under the authority of state capitals like Raleigh, nor should they. The power to solve our problems rests with all levels of government, and all sectors of society -- and that is where we must forge our solutions as well.

Just over a hundred years ago, at the dawn of a new century, your predecessors adopted North Carolina's state motto: Esse Quam Videri [ESS-ay

kwam vih-DARE-ee], to be rather than to seem, to take action -- action that matters -- rather than to talk about action. This spirit of this motto has been the animating force behind your great success in this century. And at the dawn of a new century, at this rare and fleeting moment of opportunity, it must be the challenge that drives us to make that new century our own, for all our people.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

CLINTONS ON THE BRAIN

Will this be their legacy?

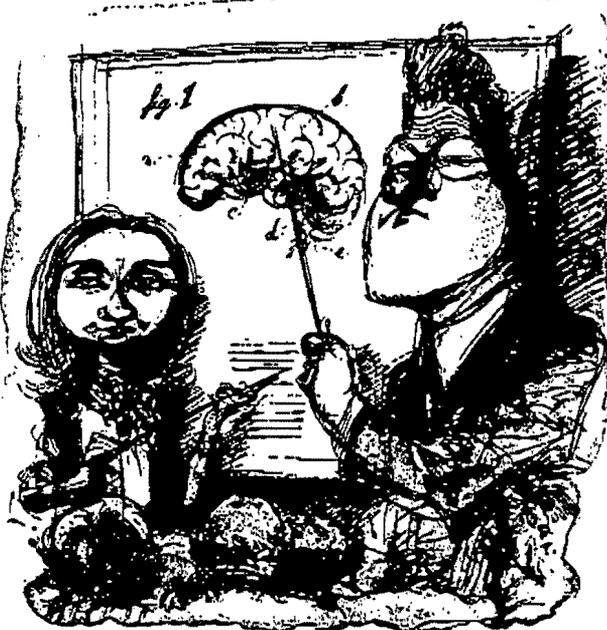
BY JOE KLEIN

ON the morning of February 21st, Bill and Hillary Clinton visited a cheerful classroom at William Lloyd Garrison Elementary School, a few miles from the White House, and read "The Tortoise and the Hare" to a group of first graders, most of whom were African-American. The President and the First Lady each held a copy of the book, and took turns reading. As one read, the other would show the page to the students, who sat on the floor, clustered around them. Despite the tangle of cameras, cables, reporters, and Secret Service agents in the back of the room, there was an ease and grace in the Clintons' performance: it was clearly something they'd done before. When they finished the story, the First Lady asked, "What did you learn from this book?" And, rather than solicit an answer from one of the eager readers in the front of the class, she looked to the more reticent souls in the back.

"Some turtles run fast," one boy said. The First Lady tried another boy. "Sometimes the tortoise wins," he said. There was an awkward silence. No one offered the obvious answer, and so the First Lady explained, "It's a lot like reading. If you do it slowly and carefully, and just keep at it, you can succeed, just like the tortoise did. You can win the race."

The moment was doubly poignant. The children were trying so hard and seemed so enthusiastic, but learning to read was going to be a struggle for more than a few of them. The Clintons were trying hard, too. Indeed, they have been very persistent about promoting their edu-

cation initiative, which is supposed to be the policy centerpiece of their second term. After visiting the classroom, they went on to the school's auditorium and announced that Washington-area colleges had made a commitment to provide hundreds of reading mentors for the city's el-

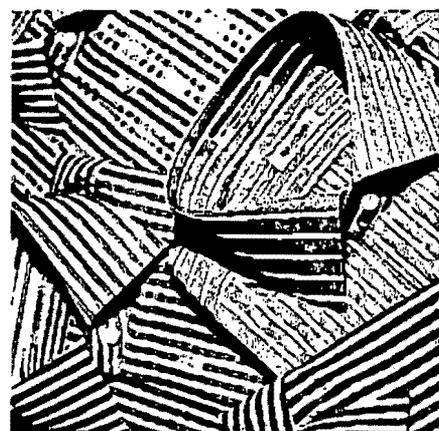


Two provocative White House education initiatives—they are arguably "his" and "hers"—may set off a national ruckus.

ementary schools. It was a direct and tangible—and undeniably worthy—result of steady Presidential exhortation. Since the Inauguration, the President and the First Lady have each been out at least once a week—she visiting schools and early-education programs, he addressing state legislatures about the need to join his campaign for national reading and math standards. On March 6th, Michigan's Governor John Engler, a Republican, pledged to do so, which was a significant victory for the President.

The intensity—and mutuality—of the Clintons' interest in this topic has only one precedent: their campaign for universal health-insurance coverage, in 1994. Obviously, this crusade isn't as risky. Few

WHY AN ASCOT CHANG SHIRT IS ONE OF THE BEST IN THE WORLD...



Fabrics:

2,500 selections. From 100s 2x2 Egyptian to 300s 2x2 Swiss poplin.

Stitching:

Special needles create an almost invisible 22 stitches per inch. Other makers are satisfied with 16.

Seams:

All single needle French seams for durability and a neater classic look.

Buttons:

Only mother of pearl. Hand picked and matched. Wok shaped bottoms for easy access.

Collar Styles:

Unlimited. Every collar is designed and built to the client specific need.

Cuff Options:

15, to begin with.

Measurements:

Just the collar alone takes 7. There are 31 in all.

Body Reading:

The most critical aspect of custom shirt making. An art.

Trained Fitters:

On premise—minimum 20 years experience in every store.

Referrals:

10% of our new business comes from laundry recommendations.

Guarantee:

The same for 50 years. Satisfaction.

Pricing:

\$85. to \$450.

PERHAPS THE BEST?

ASCOT CHANG

A Gentleman's Shirmaker

7 West 57th Street
New York, New York 10019 212-759-3333
9551-9553 Wilshire Blvd.
Beverly Hills, Ca. 90211 310-550-1339

For more information, please call 1-800-486-9966

RICHARD THOMPSON

Republicans have even bothered to attack the program as a White House "scheme" to "federalize" education policy. And the media's interest, which was never great, evaporated almost immediately after the plan was announced in the President's State of the Union Message—a consequence of scandal mania and the reflexive narcolepsy that results whenever the words "education" and "initiative" are uttered in tandem. On the evening of February 21st, the Clintons' school visit—and mentor announcement—didn't dent the network news: the big story that night was Kenneth Starr's decision not to quit as the Whitewater independent counsel.

In fact, there seems to be remarkably little interest in the political community about anything substantive that the President intends to do in his second term. An insidious assumption about priorities has begun to seep through official Washington: the rest of this spring will be about the campaign-finance scandals (and, perhaps, the congressional effort to balance the budget). But official Washington has rarely seemed more remote from the rest of the country. Bill Clinton is at the peak of his popularity—around sixty per cent, in most polls. He has repeatedly insisted that education is his top priority. "You can feel it whenever he talks privately about this stuff," an aide says. "This is it. This is his legacy." And so, perhaps, it deserves a closer look.

That requires some effort. Clinton undercut the admirable qualities of his education plan by presenting it as a laundry list of ten items stuffed into his State of the Union Message, which was delivered while much of the country was channel-surfing in search of the second O. J. Simpson verdict. He spent nearly half an hour on it, but it sounded stale—a campaign leftover, the items "bite-size" and poll-driven. The most expensive program, and the one closest to controversial, was his plan to give \$36.1 billion in college-tuition tax benefits. The public loves this idea; few politicians with a pulse will vote against it. (Most education experts think it's a waste of money, since a greater percentage of Americans already attend college than young people in any other country do.) There were also the usual pleas for more money for Head Start and safe schools and "character education" and local school construction.

But embedded in the boilerplate were two substantive ideas that could cause a ruckus. They were, arguably, "his" and "hers" education initiatives—the President's and the First Lady's personal cru-

sades. *His* was the proposal for rigorous national math and reading standards, which contained an impressive acronym familiar only to education experts: NAEP, for National Assessment of Educational Progress—a group of tests that have found startling numbers of American children to be subliterate and innumerate in recent years. *Hers* was barely mentioned in the speech, but it is at the heart of the "early learning" initiative and seems to be the education fetish of the moment in precincts as disparate as Washington and Hollywood: a fascination with new scientific research on the intellectual and emotional development of infants, which will lead, in April, to a meeting that aides have taken to calling, sometimes without even raising their eyebrows, "the White House Conference on the Brain."

