

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL
Holiday Inn Capitol
550 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Executive Session
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
November 15, 1993

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NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

November 8, 1993

To: Members of the National Education Goals Panel

From: Martin E. Orland, Acting Director

Subject: Immediate Work Priorities of the NEGP

Over the past few weeks, Goals Panel staff have worked with our new Chair and members of the Working Group to identify priority work areas and the most immediate tasks before us. Four broad themes characterize the results of these efforts; 1) a commitment to a strategic planning process to provide a blueprint for all Panel activities, 2) a shift in focus from measuring achievement of the Goals to strategies for their attainment, 3) a continued strong association with the issue of nationwide standard-setting as a catalyst for educational renewal, and 4) internal management and organizational changes.

1) Developing a Strategic Plan.

This effort will be the Panel's single highest immediate priority over the next few months. The Panel is now beginning the process of developing a strategic plan that will clarify its mission, critical objectives, implementation strategies and key milestones. The plan will take into account the Panel's new legislation as well as the Panel's unique political and policy context. All Panelists and their key staff are expected to participate actively in the strategic planning process with the objective of presenting the first draft plan at the winter NEGP meeting (January 28).

2) Focusing More on Strategies for Goal Attainment

While the strategic plan will ultimately shape the Panel's Workplan and priorities, the new legislation and feedback from our constituents strongly suggest that the Panel must become increasingly associated with strategies for goal attainment. Because of the long time period required to implement any new Panel initiative, preliminary work is underway in several areas.

Please note that all of these efforts are in their earliest stages, and that their size, direction and visibility will be heavily influenced by the results of the strategic planning process:

- o Technology. With the help of a new consultant, the Panel will begin to explore how its work can directly assist schools and teachers in taking advantage of technology applications supporting the goals and standards.
- o Strategies to Achieve Goal 6. Working with the National Alliance of Pupil Service Organizations and other national and regional bodies, the Panel is starting to plan for a major national event next October that would highlight strategies for achieving Goal 6.
- o Revamping the Panel's Reporting Function. The Panel is looking into ways to modify its reporting function so the Goals Report and other Panel documents become more useful resources for those seeking to improve learning in their communities.
- o Improving Early Elementary Education. A joint Task Force composed of members of the Goals 1 and 3 Resource Groups will convene to address the challenge of how the dimensions of readiness for school identified by the Panel can be applied to the early elementary years so that demonstrably higher percentages of 4th graders can achieve Goal 3.
- o Analyzing the Implications of the Adult Literacy Survey Findings. In conjunction with the National Institute for Literacy, papers are being commissioned to analyze the findings from the recently conducted National Adult Literacy Survey and determine their implications for adult literacy policies and programs at the national, state and local levels.
- o New Outreach Initiatives. Several new programs in this critical area are in the planning stages including sponsoring and disseminating the "Daily Report Card", a publication highlighting major programs and findings across the nation under each Goal area.

3) Continuing and Strengthening the Panel's Association With the Nationwide Standards-Setting Movement

The Panel's efforts at this meeting to develop a statement of principles on nationwide education standards is intended

to underscore and clarify its commitment to this process. In the coming months the Panel will disseminate and solicit comments on the Malcom Report from key constituency groups (egs. national standards-setting bodies, states working on new education standards, the business community and major teacher organizations) and more aggressively and effectively communicate with the American people on the general importance and usefulness of this agenda for stimulating educational reform. As with other topics, the strategic planning process will help to structure the long-term Panel positioning and strategy in this critical area.

4) Making Internal Management and Organizational Changes

Panel staff are working closely with the Education Department to fill short-term staffing needs and prepare for the internal changes dictated by the new legislation. The Panel is also immediately creating three new committees to help accomplish its immediate and longer-term work objectives:

1. An Executive Committee which can address more technical Panel policy and management issues that up until now have, by necessity, been brought before the attention of the entire Panel;
2. A Committee on Reporting to work with staff in outlining issues and alternatives in exercising the Panel's reporting function;
3. A Committee on Strategic Planning to work with staff in developing and implementing a strategic planning process.

Other organizational changes are sure to occur as a result of the strategic planning process.

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

Excerpts and Themes from Surveys of NEGP Working Group

October 28, 1993

Eighteen members of Goals Panel Working Group participated in telephone surveys-- each lasting from 40-minutes to an hour-- exploring questions and perceptions related to the Panel's mission, target audiences, messages, reputation and effectiveness.

A wealth of information was uncovered that will prove invaluable in focusing Panel activities on areas of shared concern and priority interest. While there were areas of markedly different opinions and topics significantly absent from discussion, the degree of unanimity on the following topics was striking, and typical responses included:

"Too much emphasis on the Report." The Panel needs to "get away from the report and concentrate on buy-in to build a critical mass necessary for something to happen" in education. "The Panel can't be just a group that measures." "Focus on solutions, not just data." The Goals Panel has three main focuses: to encourage and motivate parents; to act as a resource for governing bodies seeking to reform education; to provide information to policy-makers." "Focus on implementation and what works...the school administrator from (state X) that I met with this week doesn't know about the report and the data, but he's accomplishing a hell of a lot we can all learn from."

"Build political support, consensus and coalitions needed to effect change." "Strength of the Panel is its bipartisan, intergovernmental composition." "The Panel is uniquely composed to cut across political layers and boundaries...we need to build on this." Meet with political leaders, "other Governors and associations... share ideas with others." "There's never been any concerted effort at partnerships and so there is very little buy-in." "Build partnerships across institutions and organizations to achieve the Goals."

"Focus on what people can do to influence education." "Give examples of what works and lay out strategies for the local level." "Showcase what works and why." "Report on models, suggestions, policies and recommendations to reach the goals. "Push solutions." "We just sit around and wring our hands. The public wants a plan." "Emphasize the 'hidden stuff'-- work of the task forces, works in progress, standards."

"Analyze and interpret data." "Figure out what all this data mean." "...think more about the big picture. "Boil down all the data." Provide "an interpretation of the bottom line." "Create more documents like the summary guide." Draw "comparisons with state and national statistics." "Let others collect the information and the Goals Panel describe its significance."

"Provide information that people at the local and state levels can act on." "I know this data inside and out and I have kids in school, but I have no idea of what I can really do to effect change (in my school). "For something to be applicable to consumers, we need local level information. Data (in report) is still too aggregate to be useful". "Link national data with more state data."

-- more --

"Focus on standards and educate the public at large." "Help leaders and communities see that standards are non-threatening and in their best interest." "Overcome the misinformation campaign that's incorrectly and inappropriately defining the standards movement." "Boost the public communications side: why do we need standards? What do they mean?" "Fill the vacuum on standards and work on efforts to avoid the right wing backlash."

"Panel seen as peripheral by most all significant communities." Although the Panel is "a body of major political leaders" that "can't be ignored," it's seen as "marginal, at best, in critical matters influencing education." "On difficult issues, we tend to gravitate to the lowest common denominator. If we can't reach meaningful consensus (on difficult issues) how do we expect others to?"

"Take the show on the road." "Sponsor conferences to give people the information and help them know how to use it." "Hold regional forums." "Sponsor town hall meetings." The Panel suffers from an "inside the hotel-room mentality." Need more events that give Panel members "touchy-feely spin," "higher national visibility, and political prominence," and "less talking heads." "Show, don't tell."

"More outreach." "Get in popular media." "If we want to get to the people, we've got to go where they will see and hear" us. Target "parents-- they will make or break education." "Do more state and local media interviews." "The bulk of our work is on the report and it is for policy wonks, not average people."

"Organize information in new themes or formats." "Simplify the message." "We need to have more checklists, ideas, tips for people, ways for them to figure out that their community is doing ok." "Streamline version of a particular set of graphs (from the Report)-- a 10-pager pamphlet for parents, community organizations, etc." "Create a series of publications on each goal instead of one big report." "Do targeted mailings." Using "video would be great."

"Focus on strategic planning." "Problem with the Panel is: what is the job of the Panel?... needs to redefine itself." "Build shared understanding of what the Panel is and needs to be." "Panel needs direction and stability." "The Panel is an institution in its infancy...as it grows we need to revisit what it does and how it operates." "Need a coherent vision of what to accomplish and then outline steps to achieve it." "Give me a clear sense of what the Panel is trying to do over time and a plan with do-ables and deliverables."

.....

Members of the Working Group offered numerous and valuable suggestions to improve working relationships, operations and essential Panel activities. While most Working Group members say they spend five to 15 percent of their time on Panel activities or in preparation for them, the overwhelming majority indicated a willingness to become more involved-- particularly on matters related to building visibility and political payoff for their principal, engaging the public in education reform, and developing a shared understanding of what the Panel can and should do to improve teaching and learning in the United States.

wholly inadequate'

Education goals study say higher standards needed

Panel: Schools need work

Panel report: Barriers still abound to meeting education goals

Report flunks U.S. schools on progress

Report: Schools falling short

Report: We are what we learn

Nation's schools improve too slowly

School goals viewed as challenge

Panel says progress modest in improving U.S. schools

Data on graduation, drugs, guns 'sobering'

Schools fail test each top by end of century

National panel fires broadside at U.S. education for failing students

Quality 101: School data 'sobering'

2000

2000

1993

1993

MEDIA COVERAGE
National Education Goals Panel's
1993 Report:
"Building a Nation of Learners"

On September 30, 1993, the National Education Goals Panel released its 1993 Goals Report, "Building a Nation of Learners." The two-volume report is the most comprehensive and reliable compilation of data showing the nation's and the states' progress toward the six National Education Goals adopted by the Governors and the President in 1989. Despite very modest gains, the 1993 Report reveals that progress toward achieving the Goals is "wholly inadequate." At no stage in a learner's life — before schooling, during the school years, or as adults — are Americans doing as well as they should or can. In order to speed progress toward the Goals and provide the framework for systemic reform, the Goals Panel calls for the establishment of world-class voluntary education standards that would ensure our children can think critically and solve problems, exercise the rights of citizenship, and compete in a global economy.

The media event generated coverage in:

- 28 major daily newspapers, reaching a total of 10,479,712 readers;
- 136 reproductions of the Associated Press article;
- 84 independent print media articles;
- 6 national TV network shows and 20 local TV broadcasts;
- 5 national radio network shows and 16 local radio broadcasts.

The Goals Panel also produced a video news release which was carried by 7 television stations, reaching an audience of over 605,000 viewers.

Other news stories of the day included:

- Hillary Clinton Unveils Health Plan in Testimony on Capitol Hill.
- Devastating Toll of Record-Setting Earthquake in India.
- Treasury Department Issues Blistering Report on ATF Waco Raid.
- General Colin Powell Steps Down as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.
- Three Weight-Control Programs Agree to Stop False Advertising.

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

November 9, 1993

To: Members of the National Education Goals Panel
From: Martin E. Orland, Acting Director
Subject: November 15 Meeting

The nineteenth meeting of the National Education Goals Panel will take place from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Monday, November 15, in the Columbia Room of the Holiday Inn Capitol Hill Hotel, in Washington, D.C. Panelists are asked to convene at 1:45 PM in the Mars Room so that the meeting's purpose and work agenda can be briefly reviewed.

Immediately following the meeting, Panel Chairman McKernan will lead the Panel into Executive Session to discuss the search for an Executive Director in the context of the Panel's overall mission, and the year's workplan. The session will be held in the Saturn/Venus Room and begin at approximately 4:10 PM.

Briefing materials for the meeting follow. I look forward to seeing you in Washington on Monday.

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Holiday Inn Capitol
550 C Street, SW
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November 15, 1993

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NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

Holiday Inn Capitol
Columbia Room
550 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202

November 15, 1993
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- 2:00 to 2:10 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**
- 2:10 to 2:30 – **STATUS REPORT: "GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT"
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WORK OF THE GOALS
PANEL**
- o Current status of Goals 2000 legislation (Congressional Representatives)
 - o Implications of Goals 2000 for the work of the Panel (NEGP Chair McKernan)
 - o Relationships between the Goals Panel and the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (Secretary Riley)
- 2:30 to 3:00 – **RECEIPT AND DIALOGUE ON REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL
PLANNING GROUP (TPG) ON REVIEWING AND CERTIFYING
NATIONWIDE EDUCATION STANDARDS**
- o Introductory comments (NEGP Chair McKernan)
 - o Summary of Report Recommendations (TPG Chair Malcom)
 - o Panelist questions and discussion
- 3:00 to 3:30 – **ACTION ITEM: GOALS PANEL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES ON
NATIONWIDE EDUCATION STANDARDS**
- o Introductory comments (NEGP Chair McKernan and members of the Goals 3 and 4 Leadership Team)
 - o Panelist discussion of draft statement of principles
- 3:30 to 4:00 – **OPEN MICROPHONE: QUESTIONS FROM THE MEDIA AND
PUBLIC TO THE PANELISTS AND DR. MALCOM ON THE
NATIONWIDE STANDARD-SETTING PROCESS**

NEGP Functions under House Bill H. R. 3210, "Goals 2000: Educate America Act"

On October 5, 1993, the House of Representatives passed the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act." In addition to adding 4 new members to the Goals Panel (state legislators appointed through NCSL) and a new goal ("teacher education and professional development"), H.R. 3210 stipulates the following Goals Panel duties and reporting responsibilities:

(a) Duties

1. Annual Reporting

"Report to the President, the Secretary, and the Congress regarding the progress the Nation and the States are making toward achieving the National Education Goals..., including issuing an annual report;"

2. State Opportunity to Learn Standards

"Report on State opportunity-to-learn standards and the progress of States in meeting such standards;"

3. Standards Function:

(Review and Approve NESIC criteria and standards)

"Review, after taking into consideration the public comments received ..., with the option of disapproving by a two-thirds majority vote of the full membership not later than 60 days after receipt of the

"(A) criteria developed by NESIC for the certification of content and student performance standards, assessments, and opportunity to learn standards; and

"(B) voluntary national content and student performance standards and opportunity-to-learn standards certified by NESIC;"

4. Report Promising or Effective Actions

"Report on promising or effective actions being taken at the national, State, and local levels, in the public and private sectors, to achieve the National Education Goals; and"

5. Build Nationwide, Bipartisan Consensus

"Help build a nationwide, bipartisan consensus for the reforms necessary to achieve the National Education Goals."

Additional Provisions in House Bill H. R. 3210 p. 2

(b) Report

"(1) The Goals Panel shall annually prepare and submit to the President, the Secretary, the appropriate committees of Congress, and the Governor of each State, a report that shall --

(A) "report on the progress of the United States toward achieving the National Education Goals;

(B) "identify actions that should be taken by Federal, State, and local governments to enhance progress towards achieving the National Education Goals and State opportunity-to-learn standards; and

(C) "report on State opportunity-to-learn standards and the progress of States in meeting such standards.

"(2) Reports shall be presented in a form, and include data, that is understandable to parents and the general public."

Section 221 Evaluation

"From funds..., the Secretary annually shall make a grant, in an amount not to exceed \$500,000, to the... National Academy of Sciences or to the National Academy of Education to --

(1) "evaluate --

(A) the technical quality of the work performed by the Goals Panel and the Council (NESIC);

(B) the process the Council uses to develop criteria for certification of standards and assessments;

(C) the process the Council uses to certify voluntary national standards as well as standards and assessments voluntarily submitted by States; and

(D) the process the Goals Panel uses to approve certification criteria and voluntary national standards;"

(2) "periodically provide to the Goals Panel and the Council, as appropriate, information from the evaluation under paragraph (1); and

(3) "report on the activities authorized under sections 219 (Opportunity-to-Learn Development Grant) and 220 (Assessment Development and Evaluation Grants)."

**BACKGROUND:
THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL'S
ROLE IN EDUCATION STANDARDS**

November 1993

July 1990: *The National Education Goals Panel*

Following the Education Summit in Charlottesville in 1989, the President and the Governors formed the National Education Goals Panel, composed of Governors, members of the Administration and members of Congress. The Panel monitors and reports progress of the nation and the states toward six national education goals.

March 1991: *Advisory Group on Student Achievement*

Six resource groups of national experts formed by the Goals Panel in each goal area submit recommendations for data indicating progress toward the goals. In the area of improved student achievement, experts recommend the establishment of nationwide education standards and related assessment systems.

June 1991: *National Council on Education Standards and Testing*

The Goals Panel creates and Congress establishes by law the National Council on Education Standards and Testing to explore the desirability and feasibility of creating national education standards and a method to assess their attainment.

January 1992: *Report of the National Council On Education Standards and Testing*

The Council releases its report, *Raising Standards For American Education*, concluding that the development of world class education standards and a linked system of assessments are both desirable and feasible. In addition, they recommend that such standards and assessments be reviewed and certified by a new national council working cooperatively with the Goals Panel.

-over-

1992–1993: *Professional Organizations' Standards Projects*

Following the example of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, professional organizations in English, science, history, geography (subjects listed in Goal 3), fine arts, foreign languages, civics, and others secure funding from federal agencies and other sources to develop subject-specific education standards. Early drafts of many of these standards are currently available for public comment and completed drafts may be available in 1994 and 1995.

April 1993: *Goals 2000 Legislation*

The Clinton Administration submits "Goals 2000: Educate America Act," to Congress. The bill would codify the national education goals and the Goals Panel and create a National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC), which, in cooperation with the Goals Panel, would review and approve nationwide education standards. The House passes this legislation in October 1993.

May 1993: *Technical Planning Group on Standards Review*

The Goals Panel convenes an advisory group, chaired by Dr. Shirley Malcom of the American Association of the Advancement of Science, to identify issues and offer advice for NESIC and the Panel on how best to review and certify national education standards.

September 7, 1993: *Public Hearing in Minnesota*

The Goals Panel, represented by Panel Member Governor Carlson, conducts a public hearing in St. Paul, Minnesota to receive public comment on the formulation of voluntary education standards for consideration by the Technical Planning Group.

November 15, 1993: *Goals Panel Meeting*

Following discussion at its summer meetings, the Goals Panel receives its advisors' recommendations and begins drafting a "statement of principles" regarding standards.

– end –

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL PLANNING GROUP ON STANDARDS REVIEW

In May 1993, the Goals Panel convened a Technical Planning Group on Standards Review to do initial thinking and prepare recommendations on the review and certification of education standards. The Report is intended to provide guidance to the soon to be created National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) which is to be given responsibility under the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" to develop standards review and certification criteria. This Report:

1. **Recommends definition of education content standards.** The Report defines content standards as "what students should know and be able to do", both in terms of knowledge and skills. This contrasts with others who define skills in their discipline (what students should be able do) as performance standards.
2. **To give authority to content standards, suggests certification of content standards be provisional upon development of performance standards.** Defines performance standards as what indicates "how good is good enough," both the nature of the evidence and quality of student work necessary to demonstrate that the content standards have been mastered.
3. **Because it was not in the charge, makes no comment on opportunity-to-learn standards.** The only dissenting comment at the end of the report is from David Hornbeck indicating his convictions on the importance of such opportunity-to-learn standards, and a response from Technical Planning Group Chair Shirley Malcom explaining why the topic was not addressed.
4. **To show proposed standards are "world class," suggests that they be compared - and recommends how to compare them - to those of other nations.** The Report also indicates that while recommended US standards might be different, they should be at least as challenging as standards in other leading nations.
5. **Suggests that the NESIC review state standards as a set.** The purpose of this would be to gauge whether, taken together, they are a) focused enough to be feasible to implement and b) whether they encourage students' ability to integrate and apply knowledge and skills from various subjects. The Report also suggests that NESIC, preferably working with standards authors, suggest one example of how state standards could be organized in an interdisciplinary fashion, so the "course of least resistance" does not mandate subject by subject curricula.
6. **Suggests additional functions NESIC can be asked to serve that arise from the responsibility to review and certify education standards.** These include, making sure there is information available on the standards of other countries, and insisting upon the rapid development of performance standards.

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS: Q & A p. 2

Q: Against what criteria should voluntary national content standards be reviewed?

A: For subject-specific standards, be sure they are:

World Class, at least as challenging as current standards in other leading industrial countries, though not necessarily the same;

Important and Focused, including those elements that represent the most important knowledge and skills within a discipline;

Useful, developing what is needed for citizenship, employment, and life-long learning;

Reflective of Broad Consensus-Building, resulting from an iterative process of comment, feedback and revision including educators and the lay public;

Balanced, between the competing requirements for:

- * depth & breadth;
- * being definite/specific & being flexible/adaptable;
- * theory or principles & facts or information;
- * formal knowledge & applications;
- * being forward-looking & traditional;

Accurate and Sound, reflecting the best scholarship within the discipline;

Clear and Usable, sufficiently clear so that parents, teachers and students can understand what the standards mean and what the standards require of them;

Assessable, sufficiently specific so their attainment can be measured in terms meaningful to teachers, students, parents, test makers and users, the public and others;

Adaptable, permitting flexibility in implementation needed for local control, state and regional variation, and differing individual interests and cultural traditions;

Developmentally Appropriate, challenging but, with sustained effort, attainable by all students at elementary, middle and high school levels.

Q: Against what criteria should state content standards be reviewed?

A: For State content standards, be sure they are:

As rigorous as national subject-specific standards, and when different, subject to the same review criteria.

Feasible, sufficiently delimited and focused so they could be implemented.

Cumulatively adequate to give all students the knowledge, skills, and habits needed to succeed.

Encouraging of students' ability to integrate and apply knowledge and skills from various subjects.

Reflective of broad state consensus-building, resulting from an iterative process of comment, feedback and revision among educators and the public within the state.

- Q:** How can proposed standards be judged to be "world class" and "internationally competitive"?
- A:** Compare them to those of selected other countries. Then make sure that good information about the standards of relevant other nations exists. For discussion of this question, see pp. 16-17 of the full report.
- Q:** What are the implications of national content standards (of what students should know and be able to do) for determining student performance standards (of how good is good enough) and student assessments?
- A:** Make certification of content standards provisional upon development of performance standards. Otherwise content standards won't work. See pp. iii, 21-22, 25.
- Q:** In what subject areas (besides those named in the Goals, i.e., English, mathematics, science, history, and geography) should voluntary national content standards be certified?
- A:** Citizenship/civics, foreign languages, and fine arts. See pp. 8, 10-11.
- Q:** Should more than one national set of standards be reviewed and certified in any one subject area?
- A:** No. To do so would diminish the meaning of the certification and the standards. See pp. 10-11.
- Q:** How can subject-based education standards teach students to solve important real-world problems that require integrating knowledge and skills from several disciplines?
- A:** Make it a review criteria for state content standards, because states, unlike professional organizations in the disciplines, have operational responsibility for formulating standards in multiple subject areas. See pp. 9-10, 18-20.
- Q :** In what sequence should proposed subject disciplines standards be reviewed? Should it be first come, first serve? If not, in what order should the standards be considered, and what is the rationale for that order?
- A:** Create a system of periodic review cycles and review all sets submitted prior to an announced date. See p. 16.

Q:How should the subject standards fit together? Should any guidance be offered on selecting and integrating use of the standards? If so, by whom: states, local districts, individual schools and teachers, professional associations, or NESIC? If the combined disciplines propose standards that cannot be accommodated within the confines of a school day, how should schools select priorities and decide what to teach?

A: A criterion for reviewing state standards should be whether they fit together -- whether they are cumulatively feasible and adequate. NESIC should analyze the subject-specific national standards for points of overlap and connections, and provide one model of how they could be addressed in an interdisciplinary fashion. This would enable poor states following the "path of least resistance" to perceive at least one alternative to subject-by-subject curricular frameworks. See pp. 18-20.

Q:How do subject-based standards nurture the habits, skills and competencies that businesses, universities and communities need and want, and that students, parents, and lay citizens recognize as useful?

A: A proposed review criterion is that standards be "useful" for exactly these purposes. See pp 9-10 and 12-13.

DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES
ON NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

***Materials will be faxed on
November 10, 1993***

APPENDICES

MEETING SUMMARY

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

July 27, 1993

The fifth meeting of the National Education Goals Panel for the 1993 goal reporting year convened on July 26, 1993, in Washington D.C., at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, the Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson presiding. The Goals Panel is charged with monitoring progress toward the achievement of the six National Education Goals; issuing an annual progress report to the President, the Governors and the Nation; and overseeing the development of the National Education Standards and Assessment Council to ensure the development of nationally agreed-upon standards and a voluntary system of assessments.

The items on the agenda included: 1) Action Item 1: Resolution on Collegiate Assessment, 2) Action Item 2: Decision on the Use of NAEP in the 1993 Goals Report, 3) Dialogue on Criteria for Reviewing Content Standards, and 4) Draft Report on the Task Force on Education Technology.

ATTENDANCE

Members in Attendance:

Governors: E. Benjamin Nelson, Governor of Nebraska and Goals Panel Chairman; Evan Bayh, Governor of Indiana; Terry E. Branstad, Governor of Iowa; Carroll E. Campbell, Jr., Governor of South Carolina; Arne Carlson, Governor of Minnesota, John McKernan, Jr., Governor of Maine; and Roy Romer, Governor of Colorado.

Administration Officials: Richard W. Riley, Secretary of Education.

With Martin Orland, Acting Executive Director, National Education Goals Panel.

Members Absent:

Jeff Bingaman, U.S. Senator, New Mexico; Thad Cochran, U.S. Senator, Mississippi; John Engler, Governor of Michigan; William Goodling, U.S. Representative, Pennsylvania; Dale Kildee, U.S. Representative, Michigan; and Carol Rasco, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

Guest Speakers

Shirley M. Malcom, Chairperson, Goal 3/4 Technical Planning Group on Standards Review

Phil Daro, Director of Mathematics for the New Standards Project

Tom Crawford, Director of Coaching and Educational Programs for the United States Olympic Committee
Iris Carl, former head of National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Chester Finn, Edison Project of Whittle Schools

Martha Thurlow, Assistant Director of the National Center on Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

Janice Anderson, U.S. Department of Education

Alba A. Ortiz, Director of Bilingual Special Education and Director of the Office of Bilingual Education at the College of Education

Ramona H. Edelin, President and CEO of the National Urban Coalition

Pamela Keating, Head Writer, Task Force on Education Network Technology and Associate Director of the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy at the University of Washington

Dr. Robert Palaich, Leader, Task Force on Education Network Technology and Director of Policy Studies and Information Systems, Education Commission of the States

PANEL ACTIONS

The Panel:

- o Adopted the draft resolution on collegiate assessment by the Task Force on Collegiate Assessment. Recommendations included moving toward a sample-based system of assessment to determine overall graduation rates and levels of critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills among college graduates.
- o Adopted the recommendations of the Technical Planning Subgroup on NAEP Reporting on how to profile newly available indicators from the NAEP in the 1993 Goals Report.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Governor E. Ben Nelson

Governor Nelson welcomed everyone to the fifth meeting of the National Education Goals Panel's third year. Noting that it was his last meeting as the Goals Panel Chair, Governor Nelson thought that it was appropriate to briefly review the Panel's progress over the past 12 months. Governor Nelson stated that he was proud to be the first post-Charlottesville governor to chair the Panel. Continuity was extremely important during this year as the Panel for the first time faced the transition from one administration to the other.

Governor Nelson saw major accomplishments in three major areas. First and most fundamentally, the Panel solidified its presence as an agenda-setter for national education reform by demonstrating continuity, stability, and bipartisan commitment to the National Goals process during the period when leadership in the Executive Branch changed hands. Governor Nelson noted that

the Panel experienced and will be experiencing some turnover. He expressed the Panel's appreciation to Governors Romer and Campbell, who served with great distinction as Chairmen for this body.

Second, Governor Nelson noted, the Panel had begun a process of broadening its mission beyond data reporting and assessments to communicate to all Americans the critical importance of achieving the National Education Goals, the need to develop national standards reflecting what all children should know and be able to do as a result of their schooling experience, and what we all must do to ensure that the National Goals and performance standards are met. The third annual report of the Goals Panel coming out this fall will begin to demonstrate that this has been in focus. Grassroots efforts at the schoolhouse level must be assisted by Capitol Hill, the White House, and state governments.

Finally, Governor Nelson emphasized, the Panel moved forward in its more traditional areas of measurement, assessment, and standards-based curriculum reform. Examples include resolutions in the areas of citizenship in school records data, an unprecedented national dialogue on the issue of collegiate assessment, and beginning the process of developing criteria for the review and approval of national standards in academic subject areas.

