

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS FORUM

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THURSDAY,

JUNE 18, 2009

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WASHINGTON, DC

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The Stakeholders Forum convened at 9:30 a.m. in the Barnard Auditorium at US Department of Education Headquarters, 400 Maryland Avenue, Southwest, Washington, DC, Massie Ritsch, Moderator, presiding.

PRESENT:

MASSIE RITSCH, Moderator

ARNE DUNCAN, Secretary of Education

MARGOT ROGERS, Chief of Staff

JOE CONATY, Senior Officer in the Office of
Elementary and Secondary Education

CARMEL MARTIN, Assistant Secretary for
Planning, Evaluation and Policy
Development

ROBERT SHIREMAN, Deputy Undersecretary

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P R O C E E D I N G S

9:35 A.M.

1
2
3 MR. RITSCH: Good morning,
4 everybody. Please find a seat, grab a pastry,
5 grab some coffee.

6 We're very glad you're here. I've
7 been talking to a few folks that feel -- for
8 some of you, a little bit of a reunion here
9 this morning. So glad to have you back.

10 I'm Massie Ritsch. I'm the Deputy
11 Assistant Secretary for External Affairs and
12 Outreach here at the Department.

13 Welcome to the first of what we
14 hope will be almost monthly meetings, forums
15 for education stakeholders like yourselves.
16 On the way in, I hope you picked up a copy of
17 our very full agenda for this morning, as well
18 as a roster of our senior staff whom you'll
19 meet today.

20 We'll have opportunities throughout
21 the forum for your questions and your
22 comments. Remember to speak into the
23 microphones here at either side of the room as

1 this meeting is being transcribed and recorded
2 and broadcast here at the Department.

3 I also hope that you picked up an
4 evaluation form that you can leave behind and
5 let us know how we're doing with these
6 meetings so we can plan for the future. And
7 also available at the resource table at the
8 back is the Administration's education agenda
9 summarized and President Obama's cornerstone
10 speech on education as well as Secretary
11 Duncan's recent speeches on the importance of
12 data and common standards and what he's doing
13 to support initiatives in those areas.

14 On Monday morning, at the
15 Washington Convention Center, the Secretary
16 will be speaking about the urgency of turning
17 around schools where students most desperately
18 need help and we'll be making that speech
19 available as well once he made it.

20 For the last six weeks, Arne has
21 been traveling the country on his listening
22 and learning tour which we'll talk more about
23 later. He's been meeting with the folks that

1 you represent in many states. And in his
2 meetings with America's students, they
3 invariably have asked him to very critical
4 questions on their minds. First, how will you
5 help me get the education necessary to realize
6 my dreams and to successfully go where I want
7 to go in life? And two, when you and
8 President Obama play basketball, who wins?

9 (Laughter.)

10 This morning we were able to grab
11 him while he's in town to talk with you as he
12 has in recent months on the Recovery Act and
13 the proposed budget for 2010 and other issues.

14 So here he is, ladies and gentlemen,
15 Secretary Arne Duncan.

16 (Applause.)

17 SECRETARY DUNCAN: Thanks so much
18 and I just appreciate all of you taking the
19 time to come here together with us and those
20 evaluations that Massie talked about are
21 really important. The last thing you want to
22 do is waste your time. We want to start to
23 get into a rhythm of this, do it basically

1 every month and let us know what works, what
2 doesn't, what helps us move forward.

3 A couple of quick thoughts, first
4 of all, Margot later is going to introduce a
5 bunch of our team and I just want to say
6 publicly I couldn't be more proud of the team
7 that is coming together. We have an
8 extraordinarily talented career staff that
9 sort of continues to amaze folks out in the
10 field, how quickly we're turning around the
11 stimulus applications. And lots of people say
12 this is now how the federal bureaucracy is
13 supposed to work. You're moving too quick.
14 And that's the kind of things you like to
15 hear. And then we're just trying to build
16 around that team and bring in great folks
17 around the country from many, many different
18 walks of life.

19 And we have folks that are just
20 extraordinarily smart, tough, committed,
21 passionate, many making huge financial
22 personal sacrifices because they're really
23 mission-driven and see the magnitude of this

1 opportunity we have before us.

2 So I want to thank in advance all
3 these folks who have joined the team and it's
4 probably one of the things I'm most proud of
5 so far is being lucky enough to bring in folks
6 of that caliber.

7 I really see the interaction of you
8 of trying to build a real partnership and I
9 want you to hold us accountable and push us
10 and when you see us make a mistake and doing
11 something that doesn't make sense, absolutely
12 challenge us. That's your role.

13 I also see us trying to work
14 together. We're going to likewise push you.
15 I see us working very, very hard to drive this
16 reform agenda. I think we're all here because
17 we know how far we have to go and knowing
18 we're good enough as a country where the
19 status quo is good enough and we can just sort
20 of maintain.

21 And so at every level, every child,
22 K to 12, higher ed., we're trying to get a lot
23 better. We're trying to get a lot better

1 fast. We all hope for eight years. We sort
2 of have to think in blocks of four. You can't
3 bank on eight, so can we fundamentally change
4 things in this next four years and change
5 things in the next four decades. That's
6 really how we're thinking.

7 One small example, it has just been
8 fascinating the past week and we've been
9 pushing for more good charter schools, not
10 more charter schools, but more good schools.
11 You see in a state like Tennessee, because we
12 have some resources on the table, where this
13 thing was absolutely dead, Tennessee -- I
14 don't want to get ahead of myself, is
15 basically in the process of reversing
16 themselves because they have called themselves
17 back in legislative session. It has never
18 before happened in the history of the
19 Tennessee legislature supposedly, to think
20 about taking lots of kids off these waiting
21 lists, lots of poor kids off these waiting
22 lists and giving them a chance to go to some
23 of these schools.

1 It's interesting that the role that
2 we can potentially play using our resources,
3 using the bully pulpit to try and drive
4 change. I think that's what we're all here to
5 do.

6 There is obviously a tremendous
7 amount of activity going on trying to get the
8 Stimulus money very, very fast and again, our
9 career team has done an unbelievable job of
10 that trying to make sure that we're using that
11 money wisely, starting to think through where
12 we go with NCLB reauthorization. I'm learning
13 a tremendous amount through the listening and
14 learning -- I'll give a summary of where we're
15 at, probably a third of the way through that,
16 but everywhere I go I learn something. It's
17 been inner city Detroit, it's been rural
18 Vermont. It's been an Indian reservation in
19 Montana that was absolutely fascinating, so
20 just a real diversity of experiences that have
21 been great.

22 I'm starting to think through where
23 we go on that. Obviously, we have Race to the

1 Top funding coming out. We have the
2 Innovation and What Works funding coming out.

3 So the next couple of months are going to be
4 pretty exciting here. And I just want to work
5 with you to try and get the kind of dramatic
6 fundamental change. All this stuff for me,
7 it's really not about the money -- it's a lot
8 of money. We're thrilled to have it. But
9 this money is going to come and go. Can we
10 leverage these resources to get the kind of
11 fundamental change we need that will last long
12 after the last, when these dollars are spent.

13 And so the more we can partner, the
14 more you can push us, but I'll also push you
15 to really be working with the states, with the
16 districts, to be thinking about how we use
17 this money creatively and wisely and how we
18 don't just invest in the status quo. And yes,
19 we want to save hundreds of thousands of
20 teachers' jobs, but if that's all we do, we
21 miss this sort of historic, historic
22 opportunity.

23 So the more we're communicating,

1 the more we're sharing best practices. I
2 spent Sunday and Monday with about 25 of the
3 nation's Governors, with Jim Hunt in North
4 Carolina, the Hunt Institute. And it was just
5 amazing. It was unbelievably motivating.
6 These Governors, they care, they're
7 passionate, they want to do the right thing,
8 but obviously, they have a million things on
9 their plate. They don't always know what the
10 right thing is and they're hungry for
11 knowledge, they're hungry to learn; many of
12 the state school chiefs there as well. But
13 the more we're sharing what's working, the
14 more pushing out best practices, the more
15 challenging folks if it's happening over here,
16 why can't you think about it, why do we
17 continue to think the way we always did. The
18 more you guys can help us be conduits to
19 really push that message out there, that would
20 be extraordinarily helpful.

21 So again, thanks for your time.
22 Hopefully, this will be a really good day, but
23 give us again your candid feedback, your

1 honest feedback and we want to get better and
2 better at this as we get into a rhythm going
3 forward.

4 Thanks so much. It's now my honor
5 to introduce my Chief of Staff, Margot Rogers.

6 Margot?

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. ROGERS: So I have the
9 privilege of introducing our political team.
10 Before I do that, I want to acknowledge the
11 people that I'm not introducing, so I'm not
12 here to introduce all the leaders in the
13 organization and Arne alluded to the fact that
14 we have a tremendous group of career service
15 folks who have been working their hearts out
16 over the last 22, 23 weeks and for some, the
17 last 20 years. But as we've adopted an
18 ambitious agenda and are moving forward on
19 many, many fronts, we have people who are
20 working extraordinarily hard and we're very,
21 very grateful.

