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McGroarty/Dooley
August 28, 1991
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[MAINE.ED]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL
LEWISTON, MAINE
SEPTEMBER 3, 1991
xx:00 A.M.

Thanks, all of you, for this warm welcome. It's my pleasure to welcome all of you back to school -- to meet with the new Lewiston High Class of '95. //

[Introductory acknowledgements: Gov. McKernan, Congresswoman Snow, Sec. Alexander, etc.] [[Let me say to Lamar Alexander: I'll keep up with my computer lessons, but I will not write a report on "What I did on my summer vacation." //]]

Barbara and I remember our own kids going to school, first in Texas, later on in Washington, D.C. Our kids are grown -- now it's the grandkids, {x} of them, starting a new school year just like all of you. //

When you're growing up, the new year doesn't begin January 1st -- it starts today. [[I saw that this morning at Farwell Elementary School. Still, some of those kindergard^teners seemed disappointed I didn't bring along Arnold Schwarzenegger. Freshmen are more sophisticated -- but look closely, and you'll see the telltale signs of excitement.]] With the new year, the slate's wiped as clean as the blackboard. ~~Every~~ ^{Each of you} kid has a shot at straight A's -- if you can keep them.

As adults, we've got to capture that same sense of expectation -- that feeling that the school doors open onto a new world of possibility. Because the fact is, we face a challenge that shapes our future. The ringing of the school bell sounds an alarm -- a warning to all of us who care about the state of American education.

Every day brings new evidence of the crisis we confront. Take the latest SAT scores -- the ones that show the national average for math falling for the fourth straight year. Scores on the Verbal SAT dropped again -- to the lowest level ever. These sad statistics tell us again what we already know: our schools don't work. //

But what's worse is poll evidence that suggests too many parents and students remain unconcerned -- unconvinced that the state of our schools should worry them. Sure, they're aware something is wrong: Ask them to grade the nation's schools, and not even 1/4 will give them an A or B. But ask them to grade their own school, and you get a different answer: 3/4 grade their school as good -- even excellent.

We seem seem to think the crisis in American education plagues some other city or state, or some other school across town -- anywhere but our school. It's time we get our heads out of the sand -- shake off our complacency. Our schools are failing us -- not just our students or parents, but society as a whole. //

What's at stake goes beyond some abstract notion of the state of American education. What matters is the state of every school and each individual student -- here in Lewiston, and in a hundred thousand schools in cities and towns all across America. What's at stake is what kind of country this will be -- not tomorrow, but ten years from now. Not next week, but for the next generation. ~~You don't get a second chance to change the future.~~ //

Almost two years ago, this nation's Governors and I established six ambitious National Education Goals -- goals posted today right here on the walls of this gym. In April, at the White House I announced America 2000: a national education strategy to move us toward those goals. //

Today, I want to....: [[For the freshmen here, it's hard to focus on the future. How can you think about graduation -- when you're still trying to get your locker open? //]]

~~By the year 2000,~~ we pledged to raise the national graduation rate to at least 90%. In 1990, Lewiston High graduated 95% of its class -- well above the national average. Lewiston has cut its drop-out rate in half in four short years. You've earned the right to be proud. But before you get too comfortable, keep in mind that even at 95% {more than 20} of the freshmen seated behind me won't be walking across that stage to get their diploma 4 years from now at the Civic Center. //

~~By the year 2000,~~ we've challenged ourselves to become first in the world in math and science. Right now, we stand 13th -- behind {country}. Maine ranks {xx} among the 50 states.

Ranking first means more than engaging in some sort of intellectual Olympics. Where we rank in the world matters here -- and it should matter to you. Think of the world we live in. The daily discoveries in science. The political upheavals that change the face of nations. Think of the Soviet Union -- the way we saw 70 years of history swept away in seven days of whirlwind change.

Just as surely, the world changes Lewiston. For most of its history, Lewiston was a mill town, producing textiles and shoes. Times change -- today, Lewiston's traditional industries account for only 10% of the local economy. Increasingly, the mothers and fathers of this freshman class work in new companies employing new technologies. Some have even started small businesses of their own.

This country was built by generations of Americans with strong backs, and the will to work from sun up to sundown. As citizens of the next century, today's 9th Graders will be called on to work with their minds -- to keep pace with the technological revolution transforming the world. The pioneers of the next American century must be trail-blazers of a different sort, equipped to explore the far corners of the future -- and the deepest recesses of the human mind. //

Sometimes we think of education reform as a return to the schools of an earlier era. But the best schools of the 1950's wouldn't pass the test in 1991. And the very best schools right now won't be good enough for the year 2000 -- for the new century and new world beyond.

But we won't make progress if we can't measure success. ~~By the year 2000,~~ we must call on students at grades 4, 8 and 12 to demonstrate their competence in five core subjects. Each state has to develop its own means of measuring progress -- its own report card. Each student and every parent deserves to know whether they and their schools measure up to world class standards.

One of the key reasons for the poor performance we see today comes from having asked too much of teachers -- expecting them to act as social workers, part-time psychologists and family counselors. At the same time, we've asked too little of our students, of ourselves and our society. We've shied away from asking our students to excel -- and holding them accountable when they don't. (We've allowed grades to inflate and standards to crumble!!!) We've worried more about how our students feel than what they learn. That's got to change. When a student graduates, he deserves to leave school with more than self-esteem. He deserves an education. //

.....: ~~That~~ every American child should start school ready to learn, that every American adult should be literate -- and that every American school must be drug-free.

yeah! →

??? could be touchy...

Here in Lewiston, some of today's new freshmen got their start in school in Head Start -- a proven program I want to open up to thousands more pre-school children. In the battle against ~~illegal~~ drugs, Lewiston schools have taken the lead through D.A.R.E. and other drug prevention programs beginning in elementary school. And right here at Lewiston High, after the high schoolers go home, adults come to school to learn to read, and to study for their GED -- living proof it is never too late to learn. //

Every community and every school must make those goals their own -- as this state does today with Maine 2000. ///

So far, I've spoken about our schools -- about the revolution in American education that must take place within these walls. But the fact is, the revolution can't stop here. Even the best school can never be good enough.

Here's a "word problem" that shows why. Assume a child goes to school from Kindergarden to 12th grade, and never misses a day. Subtract summers and weekends -- all the hours before and after school. What you're left with is 9%: that's the small fraction of their lives our children spend in school.

[[Now, maybe parents won't find the fact our kids spend 91% of their time outside the classroom too hard to believe -- especially when it seems like we spend 50% of our time nagging our kids to clean their rooms.]]

But what happens in that 91% makes all the difference in the world. When we see that dismal drop in SAT verbal scores, it

good point!

points beyond a failure in the school. It means we're not taking the time to read to our kids -- to talk with them -- to teach them the arts of communication, how to think in words.

The first lesson of the 91% must be learned by parents. Mom and Dad: Don't make the mistake of thinking your kids only learn from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You are -- and always will be -- your sons' and daughters' first teachers. // !!!

The average parent spends 15 minutes a day -- 15 minutes -- in conversation with their child. Most people spend that much time on coffee break. The freshman here today may think they're a bit old to have their homework checked. And maybe as parents -- certainly this President will admit -- our calculus and computer skills may not be all they should. Then again, the Class of '95 is old enough to watch the evening news with their parents -- to talk about what's going on in the world, to take interests, opinions, and ideas seriously. //

What happens at home matters. When our kids come home from school, do they ever pick up a book -- or do they sit glued to the tube watching music videos? In our communities, do we value education and intellect? In the working world, do we reward employees who want to improve themselves -- do employers encourage workers to go back to school, to learn new skills?

What we can do:

Don't be a stranger in your child's school. Visit the classroom. Talk to the principal. Make it your business to find out whether your child's school is drug-free.

For the older folks among us, don't complain about "kids today" -- or that the neighborhood "isn't what it used to be." Get involved. Go into your schools -- get active in the community -- see what you can do to help.

That's what America 2000 Communities are all about. That's what will reform our schools -- here in Lewiston and across the country. That's what will lead to an American renaissance in education -- a transformation that will make this Nation every bit the leader in the next Century that it has been since 1776.

Start with the sense of possibility you feel today -- and do not rest until this revolution is won. ///

Once again, my thanks to you for this warm welcome -- and may God bless the United States of America.

#

August 30, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR DAN MCGROARTY

FROM: CAROL BLYMIRE
SUBJECT: TV STIMULATION

Dan, I just spoke with Jennings Bryant, a tv/children expert at the University of Alabama/Tuscaloosa. He said that the line about TV not stimulating the mind is incorrect, and that it would be misleading for the President to say that. He says that although tv is sometimes "chewing gum for the eyes", it still registers.

His overall theory is that tv does stimulate the mind -- whether or not it helps or hinders a student in school, is a totally different matter.

I also spoke to Fred Marino, Director of Public Affairs at the College Boards. He said that POTUS can't say what is in the speech now. He said that what President Stewart was saying in the Times article is that students need to realize that the workplace doesn't require good television-watching skills. You gotta' know how to read and write, and be able to do it well. He thinks that reading is becoming a lost art. TV can be a factor, as could be many others, i.e. kids having to work after school, or take care of siblings because both parents work, etc.

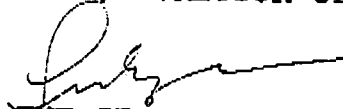
Another factual change. Scott Hamilton in Lesleye Arscht's office called. He said that Lewiston's claim of a 95% graduation rate is false. He said the principal took 100% and subtracted the drop-out rate, which is not the way it is legally supposed to be calculated. He said that we should stress reducing the drop-out rate even more, for the goals section of that paragraph.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

August 27, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR TONY SNOW
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR COMMUNICATIONS, DIRECTOR OF
SPEECHWRITING

FROM: LESLYE ARSHT 
COUNSELLOR TO THE SECRETARY AND
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

SUBJECT: Our Discussion of the President's Education
Address This Afternoon

While this may seem a lot for a fax, I thought you would benefit from an advance look at the discussion points that have been provided to us by Checker Finn, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, and others. We will, of course, want to talk this through with you this afternoon and look forward to doing so.

Attachment
cc: Stephen I. Danzansky

A handwritten signature, possibly "Leslye", enclosed in a large, scribbled circle.

Sept 89 -

did a school anti-dug address.

will it be carried?

* As far as I know, this will be the President's first "address to the nation" about education. Previous major speeches on this subject have been to specific audiences: the governors in Charlottesville, the gang in the East Room on April 18, etc. None has been aimed at Everyman, at John & Jane Doe, at the kids, at the mass of educators, etc. This calls for a somewhat different tone and voice: not the head of the executive branch of the federal government, not a Washington player (it's good that he'll be in Maine), not a politician, not a sender-forth of bills and proposals. Instead, this is the time to be the "President of all the people", to speak in plain language to ordinary people about their children, their schools and their future. He should be both critical and inspiring. Above all he should be honest. People should leave their radio or TV saying "That Bush makes a lot of sense. Maybe it's time to take this stuff seriously."

* The opening of the new school year is the obvious time to ask people to think seriously about education in general, about their own children and schools and communities in particular. Summer is over. Time to buckle down to work. But not in the old familiar routines. The President's theme should be that it's time--it's finally time, indeed it's past time--to change: to change how we think about education, how we behave with respect to it, what happens around our kitchen tables and our family rooms and in our classrooms. In our town halls and legislative chambers, too. This year ought to be viewed as the year we don't just talk about the "education crisis" but, rather, actually begin to alter our behavior. Behavior, lifestyle, how we spend our time--these will be hard to change, but they are what has to change along with our ideas and priorities and values. If we had nine such years of change in a row--culminating in school year 1999-2000--and if those changes went further each year (and were cumulative), we could reach our goals. More important, our kids would know more; our economy would be stronger; our culture and civic life would be more vibrant; our communities would be better places to live; we'd be more prosperous and more competitive; and we'd feel better about ourselves as people and as a country. Probably feel better about our own children (and grandchildren, nieces, nephews, neighbors, etc.), too, and about their prospects in life.