A FEW hours after the President and the First Lady read "The Tortoise and the Hare," and a few blocks away, Colin Powell sat in a television studio made to look like a child's bedroom and read "Goodnight Moon" to his two-year-old grandson, Brian. He read wonderfully; Brian was pretty terrific, too, pointing to the kittens and snuggling against his grandfather. The director, Rob Reiner, and his wife, Michele Singer-Reiner, watched the scene on a video monitor and then glanced at each other with tears in their eyes. "I don't think we'll need a second take," Reiner said.

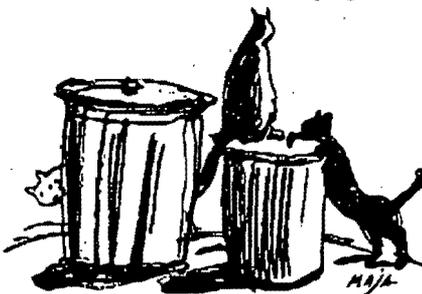
"Goodnight Moon" will be the final scene of an hour-long program about early-childhood development which ABC will broadcast on April 28th, around the time that the White House brain conference may take place. Both events coincide with a national "Early Childhood Public Engagement" campaign that is being coordinated this spring by a New York-based nonprofit group called the Families and Work Institute. A special edition of *Newsweek*, which will be available at newsstands for several weeks, will also be part of the effort. Reiner has been deeply involved with the campaign. His

interest in the subject, he acknowledged with a candor peculiar to the west side. Los Angeles—grew out of nine years' daily psychoanalysis. "I realized that what happened to me in the first three years of my life was absolutely critical, for good and not so good, to how I dealt with the world and relationships and my work," he said. "I began to think that other people should have this information, too. It's important for parents to know how important the first few years are."

Reiner's psychoanalysis coincided with a number of biochemical and behavioral studies that proved, with scientific precision, most everything your grandmother summed to be true about child-rearing: that it's crucial for babies to be hugged, talked to, sung to, read to, and adored. The ones who don't get the physical attention suffer; those who are abused or neglected can be physiologically damaged for life.

Another pilgrim who came early to this information was Hillary Rodham Clinton, who wrote about it in her book "It Takes a Village." Indeed, all questions about the brain conference are directed to the White House press office to the First Lady's staff. Few are answered: there is no guest list, and no agenda, and not even a specific date for the conference yet.

"The policy implications are absolutely clear," said Reiner, who has schooled himself in this subject—he recently addressed the National Governors' Association about it—and is working in close conjunction with the White House. He rattled off a list of early-education programs that need to be funded. The First Lady cites more than a few programs in her book, too. And it's true that programs like Healthy Start, which offers child-care advice to poor mothers in some states, seem to have been very useful. But there is another policy "implication" that may prove disturbing for a great many two-wage-earner and single-parent families. The research is pretty clear: it's much better for an infant to have a parent—almost inevitably, a mother—at home for at least the first few years of the infant's life. "Most women go back to work before they want to," says Ellen Galinsky, the president of the Families and Work Institute and a crusader for better day care who understands the limits of the possible. Her group has studied the effects of smaller group size and better training for day-care workers in Florida: only about twenty-six per cent of the child-care situations there were considered stimulating



for kids before the training, but the figure rose to between thirty-six and forty-four per cent afterward. An optimist might see progress, but many parents will see a six-in-ten chance that their own children will not be getting sufficient attention. (Galinsky said day care in Florida was better than in most of the rest of the country.)

The White House conference on the brain could touch off an emotional debate about the responsibilities of parents, and how active the government should be in encouraging parents to act responsibly. "The real policy implication," one White House aide said, "may turn out to be that we should try to make it easier for parents to stay home"—during the first few years of life—by offering a large, concentrated tax incentive.

"I hadn't thought of that," Reiner says. "That's what the conservatives are going to be for. It's very depressing."

Not just conservatives. William Galston and Elaine Kamarck, both of whom have worked on the White House staff (Kamarck still does, for the Vice-President), proposed just such a tax credit in "Mandate for Change," a policy agenda published after the first Clinton victory, by the Progressive Policy Institute, a New Democrat think tank. "I don't think this should be an either-or situation," says Galston, a former Clinton domestic-policy adviser who now teaches at the University of Maryland at College Park. "We should be

investing more in our children, period. We should have greater incentives for parents to stay home in the early years, and better child-care options for those who can't afford to do that. But don't ask me to choose between them. That's someone else's box, not mine."

It is the White House's box, and the White House hasn't yet decided how, or whether, to climb out of it. "I'd hope that every parent who learns about this research will want to go find their kids and hug them," Bruce Reed, the President's domestic-policy adviser, says. "I'd hope that this information will cause a lasting change in parental behavior."

But what about government's role? To be determined, Reed says. And how can this year's interest in early-childhood development be squared with last year's welfare-reform legislation, which now demands that poor women leave their children and find work? "We believe that kids who grow up in a household without the structure of work as a discipline and aspiration will also suffer," Reed says. "It doesn't mean that lousy child care is a good idea, but we believe that if you can bring work to a household, and a community, lives will improve."

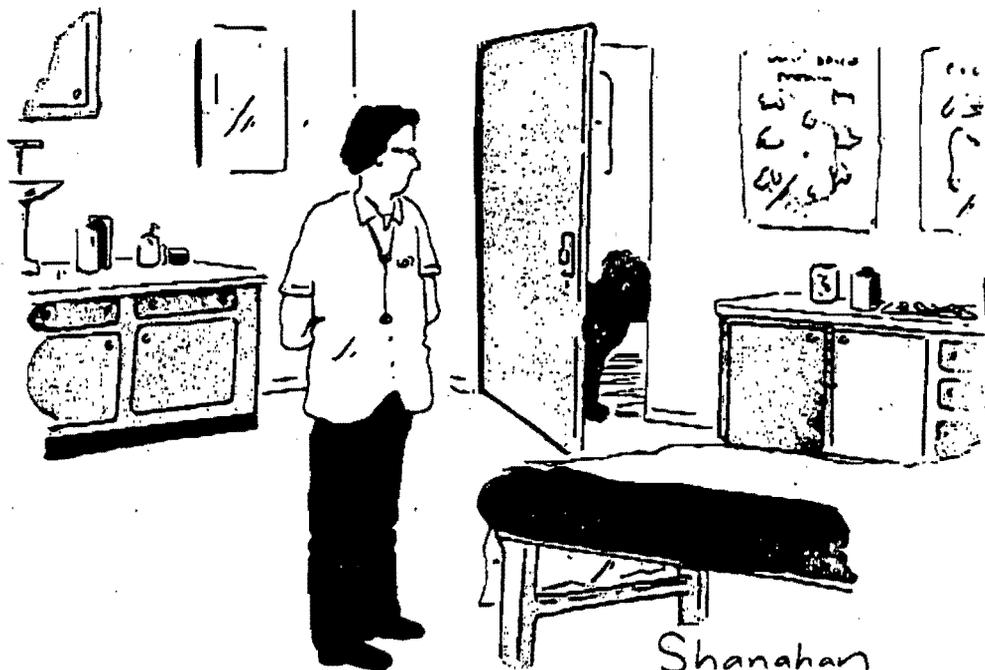
"LOOK, if you have a chance to land in Normandy, does that mean you have to plan the invasion all the way to Berlin?" a White House aide asked, in defense of the semi-hatched nature of

some of the President's education initiatives. Although Bruce Reed and others had been planning for a second term through much of 1996, the education package seems to have been cobbled together hastily, to produce something in time for the State of the Union Message.

There is a signature Clintonian quality to all this—ambitious, high-minded, and haphazard. Like the White House brain conference, much of the rest of the President's education policy—especially the call for national reading and math standards—raises more compelling questions than it seems prepared to answer. It was the President himself who insisted on the most rigorous reading and math tests. "He knew this stuff cold," an aide said. "The Department of Education was dragging its feet a little, but he knew exactly what he wanted."

