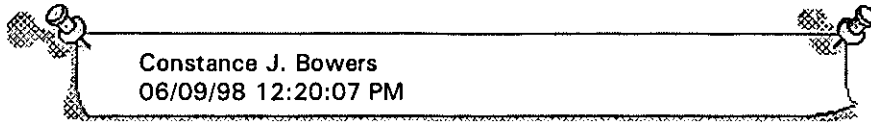


**NLWJC - Kagan**

**DPC - Box 020 - Folder 013**

**Education - Parental Involvement**



Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: LRM CJB 227 -- ED Draft letter strongly opposing HR 3189 (Parental Access to Info.)

**PLEASE REVIEW DRAFT LETTER BELOW AND PROVIDE COMMENTS BY 3:00  
p.m. today, Tuesday, June 9th. (The bill is scheduled for full committee markup  
tomorrow morning.)**

**DRAFT  
JUNE 9, 1998  
10:45 AM**

Honorable William Goodling  
Chairman, Committee on Education  
and the Workforce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to H.R. 3189, the so-called "Parental Freedom of Information Act." This bill would place new and unwarranted burdens on teachers and schools across the Nation, impose a one-size-fits-all solution to a problem that hasn't been shown to exist, and create a great deal of litigation for school districts over issues that should be handled through other means in accordance with State and local laws.

H.R. 3189 would amend section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or "FERPA") to: (1) require elementary and secondary schools that receive funds from the Department of Education to permit parents to inspect instructional and testing materials within 30 days of their asking to do so; (2) allow parents whose right to inspect these materials is violated to sue for "appropriate relief," including attorney fees; (3) bar the award of Department funds to any "educational agency or institution" (apparently including colleges and universities) that, in carrying out a Department-funded program, fails to get the parent's written consent before requiring a student to undergo medical, psychological, or psychiatric tests or treatments, or to reveal any information about the student's personal or family life; and (4) reduce, from 45 to 30 days, the current FERPA deadline to provide parental access to their children's educational records.

None of these provisions is needed, and at least some of them would be harmful. Federal law (section 445 of GEPA) already provides specific and adequate protection of pupil and parental rights relating to parental inspection of instructional materials and requires parental consent prior to a school's obtaining certain sensitive information from students. These current protections are working well and do not need to be supplemented by burdensome new requirements, such as the bill's provisions inviting countless lawsuits and claims for attorney fees that would end up being paid by the taxpayers. Simply put, there is no need for the Federal Government to impose these detailed and onerous requirements on our State and local school systems.

I am also concerned that the bill's new provisions on parental consent could, in some instances, work to deny appropriate and timely services to children with disabilities. } The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which was amended just a year ago with overwhelming bipartisan support, specifically permits school districts, if they follow certain steps, to conduct initial evaluations of children who may be eligible for IDEA services (and necessary periodic reevaluations of children who are eligible) when parents refuse to provide consent, except where that would be inconsistent with State law on parental consent. The IDEA also allows school districts to conduct reevaluations without parental consent when the parents simply fail to respond to reasonable efforts by the school district to obtain their consent. If H.R. 3189 were enacted, it could be read to override the IDEA provisions and result in the loss of services to children who need them and would otherwise qualify for them. }

I urge the Committee to leave Federal law alone in these areas and not to approve H.R. 3189.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Yours sincerely,

Richard W. Riley

**[Note to Executive Branch reviewers: the relevant text of current law is attached for your information. It will not be attached to the letter when transmitted.]**

The provisions below are in current law

## **General Education Provisions Act**

### **§445, Protection of Pupil Rights (20 U.S.C. 1232h)**

(a) All instructional materials, including teacher's manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any applicable program shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of the children.

(b) No student shall be required, as part of any applicable program, to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning--

- (1) political affiliations;
- (2) mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family;
- (3) sex behavior and attitudes;
- (4) illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
- (5) critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- (6) legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- (7) income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program),

without the prior consent of the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor), or in the case of an unemancipated minor, without the prior written consent of the parent.

(c) Educational agencies and institutions shall give parents and students effective notice of their rights under this section.

(d) ENFORCEMENT. The Secretary shall take such action as the Secretary determines appropriate to enforce this section, except that action to terminate assistance provided under an applicable program shall be taken only if the Secretary determines that--

- (1) there has been a failure to comply with such section; and
- (2) compliance with such section cannot be secured by voluntary means.

(e) OFFICE AND REVIEW BOARD. The Secretary shall establish or designate an office and review board within the Department of Education to investigate, process, review, and adjudicate violations of the rights established under this section.

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

**§614, Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations,  
Individualized Education Programs, and Educational Placements  
(20 U.S.C. 1414)**

(a) EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATIONS.

(1) INITIAL EVALUATIONS.

\* \* \* \* \*

(C) PARENTAL CONSENT.

(i) IN GENERAL. The agency proposing to conduct an initial evaluation to determine if the child qualifies as a child with a disability as defined in section 602(3)(A) or 602(3)(B) shall obtain an informed consent from the parent of such child before the evaluation is conducted. Parental consent for evaluation shall not be construed as consent for placement for receipt of special education and related services.

(ii) REFUSAL. If the parents of such child refuse consent for the evaluation, the agency may continue to pursue an evaluation by utilizing the mediation and due process procedures under section 615, except to the consent inconsistent with State law relating to parental consent.

\* \* \* \* \*

(c) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION AND REEVALUATIONS.

\* \* \* \* \*

(3) PARENTAL CONSENT. Each local educational agency shall obtain informed parental consent, in accordance with subsection (a)(1)(C), prior to conducting any reevaluation of a child with a disability, except that such informed parent consent need not be obtained in the local educational agency can demonstrate that it had taken reasonable measures to obtain such consent and the child's parent has failed to respond.

