

INTRODUCTION TO STANFORD LAW AND POLICY REVIEW

Education Reform: Examining Alternatives to Traditional Public Education

A school where children have to move their desks when it rains to avoid the leaking roof. Another ~~where~~ ^{where} teachers are in such short supply that the classes are bursting at the seams and the teachers spend their time trying to control the crowds, ~~rather than making sure that every~~ ^{rather than making sure that every} precious child ~~understands the material being taught.~~ A school where students pass through its corridors without mastering the basics at each grade level and where some pass all the way through graduation with ~~only~~ ^{not} a third-grade reading level.

Too often these are the images that one conjures up when the words “traditional public education” are uttered. In my travels around the country, I certainly have seen these images, but I have seen more and more public schools that live by the rule pasted on a wall at Public School #1 in Manhattan, “All children can learn...No Exceptions...No Excuses.” This revolutionary and profound statement commits us to the challenges of reforming our public schools to make quality public education a reality for every child. But, how? That is the question at the heart of this journal.

Not only must we consider how we will educate all children, but also we must consider whether we are committed to public education. It is critical that we honestly, realistically look at what we do right, and what we need to improve on, and how we can better provide possibilities and opportunities for every child. The alternative to low-quality public education is not to abandon our children or our public schools.

Education reform is hard work. Over ten years ago, the President and all of the Governors came together to commit to national education goals and higher academic standards for all children. The standards movement has seen real progress where school districts have had a sustained commitment to high standards and have not let go with changing superintendents or new educational fads. A recent study of education reform in North Carolina – which has one of the best track records of improving achievement and closing racial achievement gaps – shows us that putting in place high academic standards does work, particularly for disadvantaged students. This commitment has paid off on the national level, too. Last year, our nation’s reading scores were up for the first time in all three grade levels that are tested, our achievement scores for math and science were up, and the SAT and ACT scores continued to increase each year for the past five years.

Now because we have seen these signs of success, and because we can look at states like North Carolina and districts that have made the sustained commitment, we have a much better idea of what to do to help fulfill the possibility of every students and a much better idea of what more we need to do to help all public schools put in place real reforms.

The next stage of making sure all children have the opportunity to learn to high standards needs to include a commitment to teacher quality, a commitment to strong accountability, and a commitment to real public school choice for parents and students.

Children can not learn to high standards if they are not taught to high standards. Research shows that ^{the} most important in-school factor for improved academic achievement is quality teaching. Today, fully one-quarter of our secondary school teachers do not even hold a minor in their main teaching field and, in our poorest school districts, often the majority of the new teachers are not fully certified. If we are to expect more from our children, we need to demand more for our teachers. Teachers should be fully certified in the subject for which they will teach, they should be provided with real opportunities for growth and professional development throughout their careers, and they should be respected and valued with higher salaries.

Children can also not learn in schools that year after year having failing grades – low academic achievement, high absenteeism, and too few qualified teachers. It is critical that we put strong accountability plans in place to identify low-performing schools, help those schools turn around, and if they do not turn around take corrective action.

Children also need to learn in the learning environment that is right for them. We need to do more to create more competition, more challenge, and more encouragement within the public school system. Parents need more choices in selecting their public schools. Charter schools and magnet schools ^{are making a difference} ~~are making a difference~~. ~~Not only for the students and teachers they serve, but for the systems in which they operate.~~ By giving schools greater flexibility and freedom, they can experiment with new approaches and still be held accountable. Charter schools are empowering teachers and helping citizens feel obligated to once again be part of the education commitment.

It is imperative that as we move forward, we have greater accountability, we have higher standards, we have greater public school choice, and we do not allow ourselves to be pulled off track by false debates, particularly by those who claim that using public money for vouchers for private schools are a solution to improving public education and fixing failing schools.

**“RE-IMAGINING EDUCATION:
A MATTER OF JUSTICE AND POSSIBILITIES”
Address to the Jill and Ken Iscol Lecture
Series By First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton**

**Columbia University Teachers College
New York City, New York
April 19, 1999**

Thank you. Thank you so much. I am absolutely thrilled to be here, and to see all of the energy and enthusiasm for education and for teachers and children that fills this auditorium.

I want to thank my friend Jill for her dedication and for that introduction. I am very much aware—as those of you who know her are as well—that she is passionately committed to creating a more just world for all children. And she is a very good friend—someone who listens and counsels and provides all kinds of support. It would not, therefore, be surprising that she and Ken would imagine this kind of lecture series—to create an opportunity for this revered institution to re-imagine education; to think clearly about justice and possibility in light of what we know about teaching and learning; to apply research and intuition; to reach out across the lines that too often divide us; and in the process, begin to translate into reality the vision of an educational system that would truly serve all of our children.

I want to thank everyone associated with the college for their kind invitation and for their warm welcome. I also want to thank the Margaret Douglas Elementary School Choir, who, I think, entertained us with a very original and honest song, which I for one was very impressed by. I particularly also want to acknowledge, if she's here—she's on my list but I haven't spotted her yet—my friend, Congresswoman Nita Lowey, and Congressman Anthony Wiener, whom I'm told both are here or will shortly arrive.

Now I have been introduced in many different ways—and described probably in more ways than I care to remember—but I think President Levine did an unusual job of staying true to his mission and creating a little excitement in the room. And that is certainly fitting, because he has brought to his position of leadership here a single-minded determination to reach every one of the students here to give that student the tools to become the very best teacher he or she could be.

And I also want to recognize the creative vision of Peter Cookson, whose Center for Educational Outreach and Innovation brings to the challenges we face some of the best minds thinking about the hard problems of education and equity, justice and community that you are so concerned about. And it isn't an accident. Because, as President Levine said, this institution arose from the thoughts and concerns of people very much like many of you in this auditorium—who, in the Progressive Era, looked around and said to themselves, “What can we do in the midst of this rapidly changing society to create better opportunities and to educate more successfully all of the children?”

And the philanthropists and the college presidents and the bishops and others who came together understood that education was then, as it remains, the key to opportunity in our society. They also knew that people bring very different backgrounds, experiences and expectations to the educational process. And therefore they had to be far-reaching in their thoughts. They had to be willing to take some risks about what it meant to be an educator.

And so, then as now, you would find in this institution people who were on the front lines of educational research and practice. That commitment which you began with, you carry on today. And we see it in the work of Columbia's Teachers College. We see it in the results

that your graduates are able to achieve. We see it in the ways that help to change and shape institutions. We see it in the partnerships that you have created with schools, particularly here in New York City. You've initiated writing projects. You've helped to transform professional development courses. You've mentored first-year teachers. You have worked very hard to make sure that the promise of education within these ivy-covered walls doesn't just stay inside, safe from any challenges, but instead walks out into the bright sunlight—into every street, into every school—to bring the message of change, of justice, of possibility.

The collaborations that you have helped to pioneer between Teachers College and city schools are really creating positive results. And that's important. Because there is a lot of rhetoric about education these days that doesn't necessarily hold up under the scrutiny of research and objective concern. So what you have done is create a database. You created research designs. You've been honest in looking at what works and what doesn't work. And we need that more than ever.

I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that, just as at the beginning of the founding of this institution, today we face serious challenges. Not only to how we will educate all children, but whether we will remain committed to public education. Will we be willing to do what is necessary to continue to support the changes, the reforms, the practices, that will guarantee that 100 years from today someone can still stand in an auditorium here—or more likely a virtual auditorium somewhere—and say that Columbia's Teachers College has continued to make its contributions to a strong, dynamic, vital public education system?

Now there are many stories, as well as research data, that one could compile and tell about why it's important that our country, in particular, remain devoted to public education. That we not give in to the naysayers who point fingers and place blame about what does and does not happen inside our public schools. But that instead we honestly, realistically look at what we do right, and what we need to improve on, and how we can better provide possibility for every child. But without giving an inch in the overall debate about why it is critical that we maintain the strongest possible public education system that we can have here in the United States at the end of this century.

Now I am privileged to travel to many different countries and visit with many different people. And I have become convinced over all of those travels that one of the great reasons that the United States has been successful and remains successful is because of our public education system. And when I talk about success, I am not merely talking about economic or monetary success. I am talking about how we have, through fits and starts and difficulties over our entire history, maintained this unusual experiment in democracy. How we have welcomed to our shores and integrated into our society people from all backgrounds, cultures, walks of life, races, religions and ethnicities. If we need to be reminded of how essential it is that we still invest in and believe in common institutions that help to fill the public space that defines who we are as citizens, we have only to look around our world today.

I remember being in Belfast, Northern Ireland, with a group of women who we had helped to bring together—Protestants and Catholics who had never been in a room with each other before. They had never listened to each other talk in any personal setting. And slowly, as they traded personal stories and experiences, they began to say what you and I would think of as commonplace. One would say to the other, "I didn't know you felt that way." Or, "I had no idea that's how you people acted and thought." All of this time that had gone by, with all of the troubles that had been endured, and there had been so much separation—there was no opportunity to listen.

And I particularly remember, at the end of one of the workshops, a woman saying to me, "We have a very big obstacle to lasting peace in Northern Ireland, and that is that our children have never gone to school together. There's a separate school system for

Protestants and a separate school system for Catholics. And our children don't play together; they don't learn together. And insofar as it's been possible, when they grow up, they don't live or work together either." And she went on to say, "We will never have a unified, peaceful society if we don't have a public education system that is open to and encourages children from all backgrounds."

I think about that when I look at what's happening in Kosovo. You know, here in America it is easy for us to sometimes just shrug our shoulders and roll our eyes, isn't it? We say, "My goodness, these people are still fighting over things that happened 600 years ago. How can that be?"

Well one of the reasons it can be is that all sides to whatever historical event happened 600, 500, 200 years ago have kept alive the grievances and the problems that they feel are left unsolved and put them in a position of disadvantage—to the extent that their schools teach a brand of history that goes unquestioned because there's no one else sitting in the classrooms to question them. If there's a particular ethnic view of history, and the teacher is promoting that and the children are dutifully writing it down, and there's no one to say, "But that's not what I'm taught at home. Maybe we should have a discussion about that." Imagine how unlike that is in the classrooms of the public schools of America.

Now for many of you who are teachers, you may wish that it was a little more like that, because you can hardly get a word in edgewise sometimes when you start talking in front of a group of young people from many different backgrounds, all of whom have been perhaps told something at home or watched a certain version of an event on TV, and somebody else has a different or contrary point of view. But it is through that debate, it is through that dialogue, that discussion among differences, that people have to work out what it means to be citizens in a democracy. You cannot expect to maintain a democracy that requires debate and compromise among strongly held and often opposing viewpoints if people have not been given that opportunity to work with and understand and relate to and, yes, I hope, respect difference as they are coming through their own educational experience.

