

FOIA MARKER

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Ecumenical

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TO: TERRY EDMONDS

FR: KEVIN SULLIVAN 

RE: BREAKFAST WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERS

If you can find a way to make some reference to the work that the Secretary is doing it would be helpful to our future endeavors with particular attention to items one and two..

1.) Summit Conferences between Educators and Religious leaders:

The Secretary has held two regional summit conferences between religious leaders and public educators during the last year and plans to hold several more this year. To my knowledge this is the first time that this has been done. These summits are part of our continuing effort to bridge the gap between America's religious community and public education. Our first step to overcome this gap came when we issued our religious guidelines at the direction of the President. These conferences are a positive follow-up.

The first summit was held in New England and drew about two hundred leaders. The second was held in Wilmington, Delaware. We hope to hold others in the South, the West and the Midwest possibly Chicago in the coming year. As a result of these summits several partnerships are beginning to form between public educators and different church communities in Boston and Cambridge in Mass and West Hartford and New Haven in Conn in addition to Wilmington. Much of the credit for helping to sponsor this effort goes to Bishop F. Herbert Skeete in New England and Rev. Wesley Williams, both of whom represent the United Methodist Church. It would be nice if you could mention them.

2.) Tutors for the President's "Reading Challenge."

We see the religious community as a great resource for our effort to recruit one million volunteers to help us improve reading. The Secretary is going to recruit 20 to 25 religious leaders to lead this effort in the next month and will meet with the Catholic Bishops on January 15th. It would be helpful for the President to make the connection between the reading initiative and the work that so many church groups now do in education. I am sending along a specific example of a group of churches in Jackson, Tenn that are now involved in this effort that you could use as a model.

3.) Religion in Schools and Drugs

A few weeks ago when the story came out that marijuana use was up among 8th graders for the 5th straight year Riley was at the press conference with McCaffery and Shalala. Riley made the point that young people who were on the honor roll or who had joined a bible club in school were less likely to be into drugs. You might make some reference to this idea which allows you make a mention of the religious guidelines that we issued in 1995. Clinton mentioned them at the 1995 breakfast but all the President has to say is that they seem to be working well. The Secretary said that the head of the National Association of Evangelicals came up to Clinton at Hilton Head and told the President that those guidelines were the most important thing he had done in the first term.

4. Aguilar v. Felton (FYI)

The President is supporting the effort by New York City to over turn the 1986 Supreme Court ruling in Aguilar v. Felton that restricts how we provide Title I services to poor kids in parochial schools. Last October the Justice Department filed a petition for a "writ of certiorari with the Supreme Court on behalf of the Secretary in support of NYC asking the Court to hear the case. This case has great meaning for Catholics community as well as for Agudath Israel and Lutherans. It may not be appropriate to get this detailed in his remarks but any mention of Aguilar will resonate with the Catholic bishops who are in attendance.

T.
There is also a quote from
Proverbs that you could use that
we ended the speech with it
on page 5.
K.

Reach out and Read Program, Boston City Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts
 Kathleen Fitzgerald Rice, Co-Director (617) 534-4765 or
 Perri Klass, Co-Director (617) 534-5701

Physicians at Boston City Hospital saw both the need and the opportunity to work on literacy with their patients, namely young children from impoverished families. In 1989 they launched the Reach Out and Read Program to meet those needs by integrating literacy development into regular pediatric care for children ages 6 months to 6 years. The Reach Out and Read Program is co-directed by a pediatrician and early childhood educators and has three components. In the clinic waiting room, community volunteers read to the children, engaging their interest while modeling book-related interactions for the parents. In the examining room, the doctor looks at a book with the child, assessing the child's developmental progress and sharing it with the parent present. At the end of the visit, the child receives a new book to take home. This gift conveys the importance of reading to both the child and the parent. ROR has big plans to expand their project, first to 10 other Boston area neighborhood health centers and then nationwide. A parent commented on the program's effect on her daughter: "I know that by keeping her nose in books, she's going to be a reader. If she's a reader, she could be a writer. She could be a doctor. She could be anything!"

Cabrini-Green Tutoring Program, Cabrini-green Housing Development, Chicago, Illinois
 Phoebe Zoe Kessler, Program Coordinator (312) 467-4980

The only one-to-one scholastic tutoring organization working with young kids in the Cabrini-Green area, it serves 500 kids a week and has 480 volunteer tutors. The program operates three nights each week from 5:30-7pm. Kids are tutored for grades K-6, then graduate and can become Junior Assistants who help volunteers and program staff, peer-tutor younger kids, and help run the library, art, and resource areas. All tutors are volunteers and most are professionals who work in nearby downtown Chicago. Parents also volunteer in the program. All tutors go through a training and orientation session, take a tour of the program, speak with program coordinators and veteran tutors before beginning work, and attend three additional workshops each year. Through its 2-year relationship with Reading is Fundamental, the program distributes books for the kids, tailored to their individual tastes, to take home and to keep. Books are also distributed in conjunction with other events. The program is 31 years old, and its participants often bridge generations of the same families.

All funding is private and the program relies heavily upon donations. Last year, for example, Scottie Pippen of the Chicago Bulls ran a RIF fund-raiser for the program which raised \$40,000 that is paying for 2 new computers and a library up-grade. The program has only two paid staff members, with the rest of the costs arising from school supplies, buses for field trips, nightly snacks, and other needed materials.