* Some bad news/cold shower is needed, indeed is virtually unavoidable. He doesn't have to be dour in tone or shake his finger at people, but he has to tell this national audience, perhaps in a mood of brisk, blunt candor and realism--face the facts, even when we'd rather not--that education is in sorry shape. And he needs to deal with widespread retail complacency by telling people that this problem lives in their own house and neighborhood, not across town or on the other side of the state. I'm appending to this memo most of a recent article called "Whither Education Reform?" In connection with the point I'm making here, let me call your attention to several paragraphs that start with "But I'm gloomy", especially the one beginning "Our elected officials have also let us down...."


* As you know, a couple of days after you get this memo, and about a week before the President's address, the College Board will release the 1991 SAT scores. (The ACT scores may be coming out then, too, but I haven't seen them.) They're pretty grim, down two points in verbal, the same in math. This represents the first decline in math in a decade and the lowest verbal score ever. Nor are these isolated phenomena: the 1990 NAEP math results, released in June, were described by you as "an alarm that should ring all night" or words to that effect. A bunch more NAEP results from 1990 will come out on September 30 as part of the first report card of the NEGP. They aren't any more cheerful. Nor is much else in that report card.


* That first report card will, of course, be depicted as a sort of "baseline" against which to measure the progress we make during the rest of the decade toward the goals for 2000. Politically, the President can also talk in terms of a woeful "baseline" from which we can/must work our way upwards. This is probably the last time he'll be able to characterize bad news as a baseline without being held responsible personally for the lack of progress. That's because the release in April of America 2000 positioned him as "starting" in a serious way on education reform; no one would expect those efforts to have borne fruit by September; but this will be the last time he'll have that luxury. Which is probably a reason to be especially candid, even alarmist about the bad news.

* There's good news, politically, too, and that's found in the release (this week) of the 1991 Gallup education poll results. You and Tony and the rest should see that these play a very large role in the President's remarks. For the American people--as we knew already, but powerfully reinforced by the latest data--are strongly in support of virtually all the major elements of America 2000, notably including the more radical proposals that educators (and the Congress) are fussing so much about (national standards, national testing, report cards, school site management, extra pay for very good teachers, school choice, etc. etc.) The only partial downer in the Gallup results involves private school choice, but there's some good news on that front, too: the question was asked two ways, and in the formulation that is closer to yours ("send the child to any public, parochial or private school they choose") an even 50% were in favor, 39% opposed. This is more support than in the past. (Also note that Blacks and "inner city dwellers" are 57% in favor.) On all the other key "America 2000" features, I think it's fair to say that the American people are overwhelmingly positive. Likewise about the six national goals. // →

* This creates a sizable opportunity for a "populist appeal" in this address, and for being pretty candid about the "forces of resistance to changes that the American people want to see and are ready to make". I believe the President should be bluntly critical of the "education establishment" for resisting these changes. (He should, of course, also have some very nice things to say about teachers, principals and other individual educators.) I think he

should also be pretty tart about the business-as-usual, resistance-to-change, cling-to-the-old-ideas, respond-to-the-producers-rather-than-the-consumers attitude of so many in Congress.

* These points have their counterparts in most states and localities; that, too, should be said; the populist appeal is not just an inside-the-beltway discussion. You've heard me suggest that the big power shift that needs to take place in American education is from a system in which the "producers" call most of the shots to one in which the "consumers" are really in charge. The Gallup data suggest that if the consumers were in charge, the system would operate by very different rules, and according to very different principles, than it does today. The President should say this. And should place himself squarely on the side of the (consumers). 

* But the consumers really do need to be jarred out of their retail-level complacency, too. The problem isn't just in the education establishment. We have met the enemy and he is us. Education results are only going to change if actual behavior changes in millions of individual households, tens of thousands of individual classrooms and schools. This means lifestyle changes, changes in the 91 percent, changes in how we spend our time and relate to our kids, changes in the attitudes and practices of parents, employers, college admissions offices, lots of major institutions in addition to the schools. This is not something folks particularly want to hear. But they need to. Blunt candor, remember? And they need to feel that the President is serious about it, not looking to assign blame so much as to persuade a great many people that they have a very large role to play in the revival of American education, not that this is something only for schools to deal with. 

* Obviously he should reiterate the national goals. Spell them out. Read them. Say he believes in them. That the American people believe in them. The Gallup data also suggest, however, that few think these goals can be achieved by the end of the decade. Perhaps, he might say, that's because people haven't yet rolled up their sleeves to work for what they believe in. (Possible analogy here: on August 19, how many people really expected the coup in Moscow to be reversed two days later? Fatalism and defeatism may be the biggest enemies of all.)

* Obviously he should also reiterate the main themes of America 2000. For all the pooh-poohing that it's received on the Hill and from the education establishment, the Gallup data prove that most Americans favor making these changes. Will we find ourselves hailing the victory of the popular will over the forces of reaction in the Soviet Union--and expect any less of ourselves? On a major domestic issue the resolution of which is entirely within the control of the American people?

* There should be some words in here specifically aimed at parents,

what they can do, what responsibilities they should assume (Diane is especially good at crafting this kind of language.) But the address should make plain that he isn't talking only to or about parents. Every American, including the many millions who do not have school age children, is a "consumer" of American education and has a role to play in its renewal. (The Gallup data show a low level of direct involvement/participation by Americans in the activities and policy decisions of education--albeit a higher level than in 1983. Most people are still behaving as if this is somebody else's problem.)

* This is not the speech to address the civil rights stuff directly, but the President should signal his understanding that disadvantaged and minority kids in many cases have especially severe education problems and need especially vigorous efforts to solve these. Many such efforts must involve the 91 percent, not just school stuff. This could also be the place to edge into the multicultural fray by indicating that there is a great deal that all our children need to learn, that we want the curriculum to tell the whole story (including everybody's pieces of it), but that we also want all children to study and learn that entire story.

* You don't need my advice on this point, but to keep attention focused outside the Beltway, on the states and the localities, a considerable plug should be given to "America 2000" states and communities.

That's about it. That's actually a good deal more than any one address can accommodate. But I don't believe I've said anything that doesn't belong in there one way or another! Let me know if I can do anything further.

Addendum: Finn article. Note that a goodly amount of the data in here is slightly out-of-date and could be updated with new NAEP results, new Gallup poll findings, etc.

Whither Education Reform?

From one source after another, for the past decade we've been receiving evidence that American education is doing a mediocre job, one that ill-serves this country and our children. What is most alarming is that after a sustained period of valiant reform effort--and no small investment of resources--we've got so little to show for our labors and our money.

For the U.S. as a whole, per student expenditures for public education increased an average of 33 percent in real dollars (i.e. after allowing for inflation) during the 1980's. Besides spending more on it, we've been trying conscientiously to make the enterprise more effective. Yet test scores remain flat, or declining. International comparisons continue to show us near the back of the pack. Remedial education is the fastest-growing activity on many college campuses. Employers say they still can't find competent workers. The quality of our civic and political life keeps eroding.

To be sure, American education can boast some remarkable accomplishments over the decades. We have done well at constructing a universal and flexible system in which just about everybody can have just about as much education as they want, pretty much whenever they want it. We've also done well in recent years at opening access to minorities, immigrants and the handicapped. We are pretty good at recognizing student differences and trying through the schools to respond to them. Ours is an adaptive and fairly forgiving system in which it's never too late to try again.

We've hugely opened access to higher education, too, such that we're the only country in the history of world where more than half the secondary school completers at least commence further studies. (How many of them wind up with a college degree is another, and far gloomier, story.)

All true and all good. But these accomplishments cannot mask the bad news, above all the weak intellectual skills and knowledge possessed by our average high school graduate, and the widening gap between those skills and knowledge and the levels required for the kinds of jobs we're creating in America today, the kinds of jobs we have to be able to fill with qualified individuals if we are to be economically strong, not to mention culturally vibrant, civically alert and internationally secure.

The problem is not with basic skills any longer. According to National Assessment data, just about everyone who sticks with formal education through high school graduation now acquires rudimentary literacy and numeracy. At these modest levels, we're doing satisfactorily. We have successfully made it "back to the basics". It is when we look at the levels we really think people should reach that attainments plummet. Here is a single example from a recent math assessment:

"Christine borrows \$850 for one year from the Friendly Finance Company. If she pays 12% simple interest on the loan, what will be

the total amount that Christine repays?"

This problem is not very difficult. It can be solved several different ways. It requires a bit of thought, to be sure, but nothing fancy. It typifies what National Assessment calls "level 350", however, and that is a level of skills being reached by only six percent of our eleventh graders. If just six out of a hundred high school juniors can solve problems of this level of difficulty, that means 94 cannot.

Similar examples could be given in reading, writing, science, history and geography.

What all this says to me is that, while our schools are not producing new adult illiterates, they're graduating an enormous number of people with mediocre skills and knowledge, and that, above all, is why the nation is still "at risk".

I'm dwelling on outcome gauges, and this is appropriate if one accepts a more general proposition: that America is in the midst of a vast transformation of the very meaning of education. For a long time we construed education in terms of intentions and efforts, plans and inputs, institutions and services. Now we're moving, albeit in fits and starts, to redefine education in terms of how much people actually learn. One day we will say of a person "He had no education", however long he may have spent in school, if in fact he hasn't learned. The education system of tomorrow will be outcomes-driven and highly accountable for its results.

Yet when viewed in those terms, our reform efforts to date haven't borne much fruit. No, I'm not passing final judgment. American education is large, decentralized, ponderous and slow to change. Kids still take seventeen years to reach their seventeenth birthday, and they need twelve or thirteen of those years to pass through the schools. Some of the boldest reform plans, such as those in Chelsea and Chicago, in Milwaukee and Kentucky, are really just commencing. There may be progress in the making that hasn't yet shown up in the outcomes data. We all hope so.

But I'm gloomy. The main sources of my gloom are clues that people probably aren't changing their actual behavior at what I'm going to term the "retail" level of education. There's a kind of widespread schizophrenia in which people seem, on the one hand, to acknowledge that we have a very serious national education problem but also seem, on the other hand, to be reasonably contented with their own and their children's education and with their local schools. The nation may be at risk but "I'm all right Jack." Here is some evidence:

First, the children think they're doing well, even when they're not. The most recent international comparative assessment (of math and science performance among 13 year olds) found American youngsters at or near the bottom. That part did not surprise me. What staggered me were the responses to the background question asking the children to agree or disagree with the statement "I am good at mathematics". It turns out that U.S. youngsters led the world in believing themselves to be good at math, even while trailing the world in actual math performance. 68 percent of them concurred with the statement. In Korea, whose youngsters did the best on the math test itself, only 23% judged themselves to be good

at mathematics. It seems to me we must consider the possibility that we've been giving our children too much positive feedback and too many encouraging statements designed to build their self-esteem, statements that may not have been justified by the reality of their performance.

Harold W. Stevenson's pioneering comparative research at the University of Michigan has found essentially the same thing: "When asked to rate such characteristics as ability in mathematics, brightness, and scholastic performance," Stevenson writes, "American children gave themselves the highest ratings, while Japanese students gave themselves the lowest. American children believed their parents and teachers were more satisfied with their performance and worried less about their own performance in school than did Chinese and Japanese children."

Second, most parents also seem reasonably content with their children's education. The annual Gallup education poll asks parents to rate public-schools-in-general, the schools of their own community, and then the school attended by their eldest child. The pattern of responses has been essentially the same for the past decade. Parents display low opinions of schools-in-general, middling opinions about their local schools, and high opinions of their own child's school. In 1990, they gave "honors" grades (A or B, on the traditional scale) to the nation's public schools just 23 percent of the time, while rating the public schools of their own community A or B 48 percent of the time. As for the school attended by their eldest child, it received honors grades from a remarkable 72% of parents.

Stevenson and his colleagues have something to say on this, too. Here's a passage from a paper comparing the United States with China:

"American mothers expressed strongly positive attitudes about their child's performance; 35% of the American mothers, but only 13% of the Chinese mothers thought their child was doing 'very well' in mathematics--the highest value on a 5-point scale. This is in line with the large percentage of American mothers and fathers who were satisfied with their child's general level of achievement in school. Most American parents were satisfied and few expressed dissatisfaction. Chinese parents were much more critical...."

