

Yvette Melendez Thiesfield, the state education department's program manager for charter schools, said only two or three of the proposals will be selected. Applications run the gamut from high technology, computer-oriented schools to a high school with a fine arts focus.

The da Vinci school would offer an arts-oriented curriculum in which arts professionals would help in teaching standard middle school subjects.

The schools must open in September 1998. It would be the second year that the state has funded charter schools. Twelve were opened in the fall.
Publication#W\ PP# 40. Associated Press"Publication" #:\ PP#01-25 1:27p

Headline#\ PP# D'Amato seeks to burnish education record in election year
Headline #:\ PP#
By RONALD POWERS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Education is not an issue Sen. Alfonse D'Amato has paid much attention to in his years as a lawmaker. Now, with his trademark zeal and aplomb, the irrepressible New York Republican has made teacher performance a centerpiece of his re-election campaign.

The move puts D'Amato in step with his party's rediscovery of education, and is the latest example of the astute politician's ability to identify and attach his name to topics that are popular with voters.

In TV ads that began airing last year - fully 13 months before Election Day - D'Amato attacks the "liberal teachers union," saying the United Federation of Teachers places its members' interests ahead of the needs of public-school students.

"We have a system that is more interested in protecting the perks and the privileges and has become a hiring hall," the senator said. "It is an employment center, as opposed to being

a center of learning, or knowledge."

While some school watchdog groups may agree with D'Amato, at least in part, they still question his motives and point out that he's making a lot of noise about an issue over which he has no jurisdiction.

"My impression is that we are really witnessing political stratagems and not serious educational advocacy," said Galen Kirkland, executive director of Advocates for Children, a nonprofit group. "I've never heard of anything he's done to promote education."

Beyond a Senate floor speech delivered in October as his feud with the UFT was coming to a boil, D'Amato has done little on the issue.

Democrats note he has repeatedly opposed increased education spending. He joined fellow Republicans in voting to cut billions of dollars from the student-loan program and opposing the Goals 2000, which sets challenging academic standards and promotes parental involvement.

"Is my job simply to have Washington send more money into a failing system?" he asked The Associated Press in an interview last week. "Or is my job to say: 'Sure, we're going to make resources available. But we want to see to it that the kids and their interests are bettered.'"

With a third of the Senate and the entire House facing re-election this fall, the GOP announced a package of education proposals Tuesday aimed at polishing the image of a party that in the past has supported abolishing the Department of Education and slashing federal school aid.

The new GOP plan runs the gamut from federal subsidies for private and religious schools to proposals to test teacher competence and award merit pay.

Ayo Harrington, who heads United Parents Associations, a nearly 80-year-old federation of parent groups in New York, agrees with D'Amato that the teacher-tenure issue needs another look.

Teachers "are not held accountable in the way that employees are in every other industry and segment of our society," she said.

After passing a probation period, teachers in New York and many other states earn job tenure. That means they can be fired only for specific causes, such as incompetence, insubordination, neglect of duty, or physical or mental disability.

Opponents say tenure shields many unqualified or uncaring teachers. Proponents maintain it protects teachers' rights and insulates them from political favoritism and arbitrary dismissal.

Ms. Harrington, like Kirkland and others, said tenure is an issue for the state Legislature, and she finds D'Amato's sudden interest odd.

"Alfonse D'Amato spends no time talking to parent organizations ... does not visit schools, does not hold forums on education-related issues, is not close to the education community," she said. "He, like many others, are jumping on the topic of education because it seems to be a politically hot issue."

During the past year, Ms. Harrington said, she called D'Amato's offices in New York and Washington twice about pending federal education legislation. "No one ever returned my calls, responded, got back to me," she said.

Noreen Connell, executive director of the Educational Priorities Panel, a coalition of two dozen mainstream civic organizations, has been watching the issue closely and said D'Amato's interest in education "just came out of the blue."

"He just seems to have taken a page from the right-wing think tanks and run with it," she said.

But education does resonate with voters, whose support D'Amato will need in November.

A poll last month found that most New Yorkers oppose teacher tenure but favor merit pay for educators who perform well, which D'Amato says he supports.

Publication#W\ PP# 41. The Columbus Dispatch"Publication" #:\ PP# 01/24/98; Edition: Home Final; Section: NEWS; Page 04B

Headline#\ PP# DEPARTMENT WANTS NAMES KEPT PRIVATEHeadline #:\ PP#

The U.S. Department of Education announced yesterday it is going to federal court to ensure that Ohio State and Miami universities do not disclose the names of students when the two institutions make disciplinary records available to the public.

An injunction is to be filed in U.S. District Court in Columbus, according to a statement by the Education Department.

The action results from Miami's refusal to disclose student disciplinary records.

The university's policy was challenged in court. The Ohio Supreme Court in July ruled that Miami's policy violated the state's open records law. The university, the court ruled, must turn over the records.

The U.S. Supreme Court rejected the university's appeal, upholding the Ohio Supreme Court's ruling.

The Education Department's motion for an injunction will seek to keep students' names private. Disclosure of students' names would violate the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the department said in a statement.

Miami and OSU recently informed the Education Department that they would make public details of student disciplinary records, including students' names, the department's statement said.

Richard Little, a Miami spokesman, said last night that court action by the Education Department validates what the university has been saying all along - that the records should be private.

Publication#W\ PP# 42. Associated Press"Publication" #:\ PP#01-23 11:33p

Headline#\ PP# Education Department moves to stop release of student recordsHeadline #:\ PP#

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) - A dispute over the disciplinary records of Ohio colleges and students - a case that already has reached the U.S. Supreme Court - has resurfaced.

The U.S. Department of Education said Friday it had filed a lawsuit to prevent Ohio State University and Miami University from releasing campus disciplinary records containing student names.

David Berthimaume, a lawyer for the department, said a complaint and a motion to prohibit the schools from divulging the information were filed in U.S. District Court.

Miami and Ohio State had informed the Education Department that they planned to release student disciplinary records, including names, after the Chronicle of Higher Education newspaper asked for the information.

"We have filed suit to prevent irreparable harm to the students who legitimately expect privacy and confidentiality in their school's on-campus disciplinary process," said LeRoy Rooker, director of the department's Family Policy Compliance Office, in a news release.

The fight over the records began in 1995, when the Miami campus newspaper, The

Miami Student, asked for campus disciplinary records to track student crime trends. The newspaper did not ask for students' names or Social Security numbers.

The university argued that releasing the information under Ohio's open-records law would put the school in jeopardy of violating the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

The law bars the release of "education records" that can be "personally identifiable."

The Ohio Supreme Court later ruled that such information did not constitute "education records" and that the school, by deleting the age and gender of the students charged, had improperly withheld public information.

The high court said Miami must release only records that reflect "the general location of the incidents, the age and sex of the students, the nature of the offense and the type of disciplinary penalty imposed."

The U.S. Supreme Court, without comment, upheld the Ohio court in December.

Miami University spokesman Richard Little said the school just wants to do what is right under the law.

"We want clarity. We want someone to tell us what to do," he said. "This validates what we've said all along. The Department of Education says these are not public records."

Steve McDonald, associate legal counsel for Ohio State, said the school "will comply with whatever the law is."

Publication#W\ PP# 43. Newsday"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ PP# School'Extension' Proposals PromisedHeadline #:\ PP#By Dan Janison and Sarah Kershaw
STAFF WRITERS

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said yesterday he's preparing to propose new measures affecting high school students who take more than five years to graduate, but he offered no details.

Repeating his long-running attacks on the promotion of public school students who fall short of standards, Giuliani said so-called high school "extension" programs would be covered in his annual budget proposal Thursday. "Rather than spend the money on trying to get someone a college degree who hasn't done high school yet, spend the money on getting them a real high school degree," he said after a Jewish cultural breakfast in the Bronx. "The purpose of it is to shift the funding to where we do the most good," he said. In his recent State of the City address, Giuliani called for an end to open admission for the City University system and demanded that anyone admitted meet 12th-grade standards. He described it in a speech at the breakfast in the Bronx' Riverdale section, saying those who take longer should go into programs where they no longer walk the same hallways as the younger students. Night programs for those students are being considered, officials said.

"Having high schools in which you have 21-year-olds and 13-year-olds. . . creates enormous education problems and other problems as well," Giuliani told reporters afterward. Asked who would run the programs, he said, "There are a lot of possibilities. We're looking into that right now." Regarding community colleges as the place to give remedial instruction, he said it "isn't working." Chiara Coletti, a spokeswoman for School Chancellor Rudy Crew, said the two men have been discussing what steps to take. "We've been graduating more kids. That's good. It's also taking longer to graduate them," she said, noting some students in difficult economic straits sometimes drop out to take care of family members and the like.

Queens Board of Education member Carol Gresser said, "I agree with the notion it's not appropriate for 21-year-olds to be going to school with 14-year-olds." Gresser added, however, "It's important to link this up with some sort of job or internship during the day so they can have experience and a resume and enter the workforce." Earlier this month, Norman Fruchter, director of New York University's Institute for

or Education and Social

Policy, warned that the five-year limit would become a mere "cost-saving measure" and said students are better off receiving a high school diploma than an equivalency diploma. The discussion arises at a time when the state has mandated stricter standards for high schools, which some educators say will make it harder for students to complete requirements on time.

Noreen

Connell, of New York's Educational Priorities Panel, who conducted a study of graduation rates, said one of three high school students takes longer than four years to graduate, more than the typical number in other city school systems.

"We hope that the mayor's focus on this problem will encourage greater assistance to students in high schools, but we don't want a push-out scenario," Connell said.

Publication#W\ PP# 44. Forth Worth StarTelegram"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Consultants prepare to grade Fort Worth district Headline #:\ PP#

By Martha Deller
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Fourteen years ago, the Ohio state school superintendent wanted a better way to compare educational data among similar school districts across the United States.

By 1986, Bill Bainbridge, an assistant to the superintendent, and three others had figured out how to do it. They formed SchoolMatch, a consulting firm that uses a databank of information from schools nationwide to analyze a district's strengths and weaknesses.

This year, Fort Worth joins more than 660 school districts that have been audited by SchoolMatch to determine how well their schools are educating students compared with similar U.S. districts. The Star-Telegram hired SchoolMatch for \$90,000 to conduct the audit in cooperation with Fort Worth school officials.

Using data such as test scores, attendance and dropout ratios, grading patterns and

advanced placement enrollment, the auditors measure school performance compared with schools of like size and ethnic and economic makeup.

"We take school data and make it useful and understandable for people," said St Sundre, the firm's executive vice president.

But the audit consists of more than just data. Armed with the numbers, SchoolMatch auditors visit several campuses to observe local educators in action, and parents, administrators and teachers are asked to complete a survey detailing their perceptions of the district's effectiveness.

Sundre and Bainbridge, SchoolMatch's president, will lead the audit team in Fort Worth. Results of the audit, which will include a series of recommendations for improvement, are expected by April or May.

Leaders in communities where SchoolMatch has worked say the company's audits have been comprehensive and constructive.

"SchoolMatch was extremely helpful in pointing out where we were on a national scale and in making suggestions on what we can do to improve," said Thomas Shouvin, vice chairman of the 11-member New Century Commission in Jacksonville, Florida.

Although some school board members disputed parts of last year's audit of the Duval County school district in Jacksonville, it became an integral part of a yearlong community study of the district, Shouvin said.

Last week, the New Century Commission, appointed jointly by the school board and the mayor, included SchoolMatch information in its report to the school board. Improvements proposed by the district based on the audit's recommendations include creation of an office to track student performance in Duval County.

Dale Frederick chose SchoolMatch for a state-funded audit of his Warren, Ohio, school district, then recommended the firm for a privately funded audit of the Pittsburgh district that he now heads.

"It's like getting a thorough checkup," he said. "We were interested in having a professional outside the district provide us with quantifiable data that we could use to improve where we wanted to go or reinforce things we were doing in a good manner."

In the firm's early days, some superintendents commissioned audits to confirm or discount the success of their programs, but didn't share results with the public. In recent years, businesses, foundations and newspapers have paid for the audits and joined with school officials to make the results public.

Experts say educational audits are becoming increasingly popular.

For example, a New York-based market research and polling firm has helped 90 school districts conduct customer satisfaction surveys of its teachers and parents.

The National School Board Association has recently begun offering audits to help superintendents evaluate their districts' curriculum, instructional policies and board-superintendent relations.

"A number of states are compiling report cards on schools," said Kathleen Lyons, spokeswoman for the National Education Association, the nation's largest teacher organization. "But schools are usually ranked on test scores and class size, things that anyone could collect. I'm more interested in other factors, like how well qualified their teachers are."

Among SchoolMatch's recommendations in Florida were better teacher training and evaluation.

SchoolMatch examines data that veteran educators consider important educational indicators. For example, company officials have defined the educational level of parents as the single most important indicator of a child's academic success.

Richard Koeppe, a retired Colorado school superintendent who has served on several audit teams, said the data measured by SchoolMatch accurately reflect factors that affect school performance.

"I spent 30 years in public education in urban districts," Koeppe said. "If you tell me the income level, education level of parents, average daily attendance and mobility, I can predict with high accuracy the performance on standardized achievement tests.

"We've known that for years. The question, is what are you going to do about it. SchoolMatch tries to help by 'here's where you are and here's how you can do at least a little better.' "

Fort Worth Superintendent Thomas Tocco and representatives of two Fort Worth teacher organizations said they welcome the outside audit.

"They have high standards, but they're fair," Tocco said. "They'll cite our strengths and our weaknesses. That's what I'm looking for."

Larry Shaw, executive director of the United Educators Association, said he believes that outside auditors can help determine the effectiveness of Tocco's education initiatives.

"Dr. Tocco has initiated many good programs which have not been evaluated. This will give a fresh look at the district by people who know what they're doing but have no political ties to the district," Shaw said.

The outside audit could help the district's credibility, said Rubidel Johnson Peoples, president of the Fort Worth Education Association.

"I anticipate that Fort Worth will stack up favorably to similar urban cities," Peoples said.

"Should it prove to be a valid study, it will be valuable to the district and will give public confidence in Fort Worth schools a great boost."
n

Publication#W\ PP# 45. Austin AmericanStatesman"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Children get help to overcome middle school's early terrorsHead
line #:\ PP#
By Sharon Jayson
American-Statesman Staff

Bronwin Simpson didn't hesitate when asked the biggest challenge she faced as a sixth-grader at Lamar Middle School.

"The hardest thing about being a sixth-grader is opening my locker," said Simpson, 11.

Manipulating her locker's combination might seem a minor hurdle compared with being assigned schoolwork that's much tougher or confronting a classroom of strangers in a new school, but such fears are very real for sixth-graders. Just ask Sonia Rangel, also a Lamar sixth-grader, who, like all her middle school peers, faced lockers for the first time in sixth grade.

"The hardest thing is to get your locker open and get to class on time before the bell rings," Rangel said.

For both girls, adjusting to life at Lamar has been lightened by a research project of the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the educational psychology department at the University of Texas, the Texas Education Agency and the Austin school district.

Based on the knowledge that academic and behavioral problems are heightened when elementary students enter middle school, the researchers sought ways that schools could help their students adjust. For the Texas Education Agency, the study offered the possibility of ensuring that the state's increasingly multicultural population stay in school.

The study began four years ago with surveys and interviews of fifth-and sixth-graders.

Researchers found the elementary students worried more about physical safety and the academic challenges they would face in middle school than about making new friends or being in a bigger environment. But researchers noted that students, after settling into middle school, lost self-confidence and appeared to like school less than before.

Approximately 1,000 students at Highland Park, Ortega and Sims elementary schools, as well as at Lamar Middle School, participated in the study, called Barriers to Student Learning in Diverse Schools. The campuses were selected because they are predominantly single-race schools whose student populations interact for the first time at Lamar. Whites are in the majority at Highland Park, Hispanics at Ortega, and blacks at Sims.

While researchers found that most students have some trouble adjusting, minority students and students from low-income backgrounds "especially Hispanics" have the hardest time.

'A foreign country'

"Coming to West Austin is almost like coming to a foreign country," said Richard Schott, the professor who directed the LBJ School study.

"When they got here, they suddenly had to interact with a whole variety of kids they never had experienced before, especially kids from upper middle-class status. We found the

Hispanics seemed to have the hardest adjustment and then the African American students; and then for most of the Anglo students it was easier, although it was also hard for them," Schott said.

Last spring, UT educational-psychology professor Cindy Carlson and some of her graduate students launched the intervention program for fifth-graders at Ortega and Sims.

This fall, as Lamar sixth-graders, the students attended weekly decision-making and problem-solving sessions and after-school tutoring several times a week.

"These kids really leave their whole culture and community when they come to a middle school that's this far away and has this much diversity and is this different in terms of its structure from the way the elementary school is in the neighborhood," Carlson said.

Although many elementary schools may not be composed so predominantly of one race, the issue of converging cultures at middle school is critical because that's when busing begins and students leave their neighborhood elementary school behind.

The study found that students of different ethnicities were often wary of each other and "tensions based on ethnicity seemed often to be reinforced by differences in socioeconomic status." In addition, busing "set the stage for negative multicultural relationships" and limited the ability of minority students and parents to fully participate at school, thus presenting a major barrier to the school's developing a sense of community.

Extra effort pays off

The researchers' intervention seemed to serve as a buffer for the Lamar students, and those like Bronwin Simpson appear to have benefited.

"When I came to this school, I didn't know anybody except the kids that went to my old

school. Now it seems like I know everybody," she said. "But you've got to make an effort, and you've got to be nice."

Without the extra attention, Paula Simpson said her daughter Bronwin would not be at Lamar today.

"I would have transferred her to (an elementary) school that had a sixth grade because I wouldn't have been secure enough that she would have been OK," Simpson said of her daughter. "I grew up in the day when sixth grade was still in elementary school. It seemed too soon to be going to middle school."

Her concerns are shared by some Austin parents worried that the district may move sixth-graders still on elementary campuses to middle school.

Less than a dozen Austin elementary schools offer sixth grade; three schools "

Barrington, Ortega and Zavala " have one class of sixth-graders under a special science program. Sims is considering joining that group "keeping one class of sixth-graders while the rest of them move into middle school.

A more enlightened approach, according to Douglas MacIver, associate director of the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University, would be for middle schools to develop the sense of community found at elementary school.

The LBJ School report directed by Schott took the same approach, and the Austin district has adopted that philosophy for its middle school initiatives, said Kay Psencik, deputy superintendent in Austin.

"We've been acting on it," she said. "What he's (Schott) come out with is aligned with the national studies and what we've been working on."

Publication#W\ PP# 46. Tulsa World"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Don't Ask, Don't Tell Headline #:\ PP#

By World's own Service

School employees don't tell. School officials don't ask.

Administrators are often the last to find out that an employee has been arrested, convicted or even sent to prison.

"I thought it was no one's business," said Garland L. Allen, a longtime custodian who never told the district about his felony drunk-driving conviction, which, by law, prevents him from working in public schools.

"It was off work when I was partying, and that was it. It's no one's business but mine."

Area districts were in the dark about the majority of more than 200 arrests and subsequent court actions of school employees in the past two years, a Tulsa World investigation shows.

No state laws require employees to inform supervisors of run-ins with the law, and, with few exceptions, most districts surveyed by the World had no policies requiring such notification.

"I've never had one (tell of an arrest) in 12 years. I call them in when I find out about it. The majority of the time they say 'I'm afraid I'm going to lose my job,'" said Mike Pounds, director of classified personnel for Tulsa Public Schools.

More than half of the people arrested were employed with Tulsa; the remainder came from 23 districts across the state.

Brushes with the law by school employees ran the gamut, including arrests and prosecutions for drugs, violence, theft and sex.

Some employees were able to hide their crimes from districts by fulfilling sentences on weekends and scheduling court dates on vacation or sick days.

"I'm a public school teacher. I have a reputation to maintain," a Bixby teacher who was arrested for misdemeanor drunk driving said. "It's embarrassing for the district."

Districts tend to find out about run-ins involving teachers and support personnel from media reports or anonymous tips.

"We rely on newspapers to find out," Okmulgee Superintendent Bill Wilson said.

Of the three dozen school districts surveyed by the Tulsa World, Broken Arrow in northeastern Oklahoma and Mid-Del and Choctaw-Nicoma Park in central Oklahoma were the only districts with some type of notification policy.

The Mid-Del district outside Oklahoma City requires employees to notify the district "immediately" if they are placed under arrest or an arrest is pending.

The Choctaw-Nicoma Park district, also near Oklahoma City, has a similar policy.

Bus drivers for Tulsa Public Schools are screened for sanctions and points against the driving records during mid-year background checks with the Department of Public Safety.

Broken Arrow's notification policy only refers to individuals convicted of felony drug charges.

"We don't recheck everyone, because the cost would be extremely expensive for us to do that," Broken Arrow Superintendent Jerry Hill said.

"The clause is in there in order to place the burden on the employee to know

that if they
get into legal trouble and have a conviction that they are oblig
ated to inform us."

When asked if they think employees have a moral obligation to tell of their a
rrests,
school officials had varied opinions.

"I do," Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent John Thompson said.

But Union Public Schools Superintendent Cathy Burden said she felt that the i
ssue was
not so clear.

"I'm afraid it's a gray area that is not so easy to say absolutely yes and ab
solutely no,"
Burden said.

"I think they've got a right to some protection as citizens when it's not rel
ated to their
job. But when it's related, I think we have the right to know th
at."

Allen, a custodian, worked for Tulsa Public Schools with a felony DUI convict
ion for
more than a year before he resigned.

He was convicted of felony DUI in June 1996. His probation officer eventually
contacted school officials, alerting them to the crime, and they told Allen t
hat they intended
to begin termination proceedings, Pounds said.

Allen resigned in August 1997.

"In a way, I do wish they would've kept me," Allen, 42, said. "But if it's a
state law, then
you can't do nothing about it."

As part of his sentence for the 1996 conviction, Allen spent weekends in jail
so that he
could retain his job.

Paul M. Harjo, an Indian education tutor in Sand Springs, never told the dist

riect about
the felony DUI conviction he received in June 1993.

Harjo, 43, has worked for Sand Springs schools since 1990 tutoring American Indian students.

"I didn't mention it to the district," he said. "I would probably lose my job over this. I felt it was confidential. I did my time and successfully completed the probation."

But Sand Springs Superintendent George Paden said Harjo should have notified the district when he was arrested because of the nature of his employment.

"If he were with a bank or the Williams company, probably not. But in a school setting," he should have done so, Paden said.

Employees who are up-front with districts about past or pending criminal actions are the exception, not the rule.

Glynda L. Ragsdale was arrested in March 1996 on felony charges of possession of controlled drugs and misdemeanor charges of possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

She pleaded guilty to the charges and received a deferred sentence until October 1999.

A year later, Ragsdale applied for a custodian position with Claremore Public Schools and was hired three days later.

Superintendent Keith Ballard said Ragsdale told him of her arrest and charges.

"She was up-front about it," Ballard said. "We ran a check before we hired her and found the incident related more to her ex-husband. She is a good employee."

Ballard said Ragsdale, who did not return phone calls from the World, is the only employee who has been up-front with him about a criminal history.

Otherwise, Ballard has found out about employees' histories "when reading the newspaper."

Publication#W\ PP# 47. Newsday"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ PP# Trouble for Teacher / Talked with
class about being gay, says Sunnyside
school official.Headline #:\ PP#By Sarah Kershaw. STAFF WRITER; Mohamad Bazzi contributed to this story.

An openly gay Queens elementary school teacher and visible gay-rights activist has been accused by a local school official of violating educational policy by discussing his sexuality with his fourth-grade students. For the second time in his 14-year tenure at PS 199 in Sunnyside, the teacher, Daniel Dromm, is battling an ultra-conservative school board member, Frank Borzellieri, over what the teacher can say in class about his sexual orientation. Calling Dromm "the heterosexual homosexual," Borzellieri is demanding that the superintendent of Community School District 24, Joseph Quinn, take disciplinary action against the teacher. Quinn did not return calls yesterday. But in a Jan. 16 memo to Borzellieri, Quinn said the Board of Education had investigated and found "nothing of substance." Board of Education officials could not confirm yesterday whether such an

investigation took place and said they expected the issue to be resolved by officials in the local district. Visibly shaken, Dromm, 42, of Flushing, said that he is honest with his students about being gay but does not discuss the issue in class. "This is one of my greatest fears," he said of the accusations. "I don't know what they're going to do. I don't put anything past them." In 1993, Dromm was disciplined by the PS 199 principal for "outing himself" to students, after Borzellieri and another conservative school board member, Mary Cummins, accused him of inappropriate behavior. Dromm was told by the principal, Jack Bir

biglia, now retired, not to "pursue" or "elaborate on" the subject of his sexual orientation in class and he complied, he said. Dromm came out publicly in 1992 in a Newsday article, during a furor in the school district over the Rainbow curriculum, which covered homosexuality. The controversy, which engulfed the school system in 1993, ultimately led to the ouster of Schools Chancellor Joseph Fernandez. The latest conflict between Dromm and Borzellieri began in the fall, when Dromm wrote a letter to a local Queens newspaper stating that he is open about his homosexuality with his students. Borzellieri, who lives in Ridgewood, demanded that Quinn investigate. "It's just so inappropriate for a teacher to be discussing his perversions with 10-year-olds," he said. Borzellieri contends that Dromm is flouting a district policy barring him from discussing his homosexuality with students. The 1987 School Board 24 resolution bars classroom discussion of homosexuality, birth control, masturbation and abortion, officials said. Dromm said he was unaware that there was an investigation into his conduct and was never contacted or interviewed. He said he believes Borzellieri has little support, and Borzellieri acknowledged that he has no backing from other school board members. Dromm, a highly visible gay-rights activist who founded the Queens Gay Pride Committee, said it is impossible to conceal his sexual orientation from his students. "If a child asks about my sexuality, I answer honestly," he said, but he added that he does not discuss the issue with students. Shirey Stergiou, whose daughter is in Dromm's class, called him an "excellent teacher" and said her daughter does not know that Dromm is gay. "I am not aware that he has done any coming out in class," said Stergiou, co-president of the school PTA. "This is a political war that has nothing to do with what's going on inside the classroom."

Publication#W\ PP# 48. St. Petersburg Times"Publication" #: \ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Fine line between diploma, dropoutHeadline #: \ PP#
By STEPHEN HEGARTY

By most standards, the graduation picture in the state of Florida has been rosy

in recent
years.

The dropout rate, after welcome decreases a few years ago, is holding steady. The class of '97 was the largest graduating class in state history. Clearly, students are staying in school and graduating.

But more and more of those graduates are leaving school with something less than the standard diploma. Last year more graduates than ever got a certificate of completion " a sheet of paper that means they got through high school, but did not achieve all that was expected.

That certificate " a sort of Diploma Lite " leaves graduates with few options after high school. Unlike a standard diploma, the certificate of completion won't get you into a community college, much less a university. It won't get you into the military.

"It separates you from a dropout, but that's about it," said Ken Otero, director of secondary schools in Hillsborough County. "We don't really even look at that as an option."

The number and percentage of students getting non-standard diplomas remain relatively low " only a few thousand statewide last year. But both the number and percentage are increasing sharply. They doubled last year, and they're expected to keep increasing.

Though few educators have noticed the phenomenon, a recent report out of the Florida Department of Education points to its significance. Students who graduated last year represent the first wave of a baby boom that began in 1979, and trends that affect that group might be magnified over the next several years.

Also, the gap between standard diplomas and certificates of completion is wider for minority students around the state, creating another troubling disparity between black and

white students. In some districts, one out of every 10 black graduates is leaving school with a certificate of completion that limits options after graduation.

Educators are not quite sure why this is happening.

The DOE report offers a couple of theories.

"The decline in the overall percentage of seniors who complete high school with a standard diploma appears to be influenced by two simultaneous shifts in trends " the changing profile of Florida's high school students and rising academic standards," the report's conclusion reads.

"As these trends continue into the next decade, we may very well see a gradual downward shift in the proportion of students completing high school and in the proportion receiving standard diplomas. . . ."

The theory about increased academic standards may soon become more of a factor, as the state soon will require a 2.0 grade point average for graduation. In most districts, that will affect graduates two or three years from now.

The demographic shifts also are expected to become more of a factor. The percentage and number of black graduates have steadily increased in the last 20 years. But, while the percentage of white graduates getting standard diplomas is at its highest point since 1983 at 98.5 percent, the percentage of black graduates getting standard diplomas (88.6 percent) is at the lowest point recorded.

But what caused the downward shift in the last six years? The percentage of graduates leaving school with a standard diploma went from 98 percent in 1990-91 to 94 percent in 1996-97.

"These might be students who would have dropped out before," said David Mosrie,

director of the Division of Public Schools for the Florida Department of Education. "You know we've had a real push to keep students in school. It could be that they're not dropping out, but they're also not doing everything they need to do."

It also is possible that more special education students are getting certificates of completion, rather than settling for a special diploma " a non-standard diploma reserved for special education students.

Perhaps the most likely cause would be students' failure on the High School Competency Test " the basic skills test students must pass to get a standard diploma. So long as a student collects the necessary credits, the HSCT is the only thing preventing him or her from getting a standard diploma.

Students take the HSCT in their junior year, and if they don't pass it, they can take it again, and again. Even if they haven't passed the HSCT at the end of their senior year, students can retake it.

"There's a remediation program during summer school," said Susan Bailey, director of high school education for the Pinellas County schools, which has one of the higher percentages of standard diplomas in the state. "There's also an option of coming back for a 13th year. You remain in school full time or part time. Most students don't do that."

Despite those efforts, the failure rate for first-time takers of the HSCT increased last year when the passing score was raised.

With the emergence of new state tests that are expected to generate headlines in the coming months, districts will have to work to stay focused on boosting HSCT scores. Many districts are hopeful that increased standards will help students excel on the test, rather than leave them behind.

Publication#W\ PP# 49. Richmond TimesDispatch"Publication" #:\ PP#January 24,
1998
Headline#\ PP# U.Va. board discusses tailgating,
students' drinking Headline #
:\ PP#BY CARLOS SANTOS
Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

CHARLOTTESVILLE " Like most of the nation's universities, the University of
Vir
ginia is struggling with binge drinking by its students, a dangerous recreation
that seems
to be increasing, the U.Va. board of visitors heard yesterday.

Though banning alcohol at the university seems unlikely, there was a brief disc
ussion at
the meeting about prohibiting alcohol at the traditional "tailgate pa
rties" at university
football games.

Five students in Virginia have died recently from alcohol-related incidents, in
cluding
21-year-old Leslie Anne Baltz of Reston. The U.Va. student died after f
alling down some
steps after drinking heavily.

The statistics the board heard " gathered from annual surveys at U.Va. " were g
rim:

since the 1990-91 academic year, 17 U.Va. students have died from alcohol-relat
ed
injuries or illness;

on a typical weekend, the U.Va. Hospital emergency room will treat up to 10 stu
dents
with a variety of alcohol-related problems;

as many as 50 percent of U.Va. students have participated in binge drinking in
a two- to
three-week period; and

up to 80 percent of students had reported drinking alcohol in the preceding mon
th.

Dr. Jim Turner, the director of student health, said he believed binge drinking
! five or

more alcoholic drinks in one sitting for a male and four drinks in the same period for a female ! has risen steadily during the past 10 years, though he couldn't explain why.

Turner described to the board a typical emergency-room case that occurred last fall at U.Va.:

An 18-year old student, at a football game, drank a half-pint of vodka and one pint of bourbon. His friends left him outside on the parking lot where he was found and taken to the emergency room. His blood-alcohol level was .310. He recovered.

"That's a typical scenario that happens every weekend," said Turner.

"The level of intensity has gone up," said Turner, who added that the problem is not unique to U.Va., which he described as having an average drinking problem. "But average is something we don't want to aspire to."

Turner also found that of the five cases of meningitis at the university during the past 2-1/2 years, four were associated with binge drinking. Turner said studies have shown binge drinking increases the chances of contracting the potentially fatal infection.

Turner said "tailgating" at football games sends a message to students and others that drinking alcohol is acceptable. "Children model our behavior," he said.

But officials said they would review what goes on at tailgate parties and come to no decision on whether to ban alcohol, said William Harmon, vice president for student affairs.

"But we have to look at more than just the students. We have to look at the culture," he said. "What happens at tailgating is drinking."

The university responded to Baltz's death by calling for a task force that would look at the culture of drinking at U.Va. and at its policies and enforcement. About 70 percent of the students at U.Va. with alcohol-related injuries are younger than 21, the legal drinking age.

Student board member Kristine L. LaLonde questioned the impact of a task force and called for more direct, timely action. "We need to teach them how to care for a friend who has had too much to drink . . . to let them know this can happen to you."

She said incidents such as Baltz's death have an impact on students only for a short time.

Board member Franklin Birckhead urged caution in the university taking responsibility for student behavior. "It's the individual student's responsibility to monitor their own behavior," he said.

Leonard Sandridge, executive vice president and chief financial officer at U.Va., said, "There is clearly use of alcohol by our students when it's not allowed" such as in the dormitories. We have not reached them. . . . We've not been effective in dealing with that."

Publication#W\ PP# 50. Miami Herald"Publication" #: \ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# A test of standardsHeadline #:\ PP#Subhead#[\ PP# State exam to measure reading, math skillsSubhead#:\ PP#
By SABRINA WALTERS
Herald Staff Writer

Students, grab a No. 2 pencil " it's test-taking time.

Miami-Dade County public school students are among about a half-million statewide required this week to take a tough new state exam that will gauge their achievement in reading and mathematics.

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (called FCAT) will determine how many students are meeting Sunshine State Standards, requirements adopted two years ago in an

effort to raise academic expectations of students across the state.

The exam will be administered to students in grades 4, 5, 8 and 10.

The younger students will take the exam on Tuesday and Wednesday. Eighth-graders will be tested over four days beginning Feb. 2. Tenth-graders will take the test Feb. 3 and 4.

"They have been given practice tests and they had an orientation, so they will have had most of the month to prepare," said Laura Melvin, assessment coordinator for the district.

Test results will be mailed to parents in May.

Introduced last spring as a 1,200-question practice exam, the FCAT was criticized by some educators who said it took too long for students to complete and added to their already heavy workload "just another exam among many state and national tests.

More than six standardized tests will be given during the 1997-98 school year in Dade.

State Education Commissioner Frank Brogan said he intends to replace some of these other exams with the FCAT.

For example, 10th-graders who perform well on the FCAT could be excused from the High School Competency Test (HSCT), currently a requirement for graduation.

And FCAT scores would be used to determine a student's qualification for scholarships now based solely on scores from the Scholastic Assessment Test and American College Testing Program college entrance exams.

"The biggest benefit is that we're raising the bar academically, and we will be certain that a diploma in Florida will represent real knowledge that prepares students to succeed in the

work world, at a community college, a university, or a vocational program," said Brewster Brown, spokesman for the state Department of Education.

A challenging test

State officials last week warned parents and teachers that first-year test scores may be low.

The FCAT was designed to be challenging.

While other exams present only multiple-choice questions, leaving room for guessing, the FCAT includes a combination of multiple-choice and grid response questions.

In the grid questions, students must solve a problem and indicate the answer by filling in a bubbled grid.

In the math portion, students are required to show their work.

For reading, students are required to write extended answers to the passages they have been asked to read.

When the state adopted a set of standards for Florida students in 1996, part of the requirements called for a standard exam.

"The State Board of Education and the governor are leaning toward more rigorous proficiency levels," Brown said.

The standards

The Sunshine State Standards identify expected student progress after 2nd, 5th, 8th and 12th grades. The standards cover language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education and foreign languages.

The FCAT, however, tests only reading and math.

For instance, eighth-graders should be able to respond critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama. They should understand character and plot development, and how point of view and tone are used in various sections to support a central story line.

In math, eighth-graders should be able to use geometry to locate objects in two and three dimensions and to describe objects algebraically.

And unlike the Stanford Achievement Test and other standardized tests, the FCAT is not graded on a curve. Results will not be compared to other students here or nationally.

Right answers only

Students taking the exam this year will only find out how many questions they answered right and wrong, and not their standing.

A ranking system is to be developed over the summer.

State officials said they expect to use a scale that ranks students on three levels "above proficient, proficient and below proficiency.

All public school students must take the FCAT twice in elementary school "the reading portion in fourth grade and mathematics in fifth. They'll take more advanced versions, testing both their math and reading capabilities, in 8th and 10th grades."

Publication#W\ PP# 51. Atlanta Journal-Constitution "Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# School boards eyeing sales tax again Headline #:\ PP#
By Diane R. Stepp
the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Cobb and Marietta school systems are coping with overcrowded schools and new subdivisions bringing even more children to their doors " and no way to cope except for trailers.

The obvious solution is more money for new schools and repairs to existing ones .

Last spring, the two school systems joined up to push for a penny sales tax that would have generated \$653 million over five years. It was soundly defeated, and both systems promised to remain allies for another try this year.

Yet halfway into the school year, no solid plan is on the table, leaving Marietta " the smaller partner " wondering whether to go it alone.

The building pressure first became apparent late last year, when Marietta School Superintendent Ron Galloway said he was considering recommending a March bond referendum that could later be repaid with sales tax dollars. He has since backed off the idea, but several school board members say a separate bond referendum is still an option.

But last week, Galloway again stirred the pot by saying he may ask for a larger cut of the sales tax revenues than the 7 percent the school district settled for in the first alliance.

"That is an option," said Galloway. The two boards scrambled to smooth over any friction in a rare joint statement issued by the chairmen of both school boards saying the two bodies expect to continue working together.

Marietta is in an awkward position. According to state law, the city and the county must agree on a spending proposal before putting a joint sales tax issue before voters.

But Cobb County has yet to draft its side of the spending proposal, and will miss its own

deadline by two months. The county is anxious that spending recommendations come from the grass roots rather than top down, one criticism that anti-tax activists successfully used to help defeat the school sales tax referendum in June.

The long-awaited report from a citizens panel on school facility needs is now expected in late February.

But even if the county isn't politically ready, Galloway has asked for a meeting on Thursday between the officers of the Cobb and Marietta school boards to get the spending proposal in shape. Marietta also wants to know how Cobb proposes getting the word out "to all four corners of the county," said board member Annette Lewis. "We can't afford to fail."

While no absolute deadline exists, school officials need to hit parents hard with an educational campaign before schools let out in June.

"Time is of the essence," said Marietta school board member Clay Smith.

School construction plans for both systems abruptly ground to a halt last June, when the penny sales tax failed. It was the first time voters had said no to building new schools in either system, despite the reality of more than 400 trailer classrooms.

Marietta's school system now serves 7,000 students; Cobb County's serves 88,000. Combined, the two are expecting a 10 percent increase of as many as 5,700 students during the next two years "equal to 170 more trailers.

Marietta school officials' push for an early start to this year's campaign is clear: It will be an even harder sell now, because the county intends to put its own initiative on the November ballot, a 30-month extension of a 1-cent sales tax for roads.

A penny for schools combined with the road tax extension would put Cobb's sales

tax at
6 cents.

"It will be a very tough sell when you're talking about raising the sales tax by a 50 percent increase " which is what it would be if the road tax sunsets. It depends almost completely on how effective the two forces are at articulating a compelling need and convincing voters how the money will be spent," said Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster who's done research in Cobb.

Dillon said he plans to educate voters to the school district's capital needs

using radio, television and print advertising, direct mail, door to door calls in neighborhoods and rounds of speech making to local civic organizations. Rep. Mitchell Kaye (R-Marietta), a member of the House Education committee, said the school systems stand a better chance of passage if, like the county, they put a 2 1/2-year limit on the sales tax instead of the maximum five.

"There are a lot of options, a lot of things to think about," said Cobb Superintendent Richard Benjamin, who is saying little about which direction the school system will go.

One worry is Cobb tax watchdog Paul Ploener, who led a successful effort in June to defeat the school districts' plan.

"They just saw a big pot of money and figured out how to spend it all," said Ploener, who heads a group called Concerned Taxpayers in Cobb County.

Ploener said he has seen "a tremendous amount of improvement" in the new board's fiscal responsibility, but adds that he would like to see property tax relief of 3.8 mills as part of any new spending proposal.

Headline#\ PP# Parents go back to school for kids'
sake Headline #:\ P P#
By Leon Stafford
the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

When Hazel Bryant tells parents that the best way to get involved in their children's education is to get back into the classroom themselves, she knows what she's talking about.

Bryant enrolled last fall in Parent University, a south Fulton County program designed to teach moms, dads and everyday citizens how to better help schools educate children. On Saturday, she graduated from the school, walking down the aisle of Banneker High School as the program's first valedictorian.

"I'm so excited," said Bryant, the president of the PTA at S.L. Lewis Elementary School in College Park. She was joined on stage by her daughters, Alexis, 11, and Raquel, 9, as she welcomed about 200 families, friends and neighbors of the 87 graduates to the ceremonies.

The university, the brainchild of the Wraparound Collaboration, a south Fulton community organization, offered parents about 20 classes to help them better understand the educational needs of their children, said Bill Edwards, Wraparound chairman. Classes were held on Saturdays in subjects such as computers, leadership skills, dealing with children and drugs and understanding how a school system works.

Parent University is one of several initiatives that Wraparound Collaboration uses to encourage parental involvement and keep children in school.

Participants included people who do not have children, Fulton County school board members and even a principal.

Organizers challenged people to recruit parents who were not there but would benefit from the university.

"There are a lot of parents out there, and we need to bring them into this group," said
Fulton Superintendent Stephen D. Dolinger.

Jacqueline Landers used the program to learn how to use computers. She's planning to
buy one, now that she feels comfortable using them.

"My kids at home won't teach me about computers, so I had to learn it on my own," said
Landers of Hapeville.

Publication#W\ P
P# 53. Atlanta Journal-Constitution "Publication" #: \ PP# January 26, 1998

Headline# \ PP# Making the grade: Sports eligibility
may get tougher
Headline #: \ PP#
By Rick Badie and Leon Stafford
the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

In a move that could restrict thousands of students, the public school systems in Fulton
and Rockdale counties are considering increasing to 2.0 the minimum grade-point average
required for participation in athletics and other competitive activities.