Jackson, Tennessee Tutoring Program
 Jim England (901) 427-9666

In Jackson, Tennessee, 10 churches have already joined forces with 11 public housing projects to

JACKSON CHURCH Tutoring

ensure the reading success of the city's children. Currently, 250 church members tutor 350 children, mostly elementary students, throughout the city. While the churches design their own programs in accord with their talents and physical facilities, all of the students have progress charts that follow them from church to church as they move. Volunteers use the local district's "Lesson Line" to communicate with teachers, parents, and other tutors and coordinate with the school during the school year. Among those pitching in are local supermarkets and businesses who have shown their support by donating food for the program. According to one of the organizers, the program is entirely volunteer and the cost is negligible. Many students and families report that this tutoring program has made a major difference in their lives. Because of the project's initial success, 12 other churches are joining the project in the coming year.

Pilot Tutoring Programs, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Jerome Kagan, Professor, Harvard University (617) 495-3870

In this pilot tutoring program, senior citizen volunteers, many of them former teachers, tutor at-risk first graders three times a week in forty-five minute sessions -- with significant results. Paid, early childhood educators provided tutors with training, prior to and during their service. Through daily tutor logs, training sessions, and tutor observation, the educator trainers worked closely with the tutors. Tutors made a special effort to assess initially the skills, needs, and talents of their students, a diverse group of African Americans, Whites, Haitians, and Asians. One of the student's classroom teachers remarked: "[The student's] frustration level changed, he learned to focus, how to handle a book, felt he was a reader, learned he is an okay kid, learned beginning skills and to like books." The program showed significant results on the reading of both words and text. Sixty three percent of the tutored students showed major gains in reading text compared with only 30 percent of the control group; 63 percent of the tutored students gained in a major way in reading words compared with 10 percent of the control groups. The program was equally effective for children who spoke English as their first language and bilingual children learning to read English.

Early Identification Program, Reading Community City School District, Reading, Ohio

Bob Stark, Coordinator of Special Services, Cincinnati, Ohio (513) 483-6739

51 trained parent volunteers work one-on-one with 79 kindergartners, over half of the kindergartners in the district, who enter the program based on measurements of their pre-literacy skills as well as the recommendations of their teachers and parents. During the 1995-1996 school year, scores of students participating in the program increased 29.8 points in visual perception, 19.2 points in fine motor skills, and 19.3 points in basic language concepts. In contrast, students not participating in the program had gains of 5.4 in visual perception, .3 in fine motor skills, and 7.4 in basic language concepts. Since its inception in 1987, the program has served 871 children with 9,425 hours of volunteer service. Tutors and students meet four times a week in personal sessions that make use of a variety of methods intended to build pre-literacy skills. This program seeks to set the foundations for literacy before these at-risk students fall behind in their reading skills. Teachers note that by the end of the kindergarten year, the academic performance of program participants nearly matches that of the children who did not participate in the program.

REMARKS OF
RICHARD W. RILEY
U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS & EDUCATION SUMMIT
Wilmington, Delaware
July 29, 1996

Good morning. It is a great pleasure to be here with you. I want to thank Mayor Sills for his kindness in extending to us such a warm welcome. And I want to thank all of you -- the participants -- for attending as well.

In many ways this effort to bring religious leaders and educators together is something new for American education. For most of our lives the relationship between America's educators and America's religious community has been distant. Today, we seek to change that way of thinking. This is what this conference is all about -- to recognize that the many faith communities represented here today are a great "untapped resource" that we need to move American education forward. Here it might be important to give you a little history. How did this all begin?

The story begins appropriately enough with a teacher. I have on my staff a former national teacher of the year -- Terry Dozier. Terry is from my home state of South Carolina. I persuaded her just a few months after she and her husband Mark had bought a new house to pull up stakes and come to Washington as one of my advisors. I wanted someone on my staff with real day-to-day class room experience.

So Terry came and in her usual way she got busy. She created a forum for teachers all across America who had been recognized as the best in their state. One of those teachers was a teacher from Massachusetts named Stephen Levy, who sent Terry a letter in the Spring of 1993.

Stephen, a member of a conservative Christian church, had come to recognize that there was a growing division between many members of his congregation and public educators. There was a growing sense of distrust -- a very real disconnection. Three weeks later we invited Stephen and seven other religiously minded teachers to come to Washington and visit with us.

1. The Secretary may depart from prepared remarks

In addition, we invited religious leaders from many different faiths -- Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish -- conservative and mainline -- orthodox and liberal -- to help us think about what we could do to overcome this sense of distrust and -- at the same time -- what we could do together to help the American family.

We wanted these religious leaders to be full participants at the very start of our efforts to create a family involvement partnership for learning. In your packets you see one of the first fruits of that effort -- a joint statement of Common Purpose drafted by 33 religious leaders in December of 1994.

Since that time we have worked very hard to overcome the division and sometimes the confusion -- that too often has defined the relationship between religious minded Americans and public education. This work has taken many different forms.

Our Partnership for Family Involvement now includes over 700 organizations and we have a very strong focus on improving literacy. This summer, we have enlisted 300,000 adult and youth mentors in an ongoing effort to help one million children to keep up their reading skills. This fall we are encouraging parents, civic organizations, religious denominations, and businesses to go back to school -- to reconnect with their local school to find a way to help all of our children learn.

We are asking individuals and groups to work with their local neighborhood school to help young people in four specific areas --- reading, technology, providing safe-after school activities and preparing young people for college through extra tutoring.