So the public education system, which you here at this college have been devoted to improving, is one that all of us have to be willing to stand up and support. Yet we know that our public schools are, in many places, under great challenge. And there are many reasons for that—more than we could possibly discuss in one lecture, but which you study and worry about here at the college. But the bottom line is that when our public schools do not work, and do not prepare to the highest possible standard the girls and boys entrusted to them, then several things happen.

One, those young men and women are not prepared for this changing environment. Just as the immigrants who came in the great tidal waves of immigration at the end of the last century and the beginning of this one had to be in some way helped to understand what it would be like to live in this new society, to acquire skills that would be useful in the marketplace here; so—as we face not the Industrial Age but the Information Age—do the young men and women from all walks of life, from every background—whether they've been here for many generations or just recently arrived—have to be prepared and challenged as well. So we don't do any service to the young men and women whom we hope to educate if they are not prepared.

Secondly, if our public schools don't work, it gives ammunition to those who don't want them to work for many different reasons which I think are shortsighted and unfortunate. Because they would, I believe, undermine what everyone in this country has come to take for granted: our blessings—despite our difficulties—a social stability and economic prosperity and opportunity for those who are prepared to seek it. And the undermining of the public education system leads to an undermining of the public good—that intangible something that keeps us all connected together. That prepares the ground for all of us to meet despite our differences and disagreements.

So it is not only an issue of individual children and the impact it has on their lives and the impact it has on the economy with respect to future workers and citizens. But it also betrays our capacity to continue to support those public institutions that are vital for our common future.

So therefore, how do we face those issues of justice and possibility that should be addressed? And what kind of framework do we use to try to have common ground among us about what needs to be done in order to promote the best possible outcomes for the greatest number of students in our public schools? Well, clearly, if you see the challenges as I do—of unleashing the potential, the possibility within every human being, every little boy and girl who was up here singing for us—then we can't be complacent and we can't just continue to do what we've always done if it doesn't work. And we have to do a better job of presenting the legitimate needs of our public schools, and particularly our public school teachers, to the broader community. And we have to enlist more allies, and we have to be sure that parents understand their role and responsibility as well.

Now over the years, I've heard many different ways of expressing what we should be doing with our public schools. But I must say that the simple mantra that is used at Public School #1 here in Manhattan, I think states it as well as any treatise I've ever read. Here's what it says: "All children can learn... No exceptions... No excuses."

Now if you think about that, that is a revolutionary and profoundly American statement. There are not many cultures who would say it, and far fewer who would mean it if they did say it. There are great groups of children all over this world who are written off from the moment of birth—or maybe at the age of 11, or maybe at the age of 14 or 17—when it comes to education. So by our commitment to this very simple value that all children can learn, we are already starting from a breathtakingly revolutionary point. Because we know that children learn differently. We know that some come with the nature/nurture combination that make them destined for educational success whether we do anything or not, to be honest. And we know that some have so many problems that it doesn't seem possible that any group of dedicated teachers in the best school in the entire country could make much of a dent. Yet we have to believe that. Because by believing it, we are constantly poised to do everything possible to make it as real as we can. And that requires re-imagining.

I have been privileged to be involved with re-imagining the education system for quite a number of years. Jill mentioned one of my earliest experiences—first as a law student working for the Children's Defense Fund, and then as a lawyer working for the Children's Defense Fund. We were concerned about children who were dropped out, kicked out, or never entered into the public school system. We did an extensive survey. And I did, as Jill said, actually knock on doors and go into people's homes. Because we looked at Census track data from the 1970 Census, and we looked at school enrollment, and we saw this great discrepancy. Where were all these children that were of school age? They certainly weren't in the schools in many states. And by going door to door, I personally saw a lot of the obstacles that thankfully we have reduced—not completely eliminated.

But just think, it wasn't that long ago that children with even the slightest handicap were not welcomed anywhere in school. I remember going into a small apartment and a child had a very bright and eager look on her face, but she was confined to a wheel chair and had never been to school.

Not only the physical disabilities that were in many ways minor and other ways more profound, which in every case eliminated public school enrollment—but many social and family problems as well. In an immigrant community that I knocked on doors, there were children who were taken out of school when they turned 10 or 11 to help in whatever the family business was, or to care for younger children. So there were many reasons why

justice was not served, and we began to try to remedy that by legislation and by education of public officials, parents, and others.

I had a further chance to re-imagine education when my husband asked me to chair a committee in Arkansas aimed at improving the educational system there. And that too was an incredibly eye-opening personal experience for me. Because I didn't just meet with people who were already convinced of the problems and the inadequacies. But I traveled to school districts, I met with all kinds of groups of people, and I saw that there was a real disconnect between some of the expectations that parents and teachers held, and some of the realities about what children would face when they left the protected environment of those small community schools.

Because of the hard work of a lot of people and the leadership that my husband gave, we began to create alliances with businesses to improve public schools. We began encouraging parents to do more to understand what it meant to have a true education that would make a difference. We put in systems of accountability. We tried very hard to raise expectations across the board, and to try to say in a united way that we were not doing any of our children any favors by not having high expectations for them and not providing the means through which they could realize those high expectations. That worked. It was going on in Arkansas. It was simultaneously going on in a number of states all over the country because of the Nation At Risk report back in 1983 that flatly declared we were committing unilateral disarmament because we were not doing what needed to be done to keep our schools performing at the level that that generation of students required.

And then for only the third time in our history, the president—President Bush then—convened an Education Summit in Charlottesville, Va. And my husband was one of the co-chairs. They came together with what was also a revolutionary concept: that we ought to have national standards. And those national standards would be useful for states and localities and even classrooms to have a better idea of how to measure themselves in terms of what they were achieving. Because there were many people around our country, and still are, who didn't know quite what it was they were supposed to measure up to.

{ What was the benchmark? It's fine to talk about standards, but what does that mean if you're in a poor school district, on an Indian reservation, or in an inner-city, and you're told that this is what you're supposed to do, but you don't really know how you're supposed to get there? So that began a national effort, and when my husband became president, he set to work with another former governor, Dick Riley, who he made secretary of Education, to support national goals—and to help schools, teachers, and students meet them.

Now we've made progress, I believe. Among the President's, and certainly the Administration's, proudest achievements in the first term were Goals 2000 and the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Because really, from the national level, you don't have all that many tools. You have the bully pulpit, and you do have the federal legislation that provides a very small amount of direction and money for the states and the cities. But if we didn't try to do what we could at that level, then how could we influence what went on further down the line?

So the idea was to go ahead and set goals. And for the first time, Goals 2000 required states to establish academic standards and develop assessments aligned to those standards. The newly revised Title I built on that requirement by mandating that states use these standards for disadvantaged students, thus ending the practice of setting lower expectations for low-income students.

I recall very well speaking to a group of school superintendents from a number of states back in the early 80s. And I was asking them if they had had an opportunity to keep up on any of the research that could perhaps give them guidance about how to set and implement higher standards. And their basic response was that they just couldn't keep up with all that

because they were just trying to keep things going at home.

And I knew of one school district that, through the help of some foundations and enlightened schools of education, had transformed the entire district in the way that it related to kids and what it expected of them. And I remember saying to these superintendents, "Well, have any of you thought about maybe traveling to district so-and-so, and spending the day and seeing what they're doing and maybe getting some help from them?" And I'll never forget this one superintendent who looked at me and said, "You know, that just wouldn't work in my district. Our people just don't expect that sort of thing. They know that most of our kids won't go to college, and there's just no point in getting all excited about it."

And I said to him, "Well, how do you know that every child yet unenrolled in your school district won't want to go to college? You're making decisions that not only set low expectations, but set insurmountable obstacles because you're not providing the kind of curriculum and challenge that these kids need to be able to go on."

So Goals 2000 said, "Here are some standards, and here are some ways that you can meet them. And you have to make sure they're equally applicable to poor, disadvantaged students."

These two reforms fundamentally changed the federal role in elementary and secondary education. In the past our system had too often supported, and even encouraged, a two-tiered education system that did have and was satisfied with low expectations for poor children. And over the past six years, we have been working very hard to dismantle that unequal and unjust system. And I think throughout the country, we've begun to see some results.

Now the most important ingredient in seeing those results is the quality and dedication of the teachers who are asked to try to meet those standards. There isn't any argument that there is no more important ingredient. And if we do not do more to support and respect and understand and, yes, pay better our public school teachers, much of our hopes will not be realized.

We have learned that standards-based education reform that puts teachers in a position of authority and respect actually works. A recent study of education reform in North Carolina—which has one of the best track records of improving achievement and closing racial achievement gaps—shows us how it can be done, particularly for disadvantaged students. You need to have a sustained commitment to raising academic standards. And that is critical. Not a commitment that comes and goes with different superintendents, or is viewed as some kind of a fad, but one that is truly incorporated into the operation, ongoing, of a school system. We need to provide schools with the flexibility to target resources to help low-performing students, and hold schools accountable for their results.

A few weeks ago the government released new data that tells us our nation's reading scores are up for the first time in all three grade levels that are tested—4th, 8th and 12th. Our achievement scores are up for math and science. SAT scores are once again heading in the right direction—with the largest gains in mathematics. For the first time in history, SAT and ACT scores have increased each year for the past five years.

Now because we have seen these signs of success, and because we can look at states like North Carolina and districts that have made the sustained commitment, we have a much better idea of what we need to do to help fulfill the possibility of every student.

The President has laid out a bold strategy for the future. Because once again we have the opportunity to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and through this process we can, we believe, continue to push forward on the agenda of justice and

possibility equated with high expectations and results.

Now the three-part strategy that is going to be employed with respect to this authorization is to first provide federal support to help improve teacher quality. Second, target increased investments to disadvantaged children with particular attention to the early years of schooling. And third, promote real accountability for results.

John Sanford, the late superintendent of the Seattle school system said, "The victory is in the classroom." And there is no doubt in anyone's mind that that victory only comes because you've got a dedicated, qualified teacher in that classroom. And certainly I would argue, and I think any fair assessment would agree, that the vast majority of our teachers are both dedicated and qualified. But that doesn't mean that they are always given the support they need or the encouragement they desire to improve their skills, to have opportunities that are not just meaningless workshops, but sustained professional development that enable them to translate into action what they want to do for their students.

Today the President, back at the White House, honored the 1999 Teacher of the Year, a gentleman from Georgia, Andy Baumgartner, who—I love this description—is an ex-Marine who now teaches kindergarten. And some would argue that that is probably one of the best qualifications for teaching kindergarten these days. But he was honored because of the dedication and the quality and the imagination that he brings to his classroom. And we could honor so many countless other teachers. But in order to do that, we have to make sure we fulfill our obligations to our teachers, that they are provided with the support they need through training and other means.

Let's be very frank. Many teachers teach subjects for which they lack adequate preparation. Fully one quarter of secondary school teachers do not even hold a minor in their main teaching field. And that number is even higher in schools with high proportions of disadvantaged students.

We have to do a better job of creating an environment in which state licensing is based on demonstrated performance, knowledge of subject matter, and teaching skills. And there are examples all around that we can look to if we can persuade states and districts to really value that kind of preparation and continuing professional development.