The tougher standard would affect virtually every segment of interscholastic life in high
schools " from football to debate to band to ROTC weapons teams to cheerleading.

Rockdale's proposal would eliminate campus driving privileges for students who don't
maintain a 2.0 average.

Rockdale has a 1.0 GPA requirement while Fulton mandates a 70 average. About one-third
of all students participating in competitive activities in Fulton County schools have
a GPA below 2.0; about 10 percent fall below that threshold in Rockdale.

"To me, what better way to be on the leading edge of an issue than to raise academic

standards," said Tony Wilson, a member of the Rockdale school board, which will explain details of its proposal Tuesday in a special meeting. Fulton board members are fine-tuning their measure, which will be debated in the coming months.

If approved, the new 2.0 standard would go beyond the controversial "no pass, no play" rule set by the Georgia High School Association that says students must pass five classes and maintain at least a 70 average in the previous grading period to participate in interscholastic competition.

School districts can set higher standards if they want to, and Fulton and Rockdale are the first in metro Atlanta to consider raising the bar to 2.0 "a move which could generate a debate as emotional as the one sparked by "no pass, no play" in 1987.

Some critics of the proposals argue that one group of students should not be held to a higher standard, that current standards are tough enough, and that stricter ones will only discourage academically weak students who go to school for extracurricular activities.

"If you have the talent, I think you should be able to show your talent," said Jessica Potts, 16, a 10th grader at Heritage High School in Rockdale County. She wanted to join the school soccer team last year, but was turned away because she didn't have the grades.

Some parents and coaches don't think one group of students should be held to a higher standard than the rest of the population. They want board members to understand "there is a fine line between raising standards and discouraging students from staying in school," Fulton school board President Karen Weaver said. "If it's done, it will have to be done gradually."

Publication#W\ PP# 54. Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ PP# Umbrella group pitches to decentralize
educationHeadline #:\ P

P#By Jordana Hart, Globe Staff

A wide-ranging coalition of local Libertarians, fundamentalist Christians, home schoolers, and even some liberal education-reform advocates are starting a chapter of the Separation of School and State Alliance, a national organization that wants federal and state governments out of education, the group's chairman said yesterday.

"We must get rid of government-run education," said author Samuel Blumenfeld of Waltham, a one-time substitute teacher in Quincy who has an honorary doctoral degree from Bob Jones University, a fundamentalist Christian college in South Carolina. "We must get back to the educational freedom of the 1850s and 1860s. We object to the centralized system ruled top down."

The Massachusetts Eagle Forum, a chapter of the national group led by conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, met in the State House Saturday to lay the foundation for its anti-public education alliance.

"We want to give the rights of parent back to parents," said Nancy O'Toole of Cohasset, president of the local Eagle Forum chapter. "Schools are not teaching academics, but skills simply so people can be put to work."

State Education Commissioner Robert V. Antonucci said last night that he hadn't heard of the alliance.

"I am all for parent involvement, but if the group is strictly one to generate a sensational approach with no motive to help schools, then I get concerned," he said.

O'Toole said state Senator Robert L. Hedlund, a Weymouth Republican, arranged for the Eagle Forum to hold its meeting in Senate Hearing Room 222 for four hours. Yesterday, Hedlund said he has arranged for various groups to meet at the State House and was not

linked to, or even aware, of Saturday's agenda.

"It is the people's building. Anyone can meet there," Hedlund said.

Government "is the root where it all started, so where better to meet" than the State House, said O'Toole.

State Representative Mary Jeannette Murray, a Republican from Cohasset, said she attended part of the meeting as a friend of O'Toole, who was her legislative aide for 11 years. "There was some information that I thought was good," but some of the discussion seemed extreme, she said.

At the meeting, dubbed Boston Tea Party II, a Sharon parent who has a special-needs child and a Waltham parent who home-schools her two children described how their respective school districts labeled them unfit and neglectful parents and tried to get the courts to grant the state custody of their children.

The case against the Sharon mother was dropped Dec. 18, while the Waltham family has its next court date on Feb. 21.

"We were able to discuss our horrible experiences where schools have attacked our parental rights," said the Sharon parent, Lise Rubin, editor of the local newspaper.

Acknowledging that the group comprises unusual political bedfellows, Rubin said the concerns she shares with many parents about "being cut off, put down and ignored" by teachers, school administrators and government officials "will make for some pretty unusual coalitions."

The Separation of School and State Alliance was formed in January 1994 in Fresno, Calif., by Marshall Fritz, a former IBM salesman and failed Libertarian congressional candidate who had just disbanded his Pioneer Christian Academy. He sa

id in November that
his group has grown to 3,500 members of many denominations
and political views.n

Publication#W\ PP# 55. Asbury Park Press"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Education policy reflects realities Headline #:\ PP#By BRIAN K
LADKO
EDUCATION WRITER

MOST HOMEOWNERS can't say how much money their local school district received
f
rom the state in this school year. But they probably know how much they're payi
ng in
school taxes.

Similarly, most parents are likely oblivious to the state's new requirements in
science,
social studies, mathematics and four other subjects. But they know wh
at time their children
must be at school, when their children get home, and who
oversees the building during that
time.

Outside the Statehouse, education rarely inspires talk about funding formulas a
nd
academic standards. Instead, people think of tax bills, school schedules and
the people in
charge of their children.

As she begins a second term, Gov. Whitman seems to be responding to this realit
y. Though her education agenda during the past four years was focused on abstrac
t policies,
the goals she outlined in this month's State of the State address w
ere grounded in people's
experiences with schools.

The topics speak to every parent who ever had a bad experience with a school of
ficial or
longed to send their child to another district. They speak to anyone
who ever decided that
voting for school board members was too much of a hassle,
or wondered why a district with
200 students exists. They speak to anyone who
thinks students need to spend more time at
school.

The proposals may not appear so bold on close inspection. The governor isn't pu

shing
for district consolidation " just a public discussion of the issue. She
isn't calling for
statewide school choice " just a few experiments here and th
ere.

But Whitman seems determined to remind the public that education, while primari
ly a
local function, is also a state responsibility.

Tenured principals

The way principals describe it, their jobs are a virtual minefield. They are co
nstantly
alienating students, parents, and occasionally, school board members.

For that reason, they say, they need to keep tenure. Without job protection, th
ey assert,
few principals could do their jobs responsibly.

Whitman, however, wants more accountability from the middle managers of New Jer
sey's
educational system. She called for unspecified changes to the protection
principals now
have, perhaps going so far as eliminating tenure for principals
altogether.

The state stopped giving tenure to superintendents in 1991, and all superintend
ents hired
since then work on a contract basis. Principals are hoping to escape
that fate by pushing for
a compromise: streamlining of the legal procedures fo
r removing principals.

But they don't want to give up lifetime job protection, or as they call it, "du
e process."
Though they acknowledge that most middle managers don't enjoy such
security, they note
that most middle managers don't have to worry about the whi
ms of elected officials.

Ed Alster, the principal of Holmdel High School, is convinced he could not have
lasted
12 years without tenure. Whenever he disciplines a student, denies some
one's entrance into
an honors course or forbids a particular type of fund-raise

r, Alster says he creates another enemy. And in the world of public education, enemies often take their gripes to the school board.

Though Alster understands the need for accountability, he says board members in many towns "he is quick to exclude Holmdel " don't understand how school districts operate.

"I'm not sure they understand the complexities," he said.

School choice

When she first ran for governor in 1993, Whitman suggested that low-income students should get publicly funded vouchers for private school tuition. Although that concept was considered too radical by legislators, state leaders agreed on a concept called "charter schools" " publicly funded schools that operate independently of local school districts.

In September, 13 such schools opened, giving some families a free alternative to their local district. Now Whitman wants to give parents another alternative " letting students attend public schools outside their own towns without paying tuition. She hopes to see one such experiment in each county starting in September 1999.

The magnitude of the proposal remains unclear. Will the state give school officials the power to block an exodus of students to some other district? What kind of incentive, if any, would districts have to accept out-of-town students?

School officials, especially those in struggling districts, are particularly wary of school choice. A troubled school system would be most likely to lose large numbers of students, and each student's departure would reduce its annual allotment of state funds.

School officials also wonder if the lowering of barriers could lead athletic di

rectors to
raid other districts for promising athletes.

But rapidly growing districts, including several in Monmouth and Ocean counties, might actually welcome the opportunity. In Jackson Township, where 800 students must be educated in trailers, Superintendent Edward R. Elms thinks school choice might help ease the overcrowding.

"People are beginning to feel the crowdedness at this point," Elms said. "Whether it's gotten to the point that they want out, that's another story."

Other states have allowed interdistrict choice already, and found that only a small percentage of families take advantage of it, said James Murphy, spokesman for the state's school administrators. The main reason for crossing district lines, he said, is convenience: Parents want their children to attend a school near their workplace.

Merging school districts

Gov. Whitman, citing the public's frustration with property taxes, wants the power to force certain districts to merge. But she won't do it until the people give her that power.

The governor wants to hold a referendum, asking voters to decide if state government should have the power to force districts to consolidate "provided the merger will lead to lower taxes and won't sacrifice educational quality.

If the decision remains in the hands of local districts, history shows it won't happen. In recent years, only two mergers have taken place.

It's not just the obvious desire of officials and parents to keep control as local as possible. Regionalization can have the perverse effect of increasing the tax burden for residents in certain towns "usually wealthier towns" even as it lowers the overall cost per student.

In addition, the savings from school district consolidation may not be as dramatic as Whitman suggested.

Though New Jersey's multitude of districts contributes to its high administrative costs, the bulk of education dollars goes toward teacher salaries " an item largely unaffected by changes in school district size. And when two districts merge, the newly created entity usually pays teachers at the higher of the two pay scales.

A 1995 study by Rutgers University Professor Ernest C. Reock estimated that the savings from regionalization would amount to about 2 percent of that year's total school spending.

When the school population declines, larger districts will have an easier time cutting positions " and thus saving money " than small districts, Reock said. But the school population is growing, and will continue to do so for at least another decade.

November elections

Every year, a small portion of the population decides the size of the coming year's school tax bill and the makeup of local school boards.

Voter turnout for school elections, usually held on the second Tuesday in April, has varied between 10 percent and 18 percent over the last decade. The turnout for November general elections " in which voters choose candidates for federal, state, county and municipal offices Leo F. Klagholz, the state's education commissioner, believes the meager participation in school votes allows a well-organized minority to determine the outcome. He doesn't mention teachers in particular, but teachers, who favor increased school spending, definitely fit that description.

Three years ago, when he unveiled his proposal for a new school-funding formula, Klagholz suggested moving the elections to November to increase participation. The idea was dropped during negotiations with legislators, but Whitman " who didn't vote in her local school elections before becoming governor " has decided to raise the issue again, calling the current practice "undemocratic."

"After all, the largest part of the property tax bill shouldn't be decided by the smallest part of the electorate," she said.

The state's education establishment, including school board members and the state's largest teachers' union, contend that November school votes would allow partisan politics to intrude on educational issues. What they don't say " but probably fear " is that larger numbers of voters would mean more frequent rejections of school tax levies.

More time in school

The governor's words seemed clear enough: "I am asking the state Board of Education to increase the minimum length of instructional time in a school day in New Jersey to at least six hours."

But she didn't really mean that.

In the days following her speech, Whitman administration officials said the governor will actually ask the board to increase the minimum school day. And there is a substantial difference, thanks to homeroom, lunch and time between classes.

While the average amount of instructional time is about 5 1/2 hours, the average length of the school day is about 6 1/2 hours " comfortably above Whitman's proposed minimum.

Only 51 of the state's 2,169 schools " about 2 percent " reported a school day of less than six hours in 1995-96. One area school that fell below the mark that year is Keansburg High School; to meet Whitman's standard, the day would have to be lengthened by a mere 12 minutes.

Klagholz, the state's education commissioner, plans to propose additional regulations to maximize the amount of time that students actually spend in class. He would not say last week what measures he had in mind.

But Klagholz was clear on one point: Even though any lengthening of the school day would be met with teachers' demands for more pay, the state won't be providing any extra money.

"State standards are one thing and local compensation is another thing, and the two are not related," he said.

Publication#W\ PP# 56. Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ PP#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ PP# Cellucci seeks \$8m for after-school effort Headline #:\ PP#Sub
head#[\ PP# Budget proposal aims to head off an expected surge in juvenile crime
me
Subhead#:\ PP# By Geeta Anand, Globe Staff

Taking a preemptive strike at the predicted rise in juvenile crime during the next decade, Acting Governor Paul Cellucci will unveil an \$8 million initiative tomorrow that would create comprehensive after-school programs in 15 of the state's most troubled neighborhoods.

Administration officials say the state intends to form partnerships with municipalities and community groups to offer health care and structured programs after school to children aged 5 through 9 who are at risk of becoming juvenile delinquents. There is a rise in the population of children in this age group, and criminologists fear state and nationwide surges in crime when the children reach their teenage years.

"This demonstrates real insight into how political leadership can begin to effectively plan for the demographic bulge expected to surface in urban centers," said the Rev. Eugene F. Rivers, a leader of the Ten Point Coalition, a Boston group trying to reduce youth violence. "Community groups and church groups will actively participate."

Tomorrow, Cellucci will include the after-school initiative - and a proposal to boost spending on day-care programs - in his budget proposal, which will require legislative approval. The proposals appear aimed at honing an image as an education governor and disarming Democratic opponents who contend the Weld-Cellucci administration ignored those issues.

Cellucci has already pledged to add 4,000 teachers to the state's schools. As a Republican governor trying to win election in a Democratic state, Cellucci, according to political strategists, needs to demonstrate a commitment to issues beyond crime, welfare, and taxes, which former governor William F. Weld used unsuccessfully in his US Senate run.

"This fits right in with his emphasis on education in the State of the State address," observed Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, who has cast himself as the education mayor. "It shows that the governor understands that education doesn't just happen in the classroom. It happens before and after school."

Because most juvenile crime occurs between 2 and 6 p.m., when most young delinquents have little or no adult supervision, criminal justice specialists have advocated after-school programs. Those specialists, as well as local activists and politicians, praised the Cellucci initiative.

"It's far better and easier to build healthy children rather than rebuild adults," said James Alan Fox, dean of the College of Criminal Justice at Northeast

ern University.

The number of 14- to 17-year-olds in Massachusetts in the year 2005 will be 20 percent higher than in 1995, according to Fox, who conducted a nationwide study for the US Department of Justice. Fox predicts a rise in juvenile crime to accompany the juvenile population bulge unless strong measures are taken immediately.

Menino said he was pleased the state is seeking a partnership with local efforts already under way. Boston has seen strong cooperation among police, probation officers, and community leaders, and the teamwork is credited with substantially reducing the city's crime rate.

Indeed, the Cellucci initiative appears to have plenty of company. Menino said earlier this month that he is putting \$5 million over the next four years to after-school programs. And US Senator Edward M. Kennedy is expected today to announce he is filing legislation seeking federal funding for after-school programs.

Sources say the Cellucci program would require a partnership between two state departments: \$3 million from the Department of Health and Human Services, and \$5 million from the Department of Education.

What is unusual about the program is the administration's plan to target the money at 15 of the state's most distressed neighborhoods rather than sprinkle it around. Human services officials in the Cellucci administration believe the money will have the highest impact that way.

Administration officials envision the programs being run out of neighborhood schools and loosely coordinated with teachers, other local educators, and courts. In Boston, where part of the program will probably be instituted, Menino has already pledged to keep schools open in the evenings for programming.

However, aides to the acting governor say the 15 neighborhoods to be targeted in the Cellucci program have yet to be selected.

Cellucci is not the only gubernatorial candidate to address the expected rise in juvenile crime. Attorney General Scott Harshbarger commissioned and released a study last year urging the state to prepare for it.

Publication#W\ PP# 57. Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ P P#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ P!P# HOME ECONOMICS: PAYING FOR COLLEGE Cramming for financial aid
Headline #:\ P"P#Subhead#[\ P#P# Advisers: It's never too soon to study ways to put kids through schoolSubhead#:\ P\$P# By Mary Sit, Globe Correspondent

Almost as soon as their baby Nicholas was born 21 months ago, Michele Ciurea, a 34-year-old research economist, and her math professor husband, Christopher King, 39, began worrying about how to pay for their son's college education.

Should they move from their Somerville neighborhood to a pricier one with better schools, or stay where they are and enroll their son in a private elementary school - and which alternative would net more savings for college in later years?

Finally, the worrying prompted the couple to seek professional advice.

"The main thing we've done is worry," confesses Ciurea. "We've gone to a financial planner and through him we're taking a global approach to financial planning rather than the piecemeal approach we had before. We've basically allocated our investments according to our investment profile, which is more aggressive than it was before. But we haven't set aside money specifically for education - although we plan in the next few weeks to open up a Roth IRA and an educational IRA."

Ciurea and King have reason to worry. These days the average cost of a college degree

is about \$70,000 at a private university and \$25,000 at a public school.

And at the current rate of increase, costs are expected to double by the year 2015, says the Council for Aid to Education.

At most colleges, tuition outpaces inflation, with tuition and fees rising 3 to 5 percent each year. Compare that with the 2.5 percent increase over the past year of the consumer price index, the government's measuring stick for inflation.

Massachusetts state colleges, however, have reversed the trend and decrease tuition by 5 percent each year for the past five years, says Judy Keyes, director of student financial assistance at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell.

If you are starting to panic over how to pay for your child's college education, there are steps you can take to help manage the cost. Here are some suggestions from financial planners and university officials.

Set a goal.

Many parents wake up when their kids are teen-agers and suddenly realize college expenses are looming ahead. If they don't have savings, parents will end up spending \$1,000 a month as their kids go through college. "You must decide: Am I going to prepare to send my children to Yale and Harvard? A state university, junior college, or trade school?" says Ralph Schroeder, managing principal of Schroeder and Associates, a division of American Express Financial Advisors Inc.

Determine where you are financially and how much you can save monthly, and calculate how much you'll need to save. Be sure to use the rising costs of college, not the current inflation factor.

Open a custodial account.

This is the simplest way to save money for college. You can contribute up to \$10,000 a year into a custodial account and put it in mutual funds, bank accounts, or stocks. Parents control the account until the child is age 18.

Nancy Walser, author of "The Parent's Guide to Cambridge Schools" (Huron Village Press), says she and her husband have started a mutual fund earmarked for education for each of their children - a 4-year-old son and 5 1/2-year-old daughter.

"Our accountant was telling us we need to sock away \$7,000 a year for each year for each child if we want them to go to a private university. That's pretty daunting," says Walser. "I can't say we've even come close."

Bob Glovsky, director of the financial planning program at Boston University and co-host of "The Money Experts," a call-in talk show on WRKO-AM radio, says parents should not put money in the child's name.

"Money in the child's name counts six times more against you than in the parents' name when applying for financial aid," says Glovsky. The federal financial aid form analyzes the child's assets and will count 35 percent of that as the child's contribution. But the parents' assets count as only 5.6 percent of contributions.

"The rationale is that parents have other uses for their money. By putting money in your child's name you are hurting yourself for financial aid," says Glovsky. You are also giving up control, since the money belongs to the child at age 18.

How much should you save? That, of course, depends on your personal situation. But the younger the children, the more aggressive you can afford to be with your investments. Most financial planners recommend stocks and equities if you have at least 10 years before the

kids head off to college.

If you set up a trust instead of a custodial account, you must hire an attorney to draft the trust agreement and then file a tax return yearly, paying an income tax on interest, capital gains, or income earned on that investment.

Consider locking in tuition with the U. Plan.

This is a prepaid college tuition program that allows families to lock in their children's future tuition and fees at today's rates. The U. Plan locks in a percentage of tuition at 83 percent of tuition at public and private universities in Massachusetts. For example, if a family invested \$1,000 this year, which paid for 10 percent of current tuition at school A, that family would be guaranteed 10 percent of their tuition at that school in the future, regardless of how much tuition will have increased. "Each year you buy and continue to lock in tuition the year you buy it," explains Peter Mazareas, executive director of the Massachusetts Education Financing Authority, which oversees the U. Plan.

You may prepay up to 100 percent of your child's future tuition at today's rates by buying Tuition Certificates that mature in the years when your child will be in college. Each certificate can be redeemed upon maturity for a guaranteed percentage of tuition and fees at any participating college.

The U. Plan buys tax-exempt state bonds, allowing any interest earned to be tax-free.

Parents can invest as little as \$300 in a lump sum or \$25 a month. The next enrollment period starts April 15 and runs to the end of May, says Mazareas.

If a child goes to an out-of-state college, parents get their money back without a penalty and with interest paid at the rate of the consumer price index.

Glovsky, the financial adviser, warns that the U. Plan may not be the smartest

investment for families. "If your child is going to one of these schools, then it's a good investment. If your child doesn't end up at one of these schools, then it's not a good deal. Then it's become a conservative investment, and the rate of return is probably lower than the inflationary cost of college."

Explore the financial aid package offered at your child's university.

At Boston University, where tuition, fees, room and board on-campus cost \$31,700 for the 1997-98 academic year, most students rely on institutional funding, says Ryan Williams, director of the office of financial assistance at BU. "In most cases, the inflation rate for an academic year is higher than the rate of inflation for most consumer products. However, most institutions are able to also increase their ability to put more financial aid into their programs," says Williams.

Financial aid consists of three aspects: loans, grants (free money), and work-study programs, in which students are given jobs, usually on campus.

There are two types of loans - subsidized and unsubsidized. In a unsubsidized loan, parents and students can borrow money, regardless of income. While the student is in school, he pays interest only, not principal. In a subsidized loan, students do not pay interest on the loan until they stop attending school.

"Get organized," advises Susan Smolin, a Needham consultant who helps families navigate the maze of financial aid. "Set out a folder for each college. Make sure you have the requirements and deadlines. Make sure you keep copies of everything. You'll have to complete forms in subsequent years. Keep notes, including dates and names of conversations."

If your child is smart, encourage him or her to take advanced placement courses

Smolin says if a student is eligible and qualified, he or she can take the courses, then must pass an exam to earn college credit. "They're a lot of hard work. You have to take the tests that show you will earn advanced placement status. Not everyone will be eligible. It's for highly qualified academic students," she says.

Open a Roth IRA.

If you are single and have less than \$95,000 in adjusted gross income - or married with income below \$150,000 - you can set aside a maximum of \$2,000 per person into a new Roth individual retirement account. The money grows tax-free, and can be tapped without penalty to pay for qualified educational expenses.

"You could put money away, you wouldn't pay any tax on the earnings, and when the child reaches college age, you can withdraw your initial contribution tax-free," says John Czyzewski, a certified public accountant and partner at Samet & Co. in Chestnut Hill. "And if you have to go into the earnings, you can take the money out and not be subject to any penalty."

Take advantage of the new educational provisions in the tax law.

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 offers four educational incentives: Hope scholarship credit; lifetime learning credit; educational IRAs; and student loan interest deductions.

The Hope scholarship credit, available in 1998, allows you to deduct from your taxes, dollar for dollar, qualified tuition and related expenses for the student's first two years of post-secondary education.

The lifetime learning credit allows you to deduct 20 percent of expenses up to \$10,000. For example, if you incur \$5,000 in expenses for your child in her third year of college, you

get credit for 20 percent of that. "That's \$1,000 you don't pay in taxes," says Schroeder, the financial planner.

The educational IRA allows you to put in a nondeductible contribution of \$500 per year per child until the child is 18 years old. So if you have three kids, you can shield \$1,500 from taxes each year.

In the student loan interest deduction, you can deduct the interest payment during the first 60 months on a higher education loan. For example, let's say you have an \$8,300 loan at 12 percent interest. That generates \$1,000 of interest, which can be deducted from your taxes.

Consider savings bonds.

In 1990, the Treasury Department initiated the Education Bond Program, which allows interest to be completely or partially excluded from federal income tax. Payments to state tuition plans became eligible this year.

Bonds pay 90 percent of the five-year Treasury rate, increase in value monthly, and can earn interest for 30 years. "Bonds are an excellent way to save for college. They're safe, they pay market-based rates, federal tax is deferred, and, depending on your income, the interest can be excluded from your income," says Pete Hollenbach, public affairs officer at the Bureau of Public Debt in Washington. "They are easy to buy and can be registered in the parents' names or the child's name."

Interest can be fully excluded if the taxpayer meets certain income guidelines. For the 1997 tax year, single taxpayers' incomes must be between \$50,850 and \$65,850; taxpayers who are married filing jointly must have incomes of \$76,250 to \$106,250. For the 1998 tax year, income limits for single taxpayers are \$52,250 to \$67,250; for married couples filing jointly, \$78,350 to \$108,350.

Report interest income annually on your child's savings bonds.

Many children receive bonds as gifts from relatives, and parents usually ignore the bonds until they mature, then pay tax on the interest income. Instead, parents should report interest on the bonds each year.

"If the child has minimal income or no income, you can report interest and not pay any tax on the earnings," says Czyzewski. By following this strategy rather than waiting to pay taxes when you cash in the bond, you could save 30 to 35 percent in taxes.

Consider community colleges for the first two years.

Community colleges are the basement bargains of higher education. At Massachusetts Bay Community College in Wellesley, one credit costs \$75, says spokeswoman Pam Eddinger. That means a full-time, liberal arts student would pay \$1,800 for one year of college.

Freshmen can sign up for joint admissions, finish two years at a community college, and then automatically transfer to a state college or university with a 30 percent discount off tuition - as long as they have maintained a 2.5 grade point average or higher, says Paula Ogden, director of financial aid at MBCC.

Publication#W\ P*P# 58. Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ P&P#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ P'P# STUDENT LIFE AT ENGLISH
HIGH Headline #:\ P(P#Subhead#[\ P)P
Day care aids student mothers Subhead#:\ P*P# By Beth Daley, Globe Staff

Every day between class periods, English High School students pause at a thick glass window to catch a glimpse of their school's tiniest attendees: their classmates' babies.

The 11 infants and toddlers spend the school day in a bright day-care center at the school so their mothers can try to beat the odds and graduate.

The 10-year-old center - one of only two at Boston's 21 high schools - appears to help:

Thirty-two of 48 students tracked by the school who put children in the center in the last five years have either graduated from high school or received their GED. Another eight students were working toward that goal. This contrasts with a national teen mother dropout rate as high as 80 percent, according to some statistics and school officials.

"I don't think I'd be in school if I didn't have the day-care center," said Yasmarie Valentin, 16, mother of 9-month-old Davis Alexander Perez. After school, Valentin works 26 to 30 hours a week at Walgreen's to support herself and the baby, and lives with her mother, brother, and the father of her baby in a three-bedroom apartment in Dorchester. Valentin, the baby, and her boyfriend all share one room.

The appeal of the children to the many students who glance in at the center, along with its obvious convenience, has caused lingering concerns among some school officials that the center could encourage some teens to have children. In fact, it was a difficult sell to get the day-care center into the school a decade ago, English High officials said.

Today, however, most of them praise the program. And the mothers who use the center say they tell anyone who will listen that having a child has dramatically changed their life - and not for the better.

"Students probably think it's easy to have a baby because the day care is here, but believe me, it is really hard," said Valentin. "I'd never give up having my son. But I would never recommend this for anyone, especially because you don't have the things you need - a job, a car, an education."

Based on the latest Department of Public Health statistics available, 880 teens in Boston between the ages of 15 to 19, most of them in high school when they

became pregnant, gave birth in 1995, a rate that has been decreasing in the past three years. It is unknown exactly how many of those stayed in school or dropped out.

Designed to support teenage parents as much as provide care for a total of 14 babies, the YMCA of Greater Boston runs the Adolescent Parents and Children Center program. It has strict state eligibility requirements.

Mothers also must attend school 75 percent of the time and arrive at the school by 7:30 a.m. During one period of every day they visit the center to play with and read to their children and learn other parenting skills. All receive individual counseling.

Of the eleven mothers now in the program, six live with their families, two are in fosterhomes, another two are living on their own, and one lives in a homeless shelter. They range in age from 16 to 19.

Program social worker Deborah Stolbach estimates that most of the babies' fathers are involved in some way in the care of their baby. A few live with the mothers, others drop the children off in the morning or pick them up. Still, by far the greatest burden of responsibility falls on the mother.

Marilyn Arriaga, 19, mother of Alfredo Zavala, is often worn out from taking care of her son, who is "always sick." She is looking for work and says she is determined to graduate, but says it is difficult.

Dressing her baby in the center recently for "another doctor's appointment," she says, "I'd worry more if he was at another center. Here, I can take him to the hospital and check up on him."

Sindi Samayoa says she was able to graduate partly because of the center. Samayoa won a full scholarship to Lesley College in Cambridge and achieved a 3.0 average.

rage her first
semester. She works 20 hours a week and lives with her parents.

"I got pregnant at 15," said Samayoa, now 18, mother of 20-month-old Rhakil.
"My
parents were very disappointed. Everyone thought I was going to drop out,
but I proved
them wrong. I just wish I waited so much longer to have a baby. I
see so many kids having
babies - they don't realize how hard it is. When you ha
ve a baby there are so many things
you can't do. I know that."

Last week at the center, on the school's first floor, tiny babies slept in crib
s in one room
as parents and day-care workers played with the infants. For Vale
ntin, who wants to be a
nurse, the day-care center has given her a way to finis
h school and take care of her son. Still,
she says somewhat wearily, needing da
y care at 16 is not fun.

"I get to bed late, and have to be up at 5:30. I'm always tired, and it's hard
to find time to
do homework. You just can't come here when you want - there ar
e rules," she said. "This
helps when you have a baby. But it's very hard to h
ave a child at this age. It's very hard."n

Publication#W\ P+P# 59. Houston Chronicle"Publication" #:\ P,P#January 26, 19
98

Headline#\ P-P# High time for feds to get more involved
in education Headline
#:\ P.P#
By MICHAEL P. FORBES

SOME of my more partisan colleagues on Capitol Hill would like to think that Pr
esident
Clinton is a lame duck whose term in office will leave no lasting legac
y. I say baloney.

The president is embarking on a crusade to reform education. In this era of rel
ative peace
and prosperity, no issue is more critical. And no issue is fraught
with more political
pussyfooting and double-talk. Democrats fear alienating the
politically active teachers

unions. Republicans sidestep the problem by saying education should be exclusively a state and local responsibility.

Washington has no business dictating what subjects are taught or how they are presented, but it is high time it played a more substantial role in supporting public education. There is no better investment in protecting our economic and security interests in the global marketplace.

Politics must stop, the president has said, at the schoolhouse door. He's dead right on that.

Here are some of the Clinton proposals that members of both parties can and should support:

Test standards. The president is correct to advocate voluntary national test standards so that parents, teachers and administrators in our nation's 13,000 school districts can measure the performance of their children against other regions of the country. Republican hard-liners fear such testing puts the long arm of Uncle Sam where it does not belong, but having the bully pulpit of the presidency behind voluntary standards can only help improve education in the long run.

School choice. Clinton advocates innovative, privately operated charter schools and choice for parents of public school students. These plans deserve our support, and Republicans generally do support them.

Unfortunately, the president remains opposed to school vouchers on the grounds that giving poor parents financial aid will promote parochial or private schools at the expense of public schools.

Another voucher program, the GI Bill, which helped returning veterans attend the college of their choice after World War II, contributed significantly to our nation's postwar

prosperity. And Clinton is promoting a voucher that works like the GI Bill to assist the unemployed with job training.

A school-voucher program could also clear the way for low- and moderate-income parents to send their children to whatever public or private school they choose.

. Giving parents greater flexibility would strengthen public education, not weaken it, by putting failing schools on notice that they must better educate our children, or risk losing them.

School construction. Congress must drop its opposition to the president's initiative to provide for construction and renovation of school buildings. Children, instinctively hungry to learn, must be able to do so in a safe and secure environment. Assisting the increasing number of districts that are plagued by deteriorating and overcrowded schools should be a federal priority. The Republican opponents who feel this creates an additional federal entitlement best left to the state and local level are being unrealistic about the amount of local resources available for school construction programs.

Urban schools. There are reports that the president is preparing a package of incentives to bolster performance in the most-troubled urban schools. He must get support for this. The rift in educational opportunity between rich and poor contributes mightily to the continued divisions in our society. Congress has provided some minimal assistance to troubled urban schools in years past, but Republicans no doubt will resist efforts in Washington that they advocate for states.

What they don't realize is that social justice can only come with truly equal access to educational excellence.

How can we pay for all this? I've long advocated a strong military. Reallocating \$20 billion annually from the Department of Defense's \$255 billion budget, however, will do a lot more to protect our national security interests than will

a few more bombers or a few more tanks. This amount could safely be removed from the defense budget without compromising national security while still offering a substantial amount to improve education. Just as John F. Kennedy challenged the nation to land a man on the moon a generation ago, so, too, can a popular Bill Clinton use the presidency and his uncanny ability to communicate to rally the public behind his education initiatives.

With the people's support, I'm convinced he can put together a successful coalition of Democrats and Republicans in Congress, and in the state legislatures, to build a better life for every child.

Forbes is a Republican congressman from New York.

Publication#W\ P/P# 60. The New York Times"Publication" #: \ P0P# 01/26/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 19, Column 1

Headline#\ P1P# Whatever Happened to Recess?Headline #: \ P2P#
By Polly Morrice
HOUSTON " At my 9-year-old daughter's school, the morning begins with aerobics. The same bouncy tune is piped into each classroom, and the children " 900 strong " step, jump and spin. Although it seems rigid, the exercise has an impromptu, playful quality, unlike the regimented day that follows.

The students trek to classes in silent lines; lunch is devoured in half an hour. Then there's recess. In my childhood, it arrived like clockwork in the morning and afternoon, 20 minutes twice a day, plus playtime after lunch. My daughter gets a single 20-minute break. And students who misbehave are punished by losing some or all of it.

Is my daughter missing out on something precious? Yes, according to Anthony Pellegrini, an education researcher at the University of Georgia. His studies, he told me, show that recess provides "good social, cognitive and emotional stuff."
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Why, then, don't children get more of it? Because the curriculum is too full. The greatest pressure comes from academic competency tests, now required by 46 states. A lot rides on these tests. Last year, the state of Virginia threatened to deny accreditation to every school with a passing rate below 70 percent. In Texas, administrators' contracts can be tied to results on a statewide test. This creates an undue emphasis on making sure the children are well prepared.

Raising standards is laudable. But is turning children into desk potatoes the best way to stimulate their minds? Professor Pellegrini's research shows that "the longer someone sits down to attend, the less attentive he is." He adds that children are more attentive in the classroom after recess than before and that the social give-and-take of the schoolyard teaches children to work together.

Many school administrators, however, seem to think that hopscotch and tag "and just plain horsing around" are optional for today's sophisticated youngsters.

That sentiment is captured in a recent I.B.M. advertisement. It shows three smiling children who stare at a computer monitor. The copy proclaims, "When the bell rings for recess, more and more kids are staying in their seats."

Pity.

Publication#W\ P3P# 61. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ P4P# 01/26/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 18, Column 1

#i2P5P#Editorial Observer#:\ P6P#
Headline#\ P7P# Finding Qualified Teachers for the
Dead ZoneHeadline #:\ P8P#

By BRENT STAPLES

Anxiety about public schools has pushed education to the top of the domestic agenda, with Democrats and Republicans scrambling to own the issue and milk it for votes. The Democrats style themselves as reformers but will go no further than their masters, the teachers' unions, permit. The Republicans are posing as advocates of school choice for the urban poor, who are largely confined to the

ation's worst schools.

Educational dead zones " nearly all of them in cities " represent a pressing national problem that the states seem uninterested in or incapable of solving. But both Democrats and Republicans have forsworn all but modest Federal initiatives, arguing that educational policy is constitutionally "a local matter" and that Washington has no business telling the states how to proceed. Policies based on this reasoning will leave the dead zones dead, improving education only a little at the margins.

Both parties support the charter school movement, which expects talented teachers and administrators to leave existing public schools to create visionary schools of their own " even if it means pay cuts and belt-tightening to meet start-up costs. With qualified teachers deserting the cities, charter schools would be subject to the same staff shortages.

The charter strategy has yielded strong results in parts of Minnesota, Arizona and elsewhere. Thousands of children who would otherwise have been lost will succeed because of the charters. But, like the voucher idea, the charter mechanism can accommodate only a fraction of the millions who need it.

The teacher shortage is underscored in the latest Quality Counts, an annual study by the magazine Education Week, which this year focuses on the comparison between urban and suburban schools. The gap is wide and getting wider " in part because cities cannot find qualified teachers. In California and New York, for example, nearly a third of urban teachers are either unlicensed or teaching on temporary certificates " two to three times the percentage in the suburbs. Part of the problem is that suburban districts pay more and are better managed.

As seasoned teachers retire, they are being replaced by those who were educated in dysfunctional urban systems and teachers' colleges with no standards to speak of. By turning a blind eye when urban systems stocked their schools with poor

rly qualified instructors, the
states have contributed to the downward spiral.

Education historically has rested with localities. But the Federal Government has
repeatedly intervened when national interests are at stake. During the 1960's it intervened
to enforce desegregation and impose special programs like Head Start, aimed at the poor.
During the 1970's, it reversed centuries of discrimination against the disabled, who had been excluded from public school.

Failing schools are a threat to national prosperity. The children they house are the citizens
and the work force of the future. A nonprofit foundation called the National Board for
Professional Teaching Standards has already developed rigorous standards for teachers. But
fewer than a thousand of the nation's more than three million teachers have been certified
under the National Board system,
which began offering certification in 1993. The Federal Government could improve on that record by pressuring the states to strengthen teacher
training and revamp teachers' colleges. Board certification is time-consuming, rigorous and
expensive. Federal pressure and support will be needed to finish the process.

Many states have demonstrated a tepid interest in taking on basic problems. If
Washington shrinks from its responsibility, the job will go undone.

Publication#W\ P9P# 62. The Washington Times"Publication" #:\ P:P# 01/24/98;
Edition: 2; Section: D;COMMENTARY; Page D1

Headline#\ P;P# Education policy collisionHeadline #:\ P<P#
By Bonnie Erbe / Josette Shiner

Question: Senate Republicans have proposed a legislative agenda that includes
money to
boost public school students' reading skills and tax breaks for parents who save for private
school tuition. Can they steal the limelight from President Clinton, who has recently
proposed balancing the budget next year and expanding access to Medicare?

BONNIE ERBE: Senate Republicans are smart politicians, unlike some of the more
starry-eyed wild men cohorts in the House. Despite pressure from red-meat eaters
in the
GOP, Senate moderates recognize that in order to maintain a majority of

re even pick up power in this year's upcoming congressional elections, Republicans must tone down their image and appeal to middle-of-the-road and, most especially, women voters, who are now a major influence.

Hence, this savvy package of proposals from Senate Republicans, including a move to undo the damage done by GOP marrow-chompers who proposed (years ago) to abolish the

Department of Education, coupled with a move to give \$2.6 billion in tax breaks to parents who save for private school tuition, and to counter religious zealots in the party who still would use taxpayers' dollars to subsidize sectarian education. Even the formerly feral House Speaker Newt Gingrich has conceded Republicans are in dire need of burnishing their image on the education issue.

Extremists within the party are already unhappy with Senate Republicans' intelligent thinking. Conservative Rep. Tom Coburn, Oklahoma Republican, told the Associated Press this week, "The planning of our leadership is to do what's best for Republicans, rather than what's best for our country." Of course, his idea of what's best for the country differs markedly from the vast majority of Americans, who want Republicans and Democrats to get along, improve educational and job opportunities for all citizens and stop squabbling.

Democrats should be praying that Mr. Coburn and his wing of the party wins out

Because that is the only way they stand to take back the House this coming November. No one is predicting that they will. But with a slim majority of fewer than a dozen House seats, all Republicans have to do is follow some zany suggestion such as staking out major fights with the president or proposing a major tax overhaul to benefit the rich, and Democrats will reap the benefits of Republican folly at the polls.

JOSETTE SHINER: House Speaker Newt Gingrich doesn't need to wait until he retires

to study dinosaurs - there's one in the making right now in Washington: the "smallgovernmentsaurus."

Just read the headlines this week: "Clinton agenda revives `era of big government,' new spending at \$42 billion so far," in The Washington Times. And witness the scorn my colleague heaps on the rag-tag band of conservative legislators trying to hold the focus on decreased federal spending: "starry-eyed wildmen," "red-meaters" and "marrow-chompers."

It is true. After a brief revival of the quaint idea that "government that governs best," Washington is about to embark on a spending binge with goodies dispensed in every congressional district. I don't blame congressional Republicans; with Santa Claus in the White House, how can they continue to deliver coal to the voters?

Republicans deserve credit for attempting to counter Mr. Clinton with handouts that are delivered in better policy form than the failed Great Society programs of the past. And Republicans are right to realize that education and taxes are winning issues with voters, and ones on which they need to lead the way. But Republicans must be sure to always drive home the difference between their approach and the Democrats' approach to these issues - Republicans seek to empower individuals, Democrats seek to empower government.

The biggest gem in the new Republican package is Georgia Sen. Paul Coverdell's education plan that provides \$2.6 billion in tax-advantaged savings accounts to help parents pay education costs, including private school tuition. Mr. Clinton has already promised to veto such a plan. This is a fight worth having. The president has supported, even campaigned on education savings accounts for public and private colleges. Why oppose such an opportunity for children in K-12? On this my colleague is right: This savvy education package is a model for beating the White House at its own game.

Bonnie Erbe is host of the PBS program "To the Contrary." Josette Shiner is president

of Empower American

Publication#W\ P=P# 63. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ P>P# 01/24/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 14, Column 4

#i2P?P#Letters to the Editor#:\ P@P#
Headline#\ PAP# Who Will Replace Teachers Who Fail
the Test?Headline #:\ PBP#

To the Editor:

The bankruptcy of the notion that "test scores measure merit" is clearly revealed by the plight of apparently effective public school teachers who face termination for not obtaining an arbitrary score on a standardized exam (news article, Jan. 17).