I am also asking you to encourage parents to find an extra 30 minutes a day to read with their children and check their homework. If parents did that every day it would revolutionize American education. This is in many ways my sermon -- if we can help parents slow down their lives -- if we can give parents time off from the time crunch of modern living -- if we can give families, guardians and grandparents the extra support they need to raise their children right -- to keep them away from drugs, smoking, and the violence of TV -- we would be a better country and provide a more promising future for all of our young people.

In addition, we are working with other groups -- most notably the American Association of School Administrators, the National PTA and the Freedom Forum -- to define a new common ground. So they had come together to put out a statement on what they could agree on when it came to religion in the schools. This was not an easy task. It took them months of effort. And it took another two months as we worked together to bring other denominations into the group.

But their good work laid the ground work for President Clinton's decision to go forward and release guidelines on religion in public schools last year. Now, a year later I believe that these religious guidelines are starting to change the landscape and tone of the public debate about prayer in school.

Many more Americans now realize that the religious rights of students do not stop at the school house door. Young people can say grace before lunch, join a Bible Club, read their Bible during study hall, meet at the "flagpole" before school, and wear religious symbols on their clothing. At the same time, we want it to be very clear that the First Amendment continues to protect the rights of minority religions -- and even the rights of those who choose to have no faith -- to make sure that no student becomes a "captive audience."

Many of these rights are summarized in the green colored brochure that some of you may have picked up called, "A Parents Guide to Religion in Public Schools." Yes, there are still some unsettled issues like prayer at graduation ceremonies. The Supreme Court has yet to speak on this issue and the lower courts remain divided. And, yes, there is still a division over whether we should have a Constitutional Amendment on school prayer.

I do not believe that we should tamper with the First Amendment -- we have never ever changed the Bill of Rights in our history and I see no reason to change it now. We are the most religious free nation in the world because of the First Amendment. Others disagree with my opinion and that is the way it should be in our democracy.

But I believe -- that even in our disagreements -- there is new and growing tone of civility. And that's good for America and good for public education. Our public schools should not be the public space for a war on values. When you put schools in the middle, education loses.

This is why I am encouraged when people of faith reach out to each other and act on their faith and help us to raise our children. President Clinton may have said it best when he said,

"Don't you believe that if every kid in every difficult neighborhood in America were in a religious institution on weekends -- the Synagogue on Saturday, a church on Sunday, or at a mosque to say their daily prayers -- don't you really believe that the drug rate, the crime rate, the violence rate, the rate of self-destruction -- would go way down and the character of this country would go way up?"

Well, I believe the President has it about right. There is a great deal that can be done to involve our faith communities in helping our children and their parents. Many of you come from faith communities that have a long tradition of encouraging learning and helping families cope. Mormons often have a "family night" one day of the week. Many Roman Catholics parishes have kept their inner city schools open at great costs.

And I am greatly encouraged by the decision of my own faith -- the United Methodists -- to endorse a statement of principles entitled Education: the Gift of Hope. To its credit, Education: the Gift of Hope recognizes that one of the core problems we confront in American education is one of expectations. The fallacy that your potential is based on your parents income, your native language, or your race remains one of the great enduring impediments to the progress of American education.

Here a story may be in order. Last year I attended a conference in California organized by a church and community based organization called PICO. The group had been founded by a Catholic priest but it was very much a grass-roots and inter-denominational effort dedicated to social action and economic justice.

This conference was attended by over 2,500 delegates representing 250,000 parishioners. These were working class people. Average folk trying to make a living. These delegates had done the hard work of going door-to-door. We want all parents to know that their religious values are protected and honored in the public space that is public education. As I said earlier, a great deal of suspicion has grown up among conservative Christians on the role of public schools. They had come to believe that public education was "hostile" to religion, and that their values were not respected. And in some cases they were right.

Some educators had come to the conclusion that the best way to interpret the First Amendment's concerns about the separation of church and state was to avoid the issue of religion altogether. At the same time, many educators felt under siege. And after thirty years of not understanding each other on the issue of school prayer just about everybody was confused.

When we first set out to develop the President's guidelines on religion in public schools I met with a group of litigators. Conservative and liberal, groups as diverse as the National Association of Evangelicals, the American Jewish Congress, the Christian Legal Society and the ACLU.

These lawyers were something of an odd group. One of the participants in the meeting told me that after so many years of litigating against each other over school prayer they had become "institutionally paranoid." Yet, there was a sense of fellowship about them even though they were always on opposite sides in the court room. They knew that more litigation was the wrong way to go. Door-to-door, family to family, asking people about their deepest concerns. The overwhelming conclusion was a deep desire for a better education for their children.

They wanted their children to learn real life skills -- to be able to make the transition from school-to-work with some hope of future economic security. But nothing was more moving to me than the speech of a mother who got up in tears and told the delegates that expectations were everything.

This seems to be a growing trend and it is a trend that I want to encourage. Last March, Bishop F. Hebert Skeete of the United Methodist Church and the Rev. Wesley Williams -- who is with us today -- organized a New England Summit of religious leaders and educators.

I had the good fortune to attend the conference. You have to be inspired when 200 people show up the day after a blizzard. Where I come from in South Carolina we wouldn't even get out of our beds if we saw that much snow. The goal of the New England conference was summed up very neatly by one of the participants who said this, "there is a place in the church for education, and a place for religion in the school."

And that in a nutshell defines why we are here today. To find a place in the church for education and a place for religion in the school. To find the common ground that will allow us to come together as religious leaders and educators to help our children. And I can tell you that it can make a difference and so many of you are already making that difference now.