Governor Nelson stated that he was totally confident that these and other related efforts by the Panel in the past year have moved us closer to the target that all of us see--the attainment of the National Education Goals. He was equally confident that the Panel will continue its progress in the coming year under the stewardship of his successor, who will be announced next month at the National Governors Association meeting.

Governor Nelson moved to the first order of business for the meeting, which was the approval of the Goals Panel meeting summary of June 15. With no objections, questions or comments with regard to the meeting summary, the minutes were approved.

Governor Nelson then moved to action item number one on the agenda, the Draft Collegiate Assessment Resolution. He noted that those members who were present on June 15 heard a spirited discussion on the recommendations of the Panel's postsecondary assessment Task Force, as well as their conclusions that comparable state reporting on graduation rates and a sample-based system of collegiate assessment to determine the critical thinking skills of our college students were desirable.

Governor Nelson observed that for the past month the collegiate assessment leadership team of Governors Bayh and Carlson has been working closely with Panel staff and the offices of our other principals to develop a draft resolution for the Panel's consideration, one that would reflect the best thinking of the Task Force and the commenters on their report. Governor Nelson

then asked Governor Bayh to report on this subject, providing some background on the Goals Panel's role in this important area of interest and then explaining the draft resolution.

Governor Evan Bayh

Governor Bayh expressed his gratitude to all those who served on the Task Force, the staff, Edward Fuentes, and Clyde Ingle, who shares the Panel's mission supporting higher education standards and who served as Chairperson for the Task Force. The last two individuals were present at the meeting to answer any questions. Governor Bayh observed that Goal 5 is very important for obtaining the overall objectives of the Governors and the President in Charlottesville in 1989. Higher-education, postsecondary education takes a great deal of resources, both from the federal and state governments. Moving toward a system of assessments for postsecondary education is entirely consistent with the work of the Panel in the area of K-12 education.

Governor Bayh noted that Task Force began last year to explore the feasibility and wisdom of moving toward a postsecondary assessment for the above reasons, consistent with the importance of adult education. The Task Force met last year and held regional hearings around the country. Governor Bayh thanked those Governors who had attended the hearings for their time and commitment.

Governor Bayh observed that the Task Force had received a great deal of questioning and critical comment. He emphasized that the system of assessment as envisioned by the Task Force resolution is sample-based. A great deal of the critical commentary was based on misapprehensions of this point. Governor Bayh stated that the resolution does not envision assessments being given to each and every student in postsecondary education. Instead, a sample-based system of assessment would determine how the various states are doing and how the nation as a whole is faring in the area of postsecondary education.

Governor Bayh stated that, as currently envisioned, a system of assessments would be statewide as opposed to being broken down institution by institution within the various states. There was some feeling that the latter system could create the possibility of a marketing competition and rivalry between institutions in the various states, so the Task Force wished to avoid this, at least in the threshold stages. In response to the comments received, the Task Force is recommending a system of assessment that is sample-based. It will be states as a whole telling how they are doing, and our nation as a whole telling us how we all are doing without getting into comparisons of individual institutions.

It is hoped, Governor Bayh pointed out, that the system of assessments can accomplish two things. The first would be to

tell how many of our students graduate, from those that initially enter some form of postsecondary education to how many of them make it all the way to graduation. Governor Bayh stressed that this should be particular sensitivity to minority students because many of our states have unfortunately high rates of lack of completion on the part of those in minority communities. We want to focus on what we can do to improve the graduate rates of our minority students. So the first goal of the Task Force was to determine what the graduation rates are overall with particular sensitivity to how our minority students are doing.

Second, Governor Bayh noted, the system of assessment is designed to determine how our graduates, those who actually make it through to receive a diploma, do with regard to thinking critically, to communicating and to problem-solving, exactly the kind of skills they will need to be able to get a decent job in the economy of the 1990s and in the years beyond.

Governor Bayh summarized by saying that the Task Force's effort is totally consistent with what the Panel has done in the area of K-12 education, to try to determine how we are doing in order to effectively allocate our resources, and to prepare our adults as well as our children for the world in which they must compete and succeed in the 1990s and beyond. Because of these reasons and given the history and the background of the Task Force, Governor Bayh strongly urged the adoption of the Task Force resolution.

Secretary Richard Riley

Secretary Riley observed that there is some ongoing research work on postsecondary graduation data, as well as developing a national assessment of college students in critical thinking, problem-solving and communications skills, as well as developing voluntary national occupational skills standards. Secretary Riley noted that he would, as always, have to discuss the budgetary aspects of this area. Secretary Riley urged that the Panel keep its focus on Goal 1 and Goal 3 of the work that is being done--performance standards and assessments on all levels have to be maintained, and we can't get off of that track.

With that being said, Secretary Riley stated that he very much supported the continuation and expansion of analyzing what can be done that would be useful and effective in looking at higher education and trying to have it more accountable. Secretary Riley thought that the resolution as proposed certainly made good sense. The Panel should watch to see if a statewide sample would yield helpful, useful information.

Governor Evan Bayh

In a final word, Governor Bayh noted that the Panel had devoted a great deal of time in the discussion of developing the next generation of assessments, and that it is aware of how complex the issue can be. Governor Bayh wanted to thank the Department

of Education for moving forward in this area, contemplating devoting some resources and perhaps even issuing a contract to explore and examine how to develop postsecondary assessments. Governor Bayh told Secretary Riley that the Panel is very grateful for this because in the area of postsecondary assessments the science is not as evolved as in the area of K-12, and we all recognize that it needs a good deal more inclusion in that area. So the Department of Education is leading the way and Governor Bayh said that the Panel was grateful.

Governor E. Ben Nelson

Governor Nelson asked if there was a motion to adopt this resolution. Upon a motion being moved and seconded, the Governor asked for the ayes and those opposed. The Governor stated that the record should show that the resolution was adopted unanimously by all the Goals Panel members who were present.

Governor Nelson then turned the Panel's attention to the decision on the use of NAEP, which was Action Item 2 in the 1993 report. He noted that at the last meeting the Panel heard an interim report from Dr. Ramsay Selden on his advisory group's work using NAEP in the 1993 Goals Report. Pending the arrival of Governor Campbell and his Task Force and leadership team report, Governor Nelson asked Goals Panel Acting Executive Director Martin Orland to give some background on this issue.

Acting Executive Director Orland

Dr. Orland stated that the Goals Panel has taken seriously its obligations to provide the clearest information possible on our nation's and individual states' progress for achieving the National Education Goals. The Panel also has the responsibility to do the best possible job of insuring that the information that is provided by the Goals Panel is seen as technically valid and reliable. Sometimes these twin objectives create difficulties for the Panel in terms of sorting out the relative values because what we do in terms of clarity of information can be seen as being in conflict with information on technical validity and reliability.

Dr. Orland noted that this conflict has specifically come up since the beginning of the Goals Panel deliberations in the area of the National Assessment of Educational Progress with respect to how to profile achievement indicators to measure progress in Goal 3. There have been several controversies about the establishment, promulgation, and achievement levels which have been used by the Goals Panel from its inception in its 1991 report and again in 1992.

The Goals Panel thought that it was a responsible action this year to undertake as thorough an investigation as it could with leading experts to help it determine how to best profile indicators from the National Assessment of Educational Progress

using the proficiency and achievement levels established by the National Assessment Governing Board. Dr. Orland noted that the June 15 Goals Panel meeting revealed the considerable controversy and compelling issues that the Panel faces in terms of its twin obligations of providing premier information and technically valid and reliable information.

Based on the strong concerns expressed by the panelists at the June 15 meeting, the Panel staff convened a special meeting composed of members of its Advisory Group, members of the leadership team composed of representatives who have been given particular responsibility for this Goal area, and Panel staff. The goal was that out of a meeting that was held on July 8, there would be a consensus recommendation on how to profile the NAGB achievement levels in the 1993 Goals Report. Six of the eleven members of the Technical Planning Group attended that meeting, all four of the Leadership Team panelists had representatives at the meeting, and there were Goals Panel staff who were present as well.

Dr. Orland was pleased to report that those present at the July 8 meeting were able to achieve a consensus recommendation on this very difficult report. He pointed out that in the materials distributed at today's meeting, two other members of the Technical Planning Group who were not present at the July 8 meeting had expressed reservations about this consensus recommendation, and this needed to be made clear for the record. However, it was fair to say that those who were present at the July 8 meeting felt comfortable with the consensus recommendations.

Dr. Orland pointed out the main components of the consensus recommendations in the Decision Memorandum presented on page 42 of the day's briefing materials. The first component was that the Goals Panel should continue to report NAGB's NAEP achievement level data. The paramount concern here for providing clear, compelling information on national and state progress in achieving the Goals was seen as a value that is so important that it is to be kept in the forefront in terms of the unique communications responsibility of the Panel.

The consensus recommendation also, however, took into account the recent General Accounting Office report on the use of NAGB data in NAEP reports, which has given the Panel valuable guidance on how to present this information. Three main implications have been incorporated into the consensus recommendation. One is to use caution in interpreting the NAEP achievement level data. Here the distinction is the NAGB data as an excellent measure of overall performance on an ambitious test of knowledge and skills. It may be a subtle difference, but it is different from focussing on particular areas of content mastery or non-mastery. The consensus recommendation is that as long as the Panel is talking about performance and levels of performance on the NAEP exam, then it is valid to profile information in that manner.

Second, the Panel should use NAGB's policy-based definitions of achievement levels. This refers to a broader characterization by the National Assessment Governing Board of what its achievement levels represent, so that they are seen as representing broad, generic kinds of performance expectations rather than mastery of discrete competencies.

Finally, the Panel should meet the challenge of profiling information on performance levels in a meaningful way to give people an understanding about what kinds of knowledge and skills students have and don't have. The consensus recommendation is to present illustrative examples within the body of the Goals report that would profile students at different achievement levels and their ability to answer specific items on the NAEP exam. That gives the American people a sense of the vast disparities in terms of knowledge, skills and performance grounded in particular items and examples.

Dr. Orland noted that the Goals Report is a communications tool, that can be an asset and provided the information presented is consistent with the technical constraints and concerns expressed in the input to the Panel. Therefore, some minor changes in the way of profiling the indicators are recommended for the 1993 Goals Panel report.

First, in past reports the designation of competent or not competent has been used in describing NAEP/NAGB achievement levels, which has been seen as indicative of students' mastery of particular content rather than raw mastery or certain performance levels. Therefore, the consensus recommendation is to say that the measurement is consistent with the Goals Panel performance standard rather than an indicator of students being competent or not competent.

Second, the consensus recommendation is to add new exhibits, as mentioned earlier, that would describe for different types of students at the basic level, at the proficient level, and at the advanced level, what kinds of items they can and cannot master. This would be with both illustrations and some overall statistics that would show the disparity and discrepancy between students who scored at advanced and basic levels.

Third, the consensus recommendation is to change the description in the Appendix of what the NAGB levels represent, pointing out that it is generic performance rather than mastery over specific content. Finally, in the NAEP/NAGB presentation for the narrative part of the report describing how the data should be interpreted, it would be cautioned that this is an excellent indication of overall performance on an ambitious test, but it should not be perceived as representing mastery over particular kinds of content.

Dr. Orland observed that this consensus recommendation, as with most consensus recommendations, may not get the total support of

every member of the group, but it represents the best compromise, with the twin objectives of providing clear, compelling information, while also ensuring technical reliability.

Governor E. Ben Nelson

Governor Nelson thanked Acting Executive Director Orland for his presentation. He then welcomed Governor Carroll Campbell and asked if he had anything to add to the preceding comments.

Governor Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.

Governor Campbell stated that he certainly agreed with what Dr. Orland had just said. Governor Campbell wished to emphasize the importance of dropping the Goal's Panel's designation of competent for those performing at the proficient and advanced levels and replacing it with the phrase "the Goals Panel's performance standard." This was done because some people are sensitive when you use the word competent. That means that for everybody that is not rated competent, you go the other way and rate them incompetent, which is a harsh differential. So the group and the staff looked at this problem and proposed not just to put in "the Goals Panel performance standard" but add to it the words "mastery over challenging subject matter." That is really what the Goal is all about and does not suggest a negative corollary such as competent or incompetent. Governor Campbell believed that there was a general consensus about those recommendations from most of the people on staff who represent the Goals Panel.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer questioned how these new designations would be presented in the report and wondered how "mastery over challenging subject matter" would be used as a definition of Goals Panel performance standards.

Secretary Richard Riley

Secretary Riley commented that he was supportive of the direction in which the Goals Panel was going, but that it should be observed that these achievement levels are judgmental. NAGB had to use the already existing test content--the test was already there. This group certainly supports the need for rigorous standards and then moving to a standards-based education and then to a standards-based assessment. But we do not have that yet. This is really the best that we have now, and NAGB has done a fine job with what we have to move forward. The Goals Panel is supporting a really extraordinary change that gets us thinking about what is important. But it is natural for questions to be raised about this direction. Secretary Riley thought that the Panel should listen carefully to and learn from everyone who wants to make observations on these issues.

Governor E. Ben Nelson

Governor Nelson entertained a motion to approve the resolution, which was moved and seconded. He noted that the record should show that it was passed unanimously by the Goals Panel members who were present.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer asked Dr. Orland about NAGB's specific description of what students should know and be able to do.

Acting Executive Director Martin Orland

Dr. Orland stated that you could talk about general performance on world-class tests without specifying that a student performing at certain levels can do specific things. The consensus recommendation of the group was that it would be pressing the system a little bit to far to make that second statement. It would be appropriate to state that this is a generic example of performance mastery. Therefore, because you cannot make a specific statement about what that represents, the best you can do is illustrate by profiling the specific items and talk about a student who performs at the basic level, what is the likelihood that that student will get that high on the graph.

Governor E. Ben Nelson

At this point Governor Nelson excused himself as well as Governors Branstad and Carlson in order to attend a meeting with President Clinton on floods, winds and other calamities. Governor Nelson thereupon turned the gavel over to Governor McKernan.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.

Governor McKernan stated that the next couple of hours would be devoted to a dialogue on criteria for reviewing education content and standards, with three different panels. First there would be a three-way discussion among Goals Panel members, advisors from Shirley Malcom's Standards Review Technical Planning Group, and invited experts on important issues related to the review and certification of nationwide education standards. Governor McKernan then turned the discussion over to Dr. Shirley Malcom.

Dr. Shirley Malcom

Dr. Malcom first introduced her fellow panelists, Jan Anderson, Iris Carl, Chester Finn, Phil Daro and Tom Crawford. She reminded the Panel of the charge that was originally provided to her Technical Planning Group, to try to articulate what kinds of review criteria would be in place to actually examine the standards.

Subgroups had been formed to look in detail into some of the questions that were raised at the last Goals Panel meeting, such as the question of integrating knowledge and skills across several disciplines, the sequence of the review process, and the issues of the relationship of the standards criteria development activity to the notion of the social and academic missions of schools.

Dr. Malcom posed a specific question to the Goals Panel for feedback that the Technical Planning Group needed in order to form its recommendations, though the question did not have to be answered immediately. If a state develops its own education standards, what does this mean? What kind of feedback would a state want and expect, and what would the Goals Panel like to come out of that process?

Dr. Malcom then turned the discussion over to fellow panelist Phil Daro.

Dr. Phil Daro

Dr. Phil Daro introduced himself as Executive Director of the California Mathematics Project at the University of California. More to the point, he noted that he was Director of Mathematics for the New Standards Project, which is developing assessment tools and systems to try to hit high-level performance demands. The goal is to have standards make sense at the level where teachers teach and students learn. The analogy in sports is that the performance is set by performance: somebody actually runs faster, and that sets a standard.

Dr. Daro observed that the problem in education to date is that standards have been invisible: not only are our students unable to see what the performances of students in other countries are, but they do not even know what the students in the classroom next door are doing. The intention of the New Standards Project is to put into the hands of American students actual completed assignments of students from other classrooms, other states, and even other countries.

Working groups in seven countries through the International Conference of Mathematics Educators and the New Standards Project are now organizing teachers to prepare examples of the kinds of assignments they are doing, to translate them, and to start using them with teachers here to see how we can make that work as a standards-setting process. So when we talk about standards, that is what we mean, standards that students set with their own work and standards that teachers set with their own work.

Dr. Daro observed that one of the New Standards Project's basic principles is that the only way you can understand students' performances as an adult is to place yourself in the role of the student and try to perform yourself. To that end, Dr. Daro introduced a fourth-grade math test for the Goals Panel members

to take that was included in their binders for the meeting. It was designed to assess how well students are learning to use mathematics to make sense of complicated realistic situations, which, like most real-world situations, have a number of realistic approaches and reasonable solutions. This test was used in an experimental pilot from last year, and about 8 percent of the students produced responses that were seriously inadequate.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer expressed concern that there was a move away from prescribed answers to the question, "What should a student know and be able to do?" Now it seemed that measurements of what students can currently do would be setting the standards.

Dr. Phil Daro

Dr. Daro agreed with Governor Romer, but the interpretation of what he said was broader than what he intended. He noted an example in Vermont where state fourth grade mathematics standards were written in a language that was basically mystifying to students and teachers. So the standards were rewritten in student terms, and students were shown what other students had done, as examples of mathematical generalizations. In order to communicate to students what the standard is, they have to see some actual examples of performances like the ones we are asking them to do. It is really an issue of communication.

Governor Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.

Governor Campbell observed that it was more than that. You can't have just set standards, because standards are always evolving in whatever field that you happen to be in. Standards of education are evolving constantly. The standard of the best that we can do today will change tomorrow as we do things better. We have flexible standards, but they are flexing upward. We should always be trying to set the best standard in the world as our goal, and measure against that.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.

Governor McKernan returned to the idea that athletes set the standard. The NCAA has set a 3 point shot standard, but everybody is getting so good at it that they are thinking about raising the standard by pushing that line back. We may find that many people are doing better than current world-class standards and adjust accordingly in an evolutionary process. The people who are actually in the arena are the ones who ultimately set the standard, because we are going to be responding to those results that we see.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer observed that the panel came to discuss by what criteria we should judge content standards, but began by talking about assessments. The panel seemed to be sending a signal that you cannot set standards until you do assessments, that you cannot talk about content standards without simultaneously talking about how you assess them and what is the performance level you set at assessment. Governor Romer asked Dr. Daro that, when he said that a performance is set not by a theoretical judgment but by the actual performance of the youngster, wasn't he saying that you defined content also as you defined the assessment?

Dr. Phil Daro

Dr. Daro replied that the panel was saying that the standard had to make sense to the student, so that the student can set the standard for him or herself, and it has to make sense to the teacher as well. It has to make sense in the same way that someone else's performance in my sport makes sense to me so that I can aspire to it and work toward accomplishing it.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.

Governor McKernan observed that we had all been torturing our sports analogies here, and now he wanted to move the discussion along to Tom Crawford, someone who could discuss how the U.S. Olympic Committee sets and revises world-class standards for events.

Dr. Tom Crawford

Dr. Tom Crawford introduced himself as Director of Coaching and Educational Programs for the U.S. Olympic Committee. Every day, through its 41 national governing bodies of sport, the U.S. Olympic Committee is striving to figure out the best way to be internationally competitive. As a result, their standards are evolving every single day, because they pay attention to what the rest of the world is doing, and if others are doing better than us, then the U.S. Olympic Committee immediately strives to find ways to do as well or better in a wide variety of sports.

Dr. Crawford stressed that the U.S. Olympic Committee sees a major part of its function as education--educating coaches, athletes and their parents so that they understand how they can at least try to approach the world-class standard. Dr. Crawford thought they he might be driving some of his panel colleagues a little bit crazy by insisting on a similar approach. When he hears the question, what does an eighth grader need to be able to do, he always stops the group to say that from our perspective we would go a step further and ask, what does that eighth grader need to know and be able to do to do as much or more than any other eighth grader in the world. That is where the standards

should be set and that is where the standards always have to evolve to.

Dr. Crawford underscored the importance of setting a process in place so that standards can constantly evolve. In the world of sport, standards evolve weekly, monthly, every few months, and thus the training that goes on to meet those standards is constantly evolving. Part of what the U.S. Olympic Committee does is to pay close attention to what the standards are and to what other countries are doing in training their athletes to meet those standards. The Committee disseminates that information constantly through the way that it trains our coaches so that they understand both the standards and the methods that they need to use today, not a couple of years from now, to train their athletes to meet those standards.

The U.S. Olympic Committee has what it calls high-performance summits on a regular basis where it brings in the best people it can find from the world of sport to analyze how to perform at the highest possible level and meet the international standards. One of the most important points, Dr. Crawford stressed, came from one of the coaches of men's volleyball, who stood up in front of the rest of the group and said, it's very simple for us. We discovered that the most important decision that we had to make as a national governing body was that in fact we wanted to win. And until we decided that we wanted to win, we would never have been internationally competitive.

Dr. Crawford urged the Goals Panel to keep that analogy in mind. It is very important to make that first important decision that you want to win, that you want to be internationally competitive, and then the standards at the very top can become incredibly powerful for everybody involved in education. Olympic athletes are the very best, constantly pushing the envelope, and the broadcast of the Olympic games has an incredibly powerful effect on thousands of coaches and athletes across the U.S., who are now changing the way they are developing in the sport in an effort to meet those international standards. They are not all going to be gold medalists, and the U.S. Olympic Committee goal is not to produce only gold medal athletes. Rather, it is the pursuit of that international standard which leads to the maximization of human potential in every individual athlete that we are striving for. And that is what drives the standards in sports.

Secretary Richard Riley

Secretary Riley stated that he liked what Dr. Crawford had said. The standard remains constant--world-class and competitive. Indicators change as knowledge changes, as the definition of world-class changes, but the standard is the same. Secretary Riley said he was more comfortable that we do not have this varying degree of standards. We have a standards which is show by certain indicators today and it may be different indicators tomorrow, but the standard remains the same. For what a young

person should know and be able to do to be competitive world-class, now, as of this moment, we could say that this particular discipline, this particular grade level, that is a standard.

Dr. Tom Crawford

Dr. Crawford agreed with Secretary Riley. The standard is the same, but it evolves based on the world-class standards.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer offered a radical thought: that the Panel did not do itself a service when it chose the wording of Goal 4, that said that we are going to be first in the world in math and science. It is classically American to say that we are going to be the very best, and that is exactly what Dr. Crawford is advocating. Governor Romer likes the idea of the Olympic athlete going for the gold, but does not think that is a realistic expectation to lay out for a majority of a fourth grade math class. What we should tell them is that this is the content that you need to master if you are going to be a competent citizen or worker in the world. And we need to hold out some indicators that help them determine how good is good enough. There are only going to be a few that are first in the world. Governor Romer was wrestling with the issue of whether the system should be driven by what was predetermined as mastery or by ever escalating challenges to do better than you think you can do.

Dr. Tom Crawford

Dr. Crawford responding by emphasizing that having high world-class standards allows everyone to pursue them, not necessarily to achieve them, because we know that not everyone can be a gold medalist. But setting the standards that high becomes a very powerful motivator, and the ripple effect that takes place as a result of that constantly evolving world-class standard enhances the development of all of the athletes or all of the students that are striving to meet that standard. The achievement motivation comes from tracking improvement toward the standards, so it would not be seen as failing if everyone did not meet the standards. The pursuit and the motivational factor are very important.

Dr. Crawford noted, along these lines, that he had recently met with the brightest computer scientists in the U.S., who were going to represent their country in a computer Olympiad. Two of the scientists told him that they thought that they could be much better than they actually were at computer science, but since they were rated the best in the U.S., they felt absolutely no need to pursue any other standards. Dr. Crawford inspired them by asking them to imagine how incredible they could be and how competitive the U.S. could be if they aimed for even higher standards. So Dr. Crawford believed that the standard should be set very high in world-class rankings. Everybody will not be

able to meet it, but who knows what the edge of the envelope is in terms of U.S. international competitiveness.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.

Governor McKernan observed that he thought that the Goals were a little bit of what Governor Romer had suggested, and a little bit of something else. Goal 3 emphasizes kids in fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades mastering various subjects, to make sure that everyone is competent. Then Goal 4 aspires to the country being on a level that is first in the world, putting everybody together in an average.

Governor McKernan thought that Dr. Crawford's example of the volleyball team was helpful, how their whole approach changed when they made the decision to actually go for the gold and be number one in the world. Governor McKernan was not convinced that there is now in America a national agreement that it really matters whether we are number one or not. This is our greatest challenge. He had no doubt that this country could be number one in five years if it made the decision as it did on the goal of putting a man on the moon. We need a national agenda that everyone is behind, but we are struggling to make that a reality.

Dr. Tom Crawford

Dr. Crawford observed that the volleyball team probably would never have become gold medalists and internationally competitive without initially deciding that in fact was the goal that they wanted to shoot for. Because if they did not shoot that high, they would never make it. Similarly, if you do not set the expectation high enough, the child will not meet the expectation. There is also an incentive to being first in the world. The team gets more resources, funding, and marketing opportunities, and that helps, to a degree, their desire to win. The only way you'll ever reach a high goal is by setting your standards high.

Governor Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.

Governor Campbell wanted to give an example of this. He noted that Secretary Riley when he was Governor of South Carolina had a tremendous impact on the state with his Education Improvement Act. A special math/science school was built, whose single criterion for entry was ability, and it has been operating for four years. An interesting thing has happened: A number of South Carolina schools have tried hard to keep their best and brightest students from going to the Governor's School for Math and Science. They did this by upgrading their offerings and challenging students more in the public school system. So there was a direct result from setting a higher standard in a school.

By setting standards in the Goals process, Governor Campbell observed, we are trying to get students to rise to the height of their potential through their maximum effort. If they do not

give their maximum effort, then they are not going to realize their potential to be the best and compete with the best. It's like raising the pole bar vault notch higher each time. There is nothing in the world wrong with setting that bar just a little higher. The challenge is to set a standard that makes you competitive on the world scene.

Governor Campbell was worried about some people saying that we can't have these standards or challenges because it would be unfair to these students or those groups, and he thought that this was a bunch of malarkey. Different students are going to perform with different abilities, but the challenge is for them to go up. What we have now is rising mediocrity, and we can't compete with anybody with that.

Returning to Governor Romer's point, Governor Campbell agreed that we had to have a proficiency level, but that should not be the standard of excellence. In the goals of trying to set standards, you plan to get all the students to a proficiency level, but you've got to challenge them constantly with that upper level. It is the only way that we are going to continue to excite young people and keep them really interested, and it works. Where those challenges are offered, young people surprise us by always exceeding what we expect of them. Our biggest problem may be in not expecting enough in some instances.

Dr. Phil Daro

Dr. Daro wanted also to comment on Governor Romer's point, because he heard the same worries a lot from teachers: The talk about world-class standards may make us feel really good and enthusiastic, but what are you really asking us, teachers and students, to do? In the context of sports, where we seem to get fascinated and stuck so often in these discussions, we have the fitness standard, which is the standard that truly is for everyone. You can, realistically, set very high fitness standards that all people, given the dedication and effort, can attain, for a much higher level of fitness than they have today.

Dr. Daro thought that in many ways the fitness standard is the most important standard. The fascination of the high-performance, excellence standard in competitive sports is also important, psychologically, because it does motivate people. In mathematics, this has been a particularly troublesome dichotomy because the mathematics curriculum, more than any other, has been geared primarily to a very high competitive performance level for those very few that go on to become mathematicians. And the proficiency level for mathematics has been very low. There has been a huge gap in the field, and it is very distorted.

What we are trying to do, Dr. Daro stated, is to set a high proficiency standard, and that is like a high fitness standard. Maybe it is like good music programs where some go on to play violins in performance and conduct orchestras, but everybody sings in the chorus and everybody can carry the tune.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.

Governor McKernan observed that these remarks related to the point he was making earlier, that we face two challenges. The first is the Goal 3 theory of everybody mastering the basic competencies that are going to be necessary for this country to continue and to enhance its standard of living. The second is to understand the new technology age in order to compete and be best in the world in terms of technology, science and math, which are so critical. These two Goals are not inconsistent; they represent dual needs in this country.

It seemed to Governor McKernan that both Goals were important. We have always had the Goal 4 idea of being the best in the world, but he was not sure that we have had as a goal in this country that all of our students should master certain skills. His own personal theory was that we have had the view that it really did not matter if not very many of our kids mastered these challenging skills, because as long as a third of them did, they could go out and create enough jobs for everybody else who didn't master them and so we could be competitive. What has changed is that this arrangement is no longer going to enhance our standard of living. Now everybody has to master certain skills, and that is why we originally designed Goal 3 as we did.

