

File: NESIC

Carol,

I've talked again with the Department of Education concerning NESIC. The Secretary continues to view NESIC as a political lightning rod and liability that could (and probably should) be sacrificed to reduce pressure on the rest of the Goals bill. Some legislative people in the dept. believe that we should relinquish it only as part of a larger "trade" involving something we want in return.

While I agree with the Department that NESIC could easily be sacrificed without harming the future of education in this country one bit, there are three points to keep in mind:

1. It's not clear to me that we will be in a strong enough position to hold out for a trade.

2. The only way we can pitch NESIC overboard is through a legislative fix. The existing law is quite specific: we shall appoint . . . So if we believe in the rule of law, we must either constitute NESIC or alter the statute. Reopening the bill raises some interesting questions.

3. If we eliminate NESIC, many of its functions would have to devolve to the Goals Panel. So you and the Secretary would have to vote on issues such as the certification of voluntary standards.

P.S. It's not clear that Bill Goodling is eager to support the right wing of his own party on this issue.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

13-Dec-1994 04:37pm

TO: William A. Galston
FROM: Carol H. Rasco
Economic and Domestic Policy
CC: Kimberly M. Ross
SUBJECT: NESIC

I was just on phone with Gov. Romer on another topic and we talked some about NESIC....can you update me on where the Dept. is in their thinking since that memo that you and I last discussed briefly?

Thanks.

Bill -
Jennifer Davis said that you should have latest info up to, and possibly including, the following :
The Secretary is meeting w/ Bill Goodling tomorrow.
Lyme Cheney wants to set up her own NESIC (see fax).
(will know more after that.)

Kim 12-13-94

DECEMBER 7, 1994 · EDUCATION WEEK 9

Cheney To Start Review Panel

Lynne V. Cheney, the former chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, said last week that she will create an independent panel to critique proposed voluntary national education standards.

The National Education Standards and Improvement Council already exists to review the standards, but Ms. Cheney said she is concerned that NESIC will routinely certify standards that are not up to par. NESIC is a Presidentially appointed group created as part of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Its members have yet to be named.

Ms. Cheney has been highly critical of the proposed U.S. history standards that were released last month.

Her group, the Committee to Review National Standards, will be based at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington-based think tank where Ms. Cheney is a fellow.

It will have four tasks: to an-

alyze the standards and the Goals 2000 legislation; to build alliances with groups that are interested in the standards issue; to work with members of Congress as they consider standards; and to provide educators, parents, and policymakers in the states with information about standards.

The Readers' Digest Association is funding the project.

Committee members, to date, are:

Donald Kagan, a professor of classics at Yale University; Elizabeth Fox-Gentles, a professor of women's studies at Emory University; Leslie Lenkowsky, the president of the Hudson Institute, an Indianapolis-based think tank; Robert Cochrane, a professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; Sandra Stotsky, a research associate at the Harvard graduate school of education; Katherine Kersten, a member of the Center for the American Experiment, a Minneapolis-based think tank; Linda Chavez, the director of the Center for the New American Community at the Manhattan Institute, a New York-based research and education organization; Gertrude Himmelfarb, a professor emerita of history at the graduate school of the City University of New York; Susan Klees, a former professor of classics at Brandeis University; and Celeste Colgan, a former deputy chairwoman of the N.E.H. and a fellow with the Hudson Institute.

—LYNET OLSON