Individual denominations are adopting public schools. Churches and synagogues are holding tutoring classes and finding mentors for young people. Some faith communities are making their buildings "safe havens" for young people after school to keep them out of harm's way.

This is important work and so very needed. This coming September we will more young people in our nation's school than any time in American history -- 51.7 million. Demographers call this the baby-boom echo and over the next ten years this growth rate is not going to stop.

In the next ten years, we are going to have to educate an additional 2.9 million children. That's a lot of children and a great majority of these young people will be teenagers. Young people who have to worry about drugs, violence, AIDS, smoking and in some cases -- just staying alive. So we need your help.

I urge you, then, as church leaders to work with the parents in your own denominations -- to inspire them to find that extra 30 minutes to help their children learn. It is so important. Help them give their children the character and the fortitude to be good citizens -- to live their values each and every day -- and to expand their minds.

As educators I encourage you to see these faith communities for what they are -- as a great untapped resource that can do so much good for American education. For we all have a common purpose. As it is said in Proverbs 22:6 "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray."

Thank you.

Dear Terry,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit some thoughts to you. I am jotting down some random thoughts for you, not in any good order. I wanted to get them to you. I will continue to think. If I have hit on anything of interest, I would be happy to continue to try to "flesh" it out more for you.

First point about urgency and responsibility. (Referred to in Neh. comments).

Second point about role of government. If President continues to use idea of bridge, he could play off the fact that a bridge must be stable, secure, etc. The point of the bridge, however, is to give access, opportunity for people to cross. The government is not unlike that. It is see that our citizens have access.

A biblical example is seen in Nehemiah. It really is applicable to all the points you made to me. In Chapter 4:6, "So built we the wall ... for the people had a mind to work." In face of opposition the people, "made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night" 4:9. "For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded." 4:18.

These scripture references apply to the point of urgency and responsibility: they had a mind to work; to mission in world: set a watch, pray, work but secure in that the sword was ever present. This speaks to our role in the world.

Here is a quote from one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s messages, "Human life through the centuries has been characterized by man's persistent efforts to remove evil from the earth. Seldom has man thoroughly adjusted himself to evil, for in spite of his rationalizations, compromises and alibis, he knows the "is" is not the "ought" and the actual is not the possible." From sermon entitled, "The Answer to a Perplexing Question."

I think this is what the President is attempting to challenge America to do ... to move from what "is" to what "ought" to be, from the actual to the possible. Some talking points in this vein could be:

- *goodness of Americans
- *greatness of armed forces
- *grace and mercy of God

The President could frame remarks under "Seeing the Present (what is), Seizing the Possible (ought)"

I'll continue to think!

Sincerely,

Rex Horne

Dear Terry,

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Sincerely,

Rex Horne

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
ANNUAL ECUMENICAL BREAKFAST
THE WHITE HOUSE
JANUARY 6, 1997**

Acknowledgments: Vice President Gore, Secretary Riley, Tipper and Hillary...

- **Good morning and welcome to the White House.** I want to thank all of you for the gift of your presence here today, and for the gift of your example and service to all mankind. It is fitting that you come bearing those gifts today, because today is the celebration of Epiphany in the Christian faith -- the day the Magi came bearing gifts to the new born king.
- **The Responsibility we all bear.** Today, I want to talk about the responsibility we all bear for keeping the promise of America alive for all our children. This is a moment of great promise and opportunity for our country. We are beginning this new year stronger and more prosperous than ever before in our history. And the American people are coming together around our basic values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a renewed sense of community. But we face a whole host of challenges as we prepare to enter a new century.
- **My thoughts about preparing America for the 21st century.** In the weeks since the election, I have spent a lot of time thinking about what we must all do together to prepare our nation and our children to succeed in the 21st century. Regardless of party or race or religion, all Americans have a stake in a strong America. And all Americans must do their part to keep us strong. We must keep the promise of America alive for our children by working together to improve education and opening the doors of college for more of our people. We must make sure that every American shares in the bounty of our great land by each doing our part to bring opportunity and hope to people and places that have only known poverty and despair. We must make sure our communities are havens of peace, not minefields of crime by working together to root out evil and plant goodness in its place. And we must make sure our dream of freedom continues to spread across the world, through our constant prayer and vigilance.
- **Two weeks from today, I will be sworn in as President for the second time.** I want to spend that time continuing my dialogue with the American people about how we must meet the challenges of a new century. As I prepare to begin my second term as the last President of the 20th century, I will also be meeting with members of my Cabinet and Administration to lay out our plans and priorities. But, more than anything, I want to emphasize that government cannot and should not solve all these problems alone. As I have said before, my job doesn't end here at the White House -- it begins here. The challenges that lie before us will not be conquered in the halls of government, but in the town halls and halls of learning and houses of worship that have always been the birthplaces of progress in America. Some people say we need a kind of Marshall Plan -- a huge top-down spending spree to solve our vexing problems. I disagree. America doesn't

need a Marshall Plan. America needs a plan to marshal our love, our talents, and our energies -- each citizen doing their part to solve our common problems.