The Department of Education would no doubt deny recalcitrance, but it wasn't thrilled with the last set of NAEP reading results, for the year 1994, released in April of 1995. "Dick Riley didn't even attend the press conference," one testing expert said. "I can't remember another time when the Secretary of Education didn't show up." The test results were brutal. NAEP divides students into four categories: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. The two crucial categories are in the middle: a basic reader will know, say, that the tortoise beat the hare; a proficient reader will be able to extrapolate that "slow and steady wins the race." (An advanced reader might make the First Lady's point: that the lesson can be applied to other endeavors as well.) The 1994 NAEP results for fourth graders were: seven per cent advanced, twenty-three per cent proficient, and thirty per cent basic—which left forty per cent semi-literate at best. The figures for certain minorities were even more depressing: one per cent of blacks were advanced, seven per cent were proficient, twenty-two per cent were basic, and seventy per cent were below basic.

The 1994 NAEP results were culled from a national sample. The President has proposed that a similar test be given to every fourth grader in 1999, but he can't ordain it. He has to get the



"I seem to have missed the cup."

BEING AND NOTHINGNESS

Returning takes too long.

In the flatlands
the trees fill with heat,
the stations arrive at light
by a process of logic:
goat willow, birchwoods,
a cluster of dusty leaves,

then brickwork
and a street that aches for snow.
I never sleep on trains. I'd soon be lost
and how would I know myself
if not for the way you listen in your sleep
and find me,
waking, turning,
drifting off;

how would I know I was there
without your breathing,
letting me dive so far into the dark
and filling the gaps on my way
with the amber of knowledge.

—JOHN BURNSIDE

individual states to agree, and that may not be easy, even though he is offering to reimburse them for the costs of the examination. "Do we have a strategy for getting the states to go along?" an aide asks. "Well, he'll be out pushing this. We think Governor Engler's support is significant—a lot of the other Republican governors look to him. We're not expecting a huge rush of other states right away, though. . . . Is there a Plan B if they don't come along? No."

And so it is entirely possible that the centerpiece of the President's education initiative will never come into being. But it is also possible—and this is clearly what Bill Clinton is hoping for—that enough states will go along, and then the million reading mentors that he has called for will swarm into elementary-school classrooms throughout America in 1998, and the NAEP results will show a dramatic improvement in 1999. If the President were to achieve his goal—every fourth grader reading at or above the basic level—that would be a significant accomplishment indeed.

He is likely to settle for less than

that—for a national-testing regime that demonstrates just how much work needs to be done. And, like the conference on the brain, this may intensify the existing, deeply rutted policy debates between left and right—especially when parents across the country begin receiving the NAEP results, and find their children semi-literate or worse. The left will want to spend more money on poor schools; the right will argue for a freer, more entrepreneurial system. If the President is lucky, a national consensus may emerge—as William Galston proposed on early-education issues—to try both. "You're not going to get an argument from me about trying everything, including spending more money on poor schools," Chester E. Finn, Jr., a conservative education specialist with the Hudson Institute, says. "But we've also got to try some of the things that give palpitations to the teachers' unions"—things like school vouchers, merit pay, and the elimination of tenure.

As President, Bill Clinton has avoided such harsh specificity—in part, no doubt, because the teachers' unions were among

his strongest supporters, but also because he has no direct authority over such things: a union contract, like almost every other aspect of education, is a local matter. Which is why education is an area that Presidents have traditionally left to their speechwriters (and why this President didn't devote very much time to it until he began to run for reelection). Clinton's decision to stake his second term on this usually peripheral area seems a combination of true interest—he lights up whenever he enters a school—and desperation. Most of his and the First Lady's beloved social-policy issues are off the table: welfare has been "reformed" (at least, for the moment), and health care probably won't be any time soon. Crime is down. Affirmative action is being mended, not ended. The great entitlement battles—over Medicare and Social Security—are there to be fought, but they are dry, bitter debates: a matter of taking something away from the public rather than offering anything to it (other than the distant prospect of fiscal stability). "Yes, it's difficult to really do something about education," an aide says. "You don't control the levers of power. But he's pursuing this because it's what he really cares about."

These are humble times for government, and Bill Clinton's education plan is a modest policy. He does not ask for vast new funds. He offers no sticks along with his few scraggly carrots—there is no requirement that states join his testing regime, lest conservatives squawk that he is "imposing" a national education scheme; there is no requirement that high-school graduates pass a test to receive college-tuition tax credits, lest liberals squawk that minorities would suffer a "disparate impact." It's also possible that all this will be swallowed by the scandals that have overwhelmed Washington. But the debate about parental responsibility which will attend the brain conference is bound to be provocative, and the outrage that may accompany the testing results in 1999 could instigate some useful reforms. And, though Bill Clinton would no doubt like to be remembered for something more dramatic, he may have to settle for this: that at a moment when the public distrusted the government's ability to provide answers, he demonstrated—in this area, at least—an ability to raise some of the important questions. •

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 4, 1997

MEETING ON EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

DATE: March 5, 1997
LOCATION: The Cabinet Room
TIME: Briefing 1:00 pm - 1:10 pm
Event - 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm
FROM: Bruce Reed
Michael Cohen

I. PURPOSE

To discuss several ways of advancing your agenda of national standards and tests.

II. BACKGROUND

This is an opportunity to brainstorm with some of the leaders of the standards movement on the best alternatives available to you. The purpose of this meeting is not to make any final decisions on your strategy, however, it provides you with an opportunity to take into account the recommendations of experts in the standards field when making your decisions on this issue. In addition, this is a valuable opportunity to gain the support of this important group for your education reform initiatives over the coming months.

Attached is an overview of your plan for national standards and testing in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, and a summary of reactions to date. As a follow up to this meeting, we will provide you with a decision memo that incorporates the ideas discussed by the participants.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

The First Lady
Secretary Riley
Deputy Secretary Mike Smith
Erskine Bowles
Sylvia Mathews
Bruce Reed
Michael Cohen
Rahm Emanuel
Don Baer

Event Participants:

The First Lady

Secretary Riley

Deputy Secretary Mike Smith

Erskine Bowles

Sylvia Mathews

Bruce Reed

Michael Cohen

Melanne Verveer

Rahm Emanuel

Don Baer

Diane Ravitch, Former Assistant Secretary of Education in the Bush Administration

Don Hirsch, Professor of English, University of Virginia, Director of the Core Knowledge Project and author of The Schools We Need.

Governor Roy Romer

Don Stewart, President of the College Board

Richard Mills, Commissioner of Education for New York State

Hugh Price, President of the Urban League

Marc Tucker, President of the National Center on Education and the Economy and Director of the New Standards Project.

IV. PRESS PLAN

Closed Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Make brief opening remarks and then turn to each participant to speak.

VI. REMARKS

Talking Points Attached.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 4, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRUCE REED
MICHAEL COHEN

SUBJECT: YOUR PLAN FOR NATIONAL STANDARDS AND
NATIONAL TESTS IN 4TH GRADE READING AND 8TH
GRADE MATH

Summary of Plan

In your State of the Union Address you challenged every state to adopt high national standards and by 1999, to test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met. These national tests will be:

- o **Aligned with widely accepted national content standards.** In 4th grade reading, the test will be aligned with the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading standards, developed through a consensus process involving reading specialists, curriculum experts, state officials and others throughout the nation. In math, the test will be aligned with the TIMSS international math standard agreed to by experts in 41 countries, including the U.S.. The TIMSS standards are also very highly consistent with the national standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- o **Based on existing, widely accepted tests that will produce individual scores for students and parents in terms of the national standards.** The new tests will be based on the existing NAEP and TIMSS tests, which are designed to be administered to samples of students and produce national or state-level scores only. The new tests will provide comparable scores for individual students, revealing how well individual students perform relative to clear national or international performance standards
- o **Developed by recognized test developers.** The U.S. Department of Education will contract with a test developer to create these tests. The contracting process will begin shortly. The tests will be piloted in Spring 1998, and available for use in schools throughout the country in the Spring of 1999.
- o **Voluntary for use by states and local school districts.** Use of these tests will not be required as a condition of receiving federal program funds.