22 I want to call particular attention
23 to two folks who helped put today together.

1 I'm hoping that you know these people: Karen
2 Stratman-Krusemark, sitting over here to my
3 left, to most of your right, and Anya Smith,
4 and we're grateful for the work they did to
5 put together this day.

6 (Applause.)

7 As Arne said, we're committed to do
8 this roughly every month. Keep us posted on
9 what's working and what's not working,
10 particular topics you're interested in hearing
11 about, we will hypothesize from our side what
12 those are, but if there are special ones, let
13 us know, we'll work to put together a program
14 that meets your needs.

15 But I do get the real honor of
16 introducing the political team, the sort of
17 senior leadership of our political team that
18 we're building and as Arne said, we feel lucky
19 every single day to be working with such a
20 talented and special group of folks. So these
21 are alphabetical. We're missing a few people
22 who are traveling. We have pictures of most
23 of them so that you can keep track of who they

1 are. But we'll start with Russlynn Ali. I'm
2 going to ask people to stand.

3 Russlynn is our Assistant Secretary
4 in the Office of Civil Rights. She has held
5 senior positions at the Education Trust,
6 Children's Defense Fund, and has worked at the
7 Broad Foundation. We're thrilled to have
8 Russlynn with us.

9 Next, Jo Anderson who is a Senior
10 Advisor to the Secretary. Jo is the former
11 Executive Director of the Illinois Education
12 Association. He is responsible on our team
13 for lots of issues involving teachers and
14 leaders, and as you know, those are front and
15 center. Thanks, Jo.

16 Glenn Cummings, who I believe is in
17 Jordan today leading a bilateral conversation
18 on community colleges. He's the Deputy
19 Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult
20 Education, the former Speaker of the House for
21 Maine, and also a former employee at Southern
22 Maine Community College.

23 Peter Cunningham. Peter is our

1 Assistant Secretary for Communications and
2 Outreach. He previously served as Arne's
3 Communication Director in Chicago.

4 Greg Darnieder. Greg is a Special
5 Advisor to Arne as well. He is playing point
6 on college access issues and issues around
7 multiple pathways to graduation for all
8 students.

9 John Easton. John is our Director
10 of the Institute for Education Sciences. Many
11 of you know John's work as the Director of the
12 Consortium on Chicago School Research. He
13 also did a stint some time back in Chicago
14 public schools. He has deep assessment and
15 evaluation experience.

16 Gabby Gomez. I know Gabby was
17 coming from another meeting and we don't have
18 a picture of her, so maybe she'll pop in.
19 Many of you probably know Gabby. She's been
20 in D.C. for a while. She's the Assistant
21 Secretary for Legislation and Congressional
22 Affairs. She was previously the lead policy
23 advisor on higher education for the Committee

1 on Education and Labor for George Miller. She
2 also spent some time at AFT and many of you
3 have probably crossed paths with Gabby over
4 the years.

5 Peter Groff. Peter is our Director
6 for the Center on Faith-Based and Community
7 Initiatives. Peter is the former president of
8 the Colorado Senate and has been a legislator
9 in Colorado for some time.

10 David Hoff. David is the Deputy
11 Assistant Secretary for Communications
12 Development in the Office of Communications
13 and Outreach. You probably have read David's
14 work over the years, spent a number of years
15 at EdWeek and has written for many
16 educational-related and other publications on
17 education issues.

18 Lloyd Horwich. Lloyd is the Deputy
19 Assistant Secretary for Legislation and
20 Congressional Affairs. He has both Senate-
21 side and House experience, most recently as
22 the Education Counsel and Policy Advisor to
23 the Health Committee on Education and Labor

1 Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary
2 and Secondary Education.

3 Stacey Jordan. Stacey is our
4 Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, working
5 with state chiefs, superintendents, state and
6 local elected officials. Stacey comes to us
7 directly from the ed sector, but has also
8 spent time at the New York City Public Schools
9 and as the education advisor to the Mayor in
10 Providence, Rhode Island.

11 Carmel Martin. Carmel is up here.
12 Carmel is the Assistant Secretary for
13 Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development,
14 otherwise known as OPEPD. Say that ten times
15 fast. She has extensive Hill background, as
16 you all probably know, most recently as the
17 general counsel and chief education advisor to
18 Senator Ted Kennedy.

19 Melanie Muenzer. Melanie is our
20 White House liaison. The White House liaison
21 is responsible for political appointees in the
22 Department. She's also responsible for
23 filling all of our boards and commissions. So

1 she's probably talked to lots of you over the
2 last 20 weeks. Thanks, Melanie.

3 Sam Myers. Sam is our Director of
4 Scheduling and Advance. He's essentially
5 appointed scheduling for all events and
6 appearances for Arne.

7 Diane Piche. Diane is the Deputy
8 Assistant Secretary for Enforcement in the
9 Office of Civil Rights. She hails most
10 recently from the Citizens Commission on Civil
11 Rights, is a recognized expert on civil rights
12 issues and also issues connected to both title
13 I and ESEA, more broadly.

14 Massie Ritsch, from whom you heard
15 earlier. Massie is our Deputy Assistant
16 Secretary for External Affairs and Outreach.
17 He will focus on external outreach to people
18 like you, various associations, think tanks,
19 and corporations and most recently was at the
20 Center for Responsive Government.

21 Steve Robinson. Steve Robinson is
22 a Special Advisor to the Secretary focused on
23 STEM issues. Steve most recently was

1 President Obama's Education Advisor when he
2 was in the Senate.

3 Charlie Rose. Charlie is our
4 general counsel, previously advised Illinois'
5 leading education and business organizations
6 on matters of education reform and
7 legislation. Has worked with many school
8 districts in Illinois. He brings vast
9 experience on that front.

10 Juan Sepulveda. Juan is the
11 Director of the White House Initiative on
12 Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.

13 Most recently came from the Common Enterprise
14 which he founded in 1995. It's an
15 organization that's committed to kind of
16 fundamental community development and building
17 partnerships to ensure successful communities,
18 including lots of education work. Thanks,
19 Juan.

20 Jim Shelton. Jim is the Assistant
21 Deputy Secretary for the Office of Innovation
22 and Improvement. As such, he comes to us from
23 the Gates Foundation. As such, he serves as

1 our lead for ARRA, What Works in Innovation
2 Fund and in addition, as you probably know his
3 shop has a wide-ranging set of programs around
4 charter schools and many others. Thanks, Jim.

5 Bob Shireman who is up on stage is
6 the Deputy Undersecretary. Bob will be
7 working on higher education issues, has a long
8 history including being in Washington during
9 the Clinton Administration and back in
10 California working on post-secondary education
11 issues, financial aid and access.

12 Mike Smith who needs no
13 introduction to most of you, I think. Mike is
14 a Senior Counselor to the Secretary running
15 point on a range of policy matters, largely K-
16 12 and is also serving as a connecting point
17 for our Office of International Programs.

18 Joanne Weiss. Joanne is the
19 Director of the Race to the Top. She most
20 recently served as the partner and COO for the
21 New Schools Venture Fund based on California.

22 Ann Whalen. Wave your hand, Ann.
23 Ann is a Special Assistant to the Secretary

1 focused mostly of late on a range of K-12
2 policy issues including the ARRA metrics and
3 turnaround strategies.

4 John White. Behind the column for
5 me. John is the press secretary. Most
6 recently served as the Chief Communications
7 Officer for the Prince George's County Public
8 Schools.

9 Judy Wurtzel is back for another
10 stint at the Department, this time as Deputy
11 Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation,
12 and Policy Development. She's working on a
13 range of ARRA-related issues including
14 technical assistance and is also working on
15 many K-12 policy issues.

16 Matt Yale, who is not here today.
17 I actually don't think we have a picture of
18 him either. Matt is the Deputy Chief of
19 Staff. He was previously with Chicago's Ariel
20 Capital Management. Was very instrumental in
21 the transition process of Arne's moving from
22 Chicago to here and runs point on many, many
23 things I'm sure many of you have seen Matt out

1 and about in Washington.

2 We have four people we wanted to
3 flag who are on their way to the Department,
4 one of whom is here in a different capacity.
5 Kevin Jennings is our Assistant Deputy
6 Secretary for Safe and Drug-free Schools. He
7 is the founder and former Executive Director
8 of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education
9 Network.

10 Martha Kanter, our nominee for
11 Under Secretary is the current Chancellor of
12 the Foothill De-Anza Community College
13 District which is one of the largest community
14 college districts in the country, obviously in
15 California.

16 Thelma Melendez, our nominee for
17 Assistant Secretary for Elementary and
18 Secondary Education, she's the current
19 Superintendent of the Pomona Unified School
20 District.