The President's ESEA proposal will require states and school districts to phase out out-of-field assignments and emergency certification. We want to send a message that we really encourage school districts to put the resources into recruiting and retaining teachers who are fully qualified to teach the subjects they are assigned to teach by the districts. That sounds like a tautology. But if you look at the data, indeed it seems not to be connected at all in the administration of school districts all over our country.

The reauthorization legislation will also ask states to adopt performance examinations for new teachers requiring demonstration of subject matter knowledge and teaching expertise, and will provide federal resources to help teachers meet those goals. Now because of retirement, we will need to hire up to 2 million new teachers over the next 10 years. Now there are those who say it can't be done. But I believe it can if we do more to improve the opportunities and the teaching conditions for teachers; if we adopt new strategies to recruit talented candidates; if we show respect for our teachers; and if we provide the financing that teachers need to do their jobs.

One of the ways we have been planning to try to recruit more people into teaching is to get the word out to as many people in as many different settings as possible—from the Marine Corps to the Peace Corps—that teaching is an exciting, satisfying profession, and that our attitudes—our national attitudes—toward the importance of teaching and education are beginning to really turn around. After a period of, I think, unfair, unnecessary, unwarranted teacher bashing in too many quarters, we are finally back to a more sensible position, saying

clearly that teachers are the most important resources we have if we expect education to work in America. And in order to do that, we need school boards, administrators, unions, and the entire community to work together to make sure that the best interest of students are the top priority, and that the interest of teachers are understood as absolutely linked to meeting that top priority.

Now there is a lot of interesting discussion among a lot of my friends who are teachers about what has been the reaction in the last several years as people have said, "Well, we need more professional development." I cannot tell you how many times I have been told about the totally useless, one-shot workshops that last a half a day, that are required for teachers to attend, that have absolutely no relevance to their subject matter or the classroom environment. We do not need one-shot, for-profit, faddish workshops. We need a program of serious, sustained development based on research that works and is relevant to a teacher's classroom needs. And in order to do that, we should use that data that has been collected at places of excellence like Teachers College to design such programs. And the President has proposed a fund of \$1.2 billion for true professional development activities.

We also believe it is imperative to reduce class size, particularly in the elementary grades. We're very pleased that Congress last year, at the very end of the Congressional session, made a down payment toward the goal of hiring 100,000 new teachers. But we have a lot of work to do if we are really going to fulfill that promise. And it's not just something that teachers tell us is a good idea. We know, based on research, that it works. You would probably know more about the latest research than any of us who could come and talk to you, but I know that study after study over the last few years has confirmed that schools having a smaller classroom teacher-student relationship really does make a difference.

A recent five-year study of Milwaukee schools confirms that schools having a 17-1 student-teacher ratio outperform not only students in the public schools, but also those students who received vouchers under the Wisconsin plan to go outside the public school system.

Small class size is also good for teachers, not just students. I have been in classrooms where a single teacher is attempting to teach 25, 30, 35 students. And it is a daunting task that some teachers, yes, can handle very well. But most teachers, with the variety of students and learning levels and backgrounds and languages and many other differences that our young people bring into our schools confront a teacher with, find it very difficult to give all the students the attention they need.

The Administration also supports the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to create, as it has been since 1987, a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet higher standards. But, of course, we believe that if a teacher goes through that voluntary system, that teacher ought to be rewarded with higher compensation for having demonstrated the professional competence that the voluntary system at the Board requires.

So we're not there yet in terms of systems in place to give teachers the kind of support they need, but we have some good examples and models that we need to build on.

We also have to make a point, as I mentioned earlier, of helping our teachers have classrooms of students who are ready to learn. It is incredibly difficult for many teachers to stay in the profession in the face of the needs of students they know they can not meet. That is why we lose every year large numbers of teachers in their first, second or third year of teaching, who feel somewhat lost, unmentored and overwhelmed by the needs that their children bring in. I have met so many people who started out as teachers, and wanted to stay as teachers, but didn't feel that they were given the support, and they certainly weren't given the compensation that they could easily find if they shut the door on those kids and walked across the street to push some paper and perform another task. It was a lot less demanding, but far more remunerative.

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Until we clearly state that we will only have as good an education system as our teachers can make it, if we can not recruit and retain vital, dynamic, intelligent, dedicated individuals, then we will not have done all we can to make sure our public school system not only survives, but flourishes. And as we raise standards, we ought to raise salaries as well.

I also believe that it is a simple question of justice as to how well-prepared children are for school. The disparity among children begins even before birth when a mother's access to prenatal care can make the difference between a healthy baby and one who will suffer lifelong disabilities. We now know from brain research what happens in those first three years of life as a child is either stimulated and those brain cells multiply and those synapses connect, or a child is not. It's very important that we continue to do what we can to provide better pre-school opportunities for as many children as possible. That is why I have supported increased federal support for programs such as home visiting, for Head Start, for child care, for early Head Start. And I'm pleased that we've made some progress, but we still have a long way to go to ensure that every child is school ready.

And there are many challenges to school readiness, and again, you know them well, those of you who are students and teachers here at Teachers College. But some of them we need, again, to be honest about and confront. We still have not done the job that we need to do to persuade parents, particularly parents with limited educations themselves, that they must do all they can to encourage the highest expectations and the best performing schools for their children. We still have far too high a dropout rate among some of our communities. We have closed the dropout rate and the high school graduation rate for African-American students. And I am very proud, because that was a concerted effort by families, communities, educators. But we have not done a good job closing that gap with Hispanic students who still drop out at a very high rate. Or with Native American students who have probably the highest dropout rates of any population right now in our country.

So parents must be more committed. And we have to give parents the tools to act on the commitment. That's why reaching them in the early years, giving them the opportunity to know what they can do to help their own children, understanding how simple things like telling stories and reading books can help prepare their child for school—that is the kind of investment we should be making in families. We know that if we target parents, we can make a difference. And we know if we target low-performing students we can break the cycle—so that if students don't have the help they need before school, they need to get it once they enter school. And if there are many, many students in a school which leads to a low performing school, then we should make sure we do all we can to help turn that school around.

And there are a lot of plans and proposals for that. The President's proposal is to require states to identify the schools with the lowest achievement levels that will then be required to take corrective action. I have been in too many schools, and I know many of you have, where you can tell when you walk in the door what the attitude is, can't you? You can walk in a school in one part of a city, and you can walk in a school not very far away where the kids come from the same socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. But in one school, learning is happening. And in another school, there's a feeling of just being in a dead end. I have been in public schools where I have seen sixth graders sitting at their desks doing workbooks that have been erased and crossed over because they were so old and there was not money to buy new ones for the increase in the student population. And they're not even workbooks that challenge an 11- or 12-year-old. And I've been in the same kinds of schools not very far away where the sixth graders are alive with learning and energy, because there is that commitment and that understanding of what it takes. And there are still too many schools that are not performing well, and nobody is holding them accountable. And the teachers I know who are assigned to those schools, they shut their door in September and they hope nobody interferes with their kids so they can let them out in June and hopefully

Shen Adu - all children, kids not very it
or adult is doing
↳ not enough parents

Call center
and room

- Demographic survey -

- focus on successful parents > cross-section people, understand
in different ways

- do need to take about all children - to be done more it
↳ more, more - to learn & change

- focus on early child development - adults behavior ✓
adults as normal

- Sexual harassment

- encourage of participation

- resilience, more in culture

- high school rates, after school, CBO

- all families

- high school, skills training

- important point - you as a parent to parents

- help for parents > technology

- volunteerism - young people
for taking

High school pm - PU Co.

Real constraints - school fees - an area
far from schools
grow spaces

they will have learned something. But they get no help, no encouragement, no challenge from that school or from the community it serves.

Now that leads me to an issue that I alluded to earlier, and that is: What do we do about creating more competition, more challenge, more encouragement within the public school system? Well, I believe strongly in giving parents more choices in selecting their public schools. I believe that charter schools and magnet schools are making a difference. Not only for the students and teachers they serve, but for the systems in which they operate. By giving schools greater flexibility and freedom, they can experiment with new approaches and still be held accountable.

When the President came into office, there was one independent, public charter school in America. Now there are 1,100. We hope there will be 3,000. And much of the reason for that hope rests in districts and examples like East Harlem, the first public school choice system. That district was ranked last, as many of you know, when it adopted public school choice over 20 years ago. It is now still performing better than schools in New York City with similar concentrations of poverty. I've seen it in other cities. I've seen the kind of change that can happen when teachers are empowered, when citizens feel obligated to once again be part of the public education commitment.

We need to make sure that as we move forward, we have greater accountability, we have higher standards, we have greater public school choice, and we do not allow ourselves to be pulled off track by false debates, particularly by those who claim that using public money for vouchers for private schools are a solution to improving public education and fixing failing schools. At a time when we are beginning to see the fruits of the labor of many people over the last two decades to turn schools around, to understand the mix of socioeconomic and racial characteristics with teacher and learning characteristics and community support; when we are beginning to really unwrap that and understand it. We need to fix our public schools, not abandon them. And as a result I hope the re-imagining of education that Jill and Ken have asked us to do and that will be the theme of this lecture series is truly committed to both of the goals they set: justice and possibility.

Now all of us know that schools by themselves—no matter how well staffed, no matter how many resources—can not, in and of themselves, give any child a world-class education. We as a nation, we as communities, we as citizens, not only must hold our schools accountable, we must hold ourselves accountable. What is it we will do to help schools succeed? What is it we will do to encourage parents to believe in the importance of education and to support their schools, their teachers, and most importantly, their children? What is it we will do to persuade businesses to really make an investment in the schools that will provide them an educated, skilled workforce? What is it we can do to sound our voices together on behalf of the value of public education, and on behalf of the changes that are transforming schools all over this nation?

We can never take for granted that America's public school system is a cornerstone of our democracy. And the interdependent world of the next century requires constantly expanding knowledge—at its base, not just at its elite top. Failure to spread that knowledge not only perpetuates injustice, but injures our common potential for growth, prosperity and social stability.

America's greatest markets for future opportunity are right here at home in our inner-cities, in our rural communities, in our aging suburbs. Their hopes, and our hope, begin with a constantly revitalizing dynamic system of public education. Yes, the maintenance and reform of the public school system is not for the faint hearted. It requires imagination and daring, commitment and experimentation, resources. But standing here in front of all of you who are part of this great institution of teaching and learning, I'm absolutely convinced we are on the right track if we will sustain our commitment, if we will learn from one another, if we will be unafraid to change what does not work and adopt what does. We can do no

Dr. Gwendolyn Wood - Ken
Options for high school

Parents drop-out at-involvement - attend conf. & event
73% → 53%
response made

Schools keep going bigger, not for many
Parents vs. other adults
this need to be unified

Parent involvement - principal, board of directors & many others

PFIE - presentation to her & Parents
→ Parents

→ detail center - Reedy

→ minor

Positive

Why alienation??

