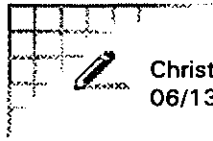


NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 021 - Folder 009

Education - Standards [2]



Christa Robinson
06/13/97 02:54:42 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Karin Kullman/WHO/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP
cc: Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP
Subject: Education PSA

There are essentially two sponsors of the Education PSAs:

I. Education Excellence Partnership: Business Roundtable, National Alliance of Business,, NGA,, AFT, US Dept of Education, Chamber of Commerce, and NEA.

II. Major League Baseball - Owners, Players Association (Don Feir)

Speakers in the program could be as follows (in order of priority):

- POTUS
- Major League Baseball Acting Commissioner
- Orioles Player (Ripkin, Mike Musina, Brooks Johnson?)
- Norm Augustine, CEO Lockheed-Martin, Pres. of Business Roundtable Education Task Force
- Governor
- Teacher

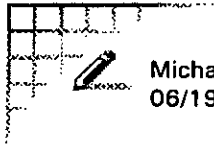
NOTE: To do this announcement on the field immediately prior to the game would probably mean that only the President and a baseball rep. would speak BRIEFLY and then they'd show the PSA. We would recommend, however, that in order to present a full unveiling of the PSAs to the press and allow the other key folks a chance to speak that there should be an off-field event at the Warehouse building at Cambden Yards before the President goes out onto the field.

Players who have taped PSAs that will be showed continually through the game are:

Tom Glavin, Atlanta Braves
Brettt Butle, LA Dodgers
Tony Gwynn, San Diego Padres

**The game is at 3:05pm on July 2nd.

Education -
standards



Michael Cohen
06/19/97 05:44:14 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: Bob Chase Meeting

I just spent about an hour with Bob Chase, following up his meeting with POTUS. We had a very good discussion. Here are the highlights:

1. He is in fact quite supportive of the national tests, and has been promoting them with his members.
2. One thing he has inherited is an official NEA policy position that opposes the development of national tests by the federal government. In preparation for the upcoming national convention, the NEA Board has proposed removing that from existing policy. That has to be voted on by the delegates; he's working to make sure it passes.
3. There are a package of education reform issue Bob is pushing at the convention this year, in addition to testing. The toughest of these will be a resolution that puts NEA in favor of "peer intervention" programs, in which teachers take responsibility for getting rid of ineffective teachers. Bob was not as confident as he'd like to be that he will win on this.
4. If these two resolutions pass, the odds will be good for an additional resolution on testing and assessment that Bob says will be supportive of our efforts. (I didn't see the text, nor did we discuss the details of it). Bob seems to be feeling his way through this convention, trying to figure out what he can pull off.
5. Bob thought we could best help win over teachers' support for the testing initiative by stressing its use as a "diagnostic" tool -- something that will tell us where things are working, where we need help, etc., as opposed to the accountability purposes the tests could also serve. I reminded him that POTUS always talks about the tests being a tool to lift people up, not put them down, etc. That's the kind of stuff he likes.]
6. I also told Bob about our efforts to recruit cities to sign up for the tests, in a way that showcases local partnerships -- including teachers' organizations -- that are working to prepare kids for meeting high standards. He thought that would be helpful, and agreed to help with his locals where we need it. ||
7. Bob stressed that he was trying to earn for NEA the reputation as an organization that could be included in the early stages of policy discussions and be constructive rather than obstructionist, as in the past. So I took him up on it -- I told him we felt we needed to go beyond rhetoric about failing schools and actually propose some steps to do something about it -- especially because we otherwise had such a poor answer to voucher proponents. We had a good discussion about this. He agrees we need to move on this, and that he has a lot of work to do with his own members on the issue. We talked for a while about what would actually make sense educationally to do, though beyond discussing the strengths and weaknesses of Daly-like efforts to reconstitute failing schools,

we didn't get very far. However, by the end of the discussion, he felt that we made an effort to reach out to him (discussions to be continued), and, more importantly, he understands that we feel a keen sense of urgency on this, and agrees that we should.

Finally, I think I should share some or all of this with John Podesta and Craig Smith, since they set up the Chase/POTUS meeting, and asked me to follow up with Bob. Anything in this you don't want them to see? Should I also summarize this for POTUS, in the weekly or in some other form?

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 9, 1997

EDUCATION STANDARDS EVENT

DATE: June 10, 1997
LOCATION: Rose Garden
BRIEFING TIME: 10:45 am - 11:00 am
EVENT TIME: 11:00 am - 11:20 am
FROM: Bruce Reed/Mike Cohen

I. PURPOSE

To highlight the results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 4th grade math and science, and to reaffirm the need for national standards to reach improved scores in the 8th grade. You will also announce that Kentucky has endorsed your national standards and testing proposal.

II. BACKGROUND

The International Release of the new 4th grade TIMSS results is being held in Boston at 10:00a.m. Each country, including the U.S., will then release its own results at 11:00 a.m. You will be announcing the U.S. results, which are very positive. U.S. fourth graders tie for second in the world in science and score above the international average in math. This is in contrast to the 8th grade results announced last fall, which show U.S. students below the international average in math and slightly above in science. This shows that our students can be internationally competitive, if we put in place the right strategies. It also reinforces your call for national standards and tests in 8th grade math in order to keep American students on the right track.

You announced the Chicago area TIMSS 8th grade results for the First in the World Consortium in suburban Chicago last January. This will be the first time you have participated in a release of national results. Within the next year the 12th grade results will be released. We expect that they show even lower U.S. performance than the eighth grade results.

At this event you will also be announcing that Kentucky will participate in your national testing program, joining leaders in California, North Carolina, Maryland, Michigan, West Virginia, Massachusetts, and the Department of Defense Schools. Governor Paul Patton of Kentucky is traveling abroad and is unable to attend this event.

Specific highlights from the 4th grade TIMSS Study:

- In science, U.S. students' average score was 565 -- 41 points above the international average science score of 524. U.S. 4th graders were outperformed only by students in Korea, and scored higher than students in 19 other countries.
- In math, U.S. students' average score was 545 -- 16 points above the international average of 529. Only seven countries -- Singapore, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Netherlands, the Czech Republic, and Austria -- outperformed U.S. students, while U.S. students outperformed those in 12 other countries.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Secretary Riley

Pat Forgione, Commissioner of Education Statistics

Bruce Reed

Mike Cohen

Michael Waldman

Event Participants:

Secretary Riley

Also Standing on Stage:

Pat Forgione, Commissioner of Education Statistics

Linda Vieth, Principal of Middlefork Elementary School, Northfield, Illinois

Sharon Simpson, 4th grade Math Teacher at Ponderosa Elementary School,
Aurora, Colorado

Lourdes Monteagudo, Executive Director of the Teachers Academy for
Mathematics and Science, which is a non-profit corporation serving
Chicago Public Schools.

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- You will be announced onto the stage accompanied by Secretary Riley, Pat Forgione, Linda Vieth, Sharon Simpson, and Lourdes Monteagudo.
- Secretary Riley will make remarks and introduce you.
- You will make remarks and then depart.

VI. REMARKS

Remarks Provided by Laura Capps in Speechwriting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREFACE

The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is the largest, most comprehensive, and most rigorous international comparison of education ever undertaken. During the 1995 school year, the study tested the mathematics and science knowledge of a half-million students from 41 nations at five different grade levels. This report presents findings from the tests, questionnaires, and curriculum analysis performed at the fourth grade. Twenty-six nations participated in the fourth-grade assessment.

- TIMSS' information not only compares achievement, but also provides insights into how life in U.S. schools differs from that in other nations.
- This report on fourth-grade students is the second of a series of three public-audience reports titled *Pursuing Excellence*. The first report presented findings on student achievement at eighth grade. The third report will be released in the spring of 1998, and will present findings from the twelfth grade. Additional reports will provide information on various other topics.

TIMSS is a fair and accurate comparison of mathematics and science achievement in the participating nations. It is *not* a comparison of "all of our students with other nations' best students," a charge that some critics have leveled at previous international comparisons. The students who participated in TIMSS were randomly selected to represent all students in their respective nations, with the exception of a few nations which are clearly noted in this report. The entire assessment process was scrutinized by international technical review commit-

tees to ensure its adherence to established standards. Those nations in which irregularities arose are clearly noted in this and other TIMSS reports.

ACHIEVEMENT

One of our national goals is to be "first in the world in mathematics and science achievement by the year 2000," as President Bush and 50 governors declared in 1989. In fourth-grade science achievement, we are close to this mark. Fourth graders in only one country—Korea—outperform U.S. students in this subject.

- In mathematics, U.S. fourth graders perform above the international average of the 26 TIMSS countries. U.S. students are outperformed by those in 7 countries and outperform those in 12 countries. Among our major economic partners who participated in the study, our students' scores are below those of Japan, not significantly different from those of Canada, and are significantly higher than those of England.
- In science, U.S. fourth graders also perform above the international average of the 26 TIMSS countries. U.S. students are outperformed by students in only one country—Korea. U.S. students outperform those in 19 countries. Among our major economic partners who participated in the study, our students' scores are not significantly different from those of fourth graders in Japan. Our students outperform those in England and Canada.
- In mathematics content areas, our fourth graders exceed the international average in five of the six areas

assessed. These five areas are: whole numbers; fractions and proportionality; data representation, analysis, and probability; geometry; and patterns, relations, and functions. In one content area, the U.S. average is lower than the international average—measurement, estimation, and number sense.

- In science content areas, our fourth graders' performance exceeds the international average in all four of the areas assessed. In three of these content areas—earth science; life science; and environmental issues and the nature of science—U.S. fourth grade students are significantly outperformed by only one or two other nations. In physical science, five other nations perform significantly better than the U.S.
- If an international talent search were to select the top 10 percent of all fourth-grade students in the 26 countries, in mathematics 9 percent of U.S. fourth-grade students would be included. In science, 16 percent would be included.
- The international standing of U.S. fourth graders is stronger than that of U.S. eighth graders in both mathematics and science.
- In comparison with their international counterparts, U.S. students perform better in science than in mathematics at both the fourth and eighth grades.

CONTEXTS OF LEARNING

- It is too early in the process of data analysis to provide strong evidence to suggest factors that may be related to the patterns of achievement described here. No single factor or combination of factors emerges as particularly important.
- On most background factors studied, there is no difference between the U.S. and the international average, or the differences are small. Therefore, these factors are unlikely to be strongly associated with our international standing.
- On those background factors on which there is a difference between the U.S. and the international average, the factor is not shared with most high performing countries. Therefore, these factors are also unlikely to be strongly associated with our international standing.
- In general, preliminary analyses shed little light on factors which might account for the differences between our performance in mathematics and science, and our performance at the fourth and eighth grades. Further analyses are needed to provide more definitive insights on these subjects.

CONCLUSION

This report presents initial findings from TIMSS for fourth-grade mathematics and science, and evidence from early analyses concerning the context of U.S. education achievement. Adequate understanding of our nation's education in an international perspective must await findings from the twelfth-grade data and deeper analysis of data at all grade levels.

TIMSS is not an answer book, but a tool to examine our own national educational strengths and weaknesses in an international perspective. All countries, including the U.S., have something to learn from other nations, and have something from which other countries can learn. These TIMSS findings will be an important source of information to guide our nation in the pursuit of excellence into the next century.



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

PAUL E. PATTON
GOVERNOR

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FAX: (502) 564-2517

May 7, 1997

Secretary Richard W. Riley
United States Department of Education
600 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-0100

Dear Secretary Riley:

Please include Kentucky among the states which plan to administer the new national tests of reading proficiency of 4th graders and math proficiency of 8th grade students in 1999. I understand that Deputy Secretary Marshall Smith has already received a request from Kentucky Commissioner Bill Cody that our state be included in this individual student assessment.

This initiative of President Clinton promises to be a valuable addition to Kentucky's ongoing work to assess the results of efforts to achieve very high standards. The Kentucky Education Reform Act passed in 1990 called for an assessment of student achievement that was primarily performance-based and similar to NAEP. Our state has developed such an assessment system, but the new national tests based on the NAEP content and performance standards would greatly strengthen our assessment of individual students and our ability to report to parents how their child performs relative to national standards.

We look forward to the availability of this new tool for improving the education of boys and girls in Kentucky's schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul E. Patton".

Paul E. Patton

cc: Wilmer S. Cody
Commissioner of Education

Good News for American Education at Close of School Year
June 9, 1997

U.S. 4th Grade Students Are Internationally Competitive in Science and Math. President Clinton announced today the fourth-grade results of the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), which show that U.S. students score above the international average in both science and math, compared with 25 other participating countries. The President welcomed the news, calling the results a good first step toward our national goal of being first in the world in math and science, and a clear indication that our students and schools can compete with those all over the world.

- In science, U.S. students' average score was 565 -- 41 points above the international average science score of 524. U.S. fourth graders were outperformed only by students in Korea, and, in turn, scored higher than students in 19 other countries.
- In math, U.S. students' average score was 545 -- 16 points above the international average of 529. Only seven countries -- Singapore, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Austria -- outperformed U.S. students, while U.S. students outperform those in 12 other countries.

President Clinton added that these results show that U.S. schools are improving. The mathematics results in particular show gains from a previous international assessment, which had indicated that U.S. students performed below the international average.

National Standards and Tests for 8th Grade Math Needed for Continued Progress. While U.S. 4th grade math and science achievement is strong, achievement in 8th grade is relatively weak, especially in math, based on TIMSS results released in November. However, we know that American 8th graders can attain the same high results, or better, if states and school districts make the changes that are necessary: raising expectations, adopting challenging curricula, improving teaching, and holding students and schools accountable for their performance.

The President's proposal for national standards and a national test in math is an essential tool in raising achievement. The test will help parents, teachers and school districts set high expectations and measure progress. It will help identify which schools need help. And it will help determine what works and what doesn't.

The voluntary national test in 8th grade math will be based on the existing, widely accepted National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test, and will also be linked to TIMSS, allowing students, parents and teachers to see how schools and students did compared with international benchmarks. The new test will help place a sharper focus on the critical late elementary, middle school and junior high school years--precisely the years when U.S. achievement appears to falter. It will also help schools and districts make sure that students have mastered the basics of math, including the essentials of algebra and geometry, by the end of grade 8, to give students the foundation to take tough math and science courses in high school to prepare for college and high-skills jobs.

Kentucky to Participate in The Voluntary National Tests in 4th Grade Reading And 8th Grade Math. The President also announced that Governor Paul Patton of Kentucky has asked that Kentucky be included in the voluntary national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math when the tests are first given in the Spring of 1999. Governor Patton joins a growing list of educational leaders in California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina and West Virginia in endorsing the tests.

Questions and Answers on TIMSS 4th Grade Results

Are these results showing strong 4th grade performance in math and science a surprise?

We pleased but not totally surprised. Prior international studies of science achievement showed that U.S. fourth graders were above average but not top ranked. TIMSS indicates that our 4th graders are top ranked in science -- second only to Korea. We felt our efforts to raise standards, increase parent involvement, and stress accountability would pay off.