- o **Licensed to test publishers and interested states and school districts.** As a result of this licensing agreement, the federal government will not be involved in administering or scoring the tests, and the tests will be readily available.
- o **Available to parents and students on the Internet once the tests have been administered.** Each year, after the tests have been administered, the test questions and answers will be released publicly and placed on the Internet, so that parents can find out whether their children are meeting national standards even if their state or district does not use the tests.
- o **The focal point for national efforts to prepare all students to reach the standards.** The point of the national standards and tests is to help improve, not just to measure, student achievement. Between now and when the tests are first administered, there must be a focused, sustained effort, and the local, state and national level, to prepare students for these tests. America Reads is one component of such an effort.

Reactions To Date

The reactions to your plan have mainly been quite positive. The Washington Post, USA Today, and many local and regional papers have expressed editorial support for this plan. As you know, the Business Roundtable endorsed it the day after the State of the Union Address. Maryland has already agreed to participate in the testing program, and Gov. Engler will announce his support later this week. Diane Ravitch and Checker Finn wrote a very supportive op-ed piece in the Washington Post last week (copy attached). We expect other education and business groups to weigh in positively as their Spring meetings occur. In addition, informal conversations with state and local education officials and business leaders around the country have been encouraging. They welcome the tests, and believe you have found a way of defining the issue that avoids old political battles. Based on conversations with a number of chief state school officers, I believe that California, New York and South Carolina will commit to participate in the testing program in the near future. A number of others are possible quickly as well.

Criticism of this plan has taken three forms. First, some have said that your plan goes too far. For example, Gov. Thompson wrote an op-ed piece in the New York Times, arguing that standards should be left to the states and local communities. Second, some in the education community have renewed the familiar argument that tests are not the solution to low performance. Instead, they argue that additional funding, better teachers, safer and more caring schools are what's needed. Third, some (e.g., David Broder, Robert Samuelson) have argued that your plan does not go far enough, because it is limited to only two subjects and grade levels, because it is not accompanied by significant new federal funding to prepare students to reach the standards, or because you do not require students to pass tests in order to graduate from high school or receive financial aid for college.

Summary

Your plan for national standards and tests in reading and math is a significant step forward, especially in light of the controversy that has surrounded the standards movement in recent years. The most important thing you can do to advance the standards movement is to continue to press the case for every state to adopt these tests. This month, you will speak to legislatures in Michigan and North Carolina; meet with the chief state school officers here in Washington; and possibly appear with Delaine Eastin and a broad coalition of business, education, and labor leaders to announce California's support for your testing plan. The Defense Department has agreed to use the tests in the schools it runs in the U.S. and around the world; we are working to arrange a public announcement for this in the next several weeks. In addition, the Education Department will soon be prepared to announce the formation of an advisory committee to guide the test development process.

We are off to a good start: if we can line up California, New York, and Michigan to support the tests, a number of other states will follow suit. But we must not let up for a moment in this crusade, and we must be especially careful not to propose any new measures that will undermine state participation in the 4th and 8th grade tests --because the most visible indicator of success or failure will be the number of states that administer those tests in 1999.

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1997 McClatchy Newspapers, Inc.
Sacramento Bee

February 28, 1997, METRO FINAL

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B7

LENGTH: 1374 words

HEADLINE: AMERICA NEEDS A NATIONAL PROGRAM OF STUDENT TESTING

BYLINE: Chester E. Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch

BODY:

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S proposal for national testing makes sense. As former assistant secretaries of the Department of Education in the Reagan and Bush administrations, we urge Congress to support it.

When President Bush and Lamar Alexander suggested something similar, which they called American Achievement Tests, congressional Democrats scoffed, and no such bill was ever introduced.

And in 1992, when a bipartisan panel called the National Council on Education Standards and Testing recommended a form of national testing, a convoluted scheme that involved different tests based on common standards, the idea was ignored by congressional leaders and attacked by prominent educators.

Still, it was a good idea then, and it's a good one now.

In fact, Clinton's version of national testing is better than Bush's in these important respects: It doesn't require any new standards or tests to be devised, and it does not hinge on dubious efforts to attach multiple tests to uniform (nonexistent) standards.

The administration has figured out that the nation already has two excellent tests that measure student achievement in reading and math, the most basic of basic skills. Accordingly, the president has proposed that states and school districts be permitted to use a respected national test for fourth-grade reading and an equally admirable international test for eighth-grade mathematics.

Nobody is obliged to use these tests. The federal government will pay for the first round of testing, and after that it's up to states and districts.

THEY CAN, however, embed the national tests into their own testing programs, which virtually every jurisdiction has, and commercial publishers would be licensed to offer them, a welcome form of "outsourcing" that would hold down costs, bureaucracy and allegations of unfair government competition.

Most important, they're good tests, incorporating standards far more rigorous than those most states now use.

The reading test is based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which has been around almost three decades but has never been used by districts or schools to report the progress of individual students. The NAEP reading test is solid, multifaceted and has rigorous standards built into it.

Sacramento Bee, February 28, 1997

For eighth-graders, the White House proposes to make available the math part of the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), given to a half-million youngsters in 41 countries. The standards are built into the international comparisons. It's TIMSS results that enabled us to see that our eighth-graders perform poorly in mathematics compared with their peers in many other industrial countries.

Consider how powerful it will be for parents and teachers to compare the math prowess of their eighth-graders in, say, Phoenix or Minneapolis, to the performance of their peers in Korea and the Czech Republic. Consider the impact of parents in Denver or Boston actually seeing how well their fourth-graders read in relation to a national standard of proficiency.

According to every major poll, an overwhelming majority of the American people want national standards and tests. Until now, there has been no way for parents or public officials to get good information about how students are doing.

Instead, they've been stuck with college entrance tests that are not representative of the full population and that, in any case, aren't even administered until the end of high school. Or they have had to settle for "standardized" tests that yield spurious results about youngsters being "at or above grade level," even though "grade level" is simply a statistical average, not a true standard.

Only with such information can parents make wise choices among schools; can parents and legislators appraise how well their school systems are doing; can teachers and principals determine how effective their efforts are, and take corrective action where needed.

To those worried about "local control," we say that these tests are a yardstick, not a harness. They give the federal government no new powers. The test results, in fact, will actually enhance local control by empowering consumers, policy-makers and professionals to know what actions need to be taken locally to improve education.

So important is national testing that it must be safeguarded from politicization, a temptation sure to arise if the student results are as bleak as everyone expects.

To prevent this possibility, responsibility for national testing should be removed from the federal Education Department (and congressional committees) and placed under the control of an independent, nonpartisan body. Such an entity, called the National Assessment Governing Board, already exists.

THE WHITE House's current plan to give control of national testing to the Department of Education would, we think, be a big mistake. If Clinton will agree to turn the program for national testing into an autonomous agency, akin to the National Science Foundation (where the National Science Board sets policy) or the National Transportation Safety Board, then Congress should endorse this part of his education package. This proposal deserves their support.

Once upon a time it was even a Republican idea. Now it is a good American idea.

Sacramento Bee, February 28, 1997

GRAPHIC: BRINTON/Special to The Bee

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 1, 1997

Education Standards Meeting Background on Non Administration Participants

Diane Ravitch

Former Assistant Secretary of Education Research and Improvement, Bush Administration
Diane is an enthusiastic supporter of your plan. She will argue that you remain focused on 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, in order to maintain bipartisan support. She will also argue that if you consider advancing a high school test, that you also consider requiring students to pass it in order to be eligible for financial aid for higher education.

Richard Mills

New York State Commissioner of Education

Rick is also a strong supporter of your plan. He will argue that you use the bully pulpit, relentlessly, to press states, communities, schools, teachers and parents to do everything necessary to prepare students to meet the standards.

Hugh Price

President, Urban League

Hugh has been speaking forcefully about the need to make sure that students in urban schools are held to high standards, and that leaders must work to remove the barriers that prevent students from meeting these standards, including low expectations, lack of parental support, incompetent teachers, and limited resources.

Marc Tucker

President, National Center on Education and the Economy and Director of New Standards Project
Mark will express support for your proposal, point out that it falls short of a comprehensive national system of standards and examinations, and urge you to endorse his New Standards effort as an example of the kind of system of standards others should adopt.

Roy Romer

Governor of Colorado

Donald Stewart

President, College Board

Don will have ideas about how to create a meaningful national test for high school graduation.