21 And Tony Miller, who is in the
22 back, is an advisor, serving as an advisor to
23 the Secretary. He is our Deputy Secretary

1 nominee and he has a great deal of experience
2 as a manager and a strategist for many
3 companies around the world and comes with
4 having done much work with the L.A. Unified
5 School District as well.

6 So that's the team. Thanks,
7 everybody.

8 (Applause.)

9 Yes, so we have selected somebody
10 who is working his way through the vetting
11 process right now.

12 So if there's an office that a name
13 doesn't show up here, a senior-level person,
14 it either means, one, we're working through
15 the vetting process, and I assure you there
16 are a number of people who are in that stage
17 right now, or it means that we haven't yet
18 filled the position.

19 So at this point I want to
20 introduce somebody who I suspect needs no
21 introduction, Joe Conaty, who is our Senior
22 Officer in the Office of Elementary and
23 Secondary Education. Joe knows more about

1 things at the Department than probably most
2 people in the room combined and I mean that
3 with all respect to Joe and no disrespect to
4 anyone else.

5 Joe, thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. CONATY: Good morning,
8 everyone. Before I start, I wanted to say a
9 few words to create a conceptual framework
10 that the Administration has been working under
11 because in some settings like this where you
12 get updated on a lot of things, it's quite
13 easy to lose the coherence that underlies all
14 of the separate initiatives.

15 And the Secretary in our meetings
16 with us has been very clear. What we're
17 trying to do is to use this unique opportunity
18 to improve education for children,
19 particularly those who haven't had a fair
20 shake, who come from challenging
21 circumstances, challenging economic
22 conditions, difficult community situations,
23 anything that in some ways can hold a child

1 back.

2 What the Secretary has said is we
3 have to use this unique historic opportunity
4 to change the lot of all children, but
5 particularly for these children in those
6 circumstances.

7 And we've been focusing on
8 essentially four strategies that really are
9 directed toward that common goal of improving
10 achievement. The strategies were articulated
11 in an April 1st or March 31st letter from the
12 Secretary. But basically, it's easy to
13 remember them. If you think about what goes
14 on in the classroom and in the school, the
15 basic content of instruction, content
16 standards, performance standards, opportunity
17 to learn standards, diagnostic assessments,
18 formative assessments, outcome assessments,
19 all of the standards and assessments really
20 are designed to improve the quality of
21 instruction.

22 What's next? The next is you need
23 an effective teacher. You need a teacher who

1 knows the subject matter, knows good pedagogy.

2 Importantly, to reach the first goal, those
3 quality teachers, effective teachers, have to
4 be equitably distributed across districts and
5 schools. So you've got the content, you've
6 got the teacher. Then you've got the context.

7 The Secretary has been very clear
8 that what we have to do is focus our efforts
9 on turning around struggling schools, those
10 schools that for the better part of our
11 lifetimes haven't shown real gain, haven't
12 shown real improvement, are in fact, located
13 sometimes in rural areas, sometimes in inner
14 cities, sometimes in suburbs, they're all
15 over, that haven't done a good job of
16 educating children, and really create a
17 national focus on turning around those
18 schools.

19 How do we know how we're doing?
20 That's the fourth priority. Transparency
21 around data, transparency about keeping high-
22 quality records that link across the life
23 course of the child so that we really know how

1 kids are doing as they progress through the
2 education system.

3 So what I'm going to talk about are
4 particular programs, but all of them we've
5 tried to leverage, guided by two things,
6 supporting what works from research and also
7 fostering and encouraging innovative
8 practices, things that we know work, but also
9 have shown promise of producing great gains
10 for these children.

11 So let me start with the
12 Stabilization Fund. Right now, 41 of the
13 states have applied for the Stabilization
14 Fund. Those 41 states, not all of them have
15 been announced yet, but we expect to receive
16 the remaining applications by the July 1st
17 deadline. To characterize those very broadly,
18 what you see is about a 4 to 1 ratio of the
19 dollars. About \$4 in elementary and secondary
20 education for every \$1 in higher education.
21 That basically echoes what you see in state
22 budgets around the country.

23 One of the things we've heard quite

1 consistently in our phone conversations with
2 states are the challenging circumstances.
3 State budgets tend to be lagging indicator of
4 economic hardship, so we're getting a lot of
5 calls now about FY 10, how do they revise
6 their applications, and so on. All of the
7 applications that we've funded and have been
8 announced are up on our web page and I would
9 encourage you to look at them.

10 There's also within that
11 Stabilization Fund a category called
12 Government Services. If there are general
13 trends in that category, they're spending
14 quite a bit on public safety. They're also
15 spending quite a bit on education and I would
16 guess about a quarter of it is undetermined.
17 They're going to decide what to do with it as
18 they see their out-year needs.

19 I don't suspect we'll have any
20 trouble with the remaining applications. The
21 process has gone quite smoothly.

22 Now let me turn to the second phase
23 of the stabilization program. As you know, we

1 announced that we were going to develop
2 metrics and have states apply for the second
3 phase of the money, approximately a third,
4 based on assurances about the metrics. The
5 basic outline of that strategy are the four
6 things I articulated earlier. We have been
7 working quite diligently to develop a notice
8 for public comment around the details of these
9 metrics. If I have one piece of advice, if I
10 can leave you with one message this morning,
11 stay in touch with our web page. There's
12 going to be an awful lot in the next month.
13 If you don't have the time, have somebody on
14 your staff -- I would not let two days go by
15 without checking it.

16 The amount that's in the queue, and
17 that's geared to come out over the next few
18 weeks is quite startling. But I would say to
19 you is in terms of the second phase, as part
20 of the Secretary and the Administration's
21 commitment to transparency, we are going to
22 whenever possible to take public comment, get
23 public input, so that these investments are

1 guided with public involvement and your
2 involvement. That's why I encourage you to
3 stay in touch with the web page. It's not
4 just so that you are informed, it's so that
5 you participate in a meaningful way in these
6 activities.

7 Let me just run through some of the
8 things that are coming through. One doesn't
9 have anything to do with the money, but it is
10 the waiver guidance on Title I. That's an
11 important thing we've been asked about, what
12 kind of waivers the Department would allow,
13 given this sort of unprecedented run up in the
14 Title I IDEA funding.

15 The next things -- and these are in
16 no particular order -- are the school
17 improvement grants. As you know, we've got a
18 substantial increase, \$3 billion, and we've
19 been working to try and target those monies
20 because of the dramatic increase in those
21 fundings. The ordinary way of expanding those
22 fundings won't work to the advantage of the
23 education community, so we've tried to develop

1 some guidelines that will target those monies
2 and have it be focused on struggling schools,
3 but still allow sufficient local flexibility
4 to meet local needs. And that notice for
5 public comment will be out shortly.

6 Also, the second phase of the
7 stabilization, those metrics will be out
8 shortly. Now I've got to check the list.

9 The next big thing that's going to
10 happen in terms of the money is, of course,
11 all of the title programs get their July 1
12 allocations. Title I, IDEA, after school
13 programs, Title II, all of those monies are
14 scheduled to go out on time and we will meet
15 the ordinary July 1 deadline.

16 Right now, open on the street are
17 the Teacher Quality Partnership competition
18 that Jim Shelton and his colleagues are
19 running from that office.

20 The State Longitudinal Data System
21 competition will be out shortly. What else?

22 Why don't I stop. I'm sure you
23 have questions. Why don't we have some

1 questions and then we'll stop and we'll let
2 others speak about the coming.

3 Hi, Jim.

4 PARTICIPANT: Hi, Joe. And
5 congratulations to all of you for holding this
6 stakeholders' meeting. It's really important.

7 On the School Improvement Fund that
8 you're getting ready to send guidance out for,
9 are there provisions for evaluating or trying
10 to gather more data in a systematic way about
11 how those funds will be used and how we might
12 learn from the use because it's such a
13 significant piece in turning around low-
14 performing schools.

15 MR. CONATY: I think in all -- you
16 have to distinguish between the proposed
17 priorities and the actual applications.
18 Frequently, in the proposed priorities won't
19 mention those things, but there will actually
20 be a requirement in the application. But the
21 answer is yes.

22 I think all of the people, if you
23 haven't guessed, I'm not one of the

1 political. I'm one of the career and it's
2 been a pleasure to work with this group. And
3 really what they've been very clear about is
4 learning lessons and sharing and disseminating
5 those lessons. Judy and her colleagues put
6 out an early document about the uses of the
7 title funds and how they could be leverage for
8 change. We'll continue to work on such
9 documents, but yes, we're going to try and
10 capture as many lessons as we can.

11 Inherent in all of this is an
12 attempt to learn and to share it and to use
13 technology. Jim Shelton has been very clear
14 about his desire to spread what works, what's
15 promising through electronic means.