Third, the teachers also say that they are generally content with their schools. On a Harris poll, sponsored by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and released in late 1989, 92% of teachers averred that their present school is providing a good or excellent education to its students. That's not to say teachers don't have complaints, criticisms and faults to find, only that, when push comes to shove, most of them think their school is doing reasonably well as it is.

Fourth, public school administrators also view the education world through remarkably rosy lenses. An Allstate survey reported in January 1990 that 91 percent of school administrators (principals and superintendents) think that American public education today is doing an excellent, very good or good job at turning out an educated population. (A group of business executives, asked the same questions, checked in at just 23

percent.)

Consider the implications for education reform: if the children think they're doing pretty well, if their parents think the children are doing well, if people think their local schools are doing well, and if the teachers and administrators in those schools agree with this appraisal, why should anyone feel inclined to alter his/her actual behavior, to demand different results from themselves or their children, or to agitate for significant changes in the schools their children attend?

Yet if the actual behavior of actual people doesn't actually change in millions of individual cases, there is no reason whatsoever to expect our averages and aggregates to change. Our outcomes will remain flat. And that, I suggest, has at least something to do with why the results of our reform efforts to date have not been more positive. It also says to me that any education improvement plan that does not deal directly with the "complacency problem" is doomed to failure.

Why have we failed to get the message across at the retail level? I can only speculate. Americans tend to be optimists to start with. We think pretty well of ourselves. We don't much like bad news. We're inclined to believe that things tend to get better, not worse.

We also have what Dr. John J. Cannell calls the "Lake Wobegon" effect of current state and local testing programs--the phenomenon that finds virtually everyone to be performing above the "national average"--and we have a flood of upbeat press releases pouring from state and local education agencies, nearly always asserting that results are good and getting better.

Our elected officials have also let us down by not looking us in the eye and saying "When I talk about educational melt-down, Mr. and Mrs. Abernathy, I'm talking about your Johnny and Janet and the school they attend, not about somebody else's children or the schools across town."

But another possible explanation also concerns me greatly. There is some evidence that young Americans are behaving rationaly when they don't study very hard or learn much in school.

Outside the yuppie elites clawing their way into Andover or Stanford, it turns out that few Americans actually reap significant rewards from studying hard and learning a lot. Children ordinarily get promoted from one grade to the next regardless of how they do. Report cards customarily consist of good news and cheery, upbeat comments, no matter the actual level of performance. High school graduates entering the workforce earn the same (for as long as ten years out of school) whether they take hard courses and earn high grades or enroll in gut classes and get C's. Their employers merely ask whether they received a diploma; nobody ever looks at their transcripts, let alone compensates them differently according to their school record.

Higher education is just as unhelpful. Admission to most colleges and universities requires merely that you be able to walk through the door and write a check; only a tiny fraction of prospective college students seek admission to competitive campuses. For most people, entry to the nearby state university is

a sure thing, no matter what their high school record shows.

Think about it. If we don't differentially reward high achievers--or penalize low performers--why should youngsters study hard and learn a lot, particularly when they have so many enticing distractions and short-term gratifications? Remember, they and their parents think they're doing okay in school. So, in the main, do their teachers and principals.

We do have some bold school reform experiments underway here and there, and of course we hope they work out. But my hopes are somewhat dimmed because I think we've shoved a number of vexing issues under the rug. The complacency factor is just the beginning. Let me note five others that particularly perturb me:

1. We haven't been paying much attention to the truism that people only learn that which they study. No state yet requires all its youngsters to take the full array of academic high school courses that the National Commission on Excellence in Education termed the "new basics" in 1983: 4 years of English, three years each of math, science and social studies, two years of foreign language and half a year of computers. Because these courses are not required, few students take them. In the high school graduating class of 1987 (the last for which we have data), only thirteen percent displayed such a pattern on their transcripts. We are flagellating ourselves because our children haven't learned things that, in reality, most of them haven't even been exposed to.

2. A second neglected truism holds that people learn things in rough proportion to the amount of time they spend studying. Yet the time factor has barely been touched in the course of our reform efforts. As a result, American youngsters spend less time engaged in academic learning than anyone else in the industrial world. We have shorter school days and years; our children do less homework. They are more apt (at the secondary level) to spend their after-school hours working at jobs. Is it any wonder that they wind up knowing less than their age-mates in other lands? I suspect that no reform scheme that fails to deal with the time factor will make much difference in the outcomes of American education.

3. Until very recently, we haven't been clear about our goals, about what an adequately educated young American would actually look like. Not long ago, Ernest Boyer compared education to "an industry that's unclear about its product, and thus is hopelessly confused about quality control." The governors and President Bush have begun to correct this situation, with the six big (and to my eye commendable) national education goals that they set forth in early 1990. But few states have embraced these, or any other explicit goals. This is a non-trivial matter. Only when we can describe what results we seek do we have a prayer of attaining them.

4. It's not just that we haven't known where we're heading. We also haven't known enough about the progress we're making. Our information feedback and accountability systems are wholly inadequate for the task at hand. We don't really know very much about how well our children are learning or how well our institutions are doing at the many levels where we need that information: the individual youngster, the classroom, the school

560
1980



1991-92 3
 92 93 4
 93 94 5
 94 95 6
 95 96 7
 96 97 8
 97 98 9
 98 99 10
 1999-2000 11
 2000-2001 (12)

building, the local school system, the state and the entire nation. People only take seriously that which is measured and reported. Student learning outcomes at these six levels have not been satisfactorily measured or reported.

5. Finally, we assign too many things to schools that they cannot do, and we do a weak job of enlisting others in their missions. When they are effective, schools can do a good job of imparting cognitive learning to children: history, chemistry, literature, and so on. But they are not powerful enough instruments that we should expect them also to prevent adolescent pregnancy, to redistribute income, to stop the plague of drug abuse, to halt the spread of AIDS, etc. Schools keep getting such additional duties thrust onto them (rarely with any more time in children's lives) and they always agree to try. The sad fact is that alone they cannot solve these problems and their willingness to try may let others off the hook. Spreading their efforts across too many fronts may also leave them effective on none.

4th = 2000
 3rd = 2001

Those are situations that don't just perturb me but that also impede our ability to revitalize the education system in ways that will yield better outcomes.

What to do differently? Everyone has his own version. Here, briefly, is my own vision of the ten essential requisites of a properly reformed education system.

First, we must set clear outcome goals having to do with cognitive learning, spelling out the skills and knowledge that we'd like every young American, regardless of background, to reach by the threshold of adulthood.

Second, once we have an outcome standard, we should relate our concept of compulsory school attendance to achieving it, rather than attaining some arbitrary birthday.

Third, we must recognize that getting essentially everybody up to a reasonable standard of intellectual attainment before they exit the formal education system is going to mean that most young Americans are going to have to spend a far larger fraction of their lives learning academic things than they are accustomed to doing today.

Fourth, what I've said implies a fairly substantial core curriculum throughout entire school systems, states, perhaps the whole country. How much of the total school curriculum should be swept into this core is up for discussion. That there should be one, it seems to me, is self-evident.

Fifth, outside that core, there should be much variety among schools as to the rest of the curriculum, huge variation as to pedagogy, and great diversity concerning things like school climate, schedule, even the nature of the instructional setting.

Sixth, implicit in the previous point is lots of school-site management. That, rather than central planning, is how authentic diversity arises, and how those engaged in delivering instructional services are most apt to get invested in what they're doing. We know this from so-called "effective schools" research. I think school site management can go quite a distance. In Chicago, it now includes the power to hire and fire the principal. It could equally include the ability to contract with independent providers for all

sorts of services, from lunch to security to specialized instruction of various kinds. But with authority must go responsibility, and that, in current education policy jargon, means accountability for results. The school thus retains its autonomy, indeed gains more, so long as its outcomes are satisfactory. When they are unsatisfactory, however, all sorts of outside intervention must follow. This appears to be the central dynamic in the new Kentucky education reform legislation, perhaps the most comprehensive such package in the nation.

Seventh, with schools encouraged to differ in many ways and to manage their own affairs, it stands to reason that students and their parents must be allowed to choose among them on the basis of those differences. I don't just mean those families fortunate enough to get into magnet schools or gifted-and-talented programs, or to pay for private schooling. I mean every child and family. It is a public policy sin to require a student, against his will and his parents' wishes, to attend a poor school that he wouldn't go near but for the compulsion when there is a better one not far away that he would prefer, if only it were permitted. I also believe that the chief barriers to integration in this society are now the district and municipal boundaries that function like educational Berlin walls. They've torn down the one in Germany. How about ~~demolishing our own?~~

choice

Choice also needs to be extended to teachers and principals. Everybody in a school ought to want to be there.

Eighth, for all this to work, there needs to be a crackerjack information feedback and accountability system, such that everyone can see how individual children and whole schools, even whole states, are doing. Accountability in education means knowing what your goals are, having reliable information as to whether those goals are being achieved, and then tying consequences to their achievement and non-achievement. When the information feedback system signals that goals are being met, good things should happen to people. When the data indicate that the goals are not being achieved, something must change--some sort of intervention must occur--or we can be certain that the goals will continue not being achieved.

Ninth, we need to integrate parents far more directly and intimately into the work of formal education. This is commonly assumed to be the toughest nut of all to crack, and it may well be. Nor am I referring only to what happens in school. Parents are the single most important influence in the 91 percent of children's lives spent outside school. (Yes, it's an amazing statistic, but anyone can do the calculation. An eighteen year old American high school graduate who started in kindergarten and has never missed a day of school in his life has, in the average case, spent only nine percent of his hours on earth under the school roof. Assume eight hours of sleep a night and the school's share of waking hours rises to just thirteen percent.) If we extend the school day and year, we might get the school's share up to 15%. But that is still going to leave 85% spent elsewhere. Parents aren't the only influence on what happens during that time, of course, but they are the strongest.

[Handwritten mark]

Engaging parents in choosing the school is part of the solution. Parent participation in education governance is another. Explicit parent education programs are another. (Missouri is doing this to particularly good effect.) Parent-teacher-student contracts may be yet another. Much more imaginative use can also be made of technology to assist the school to reach the home and vice versa.

Tenth and finally, we need to rethink our sources of teachers and principals to staff this sprawling education system. We should be seeking them in many places, not just among graduates of teacher colleges and administrator training programs. We should be differentiating their roles within the school, and paying them according to those differences, as well as according to their demonstrated competence, the demand for their particular specialty and the difficulty of their assignment. (One example of this, of course, is the idea of a career ladder, pioneered by Tennessee.) We should routinely distinguish between novice teachers and master or mentor teachers, and should create arrangements in which the more experienced teachers can work with the less experienced, and in which teachers can be more involved in the design of curriculum, instructional materials and pedagogy. When visiting Asian schools, I've been struck by the fact that, on the one hand, their teachers work pretty much year-round (and teach very large classes). On the other hand, at least at the secondary level, they teach only three or four hours a day and don't have non-instructional duties in between. Instead, they have time for class preparation, for going over student work, for meeting with individual pupils, etc. Other people in the schools handle the other tasks.

Of course I cannot prove that these ten points (and their corollaries) will improve our results. If we don't also solve the half-dozen problems outlined earlier, they probably won't. But the status quo isn't working. And neither are our conventional schemes that carry the label "education reform".

Some Possible Ideas for the President's Speech on Education/Drugs

- 1) Americans are volunteering and are willing to volunteer more time and effort to drug prevention activities

A recent national survey showed that one in ten adults are already involved in anti-drug projects organized by schools, churches and community groups

59% of those surveyed said they would be willing to volunteer for such activities

Schools, communities and religious groups must continue to draw on this enormous resource of caring Americans

- 2) One reason that caring Americans are taking action against drugs is the realization that as long as we have a serious drug problem, all the other social problems facing the nation are more difficult to solve...problems in our families, in our communities and in our schools

- 3) We must never underestimate the power of individual and group action to bring about change. There are, literally thousands of examples:

- a) Zulekha Haywood, the 8 year old daughter of Spencer Haywood, NBA All-Star; after a school class about drugs realized her father had a problem and confronted him with it. It was that emotional confrontation that got Mr. Haywood to seek help. Today, Spencer Haywood operates a foundation in his name which offers basketball clinics and drug prevention classes to youngsters in the state of Michigan.