E.D. (Don) Hirsch

Professor of English, University of Virginia and Director, Core Knowledge Project

Don has developed a set of detailed, grade-by-grade standards which are in use in a national network of more than 400 schools. He will argue that, to be useful, national standards must be grade-by-grade and specific.

**EDUCATION STANDARDS MEETING
TALKING POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT**

- I am pleased each of you could join me today for this discussion. The issue of national standards is a topic I have spent many hours talking to almost everyone of you about, sometimes going back quite a few years.
- As you know, in my State of the Union Address I announced my initiative to create national standards and individual level tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math. I have challenged every state to implement these tests.
- Today, I'd like your advice on three questions:
 - o What do we need to do to get my proposal for fourth and eighth grade testing implemented nationwide?
 - o What do we need to do to help prepare kids to meet these standards in 1999?
 - o What else should we do to keep the standards movement moving forward?

3/1

Draft

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MICHAEL COHEN

SUBJECT: NATIONAL STANDARDS AND TESTS: MEETING WITH EXPERTS

You will be meeting with a small group of experts (Marc Tucker, Diane Ravitch, E.D. Hirsch, Rick Mills, Roy Romer, Hugh Price, Don Stewart) as well as Secretary Riley and Deputy Secretary Smith, on national standards and tests on March 5. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a range of options about how to move this agenda forward. This memo should help to prepare you for the meeting by summarizing the status of your proposal for 4th and 8th grade standards and testing, and identifying several different directions future action could take.

I. YOUR PLAN FOR NATIONAL STANDARDS AND NATIONAL TESTS IN 4TH GRADE READING AND 8TH GRADE MATH

Summary of Plan

In your State of the Union Address you challenged every state to adopt high national standards and by 1999, to test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met. These national tests *will be*:

- o **Will be aligned with widely accepted national content standards.** In 4th grade reading, the test will be aligned with the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading standards, developed through a consensus process involving reading specialists, curriculum experts, state officials and others throughout the nation. In math, the test will be aligned with the TIMSS international math standard agreed to by experts in 41 countries, including the U.S.. The TIMSS standards are also very highly consistent with the national standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- o **Will be based on existing, widely accepted tests, and will produce individual scores for students and parents in terms of the national standards.** The new tests will be based on the existing NAEP and TIMSS tests, which are designed to be administered to samples of students and produce national or state-level scores only. The new tests will provide comparable scores for individual students, revealing how well individual students perform relative to clear national or international performance standards
- o **Will be developed by recognized test developers.** The U.S. Department of Education will contract with a test developer to create these tests. The contracting process will begin shortly. The tests will be piloted in Spring 1998, and available for use in schools throughout the country in the Spring of 1999.

what's this?

how soon?

- o ~~Will be~~ for voluntary use by states and local school districts. Use of these tests will not be required as a condition of receiving federal program funds.
- o ~~Will be~~ licensed to test publishers and interested states and school districts. As a result of this licensing agreement, the federal government will not be involved in administering or scoring the tests, and the tests will be readily available.
- o ~~Will be~~ available to parents and students on the Internet once the tests have been administered. Each year, after the tests have been administered, the test questions and answers will be released publicly and placed on the Internet, so that parents can find out whether their children are meeting national standards even if their state or district does not use the tests.
- o ~~Will be~~ the focal point for national efforts to prepare all students to reach the standards. The point of the national standards and tests is to help improve, not just to measure, student achievement. Between now and when the tests are first administered, there must be a focused, sustained effort, ^{at} and the local, state and national level, to prepare students for these tests. America Reads is one component of such an effort.

We will provide you an overview of the implementation strategy for this initiative shortly *what?*

Reactions To Date

the standards-testing initiative
 The ~~reactions~~ ^{has} to this plan ~~have~~ mainly been quite positive. As you know, the BRT endorsed it the day after the State of the Union Address. Maryland has already agreed to participate in the testing program, and Gov. Engler will announce his support later this week. Diane Ravitch and Checker Finn wrote a very positive op-ed piece in the Washington Post last week (copy attached). We expect other education and business groups to weigh in positively as their Spring meetings occur. In addition, informal conversations with state and local education officials and business leaders around the country have also been positive. They welcome the tests, and believe *encouraging* you have found a way of defining the issue that avoids old political battles.

Criticism of ~~this plan~~ has taken three forms. First, some have said that your plan goes too far. For example, Gov. Thompson wrote an op-ed piece in the New York Times, arguing that standards should be left to the states and local communities. Second, some in the education community have renewed the familiar argument that tests are not the solution to low performance. Instead, they argue that additional funding, better teachers, safer and more caring schools are what's needed. Third, some (e.g., David Broder, Robert Samuelson) have argued that your plan does not go far enough, because it is limited to only two subjects and grade levels, because it is not accompanied by significant new federal funding to prepare students to reach the standards, or because you do not require students to pass tests in order to graduate from high school or receive financial aid for college.

II. POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

Your plan for national standards and tests in reading and math is a significant step forward, especially in light of the controversy that has surrounded the standards movement in recent years.

Initial
More positive
NYT & Wash Post
editorials, source
USA Today poll,
New Yorker
article

NAME
STATES
(Calif., etc.)
NY

Proceed carefully
 addit. Any steps to nationalize the debate
 could undermine our efforts
 and significantly reduce the # of states we can persuade to adopt the ~~new~~ ^{strong} math tests

But it remains important to consider what else you can do to advance the standards movement and improve student achievement. The key questions are whether to propose national standards and assessments in other grades or subjects (and if so, in which), whether to leave these matters entirely to the states, or whether to adopt some kind of intermediary position. In considering these questions you should consider what steps make the most sense educationally, and also what steps will move the country forward rather than reviving tired arguments. Below I lay out some basic approaches.

~~which will be the threshold question~~ ^{of} ~~for~~ whether this initiative has a chance to succeed.

Approach 1: Remain focused on 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, and lead a sustained national effort to prepare students to reach these standards.

Setting national standards and creating national tests is not an end in ~~and~~ of itself; it should be the starting point for serious efforts throughout the country to prepare students to meet these standards and thereby raise academic performance. The most important follow up to the plan you have already announced is to lead a sustained effort to improve reading and math performance even before the standards and tests go into effect. Your America Reads initiative is one significant element of this strategy, but there is more to be done. In reading, this includes identifying and promoting effective instructional programs and teacher training programs, especially through Title 1 and Goals 2000. And it involves a sustained effort to encourage parents to read to their children on a regular basis.

A comparable effort is required in math. The TIMSS study highlights the need to undertake a massive teacher retraining effort, and to challenge textbook publishers to create world class textbooks. Employers and professionals, such as engineers and scientists, can be mobilized to help by tutoring students, helping to train and support classroom teachers, assisting in developing curriculum materials, and showing students how math concepts are used in the real world. We have been working with OSTP, the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation to develop a strategy for coordinating federal resources to improve teaching and learning in math, and for systematically reaching out to the mathematical, scientific and technical communities.

SAY MORE TO MAKE THIS EXCITING

Pro's:

- o There is ~~the~~ more public support for a limited focus on the basics than there would be on a broader proposal involving other subect areas (e.g., history).
- o This approach has the best chance of avoiding ^{sp.} debilitating old debates about national standards; by winning over Finn, Ravitch, Engler. et. al., we have begun to transform the debate about national standards into a more productive one.
- o Succeeding at this effort will make it easier to push a more comprehensive approach down the road; overloading it early on in the process with a more ambitious agenda may rekindle old debates and slow down progress on this more limited approach.
- o The most important thing to do is to help kids meet the standards; by sticking with this focused approach, we can spend scarce time and attention mobilizing resources to

actually improve, rather than simply measure, student achievement.

If we can succeed in significantly raising student performance in these grades and subjects, achievement in other subjects and grades will also increase, because reading and math are a foundation for other learning, and because we will have demonstrated for the nation how to use standards and tests to boost achievement.

This is a very big deal; don't underplay it.

Con's:

Most of the arguments for national standards and tests in 4th and 8th grade reading and math can be made for other subjects as well: for the most part, well-crafted national standards will be more demanding than those set at the state and local level; we live in a mobile and diverse society, and national standards provide a common foundation for all; just as math is math regardless of where one lives, the same is essentially true of science, geography, and writing.

not a con

Our limited focus on reading and math could unduly restrict attention in local schools to these subjects, at the expense of science in elementary schools, history and literature in middle schools, etc.