June 19, 1997

**MEMORANDUM FOR ERSKINE BOWLES**

**CC: SYLVIA MATHEWS AND JOHN PODESTA**

**FROM: ANN LEWIS, MICHAEL WALDMAN AND ELI ATTIE**

**SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN FAMILY CONFERENCE**

After meeting with Elaine Kamarck and other representatives of the Vice President's office and DPC, we have identified a number of strong options for the President's participation at the Vice President's Family Conference next Wednesday:

- Since the conference will focus on parents' involvement in their children's schools and education -- an area that is largely beyond federal authority -- we recommend that the President's remarks 1) include policy announcements to help facilitate that involvement, and 2) that he use the bully pulpit to challenge parents, teachers and schools in very concrete ways to increase the parental role in America's schools.
- We recommend that (if the Vice President's office agrees) the President speak before the forum now scheduled to precede his remarks, to enable him to better frame the discussions throughout the day.

**The President's Remarks**

**Using the bully pulpit to challenge parents, teachers and schools.** This could be the core of the President's remarks: a series of strong challenges of specific ways to increase parents' role in their children's schools. The challenges are now being formulated by OVP, DPC and our offices.

**Department of Education Report on Parent-Teacher Compacts.** This report recommends specific, written compacts between parents and teachers to increase their partnership and expand parental involvement in our schools. The President could release the report as a guide for schools; it will also be helpful in formulating the challenges mentioned above.

**AT&T Voice Mail for Parents and Teachers [tentative].** If this announcement is ready

in time, the President could announce AT&T's plan to donate free voice mailboxes for one million parents and teachers around the country, so that they can communicate with one another more easily. This ties in well with the above ideas.

**Defending the E-Rate [tentative].** If the Bell Operating Companies take legal action to block the E-Rate (which they are considering right now), this could be an opportunity for the President to defend its purpose. We are checking with Counsel on this.

**Charter Schools.** Though not specifically protected in the budget agreement, this remains a core part of our education agenda and an important way to involve parents in their children's schools at the most fundamental level. The President could restate his support for the doubling of charter schools, and urge Congress to include them in the Appropriations process.

### **Timing of the President's Remarks**

The Vice President's Office had originally suggested having the President speak last at a working session following an on-stage forum. However, after outlining what his message might be -- a strong call for parental responsibility and involvement, along with specific proposals and new tools to facilitate that increased role -- we believe it makes more sense for the President to open Wednesday's proceedings, so that his comments and ideas frame the discussions that follow. This would also eliminate any need for the President to modify his remarks or message to reflect the discussion that has taken place.

### **The Vice President's Remarks**

For your information, while the VP's Office is still considering options for the Vice President's main remarks on Wednesday, they expect that his main announcement will be the creation of a new fund by the high-tech industry -- at our request -- to help expand the use of computers and new technologies in our schools.

Please let us know your thoughts on the above.



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Education - parental  
involvement

June 24, 1997

**FAMILY CONFERENCE**

**DATE:** June 25, 1997  
**LOCATION:** Vanderbilt University  
Langford Auditorium  
**EVENT TIME:** 11:00 am - 12:45 pm  
**FROM:** Bruce Reed

**I. PURPOSE**

To highlight your commitment to improving education and to increasing family involvement in education. You will announce that the Department of Education will be releasing a handbook on how to create school compacts.

**II. BACKGROUND**

This is the third family conference you have attended, and the sixth family conference the Vice President has held. The conference is entitled "Family Re-Union 6: Families and Learning," and it will focus on family involvement in education. The Child and Family Policy Center at the Vanderbilt University for Public Policy Studies and the Children, Youth and Family Consortium at the University of Minnesota are co-sponsors of the event. The conference will be attended by approximately 1,000 invited participants and will be broadcast live via satellite throughout the country.

In your address, you will be announcing that the Department of Education will be releasing a publication entitled, **A Compact for Learning: An Action Handbook for School-Family-Community Partnerships**. School compacts are required for schools that participate in the Title I program to ensure strong parental involvement, but can be a powerful tool for all schools that seek to raise student achievement. The handbook provides step-by-step strategies, examples, and checklists on how to create an effective school compact, how to use a school compact, and how to strengthen and improve a school compact over time, based on results. The published version of the handbook will be available in late summer, and copies may be reserved by calling the Department of Education and will also be available on the Department's World Wide Web site.

You and the Vice President will be leading a discussion designed to highlight efforts to involve families in learning. You will be seated on stools on stage, and you will have the option of moving freely during the discussion as in a town hall setting. The first three

panelists will give vivid examples of local programs; the second three will discuss ways of expanding these strategies on a large scale; the following two panelists will describe strategies for communicating these ideas to the country; and the last four will talk about federal, state, and local policy that facilitates their efforts.

Prior to your arrival the Vice President will make a formal address and will announce the following:

- Findings from a parent survey sponsored by the Department of Education, the Family Involvement Partnership for Education, and GTE.
- Establishment of a new partnership to train teachers on parental involvement, with a kickoff teleconference on effective use of technology set for this fall.
- Creation of a privately financed school reform fund, headed by John Doerr, that would provide grants to "start-up," "speed-up," and "turnaround" public schools.
- Announcement of a new technology tool -- an "electronic dashboard" -- that parents could use to get important information about their child's school (school standards, events, homework assignments, etc.) and their child's performance, and to communicate with other parents and teachers.

Also, prior to your arrival, a short film of t.v. and movie clips on the subject of families and learning will be shown. Jeff Cole from UCLA provided this film, which is similar to his film that was shown at last year's conference. Following the film, the Vice President will lead an hour-long conversation with six individuals about family involvement in education. These participants include: James Comer, Yale Child Study Center; Hodding Carter, Publisher and former Assistant Secretary of State; a father and son from inner city Baltimore who have worked to involve poor urban families in their children's education, Gayle Ross, a Cherokee story teller; and Phon Malaikham, a young Laotian refugee who is now a teacher in Tennessee. Following this panel, the audience will be shown a documentary produced by the Boston University Film School with children of differing ages discussing their family's involvement or lack of involvement in their schools.

### **III. PARTICIPANTS**

#### **The Vice President**

**Secretary Richard Riley**

**Susan Genrich-Cameron**, Principal, Cason Lane Academy, Murfreesboro, TN

**Yvonne Chan**, Principal, Vaughn Next Century Learning Center, San Fernando, CA

**Roberta Altman**, Bank Street College Faculty and Liaison to Midtown West Public School, NY

**Warlene Gary**, former teacher now serving as the Manager of the Center for the Revitalization of Urban Education. \*She is representing Bob Chase, President of the NEA at this event.