- b) Maxine Lewis, working with community groups, recently organized an anti-drug event at Harlem's famed Apollo theatre. Over 600 children and

group leaders watched the half hour "Cartoon All Stars to the Rescue" anti-drug film and participated in a powerful give-and-take anti-drug session with a local rep star. As one group leader said, we can now go back to our classes and have an in depth discussion and give our kids new and more ways to say no to drugs.

- c) Parents in a Boston housing project have mobilized a Tenant Task Force and, with the volunteer support of faculty and students from a local University are holding Health Fairs to provide information and prevention guidance on drug abuse and other health problems facing the community.
- d) "Positive Directions", is an in-school anti-drug and career counseling service of the Brooklyn, NY school system that goes one step beyond. Recognizing that drop outs can not be totally avoided, it encourages these teenagers to return for counselling. Jobs have been found and lives straightened. In describing the motivation for the program, it is said, "we have to try, we can't give up...they are our children.
- e) Ruben was a 13 year old "crack runner" for a gang in Los Angeles. He wasn't particularly aware of the gravity of his "job", but he knew it let him hang out with the older gang members, and that it gave him a few extra dollars.

One day a friend invited Ruben to play basketball at the Hollenbeck Youth Center. While he was there playing ball and making new friends, Ruben's gang was busted by the police. Ruben knew he was lucky and went back to Hollenbeck the next day. He's been going there every day for the last seven years.

Today, Ruben Palomares is an Olympic hopeful -- training for his dream of winning a boxing gold medal in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain. He gets up every morning at 5:00 AM and runs for two hours before heading to work as a Hollenbeck coach and counselor. After work, Ruben spends three hours in the boxing ring, pursuing his dream.

If it hadn't been for the Hollenbeck Youth Center, Ruben Palomares, and thousands of kids like him, wouldn't even be able to conceive of such a dream, let alone be on the road to realizing it.

- 4) Progress has been made and will continue to be made one person at a time.

All studies show that there is decreasing first time trial of drugs and decreasing usage. America still has a drug problem, but we should be encouraged that the fight against drugs can be won.

Today, young Americans, those 9-12 years old, express the strongest anti-drug views of any age group in America. Two reasons for this are because more parents are talking to their children about the dangers of illegal drugs and more schools are providing in-school guidance on the subject. The result is that young Americans, the future of our country, are developing anti-drug attitudes that will help them resist pressure, enjoy happier, more productive lives...and by their example, help free our country from the scourge of illegal drugs

NOTE FROM : Larry Feinberg
SUBJECT : High Scorers on the SAT
DATE : August 21, 1991

The number of high-scoring students on the Scholastic Aptitude Test dropped precipitously during the 1970s, recovered during the mid-1980s, but has fallen back disturbingly once again. The drop was greatest and the recovery least pronounced on the verbal part of the test, but for the past three years the number of high-scorers in math has also declined.

Those scoring above 600 on the verbal part of the SAT fell from a peak of 116,585 for the class of 1972, the first year separate figures were kept for graduating seniors, to a low of just 66,292 in 1983. That's a decline of 80,293, or 43 percent, over little more than a decade, while the total number taking the exam dropped by 6 percent. As a share of all test-takers, those over 600 on the SAT-V fell from 11.3 percent to 6.9 percent in that period.

By 1987, the number of high-scorers in verbal had climbed again to 88,000 [That's the exact number College Board says it was.], recouping about 40 percent of the loss. Since then, however, the number has dropped gradually to 74,536, or 7.2 percent of the class of '91 which took the exam.

In math, the decline in those scoring over 600 was from 182,602 in 1972 to 143,566 in 1981--a drop of 39,036, or 21 percent. The share of test-takers in that high-scoring category fell from 17.9 to 14.8 percent. By 1988, the number of high-scorers had reached an all-time high, 199,688. The proportion in that category reached a high of 18.4 percent in 1990. In 1991 the number over 600 in SAT-M was down for the third year in a row to 184,382, or 17.9 percent of the class.

The numbers in this high-scoring group really do matter. They are the students sought by selective colleges; they are the ones well-prepared to handle tough college work. When their ranks are thinned, many colleges fill classes with less able students (rather than contract).

On the verbal side, the clear drop in those over 600 shows that average SAT scores have declined not just because of more students at the bottom but because of a deterioration at the top of the class as well. In math the situation is more equivocal, though clearly the increase in high-scoring students has sputtered out just as average scores have plateaued and in 1991 appear to have started down again.

August 30, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR DAN MCGROARTY

FROM: CAROL BLYMIRE

SUBJECT: CHILDREN/TV

I swear, this is the last one... Dr. Keith Milkie, the VP for Research at CTW said that the line has to be pulled, because the article spoke about a correlation, not a cause.

correlated not caused.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dr. Keith Milky
CTW

TV is not the main factor.
It is asso. w/ not caused by.

Says, "cut it!"

Studies in Times were
of kids who watched
more than 5 hrs./day.

MORE contacts: children

Prof. Dan Anderson (h) 413-367-9523
(o) 413-545-2069

Arkansas couple
John Wright (h) 913-842-6358
Alma Houston (o) 913-824-4646
co-directors CRITC

Mabel Rice - lang. dev.
(913) 842-3832 (h)
(913) 864-4572 (o)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Wa
Ellen ~~Portella~~ U of Ill
217-333-1549

Amice Dorr
Prof UCLA
(213) 825-1838

Television studies

GWU

Prof. Sterling

~~994-5250~~ old

~~994~~ 676-4254 new

7 hrs. ^{avg.} a day - set is on

Dr. Keith Melke - VP research CTW
NY, NY

Dr. Jennings Bryant - U of Alabama
Tuscaloosa
205



get examples
for the goals

Susan Martin

Head Start - ^{yes} in same

Dare ^{no} - when did they start

any ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ this yr's. freshman class
were in the above programs

Adult 3A

9300 'intended in adult
ad.

9500 are GED/diploma

9600 are literacy

9700 is community
parenting class
civic decorating

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COMPANY: The White House

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SENT BY: Louise Ockerly

SENT FOR: Fred Manno

DATE SENT: 8-30-91

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Low Test Scores Renew Debate on TV

8/28/91

By KAREN DE WITT
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 27 — Television has long been blamed for the decline in students' reading ability. Once again, those accusations were made in the aftermath of the release on Monday of the verbal scores of 1991 college-bound seniors on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, which hit an all-time low.

"There is a direct correlation" between television viewing and declines in reading skills "after two hours of television watching," William M. Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction in California, said today. "The more television you watch, the lower your reading ability."

California has conducted several studies of the relationship between television viewing and reading skills. And they came to the same conclusions as a survey by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, released last year.

That report indicated that students seemed to prefer television to books. Sixty-nine percent of the fourth graders interviewed for the report said they watched three hours or more of television a day, while less than half, 46 percent, reported reading for pleasure daily.

In Defense of Television
Michael Fitzmaurice of the National Association of Broadcasters' research and information group acknowledged that "too much TV is a bad thing." But, he added, "To blame these declines squarely on television is silly."

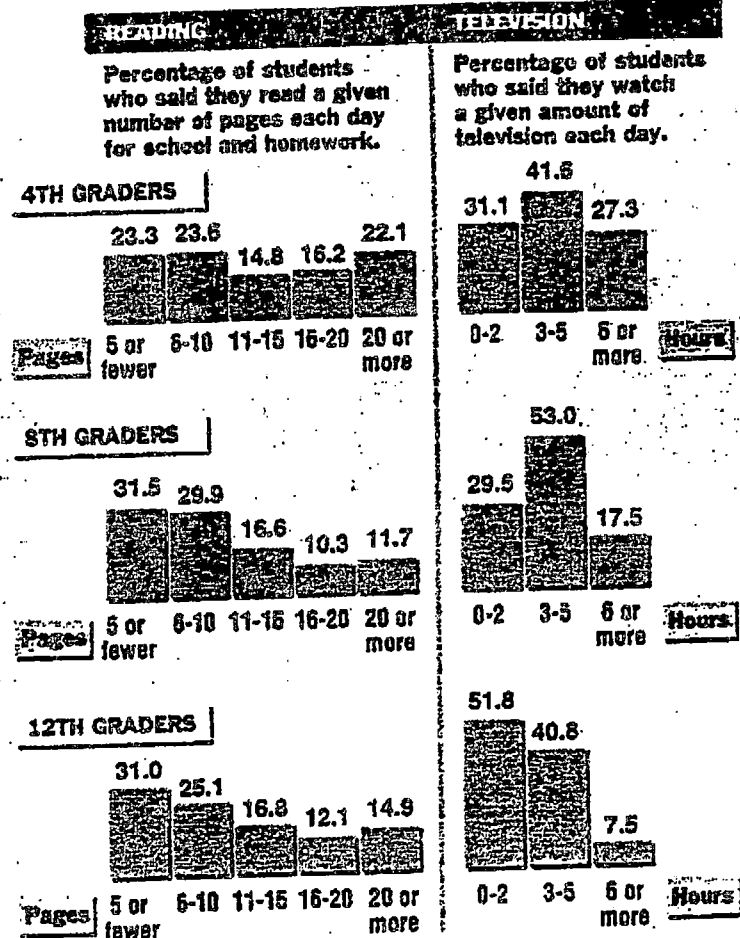
He went on: "The one thing we know is that the biggest predictor of scholastic success is the time parents spend reading to their children. Even if you threw away television, the scholastic abilities aren't going to improve."

Some educators said that verbal scores could be falling because of a changing mix of elementary and secondary school students, with more minority children, non-English speakers and children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

"Television is part of the problem, certainly, but it's not all of the problem," said Peggy Charren, president of the Action for Children's Television, a group based in Cambridge, Mass., that lobbies for quality programs. "There isn't anybody who looks at a kid who is spending three or

Reading vs. Television

From a survey of reading among American schoolchildren by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, released last year.



The New York Times

four hours watching television and not doing well in school and doesn't find something wrong in that. But I wouldn't scream at television. I think people love to make television a scapegoat and ignore what happens when our allocation of resources in this society is misplaced."

Other experts say the use of television, computers and videocassette recorders should be monitored by parents. They add that many parents who check on their children's televi-

sion viewing habits end up giving them videotapes and computers that can just as easily undermine their children's verbal skills.

"It isn't the medium that is at fault," said Dr. Arthur Pober, vice president of the Children's Advertising Review Unit for the Council of Better Business Bureaus. "Parents can't use television or videos as babysitters and then be surprised that the child doesn't read well."

Study Shows Eighth-Graders Glued To TV, Sanguine About College

They spend four times as long watching television as doing homework, they plan to attend college but not take a college-track high school program, and they don't see eye to eye with their parents on several school-related issues.

They are the nation's 3 million eighth-graders, as represented by 25,000 of their peers surveyed in a massive new Education Department investigation, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88).

"NELS:88 can be useful for illuminating changes needed in our homes, our schools, our policies," Christopher Cross, ED's assistant secretary for educational research and improvement, said at a briefing yesterday. The study also will help ED track progress toward national education goals, he said.

Spots Potential Dropouts

The survey is ED's third major longitudinal study but the first to start with eighth-graders, let alone question their parents as well. From base-year data that eighth-graders supplied in early 1988 and in biennial follow-ups, it will afford a look at early dropouts, Cross said in releasing the base-year report.

For example, the survey identified many already at risk of dropping out. One in five students surveyed reported at least two of the six factors ED used to flag those at risk of school failure: coming from a single-parent or low-income family, spending more than three hours a day home alone, having limited English proficiency, a sibling who dropped out, or parents who did not complete high school.

Students listing two or more risk factors were twice as likely as those with no risk factor to be in the lowest quartiles for grades or test scores. Members of the higher-risk set also were more expectant of dropping out.

Eighth-graders' TV viewing also was "a bit distressing," said Anne Hafner, a statistician with OERI's National Center for Education Statistics and project director for the study. On average, each spent 21.4 hours a week on television, 5.6 hours on homework and 1.8 hours on outside reading.

While three of five students said their parents rarely or never limited their television

watching time, just as many parents said they enforced rules about television.