Dr. Shirley Malcom

Dr. Malcom said that it actually goes further than that. As someone who in the course of her day job was constantly confronted by Goal 4, she observed that there have been a lot of people who have believed that certain groups were constitutionally unable to master these fields. But by putting the stake on the table of everybody doing better, it has in fact elevated the level of discussion, the notion of science and mathematics for all. It has put science on the table in terms of having frameworks and assessments in those areas. What Goal 4 has done in terms of propelling our policy and education structures forward with regard to renewed emphasis and energy in the area of science and mathematics has been useful and important.

Dr. Malcom emphasized that the notion that we were all trying to express here is that you pull people up from the top, you can't push anyone up from the bottom. Standards help you bring all participants up to a certain level. You can't just say that we will do better and better in basic skills and then we'll move on to the next level. We tried that and it didn't work. We have to say that the good stuff is for everyone, and this is an essential issue.

What is different about this discussion this time, Dr. Malcom noted, is being willing to say that we must provide the coaches with the understanding about how you help people to meet those higher standards, that we have to invest in those coaches, in

that process of getting better and helping people to arrive at the standards. That is the challenge that we really face in all of this because we do have this issue of high standards on the one hand and high performance on the other. This is a really crucial distinction to make.

Dr. Malcom observed that it was very useful to have Tom Crawford as a participant in the discussion, not because his sports analogies always fit, but because he kept pushing and challenging them to think about having transparency in the standards. The public as well as teachers and students have to understand what kinds of effort and activity must go forward in order to meet the standards. The Technical Planning Group invented something called the barbershop process, which is essentially a commonsense test as to whether people can actually understand what it is you are trying to achieve. The discussion has to move into the public arena in terms of what students need to know and be able to do.

Acting Executive Director Orland

Dr. Orland noted that Dr. Malcom had talked about investing in coaches. He asked Dr. Daro to elaborate on what teachers are expected to do with assessments tests such as the one the Panel had just taken. If there is no one right answer, how do teachers judge performance and how are they trained to have enough knowledge to make the fullest use of the information that comes from assessments like this.

Dr. Phil Daro

Dr. Daro said that one of the stark realities that they saw immediately in starting to work with teachers in other countries was that it was easy to meet with them to talk about their students' work. Teachers met with each other every day. Teachers in most other countries spend a significantly greater amount of time working together and on professional work, and correspondingly less time with the students. The workday for teachers in our country basically runs as long as the students are in the school, and students are in school for a long time.

So there is very little chance for any standard-setting to go on at the local level, Dr. Daro observed. We have to break that pattern because for this process to work, the standards will only make sense if the teacher has someone to talk to about them and someone to test their ideas and assumptions against. Otherwise, it's all just a system of wishful thinking. So one of the major things we need to do is get teachers to invest some time in looking at student responses on assessment tests like this and debating their merits. The criteria for making judgments on this eighth grade test was made by a scoring process which was determined by debates among teachers. When you talk to teachers about this debating process, it becomes one of their most valuable staff development experiences. We are trying to design

the system so that the debates are not over technicalities of scoring but over issues of instruction.

The answer to the question, Dr. Daro continued, is that by involving large numbers of teachers on a regular basis in these official kinds of scoring, that will give them the techniques but not necessarily the time to have the debates at the local level and within their schools about different kinds of student work. There is a major challenge in reallocating the major resource in education, which is teacher time--second only to student time. We have to redirect some of it to having teachers challenge each other with these standards.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer observed that he was on the verge of appointing the nine people who comprise the Standards Board of Colorado. The discussion with the panel was on how to help develop criteria that will be used to certify whether or not individual states are "aligned" with the right kinds of national standards. But there is a prior state in this process: Before certification you have to have formation. The crying need we have right now in America is what do you do to help that panel of nine in Colorado and in other states that are being formed to create the standards that subsequently will be certified. Right now we have a gap.

Governor Romer noted that if he were sitting down with Standards Board of Colorado, he would give them Goal 3 instead of Goal 4, because, although Goal 4 is a challenge, it does not have the content that Goal 3 has. Goal 3 says that the panel should arrive at a determination of what is demonstrated competence over challenging subject matter and what all students should learn to use their minds well. The issue is how much breadth over against how much depth. We can go for the gold with a lot of breadth.

Governor Romer emphasized being very careful with sports analogies in education. Sports are very defined as to what it is that the race is. In education, we have not defined that yet. We have not defined the content before we apply the measurement. We have often defined how much breadth you can get, and we may have to back it up and say how much depth you can get to use your mind well. But, Governor Romer observed, there are people who desperately need help on this issue. What can the panel do, or what can a consortium of states do to assist each other to move in the right direction so that when we get to the certification we do not fail the exam?

Dr. Shirley Malcom

Dr. Malcom replied that one of the places to start is with the work that is already being done. Even though there are materials that are in draft, they can at least stand as the basis or the backdrop against which to have your own discussions within your own states. Dr. Malcom mentioned work of the American

Association for the Advancement of Science on science for all Americans and California frameworks in science and mathematics. Draft documents of the standards are on the verge of being released.

Dr. Janice K. Anderson

Following up on Dr. Malcom's remarks, Dr. Anderson told Governor Romer that there were materials which show what the draft standards look like. Various groups have notes, tapes, and figures from their forums and discussions with teachers and scholars. In the sciences, they have had feedback from about 20,000 people on the drafts.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer stated that he had seen the drafts, and that it was good to talk about certification three years from now. But there are still people out there who need help now, and there is no good national clearinghouse to go to get the benefit of the creative work that is under way.

Dr. Janice K. Anderson

Dr. Anderson said that suggestions could be entertained on how to better disseminate this information. She mentioned the tremendous ongoing outreach effort and gave a thumbnail sketch of nine projects under way, seven of which are funded by the Department of Education. Two are funded by professional organizations in social studies and economics. Each project runs about two years and goes through different phases, from defining the discipline and its content, to writing teams, drafting standards, redrafting, soliciting input, and having hearings and focus groups. Then the national board, consisting of 30 to 35 members across the discipline, considers the thinking to date on content and draft standards before going public with them.

Four projects will go public before the end of this calendar year: those on the arts, history, civics, and geography. Science will follow later, and English, language arts, and foreign languages projects have just started in the last six months. The project groups are also working together to look at issues that they have in common, such as the reality of the school day. Working groups have been formed to look for ways to integrate standards across the subject areas at the elementary level.

Explaining the structures of the groups, Dr. Anderson noted that the civics group had come up with five large, major topic areas for what the civics standards should cover, and within each area wrote two or three content standards. There is an architecture within each discipline. Students will be encouraged to analyze, argue, differentiate, compare, contrast, and debate the subject matter. So it is reassuring that we are aiming for the higher

order skills which will lead students to be good, thinking, functioning, problem-solving employees.

In the arts, four task forces worked together--those on dance, music, theater, and the visual arts--to create an integrated approach to standards in their areas. Also active in all the debate and discussion on standards are a wide range of professional groups.

States were invited to a one-day session in January to talk about the upcoming standards, and a grant competition to encourage the states to rethink their curriculum frameworks in these various subject areas, and what that would imply for model teacher professional development programs and certifications. The January meeting brought a huge turnout and later, 54 responses to the grant competition, 25 of which were multidisciplinary. So states were seeing these efforts as resources to draw on.

So disciplines are working on their own issues independently, yet coming together to share issues and solutions. The states will address their concepts in different ways through curriculum and instruction. School boards will take the standards as a starting point and as resources and materials to draw on. Going back to Governor Romer's question, Dr. Anderson said that we will try to get better as a clearinghouse where you can get everything there is to have at this moment, but it is evolving.

Secretary Richard Riley

Secretary Riley observed that the multidisciplinary frameworks will be analyzed to see what works better and what does not. Goals 2000 is also in place, which gives the grand opportunity for all the states to have information on all the different educational frameworks used throughout the states available to everybody through the various action plans.

Dr. Shirley Malcom

Dr. Shirley Malcom introduced the next panel by observing that her technical planning group wanted to get input from people in the field who represented important constituencies and points of view, as well as the concerns of special populations.

Dr. Martha Thurlow

Dr. Thurlow introduced herself as Assistant Director of the National Center on Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities, speaking as someone who has been involved in a professional role with people with disabilities, primarily children, for more than twenty years.

Dr. Thurlow observed that when she was in school, most children with disabilities were not there. As a result, most adults are not aware that today there students with many disabilities who

are in our schools. Youngsters with relatively severe mental impairment and physical disabilities used to be in institutions, but now they are in school, often in their own neighborhoods. Learning disabilities make it difficult for many students to learn to read or to compute math problems. Severe emotional disabilities make it difficult for some youngsters to even get themselves to school. Some students are deaf, others visually impaired, and so on.

Part of the problem in addressing any issue with relation to students with disabilities is that they have a tremendously wide range of characteristics, varying in intelligence and the nature of their problems. Students with disabilities make it a little more difficult to think about how to define standards of excellence and how to measure the progress in reaching those standards. But they must not be ignored, Dr. Thurlow emphasized.

Dr. Thurlow said that those she had talked to in the disabilities community were unanimous in the belief that students with disabilities should not be excluded from the standards. Dr. Thurlow applauded the notion of high standards, along with educators who work with students with disabilities and parents of students with disabilities. It is important to have high expectations for all kids.

Dr. Thurlow's concern about standards is that the effort does not seem to recognize a range of performance. The diverse characteristics of students with disabilities means that not all students will do well. Furthermore, it will not be easy to separate those students who will do well from those students who will not. Some students with disabilities have told her that they dropped out of school because they were being held to high standards that they thought they had no chance of ever reaching. The message is that we can never be sure of the levels the students will attain.

Low expectations have tragic consequences for many students. Still, there are some students who enter school with significant disabilities that will make the achievement of certain standards possible only after very intensive efforts and extended time periods. There is not a simple relationship between a student's characteristic and the probability that the student will reach high standards. It would be unwise to hold some categories of students to the standards but not other categories of students.

One concern Dr. Thurlow had about the standards is that the accommodations and adaptations needed for students with disabilities will not be provided. Modifications are needed both in the instruction that is provided to help students meet the standards and in the way that attainment of the standards is demonstrated. The need for accommodations and adaptations will depend both on the characteristics of the individuals and the characteristics of the standards towards which they are working. In the standards that are currently being developed, there is a

great deal of variability in the way they are stated. Some standards seem to be more amenable to flexible interpretation than others.

Another concern that Dr. Thurlow had about standards was related to assessments. She believed that we must measure all students when we monitor progress toward the standards. This measurement will be a challenge because in the past our nation has usually decided not to measure those students who are not easy to measure. In NAEP, for example, almost 50 percent of the students with disabilities have been excluded from the assessment. If students with disabilities are left out of the assessment, they will be left out of educational requirements as well. Too often we find that out of sight in the assessment is out of mind.

Dr. Thurlow emphasized that we need to be accountable to all students in this standards process. This is what Kentucky has done by including the scores of all students in their results, even those two percent of the students who are assessed with an alternative format because of their severe cognitive disabilities. Students with disabilities should be considered as we develop assessment standards.

Dr. Thurlow made four recommendations to this end. First, we need to include individuals with disabilities or those who are familiar with disabilities issues when developing standards and assessment of standards. The goal is not to "dummy down" those standards, but to help state the standards in ways that promote the use of accommodations and adaptations that will be needed for students with disabilities. Second, consider an array of alternatives for making the standards appropriate for all students with disabilities. Third, include the performances of all students in the measurements for the standards. Students at the bottom must show increases along with the students at the middle and the students at the top. Fourth, remember that the important thing is progress toward the standards. All students may not do well, but all students should demonstrate progress toward the standards, and this progress should be documented for all students.

Dr. Alba A. Ortiz

Dr. Ortiz, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Research at the University of Texas at Austin and Director of Bilingual Special Education and Director of the Office of Bilingual Education at the College of Education, noted that she was also immediate past president of the Council for Exceptional Children. Dr. Ortiz was struck by the fact that many of the concerns articulated by Dr. Thurlow are also concerns for linguistically and culturally diverse students, specifically those with limited English proficiency.

Dr. Ortiz stated that she would focus her remarks on language minority students, who should be considered in all part of

education reform, just like students with disabilities. Those working with language minority students are not seeking separate sets of standards, with perhaps a few exceptions, but a recognition of individual differences, the realism of kids in classrooms as earlier indicated by Governor Romer. It is desirable to have some flexibility in terms of how you achieve standards and particularly in terms of how these are measured.

As with students with disabilities, language minority students represent a wide range of characteristics: ranges of proficiency in English and another language. Some language minority students have disabilities; an increasing number of immigrants in our schools today come to us without the benefit of any education in their home country. Among the issues to be faced in dealing with standards and accountability is how we will define English proficiency and how we will conduct assessments that measure a student's language status.

This is a complex issue, given that assessments of language proficiency have included measures of ability in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in two languages, in addition to assessing achievement in content areas in one or more languages, depending on whether the student has the benefit of a bilingual education or an English-as-a-second-language program. There are also the challenges of assessing subgroups of language minority students, for example, those in early childhood programs.

While language is a critical consideration, Dr. Ortiz cautioned that issues relative to standards and goals for these students should not be defined from the perspective of language only. Language minority students are also likely to come from poverty environments, to be mobile, to be victims of lowered expectations, and to have histories of underachievement, high dropout rates, high rates of retention, and high rates of referral to special education. Standards and assessment systems have to consider these factors. Also, not all students who need services are receiving bilingual or English-as-a-second-language services, a factor that emphasizes the critical shortage of teachers with specialized expertise in serving this population of students.

The current widespread failure among language minority students suggests that the current education system does not respond appropriately to the needs of these students. Thus, those who work with minority language students see the opportunity to learn standards and the importance of insuring access to a quality education as perhaps the most critical issues that these students face.

Dr. Ortiz said that progress has been made in identifying the variables that are conducive to producing high academic and social success for language minority students. We need a highly skilled teaching force of skilled educators who are able to

respond to linguistic and cultural diversities and can incorporate them into teaching. There is data that suggests that the smarter the teacher, the smarter the people. The students that have the greatest diversity and the greatest learning needs need those teachers with the highest levels of skill in order for the students to meet their maximum potential.

We know that high expectations are crucial, that effective programs are characterized by linguistic and cultural incorporation. It is important to provide strong native language programs and English-as-a-second-language programs in a culturally sensitive and challenging curriculum. We must avoid a "dummying down" of the curriculum for language minority students and focus on higher-order thinking skills of creativity, rather than providing low or basic skilled instruction. Parent involvement and positive school/community relations are also important for effective schools.

A variety of approaches are beneficial to the learner, Dr. Ortiz stated. The important factor for language minority students is to provide an opportunity for them to develop a high level of communicative proficiency. Also, any intervention has to be provided long enough for the student to be able to achieve the goals that we are pressing. A wealth of knowledge has come out of Chapter 1 bilingual education/English-as-a-second-language programs, and these data should be used in the development of standards and assessments.

Language minority students have to be included in assessments, Dr. Ortiz emphasized. As with students with disabilities, it is a common practice not to include limited English-proficient students in testing. This is partly because there are issues associated with how you assess the skills of these students. But also, because of the lack of appropriate education opportunities for these students, including them in the tests has tended to lower overall test scores.

By the year 2000, Dr. Ortiz observed, one-third of our nation will be members of multicultural groups. This suggests that it does not make sense to exclude these individuals from our educational accountability mechanisms. The criteria for certification of standards and the criteria for states and national assessments have to include appropriate procedures for assessing language minority students. These assessments have to be valid, reliable, fair, and free of discrimination. They have to be advocacy oriented, they have to be aimed at helping teachers prevent failure, and they have to be aimed at identifying early on a need to provide a vehicle for improving education.

Of utmost importance, Dr. Ortiz declared, is that teachers should not have to abandon sound instruction because of the demands of standardized testing. Teachers in bilingual education programs are moving quickly to provide instruction in English because the

assessments being used for students are in English. But the loss of native language instruction has really devastating effects on the learners. This suggests that assessments have to be available in the native language, that as we view the assessment issue we need to deal with the question of which languages is it feasible to assess in.

If we do not have assessments that are available in the native language, then we have to deal with the issue of how do you assess English language proficiency and how do you use those measures of English language proficiency to interpret the outcomes of, particularly, standardized testing. A system of alternative assessments is going to be important for second language learners because of the unique issues that they present in terms of testing.

In conclusion, Dr. Ortiz stated that the issues associated with the education of linguistically and culturally diverse learners are complex, and they require further study. She applauded the Goals Panel for including the issues of disability and linguistic and cultural diversity in its discussions. She suggested that many who had backgrounds in those areas would be glad to help move the agenda forward.

Ms. Ramona E. Edelin

Ms. Edelin introduced herself as President of the National Urban Coalition, and said that she was in substantial agreement with what the other members of the panel had said. She wanted to emphasize the context of setting National Education Goals as a process and the notion of high expectations as self-fulfilling prophecy. She quoted from a Nigerian scholar who observed that formal education is future oriented, and that it is the status of minorities in the social, political and occupational realms of American society as seen by the dominant white caste which determines the kind of education offered to them.

Ms. Edelin stressed egalitarianism in education. Equality is excellence because inequality leads to alienation. Excellence without equality only produces more inequality. Inequality leads to learning deficits and to alienation in the great mass of students. Alienation is the number one learning problem, depressing academic performance. Students' resistance to learning is socially produced by inequality and by authoritarian pedagogy in school, worsening the literacy problem and crisis in teacher burnout.

Teacher burnout and student resistance are social problems of an unequal system and cannot be fully addressed by teacher education reform or by classroom remedies alone. Participatory and critical pedagogy, coupled with egalitarian policies in school and society, can holistically address the education crisis. Ms. Edelin wanted to focus not so much at this moment on what we want Americans to do as on what we want Americans to be. The primary

job of educators is to create a more and more enlightened society, one in which each member of our education system will strive to be self-knowing, self-loving, self-disciplined, self-motivated, self-sufficient, and part of a dynamic and creative interdependent and interactive mix of cultures.

Ms. Edelin emphasized equality among and between cultural groups reflected in our goals and expectations, as well as a cooperative rather than a competitive learning environment. A team setting approach in education fosters an inquiry-based approach to learning, where children's questions become the center of the learning period. Children learn to be problem-solvers and higher order critical thinkers from their interests in working out whatever issues or problems they put on the table on that particular day. In a hands-on learning environment, teams of young people cooperatively handle and challenge everything in their daily lives.

In the "Say YES to a Youngster's Future" program, young African American, Latin, and Native American children learn that they will be the definers and the developers and leaders of technology for the entire planet. Ms. Edelin wanted to create learning environments of small, active groups of young people, moving away from the lecture format, which is seen as a highly negative authoritarian approach to teaching. In the small groups, we see young people reading and writing more, and becoming more verbal to express what they have learned in their science experiments, growing out of these hands-on experiences.

Ms. Edelin urged the Goals Panel, as it thought through the education issues, to include the parents and educators and policymakers from communities of color in this nation who know how to reach and to teach, to break down the alienation and provide some of the motivation, and to include the families of these young people in their learning process. Educate for change, so that young people will not still occupy an inferior caste at the end of the standards process. She urged that the national standards address the issue of who we want young Americans to be and not just what we want young Americans to do.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.

Governor McKernan thanked Ms. Edelin for her compelling testimony, and asked if there were any comments or questions.

Secretary Richard Riley

Secretary Riley thanked the three panelists for their input, which had been very helpful. In terms of the question of cultural diversity in education, Secretary Riley pointed to the arts and foreign language components of Goal 3. He noted that his wife was involved with a small elementary school in Washington, D.C., predominantly African American. A Hispanic teacher of foreign languages in the school had helped two African

American fifth grade students to win the National French Award. That teacher evidently knew how to bring the very best out in those students, and to seek the kind of excellence the panelists were talking about.

Opportunities to learn should be very positive, Secretary Riley stated. The great diversity of young people in America underscored the importance of teacher preparation for students of different capacities and interests and cultures.

Ms. Ramona H. Edelin

Ms. Edelin added that cultural dimensions could be brought in not just through the arts and languages. The National Urban Coalition program focuses on mathematics and science and the enormous contributions of African, Hispanic, and Native peoples to the development of the first 4,000 years of mathematics and science. All that we know in science was not created in just one or two hundred years. She encouraged much better rounding out in all of the disciplines of the contributions of all of the world's great groups.

Dr. Chester Finn

Dr. Chester Finn saw three problems ahead for the standards-setting venture. First, by his count there were now ten subjects preparing standards, and possibly more to come. Someday we may find ourselves with 20 subjects, each having standards that they would like to have certified. The question arises: Are they equally important, and can any state, school, teacher, plausibly do them all? The issue of selectivity has not yet been tackled.

Second, each subject could be described as expansionistic or territorial in its own sense of itself. There is a tendency within each subject to attempt to conquer the entire curriculum. There is going to be the issue of what will happen when each subject, in order to meet its own self-imposed standards, is going to require three quarters of the school deck. Especially if there are twenty of them, we can begin to see the problem ahead.

Third, looking at the needs, anxieties and legitimate concerns of groups within the population concerned about the direction of the standards, some deeply religious people are agitated. They are not sure that this approach to educational outcomes and the standards and assessments that go with it, with the sanction of government behind it, is a good thing for them and their kids. At some point we will have to grapple with this anxiety.

Dr. Finn was struck historically by Governor Romer's distinction earlier between the two kinds of standards, the one embedded in Goal 3 and the one embedded in Goal 4. We are trying to have it both ways. Dr. Finn thought that we do want to have it both ways.

It seemed to Dr. Finn that we got into this process historically. We were coming off what might be called three bad marriages as a country. One was the marriage to no standards; one was the marriage to minimum competency standards; and one was the marriage to norm-based standards in which wherever the average happened to be was described as the standard for a particular grade.

In trying to overcome all three of those problems and find someone to marry with whom we would like to reside happily forever, we are looking for something very special that meets a lot of criteria. Those include a universal competence standard that we could reasonably expect all young Americans to meet. But at the same time we would like those to be flexible over time as the needs of the society and the world change. And also at the same time we would like them to be benchmarked to whatever the best in the world are, even if we do not expect that everybody is going to meet the best-in-the-world standard. Dr. Finn thought that this combination was important, and that we can have it both or all three ways, but that it was not going to be a simple course.

Finally, Dr. Finn wanted to respond to Governor Romer's question about what could be done today for the states. Some standards projects have draft materials that are useful today, even if they are not yet final. Committees are drafting criteria that those submitting standards for review might reasonably be asked to consider meeting or formats in which to consider submitting the standards. Drafts of these kinds of criteria, or at least suggested criteria, should be ready soon. The Goals Panel in the future may want to have these criteria at least up for review pretty soon.

Dr. Iris Carl

Dr. Carl stated that principally we need to focus on the fact that the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards that are presently being used as a model are standards for every single child in America. What we are saying in the standard is that excellence and equity are not incompatible in any way. As we look at the overarching stands, or the practice standards as some people call them, we find that all of the other disciplines that are drafting standards now are incorporating such concepts as problem-solving, critical thinking, making those connections and being logical, or at least showing that children are learning to be logical in their thinking process.

Overall, however, Dr. Carl thought that a critical piece of the NCTM standards that has been missing in this debate is how do we prepare our teachers. Most of the teachers today who are in their forties have not had the benefit of a teacher education program that prepared them for the standards that we are recommending. Half of all the math that we know today has been invented since World War II. If we are going to build a future

for our children that addresses the needs of the next century for a technological society, then what we do in supporting and educating our present teaching force and preparing the new entrants is really critical.

Dr. Carl was also concerned about evaluation or assessments. NCTM is working now on an assessments document, and we know that assessment drives what is going on in the classroom. If we say that we need to be teaching the standards, we also need to add that what we teach must be what we test. And how we teach it, hands-on, using technology, or in whatever way, has to be a part of that assessment component. Right now we are still allowing standardized tests to remain dominant. We are also putting new and creative interpretations on NAEP, and placing a burden on them that is not theirs to assume.

Dr. Carl's final comment was that the international community is very much aware of the NCTM standards. In fact, the international community has praised them, has gained permission to interpret and translate the standards so that they are using them at the same that they are clutching to their bosoms their own moves toward reaching higher standards. We need to be sure that we are about the business of setting high and lofty goals for every single child, bearing in mind that the steps between Goal 3 and Goal 4 begin with Goal 3, and that incremental steps will get us there.

Governor Roy Romer

Governor Romer wanted to make some observations and pose some questions in closing. He thought that what we are trying to do with standards and educational reform is like a moon shot, and we are trying to organize a lot of things. He noted that Secretary Riley has a bill now in Congress that is also aiming at that, a comprehensive approach to try to help us move this along. But this is not the only thing that needs to be done.

We talked today about preparing for standards in the sense of certification. We also ought to have on our agenda who is preparing the textbook publishers for this new world. Is there a strategy there that has a lead time of five to seven years that we ought to have very much on everyone's agenda? Who is alerting the colleges of America that standards will be part of the new curriculum for their teacher training? Could it be mandated that every new charter school has standards for which that institution is built? Colorado hopes to accomplish the latter goal.

Governor Romer observed that there were two barriers to accomplishment of the Goals that we have not tried to intercept or remove. One is the religious groups, as identified by Dr. Finn, who are beginning to identify standards-based education as a threat to their values. Governor Romer was flabbergasted by this because it seemed to him that content orientation of NCTM standards is exactly a confirmation of the values of these

groups. We ought to intervene to change this perception because an image may grow through telecommunications that can never be wiped out.

The other barrier, Governor Romer noted, is the feeling in America that education should be local, not federalized. We are now moving to national standards to be implemented by states. Politically we need to think about the place to house this activity. If there were a consortium of states pushing this agenda, pounding on the table, insisting that the all this get done and that the federal government should also do its part, it would take away some of the onus that this is a federally driven thing. This is not a federally driven thing. This is a people-driven thing.

As long as the Goals activity is identified with federal legislation and federal administration, it is going to run the risk of being attacked as usurping America's locally funded, locally oriented education. This barrier could be intercepted by a more decentralized consortium in which the standards would be deposited, instead of being handled top down from the Department of Education.

Governor Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.

Governor Campbell wished to comment on Governor Romer's great point about religious groups. His state had convened a very broad-based curriculum congress. They had discovered that the concerns of religious groups were not over academic standards, but fears that a values-based education would be dictated out of Washington. There was no question but what this issue had to be addressed soon, but the religious groups in his state had expressed no concerns in discussing academic subjects and standards.

Dr. Shirley Malcom

Dr. Malcom wished to thank the Goals Panel and the panels that presented, who had helped us to move forward secure in the notion that what everyone wants is challenging subject matter and high expectations for all students, and that we are not in the position of basically backing away from that but in fact embracing it. She would never forget her turning point when her seventh grade teacher said to her that you are better than you think you are but you are not as good as you can be. Dr. Malcom thought that was really what we are trying to affirm here, that we have to provide the opportunities, the challenges and the standards that will allow students to reach these kinds of goals. Her Technical Planning Group was supported in this by today's comments.

Governor E. Ben Nelson

Governor Nelson declared that the Panel would now turn to the Task Force on Education Network Technology. Last February, Senator Bingaman had suggested that the Panel investigate how technology could be creatively applied toward achieving the National Education Goals. As a result of that interest, the Panel convened a task force to explore the issue. At its meeting in Lincoln earlier this year the Panel had seen live and video demonstration of technology applications in the schools, particularly the potential of telecommunications networking to fundamentally restructure teaching and learning.

Today the Panel had the opportunity to preview the results of the Task Force's report on the role of education network technology in achieving the National Education Goals. To summarize the findings, Governor Nelson introduced Dr. Robert Palaich, Task Force Chair and director of Policy Studies and Information Systems at the Education Commission of the States, and Dr. Pamela Keating, Lead Task Force Writer and Associate Director at the Institute for the Study of Education Policy at the University of Washington, College of Education.

Dr. Pamela Keating

Dr. Keating stated that the Task Force's initial response to its charge was a sense of urgency. It has been ten years since the release of the Nation at Risk Report, five years since the Education Summit at Charlottesville, and we have less than six years left till the end of the century, when we have committed ourselves to changing education in specific and substantive ways. We have come to understand as a nation that an industrial model of school organization is insufficient for an information society, that productive workers need new knowledge and skills and the ability to work together in new ways, and that the lockstep learning of the past is not useful for knowledge workers of the future.