In the face of a severe shortage of inner-city teachers, particularly those from minority backgrounds, it makes no sense to fire competent, experienced educators simply because they do not test well.

Similarly foolhardy is the notion that a one-size-fits-all measure, like the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test, is accurate for all educational settings from kindergarten to advanced placement classes. If New York desires high-quality teachers who reflect the diversity of the city's student population, it must move to a system of licensing based on classroom performance.

MONTY NEILL

Acting Exec. Dir., Fair Test

Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 20, 1998n

Publication#W\ PCP# 64. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ PDP#January 25, 1998

Headline#\ PEP# Reviving The Fourth 'R'Headline #:\ PFP#Subhead#[\ PGP# In Today's Schools, You've Gotta Have ArtsSubhead#:\ PHP#
By Bob Chase, President, NEA
(advertisement)

Writer Raymond Chandler once said that all art has a quality of redemption. If anybody knows this firsthand, it's Terry Stewart, a middle school music teacher in Smyrna, Delaware. Stewart has seen music transform the lives of his students.

One 7th grader was a chronic troublemaker until Stewart handed him a pair of drumsticks. Almost overnight, the boy became the leader of the percussion section. "He was an excellent musician," Stewart recalls. "Band became an incentive for him to do well in school. When he played in a concert at his old elementary school, his former teachers couldn't believe it was the same kid."

Mounting evidence shows that the arts are fundamental to education. But they became endangered species in our public schools during the 1980s. Budget cutters and back-to-basics advocates saw the arts as fluff and frills, and they took an ax to them.

Now, arts education is making a comeback, and not a moment too soon. New studies show that preschoolers who take piano lessons and participate in sing-alongs develop significantly better abstract reasoning and math skills than other preschoolers. Music helps to hardwire a child's brain for successful learning.

Stanford's Elliot Eisner reports that the arts are unparalleled in developing even different intellectual abilities, including the ability to be imaginative, to make judgments in the absence of a rule, to think metaphorically, and to devise multiple solutions to a problem.

Businesses certainly recognize the value of such skills. In fact business people have led the charge to revive arts education. For them, it's a matter of enlightened self-interest.

IBM hires more music school graduates than any other employer. The software company Intuit actively recruits workers with arts backgrounds. Moreover, America's number one

exporter, the entertainment industry, craves artistic employees.

As educators, however, preparing young people for the workforce is only part of our mission. We must also nourish the souls of our students so that they can grow up to be good and virtuous adults. And what a glorious abundance of soul nourishment there is in art, whether it be Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" or Lorraine Hansberry's "Raisin in the Sun," or Diego Velazquez's "Maids of Honor." Through the arts, students learn to "Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore/ of nicely calculated less or more." (Wordsworth)

Students actively engaged in the arts are "better disciplined, more confident, and score higher on standardized tests," notes Michael Marks, a high school dramatic arts teacher for 19 years and now head of the Mississippi Association of Educators.

Consider these facts. The Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C., has one of the lowest dropout rates in the country. Ninety percent of the Boys Choir of Harlem go on to college. A whopping 70 percent of last year's USA Today All-USA Academic Team are musicians. In 1996, students who took four years of high school art or music classes scored an average of 32 points higher on the verbal section of the SAT, and 23 points higher on the math, than students who took less art and music.

When children are absorbed in painting a mural, playing in a band, or rehearsing for a play, it gives them something to look forward to and aspire to each day. The arts can give a child hope and purpose.

Too many kids today are plagued by violence, drugs, neglect, and cynicism. Giving them a constructive way to channel their energies can make a pivotal difference in their lives. It can compel them to stay in school instead of dropping out, to develop a rehearsal regimen instead of a drug habit, to become a lead violinist instead of a teen mother.

Yes, pianos and paintbrushes cost money. But the payoffs are great. No other set of disciplines can benefit our children developmentally, intellectually, economically, and spiritually quite the way the arts can. And some day those children, through their art, will nourish a nation's soul.

Publication#W\ PIP# 65. Boston Globe "Publication" #: \ PJP# January 26, 1998
Headline# \ PKP# The state's education reforms are making things worse, not better
Headline #: \ PLP#

The students at many schools, such as those at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, where I work, are being hurt by Massachusetts education reform.

Although we certainly could improve our school, the requirements being imposed on us are making our school worse and are doing away with improvements we have worked hard for 40 years to develop.

Under state law, students must be in the classroom 990 hours a year. This 990 rule is extremely destructive. No one, certainly not an adolescent, learns best by sitting in a classroom hour after hour all day. The test requirements do away with all we have been striving for. Who believes that tests of short-term memory have anything to do with education? These reforms leave out everything that is important: the individual growth of individual minds, the acknowledgment of the feminine as well as the masculine, the enlargement of cultural thought to include everyone, not just the history of Greece and England.

Where are the people who should be leading the fight against the destruction of our schools? Where are the deans of the schools of education?

Where are the college presidents? Where are the superintendents and principals? Where is the Massachusetts Teachers Association? I believe that it is up to parents, especially those who have children in elementary school now, to band together to fight this attempt by white

male politicians to impose their frustrations on our children.

There certainly are many reforms that could be made. For instance 84 percent of high school students are not interested in history because the way it is presented does not connect with them. The teaching of history should be reformed exactly opposite from the way it is now being reformed.

Most students do not become proficient in another language because language instruction starts at the worst possible age. Learning of a second language should start in preschool.

By Tom Hooper English Teacher Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School

Publication#W\ PMP# 66. The Charleston Post and Courier"Publication" #:\ PNP# January 24, 1998

Headline#\ POP# Approve school reform planHeadline #:\ PPP# Public education in South Carolina is in a precarious state, both in terms of general student achievement and an increasing lack of public confidence. A comprehensive school accountability proposal now before the House of Representatives begins to address the most painful shortcomings of public schools on a statewide basis. Its passage should be a legislative priority this session. The Performance and Accountability Standards for Schools Act (or PASS) provides for broader testing of students and ranking of school performance, each giving parents and the community a better idea of where local schools rank in terms of new, tougher academic standards established for state schools and in comparison to national scores. It establishes an objective, statewide scale of achievement and would publicly rank each school and district with grades from A to F. A ranking of D or F would bring immediate state intervention. The bill provides a significant commitment of money to put top-flight teachers and administrators in failing schools. House Majority Leader Bobby Harrell says the bill is designed to "create an atmosphere that causes change," recognizing that improvements will require broad support within the community and from

the state. House Education Committee Chairman Ronald Townsend, R-Anderson, points out that it will end social promotion in the state, while instituting higher standards for student achievement. Both representatives served as ex officio members of the gubernatorial commission that prepared the reform proposal. Unfortunately, the legislation doesn't include sanctions to allow the state Department of Education to make necessary personnel or program changes in failing schools, even when they fail to respond to expert treatment, although changes can be recommended to the local authorities. Key legislators assure us that stiffened consequences will be the next step if the provisions of the bill are found to be insufficient. Those in the Legislature who are so committed should be prepared to amend the bill accordingly. On Thursday, the House approved an important "choice" amendment that should hearten parents who fear their children could be trapped in a poor school with little recourse for transfer. The House endorsed a plan that allows parents to move their children from failing schools, assuming there is room elsewhere in the district. That provides a definite consequence for failing schools. As Rep. Harrell says, "It will create a sense of urgency in these schools" to make the necessary improvements. While there has been comment about the swift approval of such a major piece of legislation by a House committee, Speaker David Wilkins notes that it was the subject of extensive review before the Legislature convened. We hope that the Senate is similarly committed to act on a comprehensive plan that has the capacity to transform failing schools. Passage of a strong, workable bill for public school reform could easily be the Legislature's major achievement this year.

Publication#W\ PQP# 67. The Raleigh News & Observer"Publication" #:\ PRP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PSP# Opening the booksHeadline #:\ PTP#Subhead#\ PUP# Colleges and universities can fight suspicions that they're gouging students by becoming more efficient, and by giving the public more information about how they're using tuition and fees.Subhead#:\ PVP#

An aptly titled new report contains as many questions as answers about the cost of higher education. But "Straight Talk," the product of a federal commission's five-month study, also carries a timely threat, which should be taken seriously: Unless colleges and universities get a handle on their finances, they could face governmental price controls. That would be a bad idea, but it might beat the alternative: losing the trust and confidence of the American public and possibly undermining the United States' educational and economic strength.

Anxiety about paying for a college education has risen steadily in the last decade, mirroring a disturbing trend that has only recently begun to level off. Since 1987, American colleges' and universities' price tags have grown faster than their costs, families' income and inflation. The result? College diplomas moving farther out of reach for many students, requiring them to stay in school longer, to go deeper into debt or to skip higher learning altogether.

In many ways, the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education hit a brick wall in its effort to understand these discrepancies. The panel came up with some plausible explanations of what might be driving costs and prices up: greater demands on schools associated with changing (and growing) student populations; climbing capital costs as schools build up their facilities and invest in technology; time and money spent to comply with a tangle of regulations. But it found little hard evidence for any of these explanations.

The group said fears about college being unaffordable might be exaggerated, especially since most students now receive some financial aid. But academic institutions' financial data are so impenetrable, they said, that few people "inside or outside the schools" understand where the money goes or what students' actual costs are. Accordingly, schools' first order of business is to make sense of that chaos, and then to explain it to students and families. That recommendation seems basic "and essential."

Other good ideas in the report include easing government regulations so schools can focus on performance; streamlining complex, duplicative accreditation procedures, which eat up faculty and administrators' time; and enhancing and simplifying federal student aid programs.

But the group's sternest and most astute recommendation is also its simplest, and, appropriately, it is directed squarely at schools themselves: Colleges and universities just have to control their costs better. Sharing resources would help them become more efficient, but they'll also have to rethink the way they do a lot of other things, from purchasing supplies to teaching. Foundations and governments can and should help by supporting research on fiscal productivity in academia.

The commission was right to reject, for now, the unworkable idea of government price controls, but it was also right to lay it on the line: Colleges and universities must both contain their costs and convince the public that higher education is an affordable, worthwhile investment. Otherwise, it could cease to be either.

Publication#W\ PWP# 68. Miami Herald"Publication" #: \ PXP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PYP# Don't weaken the regentsHeadline #: \ PZP#Subhead#[\ P[P# FOR REACTING TO GAFFE Whether the University of Florida's president stays or goes, keep the system of governance.Subhead#:\ P\ P#

Suppose politicians and business leaders were demanding the scalp of assertive college presidents and controversial professors. Floridians who care about academic freedom would be glad that there's a strong Board of Regents to buffer higher education from politics and special interests.

Yet the regents can't remain strong enough to resist being told whom to fire if they lose their authority over whom to hire " or keep. So Floridians who are

understandably upset
over the regents' treatment of the University of Florida's
President John Lombardi ought to
think long and hard before lending their support
to proposals to weaken the regents.

After all, if a particular set of regents is performing poorly, there's already
a remedy:
Appoint better regents. And if a particular governor consistently nomi-
nates weak regents,
the Senate already can deny them its confirmation.

Yet these checks are not enough for some lawmakers. Among them are several who
often
have feuded bitterly with the regents and chancellor. Example: Sen. John
Grant, R-Tampa.
Miffed last year that gay Olympic diver Greg Louganis was paid
to speak at the University
of South Florida, Mr. Grant intensified earlier efforts
to put student-activity fees under
legislative control. Now, exploiting the
controversy over Dr. Lombardi, he'd weaken the
regents by shortening their terms
and subjecting the chancellor to Senate confirmation.

With the regents effectively neutralized, the only force left standing to oversee the
university system would be . . . the Legislature itself. Any college presi-
dents who imagine
that they'd have more autonomy by dealing directly with the
Legislature are dreaming.

Rather, the universities likely would face the same kinds of problems that have
beset
Florida's public schools. There, an ever-changing succession of legisla-
tive-committee
chairmen, eager to leave a mark, have pushed through questionable
"reforms" and
pork-barrel projects for their districts.

In contrast, the Board of Regents and chancellors, especially the departing Cha-
ncellor
Charles Reed, generally have been forceful advocates and prudent policy
makers for the
university system.

Did the regents overreact to Dr. Lombardi's gaffe? Possibly. Are some regents using that

gaffe " referring to new chancellor Adam Herbert, who is black, as a
n ``Oreo" " as a
pretext to dump Dr. Lombardi because of past differences? Pr
obably. Would firing Dr.
Lombardi be a mistake, given his abject apology for hi
s offensive remark? Quite likely,
though some argue that what his admirers see
as ``independence" sometimes verges on
insubordination.

Yet this dispute is not reason enough to gut the regents' authority or to scutt
le a system
of governance that has served Florida and its universities quite we
ll.n

Publication#W\ PJP# 69. Richmond TimesDispatch"Publication" #:\ P^P#January 2
5, 1998

Headline#\ P_P# Higher Apathy Headline #:\ P`P#

The New York Times recently reported the following unsurprising news:

A survey of college freshmen confirms what professors and administrators said t
hey have
been sensing, that students are increasingly disengaged and view highe
r education less as
an opportunity to expand their minds and more as a means to
increase their incomes.

The annual nationwide poll by researchers at the University of California at Lo
s Angeles
shows that two suggested goals of education " "to be very well off f
inancially" and "to
develop a meaningful philosophy of life" " have switched p
laces in the past three decades.

In the survey taken at the start of the fall semester, 74.9 percent of freshmen
chose being well off as an essential goal and 40.8 percent chose developing a p
hilosophy. In 1968, the
numbers were reversed, with 40.8 percent selecting fina
ncial security and 82.5 percent citing
the importance of developing a philosoph
y.

It is using education more as a means to an end, rather than valuing what is be
ing learned,
said Linda Sax, director of the survey, first taken 32 years ago,
at the Higher Education
Research Institute at UCLA.

Now: Reasonable men can " and unreasonable men do " debate the nature and purposes of higher education. Cardinal Newman, for instance, had some ideas relating to the subject. And others might wonder if a year such as 1968 should serve as a benchmark for anything but rampant silliness. Nevertheless, the survey probably dismays the dwindling band believing colleges and universities ought to be devoted to higher education, not to mere training.

The researchers also found increased levels of "academic and political disengagement" among young scholars. (The less charitable might remark on the students' blas ignorance.) Numerous reasons could explain the survey's results.

" Television plays a corrosive role. As the founder of the survey notes, students entering college today belong to the generation that grew up " literally " with the tube. The more TV youngsters watch, the more materialistic and less engaged they apparently become. Tuning in encourages them to tune out.

" Policy-makers themselves define education as a means toward an economic end.

What is School-to-Work if not a scheme for transforming education into training? And when arguing for increasing government funding, college presidents and others cite the economic benefits " not only for students but also for the general community " of an ever-expanding and ever-costlier university empire. Has economic development become not a by-product but the *raison d'être* of higher education?

" The colleges themselves have degraded the liberal arts. Deconstructionism (a /k/a destructionism) and the other isms and fads to which the professoriat is prone generate indifference among students preferring knowledge to ideology. Russia and its former satellites have gotten the message the academy has not. The enemies of the liberal arts lie within the ivied walls. If students consider history, English, and philosophy irrelevant, then

perhaps it is because their professors treat the humanities as though they were. Why should students respect the so-called canon, when noisemakers inside the academy treat it with contempt?

" When a college degree has become a precondition for landing a job that doesn't necessarily require a traditional college education, is it any wonder that students attend universities primarily to groom themselves for the workforce? Moreover, the elevation of a college degree to the level of political right inevitably has attracted " if that's the word " students with scant interest in real learning.

" Here's a final hmmm: Perhaps today's students aren't so sanctimonious as their Sixties peers.

Some thinkers will lament the survey's findings; others won't give a rip. But no one should be amazed. The culture in general and the educational system in particular always will reap what they sow.

Publication#W\ PaP# 70. Tulsa World"Publication" #:\ PbP#January 26, 1998

Headline#\ PcP# Demo School Headline #:\ PdP#

THE THOREAU INITIATIVE, approved unanimously last week by the Tulsa Board of Education, has created a small measure of controversy, most of it among regular critics of the Tulsa Public Schools.

But despite the controversy, the idea of a demonstration middle school, which will blend enriched programs in science and languages with a diverse student population from throughout the Tulsa district, is an exciting one.

The demonstration school, to be housed in the former Thoreau Junior High School, 7370 E. 71st St., marks an expansion and continuation of outstanding educational offerings

in two specialty elementaries " the Mayo Demonstration School, which emphasizes science, and the Eisenhower International School, which includes a foreign language immersion program. It also will serve as a training site to learn the latest research-based instruction techniques.

Parents of children in the Mayo and Eisenhower schools have had a valid complaint, namely that there are no middle-schools where students can continue the accelerated progress made in the demonstration elementaries. Their choices are to transfer to private schools or go back into regular science and language classes in which they will essentially redo what they have already done.

The Thoreau Initiative solves that problem by offering accelerated science and language programs for middle schoolers. It also will offer enriched programs in other subject areas.

The Thoreau Initiative is an opportunity to offer enriched, accelerated programs that aren't in demand, or can't, as a practical matter, be offered, in every middle school. School officials assure that students from all parts of the district will be allowed " and encouraged " to enroll in it.

This is the best possible use for a top-notch school building that was re-acquired by the district last year.

Publication#W\ PeP# 71. Newsday"Publication" #:\ PfP#January 26, 1998
Headline#\ PgP# Making the GradeHeadline #:\ PhP#Subhead#[\ PiP# Pataki's school-funding proposals may not be perfect, but at least they're a good start.

Subhead#:\ PjP# After three years of seeming more interested in spending on ball parks than on education, Gov. George Pataki has pitched a 1998-99 state school-aid proposal that looks very much, well, in the ball park. Legislators shouldn't hesitate to make adjustments to Pataki's funding priorities but, unless a lot of real extra revenue rolls in, they should be wary of adding too much to what is proposed overall spending increases. Pataki would raise the main source of

s
chool-district funding by 4.4 percent - or about twice the rate of inflation
- to a total of
\$11.5 billion. Considering that districts received an increase of \$650 million in the fiscal
year ending March 31, after lawmakers boosted Pataki's inadequate offering, his \$450
million provides more than enough money for most systems to do the job. But there are
problems, old and new, that need to be addressed. In any given year, some schools,
particularly in poor and minority neighborhoods, are failing or crumbling and need more
help. Others, even in middle-class communities, are underfunded because school-aid
formulas don't recognize the true propertytax burden on homeowners. A recent problem for
all schools is the cost of meeting higher academic standards. The Board of Regents has

recommended targeting \$200 million - for a total aid increase of more than \$
700 million
- to help districts prepare for tougher exams and other new graduation requirements. Pataki
himself says he'd like to see average class size dip to 20 within a few years. Fine. But this
won't come cheaply. Lawmakers should apply any increases above Pataki's aid proposal
toward improving standards. And they should provide money for remedial services aimed
at keeping mildly disabled children out of special education. As for the issue that is most
likely to blow up state budget negotiations, school construction, the state needs to set a
side
a more substantial increase than the \$120 million Pataki has proposed. Lawmakers should
look for creative ways of dealing with this issue, although it's going to take more than one
year. At least, Pataki has a school-aid package that can be taken seriously. Unlike in years
past, he's on the field and part of the game.

Publication#W\ PkP# 72. Philadelphia Inquirer"Publication" #:\ PIP#January 26
, 1998
Headline#\ PmP# The fair funding fight Headline #:\ PnP#Subhead#[\ PoP# A judge makes sense on Jersey school programs; now
it's up to the state to find the moneySubhead#:\ PpP#
Subhead#[\ PqP# Subhead#:\ PrP#

Imagine the surprise and outrage of the many Trenton lawmakers who went about telling
voters last fall that they'd put New Jersey's long battle over fair fund

ing for urban schools
to rest.

Now, here comes another judge telling them they'll have to come up with a whole lot more money to give children in those schools an even chance at success in the nation's second-wealthiest state.

Last week, appellate court Judge Michael King, having studied the issue at the behest of the state Supreme Court, ruled that the state should put another \$312 million a year into supplementary education, and up to \$2.8 billion into repairing and expanding school buildings.

That's on top of the \$247 million Trenton finally found last year to bring the 28 districts in the court case to parity with affluent districts.

The 1990 Supreme Court ruling that made it the state's constitutional duty to achieve such parity said another wise thing. Because many children in poor communities come to school less prepared than other kids, the court said, "their special disadvantages must be addressed" with extra programs. Judge King, relying on nationally recognized research and his own school-side observations, made lots of sense in putting some flesh on that goal. He ordered the state to fund full-day kindergarten for all students in the 28 poorest districts, and full-day preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. The Clinton administration is moving in the same direction nationally, though too slowly.

These programs would be phased in over three years in coordination with local councils made up of representatives of Head Start, health- and day-care centers.

Finding the funds will be hard because Gov. Whitman cut state tax revenues in the face of the high court's edicts. Equally challenging for the state is making sure the money's spent wisely and well. That means upgrading college training

for early childhood teachers,
retraining current teachers and coming up with safe, adequate facilities.

The judge gave the state the OK to see whether it could achieve results through an intensive reading program for these students, rather than through the more expensive, but research-tested approach of reducing class size. The court needs to keep monitoring whether the state's touted "whole school" reforms are more than just bureaucratic lip service.

The court also might want to offer whining legislators a little walk down memory lane, reminding them that they've had eight years to save for this moment. Instead, they took the bows for cutting tax revenues, and cramped the youths of many a schoolchild.

Publication#W\ PsP# 73. Philadelphia Inquirer"Publication" #:\ PtP#January 24, 1998
Headline#\ PuP# Taming the tiger Headline #:\ PvP#Subhead#[\ PwP# Princeton has two ideas worth emulating to reduce the tuition burden on middle-income families. Subhead#:\ PxP# Princeton University's proposal to cut back student loans in favor of direct grants is a creative way to help middle-income families afford an elite school.

It is a shrewd response to parental complaints about a stunning upward price cycle in higher education. The total price of attending college has risen at twice the rate of inflation for the last 15 years.

Soaring college costs are not just a problem for parents and students. They're a problem for the nation when students carry such a load of debt that they feel they can't enter low-paying but vital professions.

Here's Princeton's answer: First, the university would replace loans with scholarships for students with family incomes of \$40,000 or less and set loans on a sliding scale for families earning \$40,000 to \$57,500.

Second, Princeton would remove home equity from its calculation of assets for families.

families earning less than \$90,000. Those with higher incomes also would see home equity play a smaller role in determining their portion of tuition. To meet the cost, estimated at \$4 million to \$6 million a year, Princeton plans to tap its abundant endowment, raise funds from generous alumni, and cut other expenses.

Princeton estimates that the new scholarships would benefit up to 600 students, and the home-equity proposal would help about 1,200. The school's board of trustees is set to vote on the plan today. If approved, it will take effect in the fall.

Princeton frankly acknowledges that it's trying to cut the sticker shock of its bill: almost \$32,000 for this academic year. Officials suspect families see that price and automatically dismiss Princeton without considering what their cost would be after deducting financial aid.

That's a mistake, says the American Council on Education. Parents should count the net costs before they rule out any college " even the Ivies. At Smith College, for example, which has annual costs of about \$28,000, 62 percent of this year's freshmen are getting financial aid of about \$20,000. (That includes loans, grants and work study.)

What's great about Princeton's plan is that it reduces the need for undergraduates to strap on thousands of dollars in debt because they have no other choice. At Princeton, students already getting financial aid typically borrow \$4,000 a year.

Princeton justifies its pricetag by pointing to its small size (6,000 students), historic and high-maintenance campus, and a world-class faculty supported by a tremendous library. Even so, it's seeing the wisdom of discounting tuition if that means being able to attract a more diverse student body.

Private colleges can't become the preserve of only the very rich and the poor.
This is an
experiment worth watching.n

Publication#W\ PyP# 74. The Washington Times"Publication" #:\ PzP# 01/25/98;
Edition: 2; Section: B;COMMENTARY;EDITORIALS; Page B2

Headline#\ P{P# For D.C. schools: quality, not rubber
stamps...Headline #:\
P|P#

Council member Kathy Patterson, one of the most ardent of legislative watchdo
gs in D.C.,
is a little miffed about Superintendent/CEO Julius Becton's plans t
o fire any teacher who is
not "certified" by Jan 31. At a hearing on D.C. publ
ic schools, she told the Senate
Committee on Labor and Human Relations "this is
a policy disaster waiting in the wings,"
"a headline waiting to happen." Well
, not to brag, but that headline has already run. "D.C.
ready to jettison unce
rtified teachers: Becton talks tough in speech to staff" is the headline
from a
n A-1, Aug. 27 headline in The Washington Times. The story went on to say 600

or so principals and administrators heard the warnings, warnings which, by the
way, were
issued four weeks before the opening day of the delayed 1997-98 scho
ol year. That gave
teachers five full months to get licensed and certified. M
rs. Patterson estimates 1,000
teachers fall into the "not certified" category.
That translates into approximately 1-in-5 of
the estimated 5,000 teachers.

But the real question is who is or who is not a quality educator. And the answ
ers cannot
be found on certification documents stating Teacher X has had Y numb
ers of hours in the
Z courses at Alphabet University. Or inquiring whether she
is a member of Zigma Zelda Zo
sorority. The answers are in the noggins of her
students. Certification programs do not
guarantee quality teachers and can co
ver up the truly bad ones. Either way students suffer.
TD The teachers and principals who are not qualified know who they are. The
ir schools
are the ones with the lowest of the low test scores. The unions kno
w too, as they push
certification as a way of weeding out the competition - tha
t is the best and the brightest.
Like merit pay, charter schools and other edu
cation-reform issues, the key is to forge ahead

at the first bark from the teachers' unions.

The reformers who took over the D.C. school system more than a year ago must now take another giant step and drop current teacher certification requirements.

Good schools need well-educated teachers, people who are proficient in their specialty fields. The bad teachers, certified or not, must go.

And be sure, the Becton administration had better not conduct wholesale firings based on a few slips of paper. A quality teaching staff is what parents pay for, and a quality teaching staff is what students deserve. Surely, Mrs. Patterson and the Becton administration want the same

Publication#W\ P}P# 75. The Washington Times"Publication" #: \ P}P# 01/25/98; Edition: 2; Section: B;COMMENTARY;EDITORIALS; Page B2

Headline#\ P}P# ... for Virginia: a school report cardHeadline #: \ P}P# Parents of children attending Virginia's public schools will be among the most

well-informed public-education consumers in the nation this fall. One day after a nonpartisan research group released a study demonstrating that parents throughout the country are extremely uninformed about the relative quality of the public schools, the Virginia state Board of Education unanimously voted to require each public school to send a detailed report annually to parents outlining the school's test scores, crime record and attendance rate. What a splendid idea.

When school performance is inadequate, even as state and local taxes have exploded to finance ballyhooed "reforms," parents and other taxpayers, armed with incontrovertible data detailing the failures, will be in a much better position to demand accountability.

For years, parents have expressed differing opinions about public schools in general and the public schools their children attend. Aware that the state of elementary and secondary public education had been declining precipitously over the years, parents, especially those

in the suburbs, nonetheless expressed confidence in the public schools in their community. But in Virginia, at least, this discrepancy will now stand exposed.

"Reality Check," an eye-opening report recently released by the nonpartisan Public Agenda research organization, showed how successful the public-education establishment was at hiding the failures of local schools from the parents. As Carol Innerst of The Washington Times reported recently, "Reality Check" revealed that most public high school graduates are seriously unprepared in the basic academic skills required for college and work.

"Employers and college professors reach dramatically different conclusions from parents, students and K-12 teachers over whether public school students are academically prepared for the work place or college," Public Agenda concluded. How "dramatically different"? Consider: "Sixty-three percent of employers and 76 percent of professors ... believe a high school diploma from a local public high school is no guarantee that a student has learned the basics, but only 26 percent of K-12 teachers, 32 percent of parents and 22 percent of high school students have similar concerns," Public Agenda reported. Nearly two out of three employers and professors rated the basic math skills of high school graduates as "poor" or "fair," the same ratings handed out by 77 percent of bosses and professors for grammar and spelling skills. As for the ability to write clearly, professors were equally disappointed with 81 percent of public high school graduates.

"Reality Check" polling also revealed that most parents either know "a little" or "don't have information" about "where your child stands academically compared to other students" in their grade (57 percent of parents responded "a little" or "don't have information"), in the same state (73 percent), in the country (80 percent) or in the world (87 percent).

Education analysts expect that Virginia's newly mandated "report card" will be the most comprehensive document available to parents anywhere in the country. Clearly, the data from the "report cards" will replace the typical hodgepodge of misinformation, disinformation. The establishment's whining and complaining in response to Virginia's new mandate merely confirmed how desperately needed and how long overdue the "report cards" weren

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Daily Education News



Monday, January 26, 1998

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Public Affairs
FB-10B, Room 2200 · 401-1576

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What Follows

NATIONAL

1. USA Today
After-school plan to be unveiled
2. Associated Press
State of the Union
3. The New York Times
Suit on S.A.T. Security Settled
4. The New York Times
Lani Guinier Joins Faculty Of Law School At Harvard
5. Sacramento Bee
State may set U.S. path on bilingual ed
6. Associated Press
Supreme Court seeks government advice on student sex harassment
7. Associated Press
President's visit gets scrutiny, congressman says
8. The Christian Science Monitor
Trash the Calculator, It's Back to Basics in Britain
9. The London Telegraph
Successful 'boot camp' to close
10. The London Telegraph
Australians to sign 'Sorry Books' for Aborigines

TRADE

11. Chronicle of Higher Education (Academe Today)
Education Dept. Sues 2 Ohio Universities to Thwart Release of Discipline Records
12. Chronicle of Higher Education
IRS Ruling Will Aid Part-Time Students Who Work at Their Colleges
13. Chronicle of Higher Education
Education Dept. Sues 2 Ohio Universities to Thwart Release of Discipline Records
14. The Times Educational Supplement
France: Socialist action zones to be reborn
15. The Times Educational Supplement
Byers puts councils in hot seat

16. The Times Educational Supplement
Success with numbers all in the mind
17. The Times Educational Supplement
Labour set to tear up teachers' contract

LOCAL

18. San Antonio Express-News
Education official tells students to set sights on college
19. Houston Chronicle
Footnotes
20. Greensboro News & Record
READING PROGRAM DIRECTOR TO SPEAK
21. The Orange County Register
Prying eyes were watching UCI's library activist
22. The New York Times
Mayor Urges Separation of High Schoolers Past the Fifth Year
23. The Washington Post
Libraries Reflecting Suburban Diversity
24. The Washington Post
At Middle School Level, Private Versus Public Hits Home
25. The Washington Post
Garvey's New Leader Has an Attendance Problem
26. The Washington Post
In Classrooms, Good Walls Make Good Neighbors
27. The Washington Post
For the Young and Old, Lessons on Life, Death
28. The Washington Post
The Lessons, Legacy Of School Integration
29. The Washington Post
Becton Team Gets Mixed Report Card
30. The Washington Post
Control Board Sees a Need To Keep UDC
31. The New York Times
School Has Success Down to a Science
32. Seattle Times
Parents give minority students a boost
33. Seattle Times
Charter schools make grade in House; face test in Senate
34. Los Angeles Times
Bill to Fix Bilingual Education Pushed Before Unz Vote
35. Baltimore Sun
Demographics are the downfall
36. Cincinnati Enquirer
Program achieves integration, but parents call it hardship
37. Hartford Courant
Judge reject claim of educational malpractice
38. Hartford Courant
Proposed Charter School Would Give Students Taste Of Democracy
39. Hartford Courant
State to hold public hearing on charter school proposals
40. Associated Press
D'Amato seeks to burnish education record in election year
41. The Columbus Dispatch

DEPARTMENT WANTS NAMES KEPT PRIVATE

- 42. Associated Press
Education Department moves to stop release of student records
- 43. Newsday
'School Extension' Proposals Promised
- 44. Forth Worth Star-Telegram
Consultants prepare to grade Fort Worth district
- 45. Austin American-Statesman
Children get help to overcome middle school's early terrors
- 46. Tulsa World
Don't Ask, Don't Tell
- 47. Newsday
Trouble for Teacher / Talked with class about being gay, says Sunnyside school official.
- 48. St. Petersburg Times
Fine line between diploma, dropout
- 49. Richmond Times-Dispatch
U.Va. board discusses tailgating, students' drinking
- 50. Miami Herald
A test of standards
- 51. Atlanta Journal-Constitution
School boards eyeing sales tax again
- 52. Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Parents go back to school for kids' sake
- 53. Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Making the grade: Sports eligibility may get tougher
- 54. Boston Globe
Umbrella group pitches to decentralize education
- 55. Asbury Park Press
Education policy reflects realities
- 56. Boston Globe
Cellucci seeks \$8m for after-school effort
- 57. Boston Globe
HOME ECONOMICS: PAYING FOR COLLEGE *Cramming for financial aid*
- 58. Boston Globe
STUDENT LIFE AT ENGLISH HIGH

COMMENTARY

- 59. Houston Chronicle
High time for feds to get more involved in education
- 60. The New York Times
Whatever Happened to Recess?
- 61. The New York Times
Finding Qualified Teachers for the Dead Zone
- 62. The Washington Times
Education policy collision
- 63. The New York Times
Who Will Replace Teachers Who Fail the Test?
- 64. The Washington Post
Reviving The Fourth 'R'
- 65. Boston Globe
The state's education reforms are making things worse, not better

EDITORIAL

66. The Charleston Post and Courier
Approve school reform plan
67. The Raleigh News & Observer
Opening the books
68. Miami Herald
Don't weaken the regents
69. Richmond Times-Dispatch
Higher Apathy
70. Tulsa World
Demo School
71. Newsday
Making the Grade
72. Philadelphia Inquirer
The fair funding fight
73. Philadelphia Inquirer
Taming the tiger
74. The Washington Times
For D.C. schools: quality, not rubber stamps...
75. The Washington Times
... for Virginia: a school report card

NATIONAL

1. USA Today

January 26, 1998

Capital Roundup

After-school plan to be unveiled

Vice President Al Gore and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton today will unveil details for a \$2 billion public-private partnership designed to provide after-school care for 500,000 children a year. The five-year program, a dramatic expansion of a fledgling federal initiative, is one of the policy initiatives slated to be part of President Clinton's State of the Union address Tuesday. The

administration will propose spending \$1 billion over five years in federal grants that would be matched by schools, states or private organizations. The money would be used to provide after-school care "enriched" with tutoring or other educational programs, generally using public-school buildings. "After-school care is in my view particularly important because the most common time for teen

violence is between 2 and 6 p.m.," Gore said in an interview Friday with USA Today. "That's also the most common time for teen pregnancy, for drug use, for experimentation with cigarettes and for experimentation with alcohol." An estimated 5 million school-age children spend time as "latchkey kids" without adult supervision during a typical week. - Susan Page, page A8■

2. Associated Press

01-26 8:34a

State of the Union

By The Associated Press

A look at likely proposals in President Clinton's State of the Union address:

-Medicare benefits to people under 65 for the first time - 62 for early retirees, 55 for people who lose their jobs and their insurance. They could "buy in" early by paying monthly premiums of \$300 to \$400, the administration estimates.

-A patient bill of rights, insuring the right in managed-care plans to appeal decisions denying care or treatment. It would require doctors, hospitals and health plans to disclose information so consumers could compare their performance. And it would guarantee access to emergency room and specialists' care.

-Tax credits for small businesses that create pension plans for workers who lack them at present. Another provision would speed up vesting of 401(k) employer-matching contributions.

-Nearly \$22 billion in subsidies and tax breaks for millions of working parents struggling to arrange affordable child care. The package includes \$7.5 billion to expand the state block grant program that gives childcare subsidies to low-income parents and parents just leaving welfare. The increase would double to 2 million the number of children eligible for assistance by 2003.

-Increased spending for schools, including about \$7 billion for a teacher recruitment initiative, representing the first time the federal government would involve itself in the hiring of teachers. The proposal also includes at least \$5 billion to build or repair schools, largely in poor and rural areas. The **Education Department** warns that classrooms will become seriously overcrowded if new teachers aren't hired in the coming decade.

-A \$5 billion package of tax breaks

and grants to encourage businesses to use clean energy technologies to reduce the problem of global warming.

-Expand the Peace Corps to 10,000 volunteers in two years from its present 6,500.

-An early-intervention program to keep poor black and Hispanic students in high school and send them on to college. Clinton will request at least \$200 million to boost spending for bilingual education, education aid for migrant children and colleges with high enrollments of Hispanic students.

-A \$71 million increase in federal spending on food safety and inspection. It would bring total annual spending on food safety to \$817 million. Also, big spending increases for medical research.

-An additional \$70 million to fund 1 million work-study students by the end of the 1999-2000 school year.■

3. The New York Times

01/25/98Section: National Desk; Section 1; Page 26, Column 4

Suit on S.A.T. Security Settled

By The New York Times

The Educational Testing Service, which administers the Scholastic Assessment Test and other standardized tests, and Kaplan Educational Centers, a test-preparation service, have agreed to

settle a lawsuit arising from Kaplan's covert attempt to demonstrate a potential security problem with the computerized Graduate Record Examination in 1994.

Kaplan sent 22 experts to nine cities to take the test by computer over several

months in 1994. They memorized as many of the questions as they could, reproduced them and, seeing that some of the same questions were repeated in subsequent tests, showed that it was possible for Kaplan to reconstruct much

of the test and, therefore, give future test takers the right answers.

The G.R.E. is the leading entrance examination for admission to graduate schools.

When Kaplan, whose headquarters are in Manhattan, alerted the testing service in Lawrenceville, N.J., about the vulnerability, the service reduced the number of times that the test was offered

and sued Kaplan for copyright infringement, breach of contract and fraud.

In June, Judge J. Frederick Motz of Federal District Court in Baltimore dismissed most of the suit, but he ruled that a trial should proceed on the issue of copyright infringement.

In the settlement, Kaplan agreed that some of its actions had been

inappropriate although not illegal and that it was entirely proper to have exposed a security problem with a national examination.

Kaplan also agreed that it would not try to reproduce any part of an Educational Testing Service examination and that it would pay the service \$150,000.■

4. The New York Times

01/24/98Section: National Desk; Section A; Page 12, Column 1

Lani Guinier Joins Faculty Of Law School At Harvard

By ETHAN BRONNER

Lani Guinier, one of the nation's most eminent and outspoken legal scholars on issues of race and sex, and whose nomination as Assistant Attorney General for civil rights was withdrawn by President Clinton in a political storm in 1993, has been named a professor with tenure at Harvard Law School, the first black woman to hold such a position there.

Ms. Guinier, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School since 1988, is to take up her position this fall, adding yet another name to the growing roster of top black professors who have gone to Harvard University in recent years, including Henry Louis Gates, Cornel West and William Julius Wilson.

"What I'm really most excited about is joining a faculty in which other members don't shrink from speaking out publicly, particularly on issues affecting women and people of color," Ms. Guinier, 47, said in a telephone interview from her office in Philadelphia. "When Harvard speaks, the world listens. I feel the one real domain for leadership in the 21st

In addition to Ms. Guinier, there are now 5 black members of the Harvard Law faculty, all men, and 11 women, all white, a situation that has eased tensions considerably within the faculty.

Mr. Clark, in announcing Ms. Guinier's appointment, said he expected it to "help the school attract other top scholars of diverse backgrounds, including more women of color."

In a telephone interview, Mr. Clark spoke of a "cascading effect in which established scholars want to come to a place if a nucleus is established."

Ms. Guinier has also focused in recent years on how women are educated. She

century is the universities because the political arena has abdicated its responsibilities."

Ms. Guinier, known for postulating creative — some have called them convoluted — solutions to racial problems, especially regarding voting rights, felt severely mistreated in 1993 when President Clinton nominated her to be the top civil rights official at the Justice Department.

As conservative opposition to her nomination mounted and she was derisively labeled a "quota queen," the President withdrew the nomination, after acknowledging that he had finally read some of her law review articles and found ideas in them that he could not defend.

Ms. Guinier asked for a chance to defend her writings publicly but was denied it. She and Mr. Clinton, who attended Yale Law School with Ms. Guinier and was a guest at her wedding, have not spoken to each other since then.

Yesterday, after announcement of the appointment was made by Robert Clark, the dean of Harvard Law School, Ms. Guinier was praised heartily by many colleagues there, including Charles Fried, has argued that new models of education for women must be found. The real question, she has said, "is whether women will get ahead simply by imitating men."

She is the author of books including "The Tyranny of the Majority: Fundamental Fairness in Representative Democracy" (Martin Kessler/ Free Press, 1994) and has a book due out in April, "Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice" (Simon and Schuster).

For Ms. Guinier, a graduate of Radcliffe College, the appointment represents a closing of a circle. Her father

a former top Justice Department official in the Reagan Administration who had opposed Ms. Guinier's appointment to the Justice Department.

"In the field of voting rights, Lani is a fundamental thinker," said Mr. Fried, who is now a justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. "I opposed her nomination to the civil rights post because she was quite committed to a preferential system in hiring, promotions and set asides. That's not the way I think things ought to be going."

The number of minority and women faculty members at Harvard Law School was an issue of fierce contention during the 1980's when the school was ideologically riven and often known as Beirut on the Charles.

In 1990, Derrick Bell, the first full-time black professor at the law school, led a protest against the fact that no minority women had been granted tenure at Harvard Law School. After two years of declining to serve on the faculty, he was dismissed and now teaches at New York University Law School. Reached yesterday, Mr. Bell declined to comment on Ms. Guinier's appointment. began attending Harvard College in 1929 but, as a black man, faced numerous problems, including segregated dormitories and a refusal to help him with financial aid. He had to leave Harvard after two years but returned triumphantly years later as the first chairman of Afro-American studies. He died in 1990.