**Anne O'Neill McGintis**, Parent, School and Community Involvement Coordinator, Hamilton Schools, Chattanooga, TN

**Diana Lam (DEE-AH-NA LOM)**, Superintendent, San Antonio School District  
**John Doerr**, Partner, Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers, Menlo Park, CA  
**Patty Burness**, Executive Director, George Lucas Foundation, San Rafael, CA  
**Betty Webb**, Executive Director, Family and Community Educational Services,  
Minneapolis, MN  
**Bill Purcell**, Director, Child and Family Policy Center, Vanderbilt University, and  
Former House Majority Leader of the Tennessee General Assembly  
**State Senator Ember Reichsgott Junge (YOUNG)**, State Senator, St. Paul, Minnesota

#### **IV. PRESS PLAN**

Open Press.

#### **V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

- Mrs. Gore will announce you and the Vice President onto the stage.
- You and the Vice President will take your seats.
- The Vice President will make brief opening remarks.
- You will make brief opening remarks.
- The Vice President will lead the discussion by introducing each participant individually.
- You will have the option of asking follow up questions to each participant.
- After each participant has spoken, the Vice President will make a closing statement.
- You will proceed to the podium to deliver your prepared remarks.
- You will then work a ropeline and then depart.

**\*SEQUENCE OF SPEAKERS PARTICIPATING IN THE ROUND TABLE  
DISCUSSION ATTACHED.**

#### **VI. REMARKS**

To be provided by speech writing.

#### **VII. ATTACHMENTS**

- Sequence of Events.
- A Compact for Learning: An Action Handbook for School-Family-Community Partnerships.

**Forum Participants and Suggested Questions**

**(IN SPEAKING ORDER -- THE VICE PRESIDENT WILL INTRODUCE PARTICIPANTS, PARTICIPANTS WILL SPEAK. THE PRESIDENT HAS THE OPTION TO ASK FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS.)**

**The Vice President** - makes opening remarks.

**The President** - makes opening remarks.

**Susan Genrich-Cameron** - Principal of Cason Lane Academy in Murfreesboro, TN. Susan is the head of a school that combines family centered decision making and the creative use of learning technology.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: Susan, how did parents influence the creation of this wonderful school?***

**Yvonne Chan** - Co-founder and Principal of Vaughn Next Century Learning Center in Los Angeles, CA. Yvonne, with other neighborhood families, has transformed a failing elementary school into a strong charter school that is the core of a new community.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: Hillary visited this wonderful school when she was in Los Angeles a few months ago. She was struck by the change you have created in the families, the school and the community, and the pride that the children are taking in their success. How did you accomplish that?***

**Roberta Altman** - Bank Street College Faculty and Liaison with Mid-Town West, a New York City public school. She teaches graduate classes in education.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: This seems like a model partnership that would be beneficial to other schools. Roberta, what role do families play in forming partnerships like this?***

**Warlene Gary** - Manager of the Center for the Revitalization of Urban Education. Warlene is representing NEA President Bob Chase. She has taught disabled and disadvantaged children in D.C., and has worked at the NEA to implement nationwide parental involvement initiatives.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: Warlene, you're a former teacher and you lead an effort to revitalize urban schools. How can we do a better job forming partnerships between families and teachers in our cities?***

**Anne O'Neill McGintis** - Coordinator of the 'Parent Resource Center' program, which works with PTAs to form Parent Resource Centers in 80 schools in Chattanooga and the surrounding area.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: Anne, how do you mobilize so many families, communities and schools in this process?***

**Diana Lam** (DEEAHNA LOM) - Superintendent of San Antonio School District. Diana has reorganized her entire school district by focusing on student achievement and parent involvement.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: I know you've used some of the successful models demonstrated by New American Schools. How has this process improved the quality of learning and given families good choices in their public school systems?***

**John Doerr** - Partner, Kleiner Perkins, Caufield & Byers, Menlo Park, CA. Leader of a new technology tool -- an "electronic dashboard" -- that will help American families and schools. The dashboard is currently being developed by a group of high tech companies in California. Doerr recently led a group of high tech CEOs in calling for national education standards.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: John, would you explain how this prototype could facilitate home and school communication, and surround children, families and teachers with vital information?***

**Patty Burness** - Executive Director of the George Lucas Foundation.

Patty will discuss a film the George Lucas Foundation has created to help parents understand what the best schools of the 21st century should look like, and how to help make needed changes a reality.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: Patty, how can film be used to help teachers, families and communities?***

**Betty Webb** - Executive Director, Family and Community Educational Services, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Betty is responsible for the process that led the Minneapolis public school system to be the first in the country to benchmark family involvement.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: Betty, can you tell us what effect your efforts are having on teaching and learning?***

**Bill Purcell** - Director of the Child and Family Policy Center at Vanderbilt University, and former Majority Leader of the Tennessee General Assembly and former Chair of the Select Committee on Children and Youth. As an elected official, Bill helped pass legislation that made Anne McGintis' work in Chattanooga possible.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: What was the change that you proposed, and how can other states facilitate family involvement?***

**State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge (YOUNG)** - Minnesota State Senator.

State Senator Junge was instrumental in passing legislation that has given families much greater choice in their public schools.

***SUGGESTED QUESTION: How has that worked, and what can other states to learn from your experience?***

**Secretary Riley** - will make remarks.

**The Vice President** - will make closing remarks and introduce the President to make a formal address from the podium.

**The President** - will make prepared remarks.

# conference agenda

June 25, 1997 | Vanderbilt University | Nashville, Tennessee

A conference sponsored by The University of Minnesota Children, Youth and Family Consortium and The Child and Family Policy Center at the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies, and hosted by the Select Committee on Children and Youth of the Tennessee General Assembly.

## OPENING SESSION | LANGFORD AUDITORIUM

8:30 - 8:40 a.m.

### Welcome

Joe Wyatt, Chancellor of  
Vanderbilt University

Martha Farrell Erickson, Director of the  
Children, Youth & Family Consortium,  
University of Minnesota and co-sponsor of  
Family Re-Union 6

Bill Purcell, Director of the Child & Family  
Policy Center, Vanderbilt University Institute  
for Public Policy Studies and co-sponsor of  
Family Re-Union 6

8:40 - 8:50 a.m.