In mathematics, the only prior international comparison of 4th graders (IEAP, 1991) showed that our fourth graders were slightly below the international average. TIMSS shows that we are above the international average. While our students did not perform at the very top in math, it is still encouraging that we have moved from below average to above average. Our own 4th grade results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show similar progress since 1990.

Why is this study so important?

TIMSS is the largest, most rigorous, and most comprehensive international comparison of education ever undertaken. It tested a half million students. 41 nations participated in the 8th grade assessment and 26 in the 4th grade. It provides not only information about relative student performance in math and science, but also valuable information about curriculum, instruction and achievement.

Why do we do so much better at 4th grade than at 8th grade?

Those who have studied this issue carefully, based on TIMSS and other data, point to what our schools teach and how we teach it.

The first issue is curriculum. Our schools -- like schools around the world -- spend the early grades teaching the basics of math and science. We do this well-- which one reason our students do relatively well at 4th grade on TIMSS. But, between 4th and 8th grade, U.S. schools tend to repeat the basics over and over while schools in other nations move on to more demanding material. For example, our students tend to learn the basics of arithmetic by 4th grade and then keep doing arithmetic until they get to study algebra

in 8th or 9th grade. High achieving nations, however, introduce several new topics -- such as elements of algebra and geometry -- in each of these years. As a result, our curriculum is less demanding than and out of sync with curriculum in other nations.

A second issue is how we teach. In many states, middle school and elementary school teachers have essentially the same preparation in mathematics -- a couple of courses in college. That might be enough to teach arithmetic really well. But it probably is not sufficient to ensure that a teacher understands the foundations of algebra and geometry well enough to teach it really well.

Finally, as a nation we have put a lot of effort in to improving the early years of school. Many state and local reform efforts are starting with kindergarten and working their way up. The TIMSS results suggest that these reforms may be paying off. The challenge is to expand them into the later grades.

What is the relation between TIMSS and the President's proposed National Tests?

The TIMSS results confirm the importance of a national voluntary test in mathematics at 8th grade. They show that U.S. students can measure up to world class standards, and that we must set higher standards for 8th grade students, as we already have for our 4th graders.

The national test in 8th grade math proposed by the President will be based on widely accepted national standards, and will also be linked to the TIMSS international test. That means that students who take the test, and their parents, would find out how well the student measures up compared to international benchmarks.

If we perform so well at 4th grade, why do we keep hearing about students who cannot do basic math and science?

Despite our relatively strong performance, the range of achievement between our highest and lowest performing students is still distressingly wide. While we were second only to Korea in science, 39% of our students scored below the international average. And, while we were above the international average in math, 47% of our students scored below the international average. This shows that we must continue to work to give every child a real chance to master challenging material.

What about 12th grade?

TIMSS 12th grade results will be released next February. The data have not yet been analyzed.

How reliable are these findings given that fewer nations participated in the 4th grade study?

Of the 41 nations that participated in the 8th grade study, 26 also participated in the 4th grade study. In determining the U.S. performance relative to other nations and U.S. 4th grade performance relative to 8th grade, the TIMSS analysis took into account the fact that fewer nations participated in 4th grade. Moreover, the results were confirmed by the comparisons of total U.S. performance among the 26 nations that participated in both the 4th and 8th grades.

What is the Administration doing to improve math and science education?

In addition to our testing initiative, the Administration has taken a number of steps to help improve math and science. For example, Goals 2000 funds help every state set higher standards in academic subjects including math and science. The Eisenhower Professional Development Program provides training to upgrade teachers skills, especially in math and science. The President's Technology Literacy Challenge provides funds to states and school districts to purchase computers and software and to train teachers to improve instruction.

In addition, last March the President issued a directive to the Education Department, the National Science Foundation, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy, to develop an interagency strategy for helping states and communities prepare students for reaching the 8th grade math standards. That plan will be completed shortly.

What is the response to the President's directive on improving math and science education?

In March the President issued a directive to the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Science Foundation asking them to develop an Action Strategy for improving math and science education by June 6. They formed an interagency working group that is now completing that strategy. The effort is taking into account the findings released today as it finishes work on the plan.

draft

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRUCE REED
MICHAEL COHEN

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON YOUR NATIONAL TESTING INITIATIVE

The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the steps underway and planned to implement your national testing initiative.

TEST DEVELOPMENT

The test development process is underway and proceeding according to the timeline initially established by the Education Department. Specifically:

- o 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 has 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. CCSSO has also established several advisory committees to guide the development of test specifications. These committees, also established for NAEP, provide an important way for the subject matter specialists, and technical testing community, as well as the education and education policy community, to participate in the test development process.

- o The Request for Proposals for the test development contracts has been let. Proposals are due XXXX, and the contracts will be awarded before September 30.
- o 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.

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 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 the remaining states to sign up over the course of the next school year.

Secretary Riley has written to every governor and chief state school officer soliciting their state's participation. He, as well as other Education Department officials, the Vice President, and DPC staff, met with more than 40 chief state school officers in April. During this meeting the chief state school officers endorsed your testing initiative. Secretary Riley talks about the test on almost every trip he takes. Between his efforts and those of Mike Cohen, we have spent considerable time trying to solicit state participation in the testing initiative.

We have made steady but slow progress to date. Based on our efforts over the past 4 months, we expect the pace of state participation to increase slightly over the coming several months. However, even states with leaders strongly committed to participating in the test are reluctant to commit publically without first building the necessary support within the state. Therefore, we expect to continue to sign up states on a slow but steady basis, and that it will take some time to get the vast majority of states.

Despite strong public support for national tests in reading and math, a number of factors are making officials in many states cautious. These include financial and political investments that have already been made in newly developed state standards and tests; scepticism 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; as well as diffuse governance arrangements and occassionally poor relations between the governor and other state education officials. In any state, a number of these factors combine to make it difficult to secure a state committment. Nonetheless, we believe if we continue on the course described below we will in fact sign up more than 40 states to participate in the testing initiative in 1999.

States Signed Up: As you know, over the past 4 months 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 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.

Next Target States: There are a number of additional states where the prospects of a public commitment to participate appears likely some time 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 4-8 states at the White House in mid July. Alternatively, we will find opportunities to announce states as they make the commitment, most likely 1-2 at a time.

The states we are focusing on now include:

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 publically.

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 Gov. 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 Gov. Carper to determine how soon he will be prepared to make a public commitment.

Utah Gov. Leavitt has expressed tentative interest in having Utah's participate, pending consultation with his chief state school officer. We are following up with Gov. Leavitt.

Wyoming Gov. Berringer participated in a conference call with Secretary Riley, Mike Cohen, and a number of governors identified above. He appeared quite interested, 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 once the legislature has adjourned, which is expected in late June.

New Jersey Preliminary discussions with the New Jersey Commissioner of Education (a gubernatorial appointee) indicated clear interest from him and Governor Whitman. However, within the past few weeks the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the state's school finance formula, which is directly tied to Gov. Whitman's efforts to raise academic standards, is unconstitutional. We believe that this decision complicates our efforts with New Jersey in the short run, though we will resume our discussions 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 publically 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, though we will encourage Rick 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 Gov. Thompson had. We believe Gov. Thompson is interested in having Wisconsin participate in the tests, though a running conflict with his chief state school officer may make it difficult for Gov. Thompson to provide the necessary instate leadership on this. We are reaching out to the chief state school officer in an attempt to resolve this problem.

Tennessee The Commissioner of Education (a gubernatorial appointee) is a strong supporter of the tests, and fully expects Tennessee to participate, with the support of the governor. Now that the legislative session is over, we will work with the Commissioner and governor to confirm Tennessee's participation and determine the most appropriate timing for an announcement.

New Hampshire Gov. Shaheen is inclined to support participation in the test, as is Commissioner of Education Betty Twomey. However, the legislature is in session for one more week, and the Gov. has been preoccupied with enacting her kindergarten initiative (which is in the budget bill) and with the budget. Once the legislative session is over, we will approach Gov. Shaheen again.

Next Steps: We are making a special effort to reach out to every Democratic governor not already listed above. In addition, Secretary Riley and Mike Cohen have met with Gov. Bob Miller, Gov. Romer, Gov. Hunt, Gov. Thompson and Gov. 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 toward two specific objectives: (1) to secure the commitment of as many states as possible to participate in the testing initiative; and, (2) if possible, to secure an NGA endorsement of your testing initiative.

An NGA endorsement may prove impossible, due in large part to the opposition of Gov. Voinavich, the incoming chair. Despite the close overlap between his agenda for education reform and your's, in recent years Gov. Voinavich has generally opposed federal involvement in education (e.g., 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's Office of Civil Rights 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.

LOCAL PARTICIPATION

We are complimenting efforts to sign up states with an effort to sign up urban school districts as well. 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 city school districts where we believe there will be strong interest in participating by the local superintendent and by majors where they 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, 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.

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 97 funds on test development. If Rep. 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. Alternatively, 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 will be meeting with Mr. Goodling this week, to explore if there are ways to address his concerns, soften his opposition, and perhaps gain his support. Secretary Riley will be prepared to respond to Mr. Goodling's substantive concerns (e.g., that the tests will identify but not help low performing schools) and his procedural concerns (that test development should not proceed unless and until there is specific Congressional authorization). In addition, he will discuss with Mr. Goodling our intention of requesting Congressional authorization for the National Assessment Governing Board to serve as the governing board for the national tests.

Beyond Mr. 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 begun to address this situation in several ways. 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, together with DPC we have begun to identify members who will actively promote the test, starting with the House. Reps. George Miller, Dale Kildee and Tim Romer are especially strong supporters, and virtually every Democrat on the House Education and Economic Opportunities Committee starting with Mr. Clay can be counted on to support the testing initiative. On the Republican side, Rep. Frank Riggs and Mike Castle have been quite supportive. However, we suspect neither will want to split from Mr. Goodling on this issue if he remains firmly opposed.

The remainder of our Congressional strategy will be developed after Secretary Riley's meeting with Mr. Goodling.

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 be 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, though these discussions have not yet resulted in greater support for this initiative.

The national PTA organization has also expressed concern about the tests, reflecting a long tradition of opposition to many forms of testing. However, we believe strongly that parents ought to be among the strongest supporters of these tests. We will be meeting with the incoming PTA president on Tuesday morning to discuss the testing initiative.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY: BUILDING SUPPORT AND SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

We are planning a number of opportunities over the next few months to enable you to highlight this initiative for the public. We are also working with the Education Department on a major Back-to-School initiative, which will provide a number of 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 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. We are working to develop a policy announcement for you to announce.....

America Reads Event in Boston You will be in Boston on June 30. We are working to develop an event that will highlight your America Reads initiative at an appropriate Read Boston site. The event will likely 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. You have been invited to participate, and we are working to get this on your schedule.

Multi-state sign up event We anticipate holding an event in mid- July at the White House, to announce a group of 4-8 states pledging to participate in the testing initiative.

} ?

Multi-city sign up event We anticipate holding an event in mid- July at the White House, to announce a group of 6-12 cities pledging to participate in the testing initiative.

Announcement of Interagency Math Strategy Prior to your speech to the Michigan legislature, you directed the Education Department and the National Science Foundation to work with OSTP to develop an interagency strategy to help states and local communities prepare students for the 8th grade math test. The strategy will address issue such as xx,yy,zz, and will be ready for public announcement by mid-July. 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 in late July. 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 effectively 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, the actor 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 is meeting this week to develop more specific plans and activities. After that, 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.

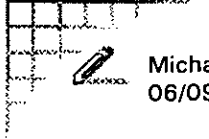
At present, we are considering the following as possible Back-to-School events for your involvement:

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 show 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.

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 in 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.



Michael Cohen
06/09/97 08:55:43 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, William R. Kincaid/OPD/EOP
Subject: Testing memo to POTUS



TJUN

Attached is a first draft of the testing memo to POTUS for your review and comment. I'm sure it is too long and needs more of a focus, but I believe most of the raw material is in there.

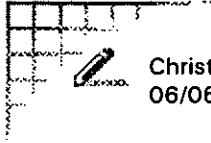
In addition to everything else you look at, please note the following:

1. In reviewing where we are with states, I do not list the states we know we are in trouble with (e.g., Virginia, SCarolina, Alabama as well as Washington; I am waiting for a return call from the gov's chief of staff in WA to settle that situation.) Do you think we need to include a discussion of those states we are not likely to get in this memo?

2. I've tried in the section on state sign up to convey the following: (1) we are making slow but steady progress -- which is all we are going to get for the near future; (2) we are working hard with about 15 states to try and sign them up -- no guarantees for how well we will do in the short run, but we are likely to get these states and more in the long run; (3) we've got a plan for working with governors to reach out to more states. Bottom line message with regard to signing up states is: be patient, we are on the right track and doing this the right way (even though we also need to increase our efforts to keep the issue in front of the public).

I'm not sure this message comes through clearly, and I couldn't figure out a way to say it without it seeming defensive. Any thoughts?

3. Note that in the section on possible events, I've included a suggestion that he speak to the National Conference of State Legislatures. We don't have a scheduling request in on this, and I think the VP is looking at going. Do you think we should pursue this?



Christa Robinson
06/06/97 03:14:56 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Stephanie S. Streett/WHO/EOP, Karin Kullman/WHO/EOP, Ann F. Lewis/WHO/EOP, Kevin S. Moran/WHO/EOP

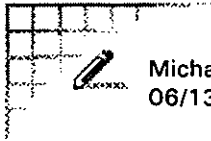
cc: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP

Subject: Scheduling request for June 10

Attached is a copy of the scheduling proposal that was regretted for June 10 requesting a Presidential Event releasing the 4th Grade Results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Could you please revisit the possibility of this being the message event of the day, since the church arson event has been cancelled. This is an important event because it is good news and it shows that the U.S. is doing extremely well compared to other countries in 4th grade math. It is a great opportunity for the President to talk about the need for similar success in 8th grade math and to push for his national math test in 8th grade math.


Secretary Riley is attending a press conference on Tuesday at 11:00am at the Press Club. We could look into moving that press conference to the White House or at we could at a minimum invite those folks to a White House event that day. We are also exploring other event possibilities with Ann.