Ms. Guinier's husband, Nolan Bowie, a professor of communications at Temple University, will take up a senior fellowship at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, also in the fall.■

5. Sacramento Bee

January 26, 1998

State may set U.S. path on bilingual ed

By Janine DeFao
Bee Staff Writer

California's June ballot measure to virtually eliminate bilingual education is the most drastic reform yet proposed in the nation, but the Golden State is not alone in debating how best to educate the country's 3.2 million children who are not fluent in English.

Bilingual education advocates say millionaire Ron Unz's English for the Children initiative — which would replace native language instruction with one year of English instruction — would send California backward in a country in which bilingual programs are growing in number and acceptance.

But critics believe California voters will send a message that could spark the end of programs nationwide that they say fail to teach children English soon enough, if at all.

"After the initiative in California passes, and we think it will pass, you will see a national debate beginning on the issue, and we think other states will follow suit," said Tim Schultz, spokesman for U.S. English, an advocacy group promoting the English language.

Already, the debate is under way in several states.

Denver Public Schools, for instance, are attempting to limit to three years the length of time a student can receive some instruction in his native language, commonly called bilingual education. School officials there also face a federal civil rights challenge over their existing bilingual program — a scenario some

That is the current state of affairs in Denver. The case has been referred to the U.S. Justice Department, and Denver Public Schools risk losing their \$30 million in federal funding, 10 percent of their total budget.

Meanwhile, school officials in Denver are trying to change the program in contention to one in which the goal would be to shift limited-English students to mainstream classrooms after three years.

"Eight years is too long a time to pick up the new language (English)," said Denver Public Schools spokesman Mark Stevens. He said some students were spending their entire school careers learning their core subjects, such as math and science, in Spanish. Nearly five-sixths of Denver's limited-English students speak Spanish.

say could be repeated in California if the initiative passes.

Massachusetts, too, debated a three-year time limit last year, but it stalled in the Legislature.

Meanwhile, schools in places where trade with Mexico and Latin America is prevalent — such as Florida and Texas — are under pressure from business leaders to ensure that children not only learn English but also maintain an ability to speak, read and write Spanish.

Typically, bilingual programs are considered "transitional," meaning instruction in a child's first language is phased out once the child masters English well enough to join the mainstream.

But the term "bilingual education" is sometimes used to describe a variety of approaches for teaching limited-English-proficient students. They include programs that aim to teach a student two languages to those that use native-language instruction to keep a child on par academically while learning English to those that use all or primarily all English instruction to teach English.

Only about one-third of limited-English students nationally are in programs that use native-language instruction, comparable to the percentage in California — which educates some 40 percent of the nation's limited-English students, according to Jim Lyons, executive director of the National Association for Bilingual Education. About two-thirds of such students live in four states: California, Texas, New York

But Stevens said Denver's proposal pales in comparison to the changes in the Unz initiative.

"Everybody looks to California to see what's coming. That's cutting edge, but some of us think that goes too far. (Using) native-language instruction is common sense" to keep students caught up in other subjects while they learn English, Stevens said. "To get rid of native-language instruction and talk about immersion for everybody is pretty cold."

A three-year time limit on bilingual education also was debated last year in Massachusetts after it was proposed by then-Gov. William F. Weld and endorsed by the state's education commissioner and board of education.

"I really feel pretty strongly on this point, that we owe it to the kids to get

and Florida.

There is no federal mandate for bilingual education (native-language instruction). While the U.S. government spends about \$262 million each year on educating limited-English students, that money funds various approaches.

But the education of children not fluent in English remains a civil rights issue.

A 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Lau v. Nichols*, found that placing non-English-speaking students in regular classrooms violated the equal protection provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and said special assistance must be provided to give them access to the regular school curriculum.

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights uses a three-prong test to determine if a school district's program meets the federal requirements:

The program must be recognized as educationally sound or considered a legitimate experimental strategy. It must be effectively implemented, including adequate staff and resources. And, the program must be evaluated to show it is successful in overcoming students' language barriers.

If the Unz initiative passes, California school districts could find themselves locked in a battle with the Office for Civil Rights if bilingual advocates argue that the new system fails to meet the federal criteria.

them in and get them out," Weld said in June.

But the proposal died in the Legislature, where lawmakers questioned whether it would run afoul of federal civil rights laws.

Educators in Miami are headed in the opposite direction, trying to determine not only how to teach Spanish speakers English, but how to do it without stripping them of Spanish skills.

The debate in Dade County has moved beyond the emotionalism and cultural arguments that often surround bilingual education. Instead, business leaders are telling educators that their programs have failed to produce graduates who are sufficiently bilingual to fill jobs in a city considered the gateway to Latin America.

"It's a serious problem. It's an apparent bilingualism, but when it comes to jobs

we are rejecting people because their Spanish is so poor," said Dario Gamboa, senior vice president for Visa International's Latin America and Caribbean division. Gamboa chairs a task force of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce seeking to raise awareness about the importance of bilingualism.

He said many job candidates speak "Spanglish" — a mix of English and Spanish — and cannot write correctly in Spanish. His office even has trouble hiring secretaries, unless they find recent immigrants who speak and write both Spanish and English.

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools responded this year by adding 38 "developmental bilingual" programs to the 10 already in operation, said Lourdes Rovira, the district's executive director of bilingual education and foreign

languages. The programs aim to preserve and build on a child's native language as the child becomes proficient in English.

About 14 percent of district students are limited in English and more than half speak Spanish.

In Texas, too, proximity to a Spanish-speaking country makes bilingualism an asset, said Mara Medina Seidner, director of bilingual education for the Texas Education Agency. Mexico is the state's largest trading partner.

Bilingualism "is valued by an increasing number of both Hispanic and English-speaking parents," she said.

The Houston school district, the state's largest, recently decided to implement developmental bilingual education. And the Ysleta schools in the El Paso area — visited recently by officials from the Sacramento City Unified School District

— have the goal that all students will graduate with facility in two languages.

Delia Pompa, director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, said bilingual education nationally is "alive and very well. The numbers are growing. The number of kids is growing who have those needs."

But critics hope the Unz initiative will sound the death knell for bilingual education in California and that the ripple effect will spread far beyond.

"We think the national press is going to pick up on it and people across the country, especially immigrants, are going to see the absurdity of not teaching children English as quickly as possible," said U.S. English's Schultz. ■

6. Associated Press

01-26 11:24a

Supreme Court seeks government advice on student sex harassment

By RICHARD CARELLI
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Supreme Court today asked the Clinton administration whether it thinks the nation's educators violate a federal law if they don't stop students from sexually harassing other students.

The court wants to hear from Justice Department lawyers before deciding whether to review the issue in a Georgia

The boy, identified in court papers as G.F., allegedly touched LaShonda's breasts, rubbed against her suggestively and repeatedly told her he wanted to have sex with her.

The lawsuit stated that LaShonda and her mother reported each incident to school officials but that G.F. was never disciplined. The boy pleaded guilty to sexual battery after Mrs. Davis complained to the county sheriff.

The lawsuit against the school board said that the harassment caused LaShonda's grades to fall and had a debilitating effect on her mental and emotional well-being. It noted that in April 1993 her father found a suicide note she had written.

The Supreme Court ruled in 1992 that sexually harassed students may collect monetary damages from their schools and

case. The government's reply could take months.

A federal appeals court barred a lawsuit against a Georgia school district and school officials over the harassment a girl received from a fellow fifth-grader.

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled by a 7-4 vote last August that peer sexual harassment by students does not violate a federal sexual-equality-in-education law known school officials under Title IX. But that ruling involved a teacher accused of harassment.

The justices previously have left intact two appeals court rulings in cases from Texas that blocked Title IX lawsuits based on a student's harassment of another student.

In the Georgia case, a federal trial judge threw out Mrs. Davis' lawsuit but a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit court reinstated it.

The full appeals court once again dismissed the lawsuit, ruling that Congress never intended Title IX to be applied to such sexual-harassment cases.

The Supreme Court already is studying a Texas case in which it is expected to clarify just when school districts are legally responsible for teachers' sexual misconduct.

as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Aurelia Davis sued the Monroe County school board and two officials over a five-month "barrage of sexual harassment and abuse" her daughter LaShonda allegedly endured from a fellow fifth-grader at Hubbard Elementary School in Forsyth, Ga., in 1992-93.

In a series of decisions, the court has ruled that on-the-job harassment can violate a separate federal anti-bias law known as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The justices are expected to decide by July in a Louisiana case whether on-the-job sexual harassment can be illegal when the harasser and victim are the same sex. They also will use a Florida case to decide when employers may be held responsible for the misconduct of an employee's supervisor.

In the appeal acted on today, lawyers for Mrs. Davis said the legal principles on sexual harassment under Title VII should apply to Title IX as well.

The case is Davis vs. Monroe County Board of Education, 97-843. ■

7. Associated Press

01-25 0:24a

President's visit gets scrutiny, congressman says

MILWAUKEE (AP) - President Clinton's proposed visit to Wisconsin has special importance because of allegations about a sexual relationship with a White House employee, a congressman says.

The Monica Lewinsky matter is "going to cast a shadow on what he's doing," Rep. Ron Kind, D-Wis., told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

"Everything he does now is going to be seen within this context," he said.

Kind represents western Wisconsin's 3rd Congressional District where La Crosse is preparing for a four-hour visit Wednesday from Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

Prior to the Lewinsky publicity, the La

Crosse schedule and a stop in Illinois were described as opportunities for the president to make follow-up remarks after his State of the Union address Tuesday to Congress.

"Not that I have heard," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Friday in Washington, D.C., when asked whether the publicity would affect the trip's plans.

"I think he is very much looking forward to that," McCurry said. "He's done that after all of his State of the Union addresses."

Clinton "is conscious of these questions on the minds of the American people and he wants to provide the answers that they no doubt seek.

"Obviously we'd be better off if we could do that prior to Wednesday when he takes this trip."

La Crosse Mayor John Medinger said he heard Education Secretary Richard Riley as well as Gore would accompany the president aboard Air Force One.

It would be Clinton's first Wisconsin visit since 1996 when he campaigned in Milwaukee and De Pere for re-election.

Kind aide Mike Fahey said Clinton chose La Crosse for post-State of the Union comments because of the reception he received in the Mississippi River community during a campaign visit with Gore in 1992. ■

8. The Christian Science Monitor

January 26, 1998

Trash the Calculator, It's Back to Basics in Britain

Alexander MacLeod

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

LONDON — Not since former Vice President Dan Quayle added an "e" to the spelling of potato has a politician faced such embarrassment in a school classroom. When Britain's

Mr. Byers may have plenty of company. In a "back to basics" campaign, Prime Minister Tony Blair has ordered sweeping changes to Britain's school curriculum that will require millions of children to spend at least two hours each day on the "three R's."

"There has been a sharp decline in numeracy in recent years," Byers says, "and much the same is true of spelling, grammar, and syntax." He has ordered teachers to ensure that children memorize arithmetic tables and that reading and writing are taught using traditional methods.

In the United States, where curriculum has been seen as predominantly a state and local responsibility, a movement is under way to set up national standards and tests to measure reading and arithmetic skills at Grades 4 and 8. A recent report showed that more than half of students in urban schools in America are failing to master basic skills in reading, mathematics, and science.

But such US standards are unlikely to be adopted until at least 2001.

Minister for Educational Standards Stephen Byers was asked recently in a radio interview to multiply eight by seven, he replied: "I think it's 54."

When told the correct answer is 56, the man charged with ensuring that British schoolchildren sharpen their math. Meanwhile, Britain is moving ahead now.

Calculators for children under 8, for example, have been banned. "Instead," Byers says, "pupils will be expected to be able to do calculations in their heads. Calculators can come later when the children can rely on their own mental skills."

Schools also have been told to do more "whole class" teaching, with pupils facing the teacher instead of sitting around tables in small groups.

In returning to a more traditional classroom philosophy, the government is acting on advice from educator David Reynolds of Newcastle University, head of a government-appointed task force.

In tests of 11-year-olds, 62 percent currently pass the standards in arithmetic. Byers says the government wants the figure to be 75 percent by 2002. And it wants to raise the percentage of students passing achievement tests in spelling, reading, and writing to 80 percent, compared with 57 percent now.

A key to the government's plan will be

skills and improve their spelling and grammar tried to make the best of the situation.

"This is a lesson to us all," he said. "I will spend an hour tomorrow refreshing my memory and learning my times tables."

a new curriculum for training teachers. Sources in the Education Ministry say less stress will be put on subjects such as history, geography, art, and music, and greater emphasis on math, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

A leaked copy of the document also says teachers must develop in pupils "a sense of literary tradition."

Some 200 "literacy coordinators" are to be appointed throughout Britain to advise schools and make sure that teachers are adopting the new methods.

The approach marks a sharp departure from "progressive" education. Since the 1960s, heavy emphasis has been put on developing pupils' imagination and social awareness rather than traditional achievement.

In a letter sent recently to 20,000 primary-school head teachers, Education Secretary David Blunkett wrote, "For too long, too many primary-school teachers have been prevented from giving literacy and numeracy the attention they deserve because the national curriculum has lacked the very clear focus on the basics,

which is crucial in primary education."

He added: "It is no surprise that so many pupils leave primary school ill-equipped in the 'three R's.'"

Teachers' unions support the reforms. But some leading educators warn that simply requiring that more time be spent on numeracy and literacy is not enough.

Nicholas Tate, head of a government-appointed authority in charge of the school curriculum, says the key is "to make better use of the time

already allocated."

"We need to have a curriculum which offers flexibility so that teachers and pupils can work on areas of learning that require special attention," he says.

Mr. Tate recalls that before World War II, when learning the three R's was emphasized, literacy and numeracy levels were far from satisfactory. "The educational levels of military conscripts in 1939 vividly illustrated this fact," he says.

Other experts agree that to achieve its goals, the government will have to make certain that classroom time is used effectively.

In a recent report, the government-funded Office for Educational Standards said that on average 10 percent of the day in primary schools was wasted on activities such as registration and moving between classes. ■

9. The London Telegraph

January 23, 1998

Successful 'boot camp' to close

By Philip Johnston,
Home Affairs Editor

BRITAIN'S first "boot camp" for young offenders is to close slightly more than a year after it opened and despite evidence that the regime is working.

The military-style establishment at Colchester, Essex, will shut on March 31 after ministers decided that it was too expensive to operate.

However, an independent appraisal of the camp completed for the Home Office just before Christmas and obtained by

The boot-camp concept was imported from America by the last Government. It was prompted by evidence that conventional institutions had failed to bring down the rate of reoffending and was designed to reform teenage criminals who failed to respond to other types of correction. Labour and the penal affairs lobby disliked the idea from the outset and the camp also struggled to find young offenders tough enough to withstand the regime. Since it opened last February, 66 offenders aged 17 to 21

The Telegraph, suggested that the concept was proving beneficial.

"Every young offender interviewed said they were fitter, healthier, more confident about themselves," said the study. "The majority found drill and exercise challenging. Others disliked it but felt it was doing them good... They appreciated the discipline and structure of the day."

Offenders said that their confidence was boosted by improved educational achievement and they saw the regime as have passed through the programme, of which 32 had been successfully discharged and four had failed.

Offenders were expected to get up at 6am, to ensure their rooms were spotless, carry out drill, and undertake physical training and education before going to bed at 10pm.

Miss Quin said the regime "has encouraged positive changes in attitudes among young offenders but the available evaluation has not supported the contention that it has been more effective

"rehabilitative".

However, the high price of running the camp appears to have swung the Government against keeping it open. In a Commons written answer, Joyce Quin, Prisons Minister, said the annual cost per place at Colchester was £31,300 - twice as much as for a conventional Young Offenders Institution. It was also £9,000 more than another "experimental", though non-military, centre at Thorn Cross, Cheshire, which is to stay open.

in preventing re-offending than other initiatives."

However, the internal study prepared by Dr Kate Painter, of Cambridge University's Institute of Criminology, compared the boot camp favourably to conventional Young Offender Institutions, where a typical day involved being locked in for long periods, leading to boredom and depression.

One Colchester inmate was quoted as saying: "Don't close it. It is giving people a chance to change." ■

10. The London Telegraph

January 23, 1998

Australians to sign 'Sorry Books' for Aborigines

By David Rennie in Sydney

AUSTRALIANS are to be asked to sign "Sorry Books" apologising for their country's ill-treatment of its Aborigines.

The books, to be placed in towns and cities nationwide, will then be bound and handed to Aborigine leaders in local ceremonies on the first "National Sorry Day" to be held in May.

The books are the idea of a coalition of government human rights and Aborigine agencies, community groups,

trade unions and churches, and will be launched next Monday, Australia Day, in Sydney.

Apologies are expected to focus on the "stolen generation", the thousands of mixed-race children forcibly removed from their families to be raised as white in a programme lasting for 150 years until the early 1970s. In what was felt were the best interests of such children, the authorities destroyed many of the records detailing who their real parents

were.

"National Sorry Day" will be held on May 26, exactly a year after the tabling in the Australian parliament of a national inquiry into the forced removal programme. The inquiry's report, Bringing Them Home, recommended instituting a day of national apology. Many of the "stolen children" who gave evidence to the inquiry said they would value such an event.

Organisers hope the civic ceremonies

of "National Sorry Day" will allow police, municipal authorities and churches to apologise for the parts such

organisations played in the forced removal programme. The federal government refuses to apologise for the

programme, apparently for fear of sparking a wave of claims for compensation.■

TRADE

RECEIVED JAN 27 1998

11. Chronicle of Higher Education (Academe Today)

January 26, 1998

Education Dept. Sues 2 Ohio Universities to Thwart Release of Discipline Records

By KIT LIVELY

The U.S. Department of Education on Thursday sued Ohio State and Miami Universities to prevent them from releasing campus judiciary records containing students' names to The Chronicle.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Columbus, Ohio, seeks to find the two universities in violation of a federal privacy law for releasing student disciplinary records, with names intact, without prior permission from the students involved. The department also

The court ordered Miami, a public institution, to release records from disciplinary proceedings to the university's student newspaper, which had sued for access to the information. Journalists in many states have been pushing for access to campus-crime reports, arguing that they provide essential information about the extent of crime on campuses and the effectiveness of university judicial systems.

In August, Mr. Rooker wrote Miami's president, James C. Garland, that the disciplinary records did qualify as "education records" under the federal law. The letter added that colleges would violate the law if they released records that might identify students.

FERPA prohibits colleges from disclosing "personally identifiable information derived from education records" without the consent of the student involved. The court documents filed last week by the Education Department say that education records are "broadly defined to include 'those records, files, documents, and other materials which — (i) contain information directly related to a student; and (ii) are maintained by an educational agency or institution.'"

But the Ohio Supreme Court applied a much more narrow definition of "education records," saying that

seeks a preliminary injunction to prevent the release of more records with names intact while the lawsuit is adjudicated.

Education Department officials said they had gone to court to protect the privacy of students whose names might appear in disciplinary files as victims or witnesses of crimes.

Said LeRoy S. Rooker, director of the department's Family Policy Compliance Office: "We really saw this as irreparable harm that could be done to students that have a legitimate expectation that the confidentiality and privacy of their disciplinary documents were not covered, but were subject to the state's open-records law. "For potential students, and their parents, it is imperative that they are made aware of all campus crime statistics and other types of student misconduct in order to make an intelligent decision of which university to attend," the decision said.

Colleges that violate the law risk losing federal funds, but Mr. Rooker has said repeatedly that the department has no intention of withdrawing such support.

He said the Ohio universities could comply with the federal law if they released the records but first deleted any information that might identify a student. Under FERPA, that information can include names of students or their family members, their Social Security numbers or student identification numbers, or "other information that would make the student's identity easily traceable."

Mr. Rooker noted that the Ohio court decision required Miami to comply only with the student newspaper's request, which would allow the university to delete the names, Social Security numbers, and college identification numbers of students before releasing the records. Mr. Rooker added, however, that the department disagrees with the Ohio court's finding that disciplinary records

judicial records will be protected. I'm not talking about the alleged perpetrator, but the victims and witnesses."

The Chronicle requested the documents in July, after the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that records from campus disciplinary proceedings were not "education records" under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as FERPA or the Buckley Amendment.

are not education records under FERPA. He said Education Department officials hope the federal courts will clarify that issue.

Miami appealed the Ohio court's ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court, but in December the Justices refused to hear the matter, allowing the state-court ruling to stand. Shortly afterward, the two universities fulfilled part of The Chronicle's request for two years' worth of records by mailing copies of records for November 1995 and November 1996. The records contained names and addresses but not Social Security numbers, which had been deleted because Ohio laws not affected by the state-court ruling prohibit their release.

After The Chronicle asked for the remaining records from those two years this month, the department decided to sue to prevent the universities from disclosing them. The Chronicle wanted to see the names in case it was necessary to contact victims or the accused to assess the fairness of the proceedings. The Chronicle also notified the universities that it has a policy of not publishing the names of victims of sex crimes without their consent.

Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, called the lawsuit "shocking and irresponsible" because the Ohio Supreme Court has

already ruled that the records in question are not covered by the Buckley Amendment.■

12. Chronicle of Higher Education

January 26, 1998

IRS Ruling Will Aid Part-Time Students Who Work at Their Colleges

By DOUGLAS LEDERMAN
WASHINGTON

Students who are employed by their colleges do not have to pay Social Security taxes if they are enrolled at least half time, the Internal Revenue Service ruled this month.

The decision, which reverses the I.R.S.'s only previous public statement on the subject, could bring refunds worth millions of dollars to colleges that have withheld the tax from the wages of work-study students who attend classes part time.

The I.R.S. ruling, Revenue Procedure 98-16, clarifies a provision in the federal tax code that exempts students and their

For three years, a group of about 30 universities, known as the Student FICA Coalition, has lobbied the agency to adopt a broader definition of the student exemption. This month's ruling provides it, exempting from the tax any undergraduate or graduate student who is enrolled at least half time, no matter how many hours he or she works.

Students cannot qualify for the exemption if they are considered "career employees," however. The I.R.S. defines career employees at colleges as people who are eligible to participate in their institution's retirement plan or who receive reduced tuition from their college (other than teaching and research assistants who qualify for tuition remission under Section 117[d] of the tax code).

employers from paying Social Security taxes when the students are employed by the college they attend.

The law exempts "a student who is enrolled and regularly attending classes," but it does not define how many courses a student must take to qualify. Until 1993, many colleges had interpreted it to cover anyone enrolled in at least one class.

In general, employers and employees each must pay a tax of 7.65 per cent, which includes money for Social Security and Medicare. The tax is known as the Federal Insurance Contributions Act, or FICA, tax.

In 1993, in a case involving Oakland Bertrand M. Harding, a Washington lawyer who represents the FICA coalition, said I.R.S. officials wanted the career-employee provision because they worried that the exemption might be sought by full-time college employees who were seeking degrees from their institutions on the side, such as an assistant controller earning a master's degree in business administration. "Virtually all schools agree that that person shouldn't be eligible for the FICA exemption, and most don't permit people like that to qualify," Mr. Harding said. "But the I.R.S. wanted a safeguard."

Mr. Harding and business officers at several colleges said they needed to examine the I.R.S. ruling more carefully before assessing its full impact. But the lawyer's initial impression, he said, is that

University in Michigan, the I.R.S. issued a "technical advice memorandum" saying that to be exempt from paying the tax, a student must take at least 12 credits of courses and must not be employed for more than 20 hours a week. College officials referred to this as the "12/20 rule."

The memorandum did not set a legal precedent, but I.R.S. agents across the country used it as a guide as they audited colleges. And some colleges began adapting their policies to comply with the stance taken in the memorandum, even though they considered it to define "student" far too narrowly.

the I.R.S. "came out pretty much right in line" with what the colleges had sought.

Because the ruling does not specify an effective date, it applies retroactively. As a result, said David R. Fuller, a lawyer in the Washington office of the Chicago law firm McDermott, Will, and Emery, which represents dozens of colleges on tax issues, institutions that have been using a more-restrictive standard for paying their work-study students can now seek refunds for up to four years' worth of FICA payments that they and their students have made.

"I think there are millions of dollars out there" available for refund from the government," Mr. Fuller said. "It's just a matter of universities' assessing how much they've withheld, and whether it's enough to make it worth the effort."■

13. Chronicle of Higher Education

January 26, 1998

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By KIT LIVELY

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Education Department officials said they had gone to court to protect the privacy of students whose names might appear in disciplinary files as victims or

witnesses of crimes.

Said LeRoy S. Rooker, director of the department's Family Policy Compliance Office: "We really saw this as irreparable harm that could be done to students that have a legitimate expectation that the confidentiality and privacy of their judicial records will be protected. I'm not talking about the alleged perpetrator, but the victims and witnesses."

The Chronicle requested the documents in July, after the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that records from campus disciplinary proceedings were not "education records" under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as FERPA or the Buckley Amendment.

The court ordered Miami, a public institution, to release records from disciplinary proceedings to the university's student newspaper, which had sued for access to the information. Journalists in many states have been pushing for access to campus-crime reports, arguing that they provide

Mr. Rooker noted that the Ohio court decision required Miami to comply only with the student newspaper's request, which would allow the university to delete the names, Social Security numbers, and college identification numbers of students before releasing the records. Mr. Rooker added, however, that the department disagrees with the Ohio court's finding that disciplinary records are not education records under FERPA. He said Education Department officials hope the federal courts will clarify that issue.

Miami appealed the Ohio court's ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court, but in

essential information about the extent of crime on campuses and the effectiveness of university judicial systems.

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Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, called the lawsuit "shocking and irresponsible" because the Ohio Supreme Court has already ruled that the records in question are not covered by the Buckley Amendment. ■

14. The Times Educational Supplement

January 23, 1998

France: Socialist action zones to be reborn

Jane Marshall reports on a minister's new attempt to help deprived children - nearly 10 per cent of the nation's total

France's 500 education priority zones are to be relaunched 15 years after they were set up to help children in deprived areas.

Schools minister Ségolène Royal last week unveiled plans to pay teachers more to stay longer in their posts, to cut the size of the biggest zones, and to ensure that all two-year-olds have a place in a nursery school.

The zones d'éducation prioritaires

(ZEPs) were introduced in 1982 by Socialist education minister Alain Savary, and have generally helped disadvantaged pupils catch up with their more fortunate peers.

There are 563 zones, catering for nearly 10 per cent of pupils - 1.2 million children in 6,000 mostly primary and lower secondary schools.

Zones are determined by factors such as an area's unemployment and

immigration rates, and parents' qualifications. Most are in run-down urban areas on the outskirts of large cities. ZEP schools have smaller classes, extra support staff, more experienced teachers and budgets nearly three times higher than those of ordinary schools.

But ministers say that the zones were neglected by the previous centre-right government, and the new prime minister Lionel Jospin promised to revitalise

them.

Last week Mme Royal announced that local and national debates on the ZEPs would take place between now and June, and presented to the cabinet her main proposals for the relaunch, due to start in selected areas in September 1998. They include:

- * encouraging zone teachers to stay longer in their posts. While they already receive bonuses and other perks, the minister will discuss with teaching unions ways of further improving career prospects and working conditions in recognition of their skills.

- * blurring the boundaries to develop networks between zone schools and those just outside. The biggest ZEPs - such as one in Marseilles which covers 10,000 pupils - will be divided into several smaller ones, "on a more human scale", to cater for about 2,000 children.

- * making available Fr20 million (£2m) to provide free books and other reading matter for children from poor families.

- * reinforcing the links between ZEP schools and families, and twinning city and rural schools.

The minister also called on local authorities which are partly responsible

for financing and running nursery schools to ensure they provide places in the zones for all two-year-olds. "Experience shows that early schooling is a major determinant for success," she said.

Mme Royal also wants more weight given to language. "Half the problems in arithmetic are due to lack of understanding of what is said," she said.

Each ZEP will also be required to produce, in consultation with its chief education officer, a "contract" outlining its aims and standards, by which its achievements and failures will be analysed. ■

15. The Times Educational Supplement

January 23, 1998

Byers puts councils in hot seat

The school standards minister told a shocked education officers' conference that local authorities are now to be inspected once every five years. He also said it would not be a 'joyous experience'. Nicolas Barnard reports.

Local education authorities are to be inspected more frequently than schools as the Government puts added pressure on councils to deliver its school improvement agenda.

The Office for Standards in Education and the Audit Commission have been told to move to a five-yearly cycle of local authority inspections.

Inspectors had embarked only this month on a programme of inspecting 12 authorities per year. But that would have meant some authorities avoiding scrutiny until as late as 2012. There will now be 30 inspections a year from 2000.

The announcement was made at the end of the week that inspectors moved into the first authorities in the new cycle of statutory inspections and comes as OFSTED switches to a six-yearly cycle of school visits.

It also demonstrated Labour's continuing predilection for announcing uncomfortable measures to local authority audiences. Stephen Byers, the school standards minister, broke the news at last weekend's annual conference of the Society of Education Officers in Harrogate.

It provoked an audibly sharp intake of breath among delegates still rattled by the Government's invitation to the private sector to run education action zones, made at the previous week's North of England conference.

Inspectors are to work up to the five-year cycle - 30 authorities a year by

2000. Mr Byers said up to six local authorities would be added to this year's schedule of 12; inspectors would visit 24 next year and move to 30 the year after.

He admitted it would not be a "joyous experience" for those under the microscope, but said "we will all be judged" - schools, authorities and ministers.

His speech, closing the Harrogate conference, contained much praise for the work of local authorities, and a pledge that the Department for Education and Employment would work more closely with officers.

Crucially, he said he believed authorities "can add value to what schools do" - a view delegates suspect is not held by everyone in the DFEE and its quangos. However, if it was intended to calm nerves, it failed. Indeed, it seemed to leave an unspoken threat hanging.

"I believe the measures in the [Schools Standards and Framework] Bill will allow education authorities to write themselves back into the script as far as education is concerned. But the Government will not do it for you," Mr Byers said.

"The means to do it will be in the legislation but you will need to show you can take on the heavy burden of helping your schools to raise standards.

"I'm confident that many authorities will be able to do that," he said - leaving some delegates wondering what would happen to the rest.

It followed an even more salutary warning by the DFEE's permanent secretary Michael Richard. In an earlier speech he said local authorities must trumpet their success "to the centre of Government" - an implicit reminder that Tony Blair now has his sights set on local government.

Some delegates, too, were uncomfortable or even insulted by Mr Byers' defence of Labour's welfare reforms - in some ways the most passionate part of his speech. Some even viewed it as emotional blackmail as he told them the reforms were vital "to free up money for education and health" and fulfil Labour's pledge of increasing spending in those areas year on year.

He called it a "courageous stand". One delegate's response was: "Doesn't he realise that poverty is one of the main causes of the problems we face?"

Action zones remained one of the major talking points of the conference, reflecting an unease many delegates felt over the part the Government expects them to play in its standards crusade.

Philip Hunter, the incoming president of the society, said many authorities were enthusiastic and willing partners, aware of the need to modernise, eager to get to grips with the problems facing education and relieved to have a Government that saw them as a partner (the money helps too). Or as another senior local authority officer put it after griping about elements of the minister's speech: "But thank God

it wasn't Stephen Dorrell."

Local authorities know they are on trial but in Harrogate an uncertainty seemed to remain about exactly what the Government wants them to do. The target

is clear enough: 80 per cent of 11-year-olds at level 4 literacy by 2002.

But how they are expected to get there seemed to many ill-defined. And yet, as they prepare education development

plans and action zone bids and await inspection, there is a growing suspicion they will be judged not only on results but on process. And that could prove the true test. ■

16. The Times Educational Supplement

January 23, 1998

Success with numbers all in the mind

The Government's numeracy task force says children should learn to count in their heads first. Nicholas Pyke reports.

British children should learn to count in their heads before they tackle formal paper-and-pencil maths, says this week's preliminary report from the Government's numeracy task force.

The influential group of academics and teachers believes pupils need a much stronger emphasis on mental arithmetic, including times tables and number games. They also want more class discussion and whole-class teaching.

But there will be no return to 1950s methods, says the group responsible for developing a national strategy. Chairman, Professor David Reynolds, said he was "exasperated" by headlines promising Victorian teaching.

There is more official concern about maths than any other curriculum subject in Britain. In a major international study, published last summer, 14-year-olds from England and Wales came only tenth out of 17 comparable countries.

The Government has promised that 75 per cent of 11-year-olds will be reaching the appropriate standard for their age in national curriculum tests, level 4, by the year 2002. It has also promised that all pupils would be at this level by the end of a second term in office, 2007.

Figures from last summer's tests show that 62 per cent are meeting the standard. The report steers schools away from concentrating on the middle-ranking

achievers those within easy range of this target. Schools will be obliged to publish figures on pupils who are struggling.

Professor Reynolds, from Newcastle University, said the report was "a watershed in maths education" because of the consensus it achieves. Its members include academics from liberal and conservative wings of maths opinion. Many of the recommendations match those of the Government's literacy task force, which were published in the autumn.

There will be a national maths strategy, costing about £50 million; numeracy training for heads, governors and teachers; summer schools in maths; a national year of mathematics in 2000; and a numeracy hour in schools.

The report gives teachers a surprising autonomy. It acknowledges that different pupils in different settings, particularly those in disadvantaged areas, need different sorts of teaching. The document has been released for consultation with a final report due before the summer holiday. The strategy would be implemented from 1999.

The National Association of Head Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers warned it would create more unwanted bureaucracy.

There is evidence that the approach is

already popular with teachers and schools, says the report, as the National Numeracy project is getting 100 calls a day asking for help and materials.

The task force recommends:

- * Training for heads, governors and maths co-ordinators;
- * A daily maths lesson of between 45 and 60 minutes;
- * Training for primary teachers on methods including: oral and mental work; devoting more time to interacting with pupils; understanding different types of classroom organisation; detailed lesson planning; assessing pupils progress;
- * An action plan to raise standards of numeracy developed by each primary school, including targets for improvement and staff development;
- * Greater emphasis on oral and mental work in the national curriculum;
- * Involvement in UNESCO's World Mathematical Year 2000, creating a national climate in which maths is seen as enjoyable;
- * Summer numeracy schools and exploration of ways in which secondary schools can build on primary work;
- * Homework guidelines for parents;
- * Measures to ensure that education bodies emphasise numeracy;
- * Research on innovative maths programmes already in place. ■

17. The Times Educational Supplement

January 23, 1998

Labour set to tear up teachers' contract

Ministers want a more flexible workforce, report Nicolas Barnard and Frances Rafferty.

Ministers want to do away with the national teachers' pay and conditions contract in an attempt to create a more

flexible workforce, The TES can reveal.

Schools in education action zones deprived areas being targeted by the

Government are to be used as a test bed for new contracts. Teachers could be paid more for working longer hours and

personal contracts could be on the agenda.

Stephen Byers, school standards

This drive will not be limited to failing schools in action zones. Mr Byers said 40 per cent of schools were coasting and they would prove hardest to convince of the need to rise to the challenge.

He said there could be more money for teachers prepared to sign up to a new agreement. But it would only be possible to squeeze more out of the Treasury if the Department for Education and Employment could demonstrate results. Education action zones, announced two weeks ago, will be given the freedom to set new pay and conditions for teachers, partly to entice staff into areas where recruitment is often difficult. One county education chairman told The TES that his authority's bid would mean negotiating longer hours for teachers.

But at the Society of Education Officers annual conference in Harrogate last weekend, Mr Byers indicated Labour's thinking was to use zones to introduce much wider-reaching reforms. "I want zones to pilot new ways of thinking as far as teachers conditions go, he said. If we put extra demands on

minister, said last weekend that it was time to replace the contract imposed on teachers in 1987 with one that reflected teachers to work in the evening, early in the morning, at the weekend, they must be rewarded and treated as professionals. If we can have a more professional teachers contract it will be a price worth having for the increased pay for the individual teachers prepared to sign up."

Under the 1987 Teachers Pay and Conditions Act now in force, teachers are required to work an annual 1,265 hours, teaching for 190 days a year with five days for in-service training.

But Government initiatives including summer literacy schools and homework clubs have already been judged a success, and there is a growing body of opinion which wants to extend the school day and even the school year. That has created pressure to reform teachers contracts which has been reinforced by the action zones.

The Government expects resistance, and unions indicated this week they would get it. Even before the extent of the Government's plans was known, the National Union of Teachers was threatening action over zones, saying it would only support bids if teachers

the demands of Labour's drive to raise standards.

organisations were consulted and if national pay and conditions applied.

But Labour is unlikely to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the unions from which it has distanced itself since taking power. Mr Byers told the SEO he had been alarmed by teachers defensiveness. That might be the legacy of 18 years under the Tories, he said, but they needed to regain their self-confidence.

"The present teachers contract was actually imposed in 1987 at the height of action and was massively opposed by teachers then. Now we are talking about changing contracts, teachers are the first to defend it. We need to take them through the argument, and say isn't there a better contract we can develop for the late 1990s?" he said.

Mr Byers also announced that authorities were to be inspected every five years by the Office for Standards in Education and the Audit Commission. Inspections will increase from 12 to 30 a year by 2000. LEAs will therefore be scrutinised more often than schools, which are to be visited every six years. ■

LOCAL

18. San Antonio Express-News

01/23/98; Edition: Metro; Section: Metro; Page 01B

Education official tells students to set sights on college

By Jeanne Russell
Express-News Staff Writer

PORTLAND - U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley urged high school students to set their minds on college in a pair of town-hall meetings at South Texas high schools.

This region's educational woes have fallen under the national spotlight in recent weeks. Riley's trip to Portland and McAllen was billed as a follow-up to President Clinton's Rio Grande Valley visit Jan. 9, when he delivered a similar stay-in-school message.

And Clinton is expected to comment on a new national report on Hispanics dropping out of school in his State of the Union speech Tuesday.

"Education beyond high school has never been more important than it is today," Riley told about 750 students at Gregory-Portland High School.

He took questions from a panel of students and community members, launching into detailed explanations of scholarships and grants for college, national standards and charter schools.

Students gave the nation's top education official better-than-passing marks, praising his substantive replies.

"In the beginning when he was telling jokes I thought he would be just another old man," said Catherine Polinard, a 14-year-old Gregory-Portland freshman. "I was impressed with the way he could answer questions so quickly without thinking."

Some have speculated that the administration's sudden interest in South Texas represents political payback to Congressman Ruben Hinojosa. D-Mercedes, rather than concern about one of the nation's most impoverished regions.

Hinojosa was among a group of Democrats who sided with the president against party leadership on trade legislation.

But aides to Hinojosa, who sits on the House Education Committee and the Hispanic Caucus, have insisted that this administration "gets" the educational difficulties facing South Texas, a region troubled by double-digit unemployment and a pre-college dropout rate of nearly 50 percent.

Riley expressed dismay at the Hispanic dropout rate, higher nationally than for any other ethnic group.

"It's just a tragedy for any child to drop out of school," Riley said.

This concern resonated with South Texas high school students who worried about paying for college.

"It was about our future," said 18-year-old Erika Buentello of Alice. "It's

about helping us through college - those of us who don't have the money."

The event was carefully choreographed, with Riley's advance team instructing high school administrators on stage decorations and requiring that the questions be sent to

"Especially Hispanics," added her friend, Sheila Martinez.

Washington before the town-hall meeting.

But most audience members said they didn't mind the event's canned political feel.

Gregory-Portland Principal Judith Richard said she appreciated the secretary's detailed list of grants, scholarships and tax credits for college. ■

19. Houston Chronicle

01/25/98; Edition: 2 STAR; Section: STATE; Page 2

Footnotes

Staff

"In the beginning when he was telling jokes I thought he would be just another old man. I was impressed with the way he

could answer questions so quickly without thinking" - Catherine Polinard, a 14-year-old Portland high school freshman, on **Education Secretary**

Richard Riley's visit to her school last week. ■

20. Greensboro News & Record

01/25/98; Edition: CITY; Section: PEOPLE & PLACES; Page 6

READING PROGRAM DIRECTOR TO SPEAK

Carol Hampton Rasco, senior advisor to **Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley** and director of the America Reads Challenge, will speak at Greensboro College 1:30 p.m. Tuesday in Cowan Building Lecture Hall. She will address students in the teacher education program as well as other Greensboro College students and faculty.

The event is open to the public.

Rasco will share an overall view of the America Reads Challenge, give a legislative update, review cutting-edge literacy research, explain how to get involved in the America Reads Challenge and debut plans to develop America Reads Challenge summer reading sites in each state.

The America Reads Challenge encourages Americans to identify what role he or she can play - professionally and personally - to help all children learn to read well and independently by the end of the third grade.

Rasco served for the past four years as assistant to the President for Domestic Policy and directed the President's Domestic Policy Council, which consists of Cabinet Secretaries and heads of domestic agencies.

A native of Arkansas, Rasco worked as President Clinton's chief policy advisor in the Arkansas Governor's office for 10 years, serving as senior executive assistant. From 1985 through 1992, she was also Clinton's liaison to the National

Governor's Association, while he served as chairman as well as lead governor on welfare reform, child care and health care reform.

Before joining Clinton's staff in 1983, Rasco worked as a volunteer in Arkansas with arts organizations, disability advocacy groups and the United Methodist Church.

Rasco received the bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas and earned a master's degree from the University of Central Arkansas.

For more information, contact Judy Cheatham, professor of English, at (336) 272-7102. ■

21. The Orange County Register

01/25/98; Edition: MORNING; Section: NEWS; Page A01

Prying eyes were watching UCI's library activist

Daniel Tsang battled the CIA for keeping a file on him, and the agency backed off.

By KIMBERLY KINDY
The Orange County Register

When the editors of magazines such as Covert Action asked the CIA whether the agency was spying on them, the spooks said: Don't worry. We're spying on Daniel Tsang instead.

Tsang is a University of California, Irvine, librarian.

The librarian started his career in 1978 on a U.S. Department of Education grant that paid him to travel the country

No spy, no terrorist, just a 48-year-old guy who occasionally does dangerous things such as indexing articles for magazines that espouse the idea that spying on U.S. citizens is wrong.