- **You have a special responsibility.** We all have a responsibility to teach our children right from wrong...to show our people the virtue of work...to help build strong families and safe communities...and to lift up the spirit, hope and faith of the American people in themselves. But, in all this, you have a responsibility like no other. Just as I am calling on leaders in business and education and public policy to do their part in preparing our country for the 21st century, I will be calling on all of you to share your special gifts in this endeavor.
- **Martin Luther King, Jr. talked about the urgency of working together.** It humbles me to know that I will be sworn-in for the second time on the day we have set aside as a nation to honor this century's great drum major for justice, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We must all remember what Dr. King said: "Together, we must learn to live together as [sisters and] brothers, or together we will perish as fools."
- **The long journey of America's greatness.** Just as we remember the lessons of Martin Luther King, so should we pause to reflect on the lessons of other great icons of the 20th century: Washington and Lincoln and Jefferson and Franklin Roosevelt. While there was a wide diversity of principle and philosophy among them, there was a unity of purpose to move America forward, to make it a place of opportunity for all its people, and to keep it the greatest force for peace and freedom in the world. In closing, I think of the words of Paul talking about the great ancestors of the church. He said, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." [Hebrews 12:1] As we go forward on our long journey of greatness, we may have our differences. But let us lay aside that weight so that with patience we can run the race that is set before us.

Thank you and God bless you all.

- We must not take this call to community lightly. If we want to ensure a better future for our children and our nation, we must commit ourselves to working together across all the lines that would divide us. I am reminded of the words of this century's great drum major for justice, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on whose birthday I shall take the oath of office. Dr. King said: "Together, we must learn to live as brothers, or together, we will perish together as fools."
- In closing, as I look out at this great sea of spiritual diversity, I know that, whatever your differences, you are all united in the cause of peace and freedom and service to our country. We must not squander this opportunity. Let us be guided by the words of Paul talking of the great leaders of the church. He said, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so

easily entangles, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” [Hebrew 12:1]

Thank you and God bless you all.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

#2
Sent Again!

FAX TRANSMITTAL

TO: Ferry Edmonds

ORGANIZATION: Speechwriting

PHONE NUMBER: 456-2777

FAX NUMBER: 456

FROM: Kevin Sullivan

PHONE NUMBER: 401-0831

MESSAGE: Ecumenical Breakfast

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9 PAGE(S) TO FOLLOW

TO: TERRY EDMONDS

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The first summit was held in New England and drew about two hundred leaders. The second was held in Wilmington, Delaware. We hope to hold others in the South, the West and the Midwest possibly Chicago in the coming year. As a result of these summits several partnerships are beginning to form between public educators and different church communities in Boston and Cambridge in Mass and West Hartford and New Haven in Conn in addition to Wilmington. Much of the credit for helping to sponsor this effort goes to Bishop F. Herbert Skeete in New England and Rev. Wesley Williams, both of whom represent the United Methodist Church. It would be nice if you could mention them.

2.) Tutors for the President's "Reading Challenge."

We see the religious community as a great resource for our effort to recruit one million volunteers to help us improve reading. The Secretary is going to recruit 20 to 25 religious leaders to lead this effort in the next month and will meet with the Catholic Bishops on January 15th. It would be helpful for the President to make the connection between the reading initiative and the work that so many church groups now do in education. I am sending along a specific example of a group of churches in Jackson, Tenn that are now involved in this effort that you could use as a model.

3.) Religion in Schools and Drugs

A few weeks ago when the story came out that marijuana use was up among 8th graders for the 5th straight year Riley was at the press conference with McCaffery and Shalala. Riley made the point that young people who were on the honor roll or who had joined a bible club in school were less likely to be into drugs. You might make some reference to this idea which allows you make a mention of the religious guidelines that we issued in 1995. Clinton mentioned them at the 1995 breakfast but all the President has to say is that they seem to be working well. The Secretary said that the head of the National Association of Evangelicals came up to Clinton at Hilton Head and told the President that those guidelines were the most important thing he had done in the first term.

4. Aguilar v. Felton (FYI)

The President is supporting the effort by New York City to overturn the 1986 Supreme Court ruling in Aguilar v. Felton that restricts how we provide Title I services to poor kids in parochial schools. Last October the Justice Department filed a petition for a "writ of certiorari with the Supreme Court on behalf of the Secretary in support of NYC asking the Court to hear the case. This case has great meaning for the Catholic community as well as for Agudath Israel and Lutherans. It may not be appropriate to get this detailed in his remarks but any mention of Aguilar will resonate with the Catholic bishops who are in attendance.

T.
There is also a quote from
Proverbs that you could use that
we ended the speech with it
on page 5.
K.

Reach out and Read Program, Boston City Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts
Kathleen Fitzgerald Rice, Co-Director (617) 534-4765 or
Perri Klass, Co-Director (617) 534-5701

Physicians at Boston City Hospital saw both the need and the opportunity to work on literacy with their patients, namely young children from impoverished families. In 1989 they launched the Reach Out and Read Program to meet those needs by integrating literacy development into regular pediatric care for children ages 6 months to 6 years. The Reach Out and Read Program is co-directed by a pediatrician and early childhood educators and has three components. In the clinic waiting room, community volunteers read to the children, engaging their interest while modeling book-related interactions for the parents. In the examining room, the doctor looks at a book with the child, assessing the child's developmental progress and sharing it with the parent present. At the end of the visit, the child receives a new book to take home. This gift conveys the importance of reading to both the child and the parent. ROR has big plans to expand their project, first to 10 other Boston area neighborhood health centers and then nationwide. A parent commented on the program's effect on her daughter: "I know that by keeping her nose in books, she's going to be a reader. If she's a reader, she could be a writer. She could be a doctor. She could be anything!"