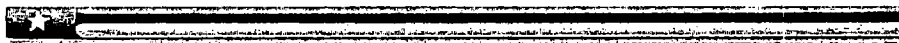
Tom Swind

- Peace

- USA Today poster stars - having young people &
him an adult
Joyce Winster
for Darlatta

less, not only for our children, but for the future we hope to share together in the kind of America we value in the years to come.

Thank you very much.



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Challenges

need in

goal ?

more my name

= points need for adults to be on

- "Raising Successful Parents"

- Joan Dancy - young people are not connected
mentals

- distribute 100,000 flyers people

- Dancy - Notine Han Song, Strait Lewis

where FFA

Answer parent

- Responsible - allowing Sunday, allowing many shows
being aware, this more responsible

- Immigrant youth &

- Hobbies

- Family things - image & message, separation & grief (violence)

Western life - the "new" society

& adult behavior - local family - talk shows, dramas etc.

change other behavior.

- NSA - attention, learn & belong

i.e. the 21st C. - getting away from 19th C. how we've - new model <
high schools - from my side
Dunlop

TALKING IT OVER

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

May 27, 1998

Ten years ago, nervous neighbors crossed the street to avoid Chicago's Du Sable High School, where, in 1987, a student was shot to death inside the building.

Now, people cross the street to enjoy the school's gardens, blooming with flowers and vegetables, and to marvel at the peacocks, pheasants and macaws in the courtyard atrium.

Down the hall, in teacher Emil Hamberlin's biology class, you'll find more animals -- boa constrictors, pythons, a pot-bellied pig, an alligator, ferrets and even a badger. When Dr. Hamberlin, who's taught at Du Sable for 35 years, notices that students are having trouble getting to school, he assigns them an animal.

"We see a dramatic improvement in attendance when we give the students responsibility," he explains. One ninth-grader, Charles Armstrong, loves feeding the animals -- the peacocks are his favorite. He's going to work with Dr. Hamberlin this summer and plans to major in biology in college.

Now, the school wants to renovate the atrium as a memorial to friends slain in the neighborhood. Last November, Du Sable's Gospel Choir members joined their suburban counterparts at the top-ranked New Trier High School for a fund-raising concert at Chicago's Orchestra Hall. Du Sable was once one of the jewels of the Chicago school system -- not unlike New Trier -- boasting famous alumni including former Mayor Harold Washington and Nat "King" Cole. But when Principal Charles Mingo arrived in 1988, the outlook was bleak.

It wasn't unusual to find more students hanging out in the hallways than in class, and on any given day, only about 65 percent showed up at all. Mingo himself bought alarm clocks for some students, went to their homes and knocked on doors to roust them out of bed. Nonetheless, he says, attendance is still his biggest problem.

Mingo also rid the halls of graffiti and declared Du Sable "neutral turf" in the gang wars that rage outside the door. He banned hats, coats, radios and sunglasses inside the building. He has to be strict, he explains, because he's dealing with "kids who've grown up without a whole lot of order." Eighty percent of Du Sable students live in the Robert Taylor Homes, one of the nation's three poorest communities.

It wasn't just the kids, though, who were underachieving. Some teachers, disheartened and uninspired, didn't issue books, claiming students would lose them. And many locked up classroom computers so that students couldn't use them. One teacher explained, "I don't want kids to steal them." Now, Du Sable prides itself on being the first public school in Chicago to be wired for Internet access.

Despite the restoration of order, Du Sable's reading test scores still lagged far behind national norms, so Mingo and his staff set out to create a "Culture of

Reading."

Teachers volunteer in after-school and summer reading programs. Everyone learns a new vocabulary word each day -- it's not unusual to be quizzed by a security guard on the "word of the day." And the daily curriculum now includes a 30-minute reading class -- almost unheard of in high school.

Meanwhile, in 1995, the entire Chicago system undertook a major reform initiative. Mayor Richard M. Daley took control of the schools, imposing strict new standards and accountability. Schools that didn't perform on national tests were placed on probation, and the worst schools were "reconstituted" -- teachers and principals had to resign and reapply for their jobs.

Two years ago, in a devastating blow for a community that was trying so hard, Du Sable was reconstituted. Mingo held onto his job, but many teachers did not. He looks back now and calls the move a "blessing."

The school board assigned a new associate principal, Katherine Owens-Smith, to deal solely with academics. She marvels at the way the school -- "everyone from the engineering staff to the cafeteria workers" -- pulled together. And, now, their hard work is beginning to pay off.

Last year, only 4.9 percent of Du Sable students met national standards in reading. On the latest test, the number climbed to 12.4 percent -- not enough to take the school off probation but demonstrating they're moving in the right direction, although they still have a long way to go.

The Chicago school system's CEO, Paul Vallas, can't talk about Du Sable's success without taking a moment to boast about the city's other schools. He notes that every school in the violent State Street Corridor, which includes Du Sable, and in the area of the infamous Cabrini-Green projects improved their scores. The four Cabrini-Green elementary schools are even eligible to come off probation now.

He's right. When we celebrate the success of Du Sable, let's also congratulate the students, teachers, staff, parents and neighbors who are working every day in schools all over Chicago to create safe havens of learning for our children. And let's spread the word that even in our country's toughest neighborhoods, we know how to make our schools work.

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TALKING IT OVER

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

May 20, 1998

America is facing a critical choice -- whether to honor and strengthen our commitment to our public schools or to retreat.

A truly free public education is a cornerstone of our democracy. Nearly 90 percent of the 52.2 million students in this country are enrolled in public schools.

Expanding the commitment to public schools is one of my husband's highest priorities. He has proposed legislation that would reduce class size in the early grades, modernize and build new schools, implement high standards of achievement and help every child read independently by the end of third grade.

It would also link every school to the Internet, end the practice of automatically promoting every student and give communities the flexibility to decide what their schools need.

Some members of Congress, however, have chosen to reject these meaningful improvements in favor of political expediency. They want to take dollars away from the public schools and use them to pay for private-school vouchers.

One proposal that has passed both houses of Congress would provide vouchers of up to \$3,200 for private- or parochial-school tuition to approximately 2,000 families in the District of Columbia.

Many of you have read news reports about the dismal state of the D.C. public schools, sadly referred to as among the worst in the nation. We must fix them, but vouchers are not the solution.

Vouchers divert attention and taxpayer dollars away from the schools that serve the vast majority of our students just when they need these resources to make fundamental changes. That's why my husband has promised to veto the bill.

Recently, a new superintendent took over the reins of D.C.'s troubled schools and has already begun to bring much-needed reform to the system. Now is not the time to siphon off desperately needed money for a program that will affect at most 3 percent of the system's 70,000 students at a cost of more than \$6 million.

Vouchers will not bring one more math teacher into the classroom or repair one broken window. Vouchers will not restore art, music or after-school activities. And vouchers will not rekindle a sense of pride in our public schools.

Vouchers raise fundamental questions about whether the federal government can use taxpayer dollars to send children to religious schools. And vouchers provide funds to schools that are not accountable for what their students learn or how the schools manage their money.

The evidence is mixed on whether children who participate in voucher programs actually do better in school. The most recent study of Cleveland's

voucher program concludes that students who use vouchers do no better than their counterparts in public school.

At a time in our nation's history when it is critical for every student to have better teachers, higher standards and more modern facilities, vouchers drain our public schools. Giving a few students a ticket out of the public schools is the wrong approach. The right approach is to fix the schools that are failing and to offer choices within the public school system.

We know how to fix our schools.

More than 10 years ago, Chicago's schools were singled out as the nation's worst. That's when the Mayor, the business community and parents got serious about fixing their schools. This week, Mayor Daley announced that test scores in the city have risen for the third straight year -- proof, he says, of the success of tough reform initiatives. The Mayor singled out DuSable High School, which has created a "culture of reading," including a special summer reading program and security guards who quiz kids on vocabulary words in the halls.

We also know how to provide meaningful choices for parents within the public schools -- such as charter schools. Charter schools are public schools that give parents and teachers the opportunity to design their own programs but are open to all students and strictly accountable for the education of their students. When my husband was elected, there was one charter school in the country. Today, under his leadership, there are almost 800.

Bill and I have visited charter schools all over the country that are leading the way in offering important choices to public-school students and their parents. Many of these schools are meeting the needs of students who had trouble succeeding in more traditional public schools.

As we prepare to enter the new millennium, we can choose to walk away from our public schools or we can choose to roll up our sleeves and make them work again. Let's not opt to give just a few students a way out at the expense of giving every student a way up.

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Talking it Over

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Albert Shanker Award for Distinguished Service New York State United Teachers

**Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Niagara Falls, New York
April 22, 1999**

Thank you very much, Tom [Hobart, Jr., president of the New York State United Teachers]. I am deeply honored and moved by this award. I feel very grateful to you for your leadership and to all those who lead with you and to all who are assembled here for your commitment and dedication to the causes in which we believe so strongly--our children's future, a nation of which we can be proud citizens--and for your willingness to meet the responsibilities that each of us has to do our part to make certain that those objectives can be realized.

I am delighted to be here in his district with Congressman John LeFalce and with Randi Weingarten [president, United Federation of Teachers] and Sandy Feldman [president, American Federation of Teachers]. I want to recognize and thank each of them. I also want to recognize all of the officers and executive committee who are here. And I congratulate the Niagara Falls All City Marching Band. You are a beautiful sight over there in your red and white uniforms.

This is the second time I have been in this convention center. I was here before on important matters relating to health and education, and I am particularly pleased to be back here among people who are so committed. Each of you who represents your constituency--as classroom teachers, college and university faculty and staff, school bus drivers, custodians, secretaries, cafeteria workers, teachers' assistants and aides, nurses, health care technicians--all of you are really on the front lines of caring for people, particularly young people. I am personally very grateful for what you do every day. Sometimes we take for granted the work that you know has to be done to help encourage a young person, to bind up his or her hurt feelings or resolve a problem that is even worse. I for one as well as the President know how essential the services you perform are.

I also know that we stand here in large measure because of the leadership of an extraordinary man. Al Shanker is someone whom we should be celebrating all of the time. Because he, in his inimitable way, caused us all to look at education--the future of our country--in a different way. For more than fifteen years, I had the opportunity to work with him on various issues. I considered him, of course, a remarkable union organizer. But he was also a world leader and a true friend. He had real courage to stand up and be counted--sometimes when it was not popular, often when he knew that the stand he would take would be controversial even with people he cared about and sometimes represented. He showed that courage in so many ways, from the voter registration drives in the South, to the fight for collective bargaining for public workers, to the arguments he eloquently made about raising standards in our public schools. He reminded Americans time and time again that our public schools are the very bedrock of our democracy and that anyone who forgot that or anyone who wished to undermine that was doing a grave disservice to democracy in America as we have known it and as we have learned to appreciate it.