Education -
standards



Michael Cohen
06/13/97 06:17:09 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
cc: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
Subject: Re: ed memo 



POTUSM.W

Attached is the latest draft, responding to Elena's suggestions. Here's what I've done:

1. I've deleted both the suggestion for a high school test and for requiring kids to meet standards in order to get college aid, as suggested by Elena. I think the President would love a high school test, and I think it's a good idea. However, I've always thought we had to have 4th and 8th grade testing pretty well along before we take on the 12th grade. Unlike Elena, I'm not concerned that the President will think this proposal is nonresponsive; my fear is that he will go for it before we are ready to take it on. On the other hand, I think the President is very unlikely to go for the college aid proposal, and we will run into all kinds of opposition within the Administration and the education community. Upon reflection, I'd rather drop this for now, and have a serious discussion with the two of you as to whether we should make a serious run at this as the Higher Education Act proposal comes to us.
2. With respect to the state (and local) sign-on events, I now talk about signing on a "handful" of states or cities, with no specific number.
3. I'm comfortable reminding him of our goal of 20 states this year and 20 the next, even though he will no doubt remember it more clearly and more often than any of us. They are ambitious goals, but worth pursuing. And the President ought to believe that we have specific and ambitious goals for this, and are killing our selves to reach them. What would he think of us if we didn't. (Besides, fresh off the success of coming close to "first in the world in math and science", I'm ready to set another impossible target1)
4. In the section describing possible Congressional fights, I've removed the notion that we might send up legislation that would condition receipt of federal funds on the use of the tests. This is on the theory that I shouldn't propose anything that I couldn't live with the President actually agreeing to. I'm ok with leaving in an option that we provide incentives for states to use the tests, though not wild about it.
5. I've had my intern proof the memo, and fixed the problems we caught. However, the last two lines of the memo, now the only two lines on the last page, start in the middle of the page. I have not been able to figure out how to fix that. I hope that when the two of you make any final changes and have Cathy print it out in final, she will be able to take care of that.

Let me know if you need anything else.

ED - standards



Michael Cohen
05/13/97 02:11:57 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP

cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Ananias Blocker III/WHO/EOP

Subject: Goodling amendment

Riley talked to Goodling a little while ago, and attempted to convince him that it would be better for him to deal with national testing initiative during NEAP reauthorization rather than on the supplemental. Goodling said he'd think about it, but made no committments.

We also just learned that the textbook publishers are endorsing the Goodling amendment (apparently our several outreach efforts with them didn't work all that well). If Goodling is out looking for endorsements, it seem less likely that he'd back off.

Rule Committee is supposed to be meeting now (2:00pm). Things should be more clear after that. I'll keep you posted as I get further information.

Educational standards

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
5/10/97

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

'97 MAY 8 PM 2:29

May 8, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Stephanie Street, Ann Lewis, Bruce Reed, Craig Smith, Mike Cohen,
Jennifer Palmieri

SUBJECT: Education Town Hall

CC: Sylvia Mathews and John Podesta

This memo is to update you on planning for the Education Town Hall meeting on May 22 and seek your approval of our proposed plan.

Location

We are recommending that the Education Town Hall be held in West Virginia. West Virginia is one of the states ready to endorse national testing standards. It is also a leading state in using and implementing technology in schools. We are proposing that the event be held in a relatively small town (with population of 50,000 to 60,000) and are working with Sen. Rockefeller's office to identify an appropriate site.

In addition to the policy reasons noted above, we are recommending that the event be held in nearby West Virginia as you have an early evening family activity in Washington on May 22. It should also be noted that we considered and rejected traveling to the other states ready to endorse standards -- Kentucky and Massachusetts -- for scheduling and/or education policy conflicts.

Format

The proposed format of the Town Hall would include opening remarks by you announcing West Virginia, Kentucky and Massachusetts' endorsement of standards, followed by an interactive session between you and groups of students, teachers, parents, and interested observers (this last group would include local education officials, elected officials and education policy leaders). We also plan to broadcast the Town Hall to all public schools in West Virginia and put the event on satellite so it can be pulled down by sites across the nation. DPC is also exploring other possible policy announcements for the event.

Should get done or (over) for (week) later

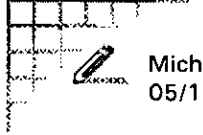
Policy Issues Related to West Virginia

As stated earlier, the West Virginia State Board of Education has endorsed your national testing initiative and has worked to develop state academic standards over the past several years. However West Virginia's approach to standards and assessments is not a model we would necessarily promote to other states. While most states have first defined academic standards and then selected of developed tests that reflect the standards, West Virginia first selected a standardized test (the Stanford 9, which is a challenging test) and then defined its standards to reflect what is on the test. Despite our concerns about this approach, we do not believe that it is inappropriate for you to hold an education town meeting in the state.

Recommendation

That the Education Town Hall meeting be held in West Virginia.

Agree / Disagree _____ Discuss _____



Michael Cohen
05/15/97 03:14:03 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, William R. Kincaid/OPD/EOP
Subject: Goodling amendment update

Here's the latest:

1. Goodling has two versions of his amendment, one of which is subject to a point of order. Obey's staff says she thinks that Goodling will offer the one that is subject to a point of order and make his speech; Obey will object, and Goodling will withdraw his amendment.
2. In the event we are not so fortunate, over the course of the day we have (1) developed talking points for our supporters; (2) developed a Dear Colleague letter for George Miller to circulate on the floor if necessary, responding directly to Bill Goodling's letter; (3) provided Tim Roemer with statements of support from the business community (and other Republican types -- Ravitch/Finn) for his use; (4) convinced NAB, which will not formally endorse until next week, to provide Roemer with information on business support for the test and to work with BRT, NAM and if possible the Chamber, to make calls to members in opposition to Goodling.
3. We are still trying to get a better fix on the Hispanic issue, though still do not know if MALDEF is in fact working in opposition to us.

ED-standards

National Testing Initiative: Goodling Amendment. Rep. Goodling offered an amendment to the supplemental appropriations bill that would have prohibited the Education Department from spending any funds on the development of national tests. If enacted, this provision would have stopped our work in its tracks. The amendment, which was not included in the package approved by the Rules Committee, was objected to on procedural grounds by Rep. Obey, and immediately dropped.

Rep. Goodling has raised both policy and procedural concerns about the testing initiative, and it is not yet clear which are in fact most important to him. On policy grounds, he has argued that the tests will lead to ranking of schools, showing only that schools with disadvantaged students perform worse than those with more advantaged students. He has also argued that the tests will do little to improve curriculum better prepare teachers or get parents more involved. On procedural grounds, he has argued that a policy of national testing is simply too big, and too controversial and step to take without the involvement of the Congress. This was the primary argument he advanced in a "Dear Colleague" letter in support of his amendment.

Secretary Riley called Mr. Goodling to discuss his concerns and to ask him not to offer his amendment. He received a noncommittal response. Rep. Riggs, who has supported our testing initiative, attempted to broker a compromise, in the form of a commitment from the Administration that we would not proceed to implement the tests without specific Congressional authorization. We chose not to accept that offer, because we do not believe such statutory authority is required, and because we believe that it would have been strategically wrong to make that concession at this time.

However, we anticipate that we will in fact engage Congress shortly in this issue, as we prepare legislation to reauthorize the NAEP. While the issue is still under discussion, we are likely to propose that the National Assessment Governing Board assume responsibility for the individual tests, much as they are responsible for governing NAEP at present.

There was slightly more than a week from when we first learned that Mr. Goodling was considering such an amendment, to its eventual introduction. Especially because this was not germane to the underlying legislation, it garnered relatively little attention, and there has been no good way to accurately gauge our strength if this amendment were put to a vote. However, some things became sufficiently clear, and these lessons will guide our future actions.


Fortunately, we have strong support among Democrats on the House education committee. Rep. Miller and Rep. Roemer, among others, were prepared to lead a floor battle if necessary. In addition, the business community remains a strong ally.

On very short notice, the National Alliance of Business, working with the Business Roundtable, the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce, began to provide documentation of business support and began to contact Members indicating their support.


We believe that support for these tests in parts of the education community is soft in spots, much as was initially the case with Goals 2000. The AFT and the Council of Chief State School Officers are strong supporters, as are the leaders of the NEA and National School Boards Association. So is the Council of Great City Schools, which is working closely with us to identify large cities that will participate in the testing program. However, organizations representing local school administrators, the PTA's, and others, could conceivably have lined up behind Mr. Goodling. As a result, the Education Department, together with DPC, is starting a new series of briefings for the leaders of the K-12 education groups that will both clarify the details of the initiative and underscore the importance of this initiative to the Secretary and to you.

There continues to be concern about the tests among civil rights groups. The particular focus of concern is on how students with limited English proficiency will perform on the 4th grade reading test. This test will be given only in English, because it is a test of proficiency in reading in English. (In contrast, the Education Department will fund the development of a Spanish-language version of the 8th grade math test). Civil rights groups feel this will disadvantage recent immigrants, who ought to be given the test in their native language. This will not be an easy issue to resolve. Education Department staff will meet with the civil rights groups next week, and will also work to identify possible options for responding to the concerns. None of the options are well developed yet.

One way of strengthening support among both education and civil rights groups is to strengthen our message that this initiative is as much about preparing students as it is about testing students. Together with the Education Department, we are working on several steps that will address this. These include stepping up efforts to identify and disseminate information and useful materials about effective practices for improving reading and math performance (some of which is underway as part of America Reads), and working with OSTP and NSF to design and launch a coordinated strategy for using federal and nonfederal resources available to improve math performance. In addition, our efforts to recruit cities for the testing program is explicitly designed to both encourage and assist cities in implementing locally designed efforts to better prepare students for the tests.

 Michael Cohen
04/28/97 09:58:27 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
cc: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
Subject: Re: advisory board eo 

I will talk to him, though I advised Bruce on Friday that we may need to slow down on this. I met with Rep. Frank Riggs, who chairs relevant subcommittee and who supports what we are trying to do. His reading of his own caucus is that this move could blow up on us if we proceed too quickly. Essentially, there is concern on the hill that, even though we have the statutory authority to develop these tests (in a discretionary fund that enables the secretary to do a whole bunch of stuff -- and which Lamar Alexander used to fund the development of national standards), that creating national tests is a big policy change that warrants Congressional involvement. From this point of view, a unilateral executive branch action, Riggs thinks we may stiffen opposition over procedural issues if we issue an executive order now, without first building a stronger base of understanding and support.

While we don't want Riggs to control the timing of our action, one key reason for appointing an advisory panel is to build support on the hill. So we certainly shouldn't rush to shoot ourselves in the foot.

Riley is testifying on the national tests tomorrow. We will know somewhat more about where we stand after the hearing.

Do you think Barry still wants to know about this now?

ED-standards



PALMIERI_J @ A1
04/28/97 01:41:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan

cc:

Subject: State Legislatures

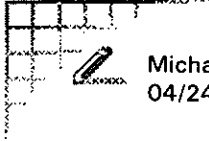
I am trying to get all the pending state legislature opportunities straight in my head.

As I understand it, Missouri is the only state that has a) endorsed our standards and b) is still in session. Correct?

Are there other states on the horizon that might endorse (like West Virginia) -- whether or not they are in session?

thanks.

Educational - Standards



Michael Cohen
04/24/97 03:26:51 PM

Record Type: Record

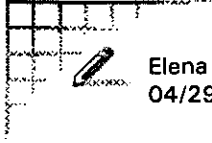
To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: Testing radio address

Radio Address: I'm trying to figure out if we are aiming just for a radio address, or if there is some kind of event/gathering in addition. One option is for the President to simply announce in his address that the following x states have signed on to the test. A second would be to invite state officials from the states to come to the address; we could set them up with the press after the address. I don't know how many high level takers we would get for this option -- probably no governors, may a couple of chiefs if they don't have to travel too far. Most likely we'd get people from the states who would be thrilled to be at the WH, but who wouldn't add much value to the address itself. A third option would be to have a roundtable with state leaders after the radio address. This would probably get more governors and chiefs, may give us a little extra press, would result in a good discussion with or without the press, and would take more work. A fourth option would be to just do the radio address without any state people, and encourage them to do something with the press in their own states.

Any reactions. It would be helpful to figure this out while I am recruiting additional states (wemay be able to get New Jersey by mid may; if not, we'll get them soon after)


Bruce answer?
I say (4)

Education - standards



Elena Kagan
04/29/97 12:04:27 PM

Record Type: Record

To: PALMIERI_J @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
cc: Emily Bromberg/WHO/EOP, Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
Subject: Re: State Legislatures 

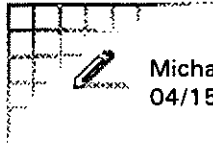
New information. New states definitely endorsing our tests are:

West Virginia
Kentucky
Vermont
Massachusetts
Missouri

New states possibly endorsing our tests are:

New York
New Jersey

We believe that all these states, other than West Virginia and Kentucky, will be in session on May 19. But we should check with intergovernmental. Emily??



Michael Cohen
04/15/97 05:17:25 PM

Record Type: Record

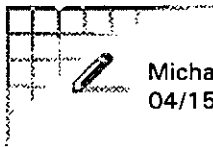
To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: NAGB and national tests -- and a state update

I thought you would be interested in the attached -- especially the state update. We've got Kentucky, Massachusetts (including Bill Weld) and West Virginia firmly committed (I'm going to send Sylvia an e-mail and take credit for West Virginia!), and possibilities with a handful of others, including New York.

I think when we get a critical mass, we should do an event with POTUS, and I think we are pretty close to that point. Plus, once we set up an event, we can probably attract a few more states, if it looks like the train is pulling out of the station.

What do you think?

----- Forwarded by Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP on 04/15/97 05:21 PM -----



Michael Cohen
04/15/97 05:10:56 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Mike_Smith @ ed.gov @ inet
cc: Terry_Peterson @ ed.gov @ inet
Subject: NAGB and national tests -- and a state update

What do you think of using NAGB as an interim advisory (not governing) group for the national test?

I know that NAGB is prohibited from serving as a **governing body** for an individual test, but it would be worth checking to see if the Secretary could legally call on the group for advice --either as a group (preferably) or perhaps as individuals if necessary. NAGB could be kept abreast of the development plans, fed information and analysis from the evaluation contractor, etc, just the way we would with an interim advisory group we would otherwise establish.

As I see it, the main advantages of the NAGB approach would be; (1) its faster than creating a new one; and, (2) it reinforces our position that we want NAGB to assume this role anyway. We could at the same time send up our NAEP reauthorization proposal, or announce that we will, and that the proposal would include provisions to give NAGB responsibility for the new tests.]

In addition to determining if we can legally do this now, we would obviously have to run the political traps.

I mentioned this to Terry in a conversation as I was writing this, and he thought it was a good idea.

Also, state updates (with an eye toward assembling a group of states for a WH sign-on event):

Kentucky: Talked to Bill Cody; Kentucky is ready to go on the tests, with support from the Board. Bill is going to double check with the gov, but expects that to be ok. Bill says these tests will actually help with conservative critics of KY's performance assessments -- they've been insisting on nationally normed tests, and Bill thinks NAEP will do the trick.

West Virginia: Last week the WVA state board of education voted to participate in the tests. Hank Marokie tells me that the Senate Ed. Chair is a big NAEP supporter, and that one of the big state board advocates for this was on the new gov's transition team. Gov knows about NAEP, and Hank thinks gov will be fine; he will talk with him on this in the near future just to be sure.

Massachusetts: I just talked to Bob Antonucci, who confirmed that Weld came out in favor of the test last week (Weld called Bob before he went to NC to find out if that was an ok move!). I've also got a call in to Weld's chief of staff just to touch base.