"Even though parents have a rule, it's not clear students are necessarily abiding by it," NCES statistician Jerry West said.

Family Communication Flawed

That was not the only important issue on which perceptions diverged. Almost half the children said they and their parents had discussed things studied in school no more than once or twice all year. But 79 percent of the parents said they "regularly" talked with their children about their school experience.

Parents with high education or income levels reported themselves more involved in their children's education. Surprisingly, Asian parents were least likely to say they discussed school regularly with their children, who often excel academically.

Quizzing the students, the researchers found that 44 percent were bored at least half the time they were in school. Still, 80 percent said their teachers were good, and nearly as many said the teachers were interested in students.

Nearly 90 percent felt safe in school, but 49 percent had had something stolen, 28 percent had been threatened, 23 percent had had a fight and 10 percent had been offered drugs.

In an ominous set of findings, 35 percent aspired to professional careers, and two-thirds planned to finish college, but only one-third planned to enroll in a college preparatory program in high school. One in four had not chosen their high school program, although most were to begin only a few months later.

Fewer than half the parents reported talking to their eighth-graders about high school plans, and only 40 percent said they had discussed long-range plans.

The survey report, "NELS:88. A Profile of the American Eighth Grade Student," will be available soon from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, (202)783-3238. Specify order number NCES 90-458a. GPO will set the price when the report is available. For information on obtaining the raw data, call OERI, (800)424-1616. --Maggie Hume

Teens and TV

■ Teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 watch TV an average of 22 hours a week. That means they spend about 3 hours a day in front of the tube.

■ Ads consume 3 to 4 hours—about 20%—of TV watched per week.

■ The more TV teens watch, the lower their writing ability; in one study, 17-year-olds who watched 6 or more hours of TV per week scored about 10 percent lower on a writing test than did those who watch only 2 hours per week.

SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH; U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION

dan is a milestone of quirkiness. For Side 1, Nike decided to keep the startle but to change the tone. Enter the agency of Weiden and Kennedy, a Nike favorite. Geoff McGann, the writer for the ads, set the target buyer as "a woman with an attitude . . . somebody who's confident enough maybe to do something a little risqué, but by no means sleazy." In less global terms, that means the sort of teen who is willing to take a chance on a shoe that her friends haven't bought yet.

The agency came up with ads that were startling precisely because they weren't splashy. W&K chose director David Fincher, whose work includes Madonna videos. The 30-second commercials had lugubrious pacing, with rich colors and no dialogue—"a kind of European, hip feel," says Side 1 art director Susan Hoffman. What words there are in the commercials appear as text on the screen and are ambiguous and somewhat titillating: a frame reads "Ben wasn't being gentlemanly," after an insulted young lady turns on her fashionable heel and walks quickly away. Ben slumps against the wall with a stupefied, "Whaaat did I say?" expression on his face. The audience can't help but wonder, either. "Everything's left up in the air a little," says Hoffman.

Once the ads were made, there was one obvious place to show them: MTV, the 24-hour televised mall. The forum for music videos created in part by media wunderkind Robert Pittman (box) reaches, by its estimate, 20 million people each week—mostly 11- to 24-year-olds—and has

become the ad venue of choice for anyone trying to break into the teen market.

The print-ad campaign, also by W&K, features the shoes and the slogan: "Shoes for Situations." Nike spread them out over a wide range of publications that appeal to the teenage girls' market, including Seventeen, Mademoiselle and Elle. Of all the magazines, there is one essential buy: Sassy. Others, like Seventeen, might be bigger, but Sassy is hotter, growing by 100,000 readers last year alone. Publisher Bobbie Helfin attributes her magazine's success to the "candid, frank, honest, personal, best-friend style." The magazine boasted a paid circulation of 450,000 last year, yet received 451,944 letters—more than one per person.

By fall 1989, shoes hit the stores, the ads went out over the airwaves and into the magazines, and the Nike sales force awaited the stampede. There's only one problem with this beautifully conceived campaign: it's not working yet. Side 1 isn't selling. The label-conscious market was apparently unwilling to take the fashion risk of a new brand. So Nike, a company that has shown that it has the patience to wait for success, has gone back to the drawing board with a narrower line of shoes and a new ad campaign that should begin airing this fall—still a Nike secret. "We're real optimistic," says Side 1's Johnson. "We've got to get the formula right." For all the talk of formulas, the Side 1 story so far shows that for all the market experts do know, this is still not an exact science. So the American teen can't be taken apart like a watch. Whew.

Are Teens TV Smart?

Robert Pittman, one of the creators of MTV, thinks teens today are an audience best spoken to in pictures. "TV babies seem to perceive visual messages better" than previous generations did, Pittman wrote in a recent New York Times editorial. "They can read a picture or understand body language at a glance."

But is visual literacy synonymous with visual smarts? Johns Hopkins University media professor Marc Miller doesn't think so. "It's just not the case that teenagers are growing up more visually sophisticated by virtue of being immersed in video images," he says. The medium just isn't that demanding. "It doesn't take a genius to [watch campaign ads and] start associating the Democrats with Willie Horton."

Even with the simplest of images, seeing is not discerning. "I show kids [ads] in class, and they can't comment on them," says Ron Lembo, professor of humanities at the University of California, Berkeley. "They're completely drawn in." And no wonder: with ads (like those for Side 1) verging on mini-dramas and mainstream TV emulating MTV, viewing has become more visceral than ever. "The appeal is on a directly emotional level," Lembo says, "and the potential for being dominated by the imagery is frightening."

Will it ever be otherwise? No one expects that teens will watch less TV. And by its very nature, TV viewing, unlike reading, will always be a basically passive exercise—analytic skills not required. What might help,



MTV creator Pittman argues kids are more visually literate

says Miller, "is a program to help interpret what teens look at." Teachers and parents (if they're not couch potatoes themselves) should

teach kids to read between the pictures, as they are taught to read between the lines.

MARY TALBOT

Ethnic minority students, who have shown substantial score gains since 1976--when their averages were first reported--showed mixed results in 1990. ~~Minority students now constitute 27 percent~~ of all students taking the SAT, up from 25 percent in 1989 and 10 percentage points higher than 1980.

"The verbal decline this year is disturbing but not particularly surprising," said Mr. Stewart. "It is also the second recent signal that the verbal skills of many American students are weak enough to seriously hamper their future opportunities, in school and college and the world of work."

Mr. Stewart noted that a report earlier this year ¹⁹⁹⁰ from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) confirmed that students at all grade levels spend little time reading or writing, whether in or out of school, and that few students can analyze or understand the full meaning of what they read. The NAEP report reveals that more than half of all high school seniors read 10 or fewer pages each day and that one-third are not required to write even two paragraphs a week; but they spend at least three hours per day watching television.

"Students must pay less attention to videogames and music videos and begin to read more," advised Mr. Stewart. "Reading is in danger of becoming a 'lost art' among too many American students--and that would be a national tragedy."

The College Board president added that "what we need is a firm commitment from parents, educators, and public officials that the improvement of our students' verbal skills is one of the nation's most important educational goals."

Despite the continued slide in verbal scores, Mr. Stewart emphasized that he was pleased with the ~~signs of progress revealed~~ on the SAT data. He cited, for example, the ~~improvement in math scores for many women and the increasing percentage of minorities taking the SAT.~~

more...

Education Week 6-13-90

Students Spend Little Time Reading Or Writing in School, NAEP Finds

By Robert Rothman

WASHINGTON—Reports released last week by the National Assessment of Educational Progress indicate that students at all grade levels spend little time reading or writing, whether in or out of school.

But they also show that those who read and write more frequently perform best in those subjects.

The reports, based on a 1988 assessment of 13,000 students in reading and 20,000 students in writing in grades 4, 8, and 12, also draw on data from surveys of teachers and students. They provide, NAEP officials said, the first data linking classroom practices to performance in these subjects.

The data make "a powerful statement about literacy education in America today," said Ina V.S. Mullis, NAEP's deputy director.

According to the reading report, about half the students in all grades reported reading 10 or fewer pages each day for schoolwork. And students' interest in books, it says, appears to decline as they progress through school.

Most of the reading instruction that takes place, moreover, is at a relatively low level, according to the report. Such instruction for most students is based on a single basal reader, it says, and few students reported discussing, analyzing, or writing about what they read.

Continued on Page 9

Most Students Read or Write Little - In or Out of School, NAEP Reports

Continued from Page 1

The report on writing reveals that, despite the growing interest in teaching that subject across the curriculum, only half of the 12th graders reported writing more than two papers in the previous six weeks, and most said their writing consisted of a few paragraphs.

Overall performance in both subjects, particularly in writing, was relatively poor, the report notes, and the achievement gaps between students from disadvantaged and advantaged areas was substantial. In writing, black 12th graders barely outperformed white 4th graders, the report notes.

Miles Myers, executive director of the National Council of Teachers of English, said that the results "highlight the need for a lot more attention to staff development on how to teach reading and writing."

He added that efforts to restructure schools should focus on ways to enable teachers to spend more time developing students' reading and writing abilities.

"A secondary teacher in the country today faces 160 students a day," he said. "How can you obtain higher levels of literacy when you have schools structured in this way?"

Reading Proficiency

A Congressionally mandated project currently operated by the Educational Testing Service under contract to the Education Department, NAEP has for 20 years measured the performance of national samples of students in a variety of subject areas.

In January, the department released reports, based on data from the 1988 assessment, showing trends in reading and writing achievement since the early 1970's. Those data compared the results of a relatively smaller sample of students with those from previous years on identical test items. (See *Education Week*, Jan. 17, 1990.)

The new findings, based on results from a slightly larger sample of test-takers on a test developed for the 1988 assessment, also include information from background questionnaires and teacher surveys, to gain an understanding of factors that might influence performance.

The reading study found, as expected, that students' proficiency increases as they progress through school, and that the gap between whites' and minorities' scores narrows over time.

However, it also found that the increase in performance from 8th grade to 12th grade was smaller than that recorded in the middle-school years, and that minorities' performance lagged considerably behind that of whites. By the 12th grade, the report notes, "the average performance of black and Hispanic students only reaches the level of 8th-grade white students."

The report also confirms the widely held impression that reading proficiency is related to the amount of homework and classroom reading students perform.

But it notes that nearly a fifth of high-school seniors report that they have no homework or do not do it, and that nearly three-fifths of the high-school students tested said they read fewer than 10 pages a day for school and homework.

Such results are particularly surprising, Ms. Mullis noted, since students in past NAEP assessments had indicated that the primary mode of instruction in most subjects was reading from textbooks.

"They must read a page a day," she observed.

Reading 'At Risk'?

The report also confirmed the view that the more often students read outside of class, the higher their reading proficiency is likely to be.

"Although NAEP data cannot be used to determine whether better readers simply enjoy reading more and, therefore, read more for fun, or whether more frequent reading for enjoyment increases proficiency," the report states, "conventional wisdom suggests that it is probably a combination of the two phenomena."

Those who read more fiction than nonfiction materials, it adds, also outperformed those who read mostly nonfiction.

Not all such students, however, remain "hooked on books," according to the report, which notes that the frequency with which students read outside of class declines as they get older. In contrast, it adds, nearly half the 12th graders said they watched three or more hours of television a day; almost a third of this group reported spending little or no time reading for pleasure.

"There are those in the council who think reading may be at risk," warned Mr. Myers of the N.C.T.E. "As students turn to television and other visual media for information, the whole habit of reading is not as central in the population as it once was."

The NAEP report notes that, while two-thirds of the 4th graders reported taking books out of the library on a weekly basis, only 12 percent of the high-school students checked books out that often. Although library usage tended to be related to proficiency, it says, those among the small percentage of students who took books from the library each day tended to perform less well than those who used the library less frequently.

"It may be the case," the report suggests, "that students who are less successful readers are encouraged to take books out of the library as part of special instructional efforts to improve their reading ability."

'Traditional' Instruction

In analyzing beginning-reading instruction, one of the most contentious issues in education, the study found that most 4th-grade teachers report that their pupils spend about an hour a day on reading.

But much of that instruction is fairly "traditional," according to the report. The vast majority of teachers said their students learned to read with phonics or eclectic approaches, rather than with methods that emphasize the use of language and literature.