### "I'll Tell You the Rest Tomorrow"

UCLA School of Communication Film  
Introduction by Vice President Al Gore

A video collage containing images of family  
involvement in learning from TV and films.  
assembled by Jeffrey Cole, Director, UCLA  
Center for Communication Policy.

8:50 - 9:50 a.m.

### Forum: "Storytellers"

The Vice President leads a forum discussion  
of compelling stories of intergenerational  
learning. Six participants discuss how their  
lives were shaped by their family  
experiences.

- 9:50 - 10:30 a.m. Vice President's Address**  
and demonstration of new technology
- 10:30 - 10:55 a.m. "Lessons from the Ones We Love"**  
A Boston University Film, Introduction by Tipper Gore
- Interviews are conducted with individual children discussing their families' roles in their learning process.
- 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. Forum Discussion with President Clinton and Vice President Gore**  
The discussion will address the following question: What are some of the strategies used to actively involve families in children's learning?
- 12 - 12:30 p.m. The President's Address**
- 12:50 - 1:50 p.m. LUNCH | PEABODY CAMPUS — MAGNOLIA LAWN**  
Remarks by Tipper Gore

**SECOND SESSION | PEABODY COLLEGE CAMPUS**

- 2 - 3:15 p.m. Vice President's Conversation with Remote Sites**  
(Rotunda, Social Religious Bldg. — Peabody Campus)  
The Vice President, with an audience of policy leaders, hosts a discussion with four live interactive remote sites. These sites are examples of creative involvement of families in early childhood learning, using technology to link families and schools, training and involvement of parents and teachers, services linking to schooling, and new approaches to teaching and learning. Remote sites are in Boston, Chula Vista, Calif., Minneapolis, MN and Union City, N.J.
- 2 - 3:15 p.m. Workshops**  
Audience attends workshops in four clusters. These workshops are concurrent with the Policy Session in the Rotunda led by the Vice President.
1. **How Very Young Children Learn: Helping Children Reach Their Full Potential**  
Location: MRL Bldg., Room 241  
Session Leader: Dr. Stanley Greenspan, George Washington Medical School  
Program: Migrant Head Start
  2. **Family Literacy and Preparation for Early Learning**  
Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 122  
Session Leader: Terry Peterson, U.S. Department of Education  
Programs: Partnership for Family Involvement

3. **Preparing Children for School and Parents for Work**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 121  
 Session Leader: Myron Ogglesby-Pitts, Hull-Jackson Magnet School  
 Programs: Caldwell Early Learning Center, Atlanta Head Start
4. **Reaching Out to Parents from the Start**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Lobby  
 Session Leader: Dr. Martha Farrell Erickson, University of Minnesota  
 Programs: Maternal Infant Outreach Worker's Project and Minnesota's  
 Early Childhood Initiative
5. **Schools Working with Families**  
 Location: Hill Bldg., Room 75  
 Session Leader: Don Davis, Center for Responsive Education  
 Programs: California's Vaughn New Century Learning Center,  
 Tennessee's Family Resource Centers, Baltimore's Parent Academy
6. **Extended Day Learning and One-Stop Services for Families**  
 Location: Mayborn Bldg., Room 205  
 Session Leader: Bill Milliken, Communities in Schools  
 Programs: Cason Lane Academy, Tennessee; Schools for Extended Learning,  
 Minneapolis, MN; Washington Heights, NY
7. **The Workplace Supporting School/ Family Partnerships**  
 Location: Mayborn Bldg., Room 204  
 Session Leader: Faith Wohl, Office of Workplace Initiatives, U.S. General Services  
 Administration  
 Companies: John Hancock, Mattel, Hemmings Motor News, Work Family Directions
8. **Creating Active School, Family and Community Partnerships**  
 Location: Payne Bldg., Room 110  
 Session Leader: Joyce Milliken, Johns Hopkins University  
 Programs: National Network Partnership 2000 and O'Hearn School, Boston
9. **The DASHBOARD: A New Gateway and Navigator for Families**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 201  
 John Doerr, Kleiner, Perkins Caufield & Byers (KPCB)  
 Programs: Spectrum Holobyte WebTV, Marimba, Four 11
10. **Linking Home and School Through Technology**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 223  
 Session Leader: Jerold Bauch, Peabody College  
 Programs: Eisenhower School, New Jersey, Family Education Network, CAST
11. **Building Networks of Learning for Families, Educators and Students**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 130  
 Session Leader: Larry Kirkman, Benton Foundation  
 Programs: Learning Technology Center at Peabody College, NETschools
12. **Adapting to Differing Learning Styles**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 102  
 Session Leader: Howard Gardner, Harvard University  
 Programs: Cab Calloway School, Delaware; Washington High School
13. **Strategies That Involve Families in Schools**  
 Location: Social Religious Bldg., Room 132  
 Session Leader: James Comer, Yale Study Center  
 Programs: Bowling Park Elementary School, Virginia; Parent Academy, Baltimore, MD;  
 National Council of Jewish Women Parent Involvement Project



FYI! This did not go  
in POTUS briefing.

The Vice President is planning to make four announcements:

- **Findings from a parent survey** sponsored by the Department of Education, the Family Involvement Partnership for Education, and GTE. Key findings:
  - 88% of parents of parents think schools treat them as important partners in helping children learn, and 86% say teachers generally listen to what they have to say.
  - However, close to 80% of parents believe they and their teachers should learn more about how parents can be more effectively involved in their children's education.
  - Parents give higher marks to elementary schools than middle schools on several measures of parental involvement. For example, 62% of elementary school parents said schools do a very job explaining to parents what students should know and be able to do in each subject, versus 45% in middle school.
- **Establishment of a new partnership to train teachers on parental involvement**, with a kickoff teleconference on effective use of technology set for this fall.
  - Founders include members of the Department of Education-sponsored Family Involvement Partnership for Education and four leading schools of education: Vanderbilt University, University of Minnesota, Bank Street College (NY), and Columbia Teachers College.
  - In addition to the fall conference, the partnership expects to produce and disseminate a guidebook on effective practices, sponsor new research, and organize follow-up meetings and activities to allow teachers to share ideas.
- **Creation of a privately financed school reform fund** that would provide grants to support good school leadership and innovation among three different categories of public schools: "start-up," "speed-up," and "turnaround" schools.
  - The fund is being established as a 501(c)(3) based in Silicon Valley, headed by John Doerr and overseen by a board of private sector and education leaders.
  - The VP will have no formal role in the fund, although it stems from his challenge and vision of school improvement.
  - The VP has agreed to be the honorary co-chair of a kickoff conference to be held in the next several months.
- **Announcement (and demonstration) of a new technology tool** -- an "electronic dashboard" -- that parents could access via computer to get important information about their child's school (school standards, events, homework assignments, etc.) and their

child's performance (homework completion, attendance, etc.). The dashboard will also help parents communicate with other parents, as well as with teachers.

- Student privacy will be scrupulously protected using cutting edge technology, as well as passwords for parents.
- Developers of this new technology include Netscape and Marimba. Marimba's CEO is expected to assist with the demo.
- An early version of the dashboard will be used to gather input on what's useful, with a more complete version made widely available later.
- The VP will note that there are additional technology tools in existence to help parents, students and teachers work together.

*Education - parental involvement*

Draft

**Challenges to Parents and Schools  
Talking Points for the President**

I challenge parents and teachers across this country to take responsibility and be clear about how can work as partners to support a student's learning at school and at home. To do this, I challenge every school, teacher, and parent to sign a written compact outlining the responsibilities and expectations for teachers and parents to help every child learn to high standards.

**Moreover, I challenge teachers and schools:**

**To get serious about setting high standards in the basic skills:** Every school district and school should hold their students to high national standards in the basic skills of 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, and measure progress toward meeting these standards through national tests to be available in Spring 1999.

**To make high standards real for students and parents every day:** Schools must communicate clearly to parents what their children are expected to learn and be able to do in the core academic areas at each grade level. And schools should provide examples of student work that meets high standards so that parents can understand the level of work expected of their children, and so that students can see clearly what good work looks like. Just as athletes can clearly see what an excellent performance looks like, so should students.

**To make the school family friendly:** Schools should make it as easy as possible for working parents and teachers to communicate with each other, through steps such as setting aside time before and after school for teacher-parent conferences; holding school-related meetings in the evenings, on weekends, and in locations convenient for parents; taking advantage of new technologies (including the Internet and voice-mail) to communicate with parents, and provide teachers and parents the training they need to fully take advantage of these new technologies.

**To show parents and taxpayers that education dollars get to the classroom:** We must all work to ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, education dollars flow to the classroom to support teaching and learning, rather than supporting large administrative structures. School systems must examine carefully and provide parents and taxpayers with clear information on how education dollars are being spent.

**I Challenge Parents to:**

**Insist that your school sets/uses high standards:** Ask your school district to adopt

challenging national standards and participate in national testing to measure progress toward these standards.

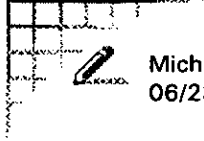
Ask your child's school to show you how its curriculum will prepare your child to reach high standards. And, ask your child's school to show you clearly, for each grade level, what your child is expected to learn and be able to do.

**Make sure your child learns that effort and hard work, more than ability or luck, leads to academic success:** Have high expectations for your child. Never say to your child that their teachers and schools are expecting too much. And demonstrate your belief that if your child works hard, he or she can master the material the school expects him or her to learn.

**Get and remain involved in your child's school, from kindergarten through high school graduation:** Students of all ages understand that the things their parents spend time on and are involved in are important. Your child will work harder and do better in school if you stay in regular contact with your child's teacher; attend school functions and events such as parent-teacher conferences and PTA meetings; volunteer in school when possible; and participate in the school's decision-making process.

**Be involved with your children:** Take the time to talk with them regularly; read together; use TV wisely; know where your children are, especially teens; talk directly to them about the values you want them to have, and about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Educational -  
parental involvement



Michael Cohen  
06/23/97 04:22:43 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: VP's Family Conference: Decision for you

It's time to decide if you or Bill Kincaid goes to the Family Conference with POTUS. My bottom line is that it makes more sense for you to go than Bill, though I don't think we go wrong either way. The President will have plenty of education advisors there -- Riley, Riley's senior staff, The VP's education people, and Bob Shireman from NEC. Since there will be some Supreme Court announcements that morning, he is more likely to need someone who can deal with unanticipated developments there.

Here 's the relevant information:

1. **Format:** POTUS speaks immediately after a roundtable discussion in which both he and VPOTUS participate. This means that his remarks will bear even less resemblance to his prepared text (which will be talking points rather than full speech) than is usually the case. I'm sure that he will weave together much of the discussion with his remarks.
2. **Announcements:** Just came from a meeting with Ann Lewis, and here is where things stand:
  1. The overall theme of POTUS remarks will be something along the lines of "we all have to do our part" -- with "we" including parents, educators and the federal gov't, among others
  2. At the top of his remarks POTUS will highlight budget agreement, and urge Congress to live up to the agreement, including his higher ed tax package. Some particulars in this statement will depend upon legislative developments in the next day, and we'll have to work with NEC closely on this (Bob Shireman will be in Nashville if we need him)
  3. There are several court decisions that might be announced that morning and which will warrant comment (Brady, CDA). These will make news.
  4. There may be a deal tomorrow night on TV ratings; if so, this will be in POTUS remarks as well.
  5. Last Friday a suit was filed to overturn FCC decision on e-rate. POTUS will defend his technology policy, including e-rate.
  6. POTUS will make challenges to parents and teachers to improve student learning (very rough draft below; I'll be working on this overnight), and release Education Department Handbook on School-Family-Community Partnerships.

Ann did not buy the afterschool announcement tied to the juvenile bill. I'm checking with Jose to see if he (or Rahm) wants to push harder on this. Do you want me to push again on this tomorrow?