Missouri: Gov. Carnahan was supposed to endorse the testing initiative when RWR was in Missouri last week (but not announce Missouri's participation -- he wasn't quite ready to go that far because of where they were in test adoption in the state). Do you know if that actually happened? And, do you think RWR would have a good sense of whether Carnahan could go one step further and indicate Missouri's interest in participating if it were tied to some sort of White House announcement event with the President? I think we may be close to a critical mass of states that want to participate to make this worthwhile.

New York: I have been talking to Rick Mills periodically. He is interested in participating, but very cautious -- I think partly because the state is a few weeks away from selecting a test developer for its own work, and partly because he wants to get the board of regents (with whom he has already talked but not pushed for a commitment) and the gov. on board. I'm pretty sure that if I told Rick that we were gathering a handful of states at the WH for an event with the President, he would work to get NY in if we gave him enough lead time.

My count here is 3 states definitely and 2 possibly. A few more (especially if we get NY), and I think we can show real momentum. I think we could pick up a few western states without much difficulty -- Montana and Colorado in particular. I also know that John Goff in Ohio is quite interested (though I don't know where Voinavich is), but I'm not sure what the state of play is with OCR and testing in Ohio. Do you know where things stand on that.

The Shanker National Education Standards

By CHESTER E. FINN JR.

This morning in Washington, hundreds of friends and admirers will salute the late Albert Shanker, president for many years of the American Federation of Teachers, in a memorial service. Al's death leaves a large void in American education. Even people who tangled with him came to respect his intellect, tenacity and integrity. It's also possible to disagree fiercely with Al on some issues yet value him as an ally and leader on others. He and I did not see eye to eye on school choice, for example, or on the role of teacher unions, yet there wasn't a dime's worth of difference between us on curriculum content, on good teaching, on educating kids around the world about democracy, or on the centrality of high academic standards to any serious reform strategy.

Part of Al's legacy of leadership on standards is Bill Clinton's proposal for voluntary national testing based on existing National Assessment of Educational Progress exams and standards. After voicing this idea—to the surprise of his own Education Department—in his State of the Union address, Mr. Clinton reportedly phoned the gravely ill Shanker and said, "We should have listened to you sooner."

Al rightly saw standards and tests as the key to real school reform. He recognized the crucial difference between the dreamy talk of standards at education "summits" and the tough-minded actions that must be taken to improve students'

and teachers' performance. As he wrote a couple of years back, "Some danger exists that world-class standards will become America's latest education slogan," a false panacea that doesn't lead anyone to study harder and thus doesn't yield any real gains.

But political Washington today is practically paralyzed by the idea of national testing. The right dislikes anything "national" while the left is skittish about anything objective. Yet Republicans mostly favor the accountability that rigorous tests offer, while Democrats are generally keen to enlarge Uncle Sam's role in education. Thus Mr. Clinton's proposal has flummoxed just about everyone, something that Al Shanker—who flummoxed a few



Albert Shanker

folks himself—well understood. Indeed, he answered many of these concerns in his own writings.

To liberals, he explained that "it is the failure to have standards and stakes that leads to elitism—to a system where few succeed except for a small group of youngsters who already have a lot going for them." To wary educators, he cautioned that "as long as students are given no reason to work, no reform, no matter how ingenious or creative, will have a lasting effect on achievement. Students always

want to know: Does it matter? Will the test count?"

To conservatives who recoil from the bureaucratic and authoritarian connotations of the word "national," Al matter-of-factly pointed out that nearly all countries whose students outperform those in the U.S. have national standards and exams—many even a national curriculum. To employers wondering how to judge job candidates, he noted that "without some kind of national standards, it would be impossible to know whether one teacher's A meant the same thing as another teacher's A."

One fitting way to memorialize Al Shanker would be to transform U.S. education by launching standards-based national tests. This is not just a Clinton initiative. After all, President Bush urged a far more ambitious testing plan six years earlier. Opinion polls make clear that Americans of every political persuasion favor national testing.

The Clinton plan has three virtues—and needs one crucial repair. First, the tests and standards already exist; there's no need to go through the agonies of drafting new ones (though we must make sure, as Lynne Cheney warned on this page recently, that they remain faithful to the underlying National Assessment).

Second, they're voluntary. States and communities that don't want to participate need not. Some will incorporate the national tests into their own accountability schemes, thus gaining the ability to compare their students to their peers in De-

troit, Charlotte, New York and Denver—and Singapore and Germany. Private schools can use them, too, as could parents wanting to check on their own children's achievement or needing clear information about the quality of schools they're choosing among.

Third, they can be used for the "high stakes" that Al Shanker argued so passionately for. States can make passing these tests the basis for grade promotion if they wish. With the addition of a 12th-grade test—Mr. Clinton has proposed only tests of fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math—they could become a basis for college admissions and employment as well.

But the Clinton plan also has one big flaw. As proposed, the tests would remain within the bosom of the federal Education Department. As Mrs. Cheney has noted, that arrangement invites bureaucratic fiddling, interest-group pandering and political manipulation. These will rob the tests of credibility and, perhaps, integrity. This bold but delicate venture needs to be truly independent. A wholly privatized version is one approach. Another is to turn over complete responsibility to the existing National Assessment Governing Board, a diverse, bipartisan group (including parents, teachers, business leaders and governors) that already makes policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress—and that set the standards Mr. Clinton is urging for the national tests. Made properly independent, such tests are worth trying.

Is there a risk that this will turn out badly? Sure. But as long as the testing remains truly voluntary, that risk is manageable. Certainly—as Albert Shanker well understood—it's no greater than the risk of keeping U.S. education on its present wretched course.

Mr. Finn, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, served as assistant secretary of education in the Reagan administration and as a member of the National Assessment Governing Board from 1988 to 1996.

A Mideast Lexicon

By SOL W. SANDERS

There is an old Persian saying—maybe an hour old—that you can't tell a camel from a Bohemian cow unless you have a Mideast lexicon.

It behooves us during the present crisis in "the peace process"—that never-ending negotiation between Israelis and Palestinians—to be clear about the terms we use and what they mean. For Western newsmen are more than usually twisting the present situation out of shape with their ahistorical approach, particularly as it involves the mapping of this area—perhaps the most sensitive patch of land in the world.

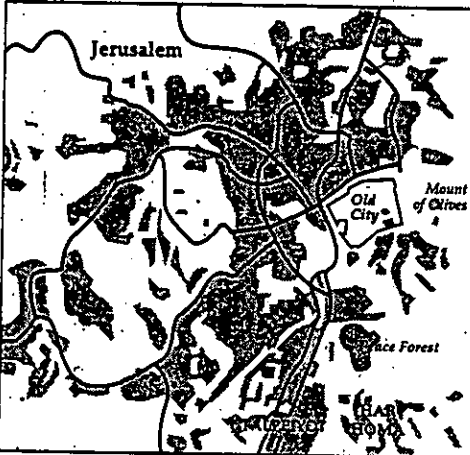
In the first place, "East Jerusalem" is a misleading designation. It was called the Old City (as contrasted with the more modern parts of the city, outside the Judean-Roman-Crusader-Mameluke-Arab-Turkish walls) until it was conquered in 1948 by the Jordanian forces of Glubb Pasha, a British officer. And since Jordan is east of Israel...

So there is no such place as "Arab East Jerusalem," or even "traditionally Arab East Jerusalem." If the Old City is today "contested East Jerusalem," it is so because the Arab powers tried to gang up on Israel in 1948 to set aside a United Nations effort to split the old British Palestine Mandate and make Jerusalem an internationalized enclave. When the 1948 war ended, the Israelis were left with most of the modern city and the Jordan Legion with the Old City. The Old City was always a potpourri of ethnic groups—Jews from time immemorial, Armenians, Greeks, Circassians, Ethiopian Coptic Christians, Russians, Westerners of all nationalities pursuing religious callings, and Arabs, most of whom were Christians. The only period of modern history during which Jews did not live there was from 1948 to 1963, when the area was under Jordanian control and Jews weren't even permitted to visit their holy places there.

Arabs have been crowding into the mushrooming greater Jerusalem, which now reaches virtually to Bethlehem. The number of legal housing units has grown 115% for Jews since 1948, 155% for Arabs—

and it is common knowledge that half the Arab housing in greater Jerusalem is illegal.

And what about the area of "East Jerusalem" that the Israelis call Har Homa, where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plans to build publicly subsidized housing are the flash point for the current conflict? Har Homa is, in fact, south of the Old City. And Arab claims to



the site are probably less legitimate than Israelis'. Zionist Jews had begun buying up the area in the 1930s before losing it to the Jordanians. More recently an Israeli developer had owned most of it and wanted to develop it commercially. (His case is still in the Israeli courts.) The Greek Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem put his oar into the water by claiming that since the last known construction on the site had been in Byzantine times, his church owned it.

The West Bank (of the Jordan River) was merely a geographical designation, with no political significance, until 1948. The area had always been known by its biblical names, Judea and Samaria, as had the coastal strip of Gaza. The Interwar League of Nations mandate that had put the old Ottoman province of Southern Syria under British control (minus the new

state of Lebanon, under French mandate) included both banks of the Jordan and the desert beyond. London decided in its wisdom to chop off "Transjordan" for a client Arab family, the Hashemites (led by King Hussein's grandfather), run out of Mecca by the Saudis.

And "Palestinian" meaning "Arab" is less than 50 years old; the nationality even younger. When I served in a U.S. ambulance unit with the British Eighth Army in Italy in World War II, it was for a time alongside the all-Jewish Queens' Own 16th Rifles Brigade, whose members were mostly German and Austrian refugees recruited in Tel Aviv. They were called "the Palestinian Regiment."

There is, of course, a Palestinian Arab cause, which demands justice. Golda Meir, the Laborite prime minister of Israel, after a visit to an Arab village where children had been induced to turn out for her waving Israeli flags, said something to the effect that only a Jew could know that kind of humiliation. No wonder all the Palestinian Arabs' above-ground organizations (and some of those below) are modeled on those of Zionist Jews, and thence the Israelis.

But the press must restrain its tendency to sloganize with loaded words. That isn't easy: A few days ago, a correspondent for the new BBC-WGBH-NPR program "The World" delivered a lecture on the nuances of words in the Mideast. He started his next item with the expression "the Walling Wall"—a term of derision used by the ignorant and by anti-Semites to describe what has always been called the Western Wall of King Herod's Second Temple.

Mr. Sanders, a veteran reporter, had his first enforced Holy Land stay when his British bomber/transport fell apart on the old British Lydda (now Lod) air base in 1945.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1997

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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.)

Must do in
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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.

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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.

OK

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:

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- 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.

~~Handwritten scribble~~

- 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.

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- 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.

Handwritten arrow pointing to the third bullet point

Handwritten note: "NAGB should be given more authority on test development"

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.

Good but need
to make sure
we've got the
substance right.

4-7-97

Good but needs to make sure we've got the Substantive stuff

- **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.

WJ

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.

2

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

WJ

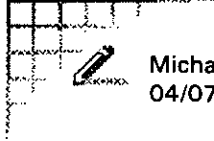
THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

4-7-97

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.

ED - standards



Michael Cohen
04/07/97 06:56:45 PM

Record Type: Record

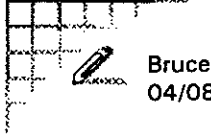
To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: state testing sign-ups

Secretary Riley goes to Missouri on Friday for a math and science conference and to announce the states participation in the TIMSS testing program -- the sample version we announced in the Chicago suburbs . It looks as though the Gov. may also announce his support for the 1999 reading and math test (it may be a little vague because of legislative discussions now on the cost of MO assessments.) I'll keep you posted on developments as they occur. I know that ED is working with chief state school officer and probably the state board of education chair (who was at the California event last week) on this, so everybody who counts should be lined up the same way on this.

Mike Smith received a letter from the chief state school officer in Kentucky, indicating his intention to have KY participate in the tests in 1999. I will ask Mike to have someone check out the Gov's position on this before we do anything.

Mike, Jennifer Davis and I are meeting tomorrow to think through further state sign-ups, as well as the next steps on the advisory committee.

ED - standards



Bruce N. Reed
04/08/97 11:42:03 AM

Record Type: Record

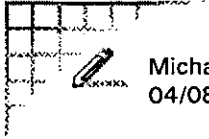
To: Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP

cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

Subject: Re: Possible Education events

Yes on math, and probably yes on marc -- but be sure to stress the no-press part, and be sure to wink at scheduling that we're not really pushing for this

ED-standards



Michael Cohen
04/08/97 10:37:46 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: Possible Education events

1. The Education Department just sent over a copy of an invitation to POTUS from MATHCOUNTS, a group that sponsors a national math competition for 7th and 8th grade students. The final round of the competition is on Friday, May 9, and POTUS has been invited to either going to the event here in DC and asking the opening question to the top ten finalists, or bymeeting with the top students and coaches later in the day at the Oval Office (he has done this once before, in 1993).

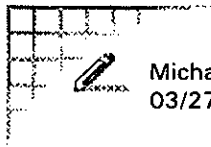
I think this is a good idea--a good way to reinforce our standards and testing proposal with real kids.

Should I send forward a scheduling request?

2. We still have that request from Marc Tucker, following up last month's meeting with POTUS, for a meeting of everybody who ever had anything to do with New Standards and/or the National Center on Education and the Economy sometime in May or June. Marc wants to schedule his next meeting of the New Standards Governing Board around this.

While I think his plan for 75 - 150 people meeting at the White House of r a couple of hours is a bit excessive, it may be appropriate in light of POTUS continuing interest to have Marc and several key members of his board come a brief POTUS on New Standards for 30 minutes, without press. What do you think? How should we proceed?

ED - standards



Michael Cohen
03/27/97 06:51:33 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: ACHIEVE and national tests

Lou Gerstner and Tommy Thompson spoke at the National Press Club at lunchtime today, issuing a 1-year follow up report to last year's education summit with business leaders and governors. I was there for the speeches and a number of follow up questions, though I left before the event was over.

I had been told by Gerstner's staff -- as recently as last night -- that Gerstner would endorse the President's national testing program in his speech. He did not, though he did complement the President for his fine attention to education in the State of the Union Address.

Tommy Thompson was asked what he thought of the President's testing plan. His answer was a muted version of his critical NYTimes op-ed piece. In effect, he said that he thought standards should be set by states and local communities where the responsibility and buy-in was, and that we didn't need a divisive fight over national standards.

Gerstner asked to answer as well (he did not have to), and essentially agreed with Thompson. He said it was a basic political reality that standards have to be done by states and local school districts, and not from the top down.

I do not know what is behind Gerstner's apparant change of heart, and could not stay long enough to find out. I will try to get clarification later today or in the morning. I am concerned, however, because the ACHIEVE board of directors (Gerstner, Thompson, Jim Hunt, Roy Romer, George Voinavich, and some CEO's as well) probably discussed the testing issue at a board meeting earlier in the day.

I'll let you know what I find out.