In addition, although teachers of half the 4th graders tested said they focused on developing comprehension skills, few employed methods that are aimed at fostering in-depth understanding of texts, such as discussing reading in small groups or having students write about what they read.

"Reading specialists say discussing and writing about what you read helps students make connections

and understand text in a global way and in more depth," Ms. Mullis said. "But students aren't asked to do these activities as frequently as they are asked to work on workbooks."

Nearly all teachers said 4th graders were asked to complete workbook or skill-sheet exercises at least weekly, and 96 percent of teachers said they relied on at least one basal textbook.

Carl Braun, president of the International Reading Association, called these findings "mindboggling" but questioned whether they represent a true picture of schools.

"I do not see these kinds of teachers at I.R.A. conferences," he said.

Perhaps as a result of such instructional practices, Ms. Mullis said, students tended to perform best on reading tasks that asked them to pick out facts from texts, and least well on open-ended questions that required them to write about what they had read.

"They may be used to skill sheets that ask them to pick out facts from texts," she said. "They had more difficulty picking out the overall message from the text, and most difficulty when asked to analyze [passages] or compare them to their personal experiences."

Short Writing Assignments

The writing assessment, like previous NAEP tests in the subject, asked students to perform a variety of informative, persuasive, and narrative writing tasks, such as describing a favorite story, trying to persuade a legislator to cut or increase funds for the space program, and writing a ghost story.

As with the reading test, students performed better as they progressed through school, but overall performance for all students hovered around the "minimal" level.

These results generally reflect the amount and quality of writing instruction in school, the report notes. Although those who reported using the writing process—planning, revising, and editing, as well as drafting—outperformed those who used such methods less frequently, few students appeared to employ these methods while taking the NAEP test.

When asked which instructional approach they used in teaching the subject, teachers of 62 percent of the 8th graders said they emphasized the writing process. But while researchers consider the process approach and skills-based methods incompatible, 80 percent of the students said they were in classes that placed at least some emphasis on both.

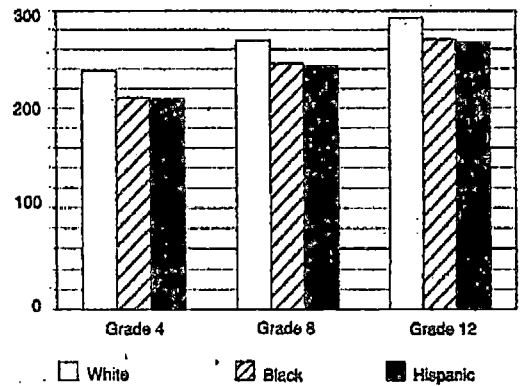
The study also determined that students write relatively seldom in class, and that what they write tends to be very short.

Only 45 percent of the 8th-grade students had teachers who said they had assigned at least four paragraph-length writing assignments in the previous month, and only 14 percent had teachers who assigned that many one- to two-page papers during that period.

Teachers in classes other than English were also unlikely to assign frequent or long writing exercises, the report notes. Some two-thirds of the 8th graders and three-fourths of the 12th graders, it points out, said they were almost never assigned papers of three or more pages in length in history classes.

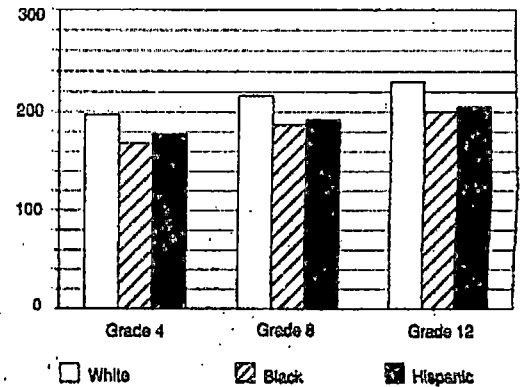
In examining the results of the

Average Reading Proficiency, 1988



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress

Average Writing Achievement, 1988



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress

tasks on the writing assessment, the report notes that more than three-fourths of the students at all grade levels were able to write at the "minimal" level on informative tasks, and between 80 percent and 95 percent could perform at that level on the narrative assignments.

But the results on the persuasive tasks were much poorer, suggesting, the report says, that "many students do not possess well-developed persuasive-writing abilities—skills that are likely to be important to students in their personal and work lives."

Time To Write

The assessment also included a special study that measured the effects of additional time for writing assignments. Critics have suggested that the 15 minutes allotted for students to complete the NAEP writing

tasks was too short to allow them to develop adequate responses.

The results indicate that doubling the amount of time allowed appeared to benefit some students, particularly the better writers.

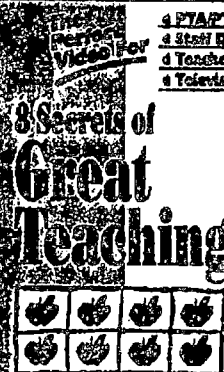
These findings suggest that the added time "raised the ceiling" for pupils who know how to write well, said Ms. Mullis.

"For students who don't know how to accomplish a task, giving them 15 minutes or all day is not going to help," she said. "But if they do know, the extra time does permit them to do a better job."

Copies of "Learning To Read in Our Nation's Schools," and "Learning To Write in Our Nation's Schools," are available for \$14 each from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, P.O. Box 8710, Princeton, N.J. 08541-8710.

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Education Week 10-15-90

John Burkett - (15 min. stat) (Anne w/ Leslye Arscott in Sec. 5 etc.)
2/19 - 2050

→ came from

been trying to nail down study
for a long time.
1987

a detailed study, done by a youth survey group

★ - how frequently parents & kids talk abt. school
1988 survey of 8th graders (follow every 2 yrs.)

to parents re: studies
the more you talk, the better you do.

46% of 8th gr. report they rarely or
never discuss w/ parents

~~27% parents~~
26% parents never at home

60% parents never/rarely limit amt. of tv watched

~~Leicester, Auburn, (2005)~~
Leicester, Auburn, (2005)
& surrounding towns

traditional leather
& textile industries

7.3%

leather 1,730
textile 1,110

non-farm
usage & sale emp. 38,910

ME Dept. of Labor → Allen Cox
1990 → (207) 289-2271

Ho-man-ick

Labor (ME) Digest 5/91
Leursten/Huburn/surrounding farms
38,400 non farm, wage &
salary employment
~~100,000~~ (fortune) 1,800
(textiles)

CDC, Leursten
Laurie
Windsor
783
783-2249
10% of industry is mill
perm. of mayor's name

Stats

~ 82% graduate rate
41% attendance 49% dropout rate

median
60 will not work in 4 yrs.

1 out of 7

To _____

Date _____ Time _____

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M _____

of _____

Phone _____

Area Code Number Extension

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL	
CALLED TO SEE YOU		WILL CALL AGAIN	
WANTS TO SEE YOU		URGENT	

RETURNED YOUR CALL

Message Farnwell *BR to kids & teachers*
Elem. School
(207) ~~782-9551~~ 795-4110 *4th grade*

Susan Martin
Q&A
call @ 10:30am Operator _____



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McGroarty/(Dooley-Blymire)
August 29, 1991
2:30 pm
[MAINE.TS]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL, MAINE
SEPTEMBER 3, 1991
1:00 P.M.??

Thanks, all of you, for this warm welcome. It's my pleasure to welcome all of you back to school -- to help my good friend Governor Jock McKernan kick off Maine 2000 -- and to meet with the new Lewiston High Class of '95. //

[Introductory acknowledgements: Congresswoman Snowe, Sec. Alexander, etc.] [[Let me say to Lamar Alexander: I'll keep up with my computer lessons, but I absolutely refuse to write a report on "What I did on my summer vacation." //]]

Barbara and I remember our own kids going off to school many years ago. Now our kids are grown -- and we watch our grandkids, 10 of them, start a new school year just like each of you. //

When you're growing up, the new year doesn't begin January 1st -- it starts today. [[I saw that this morning at Farwell Elementary School. Still, some of those kindergartners seemed disappointed I didn't bring along Arnold Schwarzenegger.]] It works that way for parents, too. Each new year wipes the slate as clean as the blackboard. Kids look forward to seeing each other and becoming cool. Parents embrace the eternal hope that this year their children will come home with straight A's.

Education and expectation: the two go hand in hand. Your world -- the whole world -- trembles with possibility. One day, we scratch out our thoughts with paper and pen; the next, it

seems, we use computers and laser printers. One day, the Soviet Union, bellicose and threatening, stares at us from across the sea. But just last month, we saw 70 years of history swept away in a single week. This is our world -- and if we are to thrive in it, we must understand history, geography, math, science. When challenges confront us, we must have what it takes to act.

That's the world waiting for the Class of 1995 -- the world you will shape. Students, you feel the opening day jitters that come with each school year. But we adults must make sure that we also feel that sense of expectation -- that feeling that the school doors open a new world of possibility, for us all.

The battle for the future begins right here. The ringing school bell sounds an alarm -- a warning to all of us who care about the state of American education: If we don't educate our sons and daughters well, they will no longer enjoy the blessings we take for granted.

Every day brings new evidence of crisis. The national average for SAT math scores has fallen for four consecutive years. Scores on the Verbal SAT have tumbled to the lowest level ever. These sad statistics tell us what we already know: Our schools don't work.

But how many of us demand better of our children, ourselves, our schools? Not enough. Polls suggest too many parents and students remain unconcerned -- unconvinced that the state of our schools should worry them. Sure, they know something is wrong: Ask them to grade the nation's schools, and not even one-fourth

will give our nation's schools an A or B. But ask them to grade their own schools, and you get a different answer: three-fourths grade their school as good -- even excellent.

We seem to think the crisis in American education plagues some other city or state, or some other school across town -- anywhere but our school. Some of us just don't want to ask tough questions and risk angering teachers and administrators. And some of us seem to believe that while everything else in the world changes, our schools shouldn't -- that what was good enough for us should be good enough for our kids. //

We share responsibility for the state of every school and each individual student -- here in Lewiston, and in a hundred thousand schools in cities and towns all across America. If our schools fail us, we can't blame Washington or Augusta: We must blame ourselves for betraying our own children.

Almost two years ago, this nation's Governors and I established six ambitious National Education Goals -- goals posted today right here on the walls of this gym. In April, at the White House I announced America 2000: a national education strategy to move us forward toward those goals. //

We don't get a second chance to change the future. Today it's time to seize the moment, and do great things. //

By the year 2000, we pledged to raise the national graduation rate to at least 90 percent. In 1990, Lewiston High graduated 95 percent of its class -- well above the national average. Lewiston has cut its drop-out rate in half in four

short years. You've earned the right to be proud. But before you get too comfortable, keep in mind that even at 95 percent more than 20 of the freshmen seated behind me won't be walking across that stage to get their diploma 4 years from now at the Civic Center.

We've challenged ourselves to become first in the world in math and science by the year 2000. Right now, we stand 13th.

Ranking first means more than engaging in some sort of intellectual Olympics. Where we rank in the world matters here - - and it should matter to you. Look at Lewiston. For most of its history, Lewiston was a mill town, producing textiles and shoes. Times change. Today, Lewiston's traditional industries account for only 10 percent of the local economy -- and even the so-called traditional industries have changed enormously. {Mayor Howaniec tells me L.L. Bean has located its new telemarketing center in Lewiston.}

Increasingly, the mothers and fathers of this freshman class work in new companies employing new technologies. Some have even started small businesses of their own. Still, we can't be content to educate our children with today's businesses in mind. By the time our kids graduate from high school or college or graduate school, new industries will have sprouted up; our economy will demand new skills.

This country was built by generations of Americans with strong backs, and the will to work from sun up to sundown. As citizens of the next century, today's 9th Graders will have to

use their minds -- to push forward the technological revolution transforming the world. The pioneers of the next American century must blaze new sorts of trails; they must explore the far corners of a future governed as much by microwaves and lasers as by coal or steel. The greatest resource for our future lies deep in the recesses of our minds, and the key to our nation's success lies with that old-fashioned treasure -- Yankee ingenuity. //

But let's face it: We won't make progress if we can't measure success. By the year 2000, we must call on students at grades 4, 8 and 12 to demonstrate their competence in five core subjects. We'll have the first of these American Achievement Tests in place for the 1993-94 school year. Each state must develop its own means of measuring progress -- its own report card -- and share the results.