She also didn't want to release the "Helping your kid get ready for college" guide from ED, as too soft. I'm ok with this; it's no big deal, and we can hold it for back to school time, a higher ed event, or ED can always release it on its own. It's not exactly a weighty or Presidential volume.

## Overcoming Barriers to Family Involvement in Title I Schools: Report to Congress

This is a 120 page study (with an 11 page executive summary) of barriers to parental involvement in their children's education and strategies for overcoming those barriers. Required by Congress in the Improving America's Schools Act, it also includes findings on early implementation of provisions of the parent involvement provisions in Title I. The report finds that some of the major barriers to increasing parental involvement are time (both for parents and for teachers), technology (for example, lack of access to classroom telephones for teachers or voice mail that could be used to explain homework assignments to parents), training (for both schools and parents), school organization (such as the sheer size and impersonality of many secondary schools). Other barriers cited include lack of education, language and cultural differences between families and schools, and lack of support from employers.

After identifying barriers, the report outlines successful steps that have been taken in 20 schools and districts to help improve parental involvement, such as a parent center in Buffalo that offers parent-child computer classes for students grades 6-12, an elementary school in Philadelphia that operates a parent network headed by a core group of ten parents, and a Cleveland elementary school that holds parent-teacher conferences at the local library and the YMCA, which are closer to some parents homes--and where the principal sometimes contacts employers if necessary to request time off so parents can meet with teachers. In addition, the report covers state policies and practices that support family involvement, with examples from Kentucky, Rhode Island, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

If used in a radio address, the report could highlight several themes: the tie between parental involvement and children's early learning, the link between parental involvement and achievement of high standards, the potential for technology to bring parents and schools closer together, the need for expand family leave legislation, the fact that the Administration's Title I legislation supports closer school-family partnerships, as well as the very broad Family Involvement Partnership for Education that the Department of Education has organized. Listeners could be invited to call the Department's 1-800 number for more information on parents can get involved in their children's education.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Thirty years of research supports the conclusion that family involvement in children's education is critical to student achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Increasing families' involvement in the education of their children so that all children can achieve at levels articulated in challenging academic standards is an important goal of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) of 1994. For example, Title I requires all schools and districts receiving Title I funds to engage in an extensive array of activities to build the capacity of both parents and school staff to work together in support of students' learning. Title I also requires schools to develop, with parents, a written parent involvement policy that describes how schools will keep parents adequately informed and how they will involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs.

IASA requires that the U.S. Department of Education (ED) conduct a study of parent involvement that identifies and describes:

- "common barriers to effective parental involvement in the education of participating children;" and
- "successful local policies and programs that improve parental involvement and the performance of participating children."

Data sources for ED's study include: (1) a review of the research literature on parent involvement; (2) the Fast Response Survey of School and Family Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8 (SFSP), a nationally representative survey of 810 elementary and middle schools; (3) the Parent/Family Involvement component of the National Household Education Survey (NHES), a nationally representative survey of 20,792 children and their parents; (4) profiles of 20 local Title I programs that have been successful in overcoming barriers to parent involvement; (5) parent focus group interviews conducted at five of those programs; and (6) a survey of 36 state educational agencies regarding state activities to promote school-family partnerships.

### **Barriers to Family Involvement in Their Children's Education**

A large body of research has documented that when schools make a concerted effort to enlist parents' help in fostering children's learning, student achievement rises (Armor, 1976; Epstein, 1991;

Leler, 1983; Toomey, 1986). When schools invest in developing partnerships with families that enable parents to support their children's learning at home and in school, the potential benefits for students are great. When school-related, family-related, or community-related barriers deter parents from becoming involved, students lose an important source of support for their academic learning.

### Lack of Time and Other Resources

Both schools and families frequently lack the time and other resources they need to establish effective partnerships.

- *Principals of K-8 Title I schools report that time is a barrier to parent involvement more often than any other factor. Eighty-seven percent of Title I principals report that lack of time on the part of parents is a significant barrier to parent involvement, and 56 percent report that lack of time on the part of school staff is a barrier.*
- *Teachers and parents lack the logistical support that would facilitate their work together. For example, many teachers lack access to private telephones, and parents often lack the transportation and child care that would allow them to make more frequent visits to schools.*
- *Time and resource constraints are especially problematic for poor parents. For these parents, basic survival, child care, and health needs often interfere with their participation in school events (Fruchter, Galletta, & White, 1992; Lontos, 1991). Principals of high-poverty Title I schools report that fewer parents attend traditional school events than principals of low-poverty Title I schools.*

### Lack of Information and Training

Most parents and school staff receive little training on how to work with one another.

- *Almost half of principals (48 percent) in K-8 Title I schools report that lack of staff training in working with parents is a great or moderate barrier to parent involvement.*
- *Some parents report that they do not know how to assist their children's academic learning. These parents would like more guidance from school staff on how to help (Epstein, 1992; Leitch & Tangri, 1988).*



Without the proper information and the skills to work together, school staff and families are more likely to view each other with suspicion and distrust:

- *Twenty percent of principals in K-8 Title I schools report that staff attitudes about parents are a barrier to parent involvement in school. Uninformed teachers are more likely to view parents' absence in school as an indication that parents don't care about the education of their children.*
- *Parents who experience schools as uninviting or alienating may decide that teachers do not really care for them or their children. Twenty-seven percent of Title I principals report that parent attitudes about the school are a problem.*

### School Organization and Practices

Traditional school organization and practices, especially in secondary schools, often discourage family members from becoming involved.

- *Survey data show that parents of older children are less likely to attend a school event or volunteer at their child's school than parents of younger children. For example, 61 percent of principals of Title I elementary schools report that most or all of their parents attend regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, compared with 22 percent of principals of Title I middle schools.*
- *Because secondary schools are generally much larger than elementary schools, with each teacher responsible for many more students, they can seem impersonal to parents. Parents often find it difficult to identify a staff member specially charged with the well-being of their child (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Rutherford, Billig, & Kettering, 1995), and find it more difficult to develop a relationship with school staff as a result.*

Some schools continue to rely exclusively on traditional outreach methods that have proven effective for only a limited number of families.