I was privileged to speak at Columbia University Teachers College earlier this week, and I said there what I would say again. The public education system of America is one of the essential reasons that America is what it is today. You cannot feel good about our country as we end this century if you cannot understand the fundamental role that public schools have played in giving us not only the resources and the opportunities that we enjoy, but also in making it possible for us to come together in our diversity and to appreciate our commonality.

So each of you who is here as a teacher or an employee of a public school or an institution of public higher education is doing what you can do to make sure that not only our education system is successful, but also that America continues to offer that dream of potential to every young person.

Al Shanker would remind us that we cannot be complacent. We cannot rest on our past laurels if we are to ensure that education is always up to the standards we need it to be. As we move into a new economy with new challenges, it requires each of us to ask hard questions. I recall very well when the national report, *A Nation at Risk*, came out in 1983, and it made some very controversial claims. It flatly stated that we were committing what it called “unilateral disarmament” because we were not doing what we needed to do to create world-class schools. Both my husband and I noticed that Al Shanker was the first union leader in the country to come out and say, “This report is a good thing. We have a lot of work to do, and we are going to roll up our sleeves and get about the business of doing the work.” I have seen the results of his leadership and your work as I have been privileged to visit schools throughout our country.

I was planning to give a very different speech tonight than the one that I will give. I was going to come here and talk about the progress we have made together with thanks, in large part, to the leadership of people like Al and Tom and Sandy and others, and the incredible effort and creativity that you have brought to establishing standards-based education reform and putting teachers once again in a position of authority and respect.

I was also going to talk about how in some of our most distressed neighborhoods I have seen schools that are turning around and giving their students the opportunities those young people deserve. But how I, along with all of you, still see many situations in which children who are poor or of color or of some other background--that are in some way left out of that educational advancement--are still falling behind.

And I wanted to talk with you about what we still needed to do to make sure that quality education was available to every child in America. At Teachers College I quoted the motto of a public school in Manhattan, PS Number One. It is a very simple motto that every child can learn: No excuses. No exceptions. And that is what you have been attempting to prove in the efforts that you have been making.

I was also going to thank you for the role that you have played in demonstrating that we can make tangible improvements. Our nation’s reading scores are up for the first time in all three grade levels. We have made progress across the board in math and science. We see the SAT and ACT scores going up. So we have a lot to show on paper that you and the students and the communities here in New York, and indeed around America, are really getting results.

I also wanted to talk about the Administration’s plans to build on this progress by putting 100,000 more teachers into classrooms to lower classroom size so that teachers can give their students the attention they need. I wanted to talk about how we do need to target more investments to disadvantaged children; and promote accountability for results; and focus on teacher quality improvements like real professional staff development and not the one-day, one-shot workshops that you have to attend. I also wanted to talk about how publicly funded vouchers are not the answer to any problem in our public schools.

These are all very important discussions, and I hope that I will have many opportunities to talk with you further about every one of these matters, and to hear from you about what is on your minds about how we can form a better partnership at all levels--not only of government but of society as well--to make sure that the goals we share in common can be realized. In coming here tonight, I know that my heavy heart is not the only one in this great hall. I thank Tom for his moment of silence, because I think our thoughts and prayers are

with people thousands of miles away--the families, the teachers, the students, the law enforcement officials, the citizens of Littleton, Colorado who have lost so many beloved members of their community. This terrible tragedy has put our entire nation into mourning, and it reminds us once again that everything in life pales in comparison to our ability to keep our children safe and out of harm's way.

I have talked with a lot of people in the last 48 hours and each of them has expressed a sense of helplessness and sometimes even hopelessness. They ask, "What can we do? How do we talk to our own children? How do we reach out to the people of Littleton to let them know that we are thinking of them and standing with them?"

My husband went to a school today and talked with students and listened to what was on their minds. He reminded them, as I have reminded others, that there is no way to explain or even understand a tragedy such as this. But we have to try. And we have to recognize that we are not helpless or hopeless. There are steps we can take, ways we can try to prevent such tragedies from ever happening again. All we have to do is to look at the people of Littleton to remind ourselves of how good our country fundamentally is. I saw the lines of men and women waiting for hours to give blood, turning out for vigils, and donating money to help with long-term counseling. I thank you, Tom, for your donation to the healing process. Local hotels are providing free rooms for family members of victims who have rushed to Littleton. Clergy, teachers and psychologists are gathering from all over the state to comfort parents and students. So we can see, even now, that in the face of this terrible tragedy people are not helpless or hopeless.

But we have to do more than just reflect on what has happened in Littleton. And again, I turn to Al Shanker. I think about how in 1995 he announced on behalf of the AFT [American Federation of Teachers] a national campaign to argue for safe and orderly schools with rigorous academic standards. He knew, as all of you know, that we had to do the best we could to provide a safe and orderly environment in all of our schools.

Now I am not sure that many of us would have pictured in our minds--when we first heard Al Shanker say that or read his column promoting that--the school in Littleton, would we? We would have had a very different picture about where the problems were, where the violence occurred, the kinds of kids involved. What this spate of school shootings and killings of the last two-and-a-half years have proven, if we ever needed to be reminded, is that there is no community that can afford to think it is immune from what happens in the larger society.

We also need no more powerful reminder that every single day our teachers are on the front lines in our schools. Even as the bullets whizzed around them, the teachers at Columbine High School never forgot their responsibilities to the students in their care. They risked their lives to shield their students and help lead them to safety. One teacher, William David Sanders, gave his life to protect his students. And two teachers were wounded.

So as we gather here tonight, I want to commend this union for being at the vanguard of the movement to stop the violence and to create safe schools where all children are ready and able to learn. And yet I am not sure that we have really absorbed the lessons you have been trying to teach us. We know that most schools in America are safe. They are, in fact, often the safest place that children can be in a community. I do not need to tell you that they are not islands cut off from the rest of society. No school security system can keep society out of the school house door. When a tragedy like Littleton happens, too often the immediate response is a lot of finger pointing. The gun lobby points at the media. The media points back at the gun lobby. Parents point at the schools. And everyone points at the parents. I do not think that is a very useful exercise.

There are reasons why the young men have made so well known the names of their towns--Littleton and Jonesboro and Paducah and Springfield and Pearl. There are reasons why these

events have happened, and there are ways we can better try to prepare ourselves to intervene and prevent them in the future. There is no way to outline completely all of the factors that go into what we have seen with the two young men in Littleton. But there is no escaping the fact that there is responsibility for all of us to fulfill. I believe, as I said in my book, that it takes a village, because I think that all of us have to be willing to accept our share of responsibility for the raising of our children. There were some who criticized me and said, "No, it is only parents." Of course parents are the primary and foremost influences in their children's lives. There is nothing that can, in any way, overtake parental responsibility in the understanding of what motivates and shapes children. But parents do not act in a vacuum. Children are not raised in test tubes. They are influenced by all that goes on around them. And those of us who have lived long enough know enough circumstances where the family does not seem to have played the major role in the creation of the problem that we can see in a young person. So we have to be thoughtful about how we understand the various factors at work and the responsibilities each of us should be taking.

There are a few points that I would like to see us make. I would ask you, who understand more about these issues than most people in our society, to join with me and others in trying to present a clearer picture of what needs to be done. Here are just some thoughts I would like to share with you.

We held a White House Conference on School Safety last October. We brought together parents and teachers, law enforcement officials, religious leaders, elected office holders, child advocates --everyone we could imagine who had a direct stake in contributing to the safety and well-being of our children. We looked at all the experts' opinions and the research about school violence.

Out of that came a guide to safe schools called Early Warning, Timely Response that was issued jointly by the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education. The report was sent to every school district. It would not surprise any veteran teacher to know what it contained in terms of what we should be looking for if we are going to try to intervene and help young people to avoid violence.

I do not know how many of these brochures actually ended up in the hands of teachers, but we are going to be sending out more to try to give those on the front lines, the teachers, the arguments and the support that they need to be able to get the resources that are required to do the job you know needs to be done. We do not have enough resources available to most of our schools to take care of the problems that teachers identify among students. We have got to do a better job of creating more psychological counseling resources, social work counseling resources, and other support services.

I have friends who are teachers--and I am sure this is an experience some of you have had--who have had to work for countless hours and days to try to find some help for a student that they know is likely to hurt himself or others. It is often a lonely and frustrating search. So the community and the school system have to be more willing to provide the support and the resources so that when the alarm bells go off in your heads, you have somebody you can turn to. I hope we will begin to focus on that and have a national response, but we will need your leadership and voice in order to achieve that.

We also have to find some ways for students to make referrals--anonymously, if necessary--so they can bring to teachers' and administrators' attention what they know is happening among some of their peers. I would like to see in every community some kind of hotline, some kind of number that can be called, both to report concerns and to seek help, and a referral service that can really back up the referrals with the services that are needed.

We are attempting in this Administration to provide more support for people with mental illness, and we have dramatically increased the funding for children's mental health services. I want to thank my friend, Tipper Gore, who has been a real champion of mental

health for everyone, particularly for children. We will not make the progress we need until we treat mental illness just as seriously as physical illness and provide the resources to treat it. We know there is a lot of confusion, alienation, and just plain growing-up adolescent angst out there. Some of it is just normal development, and some of it is more serious than that. So we do have to begin to make a distinction, and have enough trained people to treat and counsel those whom we believe are in trouble.

We also have to stand up and say what needs to be said about guns and firearms and bombs. We know that young people will have disagreements, arguments, even fights. We know that adolescents have problems with impulse control. Why on earth would we permit any young person to have access to the kind of firearms that these two young men brought into that school?

In preparation for the White House Conference on School Safety and Violence, we had a roundtable discussion with a lot of very accomplished people--experts and researchers. And I will never forget the comment that one of them made. He said, "You know, I've studied the attitudes and the psychological profiles of young people in many different societies around the world. And I believe that the single biggest difference why our rate of violence is higher than others is because we have so many weapons that are easily available." Unless you take away that capacity to immediately discharge those feelings, to use that weapon against others instead of learning how to deal with your own emotions, we know too well the results.

Now some have still argued against the need for sensible gun control, but we can see the results. When my husband stood up against the gun lobby and fought for the Brady Bill, there were those who said it would not make any difference, it would just interfere with the right of Americans to have access to weapons. Well today we can look back. Since the Brady Bill was enacted, 250,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers have been denied handguns, and I am grateful that they have.

The President will be sending crime legislation to the Congress shortly. In it he is going to ask the Congress to extend the Brady Bill so that young people who commit serious and violent offenses cannot ever purchase handguns when they become adults, and also to ask that child safety locks be put on all guns, and to raise the penalties for juveniles who possess handguns and for adults who illegally transfer them to young people. We should hold people who allow children easy access to firearms criminally responsible for their reckless actions when children get access to their guns.