Tsang's fight against the CIA caused the agency last month to change its Web site statement that the agency is "expressly prohibited by Executive by Greyhound bus. His task: to infuse college and university libraries with publications that advocated views not

Order" from spying on Americans. Now it says that in some instances the CIA will spy on U.S. citizens "if there is a reason to believe that an individual is involved in espionage or international terrorist activities." The CIA admits Tsang isn't.

Which brings us to who Daniel Tsang is. found in mainstream books and periodicals.

One magazine the federal government

paid him to distribute was Covert Action.

"It is funny," Tsang said. "That's what I've found with the federal government. The right hand never knows what the left hand is doing."

Before it was all over, Tsang sued the CIA to get a copy of the file they were keeping on him, and got them to back off.

Tsang admits that from the start he wasn't a quiet, bookish librarian. He was, and is, a librarian activist.

He indexed the contents of Covert Action and several other magazines that contend that the CIA and FBI often spy on U.S. citizens, in violation of the law. He then wrote a story for a library journal in 1979, encouraging other librarians to subscribe to the publications.

Three years ago, the CIA paid \$46,000 to settle his case, and Tsang learned that his journal article was the first item in a file that tracked his writings for more than a decade.

Tsang believes that his relationship with magazines that aimed to shut down the CIA made him a target, but just why they tracked him for so long remains a mystery.

"I have always believed they were trying to get rid of these magazines, and I was just at the edges and was pulled in," Tsang said.

The CIA will not discuss Tsang's case, but in its settlement agreement the agency promised to expunge his file and to stop tracking him _ unless he becomes a spy or engages in other kinds of international crime.

His CIA file shows that the government also was interested in Tsang's other writings, including his founding of Gay Insurgent magazine, which from 1979 to 1981 fought for the rights of gays and lesbians.

Several pages in his file refer to "attachments" he never received. What he has is frequently covered with black lines. Even his first name is blacked out.

"The CIA cited national security as the reason," said Tsang's attorney Kate Martin, referring to the blacked-out passages. "It's their mantra for why they don't release information. They say, 'If we tell you what we have, you'll figure out how we got it. You will know the sources and methods we used.'"

Tsang leads a spartan life. Drives a Volkswagen Golf economy car. Lives alone in a small beachside townhouse.

"I know who you're talking about," said CIA spokesman Tom Crispell. "There was an oversight on the Web site. We've updated it now. We don't dispute that we did this after we got a call from

where visitors listen to his collection of anti-war songs.

There are a few pieces of simple IKEA furniture. Rows of bookshelves that reach the ceiling are packed with books and magazines _ many of them about the CIA and FBI.

Louis Wolf, co-founder of Washington, D.C.-based Covert Action, said he spent the last 20 years researching how the CIA operates _ and that Tsang has gotten much further than most.

"It's his tenacity that has carried him this far," said Wolf, who believes the CIA also has a dossier on him, but has failed to secure it.

"The CIA is not supposed to collect files on Americans, and Dan Tsang's case, of course, was a landmark case that nailed them down doing just that," he said.

When Tsang arrived at UCI in 1985, he was heading a national group of librarian activists who work to get alternative literature onto library shelves.

Tsang, who is openly gay, went to work immediately stocking UCI's shelves with items from small publishers, with a particular concentration on homosexuality and Asian culture.

Students call him the "alternative librarian."

"If you are looking for research materials that aren't mainstream _ he's the person to turn to," said Wilson Chen, a UCI graduate student who studies English. "He's very accessible and is an incredible resource."

Tsang's first battle with the federal government over files was funded by a \$2,000 state grant. He requested and, little by little, got FBI files that reveal how the agency tracked the gay movement in the 1960s and '70s.

His most startling find? A 1969 poster, and a copy of orders to circulate it, from FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover that promoted a contest called Pick the Fag.

The winner was promised 500 rolls of red toilet paper for correctly guessing which 1960s radical on the poster was gay.

"They tried to gay-bait anti-war leaders. They tried to imply they were homosexuals to discredit them," Tsang said.

Tsang's list of activist work at UCI and in Orange County continued to grow. Mr. Tsang's attorneys."

Tsang never wanted the government to spy on him, but if they were going to do it, he wishes they had been better biographers.

In the early '90s, he persuaded the library to hire more employees from minority groups after a UCI report revealed that Asian-American students were being mimicked by some library staff.

In 1993, eager to seize everyone's attention, he started a radio show, "Subversity," _ a name blending subversive and university _ airing from 5 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays on KUCI/88.9 FM.

Although his voice is calm and low, the topics _ from legalizing prostitution to setting up gay clubs at high schools _ sometimes rile listeners and have made Tsang a target of death threats.

"The purpose is to discuss issues that some people might feel uncomfortable about ... so that we all deal with them," said student Grant Peterson, who went on "Subversity" to talk about his recent work co-founding the Gay-Straight Alliance at Los Alamitos High School.

Tsang also helped start the Asian-American studies program at UCI, which this year turned into a full-blown major. In 1993 he formed AWARE, Alliance Working for Asian Rights and Empowerment, which helped three Garden Grove teen-agers win a harassment lawsuit against local police.

The officers had stopped and photographed the youths _ two of them honor students _ in a strip mall police called a gang hangout. AWARE still helps kids who think they are unfairly tagged as gang members.

Tsang no longer uses a Greyhound to spread the word of the offbeat literature he wants the world to dsang{P} "He is really a remarkable person," said Marc Alexander, an attorney who squashed a judge's attempt to get Tsang to turn over notes from a free-lance article about a Laguna Hills man who was beaten by assailants who thought he was gay.

"He operates in so many different arenas," he said. "He's a scholar. He's a librarian. He's an activist. He's a radio talk-show host. He's a writer. I would describe him as a friend of the underdog."

Not everyone is so positive. The CIA for years saw him as an enemy and feared that the magazines Tsang supports could harm the agency, his file shows.

Mention Daniel Tsang's name to the CIA Public Affairs Office, and they don't have to look for his file.

"It was a waste of money, and they didn't find out much about me," he said, leafing through his file. "They weren't very good at it. I read through this and actually was quite disappointed."■

22. The New York Times

01/26/98 Section: Metropolitan Desk; Section B; Page 3, Column 1

Mayor Urges Separation of High Schoolers Past the Fifth Year

By NORIMITSU ONISHI

Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani said yesterday that high school students who do not graduate within five years should be transferred to a separate program that would give them more time to obtain their diplomas.

Earlier this month in his State of the City address, the Mayor criticized the Board of Education's practice of allowing students to stay in high school until age 21. But yesterday, for the first time he brought up the idea of creating a program specifically for students who take longer than the standard four years to graduate from high school.

"People who can't complete high school in five years should then go into a high school extension program, rather than having high schools in which you have 21-year-olds and 13-year-olds, which creates enormous educational problems," Mr. Giuliani said after delivering remarks at a morning meeting of the Riverdale Jewish Community Council in the Bronx.

The Mayor said educators would have to work out the details of the high school extension program, though he added that he would elaborate on it when he presents the city's preliminary budget on Thursday. Any proposal would require the approval of the Board of Education.

The Schools Chancellor, Dr. Rudy Crew, has been in "very serious dialogues with the Mayor over this issue in recent months," Chiara Coletti, a spokeswoman for Dr. Crew, said yesterday.

Earlier this month, the Chancellor hinted at what shape such a program might take when, following the Mayor's address, he raised the possibility of formally creating a system that would extend schooling to the 14th grade for some students. It is an idea that President Clinton has also mentioned.

Mr. Giuliani said earlier this month that students who have been in high school for five years could pursue their education at night or on weekends, as a way of "psychologically and emotionally" preparing for "the real world of work." The city currently offers some classes at night and on weekends, but it is not clear whether a high school extension program would expand on these programs or offer something new.

Carol A. Gresser, the board member from Queens, said yesterday that it was too soon to comment on any plans. But she said that any program should also offer older students internships or part-time jobs.

The latest Board of Education statistics available show that more than 34,000 students are in high school

beyond the normal four years. For example, in the class of 1993, which numbered almost 60,000 students, 19,574 stayed to their fifth year, 9,379 until the beginning of the sixth year and 5,117 until the beginning of the seventh year.

"More of our students are graduating with diplomas, but there are more and more of them graduating after six and seven years," Ms. Coletti said.

The Mayor's comments on a high school extension program were in keeping with his recent call to raise standards at the public schools, which he reiterated yesterday. He pressed for the end of open enrollment at the City University system, which would make its six community colleges virtually the only ones in the country without open admissions. And he also said that the school year should be extended to 200 days from 180 days.

Many of the Mayor's proposals would require approval or money from Albany, but he said that putting a high school extension program into effect could be done by using money that would have otherwise been used to educate older high school students.

"The purpose of this would be to shift the funding to where it would do the most good," he said. ■

23. The Washington Post

01/26/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B01

Libraries Reflecting Suburban Diversity

Fairfax Centers Serve Readers From Babies to Businesses

By Patricia Davis

Washington Post Staff Writer

At the Pohick Regional Library, in the

It's a different world over at the county's Woodrow Wilson Library. A Nicaraguan dance troupe is practicing in a meeting room, Vietnamese fiction is hot, and the branch manager is applying for a grant to buy books in 10 more languages, including Farsi and Urdu.

Inside the Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, it's all business. Surrounded by 22 million square feet of office space, the library has Fairfax County's only

heart of Fairfax County's baby belt, a gigantic Paddington Bear looms overhead, the shelves are heavily stocked extensive real-estate collection, a business specialist on the payroll, and a steady parade of business suits.

Libraries have become mirrors of Washington's increasingly diverse suburbs.

With less public money in many of their budgets — and more patrons to satisfy — librarians are striving harder to cater to different reading tastes and needs in each community.

with picture books, and library programs for preschoolers as young as 18 months old have waiting lists.

"It's a never-ending challenge for us as public funds shrink," said Elizabeth Waller, the branch manager at Pohick library. "To do that, you find out who your audience is."

The Washington area's public libraries are among the busiest in the nation, according to the American Library Association.

Last year 70 percent of Fairfax residents had library cards, and the rate

was 80 percent in the District and 86 percent in Montgomery County — all well above the national average of 55 percent.

At Pohick Regional Library, the busiest of Fairfax County's 19 libraries, it's not unusual for patrons to check out the maximum 50 books at one time, or for parents — snapping up "10 Tips on Raising Lifelong Readers" — to get their toddlers their own library cards.

"Both kids are avid readers," said Anne Ledwith, 36, who, along with her husband, Paul, 34, was recently juggling 40 books they had just checked out at Pohick, most of them for their two children, Julia, 7, and Ryan, 3.

To figure out what people want to read, library officials carefully monitor the latest demographic data, conduct user surveys and examine their circulation numbers to see which books are checked out the most.

Readers have become more worldly in many ways, said Kay Ecelberger, chief of collection development for Montgomery's public libraries.

Instead of readers seeking books on various world religions as a reference material, "now you have populations in your community that practice those religions," she said. "We have many more cultural traditions. We need to respond to that."

What people like to read most in Fairfax is a real mystery. Lots of them. Nonfiction also moves quickly, particularly books about home improvement, travel, the Civil War, soccer coaching and anything to do with computers.

Fairfax residents are not only well-read, they're also good listeners, with a huge demand for recorded books "even if they don't have geographically long commutes," said Julie Pringle, coordinator of collection management. "They have traffic backups."

When you get down to the branch level, tastes start to diverge.

"The in-depth books sort of define the

Martha Washington Branch," Pringle said of the county's Alexandria branch. "It has a lot of retired people, very well-educated people, many former government workers. They do lifelong learning."

In contrast, library officials have spotted a "baby belt" that includes Springfield, Burke, Fairfax Station, Chantilly and Centreville, based on such factors as picture-book circulation. The Reston Regional Library also has a large circulation of picture books, and its preschool programs start at an even younger age than Pohick's — 13 months.

The community that Pohick serves has a high concentration of large families, so the library has added "multiple-sibling" preschool programs aimed at holding the attention of children from 1 to 5 years old.

"They really do cater to children," said Laurie Rosen, 29, who was recently attending a "Marvelous Mittens" program at Pohick with her 2-year-old daughter, Samantha. "It's very child-friendly."

The Pohick branch's "Homework Center" is a big draw for older children and their parents. Through a special arrangement, area schools fax homework assignments to the library even before students get them, Waller said.

The library then stocks the center's 14 shelves with related books and periodicals for use in the library only, so that "the kid who wasn't first off the mark will be able to get materials," she said.

The Woodrow Wilson Library plays a very different role. It has become a life raft for waves of new immigrants who arrive daily in the Falls Church area.

"In this community, these immigrants are so new that the children were not born here," said Bonnie Worcester, the branch manager. "So they're learning English along with their parents."

The library has one of the system's largest "English as a Second Language" collections but no copies of reference books such as "Who's Who in America." There's a Spanish and Vietnamese

reading area, and many staff members and volunteers are multilingual.

Twice a week, as many as 50 young children burst through the door and head for the "Homework Help Center," where they are tutored by adults and children. Many arrive from the elementary school next door, where students come from more than 45 countries and speak more than 22 languages.

Worcester is hoping to buy books in more of their languages "so their parents can read to them."

Unlike some libraries, patrons here rarely cart armloads of books out the door, she said.

"People here will take one or two, and they will hold them so closely," Worcester said. "There's just not that same sense of entitlement."

The Tysons-Pimmit branch also serves a large number of new immigrants, but its location in the midst of the county's largest chunk of prime office space has clearly had an effect.

People in the business community often swing by on their way to and from work, or they stop by at lunch.

They often head for the county's only small-business collection or the real-estate section, donated by the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors. Many work nearby but live in Maryland.

Many investment clubs hold their meetings at the library, and a special area has been set aside for "Business Services," according to Nadia Taran, the library's branch manager.

Dire predictions that the computer would replace the book have not panned out. A recent county survey shows that 55 percent of Fairfax residents have access to the Internet but that the number of library users continues to grow steadily. Of Fairfax's nearly 1 million residents, 77 percent used their libraries last year, according to the survey.

"People are thinking that the book is dead," Waller said. "But they're still coming." ■

24. The Washington Post

01/26/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B01

At Middle School Level, Private Versus Public Hits Home

By Jay Mathews
Washington Post Staff Writer

Linda and Dana Lawhorne have been in Alexandria public schools almost all their lives, first as students and then as

parents of three bright, active daughters. But as their eldest, Megan, approaches sixth grade, they wonder if they should stay.

Megan is a fifth-grader at

Lyles-Crouch Elementary, a cozy school of 209 pupils in residential Old Town. But if she remains in the Alexandria school system, she will move this fall to the jammed hallways of George

Washington Middle School, which has 1,026 students on a large campus near the Braddock Road Metro stop.

Her mother volunteers at Lyles-Crouch, and her father is an Alexandria police detective. They cannot afford to put Megan in a private school, but they are looking at houses south of the Capital Beltway in Fairfax County, where middle school does not start until seventh grade and the schools, they think, are smaller, quieter and less chaotic.

"I have one foot on each side of the fence, and I can't quite decide," Linda Lawhorne said. Dana Lawhorne said he feels sad every time he goes house-hunting in Fairfax, but worries about his daughter's safety. "We are going to have to make or break," he said. "It will be very difficult."

In the Washington area and across the country, many parents of older elementary students are having similar debates with themselves. Middle school is often the point at which families opt out of the public school system, especially in urbanized districts such as Alexandria, educators say.

The middle school, sometimes still called junior high, inspires parental fear because it serves restless early adolescents and encompasses huge growth spurts — eighth-graders can be a foot taller than sixth-graders in the next classroom. It also draws from a larger area than an elementary school, so its students often represent a wider range of family incomes and ambitions.

At private schools, classes are usually smaller and teachers have more time to consider the needs of each child. But abandoning the local public schools often means breaking old neighborhood ties and separating children from their best friends.

It is an agonizing dilemma for many parents — and with private school applications due in February or March,

The arguments about how to treat each child, and how to assess each school, go on in her head frequently, she said. At George Washington, she said, "fights break out . . . and kids see a lot of things that are difficult."

Her fourth-grader is self-assured enough to handle it, Harrington said, but her second-grader "is not as self-confident as her sisters and is young for her grade."

She said she wants to put the youngest child in a private school now because if she waits until sixth grade, the girl might have so many friends going to George Washington that she would resist.

now is the time that choices must be made.

"The middle school is the big decision," said Jane Harrington, a Lyles-Crouch parent and children's book author who has applied to a private school for one of her daughters. "Middle school is very difficult, socially. I think you have to have a very strong and self-confident student to do all right."

Alexandria officials say that 13 percent of last year's fifth-graders left the city's public school system. They believe that was a bigger drop-off than at any other grade, although they do not have complete figures. Of the fifth-graders who left, 12 percent went to private schools, 42 percent went to public schools elsewhere in Virginia, 18 percent moved out of state and the destination of the others was not known, officials said.

Officials at Washington area private schools say they get a jump in applications during the middle school years, with school size and safety the biggest parental concerns.

In some urban areas, white parents are accused of abandoning middle schools because they have too many poor blacks, but Lyles-Crouch and George Washington have similar ethnic profiles. The elementary school is about 65 percent black, 25 percent white and 9 percent Hispanic, while the middle school is 54 percent black, 30 percent white and 15 percent Hispanic. The majority of students at both schools is poor enough to qualify for federally subsidized lunches.

But George Washington's image suffers from memories of a fatal stabbing outside the school in 1996, as well as from the frequent hallway scuffles that are familiar to many middle schools.

Alexandria school officials, like educators in other districts, have tried to ease concerns about middle school. Superintendent Herbert Berg and George

Her eighth-grader at George Washington seems bored by lessons that do not challenge her enough, Harrington said, "and if I had to do it over, I would not have sent her."

And yet, the girl and her friends have acquired an emotional resilience that impresses Harrington. "I've listened to the older kids at the school talk about the fights in the cafeteria, and they feel removed from it, although it happens right next to them," she said. "These academic-track children seem to feel that by being exposed to the difficult things in public middle school, they are learning coping skills that will help them to be

Washington Principal Richard L. Murphy invited the parents of all prospective sixth-graders to a meeting this month in the middle school's library and fielded their questions.

That contact with parents, educators say, is essential. Reginald Moss, principal of Deal Junior High in Northwest Washington, said he welcomes parents of incoming students to visit the school and has sent postcards telling them about last summer's roof repairs.

He also has a "Buddy Day" in the fall, during which sixth-graders from neighborhood elementary schools spend the day at Deal. That used to be a spring activity, he said, but he moved it up so that he could win the confidence of prospective students and their parents before they began applying to private schools.

Judith Docca, principal of Argyle Middle School in Silver Spring, said she holds meetings in the spring to reassure parents that incoming sixth-graders are kept in one corner of the school. She or a member of her staff tries to visit the home of every incoming sixth-grader in August.

Many Lyles-Crouch parents say they believe that the very best, and very worst, students at George Washington will receive close attention from skilled teachers. But the size and clamor of the school lead some to wonder whether George Washington is a good place for less-motivated children. The Alexandria middle school has more than 300 students at each grade level, while many private schools in the area have only 30.

Harrington has an eighth-grade daughter at George Washington, and she said her fourth-grade daughter at Lyles-Crouch probably will also go to the middle school. But she has applied to Burgundy Farm Country Day School, a private school just south of the Beltway in Fairfax County, for her youngest daughter, now a second-grader. prepared adults in this world."

Angela Gannon, a social worker whose son recently graduated from George Washington, thinks he benefited for exactly that reason.

"He had to learn how to deal with some chaos," she said. "The lunchroom was a big problem. He learned where to sit and where to put his belongings. In a totally orderly, conventional place, I am not sure he would have learned as much and become as confident a high schooler."

Margaret Lorber, a specialist on early childhood issues, has a fifth-grader at Lyles-Crouch and plans to send her to

George Washington. Lorber and her husband are philosophically committed to the public schools, she said. Still, she worries that her daughter will not receive enough personal attention.

George Washington "has a way to go," she said. "The place is so big, and you can see how stretched the staff are. They have wonderful people, but too few of them."

A 1996 survey by the school district found that about 13 percent of Alexandria's school-aged children were enrolled in private schools.

While D.C. parents often feel pressure to enroll their children in private school because many of their neighbors are doing so, Lyles-Crouch parents say the peer pressure is on the side of continuing on to George Washington.

The Lawhornes insist that their thoughts of moving to Fairfax have nothing to do with the stereotype of middle-class white parents fleeing a multiracial urban environment.

"We have been pretty dedicated members of this community and we would not want to be perceived that way," Linda Lawhorne said. It is safety at George Washington that concerns her, she said.

Dana Lawhorne was one of the investigators of the 1996 stabbing of a youth across the street from George Washington during summer school, an incident he attributes in part to a failure to take proper security measures. Even today, he said, the school "does not have the comfort level that it needs."

But the Lawhornes say they like the

attitudes their daughters have developed from making friends with so many different children. "My oldest daughter tends to be a defender of the weak and the oppressed," Dana Lawhorne said. "She wants things to be fair and right, and if they are not, she wants an immediate adjustment."

It would be hard, Linda Lawhorne said, to leave their tidy Cape Cod house with the colorful pineapple banner in front and the basketball hoop in the driveway. They have done much work on the house.

"We have attachments here. Our roots are here," she said. "But we are both at the point where you have to do what's best for your children." ■

25. The Washington Post

01/25/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B03

Garvey's New Leader Has an Attendance Problem

Since Charter School Fired Anigbo as Principal, Only Half of Its Student Body Is Showing Up

By Valerie Strauss
Washington Post Staff Writer

Half of the 130 students enrolled at the controversial Marcus Garvey Public Charter School have stopped attending classes there since Garvey's board of trustees fired principal Mary A.T. Anigbo, school officials said yesterday.

A new administrator, Bruce E. Greening, the pastor of St. Martin de Porres Temple in Capitol Heights, has been appointed to rebuild the school's Afrocentric program. Yesterday, he

In an interview yesterday, Greening said he intends to build a new relationship with the students at the school, whom he described as being strong supporters of Anigbo and angry at what happened to her. Garvey educates boys from kindergarten through 12th grade, many of whom had trouble functioning well in public schools. There are a few girls in the lower grades at Garvey, school officials said, but the emphasis is on boys.

"I have to establish trust," said Greening, whose soft-spoken and reserved manner contrasts with Anigbo's more gruff, confrontational style. "I don't want to try to replace her but build a new bond."

Although the boys responded well to Anigbo, he said, it is also "important for them to have strong male role models" in

appealed to the parents who left the school to return and urged the community to help rebuild Garvey.

Greening, 46, who spent 18 years teaching at various Catholic schools here and in Norfolk, stepped into the situation at Garvey this month after the trustees fired Anigbo, alleging that she mishandled school funds and rebuffed their efforts to establish more accountability at the school.

Anigbo's attorney, Mary Cox, has said that Anigbo did nothing wrong and that their lives. The D.C. Board of Education late last year weighed rescinding Garvey's charter after Anigbo and three other Garvey employees were convicted in October of assaulting a Washington Times reporter and two police officers at the school in December 1996.

Anigbo was sentenced to two years' probation and subsequently was suspended for 30 days by Garvey's board of trustees, which is headed by Anigbo's stepbrother, Richard W. Duckett. The school board, which granted Garvey's initial charter in 1996, decided against revoking it but told Garvey's trustees to improve accountability procedures.

Greening, whose daughter attends a local private school, said he wants to build on the school's strengths and improve Garvey's Afrocentric curriculum by also teaching multiculturalism. "We

the trustees wanted to micromanage the school.

Greening and his congregation of 325 members once were supporters of George Augustus Stallings Jr., but split off from the controversial former priest's African American Catholic Rite congregation.

Greening said that he contacted the Garvey board and that he took charge of the school Tuesday, although he is still negotiating a contract with the trustees.

respect all cultures," he said, "but it is important for the boys to know their own culture as well."

Garvey is one of three charter schools in the District. Charter schools are publicly funded but operate outside normal administrative oversight.

"[Greening] is the best thing that has happened to the school since this mess happened," said Marshall Phillips, parent of a 9-year-old student and a new member of Garvey's trustees board.

Since the latest troubles at the school, half the students have stopped attending classes, said Ed Sargent, spokesman for the board.

Cox, Anigbo's attorney, said many of the students who have left are attending classes at another location in Northwest Washington. The children's parents, who filed an unsuccessful suit to have Anigbo

reinstated, are running the new school with help from the former Garvey principal, Cox said.

The school board voted last week to investigate recent allegations of financial wrongdoing at the Garvey school, as well

as the firings of Anigbo and two teachers.

School officials said Garvey currently has a staff of 10 and expects to hire a few more teachers. To strengthen the Afrocentric curriculum, Garvey has brought in a consultant, Sulayman S.

Nyag, a professor of African studies at Howard University, according to Evelyn Joe, Garvey's financial and development officer. ■

26. The Washington Post

01/25/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B01

In Classrooms, Good Walls Make Good Neighbors

Educators Reversing 'Open' Design of Many Area Schools Built in 1970s

By Eric L. Wee

Washington Post Staff Writer

The students in Room SS02 are straining to hear the teacher. They can see her lips move, but her words are lost under the soundtrack accompanying the World War II filmstrip next door. And as they lower their heads to do a social studies exercise, some find it impossible to focus because of the noise.

Yet, this has been a relatively peaceful morning. "Today was a good day," said soft-spoken teacher Roslyn Dunn after class. "You only could hear what was going on in one other class. On a bad day, you can hear what's going on in three or four other classes."

Dunn's class, like others at Woodbridge High School in Prince William County, can hear neighbors because the rooms were designed without a back wall. It's one of more than 140 area schools built in the 1970s in a faddish "open-classroom" design that failed nearly as quickly as it blazed onto the national educational landscape.

But 25 years later, Washington area school districts that led the open-classroom movement are still living

Montgomery County built 21 such schools in that short period but did it with a backup plan: Work crews installed all the necessary wiring and vents so walls could easily be erected later. And gradually over the past two decades, that's exactly what the county did. All but three of those schools now have walls.

Fairfax County built 10 open-plan schools in the 1970s. Since then, the district has put up walls to close in those classrooms on most sides, as it works to renovate the schools into a traditional classroom format. Two have had the full renovation, and work on the others will continue for eight years.

Other school districts haven't been so lucky. In the District, 20 of the original 21 such schools still operate on the open plan. Their fate will be debated during the next few months when school

with what critics say are chaotically noisy rooms. Crowded schools have made the problem worse, and several area districts are scrambling to find millions of dollars to get these classrooms some walls and some quiet.

Prince George's County alone says it needs \$120 million to close up 40 open-style facilities. Prince William County needs nearly \$27 million to fix four high schools. And Anne Arundel County will decide next month whether to spend as much as \$32 million to enclose classrooms in 25 elementary schools. At a time when educators are busy searching for ways to raise test scores and learning achievement, those who deal with the effects of the open-school fad say it shows what can happen when schools embracetrends too quickly.

"It's viewed basically as a mistake," said Mike Eckhoff, assistant director of design and construction services for Fairfax County schools. "We should look at all [new ideas] closely and not just jump on the bandwagon because it's the 'in' thing. That's something we learned from this."

officials review their master plan. But a spokesman said that even if the administration decides it wants to enclose them, the cash to do it isn't there.

Prince George's, Prince William and Anne Arundel counties have decided to close up their open rooms but are in a similar cash bind. They've either decided to put the projects on hold or pay for the work over several years.

David Lever, a capital improvement officer for Prince George's, estimates it will cost more than \$3 million to fix each of the county's 40 schools. The cost is high, he said, because air ventilation systems must be reworked, and modifying the schools means meeting more stringent building codes than were in effect when the buildings were constructed.

Watch Fran Laterra try to teach her

The concept came out of the 1960s, when educators were trying to make schools less formal. Designs varied, but all of them either had shared teaching spaces or had classrooms that weren't closed off.

Proponents argued the new layouts would encourage teamwork and collegiality among instructors. Instead of teachers being isolated in closed classrooms, theorists argued, they could watch and learn from each other. It also was cheaper to build schools without walls — something that appealed to school districts trying to save money. By the early 1970s, the idea took off.

Some schools with open classrooms, such as Rockledge Elementary in Prince William County, still support the idea. Principal Sandra Carter says the lack of walls has made it easier for teachers to work together. Her students, she said, have no trouble focusing on their teacher over extraneous noise.

But most local jurisdictions were already back-pedaling by 1980, trying to close up the rooms as fast as they could.

class at Prince George's Patuxent Elementary School and you get an idea of why teachers are pressing for the changes.

Laterra is trying to lecture her fourth-graders about electromagnetic forces in the corner of a stuffy 80-foot-square room called "Pod C" that she shares with four other classes.

One problem: the door to the hallway is near her chalkboard. So when Kimberly Johnson's 28 students needed to go to the computer lab, they marched right through Laterra's room, as the harried-looking teacher desperately tried to bring her students' eyes back to the board.

Laterra's room feels like a bus station. One teacher across the room is struggling to get her students to settle down. Another one is lecturing on how to read

distances on a map. And right in the middle, a videotape on the life of Martin Luther King Jr. is booming — loud enough that students in other classes are swaying to the soundtrack.

Last year, Kathleen McCommons taught in the middle area of a similar room at the school. That, she says, was before the stress of working there nearly caused her to quit. Her ears would ring and she'd have a headache at the end of each school day. Her throat would be raw from having to yell.

"I would literally scream for the kids to hear the directions," said McCommons, who has since moved to one of Patuxent's few classrooms with a door. "It's surround sound. You can't even tell if it's coming from the front, back or side. When you're 4, 5, or 6 and you're trying to block everything out, it's impossible."

Patuxent's problem got so severe that last year Principal Joyce Edwards and parents persuaded the school system to convert a quarter of the school into traditional classrooms. Edwards says students in those enclosed rooms are now showing huge improvements in behavior and in their concentration.

While teachers in Prince William's

Woodbridge High wait for walls, they're doing everything they can to close off their rooms themselves. Some classrooms look like a used furniture flea market, with old bookshelves and cabinets stacked side by side to create dividers.

Mike Yeatts, who teaches social studies, is lucky enough to possess one of the school's last surviving temporary partitions. He props up the 6-by-4-foot barrier with a table, hoping to extend its life.

Still, the sound pollution got so bad for English teacher Gail Farmer that she offered to pay \$1,000 last year to erect a back wall for her room. But that would have violated fire code regulations, so this year she continues to endure the distractions. That includes the time she tried to give one of her classes a timed test as the class next door was playing a "Huckleberry Finn" video. Finally, after watching her students plug their ears, she had them take the exam in the cafeteria.

Teachers in these schools also have to alter their teaching styles because of the noise issue. Not wanting to disturb their entire section, they say, they're less likely to do skits, have debates or do the hands-on activities they believe are good for students.

And instead of letting a discussion gain momentum, teachers in open spaces say they have to stop those talks before the volume goes up. It's bad for learning, they concede, but necessary. Karen McPherson, a government teacher, said it was also difficult if the class wanted to talk about sensitive topics such as race, because they knew three other classes could hear their conversations.

Those problems are so debilitating that many Woodbridge High teachers now conclude that it's preferable to teach in one of the portable trailers the school set up outside to relieve the school's crowding.

These portables, once considered remote and undesirable, have become havens of peace and quiet. That's why McPherson decided three years ago to give up her room inside for a trailer that sits at the edge of an old basketball court. Now two colleagues have asked to have her room if she leaves.

"There's nothing like trying to give an essay test while the Normandy invasion is going on next door on a video," McPherson said. "Kids ask me, 'Why do you want to be out here?,' and I tell them, 'Doors [and] walls.' "■

27. The Washington Post

01/25/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B01

For the Young and Old, Lessons on Life, Death

After-School Program Puts Two Generations in Touch

By Marylou Tousignant
Washington Post Staff Writer

Third-grader Xavier Romero sat at a small table in a dining room at The Fairfax retirement community, patiently gluing tiny buttons on a heart-shaped valentine pin. The wooden pin, outlined in white eyelet lace, was a gift-in-the-making for Mary Tredway, 75, who sat next to him, praising his meticulous artistry. Xavier beamed.

Down the hall, classmate Lindsey Hellmuth was riding a different emotional wave.

Lindsey, 8, had hoped her special friend, 85-year-old Evelyn Kluge, would be well enough Thursday afternoon to come make a valentine pin with her. Instead, Kluge, whom Lindsey had taken to calling "my adopted grandmother," was in bed in her room, seriously ill. Lindsey said she wanted to go see her.

Kluge, propped up on pillows and struggling to speak, took note of Lindsey's colorful blouse, which the little

girl had worn just for her. "You look pretty," she said. "Thank you," Lindsey replied softly, her small fingers reaching out for Kluge's. The young child looked into the old woman's eyes, the two of them holding hands as quiet seconds passed.

After a few minutes, Lindsey rejoined her classmates, who by now were sharing cookies with the other seniors. Needing some time to herself, Lindsey sat off to one side, making a heart pin for Kluge.

The after-school program that twice a month brings Xavier, Lindsey and other third-graders from Glenna Orr's class at Washington Mill Elementary School to the assisted-living wing at The Fairfax near Fort Belvoir has a dry, clinical name: Orr calls it an "intergenerational partnership." Her students' parents call it the cycle of life.

For 75 minutes every other week, Orr and her students — eight or nine get to go each time — mingle with the residents. They do crafts, sing songs, play

the Steinway in the lobby, dance, laugh and swap stories.

"I just like kids. They're refreshing," said retired Air Force Col. Raymond J. Higgins, 89, explaining why he and Charley, his toy cheetah, never miss a session. "They're interested in everything. I start the conversation, get 'em unwound and let 'em loose with their imaginations."

Sonia Barksdale, 8, likes coming to The Fairfax "because the people are special. They make you feel good inside," she said.

On a recent visit, Grant Loth, 8, and Tredway were fashioning a snowman from construction paper and cotton balls. "Now, you look at that critically and tell me if you think it needs any changes," Tredway said. "No, no changes," the boy replied. "Good," Tredway said.

On another visit, with Fairfax resident Jean Palmer at the piano, Ellie Hughes motioned to Brett Robinson, 10, to join her on the dance floor. He willingly

complied and soon was twirling, with Fred Astaire grace, under Hughes's outstretched arms.

At both ends of the generational divide, the benefits of the children's visits are palpable, those involved say, particularly in a highly mobile area such as Washington where grandchildren or grandparents often live hundreds of miles away.

"There is something very touching, in terms of a mutual vulnerability, between the very young and the very old and how relationships between them develop," said Irene B. Krebs, a family therapist in Vienna. "For older people, it gives them the opportunity to access skills they used years ago, such as caretaking, mothering, fathering. It's very rejuvenating. And if they don't have a lot of family around, hugging, or having a child lean on them, is comforting."

The children gain a sense of competence plus the experience of bridging generations, Krebs said. "Kids can be afraid of aging, and they're still working on the notion of death and what that means," she said. "Here they have an opportunity to see people who may be disabled in some way but who are still

Children who develop special bonds with some of the seniors are invited back in subsequent years. Crystal Prigmore is in fifth grade and has been coming to The Fairfax off and on for three years. A few months ago, her friend, Bianca Zwart, who attended the same church as Crystal, died.

"I was real sad," the girl said. "At church, I'd always try to sit by her because nobody was there with her. When she died, I cried. A lady at my church, a close friend of hers, she told me not to cry, that Bianca wanted to be with her husband, Casey."

Even though her friend is gone, Crystal still likes to visit The Fairfax. "I think they're glad we come," she said. "We make them feel better. And they

coping."

Olga Soehngen, activities services director at The Fairfax, a 55-acre complex designed for retired military officers and spouses, said the children's visits help residents relate to the outside world.

"They feel like they're imparting their knowledge," Soehngen said. "And the kids just soak it up. After a while, they don't look at [the seniors] as being old and frail anymore. They get beyond the walkers and the wheelchairs."

Orr began the program 12 years ago at a Department of Defense school in Germany. She has since modified it at other teaching posts, including Panama, where her students regularly visited a center for the elderly that was home to about a dozen lepers, and Florida, where her fifth-graders worked with disabled seniors.

As word of the program has spread at Washington Mill, near Mount Vernon, some parents have lobbied to get their children into Orr's class.

PTA President Joan Knetemann was one. "It had tremendous importance for me," said Knetemann, whose son Michael is in third grade. "It's important give us cookies and hugs."

On Friday, the day after Lindsey's visit to Kluge's bedside, the 8-year-old came to school "kind of shaky," her teacher said. Later, she broke down sobbing, and several of her friends rushed to comfort her.

"Evelyn [Kluge] made a big impact on everyone because she's such a sweet soul," Orr said. So the class decided to send her a gift — a large pastel artwork of an angel — which all the students signed.

Hugging Lindsey, Orr told her: "We have something very special to give Miss Evelyn in celebration of her becoming an angel."

"It's a real heartfelt thing for these kids," Orr said later, "because the next

for children to interact and deal with older people. My kids get a lot. For instance, Michael is on a ski trip right now. So this program is one way he can give back to other people. Starting at a young age, he'll know this is something we do — we take care of our elderly."

Orr, who said the program has roots in her own large extended family, said she wants her students to realize that "the gift of giving is precious. They're learning something from another part of society and learning to deal with people's limitations. Hopefully, as they grow older, they'll remember the worthiness of volunteering."

Orr has adapted the program to include students as young as those in kindergarten, but she said her third-graders "are the perfect age for this. They're there. They're enjoying. They're perfectly content to listen to old stories. They don't make critical judgments."

Kristi Hellmuth, Lindsey's mother, said the experience has been a "hands-on, continuing classroom" for her daughter. "These kids are learning so much about life," she said.

time we go visit, Miss Evelyn probably won't be there. It's going to be a real empty spot for them."

A few hours later, Lindsey's mother got a phone call. Evelyn Kluge had died.

Lindsey's teacher broke the news, although Lindsey seemed to know what was coming. "I said, 'Lindsey, Miss Evelyn's in heaven, just like that angel in the picture.' And she said, 'I know, Mrs. Orr, I know.'"

After a few tears, Orr gently steered the conversation in another direction. "Lindsey, there are others there that need us." I was a bit emphatic about that," Orr said later. "It will be hard when we go back there, but life moves on." ■

28. The Washington Post

01/24/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page C01

The Lessons, Legacy Of School Integration

Ex-Montgomery Pupils, Teachers to Recall Events

By Michael E. Ruane

Washington Post Staff Writer

Anita Summerour and the other fifth-graders at the all-black Rock Terrace Elementary School knew something was up when they got Miss Boston again for sixth grade.

The teacher, her hair always in a neat bun, was tough but fair, but when the students got her for the second year in a row and their homework load increased, they knew they were being prepared for something big.

"She told us that was the way it was

going to be," Summerour said last week, as she recalled those days in the mid-1950s. "She was getting us ready."

It would not be long before black children would no longer be attending segregated classes in Montgomery County. "We would be going to school

with white kids," Summerour said.

Tomorrow, 40 years after the country began the decades-long process of trying to integrate its public schools, Summerour, along with other former students and teachers, black and white, will speak at a symposium in Rockville on the dawn of school integration in Montgomery County.

The program, which is being sponsored by the Montgomery County Historical Society and will take place from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at 850 Hungerford Dr., is aimed at reminding residents — in an increasingly diverse and affluent county — of the gulf that was crossed and the chasms that remain in the nation's still-divided society.

Montgomery school officials still struggle to equalize classrooms, and performance, by race and ethnicity. Integrated settings "must not be left to chance," school policy warns. And Prince George's County remains under a 25-year-old court desegregation order, though a judge may soon lift it.

Four decades after integration began, school equality is an ongoing project. But

Blacks made up only about 6 percent of the county's population, and they often lived in small, isolated enclaves, sometimes with unpaved roads, no running water and no garbage pickup.

Life at the hands of the white majority could be cruel and dangerous.

"This was a time when if you went down North Washington Street at night, if you were black, you had to run," Isreal, 50, recalled of his youth in Rockville. "White kids would drive along North Washington Street and yell [racial slurs] and throw Pepsi on you."

The school system included a chain of segregated schools for blacks, most inferior to white schools. Nina H. Clarke, the author of a book on the county's black schools, recalled teaching in the old Germantown Colored Elementary School, where first- to sixth-graders all sat in the school's lone classroom.

"I was teacher, mother and father," Clarke said. "I can't exactly tell you how I did it. But it was generally done in those days. You had to be creative."

After the Supreme Court's decision,

the start of the effort has left vivid memories among those present at its birth: black children, now grown, who braved the new world; a young white teacher who would carry her memories to Congress; black teachers, now aged, who feel the pride of pioneers.

"A lot of us were pioneers," said one. "We were the first to go and make a way for those that were to come behind us."

Last week, former students and retired educators — some who are participating in tomorrow's program and some who are not — spoke with feelings of pride and pain, and gain and loss, about the early days of school integration in Montgomery and its legacy.

The first years of school integration were ones of turbulence throughout much of the country as school districts sought to implement the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that segregated schools were illegal.

In Montgomery, pro-segregation parents in Poolesville kept their children out of classrooms, and protesters demonstrated when 14 black youngsters were assigned to schools there in though, some on the school board realized it was high time for change. Among them was Rose Kramer.

"I began pushing my board to take this [court] decision very seriously and take it as an opportunity to improve our system," said Kramer, 86.

The board, she said, was reluctant. It formed a commission, then recommended that the idea be tried one grade at a time every two years. "My God," she said she exploded at her colleagues, "it will take us 24 years to achieve this."

She recounted: "I said, 'Well, you know, it's the Christian thing to do.' At which point, they were really embarrassed."

School integration began in September 1956 and gained momentum over the next few years.

At Poolesville High that fall, Constance Morella, a 25-year-old rookie civics teacher from Somerville, Mass. — who has been serving Maryland in Congress for the last 12 years — tried to weather the boycott.

"A lot of times when the students

September 1956.