That's crucial. We can't hide our heads in the sand. We can't afford to treat our children's success or failure as if it were a state secret. Each student and every parent deserves to know whether they and their schools measure up to world-class standards.

One of the key reasons for the poor performance we see today comes from having asked too much of teachers -- expecting them to act as social workers, part-time psychologists and family counselors. At the same time, we've asked too little of our students, of ourselves and our society.

We've shied away from asking our students to excel -- and from holding them accountable when they don't. We figure, if

they get A's, they must be doing okay, even if an A no longer means what it used to mean. As a nation, we sometimes seem more worried about how our students feel than what they learn. That's got to change. When students graduate, they deserve more than a diploma. They deserve an education. //

But success by the year 2000 demands even more of us. Every American child should start school ready to learn. Every American adult should be literate -- and every American school must be drug-free.

Here in Lewiston, some of today's new freshmen participated in Head Start -- a proven program I want to open up to thousands more pre-school children. In the battle against illegal drugs, Lewiston schools have taken the lead through D.A.R.E. and other drug prevention programs, beginning in elementary school. And tonight, right here at Lewiston High, a new school year begins for adults learning how to read, studying for their GED -- living proof it is never too late to learn. //

Every community and every school must make those goals their own -- as this state does today with Maine 2000. Let the start of this new school year spark a revolution in American education.

So far, I've spoken about our schools -- about the revolution in American education that must take place within these walls. But the revolution can neither begin nor end here. Not even the best school can ever be good enough.

Let me use a "word problem" to show you why. Assume a child goes to school from Kindergarten to 12th grade, and never misses

a day. Subtract summers and weekends -- all the hours before and after school. How much time do our children spend in classrooms?

The answer may surprise you. It's nine-percent; one-eleventh of their time. They spend the rest of their lives elsewhere -- at home, playing with friends, in the shopping mall.

[[Now, maybe parents won't find the fact our kids spend 91 percent of their time outside the classroom too hard to believe - especially when it seems like we spend 50 percent of our time nagging our kids to clean their rooms.]]

But what happens in that 91 percent makes all the difference in the world. We can't blame the schools alone for that dismal drop in SAT verbal scores. The drop means that we haven't taken the time to read to our kids -- to talk with them -- to teach them the arts of communication -- how to think, how to write and speak clearly.

Mom and Dad: Don't make the mistake of thinking your kids only learn from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You are -- and always will be -- your sons' and daughters' first teachers. //

Here's another shocking number: The average parent spends 15 minutes a day -- 15 minutes -- in conversation with their child. Most people spend that much time on coffee break.

The freshman here today may think they're a bit old to have their homework checked. And maybe as parents -- certainly this President will admit -- we can't keep up with the latest in computer technology. But that doesn't mean we can't help. The Class of '95 is old enough to sit down, read a newspaper, and

talk with their parents about what's going on in the world, to take interests, opinions, and ideas seriously. In exchange, they can use those speaking and thinking skills to teach mom and dad how to use the computer. //

What happens at home matters. When our kids come home from school, do they pick up a book -- or do they sit glued to the tube watching music videos? [Recent studies prove something we all know: that television doesn't stimulate our brains; it sedates us, soothes us -- and does not challenge us.]

Still, the future of American education depends on more than what happens in the classroom or around the kitchen table. Our communities and businesses must support educational values, too.

So ask yourselves: In our communities, do we value education and intellect? In the working world, do we reward employees who want to improve themselves -- do employers encourage workers to go back to school, to learn new skills?

Every member of the community can play a role in this revolution. No: every member of the community must play a role.

So parents: Don't be a stranger in your child's school. Visit the classroom. Talk to the principal. Make it your business to find out whether your child's school is drug-free. Talk to your school board about school choice -- about the curriculum -- about ways to put your schools and their resources to use year round. And don't ever take no for an answer when you want to visit and ask questions. //

You don't have to have kids in school to have a stake in what happens in the classroom. For the older folks among us, don't complain about "kids today" -- or that the neighborhood "isn't what it used to be." Get involved. Go into your schools -- get active in the community -- see what you can do to help.

The same goes for local business leaders. Get involved -- not just in word, but in deed. You can think of it as community service -- giving something back to the community your company calls home. Or, think of it in terms of self-interest and sound business -- improving the schools to cultivate the kind of future employees your company needs to keep ahead. //

But above all, get moving. Get involved. That's the idea behind what I call America 2000 Communities -- places that demand that schools play a central role in community life.

We need that kind of revolutionary attitude to reform our schools -- here in Lewiston and across the country. We must ignite a renaissance in American education. We must make this Nation every bit the leader in the Century ahead that it has been since 1776.

All revolutions require principles, ideals and hopes. Start with the sense of possibility you feel today, and build on it. And by all means: Do not rest until we win this revolution. ///

Once again, my thanks to you for this warm welcome -- and may God bless the United States of America.

#

Fred Manning, Dir. of P.A. College Boards

1990 - NREP put out report on reading and writing

confirmed students at all gr. levels

NYT two days ago Bus. 8/28
lowest scores TV NREP

Teens & TV Newswatch last yr.
Summer / fall issue

message should be → start reading

workplace doesn't require

good handwriting. It requires

good writing & reading skills.

Scott Hamilton - Lesleys office
from Buckets

95% is incorrect → ~~95%~~
grad. rate

cut the line → misleading
they mis calculated

Les. Hgh has made great progress
cut d's rate in 1/2 in 4 yrs.
don't mention grad. rate.

'Too much TV' blamed as

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

More bad news about the academic abilities of American students came yesterday from the Scholastic Aptitude Test results.

The English language skills of high school seniors sank to an all-time low and math scores took their first dip since 1980, College Board officials said in releasing the 1991 SAT scores.

"We have a national problem of too much TV and too many videos that have decreased the amount of time spent reading," said College Board President Donald M. Stewart.

He was especially disturbed by the poor verbal showing, down two points this year to an all-time low of 422 out of a possible 800. He put some of the blame on widespread use of television and videos in classrooms, which he said detracts from the ability of students to read and analyze.

"Schools are demanding much less reading homework," he said.

But the news about math skills wasn't good either, and caught the College Board by surprise.

Math scores dipped two points, to

474 out of 800.

Test takers had a combined average of 896 out of 1,600, the lowest score since 1983, when the "Nation at Risk" report ushered in a new era of school reform.

"I was somewhat taken aback," Mr. Stewart said. "We thought we had stabilized math."

Teachers, too, came in for a share of the blame.

The SATs of prospective teachers (406 verbal and 441 math) remain among the lowest of any career group and significantly below national averages, he said.

"We know we have a terrible prob-

lem of [not] having teachers qualified in the courses they teach," he said. "They are underprepared in content areas."

This year, 1.3 million high school students took the SAT. A record 28 percent were minorities. Eighty-two percent of them were enrolled in public schools, 13 percent in religious schools and 5 percent in independent private schools.

Scores for public schools were down to 892, four points below the national average. Religious schools held steady at 909, 13 points above average. Independent private schools showed a two-point rise to

994, almost 100 points above the national average.

Private schools have consistently outperformed public ones since 1987, when the College Board began reporting scores by type of school.

The gap between pupils who do well on the test — above 600 points on each section — and those who do poorly — below 400 — is widening, a trend Mr. Stewart called "disturbing."

Typically just 7 percent of test takers score above 600 on the verbal section of the test, and 17 percent score that high on the math portion.

"Not enough students are meeting high standards," he said. "I fear we could evolve into a nation... with a small, 20 percent educational elite and the rest far less prepared for the world of college or the world of work."

Board officials noted that a "less elite" group of students is taking the SAT than in the past, including more "lower-class whites" whose parents did not attend college.

The College Board rejects criticism that the SAT has a sex or cultural bias and maintains that academic preparation, especially in high-level mathematics courses, accounts for the differences in test scores between the sexes and among ethnic minorities. Asian-Americans and males take the most math and score highest.

Asian-Americans, with a combined score of 941, including 530 in math, led all ethnic groups, followed by whites at 930. Since 1976, Asian-Americans gained 12 points on the math section and lost three in the verbal area. In those 15 years, whites lost 10 points in verbal and four in math.

There was some good news: the gains by minorities. Over 15 years, test scores by blacks were up 50 points, Mexican-Americans 23 and American Indians 22. But those minorities remain far below the national average. Despite a 19-point verbal gain since 1976, the verbal average for blacks is only 351 and their math average is 385 — lowest of any of the ethnic groups.

The average for men was 426 ver-

SATs drop

bal and 496 math this year. The average for women was 418 verbal and 453 math. Over 15 years, men dropped seven points, women 12 in verbal abilities. In math for that period, women gained seven points and men stayed the same.

Scores in Maryland and Virginia dropped four and five points, respectively. Maryland was above the national average and Virginia below.

Combined scores for the District's public and private schools dipped 10 points and were well below the national average. Public schools pulled the scores down, registering 334 in verbal and 368 in math.

College Board officials called attention to an oddity: Grades are going up while SAT scores are declining.

"Usually the more students study and the better the grades, scores go up," said researcher Bob Cameron.

Pupils who took the SAT had a B average.

Eight percent of the test takers said their first language was not English, and 8 percent said they learned English and another language at the same time. Board officials speculated that could have caused the lower verbal scores.

Commenting on the declining scores, Education Secretary Lamar Alexander said in a prepared statement: "The simple fact is that even our best students generally don't know enough and can't do enough to assure success in tomorrow's world."

"It's not a fluke," said Chester E. Finn Jr., a professor of education and public policy at Vanderbilt University and a member of the National Assessment Governing Board. "It's further evidence of what we already know."

With new National Assessment of

Educational Progress results coming out next month, Mr. Finn said that "the few who want to take happy pills had better look elsewhere."

College Board
Pres. Donald Stewart
212-713-8000

Dr. Keith Milky (212) 496 5300
VP Research at CTW

Dr. Jennings Bryant*

(205) 348-~~0090~~
8654

NATAT

D₂ - call for topic

(207) 795-4110

Susan Martin

1 Head Start

2

3

4 Boston Museum of Sci. kits
nature sanct. env. pro.
math summer pro. (staff)
bought math & sci. materials

5 ^{at the} High School learning programs for adults

6 DARE

self-esteem program
conflict resolution program

Farwell Phantoms

Fire Alarm goes off randomly

beginning conf. res. program

building renovations (new roof)

Lewiston Chamber of Commerce (207) 783-2249
Laurie Windsor

backgrounds of students
both parents work?

make-up of town
industry, business

any community learning centers

Lewiston

community w/ rich Franco-American tradition
mill industry (shoe/textile)
1970's - dramatic transformation

strong family values
recommitting to the value of educ.
community pulled together for the
Lewiston-Auburn ^{college} ~~campus~~ of U of ME ^{so.}

5 higher ed. colleges in Lewiston area

strong commitment to seeing
ed. as important

trying to lower dropout rate
get more kids to school
active Jr. Ach. program

business people mentor 1st & 2nd graders
w/ reading programs

Work Advantage - bus./students help control # of
hours stud-work after school. Bus.
Stud. school work together

~~Keep~~ Active adult education programs

nit-pick

McGroarty/(Dooley-Blymire)
August 29, 1991
8:30 am
[MAINE.ED]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL
LEWISTON, MAINE
SEPTEMBER 3, 1991
1:00 P.M.??

Thanks, all of you, for this warm welcome. It's my pleasure to welcome all of you back to school -- to help my good friend **Governor Jock McKernan** kick off **Maine 2000** -- and to meet with the new Lewiston High ^{School} Class of '95. //

[Introductory acknowledgements: Congresswoman Snow, Sec. Alexander, etc.] [[Let me say to Lamar Alexander: I'll keep up with my computer lessons, but I will not write a report on "What I did on my summer vacation." //]]

Barbara and I remember our own kids going off to school many years ago. Now our kids are grown -- it's the grandkids, {x} of them, starting a new school year just like each of you. //

When you're growing up, the new year doesn't begin January 1st -- it starts today. [[I saw that this morning at Farwell Elementary School. Still, some of those kindergarteners seemed disappointed I didn't bring along Arnold Schwarzenegger. Freshmen are more sophisticated -- but look closely, and you'll see the telltale signs of excitement.]] Each new year wipes the slate as clean as the blackboard. Every kid has a shot at straight A's -- all you have to do is keep them.