- *Many school activities that involve parents, such as open houses and student performances, tend to be school-dominated and peripheral to the day-to-day operations of the school (Fruchter, Gallena, & White, 1992; Mannan & Blackwell, 1992; Swap, 1992). Survey data show that parent attendance at these kinds of events is lower among parents with lower income and education levels.*
- *If schools do invest in developing a repertoire of parent involvement activities that emphasize personalized attention and interaction with parents, they will be more successful in engaging parents whom they had given up as "hard to reach." Survey*

data show that when schools engage in more personalized interactions with parents, such as parent-teacher conferences, low-income and less-educated parents attend about as often as other parents.

### Family-School Differences

Differences in education level, language, and cultural styles between parents and school staff sometimes make it more difficult for them to form effective partnerships.

- *Parents who have little education themselves participate less often in school-related parent involvement activities, such as volunteering in their child's classroom or attending parent-teacher conferences. Parents who have had negative experiences themselves as students may avoid contact with their children's schools as a result. In fact, survey data show that parents' educational level is even more strongly associated with their involvement in schools than is household income level.*
- *Survey data show that parents who do not speak English at home are less likely to participate in school-based activities, and more likely to participate in fewer activities over the course of the school year. Nevertheless, few principals of Title I schools serving children with parents whose English skills are limited identified language differences as a significant barrier. Parent survey data also suggest that parents do not see language differences as a significant problem.*
- *Culturally based differences in communication styles, expectations for teachers, parents, and children, and views on the best ways to raise and educate children can create discontinuities between families and schools (McCollum & Russo, 1993; Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993).*

### Lack of External Support for Family-School Partnerships

Family-school partnerships are difficult to nurture without the support of state and district policymakers, community organizations, and employers.

- *The absence of clearly defined and articulated policy on family involvement from the state or district level and a lack of resources to support professional development related to family involvement sends a powerful message to schools. When state or district policies and resources do not reflect a clear priority placed on school-family partnerships, schools are likely to respond by neglecting efforts to work effectively with parents (Burns & McClure, 1993).*

- *Many neighborhoods lack easy access to resources that can support parents' efforts to help their children learn.* Such resources include libraries, museums, recreation facilities, and health and social services.
- *Many employers compound the pressures on parents.* Flexible work schedules, part-time employment options, and child care for working parents can provide the time and logistical resources parents need to get more involved in school (Mannan & Blackwell, 1992).

Survey data suggest that many of the barriers described in this report have significant, measurable effects on parent involvement in schools, especially among low-income parents, parents with little education, and parents of older children. Nevertheless, a very large percentage of parents are involved in some way—for example, 76 percent of Title I principals report that half or more of their parents attend open house or back-to-school night. Research on schools and families that have developed effective partnerships in support of children's learning suggests that parents and schools must build on these first steps. Schools, under the leadership of principals, possess the primary responsibility for initiating family-school partnerships; the experience of hundreds of schools across the country demonstrates that it can be done.

## **Successful Local Approaches to Promoting Family Involvement in the Education of Their Children**

Many successful strategies used by Title I schools and districts across the country demonstrate the capacity of families, schools, and communities, working together, to influence children's learning in positive ways. The experiences of 20 schools and districts that have been successful in engaging parents in their children's education illustrate many effective strategies for moving schools, families, and communities beyond the common barriers to family involvement.

### **Overcoming Time and Resource Constraints**

- *Schools can set aside time during the school day for teachers to meet with parents or free teachers from routine chores, such as lunchroom supervision, so that they can work with parents.* Teachers can use this time to meet with parents at school or visit them in their homes. Stipends and compensatory time off also encourage teachers to use time after school and on weekends.

- *Some schools can also use technology to support school-home communication. This kind of logistical support includes easier access to telephones for teachers, voice mail, and "homework hotlines."*
- *To help parents overcome time and resource constraints, schools can provide transportation and child care services, schedule events at convenient times, and conduct home visits. Each of these strategies addresses a barrier faced by parents who want to participate more often in school-sponsored parent involvement activities.*
- *In addition to finding ways to help parents become involved at school, schools can help parents support their children's learning at home. In their daily interactions with their children at home, parents can be powerful resources for promoting their children's academic success.*

### **Providing Information and Training to Parents and School Staff**

- *Training in basic parenting skills teaches parents about child development and how to establish a home environment that supports student learning. This information can help parents create a context at home that fosters students' academic progress.*
- *Courses that help parents build their own basic literacy skills, earn a GED, accumulate college credit, or develop job-related skills also support parents' involvement in their children's education. By helping parents to reach their own academic and vocational goals, schools equip them to better support their children's learning.*
- *Workshops help parents support their children's learning at home by offering practical ideas on ways that parents can work with their children directly on school work. Common topics include helping students with curriculum-related activities, homework, other academic decisions and planning, and preparing for required tests.*
- *Some training prepares parents to contribute effectively to school decision-making or to work as volunteers. This training enables parents to participate in school governance and day-to-day operations.*
- *Training for school staff is essential for supporting the development of effective school-family partnerships. Such training addresses telephone calls, home visits, and other contact strategies; communication skills for parent-teacher conferences; and involving parents as leaders and decision-makers in the schools.*
- *Engaging parent coordinators or volunteers to train school staff not only builds parents' leadership skills but also offers teachers the opportunity to learn first-hand about parents' perspectives.*

05/03/97 25:54

## Restructuring Schools to Support Family Involvement

Some schools highlighted in this report have reorganized to promote closer interaction between teachers and students and, by extension, between teachers and families. They have also redefined traditional parent events to create more meaningful ways to welcome and involve parents in school life.

- ***An on-going needs assessment helps schools respond more effectively to parents' needs and interests.*** By asking parents about their interests, needs, and ideas for family involvement on an ongoing basis, schools help ensure that their efforts to reach out to parents complement parents' real needs and strengths.
- ***Schools can make changes to their physical environment.*** For example, they can create a space just for parents within the school, such as a parent resource center, and they can post a parent volunteer in the entrance hall to welcome parents.
- ***Schools can also create formal organizational structures for parent participation.*** Groups such as parent committees, volunteer committees, and site-based management councils allow parents to take an active role in decisions affecting the school and their children.