Threats, hate mail and warnings about potential cross burnings were delivered to the school board member who pushed hardest for integration.

Black teachers newly assigned to white schools often had trouble finding restaurants that would serve them when they sought to have lunch with white colleagues.

And black students — some of whom had left behind three-room schoolhouses heated with potbellied stoves — entered an alien white realm where they encountered everything from curiosity, to hostility, to the basest forms of racism.

"When we first got there, they wouldn't even touch us," recalled Robert Isreal, who as a 9-year-old was transferred from Rock Terrace to the all-white West Rockville Elementary School.

Montgomery, while eventually integrating its schools well, was in the 1950s more the South than suburbia, veterans of the time say.

didn't go to school, the younger ones were kept out by their parents and older ones stayed out because they were taught and believed that integration was wrong," she said.

For the beleaguered black students, there was a range of experiences and emotions.

Summerour, who left Rock Terrace for Rockville's Broome Junior High School, remembered being worried: "Was I going to be successful? How would I be treated?"

But her teacher, Miss Boston, and her parents had prepared her well. "My mother and father always said to me: 'You're going to be fine. You can do just as well as they do. You're not going to have any problems.'"

She learned they were right. The white kids were no better, no smarter. "I found," the Nuclear Regulatory Commission analyst said, "that, being around white people, they were no different than I was." ■

29. The Washington Post

01/24/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page C05

Becton Team Gets Mixed Report Card

District School Officials Receive Praise, Blame on Capitol Hill

By Debbi Wilgoren

Washington Post Staff Writer

Embattled D.C. school officials won

praise in Congress yesterday for repairing dozens of crumbling classroom buildings. But they also were scolded for missteps last summer in awarding contracts and obtaining funds and for proceeding with repairs that caused a much-criticized three-week delay in the school year.

"The good news is, it's better than it was. The bad news is, they're still not where they should be," said Rep. Thomas M. Davis III (R-Va), who presided over the hearing of the House Government Reform and Oversight subcommittee on the District. "Based on what we've heard today, this is the team, and we need to move forward."

Davis and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) heard testimony from 10 witnesses, including school system Chief Executive Julius W. Becton Jr., D.C. financial control board Chairman Andrew F. Brimmer, city finance officials and the author of a recent audit that was highly critical of the procurement

Others who testified praised the results of Williams's work. A General Services Administration official who had overseen similar projects said completing 40 roofs in 60 days was "extraordinary." Brimmer called it a "heroic job in a hectic environment."

But Brimmer also said the findings that faulty procurement put honest people in potentially compromising positions concerned him enough to ask the D.C. inspector general to investigate.

"In the future we will pay closer attention," Brimmer said.

Much of the hearing focused on the months-old question of when school officials received funding for the summer

procedures used for the summer roof repairs.

The audit, by the accounting firm Cotton & Co., supplied fresh fuel for a small but growing group of parents and elected officials who are calling for the ouster of either Becton or his operations chief and facilities director, Charles E. Williams.

David L. Cotton, the firm's managing partner, said yesterday that although he had serious concerns about the contracting process used by school officials, his audit did not closely examine the cost and funding of the roof repairs — issues that likely will be addressed in an audit now being conducted by the General Accounting Office.

Cotton termed "a mischaracterization" earlier news reports that said the audit identified cost overruns of up to \$7.2 million on the roof repairs. The audit used that number as an estimate of the roof repairs and why they did not begin work until late July and mid-August. City officials continued to disagree about the reason for the delays and whether there was money available to begin the contracting process sooner.

Davis and Norton repeatedly chided Becton for underestimating the public's reaction to the late opening of school. They also questioned his decision to offer signing and performance bonuses to some top officials, and they were especially concerned that the school system erroneously inflated the signing bonuses to cover the taxes due on them.

Davis called the bonuses "a terrible embarrassment for the city" at a time

extra cost incurred because of "emergency circumstances."

But in testimony before the committee yesterday, Williams attributed most of the extra costs to the unusual circumstances involved in doing construction work in the District, compared with surrounding jurisdictions.

Those factors include: the age and poor maintenance of buildings; higher labor costs; the city's difficulty in attracting contractors; and time pressures imposed by late planning and a court order that at the time prohibited repair work while students or staff members were in buildings.

Williams said cost overruns for the \$41 million project were about \$1.4 million. "It was not perfect, and the documentation was not what it should have been," he said. "We did the very best we could under the circumstances, and no laws were broken."

when teachers and school workers await long overdue raises.

But Becton continued to insist that he needs bonuses to recruit top talent. And he appeared not to understand the blow to his credibility caused by the late opening of school.

The retired Army general looked surprised when Davis asked whether schools would open on time in September, and he alluded to the fact that the District has settled the lawsuit that led to the delay. "This September?" Becton said. "If I don't have a court telling me my business, then yes." ■

30. The Washington Post

01/24/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page C01

Control Board Sees a Need To Keep UDC **Report Says School Should Adjust Focus**

By David A. Vise and Valerie Strauss
Washington Post Staff Writers

The University of the District of Columbia should remain a publicly supported institution granting undergraduate and graduate degrees but focus more of its resources on avionics and other technical programs that will help graduates get jobs, according to a long-overdue report released yesterday by the D.C. financial control board.

Responding to fears that the board might close the university or make it a two-year community college, control board Chairman Andrew F. Brimmer said

the open-enrollment university meets the critical needs of many working District residents who could not afford other area colleges or who need remedial training in English and other subjects.

But Brimmer also said UDC needs to sharpen its focus by further reducing the number of faculty and administrative positions, cutting the number of graduate degrees offered and investing more in core academic programs.

"Above all, they have to work on the academic program," Brimmer said, adding that a search committee of UDC's board of trustees also must turn its

immediate attention to recruiting a full-time president.

Both Acting UDC President Julius F. Nimmons Jr. and D.C. Council member Kevin P. Chavous (D-Ward 7), the chairman of the council's Education Committee, said much of the report appears to be based on outdated information.

"They looked at information when it was in a crisis mode," Chavous said. "It really did not have the analytical review based on the current set of circumstances."

Brimmer acknowledged that the

control board, which spent \$500,000 on consultants to review the university and produce the report, delivered its final study six or seven months behind schedule, saying there was more work to be done than initially anticipated.

Chavous also blasted the presidentially appointed control board for not providing him with a copy of the report before releasing it to the public. "I just feel like there's a real lack of inclusion," he said. "This isn't the way government should operate."

Brimmer praised Nimmons, saying he did "a splendid job" overcoming UDC's budget crisis last year. The school, which has been plagued by declining enrollment and shrinking support from the city government, receives about half of its roughly \$75 million budget from the District.

Nimmons said he is working hard to

Brimmer said UDC's presidents and trustees often have failed to provide proper oversight. Noting that the mayor currently picks the trustees, he said the control board would like to see a more diverse selection process, involving alumni and other officials.

The control board intends to issue a

improve the university, and Brimmer said he should be a serious candidate for the presidency.

"I am in receipt of the final report and believe that much progress has been made to address some of the issues and concerns raised," Nimmons said. "We are still reviewing the details of the report for further consideration."

Brimmer said Nimmons had made some progress paring the size of the faculty and administrative staff as enrollment has fallen. UDC laid off 30 percent of its full-time faculty members and 40 percent of the administrative staff last year, and sold the school's popular radio station for more than \$10 million. The school, which enrolled 14,115 students in 1981 and half that many by 1996, had just 4,754 students last year after it opened late and many students went elsewhere.

legally binding order directing UDC's trustees to provide, by July 1, a full-scale implementation plan for changes in the school's academic program and other operations.

Brimmer said he does not intend to make public interim reports produced by the consulting organizations — Biddison

Chester Wright, president of the Faculty Senate, attacked the report's recommendation to reduce the number of graduate programs, saying that only a handful survived the recent cuts and that they are cost-effective.

"I think it's a smoke screen to say that," he said. "Why eliminate something that is not creating a problem?"

Wright also said vocational programs can be extremely expensive.

Marc Battle, 26, a senior who is an officer in the Student Government Association, said that he thought much of the report was positive but that he found some contradictions.

"At one point, it says they want the programs to be geared more toward students getting jobs, but it also concludes that graduates of UDC are successful at getting jobs," he said.

Hier, KPMG Peat Marwick and the Institute for Higher Education Policy — that worked on the study. He also said the board would not take a position on the fate of UDC's law school until after the American Bar Association completes its accreditation review next month. ■

31. The New York Times

01/24/98Section: Metropolitan Desk; Section B; Page 3, Column 1

School Has Success Down to a Science

By FELICIA R. LEE

How many grains of sand are on the beach at Coney Island? Is there a correlation between how many books students read independently and their English grades? And — Woody Allen aside — how close in age are most husbands and wives?

It is 10 A.M. on a Tuesday at Midwood High School and the science department chairman, David Kiefer, is doing his thing. The class is research methods, taught to freshmen who eagerly peruse their notes and raise their hands as Mr. Kiefer shows how they can use science to pose and answer both the most basic and the most profound questions.

To that end, Mr. Kiefer is passing out pinches of sand to answer the question about Coney Island. If the students come up with an average amount of grains in each pinch and use a formula involving the density, mass and volume of the sand on the beach, they can roughly calculate the amount of sand.

"Mr. Kiefer, I have 141 grains," one student says. Others have similar counts.

The students have already figured out that there is a high correlation between the ages of husbands and wives (Mr. Kiefer made the joke about Mr. Allen, a Midwood alumnus), but not such a high one between independent reading and their report cards.

Presuming that the beach is one yard deep, the correct answer is 3 times 10 to the 15th power, or 3,000,000,000,000,000 (three million billion) grains of sand.

Midwood High School, in a desperately overcrowded and decrepit building in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, has become an astonishing success. For the first time in the 57-year history of the prestigious Westinghouse science awards, Midwood produced more semifinalists this year — 13 — than any other school in the nation.

Even if no Midwood students are among the contest finalists to be announced on Tuesday, its showing is impressive for a New York City public school where only half of the students enter through special admissions. The

other half are from the blocks zoned for the school. And even the magnet students are different from those at other schools; unlike Stuyvesant High or Bronx Science, where students are selected according to admission test scores, Midwood admits students based on their school records, which can benefit students who work hard but do not necessarily test well.

The Westinghouse Science Talent Search has historically been a ticket to the country's best colleges, and the winners include five subsequent Nobel Prize winners. In many ways, Midwood's showing in the ultra-elite contest is but a clue to how well the school works for both its most brilliant students and those who are more ordinary: 99 percent of graduates go on to college and the dropout rate is about one percent.

The Cinderella story goes beyond the curriculums, teaching methodology or careful selection of students, although these are part of the formula. Arching over it all is what a gleeful principal, Lewis Frohlich, calls the "gestalt" of the

place: that learning is fun and there are great rewards attached to intellectual excellence.

"We try to get students to see science not out there in the universe but something within their grasp, not to be overwhelmed by all the lingo," said Chris Rumpolo, who teaches an advanced placement science course. He has taught 12 of the 13 Westinghouse winners since freshman year.

Like Mr. Kiefer, he starts with the mundane scientific inquiry. In one class, he asked students how to make popcorn fluffier. He has brought in models of sperm cells and the digestive system, "anything that gets the kids to see it."

It apparently works. Jared Ravi Jagdeo, a 17-year-old Westinghouse semifinalist whose project focused on

The message of Midwood, communicated in slogans, reputation and student attitude is: don't come here unless you are prepared to work hard.

"If you can get into each student's soul, you can create a success," said Mr. Frohlich, who can make statements like that without sounding pretentious.

"Last year, our graduating class was offered \$28,602,546 in scholarships, and 50 went to Ivy League schools," Mr. Frohlich said. "It's not a one-shot focus on a contest. We are turning out scholars — that's the difference. They can do research, they can write, they can think."

For the last two decades Midwood has been a "special admissions" or magnet school. The students are a mix of 2,000 drawn from all over the city by the humanities or medical science programs, to which they apply, and 2,000 from the neighborhood. They literally rub shoulders in a building designed for 2,200 bodies.

Many Midwood students say they especially like their school's diversity. The student body is 43 percent black, 29 percent white, 18 percent Asian and 10 percent Hispanic. The students come from all over New York, most from Brooklyn. While some classes appear to be ethnically homogenous, others have students from a broad mix of backgrounds.

Six of the contest semifinalists are foreign born, and many are the children

how to detect cancerous antigens in the pancreas, described most Midwood students as "self-motivated."

Fellow semifinalist Svetlana Zapolskaya, who came up with a model to detect Alzheimer's disease, said that even students who are not brilliant are pushed to go as far as their abilities take them.

"It's the intermixture of students," said Ms. Zapolskaya, who is 17. "I think the collegiate students work hard, then the specialized students see them working to achieve their level so it makes them work harder. Everyone at Midwood actually gets along."

And so it is that students from poor neighborhoods like Crown Heights and immigrants from places like Chinatown beam with pride as the 13 Westinghouse of immigrants from places that include Trinidad, Greece, Russia, China and Hong Kong. Yet they do not reflect the ethnic mix of the school — none, for example, are African-American — though Mr. Frohlich said there are efforts to insure a more diverse group of students in the medical science program. At least one science teacher said he believed that immigrant parents push their children harder.

While the Westinghouse semifinalists are certainly hard working, they also appear to be well rounded. They belong to the drama club and various religious clubs, they work with senior citizens, they play football. Yet for their contest research projects, many worked as much as 40 extra hours a week at laboratories around the city with mentors who are professional scientists. Most also participate in summer science programs.

The independent work is necessary at a school where the three science laboratories lack such basics as electrical outlets and adequate exhaust systems. Paint is peeling in some rooms. Two hundred students each period try to use the library, which has a capacity of 63. Many classroom chairs are precarious.

It is a striking contrast to Midwood's historic rivals. Stuyvesant High, housed since 1992 in a \$150 million complex in lower Manhattan, and Bronx Science each produced 12 semifinalists this year. They normally trump Midwood, which in

semifinalists sashay down the halls.

"It's a good school," said Carmela Olevsky, a 16-year-old junior who is enrolled in both the medical science and humanities programs. "There are cliques, like any other place, but no one looks down on you for being smart."

Everyone is tracked into one of three programs: the medical science institute, humanities or collegiate, a college preparatory program. In their senior year a limited number can enroll in a pre-engineering program. Each program has specific academic requirements, all going beyond those required for an ordinary diploma. In the medical science institute, for example, students must complete five years' worth of science in four years, and four years of mathematics.

The past decade has placed between third and seventh in the nation in the number of semifinalists.

Dr. Josef Michl, an associate professor of pathology at the Health Science Center of the State University of New York at Brooklyn, said he believes that the hardscrabble life at Midwood actually contributes to students' success.

"I was not surprised," he said of Midwood's first-place finish in the semifinals. "The students who come from there are equivalent to students at any other school, but they work against — how do you say it — an aura of not coming from Stuyvesant or Bronx Science, which makes them work harder. In biology, chemistry, math, the training is equal to that anywhere. The teachers are extraordinary."

The 13 semifinalists have made grueling commitments with the support of family, community and Midwood.

"We don't have a lot of money, but we get extra help from the teachers," said one semifinalist, Petros Constantinos Benias, who created a project in which he pinpointed the cells that reject organ transplants.

"Then there's the support at home, and even my friends," he added. "Most of my friends aren't, like, Westinghouse kids, but we support each other. That's the thing about Midwood. The support is there."■

32. Seattle Times

January 26, 1998

Parents give minority students a boost

by Dionne Searcey

Seattle Times South bureau

Shana Beckwith was distraught when

she saw the newspaper article last fall detailing minority students' poor showing on the state's new assessment tests.

"It really broke my heart," Beckwith said. "I just thought that so many people were going to see that and get up and go to work the next day and say it's a horrible thing, but not do anything about it."

"Everyone should be doing something about it."

Too many African-American adults stand by while black students are wasting their potential, Beckwith said. And that's why she took a job last year as liaison between the Renton School District and

Fearing that might be happening at schools like Renton High, where about 28 percent of 882 students are African American, and Decatur, where the proportion is far smaller at 10 percent of the 1,467 students, the parents' groups are working to give students an extra push.

At Decatur, Turner, whose sons are recent graduates, and Helen Henderson, who has a son at Decatur, host monthly meetings at which about a dozen parents discuss ways they can help students. Turner and Henderson gather the girls every few weeks to encourage them to go to college. They plan to start meeting with black male students this semester and to sponsor an African-American student union. They want to broaden the group to include all African-American students in the district.

The 40 members of the Renton Black Parents Association sponsor 2 1/2 hours of after-school tutoring every day at Renton, Hazen and Lindbergh high schools. The group, formed nearly 16 years ago, organizes monthly "rap sessions," where African-American parents and teens gather to talk about academic and social problems.

Group members five years ago secured grant money to hire a full-time liaison who works from an office in Renton High, operating the tutoring sessions and a scholarship program and planning African-American history and cultural outings for the students.

Both groups cite improved academic achievement as a chief goal.

Efforts are paying off

Though there is no established tracking system at either school, parents say their efforts seem to be working. This fall, 11th-graders at Renton scored an average of 13 points better on the Curriculum Frameworks Assessment System standardized test than last year's class and posted the highest overall

the Renton Black Parents Association. Every day she helps students who wander into her office at Renton High for moral support or who participate in her after-school tutoring program.

It was a similar motivation that led three African-American mothers to start meeting with black girls at Decatur High School in Federal Way this school year. After hearing from one of their sons that the sophomore girls were having problems getting along and keeping their minds on school, the women gathered the girls for a heart-to-heart talk.

"Teens, in general, they're overwhelmed. To be a minority adds a scores in five years. While Principal Willie Fisher attributes the increase to everyone's efforts, he says Beckwith's tutoring program played a role.

At Decatur, parents say the girls who have met with Turner and Henderson are more academically focused than last year. At one recent meeting, applause broke out when senior Candace Landers announced she had received two college-acceptance letters. Turner said the male students have been asking when meetings for them will begin. (Turner, who also works in media relations for the state superintendent of public instruction, is seeking men from the community to volunteer their help with these meetings.)

Jerry Millet, Decatur's principal, said school officials are working hard this year to "open the door wider" to the school's minority community. He said the African-American parents' group could serve as a model for other minority groups in the school, which also has a large Asian population.

In the African-American community, parents agree there's plenty to be done. At Decatur, students are underrepresented in honors classes and extracurricular activities. At Renton, a counselor said last fall that 64 out of 80 students identified as at risk of graduating late or not at all were African American.

Part of the problem, the parents say, is a lack of African-American role models in the largely white schools and communities. Out of about 90 faculty members, Decatur has one teacher and one part-time counselor who are African American. At Renton High, with about 65 faculty members, the principal and four teachers are black.

Hearing academic advice from African-American adults is important to black students, parents said, and the teens agreed.

"It kind of does help to hear it from someone who's been there, to hear it from

whole different light to it," said Diane Turner, a leader of the African American Support Group. "Then, we're talking about how do I find my place, how do I fit in, how do I maintain my ethnic identity?"

That's where the Renton and Federal Way parents hope to help.

Turner says African-American students too often struggle with self-esteem issues and problems fitting in at schools where the majority of students are white. Sometimes, they simply stop trying.

another person from our race who's making it, because there's not a lot of us making it," said Dana Jackson, a 16-year-old Decatur junior.

Theories abound

Parents in both groups have a host of theories about why their students are falling behind. Maybe African-American students are being ignored, they say. Maybe they lack role models or self-esteem. Maybe racism is a factor, although the parents say it isn't prevalent in either school. Maybe the students just aren't listening when teachers urge them to study and to take college-entrance exams.

"You lose some kids because education is not pushed in the family. Other kids you lose because they're lost in the system," Beckwith said. "You really can't put your finger on one group, one district, one school or family. The combination ends up to be deadly."

The parents recognize problems they say are unique to African-American students in majority white schools:

— African-American students don't feel comfortable raising their hands in a class of white peers for fear they will be singled out. For example, sophomore Charlina Barrington told her mother she felt uncomfortable being one of few African-American students in an advanced-placement class. "You worked hard to get there just like everyone else," Kennetha Grant lovingly scolded her daughter. "You deserve to be there."

— Because many African-American students lack self-esteem, they don't pursue college opportunities, ignoring college-entrance exams and opportunities for financial aid.

— Often, African-American students come from single-parent households where the parent works and can't be involved in many school activities. In some cases, students themselves work after school and fall behind academically.

"Parents don't necessarily always have the energy or the time or the know-how to help students with homework or to be as involved with their child's extracurricular activities as they would like," Beckwith said.

— Clubs, vocational classes, choir and band may not appeal to the culture familiar to African-American students. "Some of the music, they don't like. They can't relate to it. Some feel the activities are not for them, or they don't want to be the only (black) one," Turner said. "So we tell them, 'Then get a buddy and go.'"

— Some teachers seem to be afraid of "You've got to understand how frustrating it is to be African American in this country and to see the high rate of

young African-American male teens and view them as menacing, parents say.

— Likewise, teachers don't understand African-American culture - for example, why black students sometimes are louder than whites. They fail to realize that because many African-American students are raised by extended family members, they don't receive as much discipline at home and may tend to be rowdy at school. "A lot of times, we have grandparents raising students, and that needs to be addressed when handing down discipline," Beckwith said.

unemployment and the high rate of incarceration," Curl said. "To have that held up as your potential future, you've

Whatever the reasons, the group members are relying on parent involvement, widely regarded as a key to academic success, to boost the students' performance by letting them know adults are taking an interest in them.

"I don't think it's a mystery that African Americans are not faring as well as the rest of the student population. They've grown up with a norm that mediocrity is OK," said Kenneth Curl, president of the Renton Black Parents Association.

got to understand how devastating that is and how demoralizing that is. That is part of what we battle." ■

33. Seattle Times

January 26, 1998

Charter schools make grade in House; face test in Senate

by Dionne Searcey
Seattle Times South bureau

A bill that would create charter schools in Washington received a ringing endorsement from the House yesterday.

HB2019 received overwhelming support from the House, which voted 72-22 in favor of the bill. It now moves to the Senate.

The measure is identical to a charter-school bill that the House passed last year but failed to make it past the Senate by a handful of votes.

Charter schools allow groups of teachers and parents to set up publicly funded alternative schools that are exempt from some of the regulations of conventional schools. Supporters say charter schools would encourage creativity and even lure some private-school students back to the public schools.

The House bill would require that charter schools employ only teachers with state teaching certificates, comply with state audits and meet or exceed the academic performance at other public schools.

The bipartisan measure has the backing of more than 70 representatives. A Senate version of the bill is sponsored solely by Republicans.

Senators speculated that Gov. Gary Locke's strong support for charter schools in his State of the State speech earlier this month may give legislators the added incentive to push the bill to approval in the Senate this year as well.

"The big difference is that the governor is on record and spoke with some enthusiasm about it," said Sen. Steve Johnson, R-Kent. "That doesn't mean there may not be few bumps along the way."

Those bumps, he said, haven't changed much from last year. Among them is a strong dislike for the idea from both ends of the political spectrum in the Senate. Some of those viewpoints were expressed Thursday at a Senate Education Committee hearing on the bill.

Some conservatives don't want charter schools because they think the state should be in charge of a regimented public-school program.

Some liberal lawmakers side with teachers unions, which, for the most part, oppose the schools because of fears they would lose power to protect the teachers.

The Senate bill is scheduled for executive session Tuesday.

The bills are largely similar. A sticking point, though, may be a provision in the House bill that requires

charter schools to comply with the education reforms passed in 1993, meaning charter schools would have to adhere to curriculum and statewide assessments that monitor both student progress and school effectiveness. The Senate bill has no such requirement.

Sen. Bill Finkbeiner, R-Carnation, one of the bill's sponsors, said requiring charter schools to comply with the state mandates governing public schools defeats the bill's whole purpose.

"We could probably get a charter-school bill to pass if we watered it down enough," he said. "The problem is we'd not end up with any schools because they'd be so difficult to start up, with all the rules and regulations."

If a charter-school bill winds up as law this session, the schools could exist as soon as the fall. But Rep. Dave Quall, D-Mount Vernon, said it's more likely that because of time needed for planning and hiring, the schools would not start showing up until 1999.

Twenty-nine states now have charter-school laws with nearly 200,000 students in attendance.

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34. Los Angeles Times

* 01/26/98; Edition: Orange County Edition; Section: Metro; Metro Desk; Page B-1

Bill to Fix Bilingual Education Pushed Before Unz Vote

By ERIC BAILEY; NICK ANDERSON
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

SACRAMENTO — Year in, year out, for a decade running, California lawmakers have tried to produce new standards for bilingual education in the state's classrooms.

They have always flunked. One bill was vetoed. A dozen others never even

Republicans were bullish backers of Alpert's bill in 1997. But this is an election year, and they have abandoned Alpert and are moving in droves to support the anti-bilingual ballot measure, launched by Silicon Valley millionaire Ron K. Unz and Orange County teacher Gloria Matta Tuchman.

Democrats, including members of the powerful Latino Caucus, have long been squeamish about tinkering with bilingual education, which is woven through the fabric of California's public school system despite continuing debate and controversy over its effectiveness.

But now, facing the Unz initiative, Democratic reluctance is beginning to thaw. Many see Alpert's legislation as a good political weapon in the coming war against the ballot measure.

If Alpert's bill is approved and signed into law by Gov. Pete Wilson, who has yet to show his hand on either measure, Unz's foes will argue that the new regulations governing bilingual education are more flexible and preferable to the initiative, which they consider a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

"There's a sense of urgency," said Assemblyman Mike Honda (D-San Jose), an opponent of the Unz initiative who is active in efforts to craft a legislative compromise. "A lot of people want to point to something and say, 'See, we have something. We don't need Unz.'"

Democrats are also saying they now consider Alpert's bill worthwhile for California's 1.4 million schoolchildren not fluent in English. That group constitutes about a quarter of the state's students; the primary language of 4 out of 5 in the group is Spanish.

Alpert's bill would give school districts a freer hand to be innovative and shape whatever approach they believe works best, be it instruction in a student's native language, immersion in classrooms where English is spoken most of the time or some other approach. It also would hold districts to account for producing positive results. Now, there are few penalties for districts that fail to move students quickly into English fluency and

made it that far.

Now, state legislators are at it again, taking a last stab at reform before the California electorate does the job for them. With an initiative to virtually dismantle bilingual education going before voters in June, a state senator is scrambling to push through a more moderate alternative designed to let ensure progress in other subjects.

Advocates of bilingual education aren't exactly running to embrace the Alpert legislation, even with the Unz initiative on the horizon.

"There aren't going to be any winners in this," said Martha Zaragoza-Diaz, a lobbyist for the California Assn. for Bilingual Education. "If we're going to give districts flexibility, we need assurances that children are not only learning English, but also math, science and writing at their grade level."

The Unz initiative, in contrast, would require virtually all classroom instruction to be in English, with limited exceptions. Children who are not fluent would get about a year of special help in English and then move into mainstream classes.

Unz said his measure is filling the void left by Sacramento.

"Last year I expected the Legislature to finally do something, but they once again failed," he said. "That's 10 straight years! Now our initiative is going to a vote in four months. It's a very foolish thing for them to come in at the last moment and say they've agreed on something."

Unz said state lawmakers are simply making a political move "motivated by nothing but the embarrassment that they've been sitting on their hands for 10 straight years."

The California law governing bilingual education expired in 1987, but state education officials have continued to carry out its general intentions, prompted, in part, by rulings in federal civil rights lawsuits that prohibit putting children in classrooms where they cannot keep up because of language differences.

In California schools, that has translated into about 30% of non-English-proficient children taking traditional bilingual education classes, in which they are instructed in basic subjects in their native language while they learn English.

The other 70% may receive help from bilingual teaching aides, specially crafted lessons in various academic subjects through so-called sheltered English,

school districts decide how best to teach students not fluent in English.

The measure by Sen. Dede Alpert (D-Coronado) faces a stiff test in the Assembly, where it was bottled up in the final days of last year's legislative session. Even if it passes, the bill could be rendered moot if the ballot measure wins and survives legal challenge. classes in English as a second language or perhaps just a bilingual dictionary. Many get virtually no extra help at all.

Part of the problem is a dearth of trained bilingual teachers. By some estimates, the state needs as many as 26,900 new bilingual teachers to fill its needs. There now are about 15,000. Alpert's bill would not rectify that situation.

Meanwhile, the State Board of Education has adjusted the regulations, allowing districts to apply for waivers from the bilingual rules. Four districts in the state—all in Orange County—have received waivers, and the Santa Barbara district plans to seek one.

As state educators have tinkered with the rules, California lawmakers have repeatedly proved powerless to push through legislation.

Last year, Alpert's bill (SB 6) appeared headed for approval until it was waylaid in an Assembly fiscal committee at the behest of Speaker Cruz Bustamante (D-Fresno). Members of the Assembly Latino Caucus, several lawmakers who are former educators and advocates of bilingual education expressed concern that the bill did not have strong enough safeguards. They said some students would be left to sink academically in classes in which they couldn't keep up with instruction in English.

Over the years, Alpert's bill and similar efforts have failed to win over many Latino lawmakers, who see bilingual education as an emotional issue. As children, some were forced into sink-or-swim situations in which they had little help learning English.

"I remember sitting in my fifth-grade classroom and not knowing what was going on," recalled Assemblywoman Martha M. Escutia (D-Bell), who believes that the Unz initiative is simply a smoke screen for the English-only movement. "Why do we make it difficult like that for kids?"

This year, Alpert is counting on Democrats like Escutia to come through. Bustamante also is now eager to see a bill to counter Unz's measure.

"I am hopeful we can put out a moderate brand of bilingual education," Bustamante said. "I don't know that it would derail the Unz initiative, but at least we'd be putting out something that's good public policy, not some patronizing product meant only as a wedge issue

during an election."

But it may be too late. Without Republican votes—and only a couple are seriously considering Alpert's bill—the chances of the governor signing the legislation are clouded. And even if it becomes law, the bill probably won't

make a dent in the Unz initiative.

"I think we missed our window of opportunity last year," Alpert said. "Maybe it was too late even then. It has just taken the Legislature so long." ■

35. Baltimore Sun

January 25, 1998

Demographics are the downfall

Grades: 'Quality Counts' findings put performance data in the context of census statistics and show how Baltimore schools pull down statewide averages.

By Mike Bowler
SUN STAFF

Once, before suburbs, Baltimore schools were the envy of Maryland. City schools were so distinguished that the system was autonomous, legally separate from the other 23 mediocrities.

Demographics changed that. Now city schools are like a boulder tied to the public school rowboat. They pull down the average for everyone.

State education officials found that out again this month, when Maryland got its second annual report card from the most thorough assessment of American education yet attempted. Maryland's grades weren't anything to brag about.

How do you explain an F (last year's grade was D+) in "school climate?" And why did Maryland get a C- in "teaching quality?"

Maryland is, after all, a state that prides itself on school reform. The Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) has become a national model, and the state got an A- on the report card in a category called "standards and assessments." But that was the only above-average grade.

Much of the mediocre showing can be explained (though not excused) in two words: Baltimore City. The city pulls down all statewide performance averages. Even Prince George's County, the other district in Maryland with a sizable urban population, shines in comparison.

This year's "Quality Counts" report, compiled by the publication Education Week with help from the Pew Charitable Trusts, grades the states from the perspective of the urban crisis, putting school performance data in the context of census data.

Just a few of the low lights:

Baltimore has 15 percent of the state's

children but 87 percent of the state's children in extreme poverty.

Maryland has one of the widest gaps between spending on urban and "nonurban" schools. This explains the C's given the state for spending and the drop from A- last year to C this year in the equity of school spending.

Maryland has the widest gap in the nation between urban and nonurban student performance in eighth-grade math and the fifth-widest gap in fourth-grade reading. Much of this difference can be attributed to Baltimore, where 45 percent of the state's poor children live.

Just under a third of urban high school teachers in Maryland lack even a college minor in the subjects they teach, compared with 16 percent in nonurban schools.

States with urban centers get poor grades in "school climate," and the lack of PTAs in many city schools helps pull Maryland down in this category.

These kinds of dismal statistics are sprinkled throughout "Quality Counts," which seems biased in its grading against states with huge urban centers, such as Maryland and Michigan.

Last summer, when Sun reporters began planning the reporting that culminated in the "Reading By 9" series in November, we referred to these statistics as the "to be sure" factors.

To be sure, there's urban poverty that makes city children harder to teach. To be sure, it's difficult to teach reading, or anything else, with 35 children in a classroom.

Difficult, but not impossible, we concluded. In fact, we found that proven methods of reading instruction aren't being used where they are needed most.

"Quality Counts" did detect one bright note in the dirge. That is the "novel

partnership" between city and state that is overhauling the governance of city schools and promising (if agreements are kept) to bring \$254 million in additional state aid over five years. That effort is well under way.

It takes time to improve education on a large scale, but a few years from now, that promising development might bring Maryland an "I" for Improvement.

White House honors Maryland teachers

A lot of attention was on the White House Thursday, but not because it announced this year's winners of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Maryland winners are Nancy Cornelius, a math teacher at Pointers Run Elementary in Clarksville; Dorothy Reitz, a math teacher at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Germantown; Karen Shrake, a science teacher at Burtonsville Elementary in Burtonsville; and John Perry, a science teacher at Mount Hebron High School in Ellicott City.

Each winner gets \$7,500 from the National Science Foundation, to be spent at the teacher's discretion to advance math and science education.

EAI was then; Tesseract is now

The EAI watch will have to become the Tesseract watch. The company that tried to make a profit operating nine Baltimore schools in the mid-'90s has changed its name to the Tesseract Group to "reflect the company's commitment to expanded educational services and the Tesseract philosophy."

One reason for the change, we suspect, is the association of "EAI" with the company's failed for-profit experiments in Baltimore and Hartford, Conn. ■

36. Cincinnati Enquirer

January 26, 1998

Program achieves integration, but parents call it hardship

BY MARK SKERTIC

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Each morning, Debra Clark watches her two children walk across the street to Washington Park Elementary in Over-the-Rhine.

Krystal and Khris don't go inside. Instead, they climb aboard a school bus that takes them 3 miles to Oyler Elementary, another Cincinnati public school in nearby Lower Price Hill.

"They could go right out my door and right in Washington Park's door," Ms. Clark said. "But the schools say no."

She lives in one of four Cincinnati Public School attendance zones where some children are bused from their neighborhood in an effort to achieve racial integration. Now, some parents and other school supporters have asked the district to reconsider its commitment to the plan.

The loudest calls to dump the program have come from those working with Oyler school, a school in mostly white Lower Price Hill.

"A lot of these Appalachian kids never make it because they're taken out of their neighborhood; they feel threatened by going to other communities," said Mike Jones, chairman of Oyler's Local School Decision Making Committee, an internal policy board.

An Oyler alumnus (class of '63), he went there when it was the school for hundreds of Price Hill children in kindergarten through ninth grade. Now, Mr. Jones and others would like to see Oyler made a neighborhood school with the grade level expanded to eighth grade from the current kindergarten-to-sixth.

Most important, they want a guarantee that children who live near Oyler will be able to attend the school and not be bused to Washington Park, where the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood is largely black. "Maybe if they make Oyler a neighborhood school, make it K-8, you'll get more parental support, more community support and more community pride," Mr. Jones said.

Administrators haven't asked the school board to reconsider the arrangement, but it might be time to do

"I get questions all the time," Whittier Principal Dominick Ciolino said. "After

so, school board President Arthur Hull said. "Yes, absolutely," he said when asked about Oyler's request. "I think maybe it's time to take another look at it."

The policy's official name is "paired schools." Oyler is paired with Washington Park; Whittier in Price Hill is linked with Washburn in the West End. The schools have about 2,300 students; 500 of them are affected by the paired-school program.

"The idea is to mix the kids from Oyler, who are predominantly white, with the kids from Washington Park, who are predominantly black," CPS Assistant Superintendent Kathleen Ware said.

The arrangement is different from magnet-school offerings, a popular, voluntary desegregation tool that affects about 14,500 students. Magnet-school programs such as Montessori instruction or intensive foreign-language offerings entice families to choose schools outside their neighborhoods.

Cincinnati families whose children attend paired schools do not get to choose whether to be part of the program, prompting annual complaints to principals. Many have argued that the district intentionally chose schools in low-income areas to implement the policy.

But the district has been hesitant to drop the paired-school effort because it would increase racial segregation, Mrs. Ware said. That could lead to a repeat of desegregation court battles that the district faced in the 1970s and '80s, administrators fear.

Milton Hinton, president of the Cincinnati chapter of the NAACP, said that concern could be unfounded. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People championed desegregation lawsuits against the district because schools and the resources given to children of different races were not equal, he said.

"Integration is certainly desirable in the kind of society in which we live," Dr. Hinton said. "But integration must not proceed just for integration's sake, just to say we have black and white kids together. Education must be paramount." nine years, there are still people who aren't pleased."■

If dropping pairing would strengthen the schools, it would benefit their neighborhoods, said Maureen Sullivan, executive director of the Urban Appalachian Council. "Neighborhoods are stronger if the institutions within the neighborhood are stronger," she said.

Oyler supporters have argued that a closer relationship between the school and community could keep more children in school and boost student achievement.

At Washington Park, the school decision-making committee did not need to hear those arguments, Principal Viola Jackson said. They like the program because without it, the school's enrollment would be entirely African-American, she said.

"Pairing gives us an opportunity," she said. "It's more global to recognize there is more than one type of culture in the world."

Still, for parents like Ms. Clark, the policy is frustrating. She likes Oyler and has been happy with the education her children have received. But being an involved parent is difficult when the school is 3 miles away and she has no car, she said.

"To get to Price Hill, I have to take a bus, or a cab if it's an emergency," Ms. Clark said. "It's not easy."

The impact on parental involvement has been one of the problems since paired schools were inaugurated in 1989, said Jennifer Cottingham, former principal at Washburn Elementary.

"I had death threats, threats that the buses would never cross Eighth Street," said Ms. Cottingham, now an administrator who works with the district's principals. "But by Halloween, we had kids wanting to spend the night at each other's home. Some kids spending the night with their friends in the projects, other kids going home with friends up the hill."

But the paired-school experiment has never succeeded in overcoming the problem of parents frustrated because their children are being bused out of their neighborhoods every morning, Ms. Cottingham said.

37. Hartford Courant

January 26, 1998

Judge reject claim of educational malpractice

WEST HAVEN, Conn. (AP) In a case of three parents suing the local school board for teaching a particular school curriculum, a judge has ruled the state does not recognize claims of educational malpractice.

Superior Court Judge Michael Hartmere said in his ruling that the parents did not prove their claims. Parents Elizabeth Bell, Barbara Murphy-Finneran and Paula Brown had said the use of the "Responsive

Classroom" curriculum was educational malpractice because, they believe, the teaching method emphasizes social skills over academics.

The suit also alleged use of the curriculum was negligent and that the conduct of educators was "outrageous," encouraging an atmosphere of chaos and fear and intentionally inflicting emotional distress on students at Pagels School.

The parents' attorney, John Williams, said he would appeal the judge's

decision.

Floyd Dugas, attorney for the Board of Education, said the decision means that courts "have no business deciding what classes, what courses or what curriculum should be utilized in schools."

Previously, a federal judge rejected a claim by the three parents that use of the curriculum violated the constitutional rights of students. ■

38. Hartford Courant

January 26, 1998

Proposed Charter School Would Give Students Taste Of Democracy

By ERIC FERRERI

WINDHAM - Students at the proposed Leonardo da Vinci Middle School in Willimantic would have a truly democratic educational experience.

Under the governance structure proposed by the school's founders, students, teachers and staff members would each have an equal vote on most school issues, in a town-meeting format. Decisions on discipline, use of facilities, hiring and firing and school finances would all fall to a schoolwide vote.

That means that everything from the school budget to class field trips would be approved by a majority vote.

"The idea is to have a new type of school where the policies are made by those who are actually in the building, including the students," said Alan Levy, director of CitiArts Inc., the community-based organization proposing the school to the state. "We want students to have ownership over their educations."

It would be the first public school in the state with such a structure. There is one private school in Hampton with a similar set of rules, and there are several others across the nation.

In addition to self-governance, the da Vinci school would offer an arts-

The da Vinci school would have a director to handle daily administrative tasks, but would be largely governed by students and staff members. While

oriented curriculum in which arts professionals would help in teaching standard middle school subjects, such as math, science and English, Levy, a teacher and professional theater director, said. The school would enroll students in grades 4 through 8.

The state Department of Education, which will decide whether to approve the school's charter, will hold a public hearing tonight at 7: at the Windham Regional Vocational- Technical School on Birch Street in Willimantic.

The proposal is one of 10 such submitted to the state this year, said Yvette Melendez Thiesfield, the state education department's program manager for charter schools. Of those, two or three will be selected, she said. The state will give the chosen schools about \$6,000 per student, and the schools must open in September 1998. It would be the second year that the state has funded charter schools.

If approved, Levy said, he'd expect an enrollment of about 125 students the first year. Students would therefore greatly outnumber the 25 teachers and staff members, but Levy doesn't view that as a problem.

"There is, I guess, the danger that a large group of people could vote and conceding that there could be some problems associated with that much student control, Levy is confident that students would cast their votes

enact something pretty silly," he said. "But that's all part of the learning process."

Empowering the students gives them a greater sense of ownership in the school, and the added responsibility would challenge students, he said.

This has been the case at The Greenwood Sudbury School in Hampton, a private school of 22 students, now in its fifth year, that has successfully provided students with an equal voice, officials there say. Students there vote on most school decisions, and there's very little trouble, said Jed Katch, a Greenwood staff member and school founder.

"It works extremely well," Katch said of the voting. "One of the misconceptions is if you give students freedom, they'll go chaotic."

The town-meeting style at the Greenwood school - appropriately housed in the basement of Hampton's town hall - has brought out the best out of in the students, Katch said. Students don't abuse their voting privileges, and when they don't understand an issue, they either learn about it or don't vote, he said.