Cabrini-Green Tutoring Program, Cabrini-green Housing Development, Chicago, Illinois
Phoebe Zoe Kessler, Program Coordinator (312) 467-4980

The only one-to-one scholastic tutoring organization working with young kids in the Cabrini-Green area, it serves 500 kids a week and has 480 volunteer tutors. The program operates three nights each week from 5:30-7pm. Kids are tutored for grades K-6, then graduate and can become Junior Assistants who help volunteers and program staff, peer-tutor younger kids, and help run the library, art, and resource areas. All tutors are volunteers and most are professionals who work in nearby downtown Chicago. Parents also volunteer in the program. All tutors go through a training and orientation session, take a tour of the program, speak with program coordinators and veteran tutors before beginning work, and attend three additional workshops each year. Through its 2-year relationship with Reading is Fundamental, the program distributes books for the kids, tailored to their individual tastes, to take home and to keep. Books are also distributed in conjunction with other events. The program is 31 years old, and its participants often bridge generations of the same families.

All funding is private and the program relies heavily upon donations. Last year, for example, Scottie Pippen of the Chicago Bulls ran a RIF fund-raiser for the program which raised \$40,000 that is paying for 2 new computers and a library up-grade. The program has only two paid staff members, with the rest of the costs arising from school supplies, buses for field trips, nightly snacks, and other needed materials.

Jackson, Tennessee Tutoring Program
Jim England (901) 427-9666

In Jackson, Tennessee, 10 churches have already joined forces with 11 public housing projects to

Jackson Church Tutoring

ensure the reading success of the city's children. Currently, 250 church members tutor 350 children, mostly elementary students, throughout the city. While the churches design their own programs in accord with their talents and physical facilities, all of the students have progress charts that follow them from church to church as they move. Volunteers use the local district's "Lesson Line" to communicate with teachers, parents, and other tutors and coordinate with the school during the school year. Among those pitching in are local supermarkets and businesses who have shown their support by donating food for the program. According to one of the organizers, the program is entirely volunteer and the cost is negligible. Many students and families report that this tutoring program has made a major difference in their lives. Because of the project's initial success, 12 other churches are joining the project in the coming year.

Pilot Tutoring Programs, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Jerome Kagan, Professor, Harvard University (617) 495-3870

In this pilot tutoring program, senior citizen volunteers, many of them former teachers, tutor at-risk first graders three times a week in forty-five minute sessions -- with significant results. Paid, early childhood educators provided tutors with training, prior to and during their service. Through daily tutor logs, training sessions, and tutor observation, the educator trainers worked closely with the tutors. Tutors made a special effort to assess initially the skills, needs, and talents of their students, a diverse group of African Americans, Whites, Haitians, and Asians. One of the student's classroom teachers remarked: "[The student's] frustration level changed, he learned to focus, how to handle a book, felt he was a reader, learned he is an okay kid, learned beginning skills and to like books." The program showed significant results on the reading of both words and text. Sixty three percent of the tutored students showed major gains in reading text compared with only 30 percent of the control group; 63 percent of the tutored students gained in a major way in reading words compared with 10 percent of the control groups. The program was equally effective for children who spoke English as their first language and bilingual children learning to read English.

Early Identification Program, Reading Community City School District, Reading, Ohio

Bob Stark, Coordinator of Special Services, Cincinnati, Ohio (513) 483-6739

51 trained parent volunteers work one-on-one with 79 kindergartners, over half of the kindergartners in the district, who enter the program based on measurements of their pre-literacy skills as well as the recommendations of their teachers and parents. During the 1995-1996 school year, scores of students participating in the program increased 29.8 points in visual perception, 19.2 points in fine motor skills, and 19.3 points in basic language concepts. In contrast, students not participating in the program had gains of 5.4 in visual perception, .3 in fine motor skills, and 7.4 in basic language concepts. Since its inception in 1987, the program has served 871 children with 9,425 hours of volunteer service. Tutors and students meet four times a week in personal sessions that make use of a variety of methods intended to build pre-literacy skills. This program seeks to set the foundations for literacy before these at-risk students fall behind in their reading skills. Teachers note that by the end of the kindergarten year, the academic performance of program participants nearly matches that of the children who did not participate in the program.

REMARKS OF
RICHARD W. RILEY
U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS & EDUCATION SUMMIT
Wilmington, Delaware
July 29, 1996

Good morning. It is a great pleasure to be here with you. I want to thank Mayor Sills for his kindness in extending to us such a warm welcome. And I want to thank all of you -- the participants -- for attending as well.

In many ways this effort to bring religious leaders and educators together is something new for American education. For most of our lives the relationship between America's educators and America's religious community has been distant. Today, we seek to change that way of thinking. This is what this conference is all about -- to recognize that the many faith communities represented here today are a great "untapped resource" that we need to move American education forward. Here it might be important to give you a little history. How did this all begin?

The story begins appropriately enough with a teacher. I have on my staff a former national teacher of the year -- Terry Dozier. Terry is from my home state of South Carolina. I persuaded her just a few months after she and her husband Mark had bought a new house to pull up stakes and come to Washington as one of my advisors. I wanted someone on my staff with real day-to-day class room experience.

So Terry came and in her usual way she got busy. She created a forum for teachers all across America who had been recognized as the best in their state. One of those teachers was a teacher from Massachusetts named Stephen Levy, who sent Terry a letter in the Spring of 1993.

Stephen, a member of a conservative Christian church, had come to recognize that there was a growing division between many members of his congregation and public educators. There was a growing sense of distrust -- a very real disconnection. Three weeks later we invited Stephen and seven other religiously minded teachers to come to Washington and visit with us.