New standards for judging educational excellence and new tools for measuring achievement indicate our commitment to higher-order thinking, more robust and demanding educational activity, and a thoughtful focus on quality in every dimension of schooling. But it is not enough simply to set standards. Educators and policymakers have to make sure that we meet them.

But despite all the rhetoric and reform work of the last ten years, the pace of change has been disturbingly slow. A generation of students is passing through our schools largely untouched by our commitment to change and unaffected by our new standards of achievement. So the Task Force has taken its charge as a strategic challenge--how to use network technology to realize the Goals as quickly and effectively as possible.

The discussion documents for the regional forums on the National Goals repeatedly speak to the need to use technology to improve teaching and learning and connect schools to work. And many educators are now well along in making use of the available technologies to enrich classroom instruction and make learning more vivid and engaging. But these separate technological advances hold little promise for sustained systemic change.

Internetwork communications and computing and access to information are rich curricular resources and invitations to inquiry and exchange. This medium offers a dramatically decentralized and democratic learning environment. Abundant resources available online suggest new ways of accessing information, and generating and disseminating knowledge, working both independently and collaboratively. Pervasive real-time communication creates a new context for thinking and interacting, and presents unprecedented pedagogic opportunities for exchanging ideas and information and creating virtual labs in classrooms for enriched teaching and learning. The Task Force believes that only comprehensive technologic support of this kind can help us achieve the Goals that we have set for ourselves.

Dr. Keating noted that as a senator, Vice President Gore was the prime sponsor for Public Law 102194, the National Research and Education Network Act signed into law by President Bush in December 1991. The NREN commits our country to connect all educational institutions, research centers, and libraries in a high-performance computing and communications network. The domestic Internet already links major universities, government research and super-computing centers, and sources of research and development in the private sector. The largest group of new users envisioned in the legislation is the K-12 community.

Internetworked computer networks are the technological equivalent of our country's highway system, Dr. Keating declared. We are now mainly transporting ideas and information instead of mostly manufactured goods. The national information highway as a new initiative will interconnect electronically all those who teach and learn in direct dialogue and immediate information exchange in real time, all the time, in a single and sustained learning community.

The very pervasiveness of this new national information highway is an assurance of equitable access to necessary information and knowledge and full participation for everyone on the network, regardless of their point of origin. As we move to fully transparent technology interfaces integrating voice, video, and data, it is apparent that we need to design these technology systems as we designed other transportation systems, to support development and improve performance.

We need to link all aspects of the work involved in reaching the six National Goals and to integrate our disparate commitments to excellence. We need to connect teaching and learning activities

across the curriculum and the learning continuum. We need to link learners and knowledge more directly, to provide immediate and pervasive access to information for our people. We need bold, concerted and coordinated action to make meaningful change and realize real excellence.

The Task Force believes that network technology is a powerful tool for systematic action and systemic support, and that is in the interest of sound national policy to connect our concern with educational change to our country's commitment to electronically connect these knowledge resources.

Transportation, communication, and education: In the nineteenth century these captured the promise of America. Their convergence with abundant resources, unprecedented development, and national unity on a transcontinental scale unified our ethnogeographical diversity and powered our economic industrialization. Their convergence this century in internetwork computing and communications will carry us into the 21st century. This is the promise of network technology.

We are facing a new electronic frontier that is revolutionizing information transport in our country's communication capacity. The magnitude of the problem of reforming and modernizing American education is as formidable as the development of the common school a century ago, and no less achievable. If as a nation we are serious about achieving educational excellence, we believe that we must be committed to internetwork computing and communications as a strategic investment in change.

This new knowledge frontier is our future, economically, socially, and educationally. Like the geographic frontier that defined American advances last century, the development of pervasive information access and computer-mediated communication extends the reach and promise of America, and ensures the continuous progress that characterizes this country.

Dr. Robert Palaich

Dr. Palaich moved to a screen to use explanatory charts. He observed that the definition of network technology is a set of tools and services that enables educators and students to use computers and telecommunications links to access information in other regions. It does not include all video. Network technology is important in educational progress and will help improve the work of teachers. In expanding learning opportunities, network technology encourages a certain equity value throughout the learning process that is very important.

But there are barriers to the process of network technology, Dr. Palaich noted. There is a significant organizational resistance to doing things differently. There is a lack of support and experience in using network technology and unless instructional practices are changed, it is not going to work. What we have

found is that the best investment is in the professional development of the teachers that are working in the schools that are involved. Network technology is an opportunity to leverage the change process in schools, and the dialogue should range from the local to the national level.

One of the key areas the Task Force examined, Dr. Palaich observed, was investing in infrastructure and research and development. There are states that have task forces on technology working on planning at the state level. But Dr. Palaich warned against an unfocused investment strategy, which would waste a lot of money. There is also a national research agenda to be considered in terms of hardware, software, and access to the Internet. The process for writing matching grants for innovative network dissemination for curriculum standards is also very important.

Network technology can help the Goals Panel in the process of introducing the standards into the schools. One of the wonderful features of network technology is that it is very strong on peer-to-peer involvement, helping people to communicate on similar issues.

Dr. Palaich wished to emphasize how hard the Task Force had worked on this effort, and he wanted to thank an outstanding and diverse group of people. He stressed that restructuring the American educational system is at a critical juncture. His estimates were that between 25 and 50 percent of educators are joining the ongoing dialogue on national goals and standards. Unfortunately, he noted, perhaps only about 5 percent are really wrestling with how to integrate them into their schools. If we are to achieve the Goals we have set, it is imperative to enroll more and more educators, parents, members of the public, and political leaders in this process of network technology.

Governor E. Ben Nelson

Governor Nelson thanked both panelists for their presentation. He noted that the Goals Panel would be revisiting this issue in the near future with a major event structured around the Task Force Report's key findings.

Although this was the last meeting of this particular Goals Panel, Governor Nelson observed, it would appear together again when the Third Annual National Goals Report is released on or around September 30. The Goals Panel will also begin a new public awareness initiative.

H.R. 1804, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, as amended and passed by the House of Representatives on October 13, 1993

103D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. ~~3210~~ 1804

To improve learning and teaching by providing a national framework for education reform; to promote the research, consensus building, and systemic changes needed to ensure equitable educational opportunities and high levels of educational achievement for all students; to provide a framework for reauthorization of all Federal education programs; to promote the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and certifications; and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 5, 1993

Mr. KILDEE (for himself and Mr. FORD of Michigan) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To improve learning and teaching by providing a national framework for education reform; to promote the research, consensus building, and systemic changes needed to ensure equitable educational opportunities and high levels of educational achievement for all students; to provide a framework for reauthorization of all Federal education programs; to promote the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and certifications, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **TITLE II—NATIONAL EDUCATION**
2 **REFORM, LEADERSHIP,**
3 **STANDARDS, AND ASSESS-**
4 **MENTS**

5 **PART A—NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL**

6 **SEC. 201. PURPOSE.**

7 It is the purpose of this part to establish a bipartisan
8 mechanism for—

9 (1) building a national consensus for education
10 improvement;

11 (2) reporting on progress toward achieving the
12 National Education Goals; and

13 (3) reviewing the voluntary national content
14 and student performance standards and opportunity-
15 to-learn standards certified by the National Edu-
16 cation Standards and Improvement Council, as well
17 as the criteria for their certification, and the criteria
18 for the certification of State assessments by the Na-
19 tional Education Standards and Improvement Coun-
20 cil with the option of disapproving such standards
21 and criteria not later than 60 days after receipt
22 from such Council.

23 **SEC. 202. NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL.**

24 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established in the ex-
25 ecutive branch a National Education Goals Panel (referred

1 to in this Act as the "Goals Panel") to advise the Presi-
2 dent, the Secretary, and the Congress.

3 (b) **COMPOSITION.**—The Goals Panel shall be com-
4 posed of eighteen members (referred to in this part as
5 "members"), including—

6 (1) two members appointed by the President;

7 (2) eight members who are Governors, three of
8 whom shall be from the same political party as the
9 President and five of whom shall be of the opposite
10 political party of the President, appointed by the
11 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the National
12 Governors' Association, with each appointing rep-
13 resentatives of his or her respective political party,
14 in consultation with each other;

15 (3) four Members of Congress appointed as
16 follows—

17 (A) one member appointed by the majority
18 leader of the Senate from among the Members
19 of the Senate;

20 (B) one member appointed by the minority
21 leader of the Senate from among the Members
22 of the Senate;

23 (C) one member appointed by the majority
24 leader of the House of Representatives from

1 among the Members of the House of Represent-
2 atives; and

3 (D) one member appointed by the minority
4 leader of the House of Representatives from
5 among the Members of the House of Represent-
6 atives; and

7 (4) four members of State legislatures ap-
8 pointed by the President of the National Conference
9 of State Legislatures, of whom not more than two
10 may be of the same political party as the President
11 of the United States.

12 (c) SPECIAL APPOINTMENT RULES.—(1) The mem-
13 bers appointed pursuant to subsection (b)(2) shall be ap-
14 pointed as follows:

15 (A) If the Chairperson of the National Gov-
16 ernors' Association is from the same political party
17 as the President, the Chairperson shall appoint three
18 individuals and the Vice Chairperson shall appoint
19 five individuals.

20 (B) If the Chairperson of the National Gov-
21 ernors' Association is from the opposite political
22 party as the President, the Chairperson shall ap-
23 point five individuals and the Vice Chairperson shall
24 appoint three individuals.

1 (2) If the National Governors' Association has ap-
2 pointed a panel that meets the requirements of subsections
3 (b) and (c), except for the requirements of subsection
4 (b)(4), prior to the date of enactment of this title, then
5 the members serving on such panel shall be deemed to be
6 in compliance with subsections (b) and (c) and shall not
7 be required to be reappointed pursuant to such sub-
8 sections.

9 (3) To the extent feasible, the membership of the
10 Goals Panel shall be geographically representative and re-
11 flect the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the United
12 States.

13 (d) TERMS.—The terms of service of members shall
14 be as follows—

15 (1) Members appointed under subsection (b)(1)
16 shall serve at the pleasure of the President.

17 (2) Members appointed under subsection (b)(2)
18 shall serve a two-year term, except that the initial
19 appointments under such paragraph shall be made
20 to ensure staggered terms with one-half of such
21 members' terms concluding every two years.

22 (3) Members appointed under subsection (b) (3)
23 and (4) shall serve a term of two years.

1 (e) DATE OF APPOINTMENT.—The initial members
2 shall be appointed not later than sixty days after the date
3 of enactment of this Act.

4 (f) INITIATION.—The Goals Panel may begin to carry
5 out its duties under this part when ten members of the
6 Goals Panel have been appointed.

7 (g) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Goals Panel shall
8 not affect the powers of the Goals Panel, but shall be filled
9 in the same manner as the original appointment.

10 (h) TRAVEL.—Each member may be allowed travel
11 expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as au-
12 thorized by section 5703 of title 5, United States Code,
13 for each day the member is engaged in the performance
14 of duties away from the home or regular place of business
15 of the member.

16 (i) CHAIRPERSON.—From among the members, the
17 President shall appoint the Chairperson who shall serve
18 a one-year term and shall alternate between political par-
19 ties.

20 (j) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—A member of the Goals
21 Panel who is an elected official of a State which has devel-
22 oped content, student performance, or opportunity-to-
23 learn standards may not participate in Goals Panel consid-
24 eration of such standards.

1 (k) EX OFFICIO MEMBER.—If the President has not
2 appointed the Secretary of Education as 1 of the 2 mem-
3 bers he appoints pursuant to subsection (b)(1), then the
4 Secretary shall serve as a nonvoting ex officio member of
5 the Goals Panel.

6 SEC. 203. DUTIES.

7 (a) DUTIES.—The Goals Panel shall—

8 (1) report to the President, the Secretary, and
9 the Congress regarding the progress the Nation and
10 the States are making toward achieving the National
11 Education Goals established under title I of this Act,
12 including issuing an annual report;

13 (2) report on State opportunity-to-learn stand-
14 ards and the progress of States in meeting such
15 standards;

16 (3) review, after taking into consideration the
17 public comments received pursuant to section 216,
18 with the option of disapproving by a two-thirds ma-
19 jority vote of the full membership not later than 60
20 days after receipt of the—

21 (A) criteria developed by the National
22 Education Standards and Improvement Council
23 for the certification of content and student per-
24 formance standards, assessments, and oppor-
25 tunity-to-learn standards; and

1 (B) voluntary national content and student
2 performance standards and opportunity-to-learn
3 standards certified by the National Education
4 Standards and Improvement Council;

5 (4) report on promising or effective actions
6 being taken at the national, State, and local levels,
7 in the public and private sectors, to achieve the Na-
8 tional Education Goals; and

9 (5) help build a nationwide, bipartisan consen-
10 sus for the reforms necessary to achieve the Na-
11 tional Education Goals.

12 (b) REPORT.—(1) The Goals Panel shall annually
13 prepare and submit to the President, the Secretary, the
14 appropriate committees of Congress, and the Governor of
15 each State a report that shall—

16 (A) report on the progress of the United States
17 toward achieving the National Education Goals;

18 (B) identify actions that should be taken by
19 Federal, State, and local governments to enhance
20 progress toward achieving the National Education
21 Goals and State opportunity-to-learn standards; and

22 (C) report on State opportunity-to-learn stand-
23 ards and the progress of States in meeting such
24 standards.

1 (2) Reports shall be presented in a form, and include
2 data, that is understandable to parents and the general
3 public.

4 **SEC. 204. POWERS OF THE GOALS PANEL.**

5 (a) HEARINGS.—(1) The Goals Panel shall, for the
6 purpose of carrying out this part, conduct such hearings,
7 sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony,
8 and receive such evidence, as the Goals Panel considers
9 appropriate.

10 (2) In carrying out this part, the Goals Panel shall
11 conduct hearings to receive reports, views, and analyses
12 of a broad spectrum of experts and the public on the es-
13 tablishment of voluntary national content and student per-
14 formance standards, assessments, and opportunity-to-
15 learn standards.

16 (b) INFORMATION.—The Goals Panel may secure di-
17 rectly from any department or agency of the United States
18 information necessary to enable the Goals Panel to carry
19 out this part. Upon request of the Chairperson of the
20 Goals Panel, the head of a department or agency shall
21 furnish such information to the Goals Panel to the extent
22 permitted by law.

23 (c) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Goals Panel may use
24 the United States mail in the same manner and under the

1 same conditions as other departments and agencies of the
2 United States.

3 (d) **USE OF FACILITIES.**—The Goals Panel may, with
4 consent, use the research, equipment, services, and facili-
5 ties of any agency or instrumentality of the United States,
6 or of any State or political subdivision thereof.

7 (e) **ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS AND SUP-**
8 **PORT.**—(1) The Secretary shall provide to the Goals
9 Panel, on a reimbursable basis, such administrative sup-
10 port services as the Goals Panel may request.

11 (2) The Secretary shall, to the extent appropriate,
12 and on a reimbursable basis, make contracts and other
13 arrangements that are requested by the Goals Panel to
14 help it compile and analyze data or carry out other func-
15 tions necessary to the performance of such responsibilities.

16 **SEC. 206. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.**

17 (a) **MEETINGS.**—The Goals Panel shall meet on a
18 regular basis, as necessary, at the call of the Chairperson
19 of the Goals Panel or a majority of its members.

20 (b) **QUORUM.**—A majority of the members shall con-
21 stitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

22 (c) **VOTING.**—No individual may vote, or exercise any
23 of the powers of a member, by proxy.

24 (d) **PUBLIC ACCESS.**—The Goals Panel shall ensure
25 public access to its proceedings (other than proceedings,

1 or portions of proceedings, relating to internal personnel
2 and management matters) and make available to the pub-
3 lic, at reasonable cost, transcripts of such proceedings.

4 **SEC. 206. DIRECTOR AND STAFF; EXPERTS AND CONSULT-**
5 **ANTS.**

6 (a) **DIRECTOR.**—The Chairperson of the Goals Panel
7 shall, without regard to the provisions of title 5, United
8 States Code, relating to the appointment and compensa-
9 tion of officers or employees of the United States, appoint
10 a Director to be paid at a rate not to exceed the rate of
11 basic pay payable for level V of the Executive Schedule.

12 (b) **APPOINTMENT AND PAY OF EMPLOYEES.**—
13 (1)(A) The Director may appoint not more than four addi-
14 tional employees to serve as staff to the Goals Panel with-
15 out regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code,
16 governing appointments in the competitive service.

17 (B) The employees appointed under paragraph (1)(A)
18 may be paid without regard to the provisions of chapter
19 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating
20 to classification and General Schedule pay rates, but shall
21 not be paid a rate that exceeds the maximum rate of basic
22 pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule.

23 (2) The Director may appoint additional employees
24 to serve as staff to the Goals Panel consistent with title
25 5, United States Code.

1 (c) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Goals Panel
2 may procure temporary and intermittent services of ex-
3 perts and consultants under section 3109(b) of title 5,
4 United States Code.

5 (d) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon the re-
6 quest of the Goals Panel, the head of any department or
7 agency of the United States may detail any of the person-
8 nel of such agency to the Goals Panel to assist the Goals
9 Panel in its duties under this part.

10 **SEC. 207. EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSESSMENT.**

11 (a) GENERAL.—(1) The Goals Panel shall support
12 the work of its Resource and Technical Planning Groups
13 on School Readiness (referred to in this section as the
14 Groups) to improve the methods of assessing the readiness
15 of children for school that would lead to alternatives to
16 currently used norm-referenced early childhood assess-
17 ments.

18 (2) The Groups shall—

19 (A) create clear guidelines regarding the na-
20 ture, functions, and uses of early childhood assess-
21 ments, including a model of school readiness that
22 addresses a broad range of early childhood devel-
23 opmental needs;

24 (B) monitor and evaluate early childhood as-
25 sements, including the ability of existing assess-

1 ments to provide valid information on the readiness
2 of children for school; and

3 (C) monitor and report on the long-term collec-
4 tion of data on the status of young children to im-
5 prove policy and practice, including the need for new
6 sources of data necessary to assess the broad range
7 of early childhood developmental needs.

8 (b) ADVICE.—The Groups shall advise and assist the
9 Congress, the Secretary, the Goals Panel, and others re-
10 garding how to improve the assessment of young children
11 and how such assessments can improve services to chil-
12 dren.

13 (c) REPORT.—The Goals Panel shall provide reports
14 on the work of the Groups to the Congress, the Secretary,
15 and the public.

16 **PART B—NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS**
17 **AND IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL**

18 **SEC. 211. PURPOSE.**

19 The purpose of this part is to establish a mechanism
20 to—

21 (1) certify and regularly review voluntary na-
22 tional content and student performance standards
23 that define what all students should know and be
24 able to do;

206(c)-
211/1

1 (b) APPLICATIONS.—A State, local educational agen-
2 cy, or consortium of such agencies that desires to receive
3 a grant under subsection (a)(1) shall submit an applica-
4 tion to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
5 containing such information and assurances as the Sec-
6 retary may require.

7 (c) REQUIREMENTS.—(1) A recipient of a grant
8 under this section shall—

9 (A) examine the validity and reliability of an as-
10 sessment system for the particular purposes for
11 which such assessment system was developed;

12 (B) ensure that an assessment system is con-
13 sistent with relevant, nationally recognized profes-
14 sional and technical standards for assessments; and

15 (C) devote special attention to how an assess-
16 ment system, treats all students, especially with re-
17 gard to the race, gender, ethnicity, disability, and
18 language proficiency.

19 (2) An assessment system developed and evaluated
20 with funds under this section may not be used for deci-
21 sions about individual students relating to program place-
22 ment, promotion, or retention, graduation, or employment
23 for a period of five years from the date of enactment of
24 this Act.

1 SEC. 221. EVALUATION.

2 (a) GRANT.—From funds reserved under section
3 304(a)(2), the Secretary annually shall make a grant, in
4 an amount not to exceed \$500,000, to the Commission on
5 Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education of the Na-
6 tional Academy of Sciences or to the National Academy
7 of Education to—

8 (1) evaluate—

9 (A) the technical quality of the work per-
10 formed by the Goals Panel and the Council;

11 (B) the process the Council uses to develop
12 criteria for certification of standards and as-
13 sessments;

14 (C) the process the Council uses to certify
15 voluntary national standards as well as stand-
16 ards and assessments voluntarily submitted by
17 States; and

18 (D) the process the Goals Panel uses to
19 approve certification criteria and voluntary na-
20 tional standards;

21 (2) periodically provide to the Goals Panel and
22 the Council, as appropriate, information from the
23 evaluation under paragraph (1); and

24 (3) report on the activities authorized under
25 sections 219 and 220.

220(b)-
221

1 (b) REPORT.—The grant recipient shall periodically
2 report to the Congress, the Secretary, and the public re-
3 garding findings and shall make a final report not later
4 than January 1, 1998.

5 **PART C—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS**

6 **SEC. 231. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

7 (a) NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL.—There
8 are authorized to be appropriated \$3,000,000 for fiscal
9 year 1994 and such sums as may be necessary for each
10 of the four succeeding fiscal years to carry out part A of
11 this title.

12 (b) NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS AND IM-
13 PROVEDMENT COUNCIL.—There are authorized to be ap-
14 propriated \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 1994 and such sums
15 as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1995
16 through 1998 to carry out part B of this title.

17 (c) OPPORTUNITY-TO-LEARN DEVELOPMENT
18 GRANT.—There are authorized to be appropriated
19 \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 1994 and such sums as may
20 be necessary for fiscal year 1995 to carry out the Oppor-
21 tunity-to-Learn Development Grant Program established
22 under section 219 of this title.

23 (d) ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION
24 GRANTS.—There are authorized to be appropriated
25 \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 1994 and such sums as may

1 be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1995 through
2 1998 to carry out the Assessment Development and Eval-
3 uation Grants Program established under section 220 of
4 this title.

5 **TITLE III—STATE AND LOCAL**
6 **EDUCATION SYSTEMIC IM-**
7 **PROVEMENT**

8 **SEC. 301. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

9 The Congress finds that—

10 (1) all students can learn and achieve high
11 standards and must realize their potential if the
12 United States is to prosper;

13 (2) the reforms in education of the last 15
14 years have achieved some good results, but these ef-
15 forts often have been limited to a few schools or to
16 a single part of the educational system;

17 (3) leadership must come both from teachers,
18 related services personnel, principals, and parents in
19 individual schools and from policymakers at the
20 local, State, tribal, and national levels, in order for
21 lasting improvements in student performance to
22 occur;

23 (4) simultaneous top-down and bottom-up edu-
24 cation reform is necessary to spur creative and inno-
25 vative approaches by individual schools to help all

221(61) - 2.11.41



**PROMISES TO KEEP:
CREATING HIGH STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN STUDENTS**

**Report on the Review of Education Standards
from the Goals 3 and 4 Technical Planning Group**

to the National Education Goals Panel

November 1993

November 15, 1993

Letter to the National Education Goals Panel:

Last May you convened the Goals 3 and 4 Standards Review Technical Planning Group and asked us do some initial thinking for and with the Goals Panel. Our charge was to prepare a report offering recommendations for "criteria and processes the National Education Goals Panel and a National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) should use to review and certify voluntary national content standards as world class, challenging, and internationally competitive as envisioned by the Goals Panel, the report *Raising Standards for American Education*, and legislation considered by the Congress."

Since May we met eight times and talked with members of the Panel directly at its June and July meetings about the nature and progress of our work. We have tried to uncover and illuminate some of the complex issues that efforts to review and certify education standards will face, and to offer you our best thinking on those topics.

We submit this report with renewed respect for the importance of the questions you asked us to address and with increased appreciation for the difficulty of the job which lies ahead. The recommendations in this report are positions upon which the group agreed. Individual members comments from David Hornbeck and Shirley Malcom are presented in Section V.

Sincerely,

Shirley Malcom, Chair
Goals 3 and 4 Standards Review Technical Planning Group

Iris Carl

David Cohen

Thomas Crawford

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Philip Daro

Chester Finn

Anne Heald

David Hornbeck

David Kearns

Richard Mills

Harold Noah

Claire Pelton

James Renier

Sidney Smith

James Wilsford

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PROMISES TO KEEP:

CREATING HIGH STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN STUDENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education is the cornerstone of democracy and the avenue to equal opportunity for all. For the most part, the American education system has succeeded in preparing generations of students from diverse backgrounds for a place in American society. Where it did not, the economy had a place for people who were willing to work hard even absent the skills of formal schooling. In this process, expectations varied from school to school and student to student, but the job got done.

However, the job has changed. The demands of today's society are different. We need graduates who can compete in the global economy. We need adults who can use the knowledge and skills they acquire in school to deal with the complex issues of their own communities and of the world.

To fulfill the old promise of American education — that all graduates will be prepared to take their place in society — requires a new promise: that all students will be held to high academic standards.

BACKGROUND

Educational renewal received support at the highest levels of government when the President and the nation's Governors met at an historic Education Summit in 1989. They announced six National Education Goals in early 1990, and in 1991 established a National Education Goals Panel to measure progress towards those goals.

Two of those goals focus on improving student achievement of challenging subject matter. Yet beyond basic skills there is no consensus on what knowledge, skills, and understandings

are worthy of being taught and measured. In 1992 Congress and the National Education Goals Panel created the National Council on Education Standards and Testing to consider establishing world-class academic standards in the United States.

The Council's report *Raising Standards For American Education* found that standards were desirable and feasible and recommended establishing a new body to encourage and, with the Goals Panel, approve nationwide education standards. In April 1993, the Clinton Administration submitted legislation, now under consideration by Congress, that provides for such a body, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC).

Anticipating creation of such a council, the Goals Panel convened a Technical Planning Group to offer background guidance for the council's consideration. The group developed this report to indicate practical initial steps for reviewing and certifying the education standards currently being developed by independent professional organizations. Chaired by Shirley Malcom, the group included Iris Carl, David Cohen, Thomas Crawford, Mahaly Csikszentmihalyi, Philip Daro, Chester Finn, Anne Heald, David Hornbeck, David Kearns, Richard Mills, Harold Noah, Claire Pelton, James Renier, Sidney Smith, and James Wilsford.

They met eight times between May and September 1993, and conducted outreach that included an extended conversation with leaders of current standard-setting projects, a call for public testimony, and a public forum in St. Paul, Minnesota. The group emerged with increased appreciation for the complexity of the task and the work that lies ahead.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered as a starting place and common point of reference for those who will review and certify education standards. The recommendations reflect a vision of how education standards might be certified in ways that encourage their adoption and use.

The recommendations suggest criteria and processes for reviewing two kinds of education standards: content standards and performance standards.

Content Standards

Content standards specify "what students should know and be able to do." They indicate the knowledge and skills — the ways of thinking, working, communicating, reasoning and investigating and the most important and enduring ideas, concepts, issues, dilemmas, and knowledge essential to the discipline — that should be taught and learned in school. They help develop the work and learning habits essential to success in the world outside school: studying well, thinking logically, drawing inferences, supporting assertions with evidence, and applying what is known to a new situation. Central to the purposes of schooling, these habits enable students to apply the knowledge and skills they learn in school to problems of the real world.

The Technical Planning Group considered two types of content standards that would be reviewed and certified: national subject-specific content standards and state content standards.

Subject-specific content standards. Content standards are being (or have been) developed by professional organizations of teachers and scholars in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, foreign languages, citizenship/civics, the arts and other subjects. The Technical Planning Group recommends that NESIC review and give written feedback on standards to any nationally recognized group that has developed standards and requested their review, but certify subject standards only in the eight subjects listed above. Only a limited set of the knowledge and skills most important for students to learn in the discipline would be proposed in a core content document, accompanied by illustrative teaching and assessment examples. Those proposing the standards would explain, in a case statement, how the standards meet the review criteria. Only one set of content standards would be certified in each subject area.

State content standards. States would need to integrate proposed standards into a feasible but adequate set for the state. State content standards would need to fit together to define the core knowledge and skills for schools to teach and students to learn within the state. The Technical Planning Group recommends that each state propose a set of meaningful standards, typically a subset of the eight NESIC-certified subject-specific standards. This core set of state standards would usually account for less than the entire school day, year or program, to allow latitude for local and school curriculum development.

In reviewing subject-specific content standards, NESIC should take a broad view, identifying overlap, connections and cumulative feasibility among the standards for different disciplines. NESIC should work with the professional organizations developing these standards to encourage that these issues be addressed early in the process. NESIC should similarly work with states to help them develop state standards that effectively integrate subject-specific content standards and are feasible to implement.