We also have to recognize something else. Why is it, in addition to the accessibility of these weapons, that a young American can take one and turn it on his fellow classmates, and then on himself? We also have to be willing to stand up and talk about the culture of violence that infects the lives of our children. You can no longer argue against the research findings that started with the Surgeon General's report in 1972 and have continued unabated from this country and others that the constant exposure to violence--on television, in the movies, in the video games, in the music--does not have an effect on the way children see themselves and others. There is just too much evidence that children are desensitized, they lose empathy. There is increasing concern about the impact on vulnerable young people of video games that are interactive and that you win based on how many people you kill.

I was reading about a study that discussed what needed to be done in the military to prepare people to overcome the natural inhibition that most humans feel about killing another human being. The military often has to work very hard to prepare people to be on the front lines. How do they do it? By repetitive practice. By target shooting where the targets look like people. By creating an instantaneous, habitual reaction, much as we see in these video games.

In the last five years we have had an additional concern raised by the Internet. And again,

we are getting increasingly worried about the access that children have on the Internet to all kinds of information and propaganda and how difficult it is to mediate between them and the information or to control their access to it. Now in the last several years we have tried in various ways to empower parents and other responsible adults so that they can be the ones to be those mediators. That is the idea behind the V-chip, where parents would be able to control what came in on the television set. That is the idea behind putting some kind of standards in place through legislation for what is pornography on the Internet. So there have been efforts made to try at the national level to equip parents and adults so that they did not feel quite so helpless in the face of this explosion of media images, many of which are violent.

Now the problem of course is, as anyone will quickly recognize, that there is so much of it, we are awash in it, and most kids are not terribly affected by it. The combination of parenting or genetics, resilience, empathy, experience, whatever, guides them through this climate of violence. But for other young people, who for whatever reason are vulnerable, we do not have early warning signals and we do not have enough safeguards built in. We are going to have to do some serious thinking in our country about how we will take more control over what our children see, and what they experience, and how they understand what they see and experience.

Now rightfully we have a lot of concerns about the First Amendment and government censorship, so we have to be very thoughtful about how we navigate through those. But I hope to be working with community groups, parents' groups, educators' groups to try to think of some better ways we can take back responsibility in this area.

We can no longer shut our eyes to the impact that the media is having on all of our children, and on the potentially violent impact it is having on some. I will be asking you to help us--to help Tipper Gore and me and the President, the Vice President and others--to think of ways we can devise to persuade parents to exercise more authority, to help peers influence each other, so that we can begin to fight back against the violence and the impact that it has.

It raises large questions about why we as a culture glorify violence, why we consider it acceptable, why we laugh at it, why we turn our backs to it when our children are involved in it. And I think we are going to have to be very honest about what kind of steps we are willing to take to do something about it.

Finally, parents, of course, have to be equipped and empowered to feel that they have more responsibility and authority on the lives of their children. I hear it from teachers all the time. How for so many reasons, parents are not able to be as involved in their children's lives as they used to be. How you do not see them in school meetings or parent-teacher conferences. How you cannot find them if you are trying to call to discuss a problem. Of course, much of that is because of the long hours and the emotional demands of work and family and single-parent families. We know that from recent reports, parents often have a high level of conflict between the obligations they feel at the workplace and what they feel to their family. Because of these pressures--the breakup of families, the disappearance of fathers from children's lives--we have many young people trying to navigate to adulthood without enough adults around them.

So how do we provide more support for working parents? How do we encourage more parents to stay involved in their children's lives, especially as those children get older? Some say that it is a task for each individual family. I do not believe that. I think we should help parents more than we are. I believe that legislation like the Family and Medical Leave Act should be extended so that parents can go to parent-teacher conferences off the job. I believe it is in all of our interests to subsidize quality child care and after-school programs so that children can be safe. I believe that communities have to work harder to involve parents in taking care of children, and provide opportunities and places for children to be during summers and evenings and weekends.

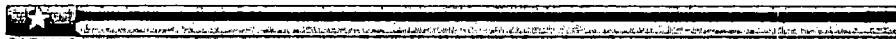
There is a lot we can do that we know works. We just lack the will to put into effect what we know works. We are not willing to do all that is necessary to give parents the tools they need to be the best possible parents they can be. We also have to be sure that we help parents know where they can go for help. A lot of parents do not know, and they throw up their hands and they walk away.

We have seen what parents can do when they join together. Just think about how before Mothers Against Drunk Driving, it was considered more or less okay to have a few drinks and get behind the wheel of a car. MADD fundamentally changed the way we think about that now. We have designated drivers. We have people who are under more social pressure not to drink and drive. Well that is one way that parents coming together, citizens banding together, have been able to change the environment and do what they needed to do to change behavior.

There is much we have to talk about. But I know that if Al Shanker were here, he would tell us to say what has to be said and to do what has to be done. Not to be afraid or hide our heads in the sand or back away from the challenges we face. Because we can meet them. It takes courage and faith and sometimes a really thick skin to overcome the hopelessness and helplessness that we can feel at times like these. But think about the amount of courage and faith it took for those students and teachers in Littleton during that crisis--or what the community has shown us in the days since. We owe it to them, and we owe it to all of our children and all of our teachers and all of our parents. And we owe it to ourselves to make sure that we adopt whatever strategy it takes --wiping out gun violence, reaching our kids with counseling, standing up against the culture of violence. Because that is what we should expect from ourselves.

I go back to that motto from PS Number One: No excuses. No exceptions. I can think of no more important tribute to those who lost their lives or those who will be struggling to rebuild theirs than to take on this issue that you led the way on years ago. Help us. Help us to understand how to make our schools safe and orderly, how to make our communities safe and orderly, and how to give hope to children who otherwise feel that no one cares. There is no better group to lead us in this effort than our nation's teachers. I thank you for what you have done. I thank you for this honor you have given me. And I look forward to working with you on behalf of America's children.

Thank you very much.



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The National Education Association's Friend of Education Award Presentation to the First Lady

**First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's Acceptance Remarks
Orlando, Florida
July 5, 1999**

Thank you. I am so pleased to be here with all of you. And I am extraordinarily honored to receive this very important and prestigious award from an organization that stands for the best in education, and therefore stands for the best in America. I am honored to be the 1999 Friend of Education, and I am honored to be with so many of you—thousands of you who prove every day that you are friends of education and friends of the children of America. And there isn't any better way to celebrate the 4th of July weekend than to be right here standing up for public education and America's children.

This, your 137th annual convention, chose as its theme, "Destination 2000: Quality Public Education for All." That is not only the goal of the NEA—that is and should be the goal for all Americans. I want to recognize your leadership that is helping to chart the way towards your goal, starting with your president. He has been an outspoken and passionate advocate for America's teachers, and a tireless crusader for the school reforms that we know are so vital if the goal of providing quality education for all is to be met. And so let me publicly thank Bob Chase for all he has done on behalf of education.

I also want to mention that at the Mental Health Conference last month, Bob came forward with a very innovative public/private partnership that combines the resources and expertise of the NEA with EchoStar Communications Corporation, the Dish Network, Future View, and the Learning First Alliance to provide 1,000 satellite TV dishes to schools and the education programming necessary to try to help our schools and our children be safer. That's the kind of groundbreaking work that we have come to expect from his leadership.

I also want to thank your vice president, Reg Weaver, and your secretary treasurer, Dennis Van Roekel. I want to thank Sheridan Pearce, and I want to thank all of you, starting with the Lamar County Education Association that nominated me for this award, and all of you who every day serve on the front lines, caring for our young people, giving them the skills and confidence they need to thrive in the 21st Century and to fulfill their God-given potential.

I know that in your ranks you include classroom teachers, college faculty, education support personnel, bus drivers, custodians, secretaries, counselors, building and grounds keepers, psychologists, and even students preparing to become teachers. All of you together hold the future of our children in your hands. And I am grateful for what you do every day.

I also want to thank you for the conference that you held during this convention that stressed the important and changing role of teachers in moving toward school improvement and came up with ideas for collaboration, risk taking, and personal responsibility. At every turn, you have been pushing the envelope of reform and looking for ways to make the ideas that sound good in speeches, or appear in papers, realities in classrooms across our nation.

So we may come here today from many different parts of America, but we understand fully that as we mark this very important Independence Weekend, our greatest task is to make sure that the American Dream stays alive and vibrant for every American. And those of us who understand what it will take in the 21st Century to make that dream live on, know we must do everything in our power to make a quality public education a reality for every single American today.

I want to thank you for your partnership for the last six-and-a-half years with the Administration. Through your hard work and the millions of people you represent, we can claim numerous victories. We have opened the doors to college wider than they have ever been before. Some of our most troubled

public schools at the beginning of this decade are now models of achievement and hope. Across the board, achievement scores are up for reading, math, and science. And the SAT scores are now at their highest level in two decades. And you, more than anyone, know that we cannot rest on the accomplishments that we have seen come to fruition because of the hard work of so many. We know that we cannot rest until we close the achievement gap between the well-off and the poor. We cannot rest when there are still too many schools failing our children and literally falling apart before our eyes. We cannot rest when too many teachers still do not have the support they need or the respect that they deserve.

So as you gather to set your priorities for this next year, I know that you are asking the toughest possible questions that need to be asked about how we chart our future for public education. How do we make sure that all students, all teachers, all schools meet the highest possible standards? How do we ensure that students receive educations that lift up their aspirations and ambitions? How do we support the changes, the reforms, and the new practices that many of you have pioneered?

I'd like to talk for just a few minutes about some of the ways that I think all of us who are Friends of Education should be working to fulfill the promise that you have established of providing that quality education. Let me start by saying that I know there are some who believe that vouchers are the way to improve our public schools; I believe they are dead wrong. There is simply no evidence that vouchers improve student achievement. Now we've been experimenting with vouchers in some jurisdictions, haven't we? And from those experiments—and some have gone on for a couple of years—we've found no evidence that any objective analysis could prove that these have made any difference in student achievement. But what they have done is to divert much-needed public funds for the few and have weakened the entire system.

Now since 1983, I have been a vigorous advocate of reforming and fixing schools that do not work. And I have taken positions on behalf of improved accountability and higher standards. And in those 16 years, I have seen that we do know how to turn around failing schools. What we have too often lacked is the staying power and the will to deliver on what we know would make a difference. But if we are to make that difference, then we have to make a solemn vow never to abandon our public schools or the children who attend them, but to instead redouble our efforts to pursue strategies that we know can make a difference. Because in every school district in America, you and I know, there are schools that are working against the most amazing odds. They are taking children who are poor and poorly prepared and are getting results.

We know a lot more today than we knew five or, certainly, 10 years ago about what we need to do to marshal the resources to make every school that successful. So let's build up our schools—not tear them down. And let's make sure that everyone has the same goal in mind—to make our public schools and our public school students the best in the entire world.

Now how do we do that? Well, first and foremost, we have to expect every single child to succeed and we have to hold every one of them to high academic standards. There should be no exceptions, no excuses, to our solemn commitment that every child can learn; every child deserves to be challenged, to have their imaginations sparked. And yet we know that that is not just the task in our schools; it has to start in our homes with parents and family members who value education. And we need a culture that cares more about what a child learns than what kind of sneakers he wears, and environments in which effort is rewarded and instant gratification is put in its proper place.