3/5 Pres Mtg on Standards

RC - AS test / more subjects

But know we have to be realistic

Layer process they us to diff place

DK - Protect from politicization - put in appt structure to
admin test

HS test - make obj nec for lin and (terminal)

Teachers should be using states too

Mills - Keep it basic - you're on the way track

Remind everyone - what who is teaching

Let gov / ch st sch ofts also participate

Don't degrade st stds.

Need intense symbols

quarterly reports?

Write a ltr to every CIT - what's on the test -

put the stds in each mailbox

No fed changes (it can import)

Price - Need to focus on what should happen in school
communities to allow kids to meet bar.

Ⓢ Another mtg w/ princes / superints a Plus.

Tucker - Ditch b/w nat stds / 2 tests

stds need to be comprehensible / clear

Ⓢ No stds of that kind for either NAEP or TIMSS

Not all stds are the same

How do you get to a syst of stds + exams in mult
subjects.

Ⓟ

Do Memo in progress
70-3

We have 4 subjects / 3 grade levels
Fed just contributes in 2 main parts.
The rest is mine! / states standards
Point to us!

Aravot - People are intimidated by standards.
Also do emphasis on love of learning / imp of learning
for indiv dev / quality of comm. s.
Substance of courses / what they ought to do /
expectations they can succeed!
More humor

Hirsch - stress pre-k + k skills
Ⓟ These early learning standards - most imp for
achieving =ily of ed op.
Give Meaning to ph-on - enter sch ready to learn.
Fierce oppos to setting early standards
France - best life-scale early dev ctr Ⓟ
Ⓟ → Set of such standards

Rumer - Stay away from federal
2-yr lag - need leadership.
What do we need to do to prepare?
Ⓟ Mailbox - great. - simple set of 4th grade
math problems
Every paper in Amer to put probs.
Then - you get on TV - go thru these
probs.
Show relationship of tests to standards

Time to test - you need teacher + curriculum + books
- bring together book publishers.

Shaw - How do you calibrate state or math test -
so much variation in when kids take
what
Very difficult to design simple test for HS - only issue
that ~~is~~ is very tough post issue.

Pritch - Do Fed! Do it!

Hill - Shut agenda - best at.



Don't if you expand - pre-school!
Only CA - mandatory pre-school -
new ground!

HS - is a swamp.

Riley Love of learning
Hammer on narrow zone

Dicker - tests have to follow from state - can't do the
opposite way around.

HRC 2 You have to start focused on what you've
already got -
just create pub awareness

Other processes below radar screen that
we would put into motion -
strategy that leads up to everyone for long!
Pay in to talk name about pre-k +
also - talk more about what what +
best practices

- NAEP - Diff b/w perf stas +
content stas?

Lots of schools need to think abt how to teach
reading.

create incentives - common best practices

Smith - Test will early be included in other assessments
And tests are keyed to specific stas -
get them to your terminals.
Widely accepted

Tucker - Stas for NAEP are of a diff. kind.
NAEP - very broad
ours - reduced, so you can have something
to teach to.
Have to think abt what kind of stas you need -
what will make you a production partner etc.

Hill - NAEP + TIMSS
2 reading frameworks - very practical stuff.
Diff it not all that great.

Romer - Make connecto - b/w w-tch + stas
Don't - it become too personalized w/you -
too federal.

Draft

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRUCE REED
MIKE COHEN

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SELECTED EDUCATION INITIATIVES

This memo provides you with a detailed update on your national standards and testing initiative and a brief update on your charter schools initiative, the two aspects of your Call to Action most directly framed as challenges to states. In the near future we will provide you with additional updates, focused on your budget-related education initiatives and on other legislative initiatives.

1. NATIONAL STANDARDS AND TESTS

Our objective is to have 40+ states participate in the initial 1999 administration of the national tests. To reach this objective, we are working on several interrelated fronts:

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. At this time, it is not known 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, and 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. In particular, virtually all groups have stressed the importance of ensuring the technical quality of the tests, and that there be adequate attention to 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 controversy about the testing program. Many urged that the time line be slowed down if necessary, in order to accommodate these concerns, although the Education Department continues to believe that the time line is realistic and appropriate. We agree, and see no reason now 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 therefore find it easier to "embed" a small

number of additional test items into their existing tests, rather than administer a separate and additional test. However, this approach has been considered and 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, that it will 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.

Creating a Political Buffer -- Ensuring the Tests are National and 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 Governors Romer, Hunt, Zell and Bob Miller, Thompson, Engler and Voinavich. 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 advisory council as soon as possible, in consultation with governors and members of congress on a bipartisan basis. 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. For example, staff level conversations suggest that key House Republicans, including Chairman Goodling, Rep. Frank Riggs and Rep. John Porter, would be willing to participate in a White House announcement of an advisory council if our consultations continue to proceed favorably.
- Especially with this council 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 reenergize 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 attempts 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 carry out this plan. Much will depend upon how effectively we are able to enlist the cooperation of a core group of Republican governors.

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. 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. In a number of cases, even our biggest supporters (e.g., Rick Mills from New York) will want to secure the support of the state board of education and the governor before making public commitments. There are a number of states which appear promising at present, including Missouri and Vermont, though we have no firm commitments yet. We hope over the next 3-4 weeks to line up a handful of states for a White House event, and we are working to identify states that would be likely to sign up when you resume your travel schedule.

However, we believe that the prospects for signing up large numbers of states will depend largely upon establishing an advisory body that has the bipartisan support of governors. This step will take some time to work out, but is the most effective way of building sustainable momentum.

We are also beginning to develop a strategy for signing up big cities, such as Los Angeles and Boston, regardless of the respective state participation. The intent here is to further demonstrate momentum, to underscore that these standards are especially important for the students and schools for which society typically has low expectations, and to demonstrate that these tests can in fact be tools to lift people up, by helping to stimulate new and focus existing partnerships and efforts 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 6-9 cities. We would seek broad partnerships in each city that would pledge to benchmark their success by using 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 develop a plan for working with these cities, to provide them with information on proven practices, and to help the cities learn from each other. A White House event announcing this partnership should generate considerable excitement and attention. It will also strengthen support for this testing initiative among members from big cities.

There are a number of steps you can take that will add momentum to these efforts, and we are developing plans for each. These include:

- **Hold a town meeting or other forum on reading and math standards.** We'd 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 expect to 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.

2. CHARTER SCHOOLS

One of our key goals 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 DC 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. Consequently, no state has enacted charter schools legislation yet this session.

However, there are some bright spots. In Washington State this week the governor, schools superintendent and legislators have tentatively reached agreement on a charter schools bill, with a vote in the state House scheduled for Friday. Mississippi is also on the verge of passing a charter law, although the number of schools authorized would be fairly limited. Charter legislation is also alive in Missouri (as part of a big post-desegregation package), Indiana, Maine, and Nevada.

There are several steps that we believe can help move things forward in some of these states. First, visible Presidential leadership in the near future, in the form of an address to a legislature on charter schools, a radio address, or other similar event, will lend support to charter schools advocates.

Second, 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. A second is a guidebook for school boards and other chartering authorities, which emphasizes the importance of effective accountability for charter schools--an important point, given problems that have emerged with casually approved schools in DC 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 request for \$100 million for charter schools.

MEMOS

- 1. O.P.M. wk (me/Hora)
- 2. Welfare-to-work - Pres. (Lyn)
- 3. Service - (Silverman) (Mike/Elena)
- 4. State strategy/substance - March 4 - drop dead
- 5. Melt et short memo / incorporate nat'l plan yesterday / give to Donna (Mike)
- 6. Needle - call Eric
- 7. Two Justice ^{why sp} ^{comp} strategy memo (Dennis/Leanne) Gooby
- 8. Welfare ^{comp} why sp strategy memo - (CR)
- 9. 6-month plan. (EK)
- 10. Weekly (EK/BR)
- 11. Welfare memo for mtg. (BR)

incl. map of targets.

Thursday end of day

Other projects (Dina)
 Chill out radio (Melissa)
 Michigan 3/5 (Mike/BR)
 Welfare mtg 3/6

Ed state memo

Other made books
 other subjects
 other state
 (BR)
 experiment

pick your own
 highlight
 call for bid
 experiment
 no. This
 + even
 in life increments
 other subjects away
 12th grade
 9th grade
 in 1st time
 get them adopted
 get better prepared to meet them

2/27

Rough Draft

Rough 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 (list attached) on national standards and tests on March 5. The purpose of the meeting is to help advance your own thinking about how to move this agenda forward, by providing an opportunity to explore a range of opinions.

In preparation, this memo summarizes the status of your proposal for 4th and 8th grade standards and testing, and identifies several possible different directions future action could take. The options are illustrative of the additional steps we could take; there are others as well that we can shape up as a result of this meeting and other discussions with you.

I. YOUR PLAN FOR NATIONAL STANDARDS AND NATIONAL TESTS IN 4TH GRADE READING AND 8TH GRADE MATH (this section needs further development)

Summary of Plan

Your plan:

Let's go over best way to present

- o challenges every state to implement national tests of individual student in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math
- o uses tests aligned with widely accepted national content standards -- NAEP reading framework, math framework based on what is taught in 41 countries and on the national standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- o calls for the development individual level tests based on existing, widely accepted tests aligned to national content standards-- NAEP test, TIMSS Test. These new tests will provide information on individual student performance compared to national standards.
- o makes use of these tests voluntary use by states and local school districts -- not required as a condition of receiving federal program funds
- o will license the new tests to test publishers and interested states and school districts. Therefore, the federal government will not be involved in administering or scoring the tests, and the tests will be readily available.
- o will make test questions and answers available to parents and students on the Internet -- once the tests have been administered -- so that parents can find out whether their

children are meeting national standards even if their state or district does not use the tests.

Put here - diff b/w stds + tests. "As above merits, ..."

Rationale for This Approach

Sharpen +
more
curriculum



While state efforts to develop standards and assessments are widespread and firmly rooted, the movement to create a national system of standards and assessments has been stalled. This is due to the uneven quality and sheer volume of the national standards that had been developed in the last 5 years; to the intense political attack on several particular standards, including those in history and in language arts; and to intense political attacks which led to the early demise of the National Education Standards and Improvement Council established in the Goals 2000 Act, which was intended to provide leadership, coordination and quality control for the national standards movement.

Your plan for national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math is sound educationally, and was designed to overcome the factors which stalled the national standards movement over the past few years. By focusing on the basic skills of reading and math.

Reading at 4th grade and math at 8th grade are key basic skills, providing an essential educ? foundation for further school learning

The focus on basic skills, widely accepted standards and tests provides the strongest base p8? from which to fight. Basic skills approach has broad public appeal; voluntary, widely accepted tests has appeal to governors and opinion leaders. This will transform debate over national standards: instead of fighting over vague concept or being tied to unpopular standards, and being subject to the charge of federal intrusion, we are now fighting for tests that can tell parents if their kids are making it or not in the basic skills-- straightforward, honest information. This fight is winnable, and should make it easier to gain support for more ambitious view of a system of national standards and examinations -- if that is where you want to head.

no congressional action required, except appropriations, over next two years. While we want to gain bipartisan support from key members of Congress, we do not want to spend our time fighting a standards battle in Congress, when we can actually be helping things happen at state and local level

Overview of Implementation Strategy

- o State sign-up
 - o We intend to sign up a critical mass of states and local school districts over the next 4-6 months; 8-10 carefully selected states should provide considerable momentum, and provide both the incentive and the political cover for many additional states to join. Maryland, Michigan set; California is a strong possibility as soon as late March. New York also looks promising. Over the next several weeks we will continue to identify states that are important bellweathers.
 - o Education Department and DPC staff have meet with testing experts, test publishers and key state and local testing officials, to seek the advice and support

of the technical experts in the field. An adequate comfort level among the state and local testing officials will make it easier to sign up additional states and districts.

- o You are scheduled to meet with 40-45 chief state school officers in mid-March to promote this plan
- o You can, if necessary, take the fight directly to the opposition --speak to at least one legislature not likely to be favorably disposed (e.g., Montana, to demonstrate your resolve and to take opposition arguments on directly)
- o We are developing a strategy to use Gov. Engler and Gov. Romer if possible, to recruit additional governors
- o We are exploring the possibility of sign-up by defense schools
- o Constituency sign-up
 - o Business Roundtable has formally endorsed this plan, and we expect the business community generally to actively support your efforts ~~was to do?~~ *more to do?*
 - o DPC and Education Deparemtn are working to gain endorsements from education, parent and other business groups; should be possible
 - o We will work closely with key constituency groups (parents, business and teachers) to press target states to sign up;
- o Test development
 - o RFP for test development to be let soon
 - o advisory committee of teachers and others to be appointed soon
 - o pilot testing in Spring 1998
- o Focused efforts to improve reading and math achievement — *get students ready to pass tests*
 - o Build strong ties to America Reads
 - o launch effort with OSTP, NSF, math/science/engineering, education and business communities to mobilize broad-based efforts to support math learning
 - o identify and promote examples of proven practices, and increase use in federal programs such as Title 1
 - o strengthen teacher training and professional development
 - o challenge textbook publishers to create world-class math textbooks

Reactions To Date

mainly positive--quick endorsement from BRT, Maryland, Engler, Ravitch and Finn. Expect other education groups to weigh in positively as their Spring meetings occur. Preliminary reactions from those in the field is quite positive; they think we have brilliantly begun to transform the debate about national standards with our proposal.

Attacks on two fronts:

(1) Going too far: Tommy Thompson--leave it to the states, voluntary now, but could become federal, we need bottom up standards and reform.

Related criticism: tests are not the solution, we need to help kids pass them (Post piece)

(2) Not far enough: Broder, Samuelson, Tucker: too few subjects and grade levels, not requiring use of tests as condition of receiving federal funds, no high school graduation test, and not tied to receipt of student financial aid

~~limit this more subject to~~
~~(2) that (2)~~
• limit it really (3)?

II. ALTERNATIVE VIEWS ABOUT MAKING PROGRESS: WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH AND HOW DO WE GET THERE.

There is broad agreement that in every state there should be a system of content and performance standards and assessments in the core academic areas. The standards should be challenging, the assessments should be worth teaching to, and the system should support and lead to improved teaching and learning rather than merely documenting student performance. The reading and math tests meet part of this goal, but still leave other subjects and grade levels unaddressed entirely.

Can be made more concise and focused

Several key issues remain to be decided. In what grade levels and subject areas is it appropriate to have national standards and assessments, and what should be left to the states? What role should the federal government play in identifying or developing standards? If you want to go beyond reading and math, how far and fast should you go? What is the end point?

Assuming your long term goal is to establish a comprehensive system of national standards and assessments, (as opposed to a limited system of national standards in carefully selected subject areas and grade levels), we must determine [?] If the goal is a comprehensive system, how rapidly, and through what path, do we move toward that goal. Here are some basic options:

Option 1: Stick with and succeed at the agenda we already have on the table. Focus on getting the 4th and 8th grade test developed, on getting states signed up, and on mobilizing a nationwide effort in schools and outside schools, to prepare kids to succeed on the tests.