Performance standards

Performance standards specify "how good is good enough." They relate to issues of assessment that gauge the degree to which content standards have been attained. While others use the term differently, in this report "performance standards" are not the skills, modes of reasoning and habits mentioned above that assessments attempt to measure. Instead, they are the indices of quality that specify how adept or competent a student demonstration must be. A performance standard indicates both the nature of the evidence (such as an essay, mathematical proof, scientific experiment, project, exam or combination) required to demonstrate that the content standard has been met and the quality of student performance that will be deemed acceptable (that merits a passing or an "A" grade.) The Technical Planning Group believes performance standards are essential to gauging whether content standards are met.

Therefore, the Technical Planning Group recommends that certification of content standards be provisional until associated performance standards are developed. Content standards themselves should include guidance on the nature of the evidence that is required to judge whether they have been met, and they should offer examples of possible assessment activities that would enable further assessment development. Over time, judgments of the quality of student performances should entail regular collection and public review and reporting of samples of actual student work.

Review Criteria for Content Standards

For subject-specific standards to be judged worthy of certification, the Technical Planning Group suggests that the public be assured that the standards are:

World-class, at least as challenging as current standards in other leading industrial countries, though not necessarily the same.

Important and Focused, including those elements that represent the most important knowledge and skills within a discipline.

Useful, developing what is needed for citizenship, employment, and life-long learning.

Reflective of Broad Consensus-Building, resulting from an iterative process of comment, feedback and revision including educators and the lay public.

Balanced, between the competing requirements for:

- depth and breadth,
- being definite/specific and being flexible/adaptable,
- theory or principles and facts or information,
- formal knowledge and applications,
- being forward-looking and traditional.

Accurate and Sound, reflecting the best scholarship within the discipline.

Clear and Usable, sufficiently clear so that parents, teachers and students can understand what the standards mean and what the standards require of them.

Assessable, sufficiently specific so their attainment can be measured in terms meaningful to teachers, students, parents, test makers and users, the public and others.

Adaptable, permitting flexibility in implementation needed for local control, state and regional variation, and differing individual interests and cultural traditions.

Developmentally Appropriate, challenging but, with sustained effort, attainable by all students at elementary, middle and high school levels.

State content standards. States would be asked to specify a "core" of standards that they require of all students. These state standards would be reviewed as a set to determine if, taken together, they are:

At least as Rigorous as National Subject-Specific Standards, and when different, subject to the same review criteria.

Cumulatively Feasible, sufficiently delimited and focused so they could be implemented.

Cumulatively Adequate to give all students the knowledge, skills, and habits needed to succeed.

Encouraging of Student Ability to Integrate and Apply Knowledge and Skills from Various Subjects.

Reflective of Broad State Consensus-Building, resulting from an iterative process of comment, feedback and revision among educators and the public within the state.

CONCLUSION

For the United States to retain international leadership, its education system must develop and implement education standards at internationally competitive levels for its entire student population.

This represents a new way of thinking — a paradigm shift — about American students. The expectation is that students in every school should be able to reach these standards with adequate support and sustained effort.

While keenly aware of the social problems weighing heavily and unevenly on schools, the Technical Planning Group agreed that inequities in current social realities could not be used as a justification for low expectations. High standards for all students were seen as the promise of American education, a promise that the Technical Planning Group wants to help the nation keep. Keeping this promise, however, will require the commitment not only of our schools, but of the broader community as well. This will require a collaborative effort of students, parents, teachers, administrators, government officials and every member of the community.

Not all students will meet these standards rapidly. However, the standards are meant to define realistic high goals. The standards would apply directly to all students except those, such as the severely mentally retarded, whose individual diagnosis implies a judgment that the student cannot meet them. However, these students, as well, deserve clearly-defined higher standards.

To reach the standards will entail a renewal of all aspects of the education system. The standards should be clear and visible. They should be reinforced by curricula, teacher training, instructional materials, and assessment practices that enable students to meet them and to compete successfully with students of any country in the world.

It is critically important that a core set of standards be defined that makes sense when communicated to the public and to teachers, students, and school systems. Both NESIC and the states have the responsibility to see that these standards make sense together. Cumulatively, the standards must be feasible to implement within the daily and long-term operation of schools, and they should be adequate to achieve the purposes of school and the promise of American education.

Our schools and our country need high standards against which to measure their success. Raising our educational performance is a long-term, systemic effort that will take decades. We do not know all that must be done to reach high standards, but we do know that high standards themselves are a critical first step. We hope this report helps the nation keep the promise of high standards for American students.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Need for Standards

"World-class athlete" — the phrase conjures up images of young men and women meeting the highest standards of athletic excellence, as they compete with youth of other countries. We picture American athletes earning Olympic medals or setting new world records. And we picture athletes in every home town in America striving toward those world-class standards, pushing themselves to excel, and improving their personal performances as they put forth effort.

But do we have a similar vision academically? Unfortunately we do not. We have standards setting the pace in sports but not in academics. We have no visible image of what academic success should look like, for which every student should work. Instead we have vague expectations that vary from school to school and from child to child. And our expectations for the vast majority of children have been far too low.

The result is that our students are nowhere near a world-class level. Business leaders express concern about the future of our work-force in a highly competitive global economy. University officials find applicants lacking in the skills and competencies needed to undertake a rigorous program of study. The very fabric of our democracy may be at stake if our schools turn out graduates unprepared to participate in their communities and to make educated, well-informed choices.

It is time to set our sights as high academically as we do athletically. We need to set world-class academic standards. They must be visible and reflected in curricula, instructional materials, teacher training, and assessment practices that enable our students to meet them and compete successfully with students of any country in the world. Not only should the top 5% of our students be as good as, or better than, the top 5% of students anywhere in the world, but the top 95% of our students should be as good as or better than the top 95% of students anywhere else. We must raise the expectations for every student in every school in the United States.

Meeting these standards will not be easy. However, the standards are meant to define what students should aim for and, with sustained effort, be able to reach. It is a goal that requires the commitment and effort of students, parents, teachers, administrators, government officials and members of the community. Schools need help. The goal requires that we all accept responsibility for seeing that all our students reach a world-class level. We don't want to fool ourselves into thinking we have succeeded because our standards are set at low levels. As our national goals for education state, we want students to succeed in challenging subject matter. Otherwise, America will remain a "nation at risk."

To overcome this risk, the nation must take the long view. Mechanisms for establishing standards, while underway, are far from complete. Initial results may be uneven, but progress will take place. The success of some states and communities will add credibility to the efforts of others. If the standards attained are high enough and the efforts to reach them are serious enough, the next generation will look at these efforts as a major turning point. To help this important process, the National Education Goals Panel asked a group of advisors to recommend some practical initial steps for reviewing and certifying education standards

currently being developed. This report is part of a continuing national conversation about creating internationally competitive education standards for America. It is intended to bring focus and concreteness to those discussions.

This report points to the complexities of certifying standards, often by making specific technical recommendations. It tries to indicate a vision of how education standards might be certified in ways that encourage their adoption and use. It is intended to offer a starting point and common vocabulary for the National Education Goals Panel, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council, states, professional organizations, citizens, and policy makers now developing standards.

III. BACKGROUND

The Promise: Standards and Reform

Education is the cornerstone of democracy and the avenue to equal opportunity for all.

Education benefits both the individual and society. Citizens must be able to participate in the work-force and in their communities to lead rich lives. Society depends upon its members to have the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy, exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and use their minds well.

Today, new demands are being made of America's education system. That system met the challenges of the past. It prepared generations of diverse newcomers to take their place in American society. In this process, expectations have varied from school to school and student to student, but the job got done. Now the job has changed. Reality does not match the promise to help all students learn what they need to know.

We all bear the burden of the uneven educational system that has evolved. Leaders in business and industry fear that the majority of American students are not prepared to compete in the global economy. Colleges and universities find that many are unprepared for rigorous study. Too few adults can meet the requirements of participatory democracy and workplace literacy. And sadly, they often do not know that this is so.

To fulfill the old promise of American education — that students will be prepared to take their place in society — requires a new level of performance for the system, and a new level of effort at reform. The call for educational reform is not new, but the need to hold all students to high standards is.

Standards-driven reform seeks to establish clear, attainable standards at internationally competitive levels for the entire national student population. This represents a new way of thinking — a paradigm shift — about American students. It raises our expectations for every student in every school, not just some students in some schools. The goal of this reform is to clarify and put in place a new set of expectations for American students at world-class levels.

Setting the standards is only the first step of many that are needed to achieve them. To make this happen will require systemic reform. The challenge is daunting — overwhelming, some fear — but the necessity is real.

Although the need for standards-driven reform is national, it must be implemented — indeed, invented — on the local level. Students and communities differ in their needs and resources. States and communities will determine the best route for providing necessary assistance to schools; they will write their own roadmaps for achieving the standards. The roadmaps should enable any student who works hard to meet the standards and any student who meets the standards to be well prepared for his or her future.

It is essential that communities do more than lay out priorities. They must assist their schools with adequate resources, necessary support and appropriate policies. Teachers cannot bear the burden alone. Determining both the standards and the means to reach them demands unprecedented action from alliances of students, parents, teachers, administrators, community members, policymakers and government officials.

A teacher at the public forum held in Minnesota September 7 wrote to the Goals Panel:

I'm feeling like the miller's daughter in the story Rumpelstiltskin. "You" national education leaders and administrators promise the public that we teachers can spin straw into gold... Everyone seems to have a right to achieve the highest standard ... and no responsibility for making the sacrifice of significant participation in the process. Help! Help! Help!

She's right. She cannot do it alone. Her students cannot do it alone. Her principal cannot do it alone. Parents cannot do it alone. They all need help. We can only do it together. Schools must have the support of their communities. High standards indicate to schools the job that the nation needs them to do. Doing the job requires trust and action from new coalitions within every community.

This type of powerful, system-wide change will not happen overnight, and its success cannot be measured in the short term. Meaningful standards must be developed and understood in each discipline and by each community. Curricula need to be developed, tested and refined in a wide variety of communities facing a wide variety of conditions. Teachers need to be trained to meet the challenges presented to them. Textbooks and teaching materials will have to be developed, and a range of new assessments will need to be invented, all based on these standards. Public involvement needs to be pervasive. People must be helped to understand what the standards are, what they require, and what it means to reach them. These steps need to be taken now.

History

Recognizing the nation's stake in education, the President and the nation's Governors met at an historic Education Summit in Charlottesville in 1989 and resolved together to set national education goals. They announced six goals in early 1990, and committed themselves to a decade of sustained effort of work to achieve them.

Two of the goals focused on improving the knowledge and skills of students:

Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship

By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, history and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

and

Goal 4: Science and Mathematics

By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

To hold themselves as public officials accountable for work to meet those goals, the President and Governors established a National Education Goals Panel to measure the progress made by states and the nation towards the goals. The Goals Panel asked national experts — among the best minds in America — what information currently existed to measure such progress. Where existing information was inadequate, the Panel asked what new information would be needed.

The Goals Panel and its advisors recognized that there was no national consensus on what constituted the most important ideas and skills for students to learn, against which to measure progress towards Goals 3 and 4. The Goals Panel embraced a proposal to develop national education standards that specify what students should know and be able to do and to encourage new methods of assessing students' success in meeting them.

The Congress of the United States in June of 1991 created a National Council on Education Standards and Testing. Congress charged the Council to advise it on the desirability and feasibility of establishing world-class education standards for the United States and methods to assess their attainment. They were also to recommend a long-term mechanism for establishing standards.

The Council met between June and December 1991 and issued its report, *Raising Standards For American Education*, in January 1992. (See Appendix E for the executive summary of this report.) The report found that standards are desirable and feasible and recommended establishing a new body to encourage and, with the Goals Panel, approve nationwide education standards. The Council found that such standards were needed to provide more equitable educational opportunity for all Americans, to enhance the civic culture, and to increase the competitiveness of the economy. It called for high, voluntary national standards to serve as guides and resources for state standards and local reform efforts. In April 1993, the Clinton Administration submitted legislation to the Congress that provided for a National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC). That legislation is now under consideration.

Both the legislation and the report call upon the new council to review and certify "content" standards (indicating what students should know and be able to do) and student "performance" standards (indicating "how good is good enough"). (See pp. 17 and 31 and Appendix C for more on these definitions.) Two kinds of "content standards" are being developed that NESIC may be asked to review: subject-specific national content standards, and state content standards. Subject-specific content standards are being developed, not by the federal government, but by professional organizations of teachers and scholars. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) worked in the late 1980's with private funds and developed content standards for mathematics. Its report *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics* has been highly regarded and generally used as a model for professional organizations in other disciplines to follow.

To enable the development of similar sets of standards in other subjects, federal agencies (the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Science Foundation) awarded grants to other professional associations for the development of standards in science, English, history, geography, civics, fine arts, and foreign languages (see Appendix A). In addition, professional groups in economics and social studies are currently developing such standards with private funds.

A number of activities are also underway at the state level. A number of states are working to identify state education standards and some are identifying a common core of knowledge and skills or desired outcomes for their states' educational systems.

The National Council for Education Standards and Testing recommended that a coordinating structure be put in place to advance standards-setting and assessment development. It agreed that such a structure could play several significant functions, including the establishment of "guidelines for standards-setting and assessment development and general criteria to determine the appropriateness of standards and assessments recommended."

Anticipating the creation of such a council, the Goals Panel convened a Technical Planning Group to advise it regarding the criteria and procedures by which education standards might be reviewed and certified. The group headed by Shirley Malcom, included Iris Carl, David Cohen, Thomas Crawford, Mahaly Csikszentmihalyi, Philip Daro, Chester Finn, Anne Heald, David Hornbeck, David Kearns, Richard Mills, Harold Noah, Claire Pelton, James Renier, Sidney Smith, and James Wilsford. (For biographic information see Appendix B.)

Charge to the Technical Planning Group

The National Education Goals Panel charged the Technical Planning Group with the following task:

Prepare a report by October 1993 recommending the criteria and processes the National Education Goals Panel and a National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) should use to review and certify voluntary national content standards as "world-class," "high-quality," and "internationally competitive" as envisioned by the Goals Panel, the report *Raising Standards For American Education*, and legislation considered by the Congress.

The group was further charged to address the following questions in its report:

- How can proposed standards be judged to be "world-class" and "internationally competitive"?
- What are the implications of national content standards (of what students should know and be able to do) for determining student performance standards (of how good is good enough) and student assessments?
- In what subject areas (besides those named in the Goals, i.e., English, mathematics, science, history, and geography) should voluntary national content standards be certified?
- Should more than one national set of standards be reviewed and certified in any one subject area?

Additional important topics and questions arose in subsequent meetings of the group and of the chair with the Goals Panel. Four of these questions directly influenced the group's thinking about the review of content standards and are addressed in the body of this report. They are:

- How can subject-based education standards teach students to solve important real-world problems that require integrating knowledge and skills from several disciplines?
- In what sequence should proposed subject-specific standards be reviewed? Should it be first come, first serve? If not, in what order should the standards be considered, and what is the rationale for that order?
- How should the subject standards fit together? Should any guidance be offered on selecting and integrating use of the standards? If so, by whom: states, local districts, individual schools and teachers, professional associations, or NESIC? If the combined disciplines propose standards that cannot be accommodated within the confines of a school day, how should schools select priorities and decide what to teach?
- How do subject-based standards nurture the habits, skills and competencies that businesses, universities and communities need and want, and that students, parents, and lay citizens recognize as useful?

The Panel indicated that while advice from this group of advisors would in no way be binding, it could help the new council begin discussing the issues for which it would be responsible and provide ideas to which the public and concerned constituents could respond.

The Goals 3 and 4 Standards Review Technical Planning Group developed the recommendations that it makes in this report through a set of discussions and activities. The Technical Planning Group and its subgroups met eight times between May and September, 1993 (May 28; July 16 and 27; August 2, 18, and 30; and September 8 and 16). Twice the group discussed its charge and progress with the National Education Goals Panel. A subgroup applied the initial review criteria to the NCTM standards, and suggested revisions on this basis. The group held a half-day conference call with representatives of the major standards-setting projects on September 3. To get public comment on its work, the group

collected written testimony through a notice in the Federal Register and a request of targeted associations. The group conducted a public forum for almost 300 in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 7.

Public comment indicated strong public concern about the quality of education and the need for education standards. There was acute awareness that setting standards alone is not enough to reach them. There was anxiety that high standards could promote standardization and fail those now doing least well. Members of the public reminded the Goals Panel that for standards to succeed, they had to be understood and adapted by local communities, who fear that aiming for "world-class" standards may be unrealistic and rhetorical. While uncertain of the prospects for success, public comment nonetheless indicated strong recognition that clear standards are now missing and that concerted action would be needed to reach them. (See pp. 37-39 Responding to Public Concerns.)

The Technical Planning Group arrived at the recommendations in this report aware of these concerns and the scope of the problems they entail. Members discussed the obstacles to reaching high standards and the local nature of the processes by which they have to be attained. The group discussed the painful social burden increasingly placed on schools. But even in the face of social problems weighing heavily and unevenly on neighborhoods and communities, members agreed on the need for high academic standards and expectations for all students. Inequities in current social realities were rejected as a justification for low expectations. High standards for all students were seen as the promise of American education, and a promise that the Technical Planning Group wants to help the nation keep.

In this context, the group focused upon its charge: to recommend criteria and processes by which challenging content standards might — in the near future — be reviewed and certified. Guiding principles for the review and certification of performance standards — essential for content standards to be effective — are also suggested. Although not charged to make recommendations on additional functions that NESIC will be charged to perform, such as the review of opportunity-to-learn standards, the group makes explicit its assumptions about the character of NESIC and additional activities that NESIC may need to undertake to help it review and certify content standards.

In developing recommendations for the future council, the Technical Planning Group assumed, as the National Council on Education Standards and Testing had indicated, that the council would be national and not federal — as independent of the federal government as law allowed. The group assumed that the legitimacy of the new council would rest upon its "moral authority," its intellectual contribution to those using and developing standards, the reasonableness of its activities — not its ability to regulate.

The group also assumed that submission of standards to the council by professional organizations and states would be entirely voluntary. This made the task of developing a review process that is legitimate and valuable even more critical. The process must have sufficient intellectual rigor and integrity to assure the public that standards would be important and worthy of adoption by states and communities. The process also needs to be of value to those developing standards and to increase the probable usefulness of their efforts.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

HIGHLIGHTS

The Technical Planning Group has concluded that the process of creating high standards for American students entails both content and performance standards. Without both, the job is far from done. Their development has begun with "content standards" and the task will not be complete until meaningful "performance standards" are developed.

The key recommendations of the Technical Planning Group are as follows:

- Subject-specific content standards, under development by professional organizations, should include a limited set of the knowledge and skills most important for students to learn in that discipline. The content standards are far more than a listing of facts, but go to the heart of the skills that spring from study of that discipline which enable students to develop sound learning and work habits.
- NESIC should certify content standards for only eight subject areas: English, mathematics, science, history, citizenship/civics, geography, foreign languages, and fine arts. However, NESIC could review and give written feedback on standards to any nationally-recognized group that has developed standards and requested their review. Only one set of content standards would be certified in each subject area.
- State content standards should integrate subject-specific standards into a meaningful yet feasible set of standards for a state. Including a subset of the subject-specific content standards certified by NESIC (or aligned to them), the state standards would usually account for less than the entire school program, allowing for local school curriculum development.
- Performance standards would provide tools to determine whether the content standards are met, spelling out both the nature of the evidence required and the quality of student performance that would be considered acceptable to demonstrate that content standards had been met. Certification of content standards should be provisional until associated performance standards are developed.
- NESIC should take a broad view in its analysis of subject-specific content standards, identifying overlap, connections and cumulative feasibility among the standards of different disciplines. NESIC should work with professional organizations to encourage that these issues be addressed as the standards are being developed.

DISCUSSION

"Content" and "performance" standards are integral parts of standards-driven reform. Yet the Technical Planning Group discovered that there is not clear agreement on definitions of these types of standards. Therefore the discussion of the group's recommendations begins by laying out specific definitions. The group used definitions consistent with those of the Goals Panel and the National Council on Education Standards and Testing.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Content standards specify what students should know and be able to do. In shorthand, they involve the knowledge and skills essential to a discipline that students are expected to learn. Those "skills" include the ways of thinking, working, communicating, reasoning and investigating that characterize each discipline. That "knowledge" includes the most important and enduring ideas, concepts, issues, dilemmas, and information of the discipline. Content standards are not merely lists of facts. The National Council for Education Standards and Testing defined content standards in this way: "Content standards should set out the knowledge, skills, and other understandings that schools should teach in order for American students to attain high levels of competency in the subject matter."

Two kinds of content standards are discussed below: subject-specific content standards and state content standards:

Subject-specific content standards are those developed by national professional organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics that may eventually be submitted for review and certification in a specific subject area, such as mathematics, science, or history, and used as models or guides to states developing their content standards.

State content standards, like those now being developed in Colorado, Delaware, South Carolina and elsewhere, are content standards in a set or collection of different subject areas that may be proposed by a state for review and certification by NESIC. Substantively, state and subject-specific content standards can be the same and where different must be equally rigorous.

The Technical Planning Group was mindful of concerns that the standards must go beyond teaching of simple facts isolated in discrete disciplines. Students must learn how to solve important real-world problems that require integrating knowledge and skills within and across several disciplines.

Part of the impetus to develop high national education standards arose from dissatisfaction with the nature and quality of the "content" commonly covered in schools today. On the one hand, lists of facts and bits of information devoid of a demand for understanding have too often defined subject content. Superficial recognition of information became a substitute for ever achieving deep understanding. On the other hand, these facts and bits of information often have been artificially categorized by discipline. But the problems of the world outside of school are not compartmentalized so neatly. Schools need to help students draw on an appropriate range of knowledge and understandings, habits and skills to solve these problems.

In addition to what is subject-specific, content standards should therefore develop the skills and habits common to all disciplines that are essential to success in the real world. These skills and habits are what connect curriculum (the study of school subjects) to the purposes of schooling. They are the intentionally-developed and habitual behaviors that help students succeed in life, even after the knowledge base has changed. These habits include the abilities to study well, think logically, support assertions with evidence, draw inferences, and apply

what is known to a new situation. Students with good work and study habits are — among other things — persistent, attentive to detail, organized, reliable, responsible, cooperative, self-starting, and thoughtful. They have the competencies and foundation skills identified by the Secretary [of Labor]'s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in *What Work Requires of Schools*. These skills and habits enable students ultimately, in the language of the national education goals, "to compete in a global economy, exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and use their minds well."

These habits and skills are central to the purposes of schooling though not specific to any subject. The cultivation of these habits must be the responsibility of teachers in every subject — and therefore ought to be an essential part of the review of every set of content standards — if the knowledge and skills of the disciplines are to be understood and applied out of school to the problems the world presents.

Content standards logically define what schools should teach and what American students should learn. Schools and districts may provide curricula and instruction that cuts across these disciplines. Meeting content standards does not require rigid separation of the disciplines in teaching, learning or assessment, but standards serve as anchors to support disciplinary integrity in interdisciplinary work.

Currently, there is confusion about the distinction between content and performance standards. Those working to develop standards in the subject areas have focused their efforts on defining what students should know and be able to do. They share with the Goals Panel and others the conviction that knowledge and skills cannot and should not be separated, but are linked to each other and to any deep understanding of subject matter. They share the conviction that standards worthy of certification are not just facts to be "covered" but also significant underlying principles that help students uncover the "so what?" of the subject matter. Unlike the Goals Panel, NCEST, and this report, some projects label as "performance standards" the skills, the ways of thinking, working, communicating, reasoning and investigating within each discipline that are inextricably linked with the knowledge. Within this report, content standards refer both to what students know and are able to do — both their knowledge and skills. The group hopes that these valuable elements will be generally accepted as part of what is meant by "content standards."

Whatever definitions are agreed to, the Technical Planning Group concluded that there is a need for consensus on what these terms mean. Citizens and professionals need to develop a common vocabulary with which to discuss and develop standards.

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC CONTENT STANDARDS

The process of setting high academic standards has begun by developing standards that focus on specific subjects. In addition to its broad charge, the Technical Planning Group was asked to provide advice on two specific issues that relate to these subject-specific content standards: "Should more than one national set of standards be reviewed and certified in any one subject area?" and "In what subject areas (besides those named in the goals: English, mathematics, science, history and geography) should voluntary national content standards be certified?"

The Technical Planning Group concluded that to reach the purposes of standards-driven reform, logically there can be only one set of national education standards per subject area.

Certifying more than one set of standards in a subject implies that no set represents the core to which students, teachers, schools and communities should commit themselves. Even if states exercise their authority to develop content standards that vary from those in other states, within a state only one set of standards per subject should operate.

Reflecting on how standards would be developed and used, the Technical Planning Group became concerned that the volume of content standards developed independently by separate professional organizations could overwhelm students, teachers and schools by proposing more than any school day, year or program (even if extended in length) could accommodate. If NESIC were to review and potentially certify as many sets of standards as were brought to it, it would in effect offer no guidance regarding the core set of standards that all students should master. For schools and the public to adopt standards, the process must insure that taken together they are sufficiently delimited and focused so that it is feasible to implement them.

Therefore, the Technical Planning Group believes that it is imperative that the number of standards be limited - within and among disciplines. It suggests that all academic content standards currently being developed be reviewed against criteria listed below and that professional organizations be offered written feedback indicating the extent to which the criteria were met, but that standards be certified only in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, citizenship/civics, foreign language, and arts. (See additional discussion of Review and Feedback, p. 20)

NESIC was envisioned as an entity to certify academic standards in areas of recognized scholarship, therefore, it would not review all the subjects currently taught in schools. Other groups such as an occupational standards board or the President's fitness council might review other subjects.

Documents to be Reviewed and Certified

Organizations proposing subject-specific standards for certification would prepare these documents:

- **A concise core content document** stating the standards.
- **A case statement** explaining how the review criteria are met.
- **An appendix or separate document** offering examples of teaching and assessment activities aligned to the standards.

The Standards Review Technical Planning Group recommends that content standards be submitted in a **concise core content document**, accompanied by a **case statement** explaining how, in the judgment of the professional organization submitting them, the review criteria have been met. The content standards document should be short, cogent and clearly focused upon the content proposed as core to the discipline. This document should clearly focus upon the most important and enduring knowledge, ideas, concepts, issues, dilemmas, and ways of thinking, working, reasoning, communicating and investigating that characterize the discipline and are likely to encourage valued knowledge, skills and habits.

While teachers, states and professional associations may find value in developing a comprehensive list of all the information and skills desirable for high school students to learn and appropriate for advanced levels of study, it is not envisioned that such a document will be reviewed and certified.

Nonetheless, professional organizations submitting subject-specific content standards should provide examples that show how the standards in the core content document may be assessed and used for appropriate curriculum and teaching. For content standards to be acted upon, they should suggest to teachers, administrators, test makers and other audiences the direction that curriculum, instruction and assessment may take for the standards to be reached. **Either an appendix or separate document** should indicate the kinds of evidence necessary to demonstrate attainment of the standards and provide exemplars of assessment tasks, instructional supports and teaching activities implied by the standards. These illustrative tasks, supports and activities, while only suggestive and not themselves to be certified, would be needed to demonstrate how proposed content standards meet the clarity, usability, and assessability review criteria.

Review Criteria

The Technical Planning Group suggests that proposed subject matter content standards be reviewed to determine if they are:

World-Class

Standards should be world-class and challenging. To meet this goal, proposed standards need to be compared with current standards and priorities in other countries. Standards should be high — as challenging as or more challenging than others in the world — but not necessarily the same. (See pp. 26-27 for additional details on how this criterion may be addressed.)

Important and Focused

Standards should focus upon a limited set of the most important and enduring knowledge, issues, ideas, questions, problems, concepts and dilemmas, ways of thinking, working, reasoning, communicating and investigating the world that are central to the discipline and to work and learning. They both should set priorities and indicate the range of subject matter that is essential for students to understand. When taken together, the elements within the standards should provide the prerequisite framework of knowledge and skills needed to continue learning.