1. The Secretary may depart from prepared remarks

In addition, we invited religious leaders from many different faiths -- Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish -- conservative and mainline -- orthodox and liberal -- to help us think about what we could do to overcome this sense of distrust and -- at the same time -- what we could do together to help the American family.

We wanted these religious leaders to be full participants at the very start of our efforts to create a family involvement partnership for learning. In your packets you see one of the first fruits of that effort -- a joint statement of Common Purpose drafted by 33 religious leaders in December of 1994.

Since that time we have worked very hard to overcome the division and sometimes the confusion -- that too often has defined the relationship between religious minded Americans and public education. This work has taken many different forms.

Our Partnership for Family Involvement now includes over 700 organizations and we have a very strong focus on improving literacy. This summer, we have enlisted 300,000 adult and youth mentors in an ongoing effort to help one million children to keep up their reading skills. This fall we are encouraging parents, civic organizations, religious denominations, and businesses to go back to school -- to reconnect with their local school to find a way to help all of our children learn.

We are asking individuals and groups to work with their local neighborhood school to help young people in four specific areas --- reading, technology, providing safe-after school activities and preparing young people for college through extra tutoring.

I am also asking you to encourage parents to find an extra 30 minutes a day to read with their children and check their homework. If parents did that every day it would revolutionize American education. This is in many ways my sermon -- if we can help parents slow down their lives -- if we can give parents time off from the time crunch of modern living -- if we can give families, guardians and grandparents the extra support they need to raise their children right -- to keep them away from drugs, smoking, and the violence of TV -- we would be a better country and provide a more promising future for all of our young people.

In addition, we are working with other groups -- most notably the American Association of School Administrators, the National PTA and the Freedom Forum -- to define a new common ground. So they had come together to put out a statement on what they could agree on when it came to religion in the schools. This was not an easy task. It took them months of effort. And it took another two months as we worked together to bring other denominations into the group.

But their good work laid the ground work for President Clinton's decision to go forward and release guidelines on religion in public schools last year. Now, a year later I believe that these religious guidelines are starting to change the landscape and tone of the public debate about prayer in school.

Many more Americans now realize that the religious rights of students do not stop at the school house door. Young people can say grace before lunch, join a Bible Club, read their Bible during study hall, meet at the "flagpole" before school, and wear religious symbols on their clothing. At the same time, we want it to be very clear that the First Amendment continues to protect the rights of minority religions -- and even the rights of those who choose to have no faith -- to make sure that no student becomes a "captive audience."

Many of these rights are summarized in the green colored brochure that some of you may have picked up called, "A Parents Guide to Religion in Public Schools." Yes, there are still some unsettled issues like prayer at graduation ceremonies. The Supreme Court has yet to speak on this issue and the lower courts remain divided. And, yes, there is still a division over whether we should have a Constitutional Amendment on school prayer.

I do not believe that we should tamper with the First Amendment -- we have never ever changed the Bill of Rights in our history and I see no reason to change it now. We are the most religious free nation in the world because of the First Amendment. Others disagree with my opinion and that is the way it should be in our democracy.

But I believe -- that even in our disagreements -- there is new and growing tone of civility. And that's good for America and good for public education. Our public schools should not be the public space for a war on values. When you put schools in the middle, education loses.

This is why I am encouraged when people of faith reach out to each other and act on their faith and help us to raise our children. President Clinton may have said it best when he said,

"Don't you believe that if every kid in every difficult neighborhood in America were in a religious institution on weekends -- the Synagogue on Saturday, a church on Sunday, or at a mosque to say their daily prayers -- don't you really believe that the drug rate, the crime rate, the violence rate, the rate of self-destruction -- would go way down and the character of this country would go way up?"

Well, I believe the President has it about right. There is a great deal that can be done to involve our faith communities in helping our children and their parents. Many of you come from faith communities that have a long tradition of encouraging learning and helping families cope. Mormons often have a "family night" one day of the week. Many Roman Catholics parishes have kept their inner city schools open at great costs.

And I am greatly encouraged by the decision of my own faith -- the United Methodists -- to endorse a statement of principles entitled Education: the Gift of Hope. To its credit, Education: the Gift of Hope recognizes that one of the core problems we confront in American education is one of expectations. The fallacy that your potential is based on your parents income, your native language, or your race remains one of the great enduring impediments to the progress of American education.

Here a story may be in order. Last year I attended a conference in California organized by a church and community based organization called PICO. The group had been founded by a Catholic priest but it was very much a grass-roots and inter-denominational effort dedicated to social action and economic justice.

This conference was attended by over 2,500 delegates representing 250,000 parishioners. These were working class people. Average folk trying to make a living. These delegates had done the hard work of going door-to-door. We want all parents to know that their religious values are protected and honored in the public space that is public education. As I said earlier, a great deal of suspicion has grown up among conservative Christians on the role of public schools. They had come to believe that public education was "hostile" to religion, and that their values were not respected. And in some cases they were right.

Some educators had come to the conclusion that the best way to interpret the First Amendment's concerns about the separation of church and state was to avoid the issue of religion altogether. At the same time, many educators felt under siege. And after thirty years of not understanding each other on the issue of school prayer just about everybody was confused.

When we first set out to develop the President's guidelines on religion in public schools I met with a group of litigators. Conservative and liberal, groups as diverse as the National Association of Evangelicals, the American Jewish Congress, the Christian Legal Society and the ACLU.