Our limited proposal may seem small and inconsequential (even though it is not); we may be missing an opportunity to strike out more boldly.

not true - could be the opposite

As a strategic matter, we should recognize that whatever we ultimately accomplish will be less than what we aim for. If we don't aim higher, we might not accomplish our current proposal.

Approach 2: Promote bold experimentation by identify/endorsing as appropriate the best standards/tests around that others could emulate.

To be filled in

There are lots of standards out there--state, "national" (e.g., geography, civics), separately developed (e.g., New Standards, ED Hirsch). One good way to fill in behind our math and reading plan is to spotlight the best of what is out there in other subjects and grade levels, and encourage states and districts to adopt/adapt those.

Approach 3: Incrementally expand your proposal to include reading and math testing at additional grade levels, and perhaps science as well. You can begin to broaden your proposal by testing math in the 4th grade as well as 8th, and reading in 8th as well as 4th. (You could also test both subjects in 12th grade, though the subject of high school testing is addressed in the next approach, described below). In addition, you could expand your plan by including the TIMSS science test at the 4th and/or 8th grades. Taken together, these steps would result in national tests in 3 subjects at both the 4th and 8th grade level, with a broader and deeper impact on teaching and learning.

Pro's:

- o Adding a 4th grade math test would give students and parents an additional, early benchmark to judge whether the student is proceeding on track. It would cause states, schools, teachers and students to prepare sooner for international standards.
- o While not traditionally considered a basic skill, science is increasingly important. Adding science tests will help spur needed improvement in science curriculum and teaching. It also will increase support for the national testing plan from the scientific community, and will help grass roots efforts to involve scientists in efforts to improve public education.
- o A larger set of 3 subjects and 2 grade levels would make it more difficult to portray your plan as a small idea.

Con's

- o Expanding the original plan undermines our argument that we are focusing on the basic subjects at key transition points. Whatever the educational merits, this expansion will reduce our credibility and leave us vulnerable to the argument that the testing system will be expanded again in the future to include additional subject areas and grade levels.
- o Tests for three subject areas per grade level triples the amount of testing time required to participate in this initiative. This alone will be an obstacle to state or local participation, especially if these tests are added on top of state or local tests, rather than replacing them.
- o Though we have not yet costed out an expanded testing program, it is likely to be more difficult to accommodate in the current year budget. Additional tests will probably not be available for the initial 1999 administration, and the cost of paying for the initial administration of all tests will be significantly higher than initial estimates.
- o It will be far more difficult to launch an effective national movement to prepare students for these tests, if the number expands from 2 to 6. Failing to launch an effective effort to prepare students will weaken your message that the point of the tests is to give students a hand up, not a failing grade.

Approach 4: Focus on High School Completion: Appoint a commission to figure out how to get a good high school level test, appropriate for postsecondary education and employment. The absence of a high school level test leaves the 4th and 8th grade proposal seemingly incomplete. If standards are important, they are surely as important at the completion of high school as they are at earlier transition points.

However, testing at the high school level poses far more difficult issues than at earlier grade levels. There is no obvious 12th grade test to turn to, comparable to the 4th grade NAEP and 8th grade TIMSS tests. (The SAT's are not appropriate because they are only taken by college-bound students, and are not aligned with any curriculum standard.) It also is not clear what grade level(s) would be most appropriate for testing; 12th grade represents high school completion, but

don't dignify
Bruder's
argument -
no one else is
accusing us
of being small.

leaves students who do not meet the standards with no real second chances to improve. From this perspective, 0th grade testing would be preferable, if testing were to be done at a single grade level. Alternatively, a number of states, including Maryland and New York, are using a series of end-of-course tests each year in high school, instead of a single test or battery of tests administered at one time. Finally, any high school testing proposal inevitably will raise questions about the consequences of student performance on these tests -- for high school graduation, college admission, financial aid and employment.

why now?

We believe that the best way to approach the issue of high school testing would be to appoint a commission, with significant representation from the higher education and employment communities, as well as from others with a stake in the education system. The charge to the commission would be to make recommendations about the desirability and uses of national standards and testing for high school completion, and for recommendations on the design, development and implementation of the system it envisions. Through its work, the commission would be expected to build a consensus around the recommended approach.

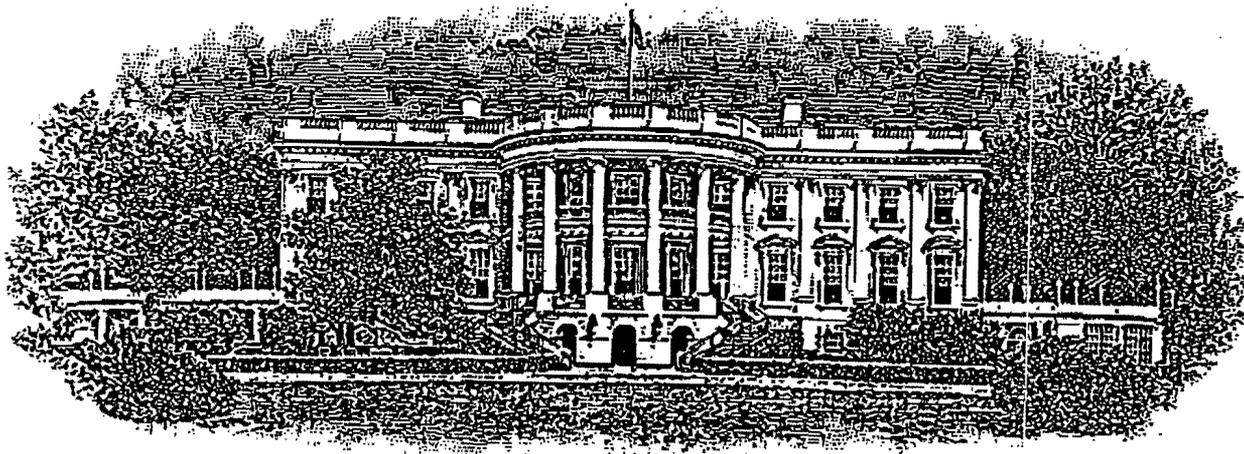
Pro's

- o It is even more important to have some kind of high-school level national standards and test ^s than it is for 4th and 8th grade, because these standards determine what students will learn before they enter the world of work or postsecondary learning.
- o High School level tests, if they are challenging, will have a profound effect on teaching, curriculum, and learning throughout the K-12 system, since the entire system must be oriented to helping students pass the tests.
- o A commission, with a clear charge, will be seen as serious and important. It will demonstrate clear leadership, especially if its recommendations are bold and significant.
- o The high school level issues--including whether and/or how tests should be used for high school graduation, employment and student financial aid--are significant, and could benefit from sustained, visible national attention.

Con's

- o Precisely because high school standards and testing can have ^a powerful effect throughout the K-12 system, this proposal can provoke criticisms of a federal takeover of school curriculum, *that will undermine our efforts to get states to adopt our 4th+8th grade tests*
- o Appointing a commission may be seen as a way of dodging tough issues, rather than asserting bold leadership.
- o The commission may recommend steps that will be highly controversial, or that you may not wish to accept (e.g., require students to pass a national test in order to qualify for federal financial aid).

The White House



DOMESTIC POLICY

4006

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

TO: Brace Reed

FAX NUMBER: 407 824-3232

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

FROM: Mike Cohen

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 202 456-5575

PAGES (INCLUDING COVER): _____

COMMENTS: FYI - I don't need comments until you return Monday afternoon, though I can be reached at the office for the next hour or so (cont'd about 11:30 pm)
Hope you are having fun!

3/2

3 Q's
1) How to ~~write~~ ^{write} ~~present~~
2) How to pass
3) What else?

Draft

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MICHAEL COHEN

SUBJECT: MEETING ON NATIONAL STANDARDS

You will be meeting with a small group of experts (Marc Tucker, Diane Ravitch, E.D. Hirsch, Rick Mills, Roy Romer, Hugh Price, Don Stewart) as well as Secretary Riley and Deputy Secretary Smith, on national standards and tests on March 5. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a range of options about how to move this agenda forward. This memo should help to prepare you for the meeting by summarizing the status of your proposal for 4th and 8th grade standards and testing, and identifying additional actions to consider once that initiative is firmly in place.