As adults, we've got to capture that same sense of expectation -- that feeling that the school doors open onto a new

world of possibility. Because the fact is, we face a challenge that shapes our future. The ringing of the school bell sounds an alarm -- a warning to all of us who care about the state of American education.

Every day brings new evidence of the crisis we confront. Take the latest SAT scores -- the ones that show the national average for math falling for the fourth straight year. Scores on the Verbal SAT dropped again -- to the lowest level ever. These sad statistics tell us what we already know: our schools don't work. //

And yet, in the face of this crisis, I see poll evidence that suggests too many parents and students remain unconcerned -- unconvinced that the state of our schools should worry them. Sure, they're aware something is wrong: Ask them to grade the nation's schools, and not even 1/4 will give them an A or B. But ask them to grade their own school, and you get a different answer: 3/4 grade their school as good -- even excellent.

We seem to think the crisis in American education plagues some other city or state, or some other school across town -- anywhere but our school. It's time we get our heads out of the sand -- shake off our complacency. Our schools are failing us -- not just our students or parents, but society as a whole. //

What's at stake goes beyond some abstract notion of the state of American education. This crisis threatens the state of every school and each individual student -- here in Lewiston, and in a hundred thousand schools in cities and towns all across

America. What's at stake is what kind of country this will be -
- not tomorrow, but ten years from now. Not next week, but for
the next generation. //

Almost two years ago, this nation's Governors and I
established six ambitious National Education Goals -- goals
posted today right here on the walls of this gym. In April, at
the White House I announced America 2000: a national education
strategy to move us forward toward those goals. //

Today, those goals -- and the target date for reaching them
-- may seem remote. But the nine years between now and the new
century ahead are a world of opportunity. You don't get a second
chance to change the future. //

By the year 2000, we pledged to raise the national
graduation rate to at least 90%. In 1990, Lewiston High
graduated 95% of its class -- well above the national average.
Lewiston has cut its drop-out rate in half in four short years.
You've earned the right to be proud. But before you get too
comfortable, keep in mind that even at 95% {more than 20} of the
freshmen seated behind me won't be walking across that stage to
get their diploma 4 years from now at the Civic Center. //

By the year 2000, we've challenged ourselves to become first
in the world in math and science. Right now, we stand 13th --
behind {country}. Maine ranks {xx} among the 50 states.

Ranking first means more than engaging in some sort of
intellectual Olympics. Where we rank in the world matters here -
- and it should matter to you. Think of the world we live in:

The daily discoveries in science. The political upheavals that change the face of nations. Think of the Soviet Union -- the way we saw 70 years of history swept away in seven days of whirlwind change.

Just as surely, the world changes Lewiston. For most of its history, Lewiston was a mill town, producing textiles and shoes. Times change -- today, Lewiston's traditional industries account for only 10% of the local economy. Increasingly, the mothers and fathers of this freshman class work in new companies employing new technologies. Some have even started small businesses of their own.

This country was built by generations of Americans with strong backs, and the will to work from sun up to sundown. As citizens of the next century, today's 9th Graders will be called on to work with their minds -- to push forward the technological revolution transforming the world. The pioneers of the next American century must be trail-blazers of a different sort, equipped to explore the far corners of the future -- and the deepest recesses of the human mind. //

Sometimes we think of education reform as a return to the schools of an earlier era. But the best schools of the 1950's wouldn't pass the test in 1991. And the very best schools right now won't be good enough for the year 2000 -- for the new century and new world beyond.

But we won't make progress if we can't measure success. By the year 2000, we must call on students at grades 4, 8 and 12 to

demonstrate their competence in five core subjects. We'll have the first of these American Achievement Tests in place for the 1993-94 school year. Each state has to develop its own means of measuring progress -- its own report card -- and share the results. Our students' success or failure shouldn't be a state secret. Each student and every parent deserves to know whether they and their schools measure up to world-class standards.

One of the key reasons for the poor performance we see today comes from having asked too much of teachers -- expecting them to act as social workers, part-time psychologists and family counselors. At the same time, we've asked too little of our students, of ourselves and our society. We've shied away from asking our students to excel -- and holding them accountable when they don't. We've allowed grades to inflate and standards to crumble. We've worried more about how our students feel than what they learn. That's got to change. When a student graduates, he deserves to leave school with more than self-esteem. He deserves an education. //

But success by the year 2000 demands even more of us. Every American child should start school ready to learn. Every American adult should be literate -- and every American school must be drug-free.

Here in Lewiston, some of today's new freshmen got their start in school in Head Start -- a proven program I want to open up to thousands more pre-school children. In the battle against illegal drugs, Lewiston schools have taken the lead through

D.A.R.E. and other drug prevention programs, beginning in elementary school. And right here at Lewiston High, after the high schoolers go home, adults come into your classrooms to learn to read, and to study for their GED -- living proof it is never too late to learn. //

Every community and every school must make those goals their own -- as this state does today with Maine 2000. Let the start of this new school year spark a revolution in American education.

So far, I've spoken about our schools -- about the revolution in American education that must take place within these walls. But the fact is, the revolution can't stop here. Even the best school can never be good enough.

Let me use a "word problem" to show you why. Assume a child goes to school from Kindergarten to 12th grade, and never misses a day. Subtract summers and weekends -- all the hours before and after school. What you're left with is 9%: that's the small fraction of their lives our children spend in school.

[[Now, maybe parents won't find the fact our kids spend 91% of their time outside the classroom too hard to believe -- especially when it seems like we spend 50% of our time nagging our kids to clean their rooms.]]

But what happens in that 91% makes all the difference in the world. When we see that dismal drop in SAT verbal scores, it points beyond a failure in the school. It means we're not taking the time to read to our kids -- to talk with them -- to teach them the arts of communication, how to think in words.

The first lesson of the 91% must be learned by parents. Mom and Dad: Don't make the mistake of thinking your kids only learn from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You are -- and always will be -- your sons' and daughters' first teachers. //

The average parent spends 15 minutes a day -- 15 minutes -- in conversation with their child. Most people spend that much time on coffee break. The freshman here today may think they're a bit old to have their homework checked. And maybe as parents -- certainly this President will admit -- our calculus and computer skills may not be state-of-the-art. Then again, the Class of '95 is old enough to sit down and watch the evening news with their parents -- to talk about what's going on in the world, to take interests, opinions, and ideas seriously. //

What happens at home matters. When our kids come home from school, do they ever pick up a book -- or do they sit glued to the tube watching music videos? But the future of American education depends on more than what happens in the classroom or around the kitchen table. In our communities, do we value education and intellect? In the working world, do we reward employees who want to improve themselves -- do employers encourage workers to go back to school, to learn new skills?

Every member of the community can play a role in this revolution. First, let me say to parents: Don't be a stranger in your child's school. Visit the classroom. Talk to the principal. Make it your business to find out whether your child's school is drug-free. Talk to your school board about

school choice -- about the curriculum -- about ways to put your schools and their resources to use year-round.

For the older folks among us, don't complain about "kids today" -- or that the neighborhood "isn't what it used to be." Get involved. Go into your schools -- get active in the community -- see what you can do to help.

The same goes for local business leaders. Think of it as community service -- giving something back to the community your company calls home. Or, think of it in terms of self-interest and sound business -- improving the schools to cultivate the kind of future employees your company needs to keep ahead. //

But above all, get involved. That's the idea behind what I call America 2000 Communities -- places that put the school at the center of community life. That's the revolutionary new attitude that will reform our schools -- here in Lewiston and across the country. That's the idea that will spark an American renaissance in education -- a transformation that will make this Nation every bit the leader in the Century ahead that it has been since 1776.

Start with the sense of possibility you feel today -- and do not rest until this revolution is won. ///

Once again, my thanks to you for this warm welcome -- and may God bless the United States of America.

#

LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL

RICHARD M. SYKES
Principal

156 East Avenue
Lewiston, Maine 04240

~~207-784-2371~~

207/795-4190

JOHN G. BOUCHLES
Assistant Principal
DR. EDWARD DWYER, JR.
Assistant Principal
ROGER LACHAPPELLE
Assistant Principal
KENNETH C. JORDAN
Vocational Director

TO: Peggy Dooley, White House
FROM: Richard M. Sykes, Principal
RE: High School & Regional Technical Center Profile
DATE: August 27, 1991

*6 goals
grad rate
math - science
tests - local
ready to learn
adults - literacy
drug-free
night
behav*

COMMUNITY

Lewiston is one of Maine's largest cities with a population of 45,000 people. Our twin city is Auburn with a population of 25,000. Lewiston and Auburn have traditionally been associated with the shoe and textile industries, but our economy has diversified to a point that it is estimated that less than 10% of the work force is currently employed by these traditional industries. The workforce has been quick to adapt to new industrial processes based upon small businesses and entrepreneurs. The median family income is comparatively low.

Lewiston has one private high school and is also home to Bates College, a highly regarded liberal arts college. The following post-secondary schools are also close by: Central Maine Medical Center School of Nursing; Mid-State Business School; University of Maine at Augusta, Lewiston-Auburn Division; University of Maine-Lewiston; and Central Maine Technical College.

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Lewiston High School & Regional Technical Center is one of the largest high schools in the state with a student population of 1,465. Grades 9 through 12 are maintained in a two-semester school year. The professional staff numbers 133. The curriculum offerings are diversified and comprehensive in nature. The Lewiston Regional Technical Center is housed in the high school complex and accepts students from the following high schools: Edward Little High School, Auburn; Leavitt Area High School, Turner; Lewiston High School, Lewiston; Lisbon High School, Lisbon; Oak Hill High School, Sabattus; and Monmouth Academy, Monmouth. The Vocational school offers 23 programs with most courses following a two-year sequence.

PROFILE

Lewiston High School is approved and accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and by the Maine State Department of Education.

GRADING SYSTEM

100 B=85 to 92 C=76 to 84 D=70-75 F=Below 70
CLASS is computed after 6 semesters and updated after the 7th semester.
CLASS is not weighted.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

4 credits in English, 1 credit in U.S. History, 1 credit in American Government, 2 Credits in Mathematics, 2 credits in Science, 1 credit in Physical Education, ½ credit in Health, Proficiency in Maine Studies and Computers. A total of 18 credits is required to graduate.

GRADUATING CLASS STATISTICS

Class of 1991	Students Attending	Students Attending
	<u>4-Year College</u>	<u>2-Year College</u>
	37.4%	9.7%
	Total going on to school 47.1%	

DROP OUT RATE AS REPORTED BY THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1986-87	11.3%
87-88	9.9%
88-89	7.4%
89-90	4.93%
90-91	not available

The staff at Lewiston High School has worked hard to reduce the dropout rate by providing a variety of educational programs and services. Recent initiatives include:

RECENT EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

1. An Air Force JROTC program was started in 1989/90.
2. An infant care program provides baby sitting services for teenage parents wishing to complete their diploma.
3. Alternative education programs have begun both in the academic and vocational curriculum.
4. A cooperative agreement with local businesses (entitled WorkAdvantage) which seeks to increase communication and understanding between employees and their student employees. The WorkAdvantage program has been adopted by the Maine Chamber of Commerce and the Maine Secondary School Principals' Association.
5. The addition of a Law Occupations program at Lewiston Regional Technical Center.
6. An Outreach Program to assist handicapped students to be successful in the mainstream physical education classrooms.
7. The addition of a Living Skills program to service trainably handicapped students.
8. Expanded athletic and extra curricular activities for all students.
9. Seven Advanced Placement offerings at the high school. An agreement with Bates College to have high school students take a Bates College course tuition free.

Lewiston High School Profile
Page3 August 27, 1991

10. Regional Gifted and Talented programs in writing, math, and science.

11. A career centered established as part of the Guidance curriculum.

Please advise if additional information is necessary.