Pro's:

- o there is the most support for this limited focus (e.g., AFT poll) on the basics than there will be on a broader set of subect areas (e.g., history)
- o this approach has the best chance of avoiding debilitating old debates and wars 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 take on 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 nationally to actually improve, rather than simply measure, student achievement.

Con's:

- o Most of the arguments for national standards and testing in 4th and 8th grade (national standards will be more demanding than those set at the state and local level in the majority of cases; we live in a mobile society; if math is math from Maryland to Montana, than writing is writing from Wyoming to Wichita and geography is geography from Georgia to ???)
- 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, literature in middle schools, etc.
- o 4th grade reading and 8th grade math really are limited; whatever we ultimately accomplish will be less than what we aim for, as the implementation battles will spark resistance from both the education community and the far right. If we don't aim higher, we won't even accomplish this much.
- o National standards and testing continues to be an important and bold idea; limiting our efforts to reading and math leaves us open to the criticism that we are in fact promoting one more small idea [e.g., Broder]

Difference? 

see next page for ordering, etc.

Option 2: Broaden national testing to include more subject areas and/or grade levels. Identify other widely accepted national standards and tests and take the same steps with them that we have announced for reading and math. Add as many subject areas and grade levels as you like--from the limited approach of simply doing reading and math at both 4th and 8th grades, to the slightly more expansive addition of science at 4th and 8th grades, to a few subjects at the 12th grade, to expanding to all grade levels and subject areas (e.g., geography, civics, arts, science, history) [this option needs to be better defined; it is too broad, and the pro's and con's differ depending upon the approach taken].

route

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Option 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. But, this one is more difficult -- there is no obvious 12th grade test (the SAT's don't work for a number of reasons, especially that they are not tied to any curriculum standard); there is an issue as to what the appropriate grade level would be, and there is far less consensus about the appropriate subjects and/or content. Any high school test would need the support and must meet the needs of higher education and employers. A commission with their representation, as

well as others (gov's, parents, hs teachers, etc.) is a good way to determine and build support for an appropriate direction

② ② ③
Object #: Promote bold experimentation by identify/endorsing as appropriate the best standards/tests around that others could emulate.

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.

Focus here on experimentation -
don't yet have consensus
don't yet know what works best
but know enough to pick out + highlight
some models
and encourage states to adopt/experiment
with them.

~~What ever happened to commission?~~

- including (but not limited to) U.S. ^{necessarily}
1. Stick w/ your own
 2. Stick w/ your own + adopt a can't in all else
 3. Stick w/ your own and ~~can~~ highlight various promising models as to other grades + subjects - for informed state experimentation
 4. Expand your own
 - a. Incrementally - 4+8 read and math; science. (of course, variations here)
 - b. More ~~radically~~ ^{radically} - ~~including (as explicitly)~~ high school test ^{→ poss addition: look to funding.}
 - c. Most radically - everything
(of course, if you expand incrementally, can add experimentation or can't ideas as to all rest.)

Ed - standards

Hudson Institute

RECEIVED

Leslie Lenkowsky
President

February 9, 1997

The Honorable Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
Domestic Policy Council
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506

Dear Bruce:

A few quick things:

1. Great to see emphasis President Clinton placed in the State of the Union on adopting high educational standards. Enclosed are publications describing the ones we are using in the Modern Red Schoolhouse, along with a copy of Tommy Thompson's message to the citizens of Wisconsin, proposing them as the starting point for that state's efforts to adopt a set of standards. We think it is **critical** to overcome the cynicism many people have about whether or not we can agree, even at the state-level, on what kids should learn. Having an example of a rigorous set of standards that are already in use in over two dozen schools from all parts of the country can help do so. Would you and/or the President be interested in a briefing on the Modern Red Schoolhouse standards?

2. As you probably know, Senators Lieberman and Moynihan, along with Senators McConnell and Abraham, have introduced an auto insurance reform bill that aims to reduce the contingency fees going to lawyers, while permitting plaintiffs to receive such compensation as they are entitled to. It has garnered fairly broad support, as the enclosed clippings from *The New York Times* suggest. In the hope that the administration might lend its support to the bill, Mike Horowitz, of our Washington staff, is eager to brief you on this. Are you interested?

ELENA/
MIKE
COHEN
(reports to go to Mike)

ELENA/
PJW

As by Mike

weekly

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The Honorable Bruce Reed
February 9, 1997

Page Two

3. Did you get my e-mail about convening a meeting of mayors, such as Goldsmith and Rendell, to talk about ways to get greater authority for welfare reform down to the city halls? Do you want to proceed?

Milwaukee has recently announced the potential contractors for the six W-2 regions in the city. Our people are pleased with the selections.

I trust all is well.

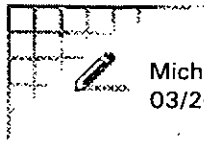
Sincerely,



Leslie Lenkowsky
President

LL/sm

Enclosures



Michael Cohen
03/26/97 10:52:23 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: Washington Times story on testing initiative

Today's Times carries a critical story (surprise) on our testing initiative. The story is based on a letter Mike Smith sent to Bill Goodling and several other members, responding to some 20+ questions they had asked. I reviewed the responses before they went up, and thought they were pretty good. I still do. I will send you copies of the responses today.

We get hit on three points in the story:

1. Developing a Spanish version of the math test. We are doing this as part of a long-standing Administration effort to make sure that kids with limited English proficiencies are included in national and state testing programs. At present, many are excluded from such testing programs, and as a result we have less information about their performance, schools and states are less accountable for teaching them, and less is expected from the kids. Providing a Spanish version of the math test takes away a number of excuses from states, schools and kids. Note that we are not developing a Spanish language version of the reading test, since that test is supposed to tell how well you read in English.

2. Our new tests will result in lower standards, compared to NAEP and to state efforts. This argument is nonsense. The story implies that our new test will be set at a lower standard than NAEP, and than states are trying to set. This is not the case. Here is the situation.

NAEP reports scores at three achievement levels (performance standards): basic, proficient, and advanced. Some time ago the National Education Goals Panel decided that, for the purposes of using NAEP to monitor progress toward the national education goals, they would focus on the percent of kids scoring at the proficient level (on average, about 30% of kids depending upon grade level and subject area)

Our test will also report three achievement levels, keyed to the NAEP levels. There will be no difference--if you are proficient on one test, you would be proficient on the other. However, ED has taken the position that our job is to put the test out there with the achievement levels, and not to determine what level is good enough. This is entirely consistent with how NAEP operates -- they supply the facts, you make the judgments. The states that use the new tests will decide for themselves how much is good enough.

At the same time, we have maintained our position on 4th grade reading. We have consistently said that 40% of US kids don't read at the NAEP basic level, and we want to get everybody over that level as fast as we can. The Times is using our focus on the NAEP basic level, coupled with the Goals Panel focus on the proficient level, to imply we are settling for low standards. In the process, they have chosen to ignore the fact that nearly half the kids don't meet the basic standard -- hardly an indication we are aiming low. They are also ignoring evidence we have supplied before that even the NAEP basic level is tougher than the passing requirements in most states.

This is a point we probably ought to have Delaine address at the California event next week.

3. The cost of the tests are increasing. They are right on this one. The initial ED cost estimates were based on a best guess about the design and administration of the test. Since then, ED has had a number of sessions with test publisher, testing experts and state testing officials. As a result, they have a better idea of how to design the test, and how it will be used. One important development is a recognition that each test will have to be a 90-minute rather than a 45-minute test, in order to provide valid information. This has had an impact on cost estimates.

Note that the development costs are still pretty low and well within ED budget, and the administration and scoring costs are still in line with the costs for state and local testing. In addition, I will talk to ED staff about the prospects for any additional changes in cost estimates.

Do you have any thoughts about how we should respond to this. I think a letter to the editor, probably from Mike Smith is appropriate. He is away until Friday, but I will talk with others in the Department about getting something in motion.

If You Have Brains, You Might Decide To Skip This Test

* * *

Michigan High-School Exam
Has Bright Kids Smarting
And Parents in Revolt

AI

By JUNE KRONHOLZ

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
BIRMINGHAM, Mich. — What if they gave a test and no one took it?

Or worse, what if they gave a test and the really bright students — the kids who study Japanese in their spare time, the kids whose small talk runs to developments in robotics, kids with 3.9 grade-point averages and aspirations to careers in engineering—refused to take it?

Which is what happened when the state of Michigan announced it would test all its high school juniors for academic proficiency, and the juniors in Birmingham said no.

The American public, hungry for accountability in its schools, tells pollsters it wants standardized tests: tough ones, long ones, lots of them. States that don't have tests are writing them; states that do have tests are rewriting them to make them harder; President Clinton, sensing the mood, is proposing national tests for fourth and eighth graders.

Michigan was a beat ahead of much of the country. Last year, it drafted the High School Proficiency Test, an 11 1/2 hour high-achievement marathon whose results were to be stamped on a graduate's diploma as a sort of seal of state approval.

In February 1996, 100,000 Michigan juniors took the first proficiency test — and the results were less than commendable. Statewide, about a third were declared "proficient" in writing and science, 40% in reading and half in math.

Those who weren't proficient were labeled either "novice" or "not-yet novice," designations that almost everyone now agrees were ill-chosen. Birmingham's juniors scored well above the state average—but still not as well as this school-proud, follow-the-rules Republican suburb of Detroit is used to scoring on tests.

A third or more of Birmingham's juniors were declared "novice" at reading, writing, math or science when the test results came back last summer. One of them was Jonathan Salz.

Jonathan, 17 years old, was declared a novice at writing. But by that time, he had already been accepted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology, Carnegie Mellon University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the University of Illinois. He had earned a perfect score on the American College Testing, or ACT, exam, which Mid-



Jonathan Salz

western states favor over the Scholastic Aptitude Test; he had scored a near-perfect 770 out of 800 on the verbal portion of the SAT; he had accumulated a 3.993 grade point average; he was a National Merit Scholar, had a perfect grade in advance-placement English, and was on his way to graduating at the head of his class.

Low-Yield Risk

"It scared me," Jonathan says. "I had never failed a test before in my life." And because the Michigan tests are never returned and the grades never explained, he had no way of knowing why he hadn't passed this one.

The buzz went around Birmingham: The test can't help you with college-admission. Please Turn to Page A11, Column 1

Continued From First Page

sion officers because, after all, only public-school students from Michigan are taking it. But there is no telling what mischief a "novice" stamp on your diploma or transcript might do. In Birmingham, where 95% of the kids go on to college, and 75% to 80% earn a degree, the proficiency test took on the character of a high-risk, low-yield bond.

So when this year's test approached, the guidance counselor at Jonathan's school, Anita Farrar, sent home a note pointing out a clause in the proficiency-test legislation that allows parents to exempt their kids from the test (she says the law requires her to let them know). That option was written for parents of children with learning disabilities, and parents who oppose testing on religious grounds.

The local paper, the Eccentric, picked up the buzz and made it a lead story. Parents were spooked. The test was too long, they said. It covered subjects the kids hadn't finished studying, they said. There were essay questions and subjective grading. And the graders weren't even Michiganders, they added.

When test day came last month, two-thirds of the 500 juniors at Birmingham's two high schools didn't take the exams—and by and large, they were the highest-achieving two-thirds. At Seaholm High, 158 juniors didn't take the test; 148 of them had B averages or better.

'Never Happened'

Greg Townsend, who has a 3.9 grade point average and a fascination with robotics, didn't take it: "It might hinder your chance of going to an out-of-state school," he reasoned. Ryan Kasprzak, who studies Japanese before school hours, didn't either: "If you take it and fail, it goes on your transcript. If you don't take it, it's as if it never happened."

Parent Bonnie Brooks urged her son, Ryan, not to take the test: "What if you don't pass?" I said. Jeff Salz had his son Jonathan retake the writing test (he passed), but he doubts he will let his daughter, a sophomore now, take the test next year.

Only in one other school district did kids refuse the test; in nearby Troy, 30% of the juniors didn't take it. But nowhere were there absences like in Birmingham. Meanwhile, Lansing, the state capital, is up in arms. The state can't lower the passing grade on the test: It is just above 50% now, and it is supposed to be raised, not lowered, every year.

It can't link the test to graduation. That idea had been around for years, but was canned when educators warned that the drop-out rate would rise. It can't require the University of Michigan to ask for the exam for admission; what would out-of-state applicants do?

Bankrupt Schools?

Gov. John Engler has proposed legislation that would let him declare a school district "educationally bankrupt" and appoint a receiver if too few students pass the high-school proficiency test. But he hasn't said what the receiver would do to restore solvency to Birmingham, where SAT scores already are 140 points above the national average.

Indeed, Gov. Engler recently announced that Michigan youngsters, who already take standardized tests in third, fourth, fifth, seventh and eighth grades, will take the president's national exams as well. It's not a popular decision: "Public pressure is growing against testing," says Diane Smollen, the Michigan school board's director of assessments.

Test makers say grades on new tests always start low, until kids learn how to take them and teachers learn how to coach them. And Michigan's test was particularly tricky because of its heavy demand for writing, a skill most schools don't teach any more.

Lesson for the President

There's a cautionary tale there for the president. His national tests would be voluntary, and after the first year, 1999, the states would have to pay the administrative costs of giving them. There would be nothing to gain from doing well, no new federal grants or aid, and everything to lose by doing poorly — your school's name and results would be splashed across the Internet. And the Education Department is predicting plenty of kids will do poorly — up to a 40% failure rate the first year.

Jonathan Salz, meanwhile, figures he didn't gain anything by taking the Michigan test last year. And Ronnie Victor, who worried that his penmanship might cost him points on the writing test, thinks he didn't lose anything by sitting it out this year.

"When they wrote the legislation," Mr. Ballard says, "they forgot how smart our kids really are."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 1997

Washington Wire

A Special Weekly Report From
The Wall Street Journal's
A1 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

MONDS

Page 1

ELENA

3/2

Draft

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MICHAEL COHEN

SUBJECT: ^{MEETING ON} 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} ~~could take~~ _{to consider once that proposal is fairly in place.}

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~~ ^{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~~ ^{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

→ ADD PAGE #'S

MONDS

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- o ~~Will be~~ ^D 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 ~~Will be~~ ^f 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~~ ^l 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~~ ^A 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~~ ^T 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 when?

Reactions To Date

The reactions to ~~the~~ ^{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 BFT endorsed it ^{spell out} 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 ^{editorial} 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 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

SAY MORE ABOUT STATES THAT CAN GO?

encouraging

INSERT A:

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; you will sign an executive order in either Michigan or North Carolina directing them to do so.

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 ...

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. ~~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. We must be especially careful not to propose any new steps that will undermine state participation in this initiative, because this will be the most visible indicator of success.~~ Below I lay out some basic approaches.

over time
what to do
to prepare students to reach the 4th grade standards

? 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 I and Goals 2000. And it involves a sustained effort to encourage parents to read to their children on a regular basis.

