

U. S. Department of Education

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If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it happens, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves

(A Nation At Risk – 1983)

- In 2006 over 200,000 students studied abroad, mostly in the fields of science and engineering, often under government-provided scholarships. Non-defense spending on R&D rose 25% and a multi-year initiative was put in motion to make the country a nanotechnology hub.

Sounds like a great investment, right?

(Rising Above the Gathering Storm Report - 2005)

- The Only Problem?

These actions were not taken here at home but in China, the United Kingdom and India

- Education is the new Economic Indicator
- **GDP: Graduation Defines Progress**
- **GNP: Graduation is a National Priority**

- Failure of Students to Graduate with High School Diploma has dramatic Economic Consequences:
- Over their lifetimes, dropouts from the class of 2007 alone will cost us more than **\$300 Billion** in lost wages, lost tax revenue and productivity.

- Increasing Graduation Rates by just 5 percent – for male students alone – would save this country nearly \$8 billion EACH YEAR in crime related costs
- Economy drives opportunity - both earned and lost.

- Looking at 50 largest cities in the Nation:
- 591,743 students in 9th grade in 2003-04
- Of that number, only **306,699** graduated on time in 2006-07.
- **What happened to the 285,044 non-graduates?**

- International Community is gaining on us in every sector – especially in education
- Consequences of doing nothing and hope system gets better – qualifies as Einstein's definition of insanity

- Public Education – it's success and equity – is as important an asset as roads, bridges, economic development – name it.
- Community drives attention to change – and it is happening in places throughout the South – just more slowly than any would like.
- Working toward time where earning a high school diploma is the norm for ALL students in all communities and where dropping out is THE rare exception.