16 The other competition I just want
17 to briefly mention is the teacher incentive
18 grant competition. We've been working with
19 Carmel, with Jo Anderson, with others in the
20 Department. That competition, we've run it
21 twice, but because we have to now take public
22 comment to run it again, we have again tried
23 to structure it in such a way to foster

1 innovation, to learn from those innovations
2 and not to just say we know how to do
3 performance pay well, but to fund a variety of
4 different methodologies in performance pay so
5 we can compare and contrast which of them
6 appear to be most effective.

7 I think my time may be up, but I'd
8 be happy to take another question. Please.

9 PARTICIPANT: Good morning, and
10 thank you again for meeting and convening.

11 I had a question on points. I
12 believe it was four that you said if they
13 committed a transparency and because that
14 doesn't necessarily equal accountability, can
15 you speak to how the funds specifically for
16 our schools and even improvements, how those
17 funds are going to be not just transparent and
18 made known, but how you're going to hold
19 schools and teachers accountable for the
20 output.

21 MR. CONATY: Let me repeat the
22 questions if you didn't hear it. Basically,
23 transparency alone is not sufficient. In

1 addition to transparency you need some
2 mechanisms in place that help people realize
3 that they're going to be held accountable for
4 the results of these investments.

5 For the school improvement money,
6 we do have reporting requirements. We will
7 have monitoring teams. It will be a district
8 and state responsibility and for all of the
9 Recovery Act funds, as you know, there are
10 special and unique reporting requirements that
11 have to be shared and publicly disseminated on
12 recovery.gov.

13 I guess that's the other thing to
14 mention, will be coming out shortly. OMB is
15 developing the reporting guidelines. For
16 those who track this closely, they went
17 through a public comment period. They
18 received public comment. They're in the
19 process of revising those reporting
20 requirements. They've shared them with us.
21 We've given feedback, by us, I mean all of the
22 federal agencies, so I suspect that we'll see
23 something from them within a month or so about

1 the reporting requirements. There will be
2 some sub, at least I believe, they will come
3 out in a such a way that there will be some
4 sub-grantee reporting requirements. It won't
5 be just at the level of the initial grant
6 recipient.

7 Anything else?

8 Thank you all again, I encourage
9 you to stay in touch with the web page. All
10 of this will be posted as soon as we can, as
11 soon as we make the next few Stabilization
12 awards, we'll put both the original and final
13 applications up on the web so that people can
14 analyze and review them.

15 Thank you all.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. RITSCH: Thank you, Joe. Joe
18 really embodies what Arne was talking about
19 earlier, the huge depth, the wealth of
20 knowledge, the expertise of the career staff
21 here that we're so grateful for.

22 So let's move on to talk about the
23 listening tour and ESEA reauthorization. Arne

1 is all about extending learning into the
2 summertime, so we are not letting him rest at
3 all this summer. He is on the road weekly as
4 part of the listening and learning tour which
5 kicked off six weeks ago. The stops so far
6 have been extraordinarily informative and
7 enlightening and as he said very different in
8 their own way.

9 Just to take you through them and
10 summarize, we kicked things off in West
11 Virginia in early May. Arne visited a
12 community college, an elementary school. He
13 also ate lunch in a middle school cafeteria.
14 I can tell you that the less than appetizing
15 cheese steak and onion rings that he ate,
16 alongside those students reinforced his
17 conviction that we must feed healthier food to
18 our kids at school and encourage those healthy
19 habits at home. So there will be more that
20 we're doing on that.

21 Then on to Detroit, this was just
22 days after a special election there for the
23 new mayor and we listed to a city that was,

1 that showed us, that told us they were ready
2 to transform their schools from a national
3 disgrace into a national model.

4 And then we went to a very
5 different place, to rural Vermont, but in a
6 conversation with teachers that Arne had at a
7 coffeehouse, we heard very similar concerns
8 about the need to attract and support good
9 teachers, especially in areas where they're
10 not in abundance. We also visited a school
11 where the kids eat food grown by local farmers
12 and I can tell you that Arne actually cleaned
13 his plate that day.

14 He has been to Montana where he
15 visited the northern Cheyenne reservation and
16 met with education and school officials,
17 students, and parents in a style similar to
18 the traditional tribal talking circle.
19 Yesterday, the Department announced a number
20 of grants, millions of dollars to help
21 American Indian children in a number of states
22 succeed in schools and to recruit American
23 Indian teachers and administrators.

1 Most recently, the tour has been to
2 Newark, New Jersey. Arne visited a charter
3 school there that has set the bar high for its
4 students by instituting a challenging
5 curriculum, offering a longer school day, and
6 extended school year, equipping the classrooms
7 with highly-qualified staff and using
8 innovative practices. As a result, students
9 there have made some tremendous academic
10 strides. You, of course, heard him talking a
11 lot, highlighting charter schools recently.

12 He'll be speaking Monday to the
13 National Conference, and about the
14 contribution that he believes they're making
15 in terms of innovative approaches to teaching
16 and to learning. He's talked about the caps
17 that some states put on charters and how doing
18 so may impede those states' applications in
19 the upcoming Race to the Top competition.

20 Speaking of Race to the Top, we
21 plan to talk more about that at the July forum
22 which I hope you'll attend.

23 On the Listening and Learning Tour

1 stops currently be planned will take Arne to
2 California, Indiana, Florida, Tennessee, and
3 Alaska, among other places. The schedule is
4 really being set as we go. I'm getting lots
5 of questions of can we get the calendar. I
6 wish I had one. We are really putting it
7 together sort of organically as opportunities
8 arise and we're trying to get to as many
9 places as possible, both with him and with
10 other folks here at the Department. Some of
11 the senior staff you met today will be
12 traveling to other states and cities and towns
13 to extend the listening in those areas.

14 Many of you asked how your
15 association's membership can be involved. I
16 hope you're hearing from members that they are
17 involved. Everywhere we go at each stop we're
18 meeting with teachers, school principals,
19 other administrators, school board members.
20 We talk with parents and students, elected
21 officials, business and community leaders.
22 The conversations have really been great. And
23 by design, they're mostly intimate

1 conversations. These are not usually town
2 halls. They're certainly not simply photo
3 ops. These are events where Arne can really
4 listen and engage. And you can tell he's
5 already listening. The speech he mentioned
6 Sunday, his visit to the National Governor's
7 Education Symposium, he quoted from comments
8 that we've gone through our on-line listening
9 tour which you can see at ed.gov.

10 In planning the tour around the
11 country, we have come to a number of your
12 organizations along the way to help us plug in
13 with your members in these cities and towns
14 and we thank you very much for that help and
15 hope we can continue to call on you as a
16 resource in this way.

17 So now to answer a Frequently Asked
18 Question among this crowd, when will you get
19 your chance to listened to here within the
20 beltway? We'd like to think you have a lot of
21 opportunities already just by being close,
22 here today being among them. Arne's met with
23 dozens of stakeholder groups in the last few

1 months. Staff have held many, many more
2 meetings and those meetings of course will
3 continue. He's spoken and staff have spoken,
4 are scheduled to speak at conferences and we
5 welcome those invitations, so feel free to
6 send them in through my office.

7 We're also planning a special
8 listening event just for you and we're
9 currently thinking it will be in September,
10 mindful that a lot of you will be on vacation
11 in August. We will get you back refreshed
12 when school starts up again and we'll have
13 more details on that. But rest assured, you
14 will have that opportunity, among many others.

15 One major reason that Arne is out
16 on the road is because we want to hear from
17 those on the ground about what works and what
18 doesn't, about the Elementary and Secondary
19 Education Act. We're among friends, so I will
20 refer to it as No Child Left Behind also.

21 So this morning, Carmel Martin, our
22 Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation,
23 Policy and Development, OPEPD, will now give

1 you an overview of our hopes for the
2 reauthorization process and how you can
3 provide some feedback on that.

4 Carmel?

5 MS. MARTIN: Thank you, everyone.
6 Thank you, Massie.

7 I'm going to shorten the name of
8 that organization that I'm in charge of any
9 day now.

10 So as Massie said, we are in a
11 listening mode right now with respect to the
12 reauthorization. It is our hope that we will
13 complete reauthorization in this Congress.
14 Many of you have probably heard me say that
15 before in other hats, but I really mean it
16 this time.

17 (Laughter.)

18 And we will be working very
19 closely, folks working on policy development
20 are going to be working very closely with
21 Massie and the other folks in our
22 Communications Division to make sure that we
23 take the input that Arne's been getting on his

1 listening tour and that informs the policy
2 development process. As Massie said, we'll
3 have a listening tour event here in D.C. that
4 we hope you'll all be able to participate in,
5 but that won't be your only opportunity for
6 providing input.

7 We are going to form working groups
8 within the Department on key issue areas.
9 We're really going to try to do that in a way
10 that is not -- doesn't create silos around
11 particular programs and in a way that allows
12 us to bring together the vast amount of
13 expertise in this Agency around various
14 issues, so ensuring that the Office of Civil
15 Rights plays a role in the policy development
16 process.