If still think you need to say more to make this sound real + interesting

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

we don't want some big fancy project, we want math teachers to teach the way the Japanese do. we need a math teaching initiative.

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.

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).

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.

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.

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.

Make TO [unclear] of [unclear] 3

~~Conc. point~~ of course, many

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.

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

If we recommend that we work with the Dept to explore a major math teaching initiative to propose in the next few months.

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, for they are likely to undermine efforts to sign states up for participation in the 4th and 8th grade testing initiative.

PUT BACK IN

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 judgments 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 operational, 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.~~

On this approach,

would

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.

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.

What about us endorsing Tucker etc?

The weakness in this approach is that

~~one:~~ *on the other hand,*

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. *Mason*

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.

We recommend X.

Insert B from p 4

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.



I still don't like this idea until after 1999.

Why science (not that useful) and not writing?

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.

We recommend 4.

7 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.

11?
10?

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, 8th 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

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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.

~~Pros~~

- 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.

~~Cons~~

- 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).

Overview of Implementation Strategy

- o State sign-up
 - o We intend to sign up a critical mass of states and local school districts over the next 4-8 months; 8-10 carefully selected states should provide considerable momentum, and provide both the incentive and the political cover for many additional states to join. Maryland, Michigan set; California a strong possibility as soon as late March.

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New York also looks promising. Over the next several weeks we will continue to identify states that are important bellweathers.

- o Education Department and DPC staff have met with testing experts, test publishers and key state and local testing officials, to seek the advice and support of the technical experts in the field. An adequate comfort level among the state and local testing officials will make it easier to sign up additional states and districts.
- o You are scheduled to meet with 40-45 chief state school officers in mid-March to promote this plan
- o You can, if necessary, take the fight directly to the opposition -- speak to at least one legislature not likely to be favorably disposed (e.g., Montana, to demonstrate your resolve and to take opposition arguments on directly)
- o We are developing a strategy to use Gov. Engler and Gov. Romer if possible, to recruit additional governors
- o We are exploring the possibility of sign-up by defense schools
- o Constituency sign-up
 - o Business Roundtable has formally endorsed this plan, and we expect the business community generally to actively support your efforts
 - o DPC and Education Department are working to gain endorsements from education, parent and other business groups; should be possible
 - o We will work closely with key constituency groups (parents, business and teachers) to press target states to sign up;
- o Test development
 - o RFP for test development to be let soon
 - o advisory committee of teachers and others to be appointed soon
 - o pilot testing in Spring 1998
- o Focused efforts to improve reading and math achievement
 - o Build strong ties to America Reads
 - o launch effort with OSTP, NSF, math/science/engineering, education and business communities to mobilize broad-based efforts to support math learning
 - o Identify and promote examples of proven practices, and increase use in federal programs such as Title 1

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- o strengthen teacher training and professional development
- o challenge textbook publishers to create world-class math textbooks

Summary of Plan

In the State of the Union Address you challenged every state to adopt high national standards and, by 1999, to test every 4th grade student in reading and every 8th grade student in math, to see if they are meeting these national standards.

The 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests to be used are based on existing, widely accepted standards and tests.

The 4th grade reading test will be based on the framework (content standards) which have guided the development of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) assessment. The NAEP reading framework was developed by a consensus process involving reading and curriculum specialists from around the country. The NAEP assessment is aligned with this framework, and incorporates performance standards -- achievement levels (basic, proficient, and advanced) which tell how well students have mastered the content.

As you know, NAEP is currently designed to be administered to national and state samples of students, but cannot produce scores for individual students. Over the next two years, the Education Department will contract with test developers to develop a new test, aligned with the NAEP reading framework and designed to provide scores for individual students reported in terms of the NAEP performance standards.

In eight grade math, the starting point is the TIMSS test. This test was based on a consensus among experts in the 41 participating countries, including the U.S., regarding what students should know and be able to do in math and science. In math, this framework overlaps substantially with the widely accepted national math standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). In turn, the NCTM standards have been the basis for the standards developed by most states, and have also guided the development of the NAEP math assessments. In short, in math, there is an extremely high degree of overlap between international and national standards -- and the international and national assessments based upon them.

Like NAEP, TIMSS is administered on a sample basis. Therefore, there is a comparable test development process to be undertaken over the next two years in order to produce a test that will provide scores for individual students.

3/2

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 additional 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

- 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).

First Lady, mch 3/4

What to do to get states to adopt

What to do to make sure kids meet tests

What to advise states not

Fisher - part of syst. of nat. stds

Ranich - stick to it - focus

if anything else - L.V. test / conduct the board

Hirsch - why w/ Ranich - Little Red & William

used grade-by-grade

but be careful - still very valuable

Mills - NY wants to do

keep focused - keep pushing hard

talk about what to do to help kids meet

don't do much else.

Price - wants to mobilize - to get the kids to meet the std.

Dunkwa - Need to do at HS level

New version of GED perhaps

Only Mills is implementer

Price & ER?

give Price a script

Good reception / momentum / shouldn't jeopardize / want on hand mass



Mark Lucy SRAB

2. changed debate about it's

pol correct history →

what's the object to in skills w/loris?

Emphasis on best practices
on these - to make
sure you meet steps



Prouce - you've seen
This, yes? Etc

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.

F. W.
Ed Stds Memo

3 part

- 1) Nat testing - reading + math
- 2) Highlight eqs of good stds - more expansive + comprehensive than just our test.
- 3) Embedding stds in broader set of accountability returns

↳ testing options - 2

1. Build new test from sample tests given to each kid - abt 1 hr. (in addition to state test)

2. Stat procedure

give tests to samples of kids
estimat - of score

Advan - no fed funding of test

Part hard to make real, in people's mind.

↳ Who dev test?

By Ed?

Use existing crite?

New crite of teachers?

Tradeoff btw speed + coverage.

Who administers?

Shouldn't be fed govt
through publishers / states

Cost of administering? \$10 per school

Rec'd test - by linking to Title I?

Goals 2000? (death of this)

America Reads - strong logic,
but won't advance leg.
prospects

Low English/Thompson
types?

All Pres - considered/rejected

But test isn't even
in place yet?? →

Any additional \$ to act as incentive??

Performance bonuses?

New Title I monies?

Test is automatic qualifier for TI

Military schools?

- Make available to parents on Internet?

If states don't do it / still be there

Why not not states (BC not ask)

- Too far down the road

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 28, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Secretary Riley
Bruce Reed
Michael Cohen
Mike Smith

SUBJECT: Moving Forward on National Standards

I. Background

Over the past four years there has been considerable activity throughout the nation to set standards of excellence for education. Work on national content standards has been completed in virtually every discipline. With the support of Goals 2000 and new Title 1 requirements, forty-eight states have developed or are in the process of developing their own academic standards, and most are also developing new assessments aligned to these standards. Public consensus on the importance of national standards of excellence for education is broad and deep, and the standards movement has clearly taken hold nationally.

Yet despite this progress, there are significant challenges as well. The quality of the standards being developed by states is quite varied. A recent AFT report indicates that only 15 states have standards that are clear and specific enough to lead to a common core curriculum, and only 12 states have tried to benchmark their own standards to world-class levels. State progress on developing performance standards and assessments is slower than with respect to content standards. No state is able to determine for itself, or assure the public, that its standards are rigorous and up to world class levels.

The state-by-state approach to standards and assessments limits the information available to parents, teachers and students. In particular, the current arrangements make it impossible for anyone to learning how well individual students perform against national or international benchmarks. In short, there is no way for anyone to know if a student who meets a particular state's performance standards is doing well enough in a larger context. This is especially important because states will vary among themselves with respect to the rigor of their performance standards.

Further, there is considerable evidence that even high quality and widely accepted academic standards, such as the national math standards, have not yet penetrated into the classroom in meaningful ways. The recently released TIMSS study of international performance in math and science shows that neither textbooks and other curriculum materials, nor teaching practices, have yet responded to the standards.

This memorandum describes three strategies for moving your national standards agenda forward. It is designed to respond to the challenges indicated above, and to build on and extend significantly the Administration's efforts over the last four years. While it promotes national level activities -- particularly new national testing -- it is designed to build on and strengthen the work underway at the state level, rather than force states to discard what they have already been doing.

II. National and International Achievement Benchmarks for Reading and Math

Proposal: We recommend that you call for a national test to determine whether students have met national performance standards in 4th grade reading and international performance standards in 8th grade mathematics. Over the next two years the federal government will develop these tests, based on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) 4th grade reading test and the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) 8th grade math test. These test would be ready for administration for the first time by the Spring of 1999, and available on the Internet by the year 2000.

Purpose: This proposal will serve two purposes. It will make the idea of national and international standards very real and concrete for students and parents for the first time, because students will get test scores comparing their performance to these benchmarks. In addition, these two tests will provide a focus for national campaigns to significantly raise student achievement in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math.

A Focused Effort: This proposal is focused on reading and math because they are the building block of nearly all school learning, and widely accepted as the most basic of basic skills. Fourth and eighth grade are critical transition points in school, and reading well by the 4th grade and mastering math, especially algebra, by the 8th grade, are essential to future academic success. NAEP and TIMSS, while not widely known to the public at large, enjoy bipartisan support in the education and policy communities. We believe this focus approach will minimize political opposition to a federal testing effort.

Information for parents, teachers and students on individual student performance: Once available, these tests will give parents, teachers and students accurate information on student performance against recognized national and international standards. They will be the only assessments that can provide this information -- no state or local testing program can currently provide this information, and no other national efforts are referenced to these recognized standards. This will make the idea of national and international standards meaningful.

Both NAEP and TIMSS were originally designed to monitor national, state or international performance, not to measure individual student achievement. Therefore, at present, neither NAEP nor TIMSS can provide individual-level scores. Our proposal would be to create individual-level versions of these tests, making it possible for the first time to measure individual students against demanding national or international benchmarks. Our consultations with leading testing experts suggests that creating individual level tests that reflect the performance standards in the current assessments is feasible.

A 2-Year Development Period, Led by the Federal Government: The tests would be developed under contract to the National Center for Education Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education. The contractor is most likely to be a commercial test publisher, or consortium of publishers. The development costs are in the range of \$2-4 million per year, and these costs would continue as long as the test was made available. The Education Department, the National Science Foundation and perhaps the Department of Defense Dependent Schools could share the development costs. It will take 18-24 months to develop the new tests. If the Education Department begins work immediately, the test could be administered for the first time in the Spring of 1999. No new legislative authority would be required to undertake this work.

To ensure the technical integrity of the work, we would organize a technical advisory committee, or ask the National Academy of Science to provide ongoing assistance.

We will also need to consider ways of reducing our vulnerability to charges of federal intrusion as a result of the federal responsibility for test development. We have considered alternative approaches, such as asking ACHIEVE, the new entity created by NGA and Lou Gerstner after the education summit in Palisades. However, that organization is still not staffed or operating yet, and is not likely to have the technical capacity to undertake this work. Further, reaching an agreement about how to proceed with this work with the Governors and CEO's on the ACHIEVE Board of Trustees is likely to slow down work which is already on a very tight timetable.

National Tests Administered Locally, Supplementing But Not Replacing State and Local Testing Programs: These tests would be voluntary; states and local school districts would not be required to administer them as a condition of receiving federal funds. They would supplement rather than replace existing state and local tests in these subject and grade levels. The combination of these new national assessments together with state or local testing will provide both performance and diagnostic information for individual students. While the bulk of the diagnostic information would come from state and local testing programs, the new national tests would provide some limited amount as well.

We estimate the cost of administering the tests at between \$5 and \$10 per student, or between \$30 and \$60 million nationally if every state and school district used the test. We have considered providing an incentive for states and districts to participate by sharing the cost of test administration, probably on a 50-50 basis. We believe this will increase participation, while it may also make us vulnerable to the charge that this incentive reduces the voluntary nature of the test.

Like most other state and local tests, these new tests would be available from a commercial test publisher. Because these tests perform a unique function not currently filled by the market, we do not anticipate significant opposition from the test publishers.

By the year 2000, versions of the tests could be placed on the Internet and scored by computer. This means that, in states or school districts not using the test, parents could administer the test to their children at home, and learn how well their children perform against national and international benchmarks.

National Campaigns to Improve 4th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math. These tests will provide important anchors for national efforts to improve reading and math performance, as well as measuring it. The America Reads challenge provides a model of federal programmatic support, coupled with a national campaign to assist parents as first teachers and to mobilize an army of volunteer tutors, that will increase reading achievement considerably. We believe that an equivalent effort should be launched in mathematics, using existing resources in a variety of federal agencies to support teaching and learning in math (e.g., the Education Department, National Science Foundation, Energy Department, NASA, etc.), and the math and science community at the national and local level. Preliminary discussions to launch this effort are already underway among the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Education Department and NSF.

The focused strategy described above should be complemented by additional efforts that address a broader range of issues. These are briefly discussed below, and can be developed more fully in the near future.

III. Promoting National Use of High Quality Standards

The focused effort on math and reading should be complemented by one that builds on existing state standards, addresses a broader range of subject areas and grade levels, provides leadership to promote nationwide consensus on what students should learn in core academic subject areas, and assists states in developing and using higher standards to effectively improve teaching and learning.

Proposal: We propose to hold a White House Conference on Standards of Excellence in Education in the Fall of 1997. The purpose of the conference would be to increase the extent to which states adopt and use standards of recognized high quality and to help improve the quality of state academic standards overall. This would be accomplished by identifying and promoting the best designed and most rigorous standards available from anywhere in the country, and by identifying and reporting to states the extent to which there already exists agreement among states on the content standards in core academic subject areas. In addition, the conference should emphasize that to be effective in improving teaching and learning, academic standards must be placed in a system of aligned assessments, curriculum, teaching practices and professional development programs as a package. Examples of such systems could include Advanced

Placement exams, New Standards, College Board's Equity 2000, and the International Baccalaureate. Promising state efforts could include the New York State Regents exams, and new assessments in Kentucky and Vermont. You could begin highlighting promising examples as part of the build up to this conference, without waiting until the Fall.

This conference should be conducted in partnership with business leaders, governors and other state officials, and educators, perhaps by working with ACHIEVE. The White House role should primarily be in convening the effort, in challenging others working on standards issues to identify quality standards, and then to help build the consensus to use them more broadly throughout the nation.

IV. Linking Standards To Accountability and Quality at the State and Local Level

In your speech to the National Education Summit in Palisades, you challenged states and local school systems to put in place meaningful systems of accountability for students, for teachers, and for schools. There are several initiatives already underway to help support these challenges, and, over the next year, the Administration should undertake several additional ones. New and proposed initiatives can be developed in more detail in a subsequent memo. Briefly, these can and could include:

Promoting Excellence and Accountability in Teaching: Expanded support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The FY 98 budget includes a significant increase in support for the NBPTS. The Education Department, in response to a Directive you issued last Fall, will inform states and school districts on ways federal resources can be used to assist in preparing teachers for board certification. In addition, the Education Department will more inform states and school systems on a range of ways in which federal resources can be effectively used to promote excellence and accountability in teaching.