Now in order to achieve our hope that every child can learn, we have to be ready to provide the resources and the support to enable educators to help those students reach those high expectations. And there isn't a more important element than the quality of a child's teacher. As General John Stanford, the late superintendent of the Seattle system that so many of us admired—we will miss him for years to come—he used to say that, "The victory is in the classroom." And he understood, as a retired military leader, that that meant that the teachers in the classroom needed the power and authority to lead and the resources to be able to give their children what they know they needed.

I've been privileged in the last 16 years, first in Arkansas and then throughout the country, to meet with

and travel to countless schools and to visit with, by now, thousands of teachers. And I know that the vast majority of our teachers are dedicated and qualified professionals, but they are often not given the support they need. How many of you have ever had to reach into your own pocket to buy classroom supplies? So the second thing we've got to do is make sure the teachers have the resources they need.

We're facing a critical teacher shortage—we're going to have to recruit more teachers. But I agree with the NEA president that there's not only a teacher shortage, there's a respect shortage and a salary shortage as well. There is no way in today's complicated, information-overdrive world that we're going to get and keep those of you in the teaching profession to carry on the tradition of public education, unless you receive the salaries that your important work deserves. From my perspective, we have to look for ways of making sure the public understands that the task you are being asked to carry forward is the most important way we can keep faith with the next generation.

Now we're going to have to recruit more teachers. I agree with the President's proposal that we expand the already successful Troops to Teachers program. We should also provide loan forgiveness to new teachers committed to teaching in hard-to-serve areas. But we cannot lower the standards in this recruitment drive, and I am very much in agreement with the proposal that states be required to phase out emergency certification and improve state teacher certification systems. But then once we get the teachers that we so desperately need, we can't just open the door to the classroom, shut it and leave them there unprepared for the challenges they face with nowhere to turn for help.

Too often, you know so well, the least experienced teachers are assigned to the most difficult schools and the most difficult students. That's a disservice to young teachers and their students. And therefore it should be no surprise that one out of every three new teachers leaves the first year, and in some urban areas it's one out of every two. We're going to have to help our young—or maybe not so young but newly minted—teachers get their footing. To do that we've got to make sure that they teach in fields that they are prepared to teach in; that we not give, right off the bat, the toughest assignments to such young teachers; that we improve and extend teacher preparation programs and support mentoring, coaching, and peer assistance—things that NEA has pioneered. We also have to provide quality, ongoing professional development, not the one-day, one-shot workshops that are too often the case. I also think that teachers need the time to prepare their courses, consult with their peers about the strategies that work, and be recognized and rewarded for your knowledge and your skills.

Now, as part of the overall education proposals that the President and the Administration are promoting, we are including a proposal that states and school districts ensure that every child is taught by a fully qualified teacher and that the federal government would expand the kind of resources that could be available for high quality professional development opportunities, including—and I would have to be in this category as well—including more specialized training to use technology in the classrooms. There are so many of my friends who are teachers that are the first to admit, like so many of us who are parents, that we cannot keep up with the technology that our children are able to master. And so our teachers need more support and opportunities to do that.

We should also allow teachers to pursue advanced certification through the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. I have worked with this issue for more than a decade, and I am very pleased that the Administration is providing for 100,000 more teachers over the next 10 years to become master teachers. It's an important step in ensuring we have the highest quality professionalism in the teaching profession that the public will recognize and reward.

Now we've been talking about teachers a lot in the national discussion, but we're also going to have to take a hard look at student responsibility as well. Because it is not just enough to try to move one part of the education equation, we have to look at all the component parts, and our students are going to have to be given a very strong message. It's the kind of message my father gave my brothers and me when we were growing up, and that was that school was our work. We were expected to do as well as we could. Yet somewhere we kind of got a mixed message from our culture about the importance of education, both generally and in certain of our ethnic and racial groups, and we need to start with a very clear and unambiguous message—that it is the job of children to learn. It is not only something that they should be doing for themselves, it is something they owe their families and their country. And if we send that

message, I think it will break through to families and it will break through to students. And one of the ways we're ending that is by calling for an end to social promotion.

Now I know that this is still controversial in some quarters. But I can only state that it is so unfair, and we really do cheat our children if we continue to promote them to the next grade if they don't have the necessary skills and knowledge to do the work required. But we also do them a terrible disservice if we do set that bar of achievement higher and then we don't provide the help and resources needed to enable them to catch up. You know, when I came in earlier, this year's National Teacher of the Year was addressing you, and I particularly like the words that Andrew Baumgartner has said about the joy he receives in teaching. He says it comes when "I look into the face of a young child and watch confusion turn to concentration, concentration to surprise, and finally surprise into the pride of accomplishment." Well, too often we stop at confusion, and we've got to do more to give every child the chance to reach the pride of accomplishment.

That means we need extended learning time. That means we need after-school and summer programs. That means we need smaller classroom sizes. I believe, and I can see that many of you do as well, that reducing class size is one of the most critical investments we can make, not only in our children's future, but in our teachers' ability to succeed. Too many teachers have to spend more time keeping order, dealing with personal problems, trying to understand what one child out of 30 or 35 needs, than maintaining high academic standards for the entire classroom. We also now have evidence. We have the evidence that backs up our anecdotal or our intuitive feeling. Studies like the recent Project Star in Tennessee confirm what parents and teachers have always known—that students do learn better in small class sizes with good teachers, particularly in the early grades. They are more likely to graduate from high school, more likely to excel academically and go on to college than their peers in overcrowded classrooms. And we have also learned from these studies that minority students, in particular, benefit from the greater personal attention they receive in smaller classes. So I'm very pleased that the Congress voted last year to reduce classroom sizes in the early grades and to begin to hire more teachers at the end of this session. And now there are those who are challenging the funding for the next installment to be sure that we get the teachers in the classroom. So we have to be vigilant and we have to make sure that the idea of 100,000 new teachers is actually translated into the funding necessary to bring that about.

Now some people have said to me, when I argue strongly for smaller class size, that they are well aware of classrooms here around the United States, and other countries, where very large class sizes don't make any difference. Well, that may be all well and true. But lots of us have firsthand experience that our children are coming to school with a lot more problems than they had a generation ago. We also know, as a friend of mine said, that with the advent of 24-hour information, particularly with the television and the Internet, it is harder to maintain a child's attention. One friend said that she stands in front of that classroom and she looks at these children, and she can just see this sort of mental remote control button being pushed as her students are looking for more entertaining channels than learning math or conjugating sentences. And so we have to do everything we can to get that personal attention that only an adult with a group of children can hold if the numbers are small enough.

We also have to do more about the sizes of some of our schools—they have gotten too big and there are too many children who feel anonymous from the start of the school year to the end of it. I was recently Principal for a Day at a school in Queens, New York. I was at a junior high school, and that school in Ozone Park was built for 1,500 students, and today houses over 2,000 students. And the day I visited they were putting in mobile classrooms so they could add 500 more by next September. Now these were youngsters of the junior high age—need I say any more? Not only that, they had 27 or 28 different languages, many were first generation immigrants, many came from struggling homes, many the children of single parents. These children I met were impressive and well spoken, but there was just such a crush of them that the teachers I spoke with about what it was like teaching there kept saying to me, "I wish I had more time with each of my students." So we need to do more to try bring down the size of our schools, especially in areas where there are a lot of other problems that have to be addressed. We need to do more with the schools within schools idea to see what potential they hold. And we have to provide more funds to modernize crumbling schools, and build more schools where schools are needed.

You know, this is a problem all across America—in cities, in suburbs, and rural communities. And

surely in this time of unprecedented prosperity in America, we can build and modernize our schools for the next century. I'm as delighted as every American when the DOW climbs, first over 10,000 and then over 11,000. But we have too many schools that are not wired for computers; we have too many others where the plaster on the ceiling is falling on the heads of the children and teachers. Let's celebrate our prosperity by making a commitment that our schools will be worthy of the children they serve now and into the future.

And we'll need your help to make that happen. The President is going back to Congress for the third year in a row to push for school construction legislation, and I hope that we can persuade the Congress that this is an urgent priority.

And while we are creating safer conditions for learning, we also have to make sure that our schools are safe. I want to thank the NEA and many of you for the work you did in your schools and in your communities in the wake of the tragedy of Littleton. You know all too well that too many children bring guns to school, too many children believe that violence and aggression is the way to solve problems, and we're going to have to take every possible effort to make our schools safe. I know that you've really talked a lot about that in your conference, and I want to thank you for your partnership with the Administration, with private sector partners, and with others—because teachers and principals need help. Everyone who works in a school—from the custodians, or the counselors, or the teacher's aids—everyone needs help in knowing how to target those children who need extra help and make sure they get it; to diffuse difficult situations; to provide cooling off periods; and to remove from schools those students who are disruptive and are disrupting the learning of others.

Our schools need more help from our parents and our communities, and we also need more social workers and counselors who are trained to see the early warning signs in the schools. I would also like to see nation-wide hotlines where students, and even teachers, can make referrals, anonymously if necessary, to try to bring attention to those students who are on the brink of homicidal or suicidal activity. And then we have to do everything possible to keep guns out of the hands of children, and we need to stand firm on behalf of the sensible gun control legislation that passed the Senate and then was watered down in the House. It does not make sense for us at this point in our history to turn our backs on the reality that there are too many guns and too many children have access to those guns—and we have to act to prevent that.

And let me also pledge my support to you in continuing an effort that I have been involved in for many years to reach out to parents and other adults so that they understand the importance of the early years of development and how critical they are to successful learning later on. You know, a parent is a child's first teacher, and we have to do more to get that message out to every parent. It is incredibly important that every parent here—Secretary Riley has said on many occasions—that if family members would read to their children just 20 or 30 minutes a day, it would literally revolutionize American education. So let me ask you to join in that effort to convince everyone you can reach about the importance of reading. And let me also ask you to stand with me in pushing for universal access to quality, affordable preschool programs for every child. And that includes Head Start, home visitations, high quality child care, early Head Start—whatever it takes to enable working parents to know that their children are well-cared for and are being well-prepared for school.

 I also hope that you will continue to stand behind the charter school/public school movement, because I believe that parents do deserve greater choice within the public school system to meet the unique needs of their children. I recently, a few years ago, gave a commencement at a school in Washington, D.C., that has very selective admissions criteria. And the students there know that when they go there they are going to have to take much harder classes, they are going to have to study Latin, and they really are going to have to apply themselves. And every year the school system and the application process had hundreds more students applying than they could possibly accommodate in that one school. And I said to the people in the school and in the school system, "Why don't you start another school like that?" Because clearly these students and their parents want to be held accountable for this higher curricular standard.