"A lot of acting out is because students are frustrated," Katch said. "Here, students have as much power as I do, and they know it." responsibly.

"I think that children in this age range can surprise us with their capabilities," he said. ■

39. Hartford Courant

January 26, 1998

State to hold public hearing on charter school proposals

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. (AP) At one proposed charter school, students would get to learn about democracy first hand.

Decisions on discipline, use of facilities, field trips, hiring, firing and school finances at the proposed Leonardo da Vinci Middle School would all be decided by a schoolwide vote with students, teachers and staff.

"The idea is to have a new type of school where the policies are made by those who are actually in the building, including the students," said Alan Levy,

director of CitiArts Inc., the organization proposing the school. "We want students to have ownership over their educations."

The da Vinci school is one of 10 proposed schools before the state Department of Education, which will hold a public hearing tonight at the Windham Regional Vocational-Technical School.

Yvette Melendez Thiesfield, the state education department's program manager for charter schools, said only two or three of the proposals will be selected.

Applications run the gamut from high technology, computer-oriented schools to a high school with a fine arts focus.

The da Vinci school would offer an arts-oriented curriculum in which arts professionals would help in teaching standard middle school subjects.

The schools must open in September 1998. It would be the second year that the state has funded charter schools. Twelve were opened in the fall. ■

40. Associated Press

01-25 1:27p

D'Amato seeks to burnish education record in election year

By RONALD POWERS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Education is not an issue Sen. Alfonse D'Amato has paid much attention to in his years as a lawmaker. Now, with his trademark zeal and aplomb, the irrepressible New York Republican has made teacher performance a centerpiece of his re-election campaign.

The move puts D'Amato in step with his party's rediscovery of education, and is the latest example of the astute politician's ability to identify and attach his name to topics that are popular with voters.

In TV ads that began airing last year - fully 13 months before Election Day - D'Amato attacks the "liberal teachers union," saying the United Federation of Teachers places its members' interests ahead of the needs of public-school students.

"We have a system that is more interested in protecting the perks and the privileges and has become a hiring hall," the senator said. "It is an employment center, as opposed to being a center of

After passing a probation period, teachers in New York and many other states earn job tenure. That means they can be fired only for specific causes, such as incompetence, insubordination, neglect of duty, or physical or mental disability.

Opponents say tenure shields many unqualified or uncaring teachers. Proponents maintain it protects teachers' rights and insulates them from political

learning, or knowledge."

While some school watchdog groups may agree with D'Amato, at least in part, they still question his motives and point out that he's making a lot of noise about an issue over which he has no jurisdiction.

"My impression is that we are really witnessing political stratagems and not serious educational advocacy," said Galen Kirkland, executive director of Advocates for Children, a nonprofit group. "I've never heard of anything he's done to promote education."

Beyond a Senate floor speech delivered in October as his feud with the UFT was coming to a boil, D'Amato has done little on the issue.

Democrats note he has repeatedly opposed increased education spending. He joined fellow Republicans in voting to cut billions of dollars from the student-loan program and opposing the Goals 2000, which sets challenging academic standards and promotes parental involvement.

"Is my job simply to have Washington send more money into a failing system?" favoritism and arbitrary dismissal.

Ms. Harrington, like Kirkland and others, said tenure is an issue for the state Legislature, and she finds D'Amato's sudden interest odd.

"Alfonse D'Amato spends no time talking to parent organizations ... does not visit schools, does not hold forums on education-related issues, is not close to the education community," she said. "He, like many others, are jumping on the

he asked The Associated Press in an interview last week. "Or is my job to say: 'Sure, we're going to make resources available. But we want to see to it that the kids and their interests are bettered.'"

With a third of the Senate and the entire House facing re-election this fall, the GOP announced a package of education proposals Tuesday aimed at polishing the image of a party that in the past has supported abolishing the **Department of Education** and slashing federal school aid.

The new GOP plan runs the gamut from federal subsidies for private and religious schools to proposals to test teacher competence and award merit pay.

Ayo Harrington, who heads United Parents Associations, a nearly 80-year-old federation of parent groups in New York, agrees with D'Amato that the teacher-tenure issue needs another look.

Teachers "are not held accountable in the way that employees are in every other industry and segment of our society," she said.

topic of education because it seems to be a politically hot issue."

During the past year, Ms. Harrington said, she called D'Amato's offices in New York and Washington twice about pending federal education legislation. "No one ever returned my calls, responded, got back to me," she said.

Noreen Connell, executive director of the Educational Priorities Panel, a coalition of two dozen mainstream civic

organizations, has been watching the issue closely and said D'Amato's interest in education "just came out of the blue."

"He just seems to have taken a page from the right-wing think tanks and run

with it," she said.

But education does resonate with voters, whose support D'Amato will need in November.

A poll last month found that most

New Yorkers oppose teacher tenure but favor merit pay for educators who perform well, which D'Amato says he supports. ■

41. The Columbus Dispatch

01/24/98; Edition: Home Final; Section: NEWS; Page 04B

DEPARTMENT WANTS NAMES KEPT PRIVATE

The U.S. Department of Education announced yesterday it is going to federal court to ensure that Ohio State and Miami universities do not disclose the names of students when the two institutions make disciplinary records available to the public.

An injunction is to be filed in U.S. District Court in Columbus, according to a statement by the Education Department.

The action results from Miami's refusal to disclose student disciplinary records.

The university's policy was challenged in court. The Ohio Supreme Court in July ruled that Miami's policy violated the state's open records law. The university, the court ruled, must turn over the records.

The U.S. Supreme Court rejected the university's appeal, upholding the Ohio Supreme Court's ruling.

The Education Department's motion for an injunction will seek to keep students' names private. Disclosure of students' names would violate the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy

Act, the department said in a statement.

Miami and OSU recently informed the Education Department that they would make public details of student disciplinary records, including students' names, the department's statement said.

Richard Little, a Miami spokesman, said last night that court action by the Education Department validates what the university has been saying all along - that the records should be private. ■

42. Associated Press

01-23 11:33p

Education Department moves to stop release of student records

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) - A dispute over the disciplinary records of Ohio college students - a case that already has reached the U.S. Supreme Court - has resurfaced.

The U.S. Department of Education said Friday it had filed a lawsuit to prevent Ohio State University and Miami University from releasing campus disciplinary records containing student names.

David Berthimaume, a lawyer for the department, said a complaint and a motion to prohibit the schools from divulging the information were filed in U.S. District Court.

The Ohio Supreme Court later ruled that such information did not constitute "education records" and that the school, by deleting the age and gender of the students charged, had improperly withheld public information.

The high court said Miami must release only records that reflect "the general location of the incidents, the age

Miami and Ohio State had informed the Education Department that they planned to release student disciplinary records, including names, after the Chronicle of Higher Education newspaper asked for the information.

"We have filed suit to prevent irreparable harm to the students who legitimately expect privacy and confidentiality in their school's on-campus disciplinary process," said LeRoy Rooker, director of the department's Family Policy Compliance Office, in a news release.

The fight over the records began in 1995, when the Miami campus and sex of the students, the nature of the offense and the type of disciplinary penalty imposed."

The U.S. Supreme Court, without comment, upheld the Ohio court in December.

Miami University spokesman Richard Little said the school just wants to do what is right under the law.

newspaper, The Miami Student, asked for campus disciplinary records to track student crime trends. The newspaper did not ask for students' names or Social Security numbers.

The university argued that releasing the information under Ohio's open-records law would put the school in jeopardy of violating the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

The law bars the release of "education records" that can be "personally identifiable."

"We want clarity. We want someone to tell us what to do," he said. "This validates what we've said all along. The Department of Education says these are not public records."

Steve McDonald, associate legal counsel for Ohio State, said the school "will comply with whatever the law is." ■

43. Newsday

January 26, 1998

School 'Extension' Proposals Promised

By Dan Janison and Sarah Kershaw
STAFF WRITERS

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said yesterday he's preparing to propose new measures affecting high school students who take more than five years to graduate, but he offered no details. Repeating his long-running attacks on the promotion of public school students who fall short of standards, Giuliani said so-called high school "extension" programs would be covered in his annual budget proposal Thursday. "Rather than spend the money on trying to get someone a college degree who hasn't done high school yet, spend the money on getting them a real high school degree," he said after a Jewish cultural breakfast in the Bronx. "The purpose of it is to shift the funding to where we do the most good," he said. In his recent State of the City address, Giuliani called for an end to open admission for the City University system and demanded that anyone admitted meet 12th-grade standards. He described it in a speech at the breakfast in the Bronx' Riverdale section, saying those who take longer

should go into programs where they no longer walk the same hallways as the younger students. Night programs for those students are being considered, officials said. "Having high schools in which you have 21-year-olds and 13-year-olds. . . creates enormous education problems and other problems as well," Giuliani told reporters afterward. Asked who would run the programs, he said, "There are a lot of possibilities. We're looking into that right now." Regarding community colleges as the place to give remedial instruction, he said it "isn't working." Chiara Coletti, a spokeswoman for Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew, said the two men have been discussing what steps to take. "We've been graduating more kids. That's good. It's also taking longer to graduate them," she said, noting some students in difficult economic straits sometimes drop out to take care of family members and the like. Queens Board of Education member Carol Gresser said, "I agree with the notion it's not appropriate for 21-year-olds to be going to school with 14-year-olds." Gresser added, however,

"It's important to link this up with some sort of job or internship during the day so they can have experience and a resume and enter the workforce." Earlier this month, Norman Fruchter, director of New York University's Institute for Education and Social Policy, warned that the five-year limit would become a mere "cost-saving measure" and said students are better off receiving a high school diploma than an equivalency diploma. The discussion arises at a time when the state has mandated stricter standards for high schools, which some educators say will make it harder for students to complete requirements on time. Noreen Connell, of New York's Educational Priorities Panel, who conducted a study of graduation rates, said one of three high school students takes longer than four years to graduate, more than the typical number in other city school systems. "We hope that the mayor's focus on this problem will encourage greater assistance to students in high schools, but we don't want a push-out scenario," Connell said. ■

44. Forth Worth Star-Telegram

January 26, 1998

Consultants prepare to grade Fort Worth district

By Martha Deller
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Fourteen years ago, the Ohio state school superintendent wanted a better way to compare educational data among similar school districts across the United States.

By 1986, Bill Bainbridge, an assistant to the superintendent, and three others had figured out how to do it. They

"We take school data and make it useful and understandable for people," said Steven Sundre, the firm's executive vice president.

But the audit consists of more than just data. Armed with the numbers, SchoolMatch auditors visit several campuses to observe local educators in action, and parents, administrators and teachers are asked to complete a survey detailing their perceptions of the district's effectiveness.

Sundre and Bainbridge, SchoolMatch's president, will lead the audit team in Fort Worth. Results of the audit, which will include a series of recommendations for improvement, are

formed SchoolMatch, a consulting firm that uses a databank of information from schools nationwide to analyze a district's strengths and weaknesses.

This year, Fort Worth joins more than 660 school districts that have been audited by SchoolMatch to determine how well their schools are educating students compared with similar U.S. districts. The Star-Telegram hired expected by April or May.

Leaders in communities where SchoolMatch has worked say the company's audits have been comprehensive and constructive.

"SchoolMatch was extremely helpful in pointing out where we were on a national scale and in making suggestions on what we can do to improve," said Thomas Shouvin, vice chairman of the 11-member New Century Commission in Jacksonville, Fla.

Although some school board members disputed parts of last year's audit of the Duval County school district in Jacksonville, it became an integral part of a yearlong community study of the

SchoolMatch for \$90,000 to conduct the audit in cooperation with Fort Worth school officials.

Using data such as test scores, attendance and dropout ratios, grading patterns and advanced placement enrollment, the auditors measure school performance compared with schools of like size and ethnic and economic makeup.

district, Shouvin said.

Last week, the New Century Commission, appointed jointly by the school board and the mayor, included SchoolMatch information in its report to the school board. Improvements proposed by the district based on the audit's recommendations include creation of an office to track student performance in Duval County.

Dale Frederick chose SchoolMatch for a state-funded audit of his Warren, Ohio, school district, then recommended the firm for a privately funded audit of the Pittsburgh district that he now heads.

"It's like getting a thorough checkup," he said. "We were interested in having a

professional outside the district provide us with quantifiable data that we could use to improve where we wanted to go or reinforce things we were doing in a good manner."

In the firm's early days, some superintendents commissioned audits to confirm or discount the success of their programs, but didn't share results with the public. In recent years, businesses, foundations and newspapers have paid for the audits and joined with school officials to make the results public.

Experts say educational audits are becoming increasingly popular.

For example, a New York-based market research and polling firm has helped 90 school districts conduct customer satisfaction surveys of its teachers and parents.

The National School Board Association has recently begun offering audits to help superintendents evaluate their districts' curriculum, instructional policies and board-superintendent relations.

"A number of states are compiling report cards on schools," said Kathleen Lyons, spokeswoman for the National Education Association, the nation's largest teacher organization. "But schools

are usually ranked on test scores and class size, things that anyone could collect. I'm more interested in other factors, like how well qualified their teachers are."

Among SchoolMatch's recommendations in Florida were better teacher training and evaluation.

SchoolMatch examines data that veteran educators consider important educational indicators. For example, company officials have defined the educational level of parents as the single most important indicator of a child's academic success.

Richard Koeppe, a retired Colorado school superintendent who has served on several audit teams, said the data measured by SchoolMatch accurately reflect factors that affect school performance.

"I spent 30 years in public education in urban districts," Koeppe said. "If you tell me the income level, education level of parents, average daily attendance and mobility, I can predict with high accuracy the performance on standardized achievement tests.

"We've known that for years. The question, is what are you going to do about it. SchoolMatch tries to help by

'here's where you are and here's how you can do at least a little better.'"

Fort Worth Superintendent Thomas Tocco and representatives of two Fort Worth teacher organizations said they welcome the outside audit.

"They have high standards, but they're fair," Tocco said. "They'll cite our strengths and our weaknesses. That's what I'm looking for."

Larry Shaw, executive director of the United Educators Association, said he believes that outside auditors can help determine the effectiveness of Tocco's education initiatives.

"Dr. Tocco has initiated many good programs which have not been evaluated. This will give a fresh look at the district by people who know what they're doing but have no political ties to the district," Shaw said.

The outside audit could help the district's credibility, said Rubidel Johnson Peoples, president of the Fort Worth Education Association.

"I anticipate that Fort Worth will stack up favorably to similar urban cities," Peoples said. "Should it prove to be a valid study, it will be valuable to the district and will give public confidence in Fort Worth schools a great boost." ■

45. Austin American-Statesman

January 26, 1998

Children get help to overcome middle school's early terrors

By Sharon Jayson
American-Statesman Staff

Bronwin Simpson didn't hesitate when Manipulating her locker's combination might seem a minor hurdle compared with being assigned schoolwork that's much tougher or confronting a classroom of strangers in a new school, but such fears are very real for sixth-graders. Just ask Sonia Rangel, also a Lamar sixth-grader, who, like all her middle school peers, faced lockers for the first time in sixth grade.

"The hardest thing is to get your locker open and get to class on time before the bell rings," Rangel said.

For both girls, adjusting to life at Lamar has been lightened by a research project of the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the educational psychology department at the University of Texas, the Texas Education Agency and the Austin school district.

Based on the knowledge that academic

asked the biggest challenge she faced as a sixth-grader at Lamar Middle School.

"The hardest thing about being a and behavioral problems are heightened when elementary students enter middle school, the researchers sought ways that schools could help their students adjust. For the Texas Education Agency, the study offered the possibility of ensuring that the state's increasingly multicultural population stay in school.

The study began four years ago with surveys and interviews of fifth- and sixth-graders. Researchers found the elementary students worried more about physical safety and the academic challenges they would face in middle school than about making new friends or being in a bigger environment. But researchers noted that students, after settling into middle school, lost self-confidence and appeared to like school less than before.

Approximately 1,000 students at

sixth-grader is opening my locker," said Simpson, 11.

Highland Park, Ortega and Sims elementary schools, as well as at Lamar Middle School, participated in the study, called Barriers to Student Learning in Diverse Schools. The campuses were selected because they are predominantly single-race schools whose student populations interact for the first time at Lamar. Whites are in the majority at Highland Park, Hispanics at Ortega, and blacks at Sims.

While researchers found that most students have some trouble adjusting, minority students and students from low-income backgrounds — especially Hispanics — have the hardest time.

'A foreign country'

"Coming to West Austin is almost like coming to a foreign country," said Richard Schott, the professor who directed the LBJ School study.

"When they got here, they suddenly had to interact with a whole variety of kids they never had experienced before, especially kids from upper middle-class status. We found the Hispanics seemed to have the hardest adjustment and then the African American students; and then for most of the Anglo students it was easier, although it was also hard for them," Schott said.

Last spring, UT educational-psychology professor Cindy Carlson and some of her graduate students launched the intervention program for fifth-graders at Ortega and Sims. This fall, as Lamar sixth-graders, the students attended weekly decision-making and problem-solving sessions and after-school tutoring several times a week.

"These kids really leave their whole culture and community when they come to a middle school that's this far away and has this much diversity and is this different in terms of its structure from the way the elementary school is in the neighborhood," Carlson said.

Although many elementary schools may not be composed so predominantly of one race, the issue of converging cultures at middle school is critical because that's when busing begins and students leave their neighborhood

elementary school behind.

The study found that students of different ethnicities were often wary of each other and "tensions based on ethnicity seemed often to be reinforced by differences in socioeconomic status." In addition, busing "set the stage for negative multicultural relationships" and limited the ability of minority students and parents to fully participate at school, thus presenting a major barrier to the school's developing a sense of community.

Extra effort pays off

The researchers' intervention seemed to serve as a buffer for the Lamar students, and those like Bronwin Simpson appear to have benefited.

"When I came to this school, I didn't know anybody except the kids that went to my old school. Now it seems like I know everybody," she said. "But you've got to make an effort, and you've got to be nice."

Without the extra attention, Paula Simpson said her daughter Bronwin would not be at Lamar today.

"I would have transferred her to (an elementary) school that had a sixth grade because I wouldn't have been secure enough that she would have been OK," Simpson said of her daughter. "I grew up in the day when sixth grade was still in

elementary school. It seemed too soon to be going to middle school."

Her concerns are shared by some Austin parents worried that the district may move sixth-graders still on elementary campuses to middle school.

Less than a dozen Austin elementary schools offer sixth grade; three schools — Barrington, Ortega and Zavala — have one class of sixth-graders under a special science program. Sims is considering joining that group — keeping one class of sixth-graders while the rest of them move into middle school.

A more enlightened approach, according to Douglas MacIver, associate director of the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University, would be for middle schools to develop the sense of community found at elementary school.

The LBJ School report directed by Schott took the same approach, and the Austin district has adopted that philosophy for its middle school initiatives, said Kay Psencik, deputy superintendent in Austin.

"We've been acting on it," she said. "What he's (Schott) come out with is aligned with the national studies and what we've been working on." ■

46. Tulsa World

January 26, 1998

Don't Ask, Don't Tell

By World's own Service

School employees don't tell. School officials don't ask.

Administrators are often the last to find out that an employee has been arrested, convicted or even sent to prison.

"I thought it was no one's business," said Garland L. Allen, a longtime custodian who never told the district about his felony drunk-driving conviction, which, by law, prevents him from working in public schools.

"It was off work when I was partying, and that was it. It's no one's business but mine."

Area districts were in the dark about the majority of more than 200 arrests and subsequent court actions of school employees in the past two years, a Tulsa World investigation shows.

No state laws require employees to inform supervisors of run-ins with the law, and, with few exceptions, most districts surveyed by the World had no

policies requiring such notification.

"I've never had one (tell of an arrest) in 12 years. I call them in when I find out about it. The majority of the time they say 'I'm afraid I'm going to lose my job,'" said Mike Pounds, director of classified personnel for Tulsa Public Schools.

More than half of the people arrested were employed with Tulsa; the remainder came from 23 districts across the state.

Brushes with the law by school employees ran the gamut, including arrests and prosecutions for drugs, violence, theft and sex.

Some employees were able to hide their crimes from districts by fulfilling sentences on weekends and scheduling court dates on vacation or sick days.

"I'm a public school teacher. I have a reputation to maintain," a Bixby teacher who was arrested for misdemeanor drunk driving said. "It's embarrassing for the district."

Districts tend to find out about run-ins involving teachers and support personnel from media reports or anonymous tips.

"We rely on newspapers to find out," Okmulgee Superintendent Bill Wilson said.

Of the three dozen school districts surveyed by the Tulsa World, Broken Arrow in northeastern Oklahoma and Mid-Del and Choctaw-Nicoma Park in central Oklahoma were the only districts with some type of notification policy.

The Mid-Del district outside Oklahoma City requires employees to notify the district "immediately" if they are placed under arrest or an arrest is pending.

The Choctaw-Nicoma Park district, also near Oklahoma City, has a similar policy.

Bus drivers for Tulsa Public Schools are screened for sanctions and points against the driving records during

mid-year background checks with the Department of Public Safety.

Broken Arrow's notification policy only refers to individuals convicted of felony drug charges.

"We don't recheck everyone, because the cost would be extremely expensive for us to do that," Broken Arrow Superintendent Jerry Hill said.

"The clause is in there in order to place the burden on the employee to know that if they get into legal trouble and have a conviction that they are obligated to inform us."

When asked if they think employees have a moral obligation to tell of their arrests, school officials had varied opinions.

"I do," Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent John Thompson said.

But Union Public Schools Superintendent Cathy Burden said she felt that the issue was not so clear.

"I'm afraid it's a gray area that is not so easy to say absolutely yes and absolutely no," Burden said.

"I think they've got a right to some protection as citizens when it's not related to their job. But when it's related, I think we have the right to know that."

Allen, a custodian, worked for Tulsa Public Schools with a felony DUI

Otherwise, Ballard has found out

conviction for more than a year before he resigned.

He was convicted of felony DUI in June 1996. His probation officer eventually contacted school officials, alerting them to the crime, and they told Allen that they intended to begin termination proceedings, Pounds said.

Allen resigned in August 1997.

"In a way, I do wish they would've kept me," Allen, 42, said. "But if it's a state law, then you can't do nothing about it."

As part of his sentence for the 1996 conviction, Allen spent weekends in jail so that he could retain his job.

Paul M. Harjo, an Indian education tutor in Sand Springs, never told the district about the felony DUI conviction he received in June 1993.

Harjo, 43, has worked for Sand Springs schools since 1990 tutoring American Indian students.

"I didn't mention it to the district," he said. "I would probably lose my job over this. I felt it was confidential. I did my time and successfully completed the probation."

But Sand Springs Superintendent George Paden said Harjo should have notified the district when he was arrested because of the nature of his employment. about employees' histories "when

"If he were with a bank or the Williams company, probably not. But in a school setting," he should have done so, Paden said.

Employees who are up-front with districts about past or pending criminal actions are the exception, not the rule.

Glynda L. Ragsdale was arrested in March 1996 on felony charges of possession of controlled drugs and misdemeanor charges of possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

She pleaded guilty to the charges and received a deferred sentence until October 1999.

A year later, Ragsdale applied for a custodian position with Claremore Public Schools and was hired three days later.

Superintendent Keith Ballard said Ragsdale told him of her arrest and charges.

"She was up-front about it," Ballard said. "We ran a check before we hired her and found the incident related more to her ex-husband. She is a good employee."

Ballard said Ragsdale, who did not return phone calls from the World, is the only employee who has been up-front with him about a criminal history.

reading the newspaper."■

47. Newsday

January 26, 1998

Trouble for Teacher / Talked with class about being gay, says Sunnyside school official.

By Sarah Kershaw. STAFF WRITER; Mohamad Bazzi contributed to this story.

An openly gay Queens elementary school teacher and visible gay-rights activist has been accused by a local school official of violating educational policy by discussing his sexuality with his fourth-grade students. For the second time in his 14-year tenure at PS 199 in Sunnyside, the teacher, Daniel Dromm, is battling an ultra-conservative school board member, Frank Borzellieri, over what the teacher can say in class about his sexual orientation. Calling Dromm "the hysterical homosexual," Borzellieri is demanding that the superintendent of Community School District 24, Joseph Quinn, take disciplinary action against the teacher. Quinn did not return calls yesterday. But in a Jan. 16 memo to Borzellieri, Quinn said the Board of Education had investigated and found "nothing of substance." Board of

Education officials could not confirm yesterday whether such an investigation took place and said they expected the issue to be resolved by officials in the local district. Visibly shaken, Dromm, 42, of Flushing, said that he is honest with his students about being gay but does not discuss the issue in class. "This is one of my greatest fears," he said of the accusations. "I don't know what they're going to do. I don't put anything past them." In 1993, Dromm was disciplined by the PS 199 principal for "outing himself" to students, after Borzellieri and another conservative school board member, Mary Cummins, accused him of inappropriate behavior. Dromm was told by the principal, Jack Birbiglia, now retired, not to "pursue" or "elaborate on" the subject of his sexual orientation in class and he complied, he said. Dromm came out publicly in 1992 in a Newsday article, during a furor in the school

district over the Rainbow curriculum, which covered homosexuality. The controversy, which engulfed the school system in 1993, ultimately led to the ouster of Schools Chancellor Joseph Fernandez. The latest conflict between Dromm and Borzellieri began in the fall, when Dromm wrote a letter to a local Queens newspaper stating that he is open about his homosexuality with his students. Borzellieri, who lives in Ridgewood, demanded that Quinn investigate. "It's just so inappropriate for a teacher to be discussing his perversions with 10-year-olds," he said. Borzellieri contends that Dromm is flouting a district policy barring him from discussing his homosexuality with students. The 1987 School Board 24 resolution bars classroom discussion of homosexuality, birth control, masturbation and abortion, officials said. Dromm said he was unaware that there was an investigation

into his conduct and was never contacted or interviewed. He said he believes Borzellieri has little support, and Borzellieri acknowledged that he has no backing from other school board members. Dromm, a highly visible gay-rights activist who founded the Queens Gay Pride Committee, said it is

impossible to conceal his sexual orientation from his students. "If a child asks about my sexuality, I answer honestly," he said, but he added that he does not discuss the issue with students. Shirley Stergiou, whose daughter is in Dromm's class, called him an "excellent teacher" and said her daughter does not

know that Dromm is gay. "I am not aware that he has done any coming out in class," said Stergiou, co-president of the school PTA. "This is a political war that has nothing to do with what's going on inside the classroom."■

48. St. Petersburg Times

January 26, 1998

Fine line between diploma, dropout

By STEPHEN HEGARTY

By most standards, the graduation picture in the state of Florida has been rosy in recent years.

The dropout rate, after welcome decreases a few years ago, is holding steady. The class of '97 was the largest graduating class in state history. Clearly, students are staying in school and graduating.

But more and more of those graduates are leaving school with something less than the standard diploma. Last year

Though few educators have noticed the phenomenon, a recent report out of the Florida Department of Education points to its significance. Students who graduated last year represent the first wave of a baby boom that began in 1979, and trends that affect that group might be magnified over the next several years.

Also, the gap between standard diplomas and certificates of completion is wider for minority students around the state, creating another troubling disparity between black and white students. In some districts, one out of every 10 black graduates is leaving school with a certificate of completion that limits options after graduation.

Educators are not quite sure why this is happening.

The DOE report offers a couple of theories.

"The decline in the overall percentage of seniors who complete high school with a standard diploma appears to be influenced by two simultaneous shifts in trends — the changing profile of Florida's high school students and rising academic standards," the report's conclusion reads.

"As these trends continue into the next decade, we may very well see a gradual downward shift in the proportion of students completing high school and in the proportion receiving standard diplomas. . . ."

The theory about increased academic

more graduates than ever got a certificate of completion — a sheet of paper that means they got through high school, but did not achieve all that was expected.

That certificate — a sort of Diploma Lite — leaves graduates with few options after high school. Unlike a standard diploma, the certificate of completion won't get you into a community college, much less a university. It won't get you into the military.

"It separates you from a dropout, but standards may soon become more of a factor, as the state soon will require a 2.0 grade point average for graduation. In most districts, that will affect graduates two or three years from now.

The demographic shifts also are expected to become more of a factor. The percentage and number of black graduates have steadily increased in the last 20 years. But, while the percentage of white graduates getting standard diplomas is at its highest point since 1983 at 98.5 percent, the percentage of black graduates getting standard diplomas (88.6 percent) is at the lowest point recorded.

But what caused the downward shift in the last six years? The percentage of graduates leaving school with a standard diploma went from 98 percent in 1990-91 to 94 percent in 1996-97.

"These might be students who would have dropped out before," said David Mosrie, director of the Division of Public Schools for the Florida Department of Education. "You know we've had a real push to keep students in school. It could be that they're not dropping out, but they're also not doing everything they need to do."

It also is possible that more special education students are getting certificates of completion, rather than settling for a special diploma — a non-standard diploma reserved for special education students.

that's about it," said Ken Otero, director of secondary schools in Hillsborough County. "We don't really even look at that as an option."

The number and percentage of students getting non-standard diplomas remain relatively low — only a few thousand statewide last year. But both the number and percentage are increasing sharply. They doubled last year, and they're expected to keep increasing.

Perhaps the most likely cause would be students' failure on the High School Competency Test — the basic skills test students must pass to get a standard diploma. So long as a student collects the necessary credits, the HSCT is the only thing preventing him or her from getting a standard diploma.

Students take the HSCT in their junior year, and if they don't pass it, they can take it again, and again. Even if they haven't passed the HSCT at the end of their senior year, students can retake it.

"There's a remediation program during summer school," said Susan Bailey, director of high school education for the Pinellas County schools, which has one of the higher percentages of standard diplomas in the state. "There's also an option of coming back for a 13th year. You remain in school full time or part time. Most students don't do that."

Despite those efforts, the failure rate for first-time takers of the HSCT increased last year when the passing score was raised.

With the emergence of new state tests that are expected to generate headlines in the coming months, districts will have to work to stay focused on boosting HSCT scores. Many districts are hopeful that increased standards will help students excel on the test, rather than leave them behind.■

49. Richmond Times-Dispatch

January 24, 1998

U.Va. board discusses tailgating, students' drinking

BY CARLOS SANTOS
Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

CHARLOTTESVILLE — Like most of the nation's universities, the University of Virginia is struggling with binge drinking by its students, a dangerous recreation that seems to be increasing, the U.Va. board of visitors heard yesterday.

Though banning alcohol at the university seems unlikely, there was a brief discussion at the meeting about prohibiting alcohol at the traditional "tailgate parties" at university football games.

Five students in Virginia have died recently from alcohol-related incidents, including 21-year-old Leslie Anne Baltz of Reston. The U.Va. student died after falling down some steps after drinking heavily.

The statistics the board heard —

Turner also found that of the five cases of meningitis at the university during the past 2-1/2 years, four were associated with binge drinking. Turner said studies have shown binge drinking increases the chances of contracting the potentially fatal infection.

Turner said "tailgating" at football games sends a message to students and others that drinking alcohol is acceptable. "Children model our behavior," he said.

But officials said they would review what goes on at tailgate parties and came to no decision on whether to ban alcohol, said William Harmon, vice president for student affairs.

"But we have to look at more than just

gathered from annual surveys at U.Va. — were grim:

since the 1990-91 academic year, 17 U.Va. students have died from alcohol-related injuries or illness;

on a typical weekend, the U.Va. Hospital emergency room will treat up to 10 students with a variety of alcohol-related problems;

as many as 50 percent of U.Va. students have participated in binge drinking in a two- to three-week period; and

up to 80 percent of students had reported drinking alcohol in the preceding month.

Dr. Jim Turner, the director of student health, said he believed binge drinking — five or more alcoholic drinks in one sitting for a male and four drinks in the same period for a female — has risen the students. We have to look at the culture," he said. "What happens at tailgating is drinking."

The university responded to Baltz's death by calling for a task force that would look at the culture of drinking at U.Va. and at its policies and enforcement. About 70 percent of the students at U.Va. with alcohol-related injuries are younger than 21, the legal drinking age.

Student board member Kristine L. LaLonde questioned the impact of a task force and called for more direct, timely action. "We need to teach them how to care for a friend who has had too much to drink . . . to let them know this can

steadily during the past 10 years, though he couldn't explain why.

Turner described to the board a typical emergency-room case that occurred last fall at U.Va.:

An 18-year old student, at a football game, drank a half-pint of vodka and one pint of bourbon. His friends left him outside on the parking lot where he was found and taken to the emergency room. His blood-alcohol level was .310. He recovered.

"That's a typical scenario that happens every weekend," said Turner.

"The level of intensity has gone up," said Turner, who added that the problem is not unique to U.Va., which he described as having an average drinking problem. "But average is something we don't want to aspire to."

happen to you."

She said incidents such as Baltz's death have an impact on students only for a short time.

Board member Franklin Birkhead urged caution in the university taking responsibility for student behavior. "It's the individual student's responsibility to monitor their own behavior," he said.

Leonard Sandridge, executive vice president and chief financial officer at U.Va., said, "There is clearly use of alcohol by our students when it's not allowed — such as in the dormitories. We have not reached them. . . . We've not been effective in dealing with that." ■

50. Miami Herald

January 26, 1998

A test of standards

State exam to measure reading, math skills

By SABRINA WALTERS
Herald Staff Writer

Students, grab a No. 2 pencil — it's test-taking time.

Miami-Dade County public school students are among about a half-million statewide required this week to take a tough new state exam that will gauge their achievement in reading and mathematics.

The Florida Comprehensive

Assessment Test (called FCAT) will determine how many students are meeting Sunshine State Standards, requirements adopted two years ago in an effort to raise academic expectations of students across the state.

The exam will be administered to students in grades 4, 5, 8 and 10.

The younger students will take the exam on Tuesday and Wednesday. Eighth-graders will be tested over four

days beginning Feb. 2. Tenth-graders will take the test Feb. 3 and 4.

"They have been given practice tests and they had an orientation, so they will have had most of the month to prepare," said Laura Melvin, assessment coordinator for the district.

Test results will be mailed to parents in May.

Introduced last spring as a 1,200-question practice exam, the FCAT

was criticized by some educators who said it took too long for students to complete and added to their already heavy workload — just another exam among many state and national tests.

More than six standardized tests will be given during the 1997-98 school year in Dade.

State Education Commissioner Frank Brogan said he intends to replace some of the those other exams with the FCAT.

For example, 10th-graders who perform well on the FCAT could be excused from the High School Competency Test (HSCT), currently a requirement for graduation.

And FCAT scores would be used to determine a student's qualification for scholarships now based solely on scores from the Scholastic Assessment Test and American College Testing Program college entrance exams.

For instance, eighth-graders should be able to respond critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama. They should understand character and plot development, and how point of view and tone are used in various sections to support a central story line.

In math, eighth-graders should be able to use geometry to locate objects in two and three dimensions and to describe objects algebraically.

And unlike the Stanford Achievement

"The biggest benefit is that we're raising the bar academically, and we will be certain that a diploma in Florida will represent real knowledge that prepares students to succeed in the work world, at a community college, a university, or vocational program," said Brewster Brown, spokesman for the state Department of Education.

A challenging test

State officials last week warned parents and teachers that first-year test scores may be low.

The FCAT was designed to be challenging.

While other exams present only multiple-choice questions, leaving room for guessing, the FCAT includes a combination of multiple-choice and grid response questions.

In the grid questions, students must solve a problem and indicate the answer Test and other standardized tests, the FCAT is not graded on a curve. Results will not be compared to other students here or nationally.

Right answers only

Students taking the exam this year will only find out how many questions they answered right and wrong, and not their standing.

A ranking system is to be developed over the summer.

State officials said they expect to use a

by filling in a bubbled grid.

In the math portion, students are required to show their work.

For reading, students are required to write extended answers to the passages they have been asked to read.

When the state adopted a set of standards for Florida students in 1996, part of the requirements called for a standard exam.

"The State Board of Education and the governor are leaning toward more rigorous proficiency levels," Brown said.

The standards

The Sunshine State Standards identify expected student progress after 2nd, 5th, 8th and 12th grades. The standards cover language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education and foreign languages.

The FCAT, however, tests only reading and math.

scale that ranks students on three levels — above proficient, proficient and below proficiency.

All public school students must take the FCAT twice in elementary school — the reading portion in fourth grade and mathematics in fifth. They'll take more advanced versions, testing both their math and reading capabilities, in 8th and 10th grades. ■

51. Atlanta Journal-Constitution

January 26, 1998

School boards eyeing sales tax again

By Diane R. Stepp
the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Cobb and Marietta school systems are coping with overcrowded schools and new subdivisions bringing even more children to their doors — and no way to cope except for trailers.

The obvious solution is more money for new schools and repairs to existing ones.

Last spring, the two school systems joined up to push for a penny sales tax that would have generated \$653 million over five years. It was soundly defeated, and both systems promised to remain allies for another try this year.

Yet halfway into the school year, no solid plan is on the table, leaving Marietta — the smaller partner — wondering whether to go it alone.

The building pressure first became apparent late last year, when Marietta School Superintendent Ron Galloway

said he was considering recommending a March bond referendum that could later be repaid with sales tax dollars. He has since backed off the idea, but several school board members say a separate bond referendum is still an option.

But last week, Galloway again stirred the pot by saying he may ask for a larger cut of the sales tax revenues than the 7 percent the school district settled for in the first alliance.

"That is an option," said Galloway. The two boards scrambled to smooth over any friction in a rare joint statement issued by the chairmen of both school boards saying the two bodies expect to continue working together.

Marietta is in an awkward position. According to state law, the city and the county must agree on a spending proposal before putting a joint sales tax issue before voters.

But Cobb County has yet to draft its

side of the spending proposal, and will miss its own deadline by two months. The county is anxious that spending recommendations come from the grass roots rather than top down, one criticism that anti-tax activists successfully used to help defeat the school sales tax referendum in June.

The long-awaited report from a citizens panel on school facility needs is now expected in late February.

But even if the county isn't politically ready, Galloway has asked for a meeting on Thursday between the officers of the Cobb and Marietta school boards to get the spending proposal in shape. Marietta also wants to know how Cobb proposes getting the word out "to all four corners of the county," said board member Annette Lewis. "We can't afford to fail."

While no absolute deadline exists, school officials need to hit parents hard with an educational campaign before

schools let out in June.

"Time is of the essence," said Marietta school board member Clay Smith.

School construction plans for both systems abruptly ground to a halt last June, when the penny sales tax failed. It was the first time voters had said no to building new schools in either system, despite the reality of more than 400 trailer classrooms.

Marietta's school system now serves 7,000 students; Cobb County's serves 88,000. Combined, the two are expecting a 10 percent increase of as many as 5,700 students during the next two years — equal to 170 more trailers.

Marietta school officials' push for an early start to this year's campaign is clear: It will be an even harder sell now, because the county intends to put its own initiative on the November ballot, a

Ploener said he has seen "a tremendous amount of improvement" in

30-month extension of a 1-cent sales tax for roads.

A penny for schools combined with the road tax extension would put Cobb's sales tax at 6 cents.

"It will be a very tough sell when you're talking about raising the sales tax by a 50 percent increase — which is what it would be if the road tax sunsets. It depends almost completely on how effective the two forces are at articulating a compelling need and convincing voters how will the money will be spent," said Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster who's done research in Cobb.

Dillon said he plans to educate voters to the school district's capital needs

using radio, television and print advertising, direct mail, door to door calls in neighborhoods and rounds of speech making to local civic the new board's fiscal responsibility, but adds that he would like to see property

organizations. Rep. Mitchell Kaye (R-Marietta), a member of the House Education committee, said the school systems stand a better chance of passage if, like the county, they put a 2 1/2-year limit on the sales tax instead of the maximum five.

"There are a lot of options, a lot of things to think about," said Cobb Superintendent Richard Benjamin, who is saying little about which direction the school system will go.

One worry is Cobb tax watchdog Paul Ploener, who led a successful effort in June to defeat the school districts' plan.

"They just saw a big pot of money and figured out how to spend it all," said Ploener, who heads a group called Concerned Taxpayers in Cobb County.

tax relief of 3.8 mills as part of any new spending proposal. ■

52. Atlanta Journal-Constitution

January 26, 1998

Parents go back to school for kids' sake

By Leon Stafford
the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

When Hazel Bryant tells parents that the best way to get involved in their children's education is to get back into the classroom themselves, she knows what she's talking about.

Bryant enrolled last fall in Parent University, a south Fulton County program designed to teach moms, dads and everyday citizens how to better help schools educate children. On Saturday, she graduated from the school, walking down the aisle of Banneker High School as the program's first valedictorian.

"I'm so excited," said Bryant, the president of the PTA at S.L. Lewis Elementary School in College Park. She was joined on stage by her daughters,

Alexis, 11, and Raquel, 9, as she welcomed about 200 families, friends and neighbors of the 87 graduates to the ceremonies.

The university, the brainchild of the Wraparound Collaboration, a south Fulton community organization, offered parents about 20 classes to help them better understand the educational needs of their children, said Bill Edwards, Wraparound chairman. Classes were held on Saturdays in subjects such computers, leadership skills, dealing with children and drugs and understanding how a school system works.

Parent University is one of several initiatives that Wraparound Collaboration uses to encourage parental involvement and keep children in school.

Participants included people who do not have children, Fulton County school board members and even a principal.

Organizers challenged people to recruit parents who were not there but would benefit from the university.

"There are a lot of parents out there, and we need to bring them into this group," said Fulton Superintendent Stephen D. Dolinger.

Jacqueline Landers used the program to learn how to use computers. She's planning to buy one, now that she feels comfortable using them.

"My kids at home won't teach me about computers, so I had to learn it on my own," said Landers of Hapeville. ■

53. Atlanta Journal-Constitution

January 26, 1998

Making the grade: Sports eligibility may get tougher

By Rick Badie and Leon Stafford
the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

In a move that could restrict thousands of students, the public school systems in Fulton and Rockdale counties are considering increasing to 2.0 the minimum grade-point average required for participation in athletics and other

competitive activities.