Useful

Standards should be useful. They should address the needs of employers, communities, and post-secondary educators. Proposed standards should promote the development of the knowledge, skills, and habits that employers, communities, and universities require, including the ability to integrate knowledge and skills from multiple subjects and apply them to the solution of real-world problems. Proposed standards should demonstrate to educators and lay people that more will be expected of students and that the standards will help them meet the fundamental goals of schooling:

- to know and be able to do what is central to the discipline.
- to use their minds well within the discipline.
- to know how to learn (within and outside of school).
- to be prepared for responsible citizenship with discipline-specific tools.
- to be prepared with discipline-specific skills and knowledge for productive participation in the global economy.
- to apply knowledge and skills from a variety of subjects to the solution of real-world problems.

Reflective of Broad Consensus-Building

Standards should result from a reasonable and inclusive process. Consensus should be sought in an iterative process of broad comment, feedback and support from professionals and the general public. Those applying for standards certification should indicate who was involved in the process, how they were involved, what aspects of the final and interim products were reviewed, and what resulted.

Balanced

Standards should represent a reasoned and acceptable balance on a set of enduring tensions or polarities. The case statement submitted by those proposing the standards should indicate how they satisfy the competing demands for:

- depth and breadth; i.e., the ability to demonstrate deep understanding of subject matter and knowledge of the main ideas and essential information on a range of topics;
- being definite, specific, or precise (about the uniform core that all students should know and be able to do) and being permissive of alternatives (so teachers have the flexibility to adjust to the needs and heritage of their students and the learning environments in which they teach);
- learning the theory or underlying principles of a domain and covering its factual knowledge;
- formal knowledge of theory or principles and facts and activities, performances and applications of knowledge;
- the best new thinking about the domain and the best of traditional practices and conceptions of the domain.

Accurate and Sound

Standards should accurately reflect sound scholarship within the discipline. Documentation should show whether scholars and scholarly associations have commented on and concurred with the standards' technical merit, as distinguished from the priorities and point of view.

Clear and Usable

Standards should be sufficiently clear so students, teachers, and parents — with reasonable interpretation — can be helped to understand what the standards mean and what the standards require of them. The standards should be clear enough to guide the development of appropriate curricula, curricular frameworks, instructional materials and professional development. They should be clear enough to enable teachers and students to judge whether the standards have been met. The standards (or associated documents) should provide examples, model tasks and samples of what is meant by an acceptable performance from a typical student as well as an outstanding performance on the sample task. While these examples would not be certified, they must be provided to make clear to teachers and curriculum specialists the direction that curricular reform must take to achieve the standards. The standards should be sufficiently clear and reasonable so they can be understood and supported by a layperson applying "common sense," as well as by businesses and universities seeking better-educated high school graduates.

Assessable

Standards (and associated documents) should be sufficiently specific so their attainment can be measured. They must indicate the nature of the evidence (such as an essay, mathematical proof, scientific experiment, project, exam or combination) that would be required to judge whether the content standard(s) in the subject had been met. Examples of potential assessment tasks, while not themselves subject to certification, are required to demonstrate that the content standard is assessable. Standards should be specific enough so that with reasonable interpretation they can inform each of these groups and their needs:

- Teachers: Can teachers use the standards both to teach and to recognize and assess student and program performance and talk with each other and with students about student performance?
- Assessment makers and users: Can test publishers, local districts, state departments of education, assessment experts, those monitoring educational performance over time and policymakers use the standards to design and/or interpret the results of assessments?
- Students: Can students use the standards [or, with interpretation, documents associated with them] to self-assess their own work and learning?
- Parents: Can parents make sense of the standards in terms of their own children's work?

- Taxpayers and the lay public: Will citizens paying for and asked to support local schools be able to connect the results of assessments of these standards to the purposes of schooling?
- Business and universities: Can employers and college teachers and admissions officers connect the knowledge, skills and habits being measured to their business and higher education needs?

Adaptable and Flexible

Standards define what is most important for students to know and be able to do in each subject. While students should be expected to reach the same world-class standards, proposed standards (and associated documents) should provide enough flexibility in implementation to accommodate state and regional differences and local control of education. Standards should be suitable for differing individual student interests and cultural traditions. Those proposing standards should provide evidence that they considered a range of different environments, experiences, and cultural traditions in which the standards may be implemented.

Developmentally Appropriate

The standards proposed should support and challenge students achieving at all performance levels. They should not represent minimum expectations. The standards should be suitable to and within the capabilities of students to learn. (See section on *Serving Students in Special Education*, p. 38). Regardless of students' perceived ability, the standards should be achievable with proper supports and sustained effort. They should build appropriately on students' developed capabilities at the elementary, middle and high school levels of schooling. Any student who works hard in a good program should be able to meet the standards; and any student who meets the standards should be well prepared for his or her future.

Additional Guidance

Review and Feedback

The Technical Planning Group recommends that standards submitted by nationally-recognized organizations be accepted for review and feedback even when they are not being reviewed for certification. In this case the review criteria would be applied to draft academic standards and NESIC would offer written feedback indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the standards against those criteria.

This application of the review criteria may be useful for two audiences: those preparing standards for ultimate certification before their final drafts and revisions are made and those preparing standards in academic subjects for which NESIC will not certify standards. Written feedback could be used for revisions or evidence of success meeting review criteria. Groups developing standards in subjects that NESIC declines to certify (in such subjects as economics, regional studies, or advanced and specialized fields of study) may nonetheless

request that NESIC review and offer feedback indicating whether the standards meet the review criteria. This service may be of particular help to the states and districts offering specialized or advanced levels of study.

Periodic Review Cycles

The Technical Planning Group was asked to consider in what sequence proposed subject-specific standards should be reviewed. The group recommends that all standards submitted by a date prescribed by NESIC be reviewed as part of a single cycle, and that NESIC establish a schedule of review dates indicating periodic cycles for review and certification.

Recertification

Content standards that meet these review criteria will offer valuable guidance to states, local school districts, curriculum specialists and classroom teachers. Standards that focus upon what is most important and enduring will last without frequent need for revision. Nonetheless, to insure that the standards are dynamic, and not static, and support continuing improvements in the education system, the Technical Planning Group recommends that standards be recertified at regular intervals. Recertification should be often enough to permit revision of the standards based on experience but at sufficiently lengthy intervals to give stability to the system and permit realistic alignment of curricula, instructional materials and assessments before the standards change.

Partial or Provisional Certification

The Technical Planning Group recommends that certification of content standards be made provisional upon the development of associated performance standards. Content standards are being developed, but as yet there is little progress towards specifying the nature and quality of evidence required to determine if they have been met. (See discussion on Performance Standards, pp. 33-36.) Without performance standards and associated assessments, students, parents, schools and communities have no way to determine their status with relation to the content standards.

As a first step, the Technical Planning Group recommends that content standards be required to provide examples of teaching and assessment activities and specify the nature of evidence needed to determine whether the content standards have been met.

Other circumstances that may merit partial or provisional certification would be: a set of potentially sound standards that fall short on one or more criteria, or submission of state content standards before national professional organizations have developed standards in all "core" subject areas.

Guidance on Applying the "World-class" Criterion

An important reason for developing education standards is to help ensure that American students learn what they need in order to compete at "world-class" levels in the global economy. Recognizing that professional organizations are properly focused on identifying what is central to their discipline, and therefore dependent on knowledge collected by others regarding the standards set in other countries, the Technical Planning Group believes NESIC should offer guidance on how the case statement of subject-specific content standards

addresses the "world-class" review criterion. The concrete guidance NESIC could offer may include:

- **Identify no more than 3 or 4 countries** that have performed well on international surveys of school achievement, or that have shown leadership in the pedagogy of the subject area. In other words, identify a small group of countries to which U.S. subject specialists would like to have the U.S. compared. Britain, China, France, Germany, Japan, and Russia may be considered as influential countries with sizeable populations. However, Australia, the Netherlands, Ontario and Quebec provinces of Canada, and Sweden also have strengths in particular areas and might be included in a list of countries to be used for comparison.
- **Specify the particular school types and grade levels in the particular countries being used for comparison.** Try to specify what fraction of the age-group is affected by the particular standards used in comparison. This is very important. For example, Japanese standards tend to be fairly uniform across the entire educational system for a given subject and grade level. This is not so in England/Wales, Germany, and France, where different tracks, institutions, and options provide different standards. Indeed, most countries operate more than one standard at a given grade level.
- **When comparing the end-of-secondary-school standards of other countries with those proposed for the U.S. watch out for differences in the age of students to which those standards apply.** For example, in Germany, it is not uncommon for Abitur candidates to be 19 (in some cases, even 20) years of age; in Japan there is a great deal of repeated taking of the university entrance examinations after a further year or two of study.
- Be aware that standards are changing fairly rapidly in many of the countries that are likely to be used in comparison. Be careful to **note at least the approximate date(s) of the standards being cited — the more up-to-date, the better.**
- There are multiple sources of material that can be used to infer the standards that are sought after in other countries: **curriculum guides** issued by ministries of education, and regional and local education authorities; **reports of school inspectors**, especially school-subject inspectors; the **regulations, test papers, and reports issued by examination bodies**, especially reports issued on the candidates' achievement in the examinations; **studies** of curricula published by the national collaborators of the IEA organization, in connection with their international studies of school achievement; **reports** by U.S. and other subject specialists who have studied the curricula, teaching and learning goals and methods, and assessments used in specific countries.
- The standards embodied in the document(s) proposed for certification in the U.S. can be compared with those of some other countries by comparing, for example, the breadth and depth of material in the subject area; and by comparing its up-to-dateness, the pedagogical methods it implies, and the extent to which it involves students actively in the learning process; also by judging how far the proposed standards for the U.S. encourage desirable work and learning habits, compared with what is known about standards in the other countries selected. (For further discussion of this issue, see Appendix E).

STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

The Technical Planning Group was asked how subject-specific education standards teach students to solve important real-world problems that require integrating knowledge and skills from several disciplines. The question is one of urgent importance. While the question must concern the disciplines themselves, the group recognized that states have the operational responsibility for adopting standards in multiple subjects and considering how they fit together.

National content standards are intended to offer guidance to states in this activity. The Technical Planning Group recommends that states propose a subset of the eight sets of NESIC-certified content standards as a common academic core required of all students in the state. The common core should ideally account for less than all instructional time and the full academic program. To allow latitude for local and school curriculum development, "core" state standards should leave room for "more" local elaboration of content. Schools and communities could offer or require the study of additional or advanced standards and a range of other significant and valued experiences that would not be certified by NESIC. An important responsibility of any new council, however, would be to examine the "core" set of standards each state proposes to insure that these are feasible and cumulatively adequate.

In most cases states would use NESIC-certified standards as a point of departure and continuing point of reference in their own state consensus building efforts. National professional organizations that understand this need and take it into account will produce work of increased usefulness for states. Since some states are rightly pioneering their own standards before national content standards have been developed, they could submit their state content standards for provisional certification before standards from national professional organizations have been developed or certified in all subject areas.

As indicated above, the Technical Planning Group believes that to be useful it is imperative that standards be feasible to implement. Further the group is not certain whether subject-specific content standards generated independently by separate professional organizations will fit together and be feasible to implement.

It will be an important role for NESIC to offer assistance to the states in this effort. The Technical Planning Group recommends that NESIC analyze the national set of subject-specific content standards they certify for points of overlap. Occasionally, the same or similar content may appear in more than one set of standards. For instance, an analysis of the U.S. Constitution could conceivably be proposed as elements of both history and citizenship/civics standards. In addition, NESIC could help states by identifying promising areas of interdisciplinary study or publicize promising areas developed by states. Some knowledge and skills within one discipline may be suitable to connect to material from other disciplines. For instance, English standards for reading and writing may be applicable in history and science, and mathematics standards may illuminate physics-related science standards.

States would be asked to show how the set of core content standards they would require for all students cumulatively address the basic purposes of schooling — educating students in the words of Goal 3 "for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy." Not every subject would not be expected to meet this test in

isolation. In addition, the Technical Planning Group recognizes that each subject may contain important additional elements (such as the appreciation of poetry, artistic beauty or mathematical logic) that are valued for themselves and not for their utility to society.

On the other hand, each state would want to be certain that the essential purposes of schooling would be realized by achieving the cumulative set of content standards they propose. For instance, certain valued knowledge about citizenship might be indicated in selected history or civics standards but not in mathematics standards. Similarly, selected science and mathematics standards may have special occupational relevance.

An important task of NESIC will be defining the attributes they deem essential to judge whether a proposed set of state content standards cumulatively fulfill these purposes.

Documents to be Reviewed and Certified

- **A set of core content documents** stating the standards selected by the state as part of the core required of all students.
- **A case statement** explaining how the state review criteria have been met, and how any content standards not previously certified by NESIC meet the subject-specific review criteria.

The state would submit a **core content document for the set of standards** that students would be required to study, indicating the relative emphasis each will be given at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The state would prepare a **case statement**, explaining how the state standards are aligned with NESIC-certified standards; where different, how they meet the review criteria for subject-specific standards; and how taken together as a set the state standards meet the review criteria set for state standards.

When content standards submitted by states for certification are viewed together, they should make sense as a whole. State content standards need to fit together to define the core that schools are required to teach and that all students are expected to learn within a given state.

Review Criteria

The Technical Planning Group therefore suggests asking whether content standards proposed by states are:

At Least as Rigorous as National Subject-Specific Standards

State standards should be at least as rigorous as national content standards, and if not the same, equally able to meet the content review criteria above. States would not be required to organize their curriculum frameworks in subject-specific sequences proposed by discipline-based professional organizations. They would be at liberty to

organize curricular frameworks around important themes that cut across subject disciplines. They would, however, be asked to demonstrate how the standards they proposed are aligned with national standards.

Cumulatively Feasible

Taken together, each state's standards should be feasible for schools with appropriate resources to implement. They should account for less than all of the instructional program. Any student who works hard in a good program should be able to meet the standards, and any school working to implement the standards should be able to do so.

Cumulatively Adequate

When state content standards proposed for certification are viewed together, they should make sense as a whole. Taken together, each state's standards should define an adequate "core." Each state should indicate what it requires from the standards certified by NESIC in English, mathematics, science, history and geography, citizenship/civics, foreign languages and the arts. The level of emphasis a state proposes at the elementary, middle and high school levels for each of these areas should be indicated.

Whatever standards and levels of emphasis states require, the state's case statement should explain how cumulatively the standards prepare all students "with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy, exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and use their minds well." The state should indicate how any student who meets the standards proposed would be well prepared for his or her future.

Encouraging of Student Ability to Integrate and Apply Knowledge and Skills from Various Subjects

The set of content standards submitted by each state in association with relevant performance standards should demonstrate that students would be asked to integrate knowledge from various subjects and apply that knowledge to the solution of real-world problems.

Reflective of Broad State Consensus-Building

Standards should result from a reasonable and inclusive process. Consensus should be sought in an iterative process of broad comment, feedback and support from professionals and the general public throughout the state. Even when adopting nationally certified standards, states applying for standards certification should indicate within the state who was involved in the process, how they were involved, what aspects of the final and interim products were reviewed, and what happened as a result.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Performance standards specify "how good is good enough." In shorthand, they indicate how adept or competent a student demonstration must be to indicate attainment of the content standards. They involve judgments of what distinguishes an adequate from an outstanding level of performance. The National Council for Education Standards and Testing defined student performance standards in this way: "Student performance standards should establish the degree or quality of student performance in the challenging subject matter set out in the content standards." Performance standards are not the skills and modes of reasoning referred to in the content standards. Rather, they indicate both the nature of the evidence (such as an essay, mathematical proof, scientific experiment, project, exam or combination) required to demonstrate that content standards have been met and the quality of student performance that will be deemed acceptable (what merits a passing or an "A" grade.)

Performance standards relate to issues of assessment that gauge the degree to which content standards have been attained. For instance a standard indicating that students should draw accurate inferences from historic, scientific or literary text is a content standard. A performance standard indicates the nature of the evidence and the quality of the student performance required to show whether students have learned this. It would, of course, be possible over time to raise performance standards without changing content standards.

Performance standards give meaning to the results of assessments of student performance. In the popular mind, people "know" that on a 100-point test 89 is pretty good and 55 is not passing. This is one kind of performance standard. So far, no one "knows" how to judge whether the new content standards have been met. Mastery of challenging subject matter may not be measured on a 100-point test. There is an urgent need to develop new and improved assessment technology.

The Technical Planning Group endorses the following general principles to guide the development of future performance standards.

- Performance standards should be tied to NESIC-certified content standards and to the kind of instruction that helps students achieve the content goals.
- They should encourage tests of knowledge, skills and understandings that are valued and what it is believed students must have, not what is easy to measure.
- Assessment tasks should measure knowledge and skills across the core disciplines as well as within them.
- Assessment tasks should measure students' ability to apply what they know to real-world problems, not just their ability to recall or recognize what was taught.
- Assessments should allow for audits of both system and student performance.

- Performance standards of how good is good enough should ultimately be set collaboratively by teachers, scholars, and representatives of employers and the public examining actual samples of real student work and informed by international performance.
- Examples of real student performances that meet and exceed performance standards should be provided routinely for the public, students, teachers, and parents. Until this happens, the meaning of the content standards will not be apparent to those trying to achieve them.
- Teachers should be helped to understand and internalize the performance standards and instructional strategies to help students master the content. This will require additional professional development.

Such performance standards linked to content standards are not yet available. Professional organizations developing standards are concentrating their efforts on specifying what students should know and be able to do. The Technical Planning Group has recommended that these content standards be reviewed to determine if they include examples of possible assessment tasks and specification of the nature of the evidence proposed as necessary to show that content standards are met. While the examples themselves would not be certified, they should be included to meet the criterion for being "assessable," and to point the direction for the development of assessments.

Assessments could be developed by standards developers, a state, groups of states, test developers, or others. Those assessments would be informed by the original standards development process, and in turn would be used to produce samples of real student work. Those samples of student work would ultimately be part of the empirical basis for setting performance standards. When samples of U.S. students' work can be compared to student work from abroad, performance standards can be benchmarked to international levels of student performance.

It is likely that the assessments which are eventually developed will require students to demonstrate competencies across several fields at the same time. For example, a 4th grade science activity might rely on graphic representation of data (reflecting a related mathematics standard) and the written presentation of results (reflecting a writing standard) as well as provide evidence of accurate interpretation of reference material (reflecting upon a possible reading standard).

Performance standards should be part of an iterative process set in conjunction with the content standards. Performance levels specifying acceptable and outstanding levels of quality of student work need to be examined against actual samples of student work. Samples of real student work need to be available before linking important consequences to students' achievement of specific performance levels.

CHALLENGES FOR NESIC

The Technical Planning Group recognizes that the task before the future National Education Standards and Improvement Council is complex and challenging.

The group was asked to focus on potential criteria and processes that NESIC should use to review and certify content standards, and to consider their implications for performance standards. In the course of addressing this charge, the group identified additional functions that it thinks NESIC will find necessary to perform in order to review and certify content and performance standards adequately. It offers these as additional guidance. Among these are to:

1. Collect and encourage the development of information regarding the standards of other nations.

This knowledge base is essential to gauge whether standards proposed by professional organizations for the United States are in fact "world-class" and "internationally competitive." The Technical Planning Group believes that while it is fair to require standards groups to know and consider such information, it is not fair to require them to develop it where it does not exist. The application of the "internationally competitive" review criterion may initially take different forms in different subject areas, because the current state of information is uneven. The Group recommends offering standards projects guidance on how to do this, and suggests specific steps on pp. 26-27. Nonetheless, the Technical Planning Group considers it important over time that a solid knowledge base be created against which to judge whether proposed standards are empirically and appropriately world-class and internationally competitive.

2. Define the attributes necessary for state content standards to be judged both cumulatively feasible and adequate.

The group sees the need for state content standards to be focused upon a limited core of standards that are feasible to teach and learn, yet adequate to prepare students for citizenship, work, and continued learning. This entails an inevitable tension between parsimony and comprehensiveness. Since NESIC will be asked to review and certify state and well as national, subject-specific standards, it will need to determine what it will require to meet both criteria, specifically how it will recognize what is "too much" for states to require of all schools and students, and how it will define the irreducible requirements of schooling.

The Technical Planning Group could easily agree that there is a need to limit the set of state content standards to what is feasible and important for schools to implement, teachers to teach, and students to learn. The group anticipated the counter-pressures to be inclusive of every set of subject matter standards that could meet review criteria. The need for parsimony and focus led members to want to designate four or five subject areas as "core" areas of emphasis that every state should require of all its students. However, the group was unable to reach consensus on what the limited number of subjects should be, and indeed, whether core standards had to be organized by subjects. It therefore recommends more generally that standards in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, foreign languages, citizenship/civics and the arts should be certified nationally, forming the set from which states would usually identify their "core."

3. Ensure analysis of the set of nationally certified subject-specific content standards to identify areas of overlap and areas where connections among the disciplines can profitably be made.

The Technical Planning Group was asked by the Goals Panel to recommend the subject areas besides those named in the goals in which national content standards should be certified. From its first meeting the group has discussed the tension between reviewing and certifying standards by subject area and teaching students to solve important real-world problems that require integrating knowledge and skills from several disciplines.

It would be optimal if the professional organizations developing standards themselves voluntarily address this problem, and identify the overlap, connections, and cumulative feasibility and adequacy of the standards they propose for certification. The Technical Planning Group recommends that NESIC cooperate with and encourage those organizations to do so. The group respects the technical and political complexities and importance of addressing this issue.

If the result of voluntary cooperative efforts are incomplete, the group recommends that NESIC itself must recognize and address these issues. NESIC's own review process should consider whether proposed standards present suitable opportunities for interdisciplinary study. NESIC should consider how the national content standards in the eight subjects they certify fit together and whether, if taken together, they are feasible for a school to teach or a student to learn. Any state or professional organization offering content standards that are more or different than those certified by NESIC in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, foreign language, citizenship/civics, or the arts should bear an extra burden of demonstrating how they connect to the other disciplines and could be used in an interdisciplinary framework.

Finally, the group recommends that NESIC, acting with and building upon work of the professional organizations that developed the standards, should indicate to states and districts how the content standards they certify could be used for interdisciplinary study. NESIC should provide at least one example of how content standards might be fit together in a framework other than the subject categories in which they were proposed and certified. Such examples could be drawn from ongoing work of states, from collaborative activities undertaken by the standards development projects themselves and other professionals, or from other sources.

The result should be that states with limited financial and technical resources seeking "the path of least resistance" should have available to them at least one model of how to feasibly implement national content standards using an interdisciplinary approach, without feeling constrained to impose subject-specific curricular frameworks. This will entail mapping backward how an interdisciplinary framework is aligned with subject-specific content standards.

The group therefore recommends that NESIC, building upon work done by national professional organizations developing standards, review and analyze the set of subject-specific content standards they certify to identify areas of overlap and areas where connections among the disciplines can be made profitably. The results of this analysis should be made available for states and districts working to develop their own state content standards and curriculum frameworks and curricula. This will entail mapping the areas of content shared among subjects.

4. Insist upon rapid development of performance standards.

Members of the Technical Planning Group believe that performance standards are imperative for content standards to be effective catalysts of reform. While content standards indicate what the real world needs students to know and be able to do, performance standards, indicating the nature and quality of student performances required to gauge how good is good enough, are necessary to judge whether the content standards have been met. (See definitions below on pages 17 and 31.) Without them, students and teachers do not know whether they are measuring up to the standards and lack incentive to work towards them. For this reason, the Technical Planning Group recommends that certification of content standards be made provisional upon the development of associated performance standards.

While good work is now going on to define what content standards should be, much remains to be done to develop performance standards. The Technical Planning Group recommends that professional organizations be asked to begin this as an iterative process while they refine content standards. Specifically, the Technical Planning Group recommends that to meet the "assessable" criterion, content standards (or associated documents) should provide examples of possible assessment tasks and specify the nature of the evidence needed to judge whether content standards have been met.

The Technical Planning Group is concerned at the amount of work that remains to be done to develop performance standards for review and certification. They hope that funding to support such additional work will be forthcoming, and suggest that NESIC convene representatives of the professional groups that developed content standards to work with assessment specialists and representatives of other standards groups in that process of developing performance standards.

RESPONDING TO PUBLIC CONCERNS

The Technical Planning Group wants to respond to important concerns expressed in the oral and written public comments it received.

□ Avoiding Standardization

One concern expressed to the Technical Planning Group was that education "standards" would require educational standardization. The concern was expressed that holding all students to the same high standards would necessitate teaching them all the same thing in the same way, reducing local discretion and teachers' creativity.

This is not the intention or expectation of the Technical Planning Group. To the contrary, it is the purpose of standards to offer a clear understanding of expectations that can validate and liberate creative educators to invent a variety of methods for attaining them. That is one reason it is so extremely important to keep standards focused upon a limited set of knowledge and skills of enduring importance. The standards should express the issues to which able teachers tend to return. Broad leeway for appropriate local adaptations and creative treatment of them not only should be permitted but also encouraged.

□ **Helping Disadvantaged Students**

Concerned citizens and educators expressed anxiety about what high academic standards would do for poor and disadvantaged students. They worry that students who are performing poorly now may experience more failure if held to higher standards.

The Technical Planning Group shares this concern for equity, and is concerned at the obvious inequities of social burden and resources among American schools. But the group feels strongly that those inequities should not be used to justify perpetuating low expectations for some. Without high standards made explicit, it can be perniciously easy to justify the *status quo*. Some students from privileged backgrounds can and do muddle through schools of indifferent quality relatively unscathed. It is the least advantaged students and the schools that serve them that may gain the most from explicit standards of what is expected and can be achieved with effort.

□ **Serving Able Students**

The call to set standards and raise expectations for all students concerns some members of the public who fear that new standards will be minimum competencies. These could encourage schools to convey "basics" to everyone at the expense of advanced material for students ready for greater intellectual challenge.

The purpose of standards-driven reform is to include everyone in deeper understanding of the most important and enduring knowledge and skills. To succeed the nation must raise achievement at all levels, among the most able as well as the average and the disabled. Students will vary in their performance on the standards to which all are held. There will be advanced levels of study and achievement that build upon the sound foundation of those standards held for all. An index of success will be the wider attainment of high levels of performance, and increased enrollment in advanced levels of study. Aesop recognized that a persistent tortoise can achieve its goal before an easily-diverted hare, but just think what a persistent hare can achieve!

□ **Serving Students in Special Education**

Standards set by national professional organizations will be appropriate for many students now served in special education. Orthopedically handicapped students, for instance, would be taught, study, be assessed, and expected to reach the same levels of performance on the same academic standards as other students. For students with some disabilities, it might be appropriate to modify the conditions of instruction and methods of assessing attainment of those standards.

All students should be held to high and appropriate standards, and should be included in efforts to characterize the nation's level of education achievement. The standards discussed in this report would apply directly to all students except those, like the severely mentally retarded, whose individual diagnosis implies a judgment that the student cannot meet them. The Technical Planning Group defers to health and special education professionals to identify on a case-by-case basis the standards — both the content and level of performance — appropriate for these students.

□ **Being both American and World-Class**

Some worry that striving for internationally competitive levels of achievement may make American education less American. They fear that high levels of achievement require elite and authoritarian values that Americans don't share.

The Technical Planning Group believes that, just as there is much to celebrate about American education, there is something to be learned from the experience and success of other countries. At the same time, we believe that other countries' education practices, even when effective, may not be suitable for American schools. Those developing education standards for America should inform themselves about the standards, achievement levels, and school practices of other countries — not to copy them, but to adapt what is of value for uniquely American contexts and goals.

□ **Being Realistic about High Standards**

Some testimony, while recognizing that *de facto* standards are much too low, fear that nothing more is realistically possible. Whether it is the need for a lot more money, or training, or motivation, or political will, they fear that the ingredients are not there and that the call for high standards is just more rhetoric. Specifically, it seems unrealistic to set high standards for all students in view of the problems of severely mentally retarded students.

Whether the issue is money, public support or political will, these big challenges require us to temper the usual human desire for a "quick fix." Significant success is likely to come slowly and perhaps even painfully as we resist the move to what is unfamiliar. Nonetheless, success is possible.

Standards can make clear that school work is not a test of natural aptitude, or another way of sorting people into groups, but centers on a set of important skills and ideas that are useful in the world and accessible to everyone who works at it. The likelihood that severely mentally retarded students may not reach the performance levels attained by other students — and the most able students may exceed them — does not make high standards less realistic for the nation. Standards that point the way towards what is significant to understanding the world, and useful to prospering in it, may realistically merit — and inspire — the effort by all students to work toward them.

□ **Not just giving a new name to an education "fad"**

Some members of the public are concerned that standards based reform is just another fad that they can wait out until public attention fades. Others associate it with "outcome-based education" and attempts to teach vague values.