These additional steps are not yet fully developed. Because this will be a brainstorming meeting, we expect addition ideas to develop. After this meeting, we will present with a decision memo with specific options and recommendations.

I. YOUR PLAN FOR NATIONAL STANDARDS AND NATIONAL TESTS IN 4TH GRADE READING AND 8TH GRADE MATH

Summary of Plan

In your State of the Union Address you challenged every state to adopt high national standards and by 1999, to test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met. These national tests will be:

- o **Aligned with widely accepted national content standards.** In 4th grade reading, the test will be aligned with the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading standards, developed through a consensus process involving reading specialists, curriculum experts, state officials and others throughout the nation. In math, the test will be aligned with the TIMSS international math standard agreed to by experts in 41 countries, including the U.S.. The TIMSS standards are also very highly consistent with the national standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- o **Based on existing, widely accepted tests that will produce individual scores for students and parents in terms of the national standards.** The new tests will be based on the existing NAEP and TIMSS tests, which are designed to be administered to samples of students and produce national or state-level scores only. The new tests will provide comparable scores for individual students, revealing how well individual students perform relative to clear national or international performance standards

1-2 PM on
EVAL
UPDATE

- o **Developed by recognized test developers.** The U.S. Department of Education will contract with a test developer to create these tests. The contracting process will begin shortly. The tests will be piloted in Spring 1998, and available for use in schools throughout the country in the Spring of 1999.
- o **Voluntary for use by states and local school districts.** Use of these tests will not be required as a condition of receiving federal program funds.
- o **Licensed to test publishers and interested states and school districts.** As a result of this licensing agreement, the federal government will not be involved in administering or scoring the tests, and the tests will be readily available.
- o **Available to parents and students on the Internet once the tests have been administered.** Each year, after the tests have been administered, the test questions and answers will be released publicly and placed on the Internet, so that parents can find out whether their children are meeting national standards even if their state or district does not use the tests.
- o **The focal point for national efforts to prepare all students to reach the standards.** The point of the national standards and tests is to help improve, not just to measure, student achievement. Between now and when the tests are first administered, there must be a focused, sustained effort, and the local, state and national level, to prepare students for these tests. America Reads is one component of such an effort.

(We will provide you an overview of the implementation strategy for this initiative shortly.)

Reactions To Date

The reactions to your plan have mainly been quite positive. The Washington Post, USA Today, and many local and regional papers have expressed editorial support for this plan. As you know, the Business Roundtable endorsed it the day after the State of the Union Address. Maryland has already agreed to participate in the testing program, and Gov. Engler will announce his support later this week. Diane Ravitch and Checker Finn wrote a very supportive op-ed piece in the Washington Post last week (copy attached). We expect other education and business groups to weigh in positively as their Spring meetings occur. In addition, informal conversations with state and local education officials and business leaders around the country have been encouraging. They welcome the tests, and believe you have found a way of defining the issue that avoids old political battles. Based on conversations with a number of chief state school officers, I believe that California, New York and South Carolina will commit to participate in the testing program in the near future. A number of others are possible quickly as well.

Criticism of this plan has taken three forms. First, some have said that your plan goes too far. For example, Gov. Thompson wrote an op-ed piece in the New York Times, arguing that standards should be left to the states and local communities. Second, some in the education community have renewed the familiar argument that tests are not the solution to low performance. Instead, they argue that additional funding, better teachers, safer and more caring

schools are what's needed. Third, some (e.g., David Broder, Robert Samuelson) have argued that your plan does not go far enough, because it is limited to only two subjects and grade levels, because it is not accompanied by significant new federal funding to prepare students to reach the standards, or because you do not require students to pass tests in order to graduate from high school or receive financial aid for college.

II. POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

Your plan for national standards and tests in reading and math is a significant step forward, especially in light of the controversy that has surrounded the standards movement in recent years. The most important thing you can do to advance the standards movement is to continue to press the case for every state to adopt these tests. This month, you will speak to legislatures in Michigan and North Carolina; meet with the chief state school officers here in Washington; and possibly appear with Delaine Eastin and a broad coalition of business, education, and labor leaders to announce California's support for your testing plan. The Defense Department has agreed to use the tests in the schools it runs in the U.S. and around the world; we are working to arrange a public announcement for this in the next several weeks. In addition, the Education Department will soon be prepared to announce the formation of an advisory committee to guide the test development process.

We are off to a good start: if we can line up California, New York, and Michigan to support the tests, a number of other states will follow suit. But we must not let up for a moment in this crusade, and we must be especially careful not to propose any new measures that will undermine state participation in the 4th and 8th grade tests -- because the most visible indicator of success or failure will be the number of states that administer those tests in 1999.

Assuming that the testing initiative continues to gain support, it is not too early to consider what else you can do to advance the standards movement and improve student achievement. The key questions are whether to propose national standards and assessments in other grades or subjects (and if so, in which), whether to leave these matters entirely to the states, or whether to adopt some kind of intermediary position. In considering these questions you should consider what steps make the most sense educationally, and also what steps will move the country forward rather than reviving tired arguments. Below I lay out some basic approaches.

Approach 1: Lead a sustained national effort to prepare students to reach the 4th and 8th grade standards.

Setting national standards and creating national tests is not an end in and of itself; it should be the starting point for serious efforts throughout the country to prepare students to meet these standards and thereby raise academic performance. The most important follow up to the plan you have already announced is to lead a sustained effort to improve reading and math performance even before the standards and tests go into effect. Your America Reads initiative, is one significant element of this strategy, but there is more to be done. In reading, this includes identifying and promoting effective instructional programs and teacher training programs, especially through Title 1 and Goals 2000. And it involves a sustained effort to encourage parents to read to their children on a regular basis.

A comparable effort is required in math. The TIMSS study highlights the need to undertake a massive teacher retraining effort, and to challenge textbook publishers to create world class textbooks. Employers and professionals, such as engineers and scientists, can be mobilized to help by tutoring students, helping to train and support classroom teachers, assisting in developing curriculum materials, and showing students how math concepts are used in the real world. We have been working with OSTP, the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation to develop a strategy for coordinating federal resources to improve teaching and learning in math, and for systematically reaching out to the mathematical, scientific and technical communities.

Pro's:

- o There is the more public support for a limited focus on the basics than there would be on a broader proposal involving other subject areas (e.g., history).
- o This approach has the best chance of avoiding debilitating old debates about national standards; by winning over Finn, Ravitch, Engler. et. al., we have begun to transform the debate about national standards into a more productive one.
- o Succeeding at this effort will make it easier to push a more comprehensive approach down the road; overloading it early on in the process with a more ambitious agenda may rekindle old debates and slow down progress on this more limited approach.
- o The most important thing to do is to help kids meet the standards; by sticking with this focused approach, we can spend scarce time and attention mobilizing resources to actually improve, rather than simply measure, student achievement.
- o If we can succeed in significantly raising student performance in these grades and subjects, achievement in other subjects and grades will also increase, because reading and math are a foundation for other learning, and because we will have demonstrated for the nation how to use standards and tests to boost achievement.

Con's:

- o Most of the arguments for national standards and tests in 4th and 8th grade reading and math can be made for other subjects as well: for the most part, well-crafted national standards will be more demanding than those set at the state and local level; we live in a mobile and diverse society, and national standards provide a common foundation for all; just as math is math regardless of where one lives, the same is essentially true of science, geography, and writing.
- o Our limited focus on reading and math could unduly restrict attention in local schools to these subjects, at the expense of science in elementary schools, history and literature in middle schools, etc.
- o Our limited proposal may seem small and inconsequential (even though it is not); we may be missing an opportunity to strike out more boldly.

- o As a strategic matter, we should recognize that whatever we ultimately accomplish will be less than what we aim for. If we don't aim higher, we might not accomplish our current proposal.

The following approaches are intended as possible additions to, not substitutes for, the approach described above. We believe that none of them should be pursued publicly over the next 4-6 months, or they are likely to undermine efforts to sign states up for participation in the 4th and 8th grade testing initiative.