17 Obviously, the Office of Elementary
18 and Secondary Education will be key to the
19 reauthorization process, but other offices as
20 well, OSERS, and really trying to bring
21 together rich groups of folks to give our
22 internal process in depth, but we'll also be
23 reaching out to you to get your ideas in terms

1 of reauthorization.

2 I think Arne is committed to -- he
3 often says that he feels there's been some
4 positive impacts of No Child Left Behind, but
5 he feels like the goals were too loose and the
6 definition of how to get there was too tight,
7 so we're really going to be taking that
8 concept seriously in seeing how we can help
9 states develop really high goals, but provide
10 more flexibility in terms of how to get there.
11 We're looking to raise the bar and close the
12 gap at the same time so that's sort of the
13 over-arching theme for our work.

14 In terms of the issues that we'll
15 be focusing on, they're probably apparent to
16 you based on Joe's presentation with respect
17 to the Recovery Act implementation, those same
18 areas will be critical to our work on the
19 reauthorization. We're really seeing the work
20 around the metrics for Stabilization
21 translating into focus -- the Race to the Top
22 funding and then hoping to carry through that
23 work into the reauthorization.

1 So once the Recovery Act money is
2 spent, there's still a continuing focus on
3 those key reform areas and supports for states
4 to carry them forward. So we'll focus like in
5 the Recovery Act context on issues that Joe
6 mentioned including getting international
7 benchmarks, career and college ready standards
8 in all of our schools, ensuring transparency
9 of information so teachers get that
10 information to improve and create environments
11 of continuous improvement, but also parents
12 get that information so they can hold school
13 systems accountable for what's happening with
14 their students.

15 We'll also focus on rewarding
16 excellence in teaching and looking to really
17 re-envision the teaching profession so that it
18 is truly the profession that it's meant to be,
19 helping to provide supports for teachers,
20 again, to continuously improve their practice
21 and then also carrying through the focus on
22 school turnaround in the context of taking a
23 fresh look at the accountability system in

1 ESEA and looking at how we can carry through
2 some of the principles around school
3 turnaround that will be supported in both Race
4 to the Top and our Stabilization metrics, into
5 that context, and really trying to look fresh
6 at the accountability proposals, the state-of-
7 the-art, state of technology has changed since
8 2001 and we really want to be able to say
9 well, given the state of play right now,
10 what's the best way to ensure accountability
11 for all kids, but in a way that's most
12 productive for improving schools.

13 Another key theme that we'll carry
14 throughout our work on ESEA will be ensuring
15 that there's high quality assessments,
16 particularly for English language learners and
17 students with disabilities, and the focus on
18 innovation, Jim's work on What Works
19 Innovation Fund. We're also going to be
20 looking to translate that into the Elementary
21 and Secondary Education Act throughout the
22 programs funded in that law; and then looking
23 at how we can better support parent and

1 community engagement.

2 And finally, I'd say we will be
3 looking to see how we can have a stronger
4 focus on high school graduation, so that we
5 can align the Elementary and Secondary
6 Education Act with the President's over-
7 arching goal for us as a Department to ensure
8 that we become first in the world in terms of
9 college completion and obviously a key
10 component to that will be ensuring that kids
11 are graduating from high school college ready,
12 so that will be a big focus as well.

13 So those are just some of the
14 highlights. We really haven't delved into
15 these issues deeply because we really are in a
16 listening mode and want to hear from people
17 out at the local level about what they think
18 our focus should be and what things they think
19 are working and not working. But we will be
20 engaging with you all as we start to move
21 forward in terms of the policy development
22 around the bill and looking forward to your
23 help.

1 I think with that I'll pause for
2 some questions before I move on to the budget.

3 MR. GRANT: My name is Robert
4 Grant. I'm from Washington, D.C. Hopefully,
5 actively involved in education and my good
6 friend and neighbor in my community found out
7 today. It seems that the listening tour
8 that's been held in West Virginia, Michigan,
9 Vermont, some of the other places was designed
10 to hear from local people, teachers, students,
11 local education groups about education at
12 their level.

13 From what I'm hearing, the plan in
14 the press release, there was one plan for
15 Washington, D.C. Now it appears it's being
16 changed to include national organizations that
17 are in Washington to give a perspective on
18 education at a broader level, rather than to
19 hear from local individuals and organizations
20 dealing with District of Columbia public
21 school education. And I think from a local
22 perspective I find that to be a difference in
23 attention.

1 I think that it would be helpful to
2 the -- because of the unique relationship
3 between the Department of Education and the
4 District of Columbia and DCPS, it would be
5 valuable for the Secretary to have a listening
6 tour with District of Columbia teachers,
7 parents, and local education groups such as
8 the various Ward Education Councils to give a
9 comment on District education, a perspective
10 other than Chancellor Rhee and Mayor Fenty.

11 MR. RITSCH: Thank you. And Mr.
12 Grant, we'll be continuing our own listening
13 tour in the Bloomingdale and LeDroit
14 neighborhood regularly.

15 But yes, as we talked about, for
16 one thing because of the proximity the
17 Secretary is out quite a bit in D.C. schools,
18 but we can certainly have more conversations
19 and we'll think about how we can do that
20 because as you point out there is a unique
21 situation. I said all the stops we're making
22 are different in their own way and I think a
23 good conversation could be had here around

1 particular local issues.

2 Next question.

3 MS. SMITH-LEE: Hi, I'm Stephanie
4 Smith-Lee with the National Down Syndrome
5 Society and I'd like to thank you for this
6 opportunity for the update and to meet all of
7 you today. It's very helpful.

8 I wanted to share with you
9 something that we've been hearing from our
10 parents of children with Down Syndrome from
11 around the country. We've been hearing from
12 many of them that they are very concerned
13 about some of the comments that are being
14 publicized in the paper that have been made in
15 these listening tours about the education of
16 students with cognitive disabilities and
17 significant cognitive disabilities and
18 criticisms of the testing of these children.
19 And they're asking us how they can share their
20 very positive views about the importance of
21 accountability for students with disabilities
22 and having high standards and appropriate
23 assessments for children who are in the one

1 percent. And they don't want to have that
2 weakened. They want to be able to have good
3 assessments and your comments about improving
4 those assessments is very much appreciated.

5 So hold the line on that. Thank
6 you very much.

7 MS. MARTIN: Thank you, yes. That
8 will be something that we'll be prioritizing
9 as we look at the issues of assessments and
10 accountability. We understand the
11 complexities there and we want to make sure
12 that those groups are not discounted in any
13 way, any changes in the accountability system.

14 Anybody else?

15 Well, I've also been tasked to talk
16 to your about our budget for FY 2010. I think
17 we've already held a session that many of you
18 probably attended, so I won't go too far into
19 the weeds with that, just briefly go over the
20 highlights and then see if you have any
21 questions about that.

22 Our budget proposal, I think, also
23 follows through on the themes that Joe talked

1 about when he was talking about the Recovery
2 Act and the themes I talked about in terms of
3 reauthorization. Given the tremendous
4 investment that we've received through the
5 Recovery Act, \$100 billion, about twice our
6 discretionary budget, our 2010 budget proposal
7 was relatively flat because the funding from
8 the Recovery Act, we believe a large portion
9 of that will be spent in the FY 2010 school
10 year. But we did include key increases in
11 investments around some of our priority areas.

12 The first, I would say is in the
13 area of ensuring that we've got the building
14 blocks for success for students to be
15 successful in college, successful in
16 Elementary and Secondary Education Act and you
17 see that in our call for major new investments
18 in early learning.

19 We've got \$500 million for school,
20 Title I school districts to expand early
21 learning opportunities for their students, and
22 \$300 million for an Early Learning Challenge
23 Fund which is designed to be a competitive

1 program, goes to states so that they could
2 build really state-of-the-art, first class,
3 early learning systems and bring together the
4 early childhood programs across settings, so
5 Head Start, child care, as well as school-
6 based programs around a common set of
7 standards, both for the programs themselves,
8 for the educators in those programs, and in
9 terms of what kinds of outcome measures we
10 want to be using to ensure that students are
11 arriving at school ready to be successful.

12 We also have included in a new
13 program for elementary grades in literacy.
14 The budget has substantial increases for the
15 Early Reading First Program and the Striving
16 Readers Program so we can also tackle literacy
17 with respect to the early childhood arena and
18 adolescent literacy, but the budget, as you
19 know, did not contain funding last year for an
20 elementary school literacy program. So we are
21 re-establishing that. Again, seeing that as
22 really a foundational issue for students to be
23 successful.

1 We also have substantial increased
2 investment in teachers, again, looking to
3 reward excellence in teaching. We are more
4 than doubling the Teacher Incentive Fund and
5 asking Congress to increase funding for that
6 program to \$500 million.

7 And then continuing our efforts
8 around school turnaround and dropout
9 prevention. We've asked for a substantial
10 increase in the School Improvement Fund, \$1.5
11 billion. Forty percent of that funding would
12 be targeted on secondary schools that are
13 either dropout factories or feeder schools for
14 dropout factories and there we're really
15 looking to take on the issue of school
16 turnaround, continuing on the work that will
17 be done with the \$3 billion for that purpose
18 in the Recovery Act funding.