 Well, slowly but surely, we're beginning to create schooling opportunities through the public school

charter system that are providing those kinds of options for parents and students—raising academic standards, empowering educators. And I invite educators to be at the forefront of this. Because I know that the NEA has already helped to create a number of charter schools. And I'm very pleased that you have done this, because I think when we look back on the 1990s, we will see that the charter school movement led by experienced, committed, expert educators will be one of the ways we will have turned around the entire public school system.

I also want to commend you for your partnerships with businesses and other private sector employers, because I know how important their critical role is in supporting our public schools. The kind of support that businesses should give goes to the very heart of knowing that this is where their future workforce will come from, and this is where they have to be playing an important role. I also hope that we will continue to do all that we can to help families to balance their work and family/parenting responsibilities. We still have too many families that have to make the wrong choice between caring for their children and bringing in that income, they don't even get to come to the parent/teacher conferences. And then there becomes a kind of cycle of indifference that sets in; they can't participate, therefore they withdrawal, therefore they seem like they don't care. We need businesses to understand that they need to support parents in supporting their children's schools and teachers.

So there's a lot ahead of us that you'll be voting on and considering and talking about at this conference, and already have during the last several days. But I am very optimistic about the future of public education, because I think that word is finally beginning to spread—that we have the best schools, the smartest kids that you can find anywhere in the world. What we haven't done is to make sure that that is available to all of our children. That is your goal; that is your mission. And as we close this 4th of July weekend, there isn't any more important mission, in terms of its critical role in creating the America that will be here a hundred years from now.

Just imagine, a hundred years from now as we close the 21st Century, the NEA will be meeting somewhere, maybe in Cyberspace, and you'll be thinking both about the future challenges you face and you'll be looking back and thinking about what the past century looked like. I am very hopeful that not just at that very long date ahead of us, but in the years to come, the commitment to public education that marks the United States as unique will be reinvigorated, will be better supported, and will produce results for our children in every corner of our land. I will do all that I can, working with you to make that happen. And I will do all that I can, speaking on your behalf to the broader public, to make sure that everyone in America understands that we have a stake in the success of public education.

Some of you have been very interested in the work that the President has done and that I and others have tried to help him with, and the peace process in Northern Ireland. But I will never forget, on one of my trips to Belfast, meeting with a group of citizens and hearing about their difficulties, being told that it was the first time there had been any convening of people from both communities in a single room sitting down and talking about the issues that all of us worry about around our kitchen tables. It was important for the Catholic and Protestant women there to hear that each of them would often say a silent prayer when their husband or their son went off to work or out the door to play. It was important for each of them to see each other with human eyes unveiled by centuries of distrust. And one of the participants said, "But you know, Mrs. Clinton, our biggest obstacle is that our children have never gone to school together. They've always been separate systems. They've never learned to play together, to learn together, to work together, to build a better future together." And she went on to say, "You know, one of the great gifts that America has is that you've educated everybody together."

I believe that what she said should be heard by every American. Because sometimes our debates about reforming our schools and our public education system lose sight of that fundamental reality—that undergirding our democracy is public education—an idea that America has invested in and nurtured, and which does very well in most places for most children. One only has to look at how well the United States is positioned today. Our economy is booming, we are demonstrating to the world—from Belfast to Pristina, the Middle East to Africa—what it takes for a very diverse society to be successful. And, yes, we still have problems and we have flaws, but there is no place I'd rather be than right here thanking you for what you've done to help make America as great as it is and will be.

Thank you all very much.

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Introduction on Campaign Finance

Reform - Winter 1998

Symposium Introduction

There are a host of legal regulations governing the political process, but two fictional "laws" seem to affect the process as much as any statute. The First Law of Political Thermodynamics holds that the desire for political power cannot be destroyed; at most, it can be channeled into different forms. The Third Law of Political Motion predicts that every reform effort will produce a corresponding series of reactions designed to maintain the existing distribution of power.

The history of campaign finance regulation in contemporary America offers a textbook illustration of these ideas. The key feature of the Federal Campaign Act of 1974 was its stringent regulation of campaign contributions and expenditures. Inspired by Justice Brandeis's observation that "[s]unlight is said to be the best of disinfectants,"¹ FECA imposed a variety of reporting requirements. FECA limited who could contribute to candidates for federal office, how much they could contribute, and how much candidates themselves could spend; it also provided for a system of public financing for presidential elections.

But the FECA we have today is drastically different from the FECA Congress passed. In *Buckley v. Valeo*, the Supreme Court identified a constitutionally significant difference between campaign contributions and expenditures. The Court held that the First Amendment prohibited any mandatory caps on expenditures. After *Buckley*, the government can regulate the amount of money a person contributes, but, unless the candidate agrees to let the government finance his campaign, the government cannot limit the amount of money a candidate spends. In any case, spending by individuals or entities "independent" of the candidate's campaign was held to involve core political speech and to be entitled to the most expansive constitutional protection. *Buckley* thus produced a world in which the demand for money was unconstrained while the supply was strictly controlled.

The result should have been predictable. As the Army Corps of Engineers learned trying to redirect the Mississippi, money, like water, will seek its own level. The price of apparent containment in one place may be uncontrolled flood damage elsewhere. The rise of political action committees (PACs), "bundling," and single-issue independent expenditure groups is a direct result of the post-*Buckley* regime. Twenty-five years

after FECA, the conventional view is that American politics is more money driven and arguably more corrupt than ever. The last presidential election cycle saw the virtually complete circumvention of the vestigial public financing system. The amount of underregulated "soft money"—money contributed not to candidates or on federal elections but to the political parties for general "get out the vote" efforts and other forms of "party building"—mushroomed and swamped the publicly provided or highly regulated funds covered by FECA. And the last round of congressional elections saw more "independent expenditures" than ever before. These expenditures raise the question whether an electoral process driven not by candidates, and perhaps not even by strong political parties, but by other ideological groups or wealthy individuals, is really an improvement.

Most of the legal-academic debate about campaign finance reform has focused entirely on *Buckley* and questions of constitutional law. Unfortunately, the debate often stops there. Many participants in the campaign finance debate are relatively unfamiliar with the more general history of electoral reform or are largely uninterested in the practical details of political regulation. One of the signal virtues of this symposium is that it goes beyond, beneath, and behind constitutional doctrine to ask how the campaign finance regime actually works, and what implications different political philosophies have for the possibility or desirability of particular reforms. It brings together authors with a wide variety of perspectives and expertise.

A generation after FECA and *Buckley*, it is time to revisit the question of how to regulate the role of money in the political system. As long as money remains useful, and political power remains a prize worth pursuing, there will always be new challenges for campaign finance reform.

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¹ LOUISE BRANDEIS, *OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY* 62 (1933).

Intro on Crime and Sentencing

Symposium - Winter 1999

Symposium Introduction

The often-told story is roughly true. The United States essentially had no law of punishment for a century and a half after Independence (and almost a century after the advent of the modern prison). The special case of the death penalty aside, within whatever (usually broad) sentencing ranges appeared in legislative definitions of crimes, judges had unlimited discretion to set initial sentences, and parole boards and other agencies often had equal authority to modify the length of incarceration.

Scroll forward to post-War America, however, and discretionary sentencing came to be denounced from both sides: the conservatives condemning its leniency and the liberals its arbitrariness. We then saw an era of sentencing reform, at least in name and pretense or aspiration: an amalgam of political and scholarly efforts to bring regulative rationality to sentencing through specific legislative criteria and more thoughtful social scientific evaluations of efficacy and fairness.

The most noted outgrowth of the reform era, the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, illustrates how difficult it is to develop a cohesive solution to a problem subject to diverse interpretations. The Guidelines were indeed "reform"-minded in the senses I have noted, and they, at least initially, invited full and balanced participation by all the institutional actors—judges, as well as prosecutors and regulators. But the Guidelines were barely in effect before they were themselves denounced as the exemplar of the era that quickly followed reform—the era of increased and increasingly rigid, incarcerative sentencing.

A political historian might describe the result as the coincidence of two political independent political forces: one was the very aspirational reformism of those immediately involved in sentencing; the other was the new anti-crime theme of American politics in general. This latter force reflected the voters' reaction to the perceived moral and legal leniency of 1960s America. Enter the new iconic "target voter"—the middle class, populist conservative, identified through the Nixon "Southern Strategy" of 1968, fully realized as the "Reagan Democrat" of the 1980s, nicely represented by the elder Bush's successful use of the Willie Horton ad in 1988.

Crime became both a central and trivial factor in American politics: it was central in that all politicians, Republican and Democrat, had to take voluble, rhetorical oaths of commitment to increased prison sentences if they were to survive. It became trivial in that the rhetorical unanimity and risk-aversion of politicians on this subject

ensured that there would be no political debate about it. And the result has been the survival of one aspect of the reformist agenda—the regulative rationality par—finding perhaps an unintended partner in the political commitment to increased sentences.

The rich and diverse contributions to this symposium illustrate the mixture of consequences, intended and unintended, of this partnership. We now have lots and lots of sentencing law: guidelines, mandatory minimum sentences, truth-in-sentencing laws, habitual offender laws (of which the Three Strikes laws are only one late version). Criminal law scholars now have the opportunity and obligation to subject these laws, with all their doctrinal complexity and contested interpretations, to the kind of scrutiny which the vague domain of old discretionary sentencing once escaped.

Moreover, these laws were often enacted with very explicit, utilitarian agendas. At the same time, our crime statistics have become much more comprehensive and precise. As a result, scholars face the enhanced challenge of measuring outcomes against promises. Two huge statistical phenomena lie at the center of this new scrutiny: first, perhaps unsurprisingly, the incarceration rate continues to rise dramatically; second, perhaps very surprisingly and even mysteriously, the crime rate, including the violent crime rate, has dropped significantly in the last few years. Politicians claim this is all very logical: the new laws have put more people behind bars for longer periods of time and thus have deterred crime.

Most academics claim the opposite and, as this symposium shows, ask probing empirical questions: is the crime decline greater where and when these new laws are used? The evidence offered here throws a challenge back at the politicians, who, nevertheless, are not about to say touché.

But the new legal analysis of sentencing takes on subtler issues as well. We see the fascinating political dynamics of the shift in political power over sentencing from judges to an initial setting of the sentencing agenda by legislatures and then a sub-delegation to prosecutors. We get some new history to show that the judges who have decried this loss of sentencing control by judges may have recklessly contributed to it. We see new questions and new data about whether the specific target population of recidivist laws—slightly older recidivists—is the population evincing receipt of the deterrent message. We see new data and new questions about the possible overbreadth of these laws, and whether the

rhetoical focus on violent crime can be reconciled with the proportion of the new prison population who have not committed violent crimes. And we get an examination of some of the hidden stories of the new world of sentencing, such as the phenomenon of the prison system having to deal with new classes of prisoners—old men and young mothers.

Thus, the new law of sentencing has begun to yield a new legal scholarship of sentencing, to which this symposium is a rich and diverse contribution.

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