Approach 2: Highlight the best standards in other subject areas and grade levels, and urge states to adopt them.

States, local school districts, and a host of national organizations (e.g, National Geographic Society, New Standards, etc.) have developed standards in all academic subject areas. These vary in rigor and quality. This is the right time in the national standards process to take stock of what has been developed, identify the most challenging and useful sets of standards from among those developed by states and national organizations, and urge all states to adopt the best standards and assessments that are identified. This would result in an overall improvement in the level and quality of state standards, and greater commonality -- though not necessarily strict uniformity -- in the standards among states. This 'bottom up' approach to national standards would also retain a good deal of flexibility for states.

This approach will work best if the judgements about the quality of existing standards are made by a nonfederal source. It will be politically very difficult for the Education Department to undertake this task. While no national organization is ideally suited for this role, the best candidate is ACHIEVE, the new entity established by the governors and business leaders after the 1996 National Education Summit in Palisades. The mission of this organization, once it is operationally, will be to assist states to develop and implement high quality academic standards and tests. This approach, then involves reaching an agreement with the business leaders and bipartisan group of governors that, together with them, you will urge states to adopt or adapt the best standards identified by ACHIEVE.

Pro's:

- o By keeping the governors at the center of this approach, you will increase state commitment to using the best standards and keep the approach a bipartisan one.
- o This approach can promote national consensus on what students should learn in various subject areas based on the best standards that are available, and without raising the specter of federal intrusion.

Con's:

- o ACHIEVE's capacity to do this work is untried. It has yet to hire an executive director or staff, or conduct any work. In addition, ACHIEVE was established explicitly to focus on state, rather than national standards, since the political atmosphere at the education summit was very much in opposition to both national standards and federal involvement

in standards. It is not clear if the ACHIEVE governing board has the political room needed to alter its mission as envisioned here.

- o Unless the governors and business leaders actually push states aggressively to coalesce around a small number of high quality standards and assessments, this approach may make a difference in only a small number of interested states, while the rest continue to act independently.

Approach 3: Focus on High School Completion: Appoint a commission to figure out how to get a good high school level test, appropriate for postsecondary education and employment. The absence of a high school level test leaves the 4th and 8th grade proposal seemingly incomplete. If standards are important, they are surely as important at the completion of high school as they are at earlier transition points.

However, testing at the high school level poses far more difficult issues than at earlier grade levels. There is no obvious 12th grade test to turn to, comparable to the 4th grade NAEP and 8th grade TIMSS tests. (The SAT's are not appropriate because they are only taken by college-bound students, and are not aligned with any curriculum standard.) It also is not clear what grade level(s) would be most appropriate for testing; 12th grade represents high school completion, but leaves students who do not meet the standards with no real second chances to improve. From this perspective, 10th grade testing would be preferable, if testing were to be done at a single grade level. Alternatively, a number of states, including Maryland and New York, are using a series of end-of-course tests each year in high school, instead of a single test or battery of tests administered at one time. Finally, any high school testing proposal inevitably will raise questions about the consequences of student performance on these tests -- for high school graduation, college admission, financial aid and employment.

We believe that the best way to approach the issue of high school testing would be to appoint a commission, with significant representation from the higher education and employment communities, as well as from others with a stake in the education system. The charge to the commission would be to make recommendations about the desirability and uses of national standards and testing for high school completion, and for recommendations on the design, development and implementation of the system it envisions. Through its work, the commission would be expected to build a consensus around the recommended approach.

Pro's

- o It is even more important to have some kind of high-school level national standards and test than it is for 4th and 8th grade, because these standards determine what students will learn before they enter the world of work or postsecondary learning.
- o High School level tests, if they are challenging, will have a profound effect on teaching, curriculum, and learning throughout the K-12 system, since the entire system must be oriented to helping students pass the tests.

- o A commission, with a clear charge, will be seen as serious and important. It will demonstrate clear leadership, especially if its recommendations are bold and significant.
- o The high school level issues--including whether and/or how tests should be used for high school graduation, employment and student financial aid--are significant, and could benefit from sustained, visible national attention.

Con's

- o Precisely because high school standards and testing can have powerful effect throughout the K-12 system, this proposal can provoke criticisms of a federal takeover of school curriculum.
- o Appointing a commission may be seen as a way of dodging tough issues, rather than asserting bold leadership.
- o The commission may recommend steps that will be highly controversial, or that you may not wish to accept (e.g., require students to pass a national test in order to qualify for federal financial aid).



Pruce - you've seen
This, yes? Elena

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 10, 1997**

**Contact: Johanna Schneider
(202) 872-1260**

**STATEMENT BY NORMAN R. AUGUSTINE, CHAIRMAN AND CEO
LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION AND
CHAIRMAN, EDUCATION TASK FORCE OF
THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE
ON PRESIDENT CLINTON'S CALL FOR NATIONAL TESTS IN
READING AND MATHEMATICS**

Washington, DC--The Business Roundtable applauds the President's continued efforts to make achievement of high academic standards a top priority--a goal the Roundtable itself has been pursuing. The Roundtable supports voluntary national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade mathematics. These tests will provide a national benchmark in reading and an international benchmark in mathematics that parents and educators can use to learn how their own children and students are performing.

The first step to improve education in the United States is to substantially raise academic standards and verify achievement through rigorous testing. In many local communities, parents are uncertain about whether their children are being adequately prepared to succeed. They do not know whether their child's grades or test scores measure up to expectations in other communities, states or countries. Parents who move frequently are surprised to discover that the rigor of what their children learn in school varies from place to place. Yet, when young people apply for a job, employers hold them to the same standard, no matter where they went to school, because employers must themselves compete on a worldwide basis.

The Business Roundtable urges states and local communities to continue to adopt standards in these basic subjects and in other core academic disciplines. Successful schools, like successful businesses, use data to improve their performance. The availability of a national benchmark in 4th grade reading and an international benchmark in 8th grade math should help drive the improvements that are needed to help students meet world-class academic standards.

The Business Roundtable is an association of more than 200 chief executives of leading U.S. corporations, employing over 10 million people. The CEOs examine public policy issues that affect the economy and develop positions which seek to reflect sound economic and social principles.

EDUCATION

What we're for / what we hope to accomplish: Your objective in this meeting is to seek bipartisan support for national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math. You don't need congressional approval to launch your testing plan, but you should try to persuade them to join you on the bully pulpit on the importance of the basics. You should make a strong case for the testing proposal, and offer them a follow-up meeting with Dick Riley and Bruce Reed for further discussion of the details. The key points to stress are: 1) these tests are voluntary; 2) they are based on tough existing standards that have broad bipartisan support; 3) many conservative experts in the education field already support the testing plan (John Engler; Checker Finn from the Hudson Institute); and 4) they should help persuade their states to sign up. Bill Goodling has also said publicly that while he has real concerns about the rest of our education agenda, he supports the testing proposal.

What to guard against / what to oppose: You can emphasize the potential for bipartisan agreement on an education tax cut, the G.I. Bill, literacy, etc. But as you know, we're far apart on the details. The Republican leadership has raised concerns about HOPE scholarships, the proliferation of literacy programs, school construction, and other elements of our education agenda. We have responded to detailed questions from Archer, and just received another detailed letter from Goodling. You should be especially careful not to open the door on vouchers. The Republicans will press that issue, but you should make clear that vouchers is an area where we just don't agree.

WELFARE REFORM

What we're for / what we hope to accomplish: You should emphasize the welfare-to-work initiative as an area where we should be able to reach agreement. The Republicans support the idea of tax credits for hiring people off welfare. It will take longer to persuade them to go along with our plan to provide \$3 billion to states and cities. You can offer to work with them on the details -- we have not sent up our own welfare-to-work bill, because we want to develop bipartisan support. You might also enlist their help in recruiting business leaders to hire people off welfare.

What to guard against / what to oppose: You should urge them to discuss the immigrant issue with their governors, but you shouldn't sign on to their idea of an immigrant block grant. It's far too early to have that kind of discussion. Most of the Republican leadership (especially Nichols) vehemently opposes us on immigrant benefits, although Gingrich may be a closet supporter (he rose to applaud your statement in the State of the Union). A strong message from you on immigrants would also help with Hill Democrats, who have not been much help on that issue so far.