19 And then finally, we have a strong
20 focus in our budget proposal around college
21 access and completion. I think Bob will talk
22 in more detail about that, but we have
23 unprecedented resources for student aid, need-

1 based student aid, as well as expansion of
2 low-cost student loans through our Perkins
3 proposal and then a focus on college
4 completion through the College Access and
5 Completion Fund that we've called for in our
6 budget.

7 We're working very closely with the
8 leadership in the House and the Senate to try
9 to move forward on these budget initiatives
10 with the authorizing committee on our college
11 proposals, both authorizing committees, and
12 then also working closely with the
13 Appropriations Committee on the discretionary
14 side. Arne testified last week or the week
15 before, before both Subcommittees. We
16 followed up with a series of meetings with our
17 staff and we're hopeful that as they move
18 forward with their process over the summer,
19 that our initiatives will be included in their
20 bills because we do feel like these are the
21 critical areas for continued investment and
22 really what we need to continue on the path
23 towards raising the bar and closing the gap.

1 So with that I'll stop and see if
2 you have any questions about the budget.

3 If not, I will turn it over to my
4 colleague.

5 MS. VONGRASSAMY: Hi, this -- my
6 name is Soumary Vongrassamy with Southeast
7 Asia Resource Action Center. You touched upon
8 dropout prevention. If you can speak a little
9 bit about dropout recovery. There's about 1.2
10 million students that drop out already, so if
11 you could speak a little bit about that with
12 the reauthorization as well as the budget.

13 MS. MARTIN: Yes. So we are
14 looking -- the school improvement money since
15 it is directed at turning around low-
16 performing schools is more focused on dropout
17 prevention. But we have also included in our
18 budget proposal a \$50 million fund for high
19 school graduation initiatives and in that
20 context really looking at both dropout
21 prevention and dropout recovery.

22 We've also been working closely
23 with our colleagues at the Department of Labor

1 in looking at the reauthorization of the
2 Workforce Investment Act and the youth funding
3 stream in that bill which has a strong focus
4 on dropout recovery so that is a side of the
5 issue that we'll be pursuing as well.

6 MR. LIPPINCOTT: I am Robert
7 Lippincott with PBS. In the FY 10 budget one
8 of the significant changes in reduction in
9 particular for support for Ready to Teach or
10 online teacher professional development which
11 our experience has been that it's one of the
12 key leverage points and really something that
13 it's not only innovative, it actually does
14 work.

15 I was wondering if there's a
16 provision of some kind which would take that
17 place, take the place of that fund?

18 MS. MARTIN: There is a provision
19 in our proposal for the fund for the
20 improvement of education which contemplates,
21 sets aside funding for competitive process to
22 do the type of work that was being done with
23 respect to ready to teach. It doesn't

1 specifically designated the money for PBS, but
2 it does contemplate a competition around that
3 initiative.

4 So I'll turn it over to my
5 colleague, Bob.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. SHIREMAN: Good morning. Of
8 course, you all have heard the big goal in
9 higher education is to return our nation to
10 number one in the world in terms of the
11 proportion of adults with degrees beyond,
12 degree certificates, other credentials beyond
13 high school. The President laid this goal out
14 in his speech before the joint session of
15 Congress.

16 And it's important to remember that
17 while that is a higher education goal in a
18 sense, that much if not all of what we are
19 proposing around pre-K and K-12 education is
20 about preparing for college and career and
21 helping to reach that goal. In fact, every
22 elementary and middle school and high school
23 should be a college preparation program of

1 sorts. So while I'll talk about our higher
2 education investments, preparation for college
3 is key to achieving that bold goal that the
4 President has set for the nation.

5 In addition to preparation, we need
6 to make sure that families have access to
7 college, they are able to enter and in many
8 cases re-enter. We will not reach that goal
9 if we simply do a better job getting people
10 graduating from high school, going to college,
11 and completing college. We need people who
12 are out there in the workforce now or possibly
13 unemployed and wanting to be more in the
14 workforce, to go back to school, complete a
15 degree that they may be started on at some
16 point or maybe go to college for the first
17 time in their 30s, 40s, or maybe even their
18 50s and beyond.

19 And so access to college is
20 critical. Around that, we have committed
21 substantial resources in the recovery
22 legislation and in the FY 10 budget around
23 expansion of the higher education tax credits

1 and which of course is not a Department of
2 Education program, but also at the Department
3 of Education really the big, the major goal
4 here is to secure, to make sure that grants
5 and loans are reliably available, not just
6 next year, but into the future. We can tell a
7 young person in middle school that these
8 programs are there, will be there, and will be
9 funded at levels that you will be able to pay
10 for college.

11 We've proposed taking the stimulus
12 level of the Pell grants at \$5,550 and
13 guaranteeing an increase each year of the
14 Consumer Price Index plus one percent. We
15 have proposed making all student loans
16 directly. You may have seen the news
17 yesterday about the servicing contractors that
18 will be servicing the loans that we are
19 purchasing as part of the current efforts to
20 keep the guarantee program running, but that
21 program is not reliable.

22 What happens in a credit market,
23 threatens every day, creates questions every

1 day about whether loans are going to be made
2 tomorrow in the guaranteed student loan
3 program. We need to make sure that those
4 loans are reliably available, making them
5 directly as the way to accomplish that and
6 also saves billions of dollars that can be
7 plowed back into the Pell Grant Program and
8 other investments.

9 We are also mindful that we have to
10 improve the rates at which we get folks
11 completing their degrees once they enter
12 higher education and job training programs and
13 there we need a lot of innovation and
14 learning. We need to try new and different
15 things and also test the question of whether
16 some of the things we are doing now in our
17 colleges are as effective as they can be. So
18 we're proposing access and completion fund
19 that is about innovation for states and
20 colleges to innovate, evaluate, learn, share
21 those learnings and help their peer
22 institutions to do a much better job, whether
23 it's preparing, getting students who are in

1 developmental courses, who aren't quite up at
2 the level of taking college credit courses,
3 and getting them to the point where they can
4 actually enter those college-level courses and
5 get through or helping students stay in a math
6 and science course track. We have a lot of
7 students who start there, and then divert in
8 other directions. And so we want states to be
9 working with us toward those broad goals.

10 The overarching goals of improving
11 college completion, but also doing some
12 targeting in terms of what are the areas where
13 we need to do better, and of course, the stem
14 areas are a key part of that.

15 With our completion fund and other
16 efforts and the pending reauthorization of the
17 Workforce Investment Act, we are taking every
18 opportunity to identify ways that we can
19 bolster community colleges and the role that
20 they particularly play in that returning
21 college student, returning worker who may need
22 some additional training. We did this
23 recently working with the Department of Labor,

1 looking for ways how can we tell, how can we
2 help someone who has lost their job go back to
3 college and get some additional training.

4 So working with the Department of
5 Labor and state unemployment insurance offices
6 around the country will be, they will be
7 contacting all of the recipients of
8 unemployment insurance and letting them know
9 that they can go to a financial aid office and
10 the financial aid office will set their income
11 at zero rather than the regular financial aid
12 process has them looking back at the year
13 before when they were employed, when they
14 obviously had a bigger income. So making it
15 easier for them to go in and get that change
16 to zero income so that they're much more
17 likely to qualify for a Pell Grant.

18 And so we are looking for those
19 kinds of ideas for ways that we can reach out.

20 They don't have to be legislative. There are
21 ways that we can reach out and encourage folks
22 to return to school and to take advantage of
23 the programs that we have now.

1 In that regard, we are also
2 spending a lot of time and effort on looking
3 at the financial aid application process
4 itself. Those of you in K-12, of course, have
5 to grapple with that as much as or more than
6 those in the higher education area. We will
7 soon be making an announcement around that and
8 the general outline, the general outlines are
9 that we are -- most people fill out the web-
10 based form.

11 We are taking advantage of
12 technology to do a much better job helping
13 people through the process on the web-based
14 forum in an interactive kind of way and
15 skipping irrelevant questions. So we really
16 went through with a fine-tooth comb and
17 figured out well, if we ask this question
18 earlier, can't we eliminate these other four
19 questions that don't matter if you answer a
20 certain way on that question.

21 So things like that that the step
22 logic that can make it a much, much better
23 experience will dramatically improve the on-

1 line application. We're also looking at and
2 will have a partnership with the IRS to be
3 able to give people the option of pulling down
4 their 1040 information that can be inserted
5 into their FAFSA so they don't have to go find
6 their tax form, so we will be piloting those
7 kinds of efforts.

8 And then we're also looking at
9 whether there are some items that even after
10 doing that just don't make sense to be on the
11 -- to be part of the formula and perhaps
12 asking Congress to eliminate some of those
13 items.