Standards do seek to shift the focus of education to what students should learn and schools should teach, but standards-based reform is not a new tag for outcome-based education. Scholars, educators, and lay people are developing standards in academic disciplines. The Technical Planning Group recommends that standards groups and states conduct public dialogue and broad based consensus building efforts in the development of standards. Provision for public comment and input is part of each of these efforts.

Standards can enable parents and communities to take more control and responsibility for local education. They indicate to parents the core academic purposes schools are intended to serve. They distinguish the academic tasks from competing and distracting social projects schools must undertake when families and communities do not or cannot address them.

CONCLUSION

The Goals 3 and 4 Technical Planning Group on the Review of Standards was asked to address important questions — to identify the fundamental issues that must be dealt with for standards-driven reform to succeed. We took this charge seriously, knowing the significance of the consequences. The experience was demanding — both stimulating and humbling. We hope that the National Education Goals Panel and any future National Education Standards and Improvement Council find the report a useful guidepost to the issues with which they will have to deal.

We emerge with increased appreciation for the complexity of the task and the work that remains to be done. It is critically important that a core set of the discipline-based standards be defined that make sense when communicated to the public and to teachers, students and school systems. Both NESIC and the states have responsibility to see that these standards make sense together so that they are both cumulatively feasible within the daily operation of schools and over the longer term of the school program, and cumulatively adequate to achieve the purposes of schooling and the promise of American education. We fully recognize the magnitude of the intellectual challenge and the political difficulties involved. But this is a task that must be accomplished to keep the educational promise of America for its citizens and their future.

Our schools and our country need high standards against which to measure their success and expectations. Raising our educational performance is a long-term, systemic effort. We do not know all that must be done to reach high standards, but we do know that high standards themselves are a critical first step. We hope this report helps to move that reform ahead.

APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES OF MEMBERS OF THE TECHNICAL PLANNING GROUP

Biographic Sketches
Members of the Goal 3/4 Standards Review Technical Planning Group

MEMBERS: * Shirley Malcom; Iris Carl; David Cohen; Tom Crawford; Mahaly Csikszentmahalyi; Phil Daro; Checker Finn; Anne Heald; David Hornbeck; David Kearns; Rick Mills; Harold Noah; Claire Pelton; James Renier; Sid Smith

IRIS CARL was President of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) while they developed the standards other disciplines are now seeking to parallel. She was a member of both the NCTM Commission on Standards for School Mathematics and the National Council on Education Standards and Testing (NCEST). She has served as Vice Chairperson of the Mathematical Sciences Education Board (MSEB) and a director of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. She has been a teacher (K through graduate school), an elementary school principal, and director of mathematics for the Houston Independent School District.

DAVID COHEN is a John A. Hannah Distinguished Professor of Education and Social Policy at Michigan State University. He has been chairman of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Programs in Administration, Planning and Social Policy Studies, and was a principal co-organizer and Co-chair of the Harvard Center for Law and Education. Widely published, he is a member of both the Council for the Behavioral and Social Sciences of the National Academy of Sciences and MSEB. His current research includes the relations between policy and instruction.

TOM CRAWFORD is Director of Coaching and Educational Programs for the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). He has extensive experience advising and counseling amateur and professional athletes and coaches. He has a doctorate in Physical Education from Indiana University, where he co-founded the Youth Sport, Fitness, and Health Clinic of Reilly Hospital for Children at the university medical center. He served on the faculty of both the psychology and physical education departments and coached tennis at Indiana and Purdue universities. He is senior editor for Olympic Coach and a reviewer for other sports journals.

MAHALY CSIKSZENTMAHALYI, a refugee from communist Hungary, began a classical secondary education (in Latin and Greek) in Italy. He subsequently transferred to and dropped out of a vocational secondary school before moving to the United States and completing his higher education at the University of Chicago. He recently served as chairman of the department of psychology and is now Professor of Human Development and Education at Chicago. He has written over 140 articles and 10 books, the latest of which, Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (1990) has been translated into Japanese, German, and 6 other languages.

PHIL DARO is currently Director of Mathematics for the New Standards Project and Executive Director for the California Mathematics Project. The New Standards Project is designing a national assessment system benchmarked to international standards for use by partner states (including California) and districts. He is a member of the Mathematical Sciences Education Board (both Assessment and Executive Committees) and the Technical Advisory Committee for the CA Learning Assessment System. He formerly taught high school mathematics.

CHESTER E. FINN is a founding partner and senior scholar with the Edison Project of Whittle Schools and director of their Washington office. He now is a member of the National Assessment Governing Board and Senior Fellow of the Hudson Institute. He has served as Assistant Secretary of OERI and Counselor to the Secretary of the US Department of Education (1985-88), a member of the National Council on Education Standards and Testing, and an advisor to 3 US presidents and several governors. He has written or edited 8 books, the latest Education Reform in the '90's, and more than 150 articles.

ANNE HEALD is Executive Director of the University of Maryland's Center for Learning and Competitiveness, an organization dedicated to improving the competitiveness of US workers by identifying and applying relevant lessons from abroad in workforce development, and currently focused on the school-to-work transition process in the US. For ten years, Heald directed an international exchange program focused on employment and economic development issues at the German Marshall Fund of the US. Once a teacher, she is an acknowledged expert on the transfer of international "best practice" in youth apprenticeships and skills training.

DAVID HORNBECK is co-director of the National Alliance for Restructuring Education and senior advisor to the National Center on Education and the Economy, the Business Roundtable and other private sector, non-profit and government institutions interested in significantly restructuring education. He served as a primary architect of Kentucky's sweeping 1990 reform legislation. Until recently, Hornbeck was a partner in the Washington, DC law firm of Hogan & Harston working with the firm's large education law practice. From 1976 to 1988 he was Maryland State Superintendent of Instruction.

DAVID T. KEARNS was CEO of Xerox Corporation from 1982 until 1990. From 1991 until 1993 he was Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Education. Prior to joining Xerox, Kearns was a vice president in the Data Processing Division of IBM. He formerly served as chairman of the boards of the National Urban League, Junior Achievement, and the University of Rochester. He is now a member of the boards of The Chase Manhattan Bank, Time Warner, Inc., Ryder System, In., the University of Rochester, and the Ford Foundation. He co-authored Winning the Brain Race, a plan to make American schools competitive, and Prophets in the Dark, how Xerox reinvented itself and beat back the Japanese.

SHIRLEY M. MALCOM heads the Directorate for Education and Human Resources at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). After working at the National Science Foundation and teaching biology at the university and high school levels, she is currently a board member at the National Center on Education and the Economy, its New Standards Project, and other organizations. She co-chairs a task force on women in biomedical research at NIH and chaired a task group looking at the school to work transition for the Clinton-Gore transition team.

RICHARD P. MILLS has been Vermont's Commissioner of Education since 1988, where he has encouraged education goals, a common core of learning, a student performance assessment based on portfolios, and a Professional Standards Boards with a majority of teachers. He currently serves on the boards of the National Center for Education and the Economy, New Standards Project, and the National Assessment Governing Board. From 1984-88 he served as (NJ) Governor Thomas Kean's education advisor, directing the governor's education work, following nine years with the New Jersey Department of Education.

HAROLD J. NOAH, British born and educated, is Gardner Cowles Professor Emeritus, Institute of Philosophy and Politics of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, where he was dean of the faculty. He has worked in the economics of education and in comparative education. His latest publication is Secondary School Examinations: International Perspectives on Politics and Practice (Yale University Press, 1993). His current research focusses on the changes occurring in examinations and qualifications in Europe as EC labor markets become more closely integrated.

CLAIRE L. PELTON is vice chair of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and twice "teacher of the year," is director of educational services/ombudsman for the San Jose (CA) Unified School District. She has served as a mentor teacher, on several state (CAP) and national (SAT) test development committees, and on the CA State Board of Education committee on the collegiate accreditation of teacher education programs. She wrote the chapter "Education Reform: A Teacher Responds" for a text (Challenges to the Humanities) on school reform.

JAMES J. RENIER is chairman and CEO of Honeywell, Inc., and serves as a board member of several Minneapolis/St. Paul companies. He has a doctorate in physical chemistry and serves on the Board of overseers for the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management. He is a board member of the New American Schools Corporation, the Minnesota Business Partnership, the Committee for Economic Development, the Institute of Educational Leadership, and the National Commission on Children.

SIDNEY W. SMITH is director of the ATLAS school reform project, funded by the New American Schools Development Corporation. He works with Ted Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, Howard Gardner's Project Zero, James Comer's School Development Program, and the Education Development Center. He was formerly headmaster of Boston's English High School, director of alternative education for the Boston Public Schools, and taught at the middle and high school levels. He is a coauthor of a recently published book on performance assessment, Graduation by Exhibition, distributed by ASCD.

APPENDIX B
NATIONAL CONTENT STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

NATIONAL CONTENT STANDARD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Arts

Music Educators National Conference

1806 Robert Fulton Drive
Reston, VA 22091

John Mahlmann, Standards Project Director

In coordination with the American Alliance for Theater and Education, the National Art Education Association and the National Dance Association.

The standards are scheduled to be completed Summer 1994.

For copies of draft standards, other available material or information about opportunities to comment on the standards, contact: Megan Prosser at (703) 860-4000 or FAX (703) 860-4826.

Citizenship and Civics

Center of Civic Education

5146 Douglas Fir Road
Calabasas, CA 91302-1467

Charles Quigley, Standards Project Director

Margaret Branson, Co-Director

The standards are scheduled to be completed Fall 1994.

For copies of draft standards, other available material or information about opportunities to comment on the standards, contact: Margaret Branson at (818) 591-9321, FAX (818) 591-9330 or Mark Molly at (202) 265-0529 or FAX (202) 265-0710.

English, Language Arts

The Center for the Study of Reading

174 Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

In coordination with The National Council of Teachers
of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA).

Allen Farstrup, Standards Project Director for IRA
Miles Myers, Standards Project Director for NCTE
P. David Pearson, Standards Project Director for The Center

The standards are scheduled to be completed Fall 1995.

*For copies of draft standards, other available material or
information about opportunities to comment on the standards,
contact: Jean Osborn at (217) 333-2552 or FAX (217) 244-4501.*

Foreign Languages

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Inc.

6 Executive Plaza
Yonkers, NY 10701-6801

In coordination with the American Association of Teachers of French,
the American Association of Teachers of German and the American
Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

June K. Phillips, Standards Project Director

The standards are scheduled to be completed Spring 1996.

*For copies draft standards, other available material or
information about opportunities to comment on the standards,
contact: Jamie Draper at (914) 963-8830 or FAX (914) 963-1275.*

Geography

National Council of Geographic Education
Geography Standards Project
1600 M Street, NW - Suite 2611
Washington, DC 20036

In coordination with the Association of American Geographers,
the National Geographic Society and the American Geographical Society.

Anthony R. DeSouza, Standards Project Director

The standards are scheduled to be completed Fall 1994.

*For copies of draft standards, other available material or
information about opportunities to comment on the standards,
Contact: Heather Scofield at (202) 775-7832 or FAX (202) 429-5771.*

History

National Center for History in the Schools at UCLA
231 Moore Hall, 405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Charlotte Crabtree, Standards Project Co-Director
Gary B. Nash, Standards Project Co-Director

The standards are scheduled to be completed Spring 1994.

*For copies of draft standards, other available material or
information about opportunities to comment on the standards,
contact: Pamela Hamilton at (310) 825-4702 or FAX (310) 825-4723.*

Mathematics

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

1906 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20091-1593

Thomas Romberg, Chair of the Standards Commission

The standards were completed in March 1989.

For copies of the standards, other available material or information about opportunities to comment on assessment initiatives, contact: Virginia Williams at (703) 620-9840 or FAX (703) 476-2970.

Science

National Academy of Sciences

National Research Council

2101 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20418

In coordination with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of Physics Teachers, the American Chemical Society, the Council of State Science Supervisors, the Earth Science Coalition and the National Association of Biology Teachers.

Ken Hoffman, Standards Project Director
Angelo Collins, Standards Project Co-Director (?)

The standards are scheduled to be completed Fall 1994.

For copies of draft standards, other available material or information about opportunities to comment on the standards, phone: (202) 334-1399 or FAX (202) 334-3159.

APPENDIX C

SETTING STANDARDS IN OTHER COUNTRIES:

A paper by Harold Noah commissioned for
the National Education Goals Panel

Setting Standards in Other Countries

A paper by Harold Noah commissioned for
the National Education Goals Panel

I. How standards are set in other countries

China. Standards are set for the entire country and for all levels of the school system by the State Education Commission (SEDC), Beijing. SEDC does this by issuing teaching programs (detailed curriculum descriptions) for each subject at each grade level of the primary and secondary schools, as well as for the teacher training colleges (normal schools). In addition, the SEDC prescribes the allocation of classroom hours among subjects at each grade level. The SEDC commissions standard textbooks for distribution to the schools. However, some latitude is afforded to the provincial school authorities and to the larger cities to devise supplementary materials to meet specific local needs, especially the need for study material in local languages in the areas inhabited by national minorities.

Secondary education tends to concentrate on preparing students to sit for the National Unified College Entrance Examination (NUCEE). There is a good deal of rhetoric in official publications and in the professional literature about the need to release the schools from the shackles of preparation for the examinations -- especially to emphasize the virtues of "communist morality," "socialist patriotism," and the like. But, since the examinations are highly competitive (only about 1 in 3 candidates will eventually be offered a place in state-run higher education), exam requirements continue to be a powerful standards setting mechanism.

The SEDC's control of not only the schools' programs and timetables, but also the curricula of the teacher training colleges, means that young teachers enter on their work in the schools with a rather unified set of standards and expectations, reinforcing those that are carried over from their own recent experiences as students.

England/Wales. Until the end of the 1980's, there were no official national content standards. Instead each of the approximately 160 local education authorities was free to issue its own set of content guidelines. These varied from the quite detailed to the most sketchy, or were even absent altogether. In any event, the heads of individual schools usually assumed that it was their responsibility to determine what should be taught in their schools and how hours should be allocated among the subjects. It was further usually assumed that each teacher (or subject department) would determine which books, other materials,

and methods to use. In this sense, one could speak of a very loosely coupled system, in which initiative at the school and classroom level was more important for establishing content standards than any official pronouncements.

However, that was by no means the end of the story. As in China, the influence of end-of-secondary-school examinations (especially, the Certificate of Secondary Education, the General Certificate of Secondary Education, and the General Education Advanced Level Certificate) on the schools' formal curricula and on the practice of teaching and learning was very strong. However, these examinations did not constitute a national system: there were between 7 and 15 separate examination boards providing the examinations, with different syllabuses, different regulations, different test papers, and (it was alleged) different standards of grading. Schools, and even subject departments in schools, signed up with different boards, so the backwash effect of the examinations, although strong, was quite varied across the country.

From time to time, in order to try to influence what the schools were doing and/or what the local education authorities were asking them to do, the Department of Education and Science (DES) would issue surveys of education, or reports on special topics. More rarely, official commissions of inquiry (Royal Commissions) were appointed to investigate, consider, report, and provide recommendations.

In the 1960s, the DES established a national Schools Council to advise on curriculum, standards, and examinations. Local education authorities, teachers, employers, and university professors were joined in so-called "free association". It was emphasized that the Schools Council was not to be a tool of DES. Rather, teachers' representatives were given a majority vote in governance of the Schools Council. Although work went ahead very actively to produce new curricula in all of the major school subjects, their final influence on school practise was small.

By far the most important tool in the hands of the central government for reviewing and perhaps influencing a school's standards was the corps of HMI's (Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools), whose members would descend pre-announced on a school to observe teachers, to check on facilities, to look at pupils' written work, to form an opinion about the level of operation of the school, and to make recommendations. Their written reports were formidable documents that tended to carry a good deal of weight. Insofar as the HMI's were in agreement about content standards (which was by no means always the case), they could help to define standards in

practice. But the general stance of the central government was to stay out of (even to take pride in staying out of) the standards setting business.

This "hands-off" approach has been rejected by the recent Conservative administrations. In the mid-1980s the Schools Council was abolished (its recommendations tended to be too radical for the taste of the then minister of education) and two separate bodies were set up, the Examinations Council and the Curriculum Council. This marked the beginning of a distinctly more pro-active stance by the central government toward standards and assessment. Beginning in 1986, the government embarked on a legislative program designed to locate control of a core portion of the schools' curricula in the central government. The major outlines of the changed approach were embodied in the Education Reform Act of 1988. A National Curriculum was instituted. A School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC), appointed by the minister, replaced the two separate councils on examinations and curriculum. One part of SEAC's remit is to certify curricula in the core subjects. For the first time in English educational history, all state schools would be expected to teach to a common set of goals in a prescribed set of subjects. SEAC's second job is to review the syllabuses, regulations, and examination papers of the various GCSE and GCE A-Level examining boards, to suggest changes, and to approve or disapprove. A major goal is to reduce the differences among the boards in the content and grading of their examinations. More revolutionary yet in the English context has been the plan to test all pupils at ages 7, 11, 14, and 16 in the core subjects.

The standards setting procedures took much longer than was expected. Many of the original proposals in the core subjects ran into stiff opposition from teachers, professional educational associations, and even employers' organizations, and had to be withdrawn for redrafting. By now, however, there is greater acceptance among teachers of the desirability of having a set of national content standards in the major school subjects.

Meanwhile, the attempts to implement nationwide testing, beginning with 7-year olds, have run into organized opposition from teachers, who complain that the tests take too much time, are poorly constructed, and are in any case often impossible for an unaided teacher to administer properly. In June/July, at the close of the 1993 school year, the teachers unions announced a boycott of the tests, and most teachers refused to administer them. The minister was left vowing to persist in imposing the testing (though quite how he would do it if the teachers would not cooperate was by no means clear), and to uttering threats about

withholding pay from those teachers who continued their boycott.

Observers have noted a certain irony in that while Mrs. Thatcher's announced policy was to shrink the role of the state in British life in general, practice has gone the other way in schooling, as government has limited the educational powers of the local authorities and has inserted the ministry (now renamed "Department for Education") squarely into the business of setting and assessing standards.

France. The French school system has experienced a series of major restructurings and expansions in the past 30 years. Secondary education has been particularly affected, by opening up what had been a rather circumscribed system to all children of secondary school age. Between the primary school and the upper secondary school (lycée) an intermediate 3-year collège has been introduced. The lycée system has been vastly expanded and differentiated, providing many different types of institutions and internal tracks. Primary education has been less touched by restructuring.

Throughout all these changes, the administrative structure of the system, particularly its highly centralized and bureaucratic nature has remained a constant, despite the fact that recent years have seen some movement toward devolution of administrative authority, and especially : responsibility for finance, to the départements (roughly, counties) and municipalities. In line with the centralizing traditions of the educational system, curricula and content standards are established under the control of the ministry of education by national subject commissions, which contain members from the universities and employers' groups, but with a predominant voice going to the ministry's own inspectors general.

Curricula and standards are published in great detail by the ministry and it is expected that they will be followed closely in all French schools, with only minor regional variation. A large corps of inspectors sees to it that schools and teachers follow the prescribed programs. Standards tend to be high, in the sense that not only is the quantity of material to be covered quite large, but there is a good deal of relatively difficult material, too -- especially in the upper secondary grades. Students are expected to master extensive bodies of knowledge and to exhibit their knowledge, understanding, and skills in formal ways. For example, French schooling emphasizes that there is a "correct" way of writing an essay, critiquing a proposition in philosophy, or presenting a solution to a problem in mathematics. Teachers insist that students master

these techniques; individual, innovative style is not likely to be rewarded.

At the end of each year, teachers review the work of the students together with the results of end-of-year examinations, to decide whether a student is to be promoted to the next grade, or be required to repeat the grade. Répétition is not unusual: for example, over the course of primary schooling about 30 percent of the students can expect to repeat at least one year. In secondary school the rates are much lower, between 8 and 15 percent, depending on the type of school and track, but failure to gain promotion sends a very clear signal about standards to student and family.

After the first cycle of secondary education (the 3-year collège), the student passes to the second cycle, which has two streams, one "long," the other "short." The long stream enrolls approximately half the age group. It normally takes three years (though about half the students take an extra year) and leads to the baccalauréat at age 18 or 19. The short stream lasts two years, concentrates on technical studies, and leads to the Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle (Vocational Certificate).

The baccalauréat is exceptionally important in practice in establishing the standards of French education. The pass rate is usually about 66 percent of candidates, or 33 percent of the age group. Passing the bac opens the door to a tuition-free place in a university. Depending on the particular bac track the student has entered, s/he will take written and/or oral examinations in 6-7 subjects. The typical written examination will last 3 to 4 hours, for a total of 20 to 24 hours of written examination. Each year the ministry circulates a list of topics to be addressed in the next exam administration. It sets dates for the examinations and announces procedures for administering them. The ministry formulates the rules for appointing local juries of examiners, describes their powers, procedures, and the constraints on them. The ministry also specifies the general criteria and technical aspects for evaluating answers and awarding marks (such as weighting scores on particular subjects according to the type of baccalauréat). Limited discretion is given to the regional academic authorities (académies), but the ministry retains ultimate control over the entire process of the baccalauréat examination through its regional pedagogical inspectorate. Members of the inspectorate are subject specialists in each region who work closely with the rector of the académie to appoint members of the juries supervising the examination, to decide the questions to appear on the examination papers, and to determine grading criteria. Thus, even though there is a degree of devolution of administrative authority to the

regions, the final power to decide what standards will be upheld by the bac resides in Paris at the ministry. Given that the announced policy of the government is to have 80 percent of the age-group "brought to baccalauréat level" by the year 2000, the role of the ministry in setting standards, via both curriculum and bac regulations is hard to exaggerate.

France has a further standards-setting mechanism worth mentioning. The state supports a network of higher education institutions known as grandes écoles. Their courses of study, facilities, and faculty - mainly in engineering and public administration - are vastly superior to those found in the universities. Entry is by competitive examination (popularly known as the concours) taken after two years of post-baccalauréat preparation in special classes organized at the lycées or in private, for-profit cramming schools. Groups of grandes écoles set common entrance examinations, incorporating extremely high standards, to select about 10 percent of those going on to higher education. Success in entry and completion of the course at a grande école means preferential access to the best jobs in government and the economy.

The French have acted on the assumption that, alongside the formal statement of standards in regulations and the work of an inspectorate to report on their observance, a series of tough tests and examinations, culminating in the baccalauréat and the concours, provides further assurance that school standards will not only be set at a high level, but will be maintained.

Germany.¹ Each of the original 11 (16 since 1991) Federal provinces (Länder) is guaranteed formal sovereignty in matters of education and culture, like the states of the United States. And, like the states here, they are jealous guardians of that sovereignty. If for no other reason, Germany offers a distinct contrast to the French model, which has relied so heavily on nationwide standardization and control from the center to set and maintain academic standards. Nevertheless, like France, the Federal Republic has also managed to achieve a relatively high and uniform degree of academic quality within the various types of schools and at the various grades levels within those schools, while according a large measure of autonomy to each of the provinces.

¹ The discussion of Germany refers to the 15 "original" provinces, and should not be taken to describe the situation in the five new provinces established on the territory of the defunct German Democratic Republic.

After attending a common primary school, students in Germany go on to one of three main types of secondary school: Hauptschule, Realschule, and Gymnasium. Attempts during the 1960s and 1970s to introduce comprehensive secondary schools were mostly unsuccessful. The Hauptschule enrolls about 35 percent of the age-group for a 5-year course of study that is less academically demanding than in the other two types of secondary school. The Realschule enrolls about 30 percent of the age-group in a 6-year course. Its standards lie between those of the Hauptschule and the Gymnasium. The Gymnasium is primarily academic in orientation, and prepares students for the Abitur examinations at the end of 9 years of study.

Each provincial ministry of education issues curriculum guides and timetables of hours of class in great detail for each subject in each of the school types. The guides are usually formulated in consultation with school teachers, university specialists, and educationists. It is expected that teachers will follow the guides closely, and it appears that this does in fact happen without much resort to inspection or other administrative means.

In like manner, regulations governing the award of certificates of completion of the Hauptschule and Realschule courses, as well as the Abitur certificate, are issued by each province. Given this emphasis on regional autonomy in setting standards, how has Germany managed to secure a workable degree of uniformity of standards?

The main instrument has been the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, which brings together the ministers of all the provinces, taking decisions by consensus. The Standing Conference is a forum for the exchange of information and proposals. It attempts to reduce as far as is practicable the differences in educational arrangements among the provincial systems, to provide a more solid basis for the mutual recognition of credentials by the provinces. The Conference has many achievements to its credit, although negotiations often drag on for years before agreements are reached. They range from getting the provinces to begin and end their school years more or less on the same dates, to insuring that differences in curricula, timetables and examination and diploma standards are reduced. Much of this effort is driven by agreement that mutual recognition of credentials is a necessity in the relatively small land area of the Federal Republic.

The Abitur examination has some of the same standard-setting effects in Germany that the baccalauréat has in France; both pull standards in the direction of loading the curriculum not only more heavily with material to be learned, but with more difficult material as well. However, teachers working

in individual schools play a more significant role in setting standards for the Abitur than for the baccalauréat, so the academic material to be mastered for the Abitur does not have quite the national currency and impact that the baccalauréat has in France.

Japan. The ministry of education in Tokyo (Mombusho) sets the standards for schooling in much the same way that the Paris ministry does in France -- at least as far as administrative regulation, inspection, and approval of textbooks are concerned. However, there is greater devolution of responsibility from Tokyo to the 47 prefectures (Ken) and municipalities for setting standards and deciding other school matters than from Paris to the académies.

The ministry publishes guidelines, setting out the required courses of study, the curriculum, and credit requirements for each level of the school system. These are to be followed by the prefectures, which have boards of education to run education, especially upper secondary schools, in their districts. In turn, municipalities (which run elementary and lower secondary schools) devise their programs of study and timetables according to the guidelines established at the prefectural level. The guidelines on courses of study issued by Mombusho are quite general; they become progressively more detailed as one moves through the intermediate prefectural and municipal stages of administration down to the level of the individual school.

The ministry is advised by a Curriculum Council, which prepares a set of recommendations on objectives, content, allocation of teaching hours, and the like. These recommendations are then used by subject specialists employed by the ministry, who work with consultants from outside the ministry, to devise the course of study for each school subject and each grade level. Teachers are used as consultants to the Curriculum Council to advise on the content of the teachers' guides which are also produced and circulated by the ministry. Textbooks are commercially developed and produced, but they must be sanctioned by the ministry before they can be used in the schools. Hence, the textbooks adhere closely to the ministry's specifications. Adoption is by the prefectural and municipal education boards, who buy the books for all of their students in compulsory education (i.e., to the end of lower secondary school). No charge is made for these books and they do not have to be returned to the school at year's end.

Many observers have pointed to the relatively relaxed nature of Japanese pre-primary and primary schools, compared with the exam-driven atmosphere in the secondary schools. Because the entrance examinations require the mastery of

large quantities of factual material, are so important in determining the students' future prospects in employment, and are so competitive, they are probably more important for understanding how the particular standards currently observed in Japanese education have come about and are maintained.

Standards in the Japanese secondary school system are set in practice by the backwash effect of the entrance examinations -- in this case, from lower to upper secondary school, and from upper secondary school to higher education. "More than any other single event, the university entrance examinations influence the orientation and life of most Japanese high school students, even for the many who do not go on to postsecondary education." (U.S. Department of Education, Japanese Education Today, 1987:44) Transfer from lower to upper secondary school is not automatic; in many prefectures the transfer will be determined by the score achieved in the entrance examinations run either by the prefecture at large or by individual schools. This is a critical point in the student's career. Not only is it the end of compulsory education, but there is a well-recognized hierarchy of quality and prestige among upper secondary schools, both nationally and within prefectures. Getting into the "right" school will influence a student's chances of admission to the "right" university 3 years later. Getting into the "right" university will be critical for future employment and income.

The struggle to enter the "right" school and university (or at least the most prestigious one in sight) explains why such a high proportion of Japanese upper secondary students (about 30 percent) are enrolled in fee-charging private education. The private schools are not necessarily academically superior to the public institutions, but parents hope that their children will get more individual attention. The presence of the university entrance examinations at the end of the three years means that the private schools cannot afford the luxury of having lower standards than their public counterparts.