Whatever steps schools take to develop close partnerships with families on behalf of students' learning, schools that are most successful are prepared to reconsider all of their established ways of doing business and to restructure in ways that will make them less hierarchical, more personal, and more accessible to parents.

## Bridging School-Family Differences

- ***Schools can help parents strengthen their own basic literacy skills.*** Some schools highlighted in this report offer GED, ESL, and other adult basic education classes to parents on site; other schools send home projects and activity kits intended to build parents' literacy skills as they work on them with their children. At two of the schools highlighted in this report, Even Start projects combine adult basic education, parenting classes, and early childhood education in on-site programs designed to foster literacy skills for both parents and children.
- ***"Family Math" nights or similar events help allay parents' fears about their own mastery of subject matter.*** These events give parents a chance to learn together with their children in an environment that is pleasant and non-threatening.

- *To address language barriers, schools highlighted in this report provide extensive translation services. These schools provide translation for school-home communications, parenting training, and participation in decision-making and school governance.*
- *A home-school liaison, often a parent who lives in the community, can play a crucial role in building trust between home and school. Because a home-school liaison is usually closely identified with the community and shares the same cultural background with parents, he or she is well-equipped to reach out to parents whose cultural backgrounds differ from teachers'.*
- *Other schools provide training and other activities to promote understanding of different cultures among school staff.*

### Tapping External Support for Family-School Partnerships

Among the schools highlighted here, successful parent involvement strategies often grow out of family resource centers and partnerships with local businesses, agencies, colleges, and universities.

- *School-community partnerships can support an array of services that help parents get more involved in their children's education. Such services may include homework hotlines, social services such as substance abuse or child abuse prevention, conferences and workshops, adult education, health services, refurbished school facilities, and refreshments for and transportation to school-sponsored events.*
- *District and state supports for family involvement include policies, funding, training, and family services that support school-family partnerships. With the backing of these district and state supports, schools can draw on a broad system of expertise and experience to cultivate partnerships with families. District and state-run parent resource centers are one example of how schools can benefit.*

### Effects on Student Achievement

Although it is impossible to attribute student achievement gains or other positive outcomes in any school or district solely to their parent involvement activities, it does appear that many schools that make parent involvement a priority also see student outcomes improve in some way. For example, of the 13 schools highlighted in this report, eight report gains in student achievement data over the last one to three years and four report gains in attendance rates or attendance rates hovering consistently over 95 percent. Parents themselves believe that their involvement influences their

child's performance in school. In focus group interviews, for example, many parents argued that their involvement had improved their children's attitude toward school and engagement in learning.

## **State Policies and Practices to Support Family Involvement in Education**

*State survey data suggest that states are taking an active role in supporting school and district efforts to involve parents in their children's education, although the intensity, extent, and quality of this support is unclear.* States have also undertaken a number of activities that support school and district efforts to implement the Title I parent involvement requirements in IASA.

- **Almost two-thirds of the 36 states responding to the survey report that they have developed documents to guide state-level support of school and district family involvement efforts.**
- **In more than half of responding states, statutes are in place to guide state-level support of family involvement efforts.**
- **All of the 36 responding states identified at least one source of funding that contributed to a state-level parent involvement budget.**
- **Of all the sources of funding available to states to support family involvement activities, states rely most often on Title I and other federal funds. Thirty states identified Title I as a source of funding for parent involvement activities, while only 19 of 36 states support family involvement with their own general education funds.**
- **Most of the 35 states responding to this section of the survey report providing technical assistance and support to schools and districts that includes disseminating information, providing staff development, and supporting parent education and training.**
- **Most of the 35 states responding to this section of the survey report assisting schools and districts in implementing the Title I parent involvement provisions, including assisting with crafting parent involvement policies and school-parent compacts, building capacity among staff and parents, and ensuring access and coordination with other parent involvement efforts.**

## **Early Implementation of the Title I Parent Involvement Provisions**

Survey data collected from Title I elementary and middle schools in spring 1996, less than a year after the new Title I provisions went into effect, provide some preliminary information on the

implementation of many activities required or endorsed by Title I. Because the data were collected early, the findings presented in this report should be considered baseline measures of schools' progress in implementing Title I.

- *Sixty-four percent of Title I principals report that their schools consult parents in the development of parent involvement activities. This consultation is a key requirement of Title I.*
- *More than three-quarters (78 percent) of Title I principals report that their schools have advisory groups or policy councils that include parents.*
- *A much smaller number of Title I schools report, however, that they consider parent input when making decisions on selected topics related to school programs and policies. For example, only 40 percent involve parents in making decisions about the allocation of funds, and only 49 percent involve parents in making decisions about discipline policies and procedures.*

To build parents' capacity to support their children's learning, most Title schools take steps to provide parents with information on how to help their children learn at home, although the quality, as well as the reach, of the information provided clearly varies across schools.

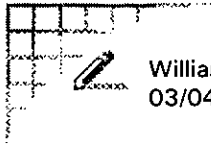
- *Ninety-six percent of Title I principals report that their schools provide information to parents on at least one topic related to parenting or helping their children learn at home. Topics include: (1) child or adolescent development; (2) nutrition, health, or safety; (3) parenting skills; (4) information on community services; (5) helping with homework; (6) developing study skills; and (7) ideas for learning activities outside of school.*

Other services to parents endorsed in the Title I legislation are fairly common among Title I schools, although they are not universal.

- *Of the Title I schools that serve students whose parents have limited English skills, 86 percent report that they provide interpreters for meetings. Sixty-nine percent report that they provide translations of printed materials. These findings indicate a relatively widespread effort on the part of Title I schools to accommodate parents with limited English proficiency.*
- *Thirty-seven percent of Title I school principals report that their schools have parent resource centers. An additional 14 percent report that their schools are currently developing them.*



ED-parental  
involvement



William R. Kincaid  
03/04/97 03:07:13 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Parental Involvement Report

Since it looks like we are not going to be using the parental involvement report for Michigan, we need to decide whether we want to use it another day soon. ED is hoping to use its release to pitch a satellite town meeting that is coming up on March 11th. In addition, they feel they really need to get the report up to the Hill within the next two weeks.

Keep in mind that the First Lady's office was interested in being involved with the release of this as well.

Thanks.