14 So a lot of work on the FAFSA and
15 we'll be making some announcements in that
16 regard. Some of what we'll be announcing will
17 be items that will be for this coming year.
18 The form that goes live January which means it
19 will go in the congressional record and be
20 open to comments, so you may see some things
21 where we could go even further than what we
22 are planning.

23 I'll stop there and open it up for

1 questions about those items or anything else
2 that's related.

3 MS. JONES: Good morning. My name
4 is Kimberly Jones. I'm with the Council for
5 Opportunity in Education. This question is
6 actually a hybrid of your topic as well as
7 Carmel's. Let me preface my question by
8 saying I understand that we're in an
9 unprecedented economic turmoil and there are
10 tough choices that have to be made. And I
11 also understand and appreciate the investment
12 that the Department has put into financial aid
13 for low-income students, particularly the Pell
14 investment.

15 I represent the TRIO programs which
16 serve low-income, first generation students.
17 And just looking at the content of the
18 Recovery Act and then looking at the FY 10
19 budget, looking at the higher-ed sections,
20 it's hard not to notice that not only TRIO,
21 but other access and retention, success
22 programs like Gear-Up, like programs that are
23 already in place at minority- serving

1 institutions, like career technical ed are
2 absent or somewhat neglected.

3 And so my question is going
4 forward, given this goal and objective of
5 having the highest post-secondary rate in the
6 world for the country, what do you see the
7 roles of these programs that have been around
8 for decades that have been proven by studies
9 run by the Department of Education that
10 they're effective and improving retention,
11 what role do you see, again, not just TRIO,
12 but other higher-ed access, retention and
13 success programs that thus far have not played
14 a major role in the Administration's plans?

15 MR. SHIREMAN: Sure. There's
16 enormous potential for Gear-Up, Upward Bound
17 talent search and other college preparation
18 programs in our overall agenda and I've
19 actually learned a lot from what Chicago has
20 done over the past couple of years of figuring
21 out ways to leverage Gear-Up and the TRIO
22 programs in their overarching, district-wide
23 effort to improve college preparation and

1 college going.

2 And so I think we need to be
3 thinking both in our -- and we are -- thinking
4 both in our higher education thinking as well
5 as in our K-12 and high school reform thinking
6 about how we learn from and build on those
7 kinds of programs and efforts and activities.

8 So I think there is enormous potential there.

9 As you know, many, many programs were flat-
10 funded in our FY 10 budget proposals, so they
11 weren't singled out, but I understand that
12 they also were not singled out for increases
13 and those are the kinds of things that we'll
14 be looking at going forward.

15 MS. JONES: We look forward to
16 working with you.

17 MR. SHIREMAN: Great. Thank you
18 very much.

19 MR. DeWITT: Hi, Steve DeWitt. I'm
20 with the Association for Career and Technical
21 Education. And I'm having deja-vu because I
22 went on after Kim during the budget briefings.

23 My question is about career ready.

1 First of all, thank you from the Department
2 for talking about both college and career
3 ready. It's something that's been needed for
4 a long time.

5 I attended a briefing yesterday
6 about the National Governors and Council of
7 Chief State School Officers' work on common
8 core standards. And the question about career
9 readiness and what that means and the answer
10 was from the panel that people have a lot of
11 different ideas about what this means. Some
12 large corporations have one view, smaller
13 companies have a different view or smaller
14 kind of home town businesses.

15 Does the Department have a
16 particular view of what career ready means and
17 if not, how do we get there in terms of what
18 that means?

19 MR. SHIREMAN: This is definitely
20 an area that we have been looking at and as
21 you know our programs do fund some career
22 pathway kinds of efforts, our career tech
23 programs that -- and part of what we need to

1 look at is to get into more detail and the
2 great thing about those programs is that they
3 have a clear path to what's the -- what is the
4 secondary school component, what does that
5 lead into in terms of the post-secondary and
6 at least some, maybe all of the components.
7 There's a -- it aims towards some kind of
8 credential industry recognized credential.

9 Exactly how that relates to
10 standards and what you know and are able to do
11 that might be developed on the academic side
12 is I think exactly the kinds of discussions
13 that we need to have and we welcome input on
14 that.

15 MR. DeWITT: Is it only academics
16 or is it also a lot of those 21st century
17 skills for lack of a better word?

18 MR. SHIREMAN: I guess that's why I
19 said what people, what young graduates know
20 and are able to do, because I think that is
21 some of the able to do and what should we be
22 looking at and critical thinking skills that
23 are very important to the workforce as well as

1 being college ready.

2 So I think -- I certainly and
3 others could use input and advice about how to
4 -- I don't know if it's marrying the two or
5 aligning, that whole question.

6 Carmel, I don't know if you have
7 any further thoughts on that, but it's an area
8 that we need to be looking into more and
9 welcome input.

10 MR. DeWITT: And it is a tough
11 question. We'd love to work with you.

12 MR. SHIREMAN: Great. I really
13 appreciate that.

14 Yes?

15 MR. BRANNUM: The question is for
16 Carmel. I want to thank you for holding this.
17 Hopefully my name and email doesn't get
18 expunged from the Department's records, but --

19 MR. SHIREMAN: I know where you
20 live.

21 (Laughter.)

22 MR. BRANNUM: You're welcome any
23 time.

1 Carmel, the issue of vouchers, what
2 is the Department's position on vouchers
3 nationally as opposed to just within the
4 District of Columbia since people here have
5 voiced an opinion against vouchers, but
6 vouchers have been imposed locally.

7 Will the Department support
8 vouchers nationally since it caved in to
9 certain interests on Capitol Hill and imposed
10 vouchers in the District of Columbia?

11 MS. MARTIN: Well, both the
12 President and Arne have been pretty clear that
13 they believe that vouchers is not the answer
14 to improving public education in America and
15 their focus is going to be on public schools.

16 That said, there are many programs run by the
17 Department of Education that provide funding
18 to private schools through the Equitable
19 Participation Program. Most categorical,
20 formula-based programs in the Elementary and
21 Secondary Education Act and the Individuals
22 with Disabilities Education Act do provide a
23 share of those fundings to private schools for

1 serving low-income and students with
2 disabilities. I think the President and Arne
3 are strongly supportive of that.

4 With respect to the D.C. program,
5 they both also have been very clear that
6 although they don't support continuing the
7 program. They believe that the children who
8 are currently in those programs should be
9 protected and not have their education
10 disrupted, so we have asked Congress to
11 reverse legislation, statutes that they have
12 passed that prohibit us from using funding
13 after the next school year for additional
14 scholarships for those children in the 2011-12
15 school year.

16 So we will be fighting to secure
17 funding in the appropriations process to
18 protect those students and allow them to
19 continue in those schools.

20 MR. BRANNUM: That, I can
21 understand, but there was an effort to try to
22 do a back-door expansion of that by saying
23 it's to fund siblings of the current students

1 who are not in the program, but who are now
2 getting ready to go to school while them being
3 a legacy because their older brother and
4 sister was in and now they're getting ready to
5 go to school, so we want them to go. It's
6 that sibling piece that's coming up.

7 MS. MARTIN: So our focus is on the
8 students who are currently in those schools,
9 because again the idea is not to have their
10 education disrupted. The program did not
11 provide for sibling preference, so just
12 because a student is in the school did not
13 mean that their sibling would be able to go to
14 the school, but at the end of the day, the
15 decision about that will be made by Congress,
16 but our proposal to Congress is to provide us
17 with sufficient funding to continue the
18 education of those currently in those schools.

19 MS. VENEGAS: Good morning. I'm
20 Kerry Venegas from the National Indian
21 Education Association and I'd like to start
22 just by thanking Secretary Duncan for his
23 recent visit to northern Cheyenne and his

1 attention to native students.

2 I have a question about tribal
3 colleagues and the support for tribal
4 colleges, particularly as they've been
5 connected as entry and re-entry points in
6 rural communities, not just for native
7 community members, but for all community
8 members, and also their connection to the
9 professional development grants that actually
10 fund the teacher pipelines in rural
11 communities and on reservations and how you
12 guys are supporting this and what the thinking
13 is around this.

14 MR. SHIREMAN: I think we would be
15 supportive of them.

16 (Laughter.)

17 MS. VENEGAS: That's good.

18 MR. SHIREMAN: Yes. We are
19 definitely interested. Community colleges,
20 generally, are an area that we see as
21 currently serving the populations that we have
22 the most potential to get enormous increases
23 and throughput to degrees and certificates.

1 So your ideas about strategies, ways that we
2 can be helpful in that regard, we welcome
3 that.

4 MS. VENEGAS: Thank you.

5 MR. SHIREMAN: Thanks.

6 Go ahead.

7 MR. BURNETT: Hi, my name is
8 Patrick Burnett. I'm here on behalf of the
9 National Association of State Student Grant
10 and Aid Programs. Thank you so much for your
11 comments about the higher education plans for
12 the Department.