Japanese parents make great effort to promote their children's academic success. Not only do mothers expect to help with their children's homework, but families are prepared to pay the relatively high costs of enrollment in after-school cramming schools (juku), where the emphasis is not only on the material to be learned, but also on techniques of successful study and test-taking. Reinforcing this family interest and commitment is the widespread belief that academic success is not determined by the child's innate ability (a belief held quite strongly in most other countries, including the U.S.), but by the effort exerted to learn. Hence the view in Japan that, given the willingness

to make an effort and to persist, all can reach the high standards demanded.

Summary. Most countries embody their content standards in curriculum guides issued by the ministries of education, or their equivalents. Typically, ministry officials consult with education professionals in the course of establishing curricula and standards. In some countries (for example, Japan) consultation draws on the experience of secondary school teachers; in others (for example, France) members of the schools inspectorate play a large role. We observe a general tendency, however, to move away from consultation strictly with educators, to involve a wider spectrum of interests -- especially employers and parent groups. This has been evident, for example, in England/Wales.

Standards that exist on paper are not necessarily followed at the classroom and school level. In order to increase observance of curriculum guidelines, inspectors of education are appointed to visit schools and classrooms to report on the extent to which the official curriculum is being implemented and on students' and teachers' performance. In addition, many countries require that textbooks used in the schools receive official approval. Ministries of education may commission textbooks embodying the principles and content of the official curriculum, arrange for their publication, distribute them, and require their use in the state schools (for example, China).

A national examination system provides a further mechanism for setting standards, through specification of examination syllabuses and regulations, preparation of tests, grading of answers, and establishment of cutoff points. In most countries these examinations are within the jurisdiction of the ministry of education, but are prepared and administered by subordinate (sometimes semi-independent) authorities. In China, England/Wales, France, Germany and Japan the examinations have national currency and are high-stakes events for students and schools. Their backwash effect on what actually goes on in classrooms is formidable and reaches far down the grade levels.

Reference to a less tangible, less "institutional," and certainly less malleable factor is in order at this point. Even though the judgment of teachers and school administrators about what levels and kinds of knowledge, skills, and attitudes students should attain will to some extent be formed by the official regulations and requirements, in the final analysis it is the values and expectations internalized by teachers and administrators and expressed in their pedagogical work that are likely to dominate standards-maintenance in practice.

II. Comparing proposed standards with those of other countries

A primary goal of proposed standards is that they should be "world class," "internationally competitive," "comparable to the best in the world."

Further, the NEGP proposes that standards documents submitted for review and certification contain a section comparing the proposed standards "with current standards and priorities in other countries. Standards should be high - as challenging as, or more challenging than, others in the world, but not necessarily the same." (Review Criteria for Subject-Specific Standards, August 23, 1993).

In the light of the above summaries of how five important countries go about the business of establishing and maintaining academic standards for their schools, developers of standards may welcome some guidance on how comparisons with other countries' standards might be made, what sources might be used, and what form the comparison might take.

The section "Guidance on Applying the "World-Class" Criterion on pages 16-17 of the report are offered as a guide to those working on these comparisons.

III. Recommendations for the consideration of other TPG members

1. The requirement that those proposing standards should document by comparison the fact that their proposed standards are in fact "world class," is on the face of it a reasonable one -- as long as it is understood all around that the comparisons can be (should be?) quite limited with regard to number of countries, types of school, and grade levels.
2. Those making the comparisons should be given fairly wide latitude also in selecting which aspects of their proposed standards they wish to focus on: depth, breadth, up-to-dateness, emphasis on theory, apparent utility for future study or work, capacity to interest/motivate students, incorporation of practical or lab. work, assessability, etc., etc.
3. Countries that have achieved high standards have done so not merely by the adumbration of curricular guidelines, increases in the hours of study overall or for particular subjects, teacher training and retraining, spending more money, and so forth. Family support is immensely important. Even in those countries that can boast of high standards overall, there is now the familiar concern that children who

do not have good support at home are only too likely to be defeated by the challenges that school presents.

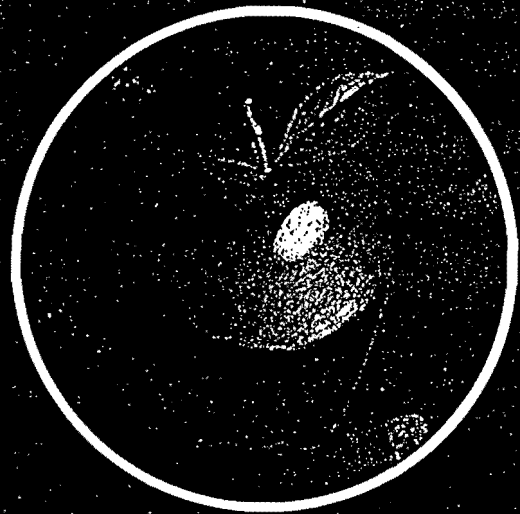
4. A tough examination system carrying solid rewards for success seems to be very helpful in setting and maintaining high standards, though not necessarily to the exclusion of the aforementioned policy instruments.

5. Certainly, in the United States we do ourselves immense harm when we insist on testing children frequently for "aptitude" and "ability," using the results to label, classify, and track them. The results are predictable, and the contrast with Japan, where effort not "ability" is seen as the prime mover of achievement, is startling. Good standards will help elicit high levels of effort by learners, not just high levels of measured achievement by the "able".

6. In the end, teachers are the purveyors of standards. Whatever is written on paper will remain on paper unless teachers incorporate the standards into their values, teaching, and behavior. After standards are certified and adopted by this or that state or school district -- then comes the hard part.

7. The standards and standards setting procedures reviewed in Part I of this report did not appear overnight. Instead they have been the outcome of many decades of development, in some instances a century or more. In this business of standard setting in schooling it is imperative to take the long view. Success, whatever that may be, is unlikely to come quickly; techniques and mechanisms for establishing standards will not be perfected rapidly or to everyone's satisfaction; and by no means all states will be (or will need to be) attracted to adopt certified standards immediately, or even after two or three decades. The notion of national standards for schooling does not sit comfortably with the American preference for local control. However, it may be becoming more acceptable, and one can take encouragement from recent experience in England/ Wales. There, too, national "approved" standards for the schools were regarded as somehow alien -- even "Continental," but opinion in the last year or two has swung around to substantial approval. The same may well happen here, especially if the standards are seen to be reasonable and attainable, technically sound, and not imposed, but available for voluntary adoption.

APPENDIX D
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
RAISING STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION



Raising Standards For American Education

A Report to Congress, the Secretary of Education,
the National Education Goals Panel,
and the American People

The National Council on
Education Standards and Testing

Washington, D.C. January 24, 1992

Executive Summary

The National Council on Education Standards and Testing was created in response to interest in national standards and assessments by the Nation's Governors, the Administration, and Congress. In the authorizing legislation (Public Law 102-62), Congress charged the Council to:

- advise on the desirability and feasibility of national standards and tests, and
- recommend long-term policies, structures, and mechanisms for setting voluntary education standards and planning an appropriate system of tests.

The work of the Council follows and complements the President's Education Summit with the Governors held in 1989. This important collaborative effort led to the adoption of six National Education Goals designed to engage all Americans, from young children to adults. The National Education Goals Panel was created to report annually on progress toward the Goals. In its first year, the Panel concluded that to meaningfully measure progress on Goals 3 and 4, consideration should be given to creating national education standards that define what students should know and be able to do and to identifying and

National Education Goals 3 and 4

Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship

By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

Goal 4: Science and Mathematics

By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

developing methods to assess students' success in meeting them. The President similarly has called for the creation of World Class Standards for students and high-quality tests on which they can demonstrate achievement of these standards.

In carrying out its charge to examine a broad range of issues, the Council met eight times between June and December, 1991. Task forces were created and produced background papers that informed the Council's discussions. In response to the congressional call for broad public participation, the Council solicited and received public comment from experts and organizations representing a wide range of constituents and interests. This report to Congress, the Secretary of Education, the National Education Goals Panel, and the American people provides recommendations reached after intense deliberation and includes concerns that must be addressed as work progresses on developing standards and assessments.

Desirability of High National Standards and a System of Assessments

In the course of its research and discussions, the Council concluded that high national standards tied to assessments are desirable. In the absence of well-defined and demanding standards, education in the United States has gravitated toward *de facto* national minimum expectations. Except for students who are planning to attend selective four-year colleges, current

education standards focus on low-level reading and arithmetic skills and on small amounts of factual material in other content areas. Consumers of education in this country have settled for far less than they should and for far less than do their counterparts in other developed nations.

High national standards tied to assessments can create high expectations for all students and help to better target resources. They are critical to the Nation in three primary ways: to promote educational equity, to preserve democracy and enhance the civic culture, and to improve economic competitiveness. Further, national education standards would help to provide an increasingly diverse and mobile population with shared values and knowledge.

The Council recommends standards for students and standards for schools and school systems. Student standards include specification of the content — what students should know and be able to do — and the level of performance that students are expected to attain — how good is good enough. The Council envisions that the national standards will include substantive content together with complex problem-solving and higher order thinking skills.

To ensure that students do not bear the sole burden of attaining the standards and to encourage assurances that the tools for success will be available at all schools, the Council also recommends that states establish school delivery standards. System performance standards should also be established. School delivery and system performance standards would attest to the provision of opportunities to learn and of appropriate instructional conditions to enable all children to reach high standards.

In endorsing the concept of national standards for all students, the Council stipulates several characteristics these standards should have:

- Standards must reflect high expectations, not expectations of minimal competency.
- Standards must provide focus and direction, not become a national curriculum.
- Standards must be national, not federal.
- Standards must be voluntary, not mandated by the federal government.
- Standards must be dynamic, not static.

The Council's intent in recommending the establishment of national standards is to raise the ceiling for students who are currently above average and to lift the floor for those who now experience the least success in school, including those with special needs. States should work toward reducing gaps in students' opportunities to learn and in their performance, such as those now associated with race, income, gender, and geographical location.

Having reached consensus that standards are desirable, the Council then determined that it is not sufficient just to set standards. Since tests tend to influence what is taught, assessments should be developed that embody the new high standards. The considerable resources and effort the Nation expends on the current patchwork of tests should be redirected toward the development of a new system of assessments. Assessments should be state-of-the-art, building on the best tests available and incorporating new methods. In order to measure individual student progress and to monitor achievement in attaining the National Education Goals, the new system of assessments should have two components —

- individual student assessments, and
- large-scale sample assessments, such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The key features of both components would be alignment with high national standards and the capacity to produce useful, comparable results. In addition, the system of assessments should have a number of other features.

- The system of assessments must consist of multiple methods of measuring progress, not a single test.
- The system of assessments must be voluntary, not mandatory.
- The system of assessments must be developmental, not static.

As these features are put in place, technical and equity issues need to be resolved, and the overriding importance of ensuring fairness for all children needs to be addressed. Resolving issues of validity, reliability, and fairness is critical to the success of the new system.

The Council concludes that the United States, with appropriate safeguards, should initiate the development of a

voluntary system of assessments linked to high national standards. These assessments should be created as expeditiously as possible by a wide array of developers and be made available for adoption by states and localities. The Council finds that the assessments eventually could be used for such high-stakes purposes for students as high school graduation, college admission, continuing education, and certification for employment. Assessments could also be used by states and localities as the basis for system accountability.

In the Council's view, it is desirable that national content and performance standards and assessments of the standards be established. Doing so will constitute an essential next step to help the country achieve the National Education Goals. Moreover, developing standards and assessments at the national level can contribute to educational renewal in several ways. This effort has the potential to raise learning expectations at all levels of education, better target human and fiscal resources for educational improvement, and help meet the needs of an increasingly mobile population. Finally, standards and assessments linked to the standards can become the cornerstone of the fundamental, systemic reform necessary to improve schools.

Feasibility of Creating National Standards and a System of Assessments

As a first step, the Council recommends that standards be developed in the five core subject areas set out in the National Education Goals — English, mathematics, science, history, and geography — with other subjects to follow. The feasibility of setting national standards and their effectiveness in prompting state and local reform and experimentation is demonstrated by the work of several national professional organizations, a number of states, and other countries. The experiences of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and of several states demonstrate that standards-setting is feasible — it is being done. Slowly but surely across the country, states and local districts are responding to the NCTM standards by changing the curriculum and style of teaching to reflect the challenging new standards. The Council recommends national support for such efforts and encourages the work by

professional organizations, states, and localities in articulating standards, curriculum frameworks, and instructional guidelines.

To make national standards meaningful, it is important that the Nation be able to measure progress toward them. New forms of assessments — tests worth teaching to — are envisioned. A system of student assessments linked to world-class standards would provide information that could be used to:

- exemplify for students, parents, and teachers the kinds and levels of achievement expected;
- improve classroom instruction and learning outcomes for all students;
- inform students, parents, and teachers about student progress;
- measure and hold students, schools, school districts, states, and the Nation accountable for educational performance; and
- assist education policymakers with programmatic decisions.

It is unlikely that all of these purposes could be accomplished with the same assessment. Requirements for validity, reliability, and fairness necessitate on-going, independent reviews of the assessments and their uses. Further, particularly for children who have historically experienced less success in schools, such as the poor, ethnic minorities, and students with disabilities, schools should ensure the opportunity to learn as a critical condition for valid and fair use of assessment results.

Some existing assessments may be retained, while others will need to be replaced to avoid adding to the current patchwork. Promising efforts are under way nationally, as well as by states, localities, research institutions, and test publishers using new assessment methods to measure student progress against more demanding curriculum content. Investing in a national system of assessments could lead to more effective and economical use of available resources since it would provide direction and focus to reform efforts. The Council urges support for necessary research and development so that the critical need for assessing students against the yardstick of national, world-class standards can be met.

The Council notes that if they are to be useful, comparable results should be available to all key levels, including individual students and their parents, schools, districts, states, and the

Nation. Assessment outcomes tied to the standards should be widely distributed and communicated in a form that is readily comprehensible to students, parents, policymakers, and the public. States and localities should report results in the context of relevant information on the conditions of learning and students' opportunities to learn.

Developing and Implementing National Standards and a System of Assessments

To ensure that development of national standards and a voluntary system of assessments is done effectively, a coordinating structure needs to be agreed upon and put into place. This structure should benefit from and not duplicate work already being done by existing entities. The Council recommends that a reconfigured National Education Goals Panel and a newly created National Education Standards and Assessments Council work jointly to certify content and student performance standards and criteria for assessments as world class. The Council further recommends that to ensure strong public accountability in this work the Panel would appoint members of the National Education Standards and Assessments Council, which would have the responsibility to coordinate this national effort.

High national standards and a system of assessments, while critically important, are not panaceas for the Nation's educational problems. Other required elements of reform include state curriculum frameworks tied to the standards, professional development opportunities for teaching to the standards, new roles and responsibilities for educators, technology that enhances instructional opportunities, assistance to families and communities in need, incentives to inspire better efforts by students and educators, early intervention where problems are identified, and the reduction of health and social barriers to learning.

Conclusion

The country is engaged in a national debate on what students should know and be able to do and on how to measure

achievement toward those ends. This debate is part of a fundamental shift of perspective among educators, policymakers, and the public from examining inputs and elements of the educational process to examining outcomes and results. The Council initially discussed standards and assessments as a way to help measure progress toward the National Education Goals but came to see the movement toward high standards as a means to help achieve the Goals.

While mindful of the technical and political challenges, the Council concludes that national standards and a system of assessments are desirable and feasible mechanisms for raising expectations, revitalizing instruction, and rejuvenating educational reform efforts for all American schools and students. Thus, the National Council on Education Standards and Testing endorses the adoption of high national standards and the development of a system of assessments to measure progress toward those standards.

National Council on Education Standards and Testing

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Marshall S. Smith *Stanford University*

APPENDIX E

CHAPTER OF THE 1993 GOALS REPORT
"SETTING STANDARDS, BECOMING THE BEST"

Setting Standards, Becoming the Best

Americans thrive on challenge. We settled a massive land, created a new form of government, developed into an economic leader, and landed on the moon—all because these were challenges that did not daunt us. In personal performances, too, we admire and reward those who set high standards for themselves and meet the challenge, as superior athletes, or exceptional pianists, or Nobel laureates in science and literature.

Four years ago the nation's Governors and the President challenged the American people again, this time to rebuild their education system so that it is among the best in the world. The six National Education Goals are the framework for this effort.

A scant century following Independence, the American public school system had evolved to attempt what no other country had done—to provide universal access to a free education. At the time, the public equated progress through the system with results. A de facto set of measurements documenting student progress emerged, consisting of high school diplomas; course credits, time spent on subjects, and nationally devised tests that assumed certain content had been covered and that such content was important. With diplomas in hand, young people, as well as their parents, employers, or college teachers, believed that they had been prepared adequately for the years ahead.

We now know that this is not true. Our schools are not organized around high standards for our students; at best, we have a minimum curriculum, reinforced by mediocre textbooks and teaching methods. Our low expectations for most students, growing out of the haphazard and disconnected system with which we had become much too comfortable, might have continued to be acceptable were it not for two very important realizations in the past decade. First, the standards we have in education do not match with the performance needs demanded by citizenship and employment in our society. Second, our minimal and fractured system of standards is significantly below that of countries with which we compete for leadership, economically and politically.

Consider today's demanding marketplace. Will a worker who punches the clock, stays the required amount of time, has only minimum skills, and applies

a scant amount of effort be assured a paycheck? In essence, this has been the context of public education—minimal expectations and a guaranteed endorsement.

Now consider the dilemma of a businessperson dependent upon employees skilled in statistical measurement using new technologies. In the pool of young people the employer can draw from, only 35%, on the average, will have completed three years of a challenging mathematics sequence before leaving high school. Worse, the employer knows neither what knowledge they actually have nor if they can apply it in an advanced workplace. The employer's competitors around the world, however—in Korea, or Canada, or Spain or several other countries—recruit young workers who consistently outperform our students academically.

Business leaders and many policymakers in the United States believe that this situation is intolerable. Initial reforms attempted to shore up the existing structure—more high school graduation requirements, more seat time, teachers better prepared to teach academic subjects. With the adoption of the National Goals, the conversation has shifted to results—what is our education system accomplishing and how do we become the best? The answers to those questions lead directly to the need for nationwide standards. In order to be competitive and to get the most from our investment in education, those standards arguably must be set very high. Moreover, in order to be fair, to preserve our pluralistic society, and to protect our democracy, those standards must challenge all students.

The movement to nationwide standards is intended as a powerful lever for changing American education. It represents a new emphasis, one that focuses on quality learning for all children, not merely access for all. High performance is no longer considered an exception; exceptional performance is expected to become the norm.

The scope and nature of efforts to develop nationwide standards are unprecedented. For a national consensus to emerge, a host of concerns must be addressed, and a common vocabulary is essential. Certain questions need clear answers:

What is a Nationwide Education Standard?

Education standards are what all students should know and be able to do with their knowledge. Moreover, they imply that mastery should be at a very high level. Besides being rigorous, such standards must reflect what has been called "a thinking curriculum"—a curriculum that forces students to use their minds well, to solve problems, to think, and to reason. The term "world-class" is often used to describe standards that meet or exceed those of our strongest competitor nations.

Standards refer to both content and performance. *Content standards* describe the areas of knowledge all students should have access to if they are to become the productive and fully educated citizens of tomorrow. The content standards should be challenging and focused, reflecting the most important ideas and skills needed. Although they are currently being developed separately in different academic subject areas (mathematics, history, the arts, etc.), content standards should ultimately enhance efforts to link specific ideas and skills from different subjects together in meaningful and useful ways.

But exposure to knowledge alone does not guarantee learning at high levels. We also need to have assurance that students have more than just a cursory knowledge of content, and that is the role of *performance standards*. Basically, performance standards should demonstrate how good is good enough. Performance is usually evaluated in terms of successive levels of mastery. Writing out the answers to simple questions about a passage from literature might be considered a novice level. Elaborating on the meaning of the passage might indicate a higher level of learning. Comparing the passage to another source and analyzing the differences might be even still higher. The essential point is that students must show how well they have learned the content. Nationally, we will need to know what percentages of students are reaching what levels of performance on content so that the public will know how the education system is performing.

By having such standards, we turn the traditional mode of schooling around. In the past, how students were taught was mostly fixed, and the results varied—some students failed, most learned at least some of what they were taught. To enable all students to learn at high levels, varied instructional strategies are needed to challenge them. The standards are fixed, but the means of reaching them are varied.

The standards being discussed and developed are unconventional for American schools today because

they reflect deliberately higher achievement. However, they also are realistic. In truth, we just have not asked as much of students and schools in the past as they are capable of performing. For example, only one of 11 eighth graders understands measurement or geometry concepts, compared to two of five students in Korea. Only one of 15 American high school seniors can solve problems involving Algebra, and fewer than five percent can interpret historical information and ideas, not because they cannot do these things but because so few are exposed to high content instruction.

Get Specific. What Are Some Examples of What All Students Should Know and Be Able To Do?

Suppose we are watching a fourth grader use numbers. In a typical mathematics classroom today, this probably means simple arithmetic, adding and averaging similar columns of figures—dull stuff. However, our student has been learning mathematics since kindergarten under the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. So, she knows how to analyze sets of data, draw a line plot, and decide on an analytic approach. She takes two sets of data collected on samples of bears—grizzlies and black bears. She analyzes their sex and their weight and plots the results of her work on a graph. Is she skilled in arithmetic? Certainly! Can she apply her knowledge, and is she eager to do so? You bet! Is she bored or intimidated by math? No! Is she up to high standards work? Yes!

In a middle-grades science classroom, we might watch a small group of students learn about the common properties of matter, such as the particle model, and the fact that a total mass of materials involved in any observed change remains the same. They have an ice cube in a jar and record what changed and did not change as the ice melted—color, wetness, temperature, mass, shape, volume and size. They work to identify one factor they regard as critical to the melting process and express it as a question, which they proceed to investigate. They then draw conclusions and share and discuss them with the whole class. These students have used the scientific method, solved problems as a group, analyzed data, expressed their findings in writing, and defended their analysis in discussion. Regrettably, only about one-fourth of eighth graders in a typical science class in the present system regularly write up science experiments, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Now we are looking over the shoulders of graduating seniors taking a more conventional test in

American history, but at an advanced level. They have three hours to answer four questions which they may select from several categories. Let's pick the general category. One of the questions asks students to analyze whether government regulation did more harm than good to the American economy between 1880 - 1920. Another has them explain why evangelical protestantism has been an important force in American life and what effects it had in the period 1800-1880 or 1900-1960. Another asks them to offer evidence for the existence and influence of a "military-industrial complex" in the conduct of American foreign policy from 1954 to 1974.

These questions, taken from an actual test in England, illustrate the level and depth that other countries expect their students to know. The challenge to these students does not stop at mastering historical facts. They must also integrate this knowledge far beyond traditional rote memorization.

Content and performance standards set high expectations for children. They also challenge educators and parents to become effective teachers. And they set all of us on a path toward becoming active, lifelong learners.

How Are Nationwide Standards Being Set?

Three principles guide what is happening in setting high nationwide content standards.

One is that their use is entirely voluntary. The standards are *not* a centrally imposed national curriculum, but rather a resource to help schools, districts, and states anchor their curriculum, instruction, assessment, and teacher preparation efforts. They are reference points for public understanding, providing a common focal point for school people, parents, and other interested citizens to agree on what is important and to work together to improve education results for all.

A second element is that nationwide standards are not fixed forever. They are intended to be continually discussed and improved. The development and distribution of the initial content and performance standards in a subject should only be the beginning.

The third important element is the truly inclusive process that is being used to reach a consensus on nationwide standards. Every possible interest is involved. At the core are the real experts—the master teachers of history, civics, geography, science, English and language arts, foreign languages, and the arts. Their partners are researchers and academic

experts. A lengthy process of feedback and revising follows the initial development. This is the process used by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) in developing the standards it announced four years ago. The process has become a model for other subject areas.

Separate but related individual projects focus on content standards or address particular aspects of higher performance. For example, more than one-half of the nation's students are in states or school districts involved with the New Standards Project, a foundation-funded effort to arrive at high standards through assessments which rely on students' abilities to reason and solve real-world problems. The 300 schools in the Coalition of Essential Schools are developing a core of learning and new ways for students to display what they have learned.

Many state-instigated efforts are changing the education of students from one based on time spent in class to one based on challenging content. Maine's Common Core of Learning, New Mexico's Standards for Excellence, Michigan's Partnership for New Education, and the curriculum frameworks developed in California are examples of where research and best-practice knowledge are coming together to stimulate higher levels of learning.

Some argue that those closest to students, the teachers, are those most capable of making content decisions for their classrooms. On the other hand, some believe that a uniform national curriculum is the only way to ensure progress. In a uniquely American way, we have opted for a balanced approach, with local classroom decisions guided by a common core framework that reflects a nationwide consensus about what is most important for students to learn.

We do not want to be stifled by a national curriculum. Nor do we want a hit-or-miss education system. We want everyone to be working from their own unique context toward the common goal of providing challenging content for all students.

If All of These Efforts Are Already Taking Place, What is There Left To Do?

Despite the many efforts under way to set new standards, most students in this country are still taught unchallenging curriculum and are still not aware of what they should be aiming for in their studies. In addition, parents, teachers, and the broader general public remain largely ignorant about what they should expect students to know and do as a result of their education. Without a process to reinforce and build on the power of high expectations in the public's

mind, even what has been accomplished so far might prove to be short-lived.

All of the individual efforts under way to develop high-quality content and performance standards need to become part of a nationwide commitment by *all* citizens to hold *all* students to high standards. These in turn can become the foundation for locally determined changes in assessment, teacher preparation, curriculum, classroom organization, and other policies and practices that must occur for the standards to be met. Ultimately, it is only by local communities adopting standards-based systemic approaches to reform that we can obtain the fundamental changes in our schools necessary for achieving the National Education Goals.

At the moment, the prospects are unprecedented for renewing public education throughout the country. The public demand, the professional commitment, the research knowledge available about how children learn best, and the growing recognition of the interrelatedness of this country's human investment with what is happening around the world provide excellent conditions for change. We must build on these possibilities.

How Can We Assure That All Students Have Equal Opportunities to Meet The New Standards?

American society is morally committed to equal opportunity. For too many students, disastrously low expectations compound disparities in the quality of schools. These students face a dim future. Taxpayers and voters, however, are unlikely to increase resources for schools without a conviction that dramatic improvements in learning will result. High standards for all is a way to say that we will refuse to settle for low levels of learning for any student.

The experiences of the many initiatives under way to create that high quality are almost unanimous about one important result. The process of being included in the development of high standards and of good assessment systems linked with the content becomes a process of renewal for teachers and administrators. With new skills, heightened awareness of what challenging content is, and experiences of seeing how changes in their instruction produce good changes in students, their expectations rise—for all students. Positive attitudes by students and families toward higher standards are vital, too, but they go in tandem with changes in classroom practice.

Certainly, assuring equal opportunities depends on a number of additional factors. Having a nationwide

consensus on high standards, however, is essential if we are to end the invidious consequence of our present system—one set of standards for the advantaged, another for the disadvantaged.

What Are The Next Steps?

By the end of 1994, most of the projects working on academic standards will have completed at least a first draft of their recommendations.

The National Education Goals Panel and proposed National Education Standards and Improvement Council will work together to assure quality and to certify the results of the standards-setting process, with the former focusing on overall policy and the latter providing technical expertise. The Goals Panel already has appointed a Standards Review Technical Planning Group to recommend criteria to be used to review and certify the upcoming voluntary nationwide content standards.

These steps are the first part of the systemic reform process envisioned by the National Goals. They say, in effect, that the nation is committed to the long-haul process of building a world-class education system.

Conclusion

All students will have opportunities to learn at higher levels when American society acts on its belief that this result is important now and in the future, it is fair, and it is possible.

High standards are the very heart of education reform in this country. They are reference points to be used by states and localities nationwide in developing renewed education systems that will be high-performing, equitable for all, and accountable. Think what reforms would look like without standards, without an agreement on what we expect from our students, and without a commitment that all students will be challenged to work with stimulating content, think critically about it, or use it in meaningful ways. The search for high standards already has invigorated the teaching profession, brought researchers and practitioners together in thoughtful ways, and begun to fashion education policymaking into a more effective role.

In essence, the emerging consensus on standards will drive systemic education reform. New nationwide standards will finally allow us as a people to agree on where we want to be. Standards also will allow American education to begin to meet the challenge set four years ago and move it toward its potential and toward the results American society wants for all its children.