The development of guidebooks that summarize best practices on issues such as rewarding excellence in teaching, removing incompetent teachers, requiring students to meet academic standards before moving to the next level of schooling, etc.

Working with business leaders to help employers consider student academic performance in employment decisions. The business community has been working to identify ways in which employers can reinforce the importance of academic performance for high school students, through the review of high school transcripts and other evidence of school performance. Many business leaders working on this issue would welcome a partnership with the White House that could raise the visibility of these efforts, and lead to more widespread efforts by employers.

File -
Education -
standards

**LIFTING SCHOOL STANDARDS:
MEETING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE
Wednesday, January 22, 1997**

Preparing America for the 21st Century. In his Inaugural address, President Clinton pledged to lead this country into the 21st Century with the American Dream alive for all our children.

Giving Our Children a World-Class Education. Today, at Glenbrook North High School in Glenbrook, Illinois, in his first speech outside Washington in his second term, President Clinton will begin to highlight what we must do to achieve that vision: lift school standards and give our children the world's best education. In the global, information economy, education is the most critical tool of all.

President Clinton's Education Agenda includes:

- HOPE Scholarship tax cuts to make the first two years of college universal (\$1,500 tax credits for first two years, \$10,000 tax deduction for all college costs);
- The G.I. Bill for Workers to make training ~~is~~ available throughout a lifetime;
- A 20% increase in school construction and renovation;
- Expanding public school choice by opening 3,000 charter schools, run by parents and teachers, that stay open only if they produce results;
- Ensuring that every child can read by 3rd grade -- with 30,000 reading specialists mobilizing a volunteer army of one million volunteer tutors nationwide.
- Connecting every classroom and school library to the Internet by 2000.

Raising Standards. President Clinton has urged higher standards for students, teachers and schools, including a requirement that students take tough tests to move up in school.

In Global Economy, Standards Must be International. Last year, educators from around the world gave half a million students -- including 40,000 in the United States -- the Third International Math and Science Test, our first clear picture of what a world-class education really means. We learned that our 8th graders are above the international average in science, but below it in math. We need to use these results to improve our schools everywhere.

Chicago-area Schools Rose to the Challenge of International Testing, and Ranked First and Second in The World. Glenbrook and 19 other Chicago- area school districts administered this international test and measured themselves against the world. The 8th graders tied for first place in the world in science, and tied for second in the world in math.

President Clinton Urges School Districts Across the Country to Take International Math and Science Test, To Help Lift Standards. In his remarks in Glenbrook, President Clinton challenged states and school districts to follow the example of what is working in the Chicago area -- to compare their own curricula against international standards of excellence. He has asked Education Secretary Riley to work with states and school districts throughout the country that want to take this international test.

Maryland Speech Standards and Testing portion

...I have long believed that one of the most important steps we can take to improve education for our children is to set high standards of academic excellence for them to meet, and then measure how well students are meeting those standards. [tests will tell us which students and schools need help, how we have to change teaching methods, etc....]

Maryland has been a leader in this approach, and you should be proud of your efforts. The Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) -- for grades 3, 5, and 8 in core academic subjects -- reflects high standards of learning, and makes clear what students are expected to learn.

Maryland is one of the few states in the country that has made an effort to learn what other countries expect of their students as you developed your own standards. You know that in this global economy nations around the world are setting the standard of excellence our students must reach, just as the finest athletes anywhere in the world define the benchmarks of excellence for our Olympic athletes.

Your performance assessments, among the most highly regarded anywhere in the country, measure what really matters for students to learn rather than what is easy to test.

You know that setting standards and testing students doesn't work like magic. That is why you have been working hard to provide Maryland's teachers with the extra professional development they need to be able to teach to these standards, and to upgrade the curriculum as well.

And you know that accountability is important. I commend your efforts to provide report cards for each school district and school, to hold schools accountable for their performance, and to intervene in schools that are failing if they can't be turned around on their own. The students in those schools deserve nothing less than a first-rate education, and we can't let them down.

The Maryland State Board of Education is now embarked on a significant effort to extend the assessment program to high school students as well. The high school assessments proposed by the Maryland State Board of Education -- a series of ten "end-of-course" exams in core academic subjects -- will measure individual student as well as school performance, will hold high school students accountable for their own learning and encourage them to work hard and do their best, and will once again make the high school diploma mean something.

So I commend you for all of these efforts and the others you have taken to improve education in Maryland. [might want to add sentence indicating that charter school legislation is under discussion, and that President hopes that the state will pass a strong charter schools law -- I am still checking the politics and status of this proposal] As a result of your sustained efforts over the past five years, Maryland schools have shown five years of steady, sustained progress, and stand as a model to the nation.

But you must do more, for your students, their parents and the schools. Last week in my State of the Union Address, I proposed that every state -- including Maryland -- adopt national standards and national tests, for fourth grade reading and eighth grade math. Let me tell you why.

We are a highly mobile society, and students must master the basic skills no matter where they live. If a student doesn't learn to read well by 4th grade, they will fall behind in all of their subjects. And students who don't master algebra by 8th grade won't be prepared for college and high skilled jobs.

While every state, including Maryland, has worked to develop its own definition of what students should know and be able to do with respect to reading and math, at present, no state can compare its standards or its student performance with other states or with national or international benchmarks.

More importantly, no parent has the means to determine if her child is doing well enough against widely (nationally) recognized benchmarks. The state or local test their children takes tells them how well their child performs; but there is no way for a parent to tell how good is "good enough." And, unfortunately, for some (many???) states, the (performance) standard for satisfactory performance is still quite low.

Yet we already have widely recognized and utilized national standards and national tests of student performance, for reading and math.

In reading, 40 [check number] states participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress, measuring state performance against a rigorous national standard. The test was designed to reflect what reading teachers and other experts have learned is important for student to be able to do, and to reflect what states generally teach as well.

In math, in 1995 U.S. students participated in the Third International Mathematics and Science a Study, a 41-nation study, including tests given at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade levels in math and science. In this case, the test measures what an international consensus of educators believes students should learn. And the framework for this test reflects very well the widely accepted national standards developed in 1989 by the

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, used by every state including Maryland. So, for mathematics we have a good measure of rigorous international as well as national standards.

And these tests sets very rigorous performance standards. Nationally, some 40% of the 4th grade students do not reach the "basic" level of performance in reading, which most people consider minimally acceptable. This is not an easy test.

In math, on average, U.S. students performed below the international average at the 8th grade level. Only 45% of our students performed at the international average, and only 5% of our students performed in the top 10% of students internationally. We have a long way to go to reach international standards.

These tests help raise our sights higher. Unlike previous generations of tests of basic skills, they don't dumb down our curriculum or our students.

These widely accepted tests do an excellent job of reporting on state and national education progress. However, they are designed only to be administered to a small sample of students nationally or in each state. Only a few students take them at a time, and no student, and no school, can find out how he or she did.

I believe that every parent deserves to know whether his or her child is meeting these high national and international standards in the most basic of subjects, reading and math. Students must know this as well, for this is how they can tell if they are on track or in danger of falling behind. But we can't have an honest assessment of our students or our schools unless this information is available for every student and every school.

My plan, announced in my State of the Union Address last week, will address this need, by 1999. The U.S. Department of Education will fund the development of a 4th grade reading test and an 8th grade math test for individual students, based on the existing NAEP and TIMSS tests. The scores on these new tests will be comparable to the scores on the existing tests, so that students can learn how well they perform compared to rigorous national and international benchmarks.

The development work will take two years. Once completed, the tests will be licensed to interested commercial test publishers and states. States and school districts can then purchase these tests the same way they purchase the rest of the tests they use.

No state or local school district will be required to administer these tests in order to receive federal education funds. They will not be administered or scored by the federal government.

But I urge every single state to use these tests, not to replace but to supplement and enhance their own testing program. They provide information that is simply essential for students, parents, teachers and the public must have if we are to improve our schools. And this information cannot be obtained in any other way.

Announce: National Business Roundtable Education Task Force, led by Norman Augustene of Martin Marietta, and an important supporter of Maryland's education reform efforts, has endorsed this plan for national standards and national tests.

Challenge: The Maryland State Board of Education to incorporate these tests into the state's overall approach. [Chris Cross, the President of the Maryland State Board of Education (and the President of the Council on Basic Education, a nationally recognized group promoting academic standards and also a former Assistant Secretary of Education in the Bush Administration) is prepared to respond positively]

Va. Class Standards Mean No Standing Pat

Teachers Scramble to Change Basic Routines to Meet Tough New Goals

Second of two articles

A By Victoria Benning
Washington Post Staff Writer

Each January, as a break from the winter doldrums, the first-graders in Donna Pozda's class at Leesburg's Catoctin Elementary School have embarked on a lighthearted study of penguins. They always seem to enjoy learning about Macaroni and Chinstrap penguins and other varieties of the creatures.

But this year, Pozda's lesson plan was much more substantive. Her students studied the different places that penguins live: Antarctica, Australia, New Zealand and South America. They examined maps of those lands, then used miniature penguins to mark the spots on a globe they made.

Pozda made the changes because of new state education standards that took effect in the fall. First-graders now are supposed to be able to locate not only their own communities but also Richmond, the state of Virginia, the United States, seven continents and four oceans on a map and a globe.

Teachers, students and parents throughout Northern Virginia are scrambling to adjust to the state's Standards of Learning, a 101-page document that sets subject-by-subject expectations for students in each grade. It is the centerpiece of Republican Gov. George Allen's education program, and state officials this week will propose how teachers and school districts are to be held accountable for their students' performance.

The standards are ambitious. Kindergarten are supposed to be introduced to the concepts of algebra, probability and statistics. Second- and third-graders are to learn principles of economics. In science, students at various grade levels will spend more time in laboratories.

Maryland, meanwhile, has had standards in place for third-, fifth- and eighth-graders for several years to help measure how well schools are doing. State officials are developing high school requirements that will form the basis of tests students will have to pass to graduate. They are scheduled to decide this week what form the testing will take. District school officials are developing an academic plan that would include standards.

Virginia's initiative has drawn praise from many educators and business leaders outside the state who describe it as a national model that meets President Clinton's call for tougher academic standards and testing in public schools. The American Federation of Teachers rated the guidelines "exemplary," and sev-

See STANDARDS, A11, Col. 1

STANDARDS, From A1

eral states are borrowing from Virginia for their own standards.

But although local school officials, teachers and parent groups are applauding the goal of raising academic standards, they say they have problems with the way the Allen administration is pursuing it.

Many complain that the pace of the changes is too rapid. Students in the third, fifth, eighth and 11th grades will undergo a practice round of testing in the spring, and when the tests are given again next year, the results will count as the measure of whether students are meeting the standards. But be-

cause many teachers lack the training or textbooks to teach the new lessons, some students will be tested on material they haven't covered, school administrators say.

Teachers and school officials also maintain that some of the standards for younger students aren't appropriate. Second-graders, for example, are required to learn about ancient Egypt and China at an age when they still are trying to grasp the concept of their own communities and how they fit into the United States, critics say.

In addition, local educators say, the sheer volume of new requirements—coupled with the state's testing schedule—may force teachers to be less innovative in the classroom.

"There is a lot of information to cover," said Kathleen Grove, assistant superintendent for instruction in Arlington. "That means less discretionary time for teachers to introduce pet projects. Instruction will have to be quite focused and paced."

"I think we're all worried about the number of tests and that they will take away time from connecting with kids," said Cathy McMurtrey, a fourth-grade teacher in Prince William County who is trying to teach her students to do historical analysis from diaries, letters and artifacts, another skill specified in the state's regulations. "It could get to the point where all we have time for is tests."

Allen administration officials, who have warned repeatedly that the local "education establishment" is determined to resist the governor's program, reject the criticism that the state is moving too quickly and say school districts have had plenty of time to prepare. Curriculum guides list hundreds of appropriate textbooks and materials, said Michelle Easton, president of the state Board of Education, which issued the new standards.

"Every time you change something, you're going to get the criticism that you're doing things too fast," said Richard T. LaPointe, state superintendent of public instruction.

The old state standards, adopted in 1983 and revised slightly in 1992, were "difficult to implement, unclear, mushy and, most importantly, not rigorous," LaPointe said.

For example, they required high school students to take three years of math to graduate but didn't specify which courses, so students could graduate after taking only basic math, he said. The new standards say that students must master algebra, and algebra will be on the 11th-grade test they'll eventually be required to pass to graduate.

Northern Virginia officials note that many of their districts' standards, in math and other subjects, exceeded the state's. But implementing the state's new rules, they say, still will be a long and arduous process, one that requires rewriting much of the curriculum and training many teachers, especially in the early grades, in subjects they have never taught.

Fairfax County, the Washington area's largest school system, is revising its math, science and social studies courses because of skills that will need to be taught to students at a younger age. "Between the changes in science, the different social studies requirements and the expanded math, there is going to be tremendous stress on our primary-grade teachers who have to prepare kids for the third grade, where they will be tested," said Nancy Sprague, assistant superintendent for instructional services in Fairfax. "It's going to require major staff development."

In Prince William, substitute teachers will work 2,800 more days this school year than the previous year so that regular teachers can be trained in the new standards. The district also must add labs and equipment at many schools because of changes to its math and science curriculums.

In some cases, the main problem is finding the teaching materials to meet the state's objectives, instructors say. Second-grade teachers, for example, say it's hard to find information on economics or ancient Egypt that is aimed at 7-year-olds. In Loudoun County, teachers have had to cull resources from libraries, parents and the World Wide Web.

Third-graders now are supposed to know about ancient Greece and Rome. But Arlington officials have warned parents that their children won't have a clue when they are tested on those subjects in the spring, because there hasn't been time to design the lessons.

Tom Vischi, parent of a third-grader at Arlington's Jamestown Elementary School, worries that it will be a blow to his daughter's confidence to sit down to a test full of unfamiliar things, even though this year's scores won't count. "You know that nightmare we've all had when you go in to take your final exam . . . and you wake up screaming?" Vischi said. "I want to avoid that."

For older students, the program may mean fewer electives as middle and high schools add courses to meet the new requirements.

Arlington officials, for example, have proposed adding geography and a second year of world history in the 10th grade to prepare students for the state's 11th-grade test. That would reduce the number of electives that 10th-graders could take—courses such as music or a second foreign language—from three to two. School officials say their hands are tied and have told parents who don't like the proposal to contact the state Board of Education.

For all the doubts about the new rules and the timetable for implementing them, several local school board members say the rules are a step in the right direction.

"The old standards and our old curriculum were not stringent enough for the students, and they've paid a price for that," said Prince William School Board Chairman Lucy S. Beauchamp (At Large). "We owe it to the kids in this county to have these standards and to make sure that they're followed."

Staff writer Dan Beyers contributed to this report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION 

To read the full text of Virginia's Standards of Learning for English, history, math and science, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.washingtonpost.com>

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