These lawyers were something of an odd group. One of the participants in the meeting told me that after so many years of litigating against each other over school prayer they had become "institutionally paranoid." Yet, there was a sense of fellowship about them even though they were always on opposite sides in the court room. They knew that more litigation was the wrong way to go. Door-to-door, family to family, asking people about their deepest concerns. The overwhelming conclusion was a deep desire for a better education for their children.

They wanted their children to learn real life skills -- to be able to make the transition from school-to-work with some hope of future economic security. But nothing was more moving to me than the speech of a mother who got up in tears and told the delegates that expectations were everything.

This seems to be a growing trend and it is a trend that I want to encourage. Last March, Bishop F. Hebert Skeete of the United Methodist Church and the Rev. Wesley Williams -- who is with us today -- organized a New England Summit of religious leaders and educators.

I had the good fortune to attend the conference. You have to be inspired when 200 people show up the day after a blizzard. Where I come from in South Carolina we wouldn't even get out of our beds if we saw that much snow. The goal of the New England conference was summed up very neatly by one of the participants who said this, "there is a place in the church for education, and a place for religion in the school."

And that in a nutshell defines why we are here today. To find a place in the church for education and a place for religion in the school. To find the common ground that will allow us to come together as religious leaders and educators to help our children. And I can tell you that it can make a difference and so many of you are already making that difference now.

Individual denominations are adopting public schools. Churches and synagogues are holding tutoring classes and finding mentors for young people. Some faith communities are making their buildings "safe havens" for young people after school to keep them out of harm's way.

This is important work and so very needed. This coming September we will more young people in our nation's school than any time in American history -- 51.7 million. Demographers call this the baby-boom echo and over the next ten years this growth rate is not going to stop.

In the next ten years, we are going to have to educate an additional 2.9 million children. That's a lot of children and a great majority of these young people will be teenagers. Young people who have to worry about drugs, violence, AIDS, smoking and in some cases -- just staying alive. So we need your help.

I urge you, then, as church leaders to work with the parents in your own denominations -- to inspire them to find that extra 30 minutes to help their children learn. It is so important. Help them give their children the character and the fortitude to be good citizens -- to live their values each and every day -- and to expand their minds.

As educators I encourage you to see these faith communities for what they are -- as a great untapped resource that can do so much good for American education. For we all have a common purpose. As it is said in Proverbs 22:6 "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray."

Thank you.

The Bible Gateway

Hebrews 12:1

(English-NIV/RSV/KJV/Darby/YLT)

See also: [Previous chapter](#), [This chapter](#)

- 1
- NIV Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.
- RSV Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,
- KJV Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,
- DBY Let *us* also therefore, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, laying aside every weight, and sin which so easily entangles us, run with endurance the race that lies before us,
- YLT Therefore, we also having so great a cloud of witnesses set around us, every weight having put off, and the closely besetting sin, through endurance may we run the contest that is set before us,
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DRAFT

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
ANNUAL ECUMENICAL BREAKFAST
THE WHITE HOUSE
JANUARY 6, 1997**

M. Lawrence

Acknowledgments: *V.P. Gura, H. B. Tipper & Hillary*

- Good morning and welcome to the White House. I want to thank all of you for the gift of your presence here today, and for the gift of your example and service to all mankind. It is fitting that you come bearing those gifts today, because today is the celebration of Epiphany in the Christian faith -- the day the Magi came bearing gifts to the new born king.
- That is what I want to talk with you about today. How we all must come together, bearing our unique gifts, towards the goal of keeping the promise of America alive for all our children. This is a moment of great promise and opportunity for our country. We are beginning this new year stronger and more prosperous than ever before in our history. And the American people are coming together around our basic values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a renewed sense of community. But we face a whole host of challenges as we prepare to enter a new century.
- In the weeks since the election, I have spent a lot of time thinking about what we must all do together to prepare our nation and our children to succeed in the 21st century. Regardless of party or race or religion, all Americans have a stake in a strong America. And all Americans must do their part to keep us strong. We all must work to improve our schools and the education of our children ... to expand college opportunities for more of our people...to lift more people out of welfare and the ranks of the underclass... to continue to make our streets and homes safe and free from the dangers of guns and drugs and violence....to make sure America remains the strongest force for peace and freedom in the world.
- In the two weeks, leading up to the inauguration, I will be talking more about how we meet those challenges as one America. If there is one thing we have learned, it is that government cannot and should not solve all these problems alone. As I have said before, my job doesn't end here at the White House -- it begins here. The challenges that lie before us will not be conquered in the halls of government, but in the town halls and halls of learning and houses of worship that have always been the birthplaces of progress in America. There have been times when America needed a Marshall Plan -- a huge top-down government effort to tackle our vexing problems. But, today, we don't need a Marshall Plan -- we need a plan to marshall our love our talents and our energies -- each citizen doing their part -- to solve our common problems.
- We must not take this call to community lightly. If we want to ensure a better future for our children and our nation, we must commit ourselves to working together across all the lines that would divide us. I am reminded of the words of this century's great drum major

for justice, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on whose birthday I shall take the oath of office. Dr. King said: "Together, we must learn to live as brothers, or together, we will perish together as fools."

- In closing, as I look out at this great sea of spiritual diversity, I know that, whatever your differences, you are all united in the cause of peace and freedom and service to our country. We must not squander this opportunity. Let us be guided by the words of Paul talking of the great leaders of the church. He said, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." [Hebrew 12:1]

Thank you and God bless you all.