13 You mentioned or you referenced the
14 anticipated savings from the ending of the
15 guaranteed loan program and switching over to
16 the direct loan program. I had two related
17 questions based on that, actually three, one
18 being the schedule for a legislation that
19 would end FELP.

20 Second, if there are plans for how
21 any of the anticipated savings would be
22 dedicated towards ACIF, and how --

23 MR. SHIREMAN: What's which, sorry?

1 MR. BURNETT: I'm sorry, to the
2 access and completion.

3 MR. SHIREMAN: Okay.

4 MR. BURNETT: And third, whether
5 the Department has given any consideration to
6 the impact that the ending of FELP would have
7 on state-operated guaranteed programs where
8 states rely on their payments of FELP as a
9 revenue source for their need-based grants.

10 MR. SHIREMAN: Sure. So the
11 guaranteed program is ending regardless of
12 whether we act because of the credit markets.

13 And state agencies are now suffering the
14 resulting revenue losses from the inability of
15 the lenders to hold on to loans. And so our
16 proposal is to include in our Access and
17 Completion Incentive Fund dollars for states
18 to provide to these agencies so that they can
19 continue the access and information kinds of
20 activities that have been important to schools
21 in those states, having the people, the
22 materials to provide information about going
23 to college.

1 So the guaranteed loan program
2 earnings that those entities have had in the
3 past are disappearing now before Congress does
4 anything. We're coming in with a proposal to
5 bolster that so that those activities can
6 continue. We're not doing it in a way where
7 we're giving student loan tasks to those
8 agencies because what we think is important is
9 to have the most efficient student loan
10 program and reliable student loan program that
11 we can have and have state agencies that are
12 getting information about financial aid of all
13 types. They don't need to have a financial
14 interest in a loan program per se. They
15 should be getting information out about Pell
16 Grants, about state grants, about student loan
17 opportunities and so we want to make sure that
18 that information is there.

19 MR. BURNETT: Thank you very much.

20 MR. SHIREMAN: Thanks a lot.

21 MR. BLANK: Good morning, I'm Marty
22 Blank with the Institute for Educational
23 Leadership and the Coalition for Community

1 Schools.

2 Joe started by talking about
3 coherence and the four elements and in the
4 course of the morning we've heard about a
5 multiple series of new programs, categoricals
6 that still exist that often continue to
7 function in local communities in silos and as
8 a result we don't leverage those resources and
9 mobilize community support to really get the
10 kind of outcomes we want for kids.

11 So my question is how are you
12 thinking about trying to embed in these
13 various programs language that will encourage
14 alignment and incentivize partnership across
15 these different programs of the Department as
16 well as they can put it in a broader context
17 with the programs of the Department of Labor
18 or Health and Human Services, all of which in
19 one way or another tend to show up in school
20 or in relationship to school?

21 MR. SHIREMAN: I think you're
22 already seeing some evidence of our working
23 with Department of Labor, for example, and

1 certainly in our discussions about the
2 Workforce Investment Act. We're looking for
3 more and more ways to make that happen.

4 The struggle is always that when
5 you have a silo it's focused on -- there's a
6 focus and we need to be looking for more ways
7 to break through all of that.

8 I don't know, Carmel, if you want
9 to talk more about the options.

10 MS. MARTIN: I think that is
11 something we are working very hard to address
12 and starting with at the federal level so in
13 developing our early learning proposals we've
14 been meeting at least twice a week with our
15 colleagues at the Department of HHS so that
16 we're doing that together, not separately.
17 We're not just asking for consultation. It is
18 a joint project and once our programs are
19 developed the intention is for them to be
20 jointly administered.

21 As Bob said, we have been working
22 closely with our colleagues at the Department
23 of Labor in developing our proposals for the

1 Workforce Investment Act. They're going to be
2 joint proposals so we're hoping to carry that
3 through again, through the implementation
4 process as well.

5 I think in terms of what's
6 happening at the state and local level, I mean
7 I think it was not -- it was a very conscious
8 decision to have the Race to the Top funding
9 going to a governor which is, as you know,
10 unusual for federal education program funding,
11 but I think part of the rationale for that was
12 to say this needs to be a comprehensive reform
13 initiative that does take into mind other
14 funding streams that help children and youth
15 to be successful and when Arne met with the
16 governors earlier this week he really called
17 upon them to do just that.

18 As I mentioned in our efforts
19 towards reauthorization on the Elementary and
20 Secondary Education Act, part of my job since
21 I don't sit in any particular pot, but rather
22 looking at policy development across the
23 Agency, part of my job is to make sure that

1 we're not looking at particular issues. It's
2 not just the people running programs who will
3 be saying how should they be changed for
4 reauthorization, but how can we come together
5 because there's such a breath of expertise
6 across the Agency and how can we make sure
7 that we're not being siloed in how we look at
8 that reauthorization.

9 So those are just a few examples of
10 how we're trying to address the issue that
11 you're talking about, but I'm sure there's
12 more things.

13 MR. BLANK: I appreciate that. We
14 are excited about working with you on that
15 because we think that accountability tools can
16 be used to drive this kind of coherence. It's
17 not just about measures of academic success,
18 but other measures that can be used to expect
19 people to be working together and to
20 incentivize the kind of partnerships,
21 alignments and coordination that is so
22 necessary if we're really going to sustain
23 these strategies.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. HARRIS: Hi. Bob Harris from
3 the Career College Association. Thank you and
4 the Secretary, the President, for all your
5 support for higher education.

6 The Chicago Tribune website was
7 reporting this morning that the White House
8 Chief of Staff told the Democratic Leadership
9 Council that the Administration has a new
10 program

11

1 that's about to throw a lot of money into
2 job-training programs and specifically to be
3 directed at community colleges.

4 Realizing that the White House
5 Chief of Staff sometimes gets ahead of the
6 Administration, I wondered whether you could
7 enlighten on that and in particular whether if
8 this is accurate, whether it is really
9 restricted to community colleges or might also
10 be available to high schools, traditional
11 schools, and to career colleges?

12 MR. SHIREMAN: Well, fortunately, I
13 saw that a few hours ago and I sent an email
14 asking the same question.

15 (Laughter.)

16 So the answer is no, I can't
17 enlighten you. I'll let you know when we
18 know.

19 MR. HARRIS: Thanks.

20 MR. COLEMAN: Just one last comment
21 on this. Jim Kohlmoos from Knowledge
22 Alliance.

23 Marty's comment about silos and

1 trying to break them down through sort of
2 thematic approaches cutting across different
3 programs is a really important one. At the
4 same time, as you see increased accountability
5 measures being put into place, particularly
6 out of OMB and their part process, it actually
7 encourages the silos to continue to exist as
8 people become more focused on accounting for
9 their particular silo.

10 So I'm not sure how to resolve
11 this, but have you been given any thought to
12 how best to create an accountability system
13 that cuts across the silos, but at the same
14 time accounts for how dollars are being spent
15 in the ways that they were intended?

16 MS. MARTIN: We have been thinking
17 about that and working with OMB in terms of
18 how part should be revisited and revised. So
19 it is something that we're looking at. The
20 challenge is if you look at performance
21 measures that go across programs, those tend
22 to be more long-term goals. So we need to
23 have both sort of long-term and short-term

1 goals and short-term can be more directed
2 towards the piece that the program is meant to
3 address.

4 Hopefully, we'll have something on
5 that soon.

6 MR. RITSCH: Any other final
7 questions?

8 Well, you've heard a lot from us
9 this morning. We hope it was useful and thank
10 you for your questions and comments. We
11 always appreciate the opportunity to hear from
12 you.

13 A few just little housekeeping
14 things. As Joe mentioned, stay tune to
15 ed.gov. Watch it closely, but we're also
16 planning to redesign it and so we want to know
17 your feedback on that and particularly we want
18 to know what you use the Department's website
19 for, what are you top tasks. And you can
20 email directly our web master. His name is
21 Kirk Winters. It's kirk.winters@ed.gov.

22 As I mentioned earlier, we're also
23 looking for your feedback on this forum to

1 help us plan for future forums. Please leave
2 behind those evaluations.

3 A transcript and an audio file of
4 today's meeting will be available on our
5 website early next week. Feel free to share
6 it with your members and anyone else you think
7 would be interested.

8 Please also share those speeches
9 that Secretary Duncan has been making on the
10 core reforms, data, common standards. Monday,
11 we'll be focusing on turnaround schools and
12 teacher quality and support.

13 The notice for our next Education
14 Stakeholders Forum, date to be determined,
15 will be on ed.gov, so another reason to watch
16 that around the middle of next month.

17 Feel free to stick around, chat
18 with each other, finish up the breakfast over
19 there and the coffee, come up and say hi. And
20 if you need to get in touch with the
21 Department and you don't know where to start,
22 please come to my office, email and we can put
23 you in touch with the right people.

1 So thanks for coming over this
2 morning, everyone. We'll see you next time.

3 (Applause.)

4 (Whereupon, at 11:02 a.m., the
5 meeting was concluded.)

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