The tougher standard would affect virtually every segment of interscholastic life in high schools — from football to debate to band to ROTC weapons teams to cheerleading.

Rockdale's proposal would eliminate campus driving privileges for students

who don't maintain a 2.0 average.

Rockdale has a 1.0 GPA requirement while Fulton mandates a 70 average. About one-third of all students participating in competitive activities in Fulton County schools have a GPA below 2.0; about 10 percent fall below that threshold in Rockdale.

"To me, what better way to be on the leading edge of an issue than to raise academic standards," said Tony Wilson, a member of the Rockdale school board, which will explain details of its proposal Tuesday in a special meeting. Fulton board members are fine-tuning their measure, which will be debated in the coming months.

If approved, the new 2.0 standard would go beyond the controversial "no pass, no play" rule set by the Georgia High School Association that says students must pass five classes and maintain at least a 70 average in the previous grading period to participate in

interscholastic competition.

School districts can set higher standards if they want to, and Fulton and Rockdale are the first in metro Atlanta to consider raising the bar to 2.0 — a move which could generate a debate as emotional as the one sparked by "no pass, no play" in 1987.

Some critics of the proposals argue that one group of students should not be held to a higher standard, that current standards are tough enough, and that stricter ones will only discourage academically weak students who go to school for extracurricular activities.

"If you have the talent, I think you

should be able to show your talent," said Jessica Potts, 16, a 10th grader at Heritage High School in Rockdale County. She wanted to join the school soccer team last year, but was turned away because she didn't have the grades.

Some parents and coaches don't think one group of students should be held to a higher standard than the rest of the population. They want board members to understand "there is a fine line between raising standards and discouraging students from staying in school," Fulton school board President Karen Weaver said. "If it's done, it will have to be done gradually."■

54. Boston Globe

January 26, 1998

Umbrella group pitches to decentralize education

By Jordana Hart, Globe Staff

A wide-ranging coalition of local Libertarians, fundamentalist Christians, home schoolers, and even some liberal education-reform advocates are starting a chapter of the Separation of School and State Alliance, a national organization that wants federal and state governments out of education, the group's chairman said yesterday.

"We must get rid of government-run education," said author Samuel Blumenfeld of Waltham, a one-time substitute teacher in Quincy who has an honorary doctoral degree from Bob Jones University, a fundamentalist Christian college in South Carolina. "We must get back to the educational freedom of the 1850s and 1860s. We object to the centralized system ruled top down."

The Massachusetts Eagle Forum, a chapter of the national group led by conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, met in the State House Saturday to lay the foundation for its anti-public education alliance.

"We want to give the rights of parent back to parents," said Nancy O'Toole of Cohasset, president of the local Eagle Forum chapter. "Schools are not teaching academics, but skills simply so people can be put to work."

State Education Commissioner Robert V. Antonucci said last night that he hadn't heard of the alliance.

"I am all for parent involvement, but if the group is strictly one to generate a sensational approach with no motive to help schools, then I get concerned," he said.

O'Toole said state Senator Robert L. Hedlund, a Weymouth Republican, arranged for the Eagle Forum to hold its meeting in Senate Hearing Room 222 for four hours. Yesterday, Hedlund said he has arranged for various groups to meet at the State House and was not linked to, or even aware, of Saturday's agenda.

"It is the people's building. Anyone can meet there," Hedlund said.

Government "is the root where it all started, so where better to meet" than the State House, said O'Toole.

State Representative Mary Jeannette Murray, a Republican from Cohasset, said she attended part of the meeting as a friend of O'Toole, who was her legislative aide for 11 years. "There was some information that I thought was good," but some of the discussion seemed extreme, she said.

At the meeting, dubbed Boston Tea Party II, a Sharon parent who has a special-needs child and a Waltham parent

who home-schools her two children described how their respective school districts labeled them unfit and neglectful parents and tried to get the courts to grant the state custody of their children.

The case against the Sharon mother was dropped Dec. 18, while the Waltham family has its next court date on Feb. 21.

"We were able to discuss our horrible experiences where schools have attacked our parental rights," said the Sharon parent, Lise Rubin, editor of the local newspaper.

Acknowledging that the group comprises unusual political bedfellows, Rubin said the concerns she shares with many parents about "being cut off, put down and ignored" by teachers, school administrators and government officials "will make for some pretty unusual coalitions."

The Separation of School and State Alliance was formed in January 1994 in Fresno, Calif., by Marshall Fritz, a former IBM salesman and failed Libertarian congressional candidate who had just disbanded his Pioneer Christian Academy. He said in November that his group has grown to 3,500 members of many denominations and political views.■

55. Asbury Park Press

January 26, 1998

Education policy reflects realities

By BRIAN KLADKO
EDUCATION WRITER

MOST HOMEOWNERS can't say how much money their local school

district received from the state in this school year. But they probably know how much they're paying in school taxes.

Similarly, most parents are likely

oblivious to the state's new requirements in science, social studies, mathematics and four other subjects. But they know what time their children must be at

school, when their children get home, and who oversees the building during that time.

Outside the Statehouse, education rarely inspires talk about funding formulas and academic standards. Instead, people think of tax bills, school schedules and the people in charge of their children.

As she begins a second term, Gov. Whitman seems to be responding to this reality. Though her education agenda during the past four years was focused on abstract policies, the goals she outlined in

For that reason, they say, they need to keep tenure. Without job protection, they assert, few principals could do their jobs responsibly.

Whitman, however, wants more accountability from the middle managers of New Jersey's educational system. She called for unspecified changes to the protection principals now have, perhaps going so far as eliminating tenure for principals altogether.

The state stopped giving tenure to superintendents in 1991, and all superintendents hired since then work on a contract basis. Principals are hoping to escape that fate by pushing for a compromise: streamlining of the legal procedures for removing principals.

But they don't want to give up lifetime job protection, or as they call it, "due process." Though they acknowledge that most middle managers don't enjoy such security, they note that most middle managers don't have to worry about the whims of elected officials.

Ed Alster, the principal of Holmdel High School, is convinced he could not have lasted 12 years without tenure. Whenever he disciplines a student, denies someone's entrance into an honors course or forbids a particular type of fund-raiser, Alster says he creates another enemy. And in the world of public education, enemies often take their gripes to the school board.

Though Alster understands the need for accountability, he says board members in many towns — he is quick to exclude Holmdel — don't understand how school districts operate.

"I'm not sure they understand the complexities," he said.

School choice

When she first ran for governor in 1993, Whitman suggested that low-income students should get publicly funded vouchers for private school tuition. Although that concept was considered too radical by legislators, state leaders agreed on a concept called

this month's State of the State address were grounded in people's experiences with schools.

The topics speak to every parent who ever had a bad experience with a school official or longed to send their child to another district. They speak to anyone who ever decided that voting for school board members was too much of a hassle, or wondered why a district with 200 students exists. They speak to anyone who thinks students need to spend more time at school.

The proposals may not appear so bold "charter schools" — publicly funded schools that operate independently of local school districts.

In September, 13 such schools opened, giving some families a free alternative to their local district. Now Whitman wants to give parents another alternative — letting students attend public schools outside their own towns without paying tuition. She hopes to see one such experiment in each county starting in September 1999.

The magnitude of the proposal remains unclear. Will the state give school officials the power to block an exodus of students to some other district? What kind of incentive, if any, would districts have to accept out-of-town students?

School officials, especially those in struggling districts, are particularly wary of school choice. A troubled school system would be most likely to lose large numbers of students, and each student's departure would reduce its annual allotment of state funds.

School officials also wonder if the lowering of barriers could lead athletic directors to raid other districts for promising athletes.

But rapidly growing districts, including several in Monmouth and Ocean counties, might actually welcome the opportunity. In Jackson Township, where 800 students must be educated in trailers, Superintendent Edward R. Elms thinks school choice might help ease the overcrowding.

"People are beginning to feel the crowdedness at this point," Elms said. "Whether it's gotten to the point that they want out, that's another story."

Other states have allowed interdistrict choice already, and found that only a small percentage of families take advantage of it, said James Murphy, spokesman for the state's school administrators. The main reason for crossing district lines, he said, is convenience: Parents want their children

on close inspection. The governor isn't pushing for district consolidation — just a public discussion of the issue. She isn't calling for statewide school choice — just a few experiments here and there.

But Whitman seems determined to remind the public that education, while primarily a local function, is also a state responsibility.

Tenured principals

The way principals describe it, their jobs are a virtual minefield. They are constantly alienating students, parents, and occasionally, school board members. to attend a school near their workplace.

Merging school districts

Gov. Whitman, citing the public's frustration with property taxes, wants the power to force certain districts to merge. But she won't do it until the people give her that power.

The governor wants to hold a referendum, asking voters to decide if state government should have the power to force districts to consolidate — provided the merger will lead to lower taxes and won't sacrifice educational quality.

If the decision remains in the hands of local districts, history shows it won't happen. In recent years, only two mergers have taken place.

It's not just the obvious desire of officials and parents to keep control as local as possible. Regionalization can have the perverse effect of increasing the tax burden for residents in certain towns — usually wealthier towns — even as it lowers the overall cost per student.

In addition, the savings from school district consolidation may not be as dramatic as Whitman suggested.

Though New Jersey's multitude of districts contributes to its high administrative costs, the bulk of education dollars goes toward teacher salaries — an item largely unaffected by changes in school district size. And when two districts merge, the newly created entity usually pays teachers at the higher of the two pay scales.

A 1995 study by Rutgers University Professor Ernest C. Reock estimated that the savings from regionalization would amount to about 2 percent of that year's total school spending.

When the school population declines, larger districts will have an easier time cutting positions — and thus saving money — than small districts, Reock said. But the school population is growing, and will continue to do so for at least another decade.

November elections

Every year, a small portion of the population decides the size of the coming year's school tax bill and the makeup of local school boards.

Voter turnout for school elections, usually held on the second Tuesday in April, has varied between 10 percent and 18 percent over the last decade. The turnout for November general elections — in which voters choose candidates for federal, state, county and municipal offices — Leo F. Klagholz, the state's

The state's education establishment, including school board members and the state's largest teachers' union, contend that November school votes would allow partisan politics to intrude on educational issues. What they don't say — but probably fear — is that larger numbers of voters would mean more frequent rejections of school tax levies.

More time in school

The governor's words seemed clear enough: "I am asking the state Board of Education to increase the minimum length of instructional time in a school day in New Jersey to at least six hours."

But she didn't really mean that.

In the days following her speech,

education commissioner, believes the meager participation in school votes allows a well-organized minority to determine the outcome. He doesn't mention teachers in particular, but teachers, who favor increased school spending, definitely fit that description.

Three years ago, when he unveiled his proposal for a new school-funding formula, Klagholz suggested moving the elections to November to increase participation. The idea was dropped. Whitman administration officials said the governor will actually ask the board to increase the minimum school day. And there is a substantial difference, thanks to homeroom, lunch and time between classes.

While the average amount of instructional time is about 5 1/2 hours, the average length of the school day is about 6 1/2 hours — comfortably above Whitman's proposed minimum.

Only 51 of the state's 2,169 schools — about 2 percent — reported a school day of less than six hours in 1995-96. One area school that fell below the mark that year is Keansburg High School; to meet Whitman's standard, the day would

during negotiations with legislators, but Whitman — who didn't vote in her local school elections before becoming governor — has decided to raise the issue again, calling the current practice "undemocratic."

"After all, the largest part of the property tax bill shouldn't be decided by the smallest part of the electorate," she said.

have to be lengthened by a mere 12 minutes.

Klagholz, the state's education commissioner, plans to propose additional regulations to maximize the amount of time that students actually spend in class. He would not say last week what measures he had in mind.

But Klagholz was clear on one point: Even though any lengthening of the school day would be met with teachers' demands for more pay, the state won't be providing any extra money.

"State standards are one thing and local compensation is another thing, and the two are not related," he said. ■

56. Boston Globe

January 26, 1998

Cellucci seeks \$8m for after-school effort

Budget proposal aims to head off an expected surge in juvenile crime

By Geeta Anand, Globe Staff

Taking a preemptive strike at the predicted rise in juvenile crime during the next decade, Acting Governor Paul Cellucci will unveil an \$8 million initiative tomorrow that would create comprehensive after-school programs in 15 of the state's most troubled neighborhoods.

Administration officials say the state intends to form partnerships with municipalities and community groups to offer health care and structured programs after school to children aged 5 through 9 who are at risk of becoming juvenile delinquents. There is a rise in the population of children in this age group, and criminologists fear state and nationwide surges in crime when the children reach their teenage years.

"This demonstrates real insight into how political leadership can begin to effectively plan for the demographic bulge expected to surface in urban centers," said the Rev. Eugene F. Rivers, a leader of the Ten Point Coalition, a Boston group trying to reduce youth violence. "Community groups and church

groups will actively participate."

Tomorrow, Cellucci will include the after-school initiative — and a proposal to boost spending on day-care programs — in his budget proposal, which will require legislative approval. The proposals appear aimed at honing an image as an education governor and disarming Democratic opponents who contend the Weld-Cellucci administration ignored those issues.

Cellucci has already pledged to add 4,000 teachers to the state's schools. As a Republican governor trying to win election in a Democratic state, Cellucci, according to political strategists, needs to demonstrate a commitment to issues beyond crime, welfare, and taxes, which former governor William F. Weld used unsuccessfully in his US Senate run.

"This fits right in with his emphasis on education in the State of the State address," observed Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, who has cast himself as the education mayor. "It shows that the governor understands that education doesn't just happen in the classroom. It happens before and after

school."

Because most juvenile crime occurs between 2 and 6 p.m., when most young delinquents have little or no adult supervision, criminal justice specialists have advocated after-school programs. Those specialists, as well as local activists and politicians, praised the Cellucci initiative.

"It's far better and easier to build healthy children rather than rebuild adults," said James Alan Fox, dean of the College of Criminal Justice at Northeastern University.

The number of 14- to 17-year-olds in Massachusetts in the year 2005 will be 20 percent higher than in 1995, according to Fox, who conducted a nationwide study for the US Department of Justice. Fox predicts a rise in juvenile crime to accompany the juvenile population bulge unless strong measures are taken immediately.

Menino said he was pleased the state is seeking a partnership with local efforts already under way. Boston has seen strong cooperation among police, probation officers, and community

leaders, and the teamwork is credited with substantially reducing the city's crime rate.

Indeed, the Cellucci initiative appears to have plenty of company. Menino said earlier this month that he is putting \$5 million over the next four years to after-school programs. And US Senator Edward M. Kennedy is expected today to

Administration officials envision the programs being run out of neighborhood schools and loosely coordinated with teachers, other local educators, and courts. In Boston, where part of the program will probably be instituted, Menino has already pledged to keep

announce he is filing legislation seeking federal funding for after-school programs.

Sources say the Cellucci program would require a partnership between two state departments: \$3 million from the Department of Health and Human Services, and \$5 million from the **Department of Education**.

schools open in the evenings for programming.

However, aides to the acting governor say the 15 neighborhoods to be targeted in the Cellucci program have yet to be selected.

Cellucci is not the only gubernatorial

What is unusual about the program is the administration's plan to target the money at 15 of the state's most distressed neighborhoods rather than sprinkle it around. Human services officials in the Cellucci administration believe the money will have the highest impact that way.

candidate to address the expected rise in juvenile crime. Attorney General Scott Harshbarger commissioned and released a study last year urging the state to prepare for it.■

57. Boston Globe

January 26, 1998

HOME ECONOMICS: PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Cramming for financial aid

Advisers: It's never too soon to study ways to put kids through school

By Mary Sit, Globe Correspondent

Almost as soon as their baby Nicholas was born 21 months ago, Michele Ciurea, a 34-year-old research economist, and her math professor husband, Christopher King, 39, began worrying about how to pay for their son's college education.

Should they move from their Somerville neighborhood to a pricier one with better schools, or stay where they are and enroll their son in a private elementary school - and which alternative would net more savings for college in later years?

Finally, the worrying prompted the couple to seek professional advice.

"The main thing we've done is worry," confesses Ciurea. "We've gone to a financial planner and through him we're taking a global approach to financial planning rather than the piecemeal approach we had before. We've basically allocated our investments according to our investment profile, which is more aggressive than it was before. But we haven't set aside money specifically for education - although we plan in the next few weeks to open up a Roth IRA and an educational IRA."

Ciurea and King have reason to worry. These days the average cost of a college degree is about \$70,000 at a private university and \$25,000 at a public school. And at the current rate of increase, costs are expected to double by the year 2015, says the Council for Aid to Education.

At most colleges, tuition outpaces

inflation, with tuition and fees rising 3 to 5 percent each year. Compare that with the 2.5 percent increase over the past year of the consumer price index, the government's measuring stick for inflation.

Massachusetts state colleges, however, have reversed the trend and decrease tuition by 5 percent each year for the past five years, says Judy Keyes, director of student financial assistance at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell.

If you are starting to panic over how to pay for your child's college education, there are steps you can take to help manage the cost. Here are some suggestions from financial planners and university officials.

Set a goal.

Many parents wake up when their kids are teen-agers and suddenly realize college expenses are looming ahead. If they don't have savings, parents will end up spending \$1,000 a month as their kids go through college. "You must decide: Am I going to prepare to send my children to Yale and Harvard? A state university, junior college, or trade school?" says Ralph Schroeder, managing principal of Schroeder and Associates, a division of American Express Financial Advisors Inc.

Determine where you are financially and how much you can save monthly, and calculate how much you'll need to save. Be sure to use the rising costs of college, not the current inflation factor.

Open a custodial account.

This is the simplest way to save money for college. You can contribute up to \$10,000 a year into a custodial account and put it in mutual funds, bank accounts, or stocks. Parents control the account until the child is age 18.

Nancy Walser, author of "The Parent's Guide to Cambridge Schools" (Huron Village Press), says she and her husband have started a mutual fund earmarked for education for each of their children - a 4-year-old son and 5 1/2-year-old daughter.

"Our accountant was telling us we need to sock away \$7,000 a year for each year for each child if we want them to go to a private university. That's pretty daunting," says Walser. "I can't say we've even come close."

Bob Glovsky, director of the financial planning program at Boston University and co-host of "The Money Experts," a call-in talk show on WRKO-AM radio, says parents should not put money in the child's name.

"Money in the child's name counts six times more against you than in the parents' name when applying for financial aid," says Glovsky. The federal financial aid form analyzes the child's assets and will count 35 percent of that as the child's contribution. But the parents' assets count as only 5.6 percent of contributions.

"The rationale is that parents have other uses for their money. By putting money in your child's name you are hurting yourself for financial aid," says Glovsky. You are also giving up control,

since the money belongs to the child at age 18.

How much should you save? That, of course, depends on your personal situation. But the younger the children, the more aggressive you can afford to be.

This is a prepaid college tuition program that allows families to lock in their children's future tuition and fees at today's rates. The U. Plan locks in a percentage of tuition at 83 public and private universities in Massachusetts. For example, if a family invested \$1,000 this year, which paid for 10 percent of current tuition at school A, that family would be guaranteed 10 percent of their tuition at that school in the future, regardless of how much tuition will have increased. "Each year you buy and continue to lock in tuition the year you buy it," explains Peter Mazareas, executive director of the Massachusetts Education Financing Authority, which oversees the U. Plan.

You may prepay up to 100 percent of your child's future tuition at today's rates by buying Tuition Certificates that mature in the years when your child will be in college. Each certificate can be redeemed upon maturity for a guaranteed percentage of tuition and fees at any participating college.

The U. Plan buys tax-exempt state bonds, allowing any interest earned to be tax-free. Parents can invest as little as \$300 in a lump sum or \$25 a month. The next enrollment period starts April 15 and runs to the end of May, says Mazareas.

If a child goes to an out-of-state college, parents get their money back without a penalty and with interest paid at the rate of the consumer price index.

Glovsky, the financial adviser, warns that the U. Plan may not be the smartest investment for families. "If your child is going to one of these schools, then it's a good investment. If your child doesn't end up at one of these schools, then it's not a good deal. Then it's become a conservative investment, and the rate of return is probably lower than the inflationary cost of college."

Explore the financial aid package offered at your child's university.

At Boston University, where tuition, fees, room and board on-campus cost \$31,700 for the 1997-98 academic year, most students rely on institutional funding, says Ryan Williams, director of the office of financial assistance at BU. "In most cases, the inflation rate for an academic year is higher than the rate of inflation for most consumer products. However, most institutions are able to

with your investments. Most financial planners recommend stocks and equities if you have at least 10 years before the kids head off to college.

If you set up a trust instead of a custodial account, you must hire an also increase their ability to put more financial aid into their programs," says Williams.

Financial aid consists of three aspects: loans, grants (free money), and work-study programs, in which students are given jobs, usually on campus.

There are two types of loans - subsidized and unsubsidized. In a nonsubsidized loan, parents and students can borrow money, regardless of income. While the student is in school, he pays interest only, not principal. In a subsidized loan, students do not pay interest on the loan until they stop attending school.

"Get organized," advises Susan Smolin, a Needham consultant who helps families navigate the maze of financial aid. "Set out a folder for each college. Make sure you have the requirements and deadlines. Make sure you keep copies of everything. You'll have to complete forms in subsequent years. Keep notes, including dates and names of conversations."

If your child is smart, encourage him or her to take advanced placement courses.

Smolin says if a student is eligible and qualified, he or she can take the courses, then must pass an exam to earn college credit. "They're a lot of hard work. You have to take the tests that show you will earn advanced placement status. Not everyone will be eligible. It's for highly qualified academic students," she says.

Open a Roth IRA.

If you are single and have less than \$95,000 in adjusted gross income - or married with income below \$150,000 - you can set aside a maximum of \$2,000 per person into a new Roth individual retirement account. The money grows tax-free, and can be tapped without penalty to pay for qualified educational expenses.

"You could put money away, you wouldn't pay any tax on the earnings, and when the child reaches college age, you can withdraw your initial contribution tax-free," says John Czyzewski, a certified public accountant and partner at Samet & Co. in Chestnut Hill. "And if you have to go into the earnings, you can take the money out and not be subject to any penalty."

Take advantage of the new

attorney to draft the trust agreement and then file a tax return yearly, paying an income tax on interest, capital gains, or income earned on that investment.

Consider locking in tuition with the U. Plan.

educational provisions in the tax law.

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 offers four educational incentives: Hope scholarship credit; lifetime learning credit; educational IRAs; and student loan interest deductions.

The Hope scholarship credit, available in 1998, allows you to deduct from your taxes, dollar for dollar, qualified tuition and related expenses for the student's first two years of post-secondary education.

The lifetime learning credit allows you to deduct 20 percent of expenses up to \$10,000. For example, if you incur \$5,000 in expenses for your child in her third year of college, you get credit for 20 percent of that. "That's \$1,000 you don't pay in taxes," says Schroeder, the financial planner.

The educational IRA allows you to put in a nondeductible contribution of \$500 per year per child until the child is 18 years old. So if you have three kids, you can shield \$1,500 from taxes each year.

In the student loan interest deduction, you can deduct the interest payment during the first 60 months on a higher education loan. For example, let's say you have an \$8,300 loan at 12 percent interest. That generates \$1,000 of interest, which can be deducted from your taxes.

Consider savings bonds.

In 1990, the Treasury Department initiated the Education Bond Program, which allows interest to be completely or partially excluded from federal income tax. Payments to state tuition plans became eligible this year.

Bonds pay 90 percent of the five-year Treasury rate, increase in value monthly, and can earn interest for 30 years. "Bonds are an excellent way to save for college. They're safe, they pay market-based rates, federal tax is deferred, and, depending on your income, the interest can be excluded from your income," says Pete Hollenbach, public affairs officer at the Bureau of Public Debt in Washington. "They are easy to buy and can be registered in the parents' names or the child's name."

Interest can be fully excluded if the taxpayer meets certain income guidelines. For the 1997 tax year, single taxpayers' incomes must be between \$50,850 and \$65,850; taxpayers who are married filing jointly must have incomes of

\$76,250 to \$106,250. For the 1998 tax year, income limits for single taxpayers are \$52,250 to \$67,250; for married couples filing jointly, \$78,350 to \$108,350.

Report interest income annually on your child's savings bonds.

Many children receive bonds as gifts

Community colleges are the basement bargains of higher education. At Massachusetts Bay Community College in Wellesley, one credit costs \$75, says spokeswoman Pam Eddinger. That means a full-time, liberal arts student would pay

from relatives, and parents usually ignore the bonds until they mature, then pay tax on the interest income. Instead, parents should report interest on the bonds each year.

"If the child has minimal income or no income, you can report interest and not pay any tax on the earnings," says \$1,800 for one year of college.

Freshmen can sign up for joint admissions, finish two years at a community college, and then automatically transfer to a state college or university with a 30 percent discount off

Czyzewski. By following this strategy rather than waiting to pay taxes when you cash in the bond, you could save 30 to 35 percent in taxes.

Consider community colleges for the first two years.

tuition - as long as they have maintained a 2.5 grade point average or higher, says Paula Ogden, director of financial aid at M B CC. ■

58. Boston Globe

January 26, 1998

STUDENT LIFE AT ENGLISH HIGH

Day care aids student mothers

By Beth Daley, Globe Staff

Every day between class periods, English High School students pause at a thick glass window to catch a glimpse of their school's tiniest attendees: their classmates' babies.

The 11 infants and toddlers spend the school day in a bright day-care center at the school so their mothers can try to beat the odds and graduate.

The 10-year-old center - one of only two at Boston's 21 high schools - appears to help: Thirty-two of 48 students tracked by the school who put children in the center in the last five years have either graduated from high school or received their GED. Another eight students were working toward that goal. This contrasts with a national teen mother dropout rate as high as 80 percent, according to some statistics and school officials.

"I don't think I'd be in school if I didn't have the day-care center," said Yasmarie Valentin, 16, mother of 9-month-old Davis Alexander Perez. After school, Valentin works 26 to 30 hours a week at Walgreen's to support herself and the baby, and lives with her mother, brother, and the father of her baby in a three-bedroom apartment in Dorchester. Valentin, the baby, and her boyfriend all share one room.

The appeal of the children to the many students who glance in at the center, along with its obvious convenience, has caused lingering concerns among some school officials that the center could encourage some teens to have children. In fact, it was a difficult sell to get the day-care center into the school a decade ago, English High officials said.

Today, however, most of them praise the program. And the mothers who use

the center say they tell anyone who will listen that having a child has dramatically changed their life - and not for the better.

"Students probably think it's easy to have a baby because the day care is here, but believe me, it is really hard," said Valentin. "I'd never give up having my son. But I would never recommend this for anyone, especially because you don't have the things you need - a job, a car, an education."

Based on the latest Department of Public Health statistics available, 880 teens in Boston between the ages of 15 to 19, most of them in high school when they became pregnant, gave birth in 1995, a rate that has been decreasing in the past three years. It is unknown exactly how many of those stayed in school or dropped out.

Designed to support teenage parents as much as provide care for a total of 14 babies, the YMCA of Greater Boston runs the Adolescent Parents and Children Center program. It has strict state eligibility requirements.

Mothers also must attend school 75 percent of the time and arrive at the school by 7:30 a.m. During one period of every day they visit the center to play with and read to their children and learn other parenting skills. All receive individual counseling.

Of the eleven mothers now in the program, six live with their families, two are in foster homes, another two are living on their own, and one lives in a homeless shelter. They range in age from 16 to 19.

Program social worker Deborah Stolbach estimates that most of the babies' fathers are involved in some way in the care of their baby. A few live with

the mothers, others drop the children off in the morning or pick them up. Still, by far the greatest burden of responsibility falls on the mother.

Marilyn Arriaga, 19, mother of Alfredo Zavala, is often worn out from taking care of her son, who is "always sick." She is looking for work and says she is determined to graduate, but says it is difficult.

Dressing her baby in the center recently for "another doctor's appointment," she says, "I'd worry more if he was at another center. Here, I can take him to the hospital and check up on him."

Sindi Samayoa says she was able to graduate partly because of the center. Samayoa won a full scholarship to Lesley College in Cambridge and achieved a 3.0 average her first semester. She works 20 hours a week and lives with her parents.

"I got pregnant at 15," said Samayoa, now 18, mother of 20-month-old Rhakil. "My parents were very disappointed. Everyone thought I was going to drop out, but I proved them wrong. I just wish I waited so much longer to have a baby. I see so many kids having babies - they don't realize how hard it is. When you have a baby there are so many things you can't do. I know that."

Last week at the center, on the school's first floor, tiny babies slept in cribs in one room as parents and day-care workers played with the infants. For Valentin, who wants to be a nurse, the day-care center has given her a way to finish school and take care of her son. Still, she says somewhat wearily, needing day care at 16 is not fun.

"I get to bed late, and have to be up at 5:30. I'm always tired, and it's hard to find time to do homework. You just can't

come here when you want - there are rules," she said. "This helps when you

have a baby. But it's very hard to have a child at this age. It's very hard."■

COMMENTARY

59. Houston Chronicle

January 26, 1998

High time for feds to get more involved in education

By MICHAEL P. FORBES

SOME of my more partisan colleagues on Capitol Hill would like to think that President Clinton is a lame duck whose term in office will leave no lasting legacy. I say baloney.

The president is embarking on a crusade to reform education. In this era of relative peace and prosperity, no issue is more critical. And no issue is fraught with more political pussyfooting and double-talk. Democrats fear alienating the politically active teachers unions. Republicans sidestep the problem by saying education should be exclusively a state and local responsibility.

Washington has no business dictating what subjects are taught or how they are presented, but it is high time it played a more substantial role in supporting public education. There is no better investment in protecting our economic and security interests in the global marketplace.

Politics must stop, the president has said, at the schoolhouse door. He's dead right on that.

Here are some of the Clinton proposals that members of both parties can and should support:

- Test standards. The president is correct to advocate voluntary national test standards so that parents, teachers and administrators in our nation's 13,000 school districts can measure the performance of their children against other regions of the country. Republican hard-liners fear such testing puts the long arm of Uncle Sam where it does not belong, but having the bully pulpit of the presidency behind voluntary standards can only help improve education in the long run.

- School choice. Clinton advocates innovative, privately operated charter

schools and choice for parents of public school students. These plans deserve our support, and Republicans generally do support them.

Unfortunately, the president remains opposed to school vouchers on the grounds that giving poor parents financial aid will promote parochial or private schools at the expense of public schools.

Another voucher program, the GI Bill, which helped returning veterans attend the college of their choice after World War II, contributed significantly to our nation's postwar prosperity. And Clinton is promoting a voucher that works like the GI Bill to assist the unemployed with job training.

A school-voucher program could also clear the way for low- and moderate-income parents to send their children to whatever public or private school they choose. Giving parents greater flexibility would strengthen public education, not weaken it, by putting failing schools on notice that they must better educate our children, or risk losing them.

- School construction. Congress must drop its opposition to the president's initiative to provide for construction and renovation of school buildings. Children, instinctively hungry to learn, must be able to do so in a safe and secure environment. Assisting the increasing number of districts that are plagued by deteriorating and overcrowded schools should be a federal priority. The Republican opponents who feel this creates an additional federal entitlement best left to the state and local level are being unrealistic about the amount of local resources available for school construction programs.

- Urban schools. There are reports that

the president is preparing a package of incentives to bolster performance in the most-troubled urban schools. He must get support for this. The rift in educational opportunity between rich and poor contributes mightily to the continued divisions in our society. Congress has provided some minimal assistance to troubled urban schools in years past, but Republicans no doubt will resist efforts in Washington that they advocate for states.

What they don't realize is that social justice can only come with truly equal access to educational excellence.

How can we pay for all this? I've long advocated a strong military. Reallocating \$20 billion annually from the Department of Defense's \$255 billion budget, however, will do a lot more to protect our national security interests than will a few more bombers or a few more tanks. This amount could safely be removed from the defense budget without compromising national security while still offering a substantial amount to improve education. Just as John F. Kennedy challenged the nation to land a man on the moon a generation ago, so, too, can a popular Bill Clinton use the presidency and his uncanny ability to communicate to rally the public behind his education initiatives.

With the people's support, I'm convinced he can put together a successful coalition of Democrats and Republicans in Congress, and in the state legislatures, to build a better life for every child.

Forbes is a Republican congressman from New York.■

60. The New York Times

01/26/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 19, Column 1

Whatever Happened to Recess?

By Polly Morrice

HOUSTON — At my 9-year-old daughter's school, the morning begins with aerobics. The same bouncy tune is piped into each classroom, and the children — 900 strong — step, jump and spin. Although it seems rigid, the exercise has an impromptu, playful quality, unlike the regimented day that follows.

The students trek to classes in silent lines; lunch is devoured in half an hour. Then there's recess. In my childhood, it arrived like clockwork in the morning and afternoon, 20 minutes twice a day, plus playtime after lunch. My daughter gets a single 20-minute break. And students who misbehave are punished by losing some or all of it.

Is my daughter missing out on

something precious? Yes, according to Anthony Pellegrini, an education researcher at the University of Georgia. His studies, he told me, show that recess provides "good social, cognitive and emotional stuff."

Why, then, don't children get more of it? Because the curriculum is too full. The greatest pressure comes from academic competency tests, now required by 46 states. A lot rides on these tests. Last year, the state of Virginia threatened to deny accreditation to every school with a passing rate below 70 percent. In Texas, administrators' contracts can be tied to results on a statewide test. This creates an undue emphasis on making sure the children are well prepared.

Raising standards is laudable. But is turning children into desk potatoes the

best way to stimulate their minds? Professor Pellegrini's research shows that "the longer someone sits down to attend, the less attentive he is." He adds that children are more attentive in the classroom after recess than before and that the social give-and-take of the schoolyard teaches children to work together.

Many school administrators, however, seem to think that hopscotch and tag — and just plain horsing around — are optional for today's sophisticated youngsters. That sentiment is captured in a recent I.B.M. advertisement. It shows three smiling children who stare at a computer monitor. The copy proclaims, "When the bell rings for recess, more and more kids are staying in their seats."

Pity.■

61. The New York Times

01/26/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 18, Column 1

Editorial Observer

Finding Qualified Teachers for the Dead Zone

By BRENT STAPLES

Anxiety about public schools has pushed education to the top of the domestic agenda, with Democrats and Republicans scrambling to own the issue and milk it for votes. The Democrats style themselves as reformers but will go no further than their masters, the teachers' unions, permit. The Republicans are posing as advocates of school choice for the urban poor, who are largely confined to the nation's worst schools.

Educational dead zones — nearly all of them in cities — represent a pressing national problem that the states seem uninterested in or incapable of solving. But both Democrats and Republicans have forsworn all but modest Federal initiatives, arguing that educational policy is constitutionally "a local matter" and that Washington has no business telling the states how to proceed. Policies based on this reasoning will leave the dead zones dead, improving education only at the margins.

Failing schools are a threat to national prosperity. The children they house are the citizens and the work force of the future. A nonprofit foundation called the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has already developed rigorous standards for teachers. But fewer than a thousand of the nation's more than three

Both parties support the charter school movement, which expects talented teachers and administrators to leave existing public schools to create visionary schools of their own — even if it means pay cuts and belt-tightening to meet start-up costs. With qualified teachers deserting the cities, charter schools would be subject to the same staff shortages.

The charter strategy has yielded strong results in parts of Minnesota, Arizona and elsewhere. Thousands of children who would otherwise have been lost will succeed because of the charters. But, like the voucher idea, the charter mechanism can accommodate only a fraction of the millions who need it.

The teacher shortage is underscored in the latest Quality Counts, an annual study by the magazine Education Week, which this year focuses on the comparison between urban and suburban schools. The gap is wide and getting wider — in part because cities cannot find qualified million teachers have been certified under the National Board system, which began offering certification in 1993. The Federal Government could improve on that record by pressuring the states to strengthen teacher training and revamp teachers' colleges. Board certification is time-consuming, rigorous and expensive.

teachers. In California and New York, for example, nearly a third of urban teachers are either unlicensed or teaching on temporary certificates — two to three times the percentage in the suburbs. Part of the problem is that suburban district pay more and are better managed.

As seasoned teachers retire, they are being replaced by those who were educated in dysfunctional urban systems and teachers' colleges with no standards to speak of. By turning a blind eye when urban systems stocked their schools with poorly qualified instructors, the states have contributed to the downward spiral.

Education historically has rested with localities. But the Federal Government has repeatedly intervened when national interests are at stake. During the 1960's it intervened to enforce desegregation and impose special programs like Head Start, aimed at the poor. During the 1970's, it reversed centuries of discrimination against the disabled, who had been excluded from public school.

Federal pressure and support will be needed to finish the process.

Many states have demonstrated a tepid interest in taking on basic problems. If Washington shrinks from its responsibility, the job will go undone.■

62. The Washington Times

Education policy collision

By Bonnie Erbe / Josette Shiner

Question: Senate Republicans have proposed a legislative agenda that includes money to boost public school students' reading skills and tax breaks for parents who save for private school tuition. Can they steal the limelight from President Clinton, who has recently proposed balancing the budget next year and expanding access to Medicare?

BONNIE ERBE: Senate Republicans are smart politicians, unlike some of the more starry-eyed wild men cohorts in the House. Despite pressure from red-meat eaters in the GOP, Senate moderates recognize that in order to maintain a majority or even pick up power in this year's upcoming congressional elections, Republicans must tone down their image and appeal to middle-of-the-road and, most especially, women voters, who are now a major influence.

Hence, this savvy package of proposals from Senate Republicans, including a move to undo the damage done by GOP marrow-chompers who proposed (years ago) to abolish the **Department of Education**, coupled with a move to give \$2.6 billion in tax breaks to parents who save for private school tuition, and to counter religious zealots in the party who still would use taxpayers' dollars to subsidize sectarian education. Even the formerly feral House Speaker Newt Gingrich has conceded Republicans are in dire need of burnishing their image on the education issue.

Extremists within the party are already unhappy with Senate Republicans' intelligent thinking. Conservative Rep. Tom Coburn, Oklahoma Republican, told

the Associated Press this week, "The planning of our leadership is to do what's best for Republicans, rather than what's best for our country." Of course, his idea of what's best for the country differs markedly from the vast majority of Americans, who want Republicans and Democrats to get along, improve educational and job opportunities for all citizens and stop squabbling.

Democrats should be praying that Mr. Coburn and his wing of the party wins out. Because that is the only way they stand to take back the House this coming November. No one is predicting that they will. But with a slim majority of fewer than a dozen House seats, all Republicans have to do is follow some zany suggestion such as staking out major fights with the president or proposing a major tax overhaul to benefit the rich, and Democrats will reap the benefits of Republican folly at the polls.

JOSETTE SHINER: House Speaker Newt Gingrich doesn't need to wait until he retires to study dinosaurs - there's one in the making right now in Washington: the "smallgovernmentsaurus."

Just read the headlines this week: "Clinton agenda revives 'era of big government,' new spending at \$42 billion so far," in The Washington Times. And witness the scorn my colleague heaps on the rag-tag band of conservative legislators trying to hold the focus on decreased federal spending: "starry-eyed wildmen," "red-meaters" and "marrow-chompers."

It is true. After a brief revival of the quaint idea that "government that governs least governs best," Washington is about

to embark on a spending binge with goodies dispensed in every congressional district. I don't blame congressional Republicans; with Santa Claus in the White House, how can they continue to deliver coal to the voters?

Republicans deserve credit for attempting to counter Mr. Clinton with handouts that are delivered in better policy form than the failed Great Society programs of the past. And Republicans are right to realize that education and taxes are winning issues with voters, and ones on which they need to lead the way.

But Republicans must be sure to always drive home the difference between their approach and the Democrats' approach to these issues - Republicans seek to empower individuals, Democrats seek to empower government.

The biggest gem in the new Republican package is Georgia Sen. Paul Coverdell's education plan that provides \$2.6 billion in tax-advantaged savings accounts to help parents pay education costs, including private school tuition. Mr. Clinton has already promised to veto such a plan. This is a fight worth having. The president has supported, even campaigned on education savings accounts for public and private colleges. Why oppose such an opportunity for children in K-12? On this my colleague is right: This savvy education package is a model for beating the White House at its own game.

Bonnie Erbe is host of the PBS program *"To the Contrary."* Josette Shiner is president of *Empower America*■

63. The New York Times

01/24/98 Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 14, Column 4

Letters to the Editor

Who Will Replace Teachers Who Fail the Test?

To the Editor:

The bankruptcy of the notion that "test scores measure merit" is clearly revealed by the plight of apparently effective public school teachers who face termination for not obtaining an arbitrary score on a standardized exam (news article, Jan. 17).

In the face of a severe shortage of

inner-city teachers, particularly those from minority backgrounds, it makes no sense to fire competent, experienced educators simply because they do not test well.

Similarly foolhardy is the notion that a one-size-fits-all measure, like the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test, is accurate for all educational settings from kindergarten to

advanced placement classes. If New York desires high-quality teachers who reflect the diversity of the city's student population, it must move to a system of licensing based on classroom performance.

MONTY NEILL

Acting Exec. Dir., Fair Test

Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 20, 1998■

64. The Washington Post

January 25, 1998

Reviving The Fourth 'R' In Today's Schools, You've Gotta Have Arts

By Bob Chase, President, NEA
(advertisement)

Writer Raymond Chandler once said that all art has a quality of redemption. If anybody knows this firsthand, it's Terry Stewart, a middle school music teacher in Smyrna, Delaware. Stewart has seen music transform the lives of his students.

One 7th grader was a chronic troublemaker until Stewart handed him a pair of drumsticks. Almost overnight, the boy became the leader of the percussion section. "He was an excellent musician," Stewart recalls. "Band became an incentive for him to do well in school. When he played in a concert at his old elementary school, his former teachers couldn't believe it was the same kid."

Mounting evidence shows that the arts are fundamental to education. But they became an endangered species in our public schools during the 1980s. Budget cutters and back-to-basics advocates saw the arts as fluff and frills, and they took an ax to them.

Now, arts education is making a comeback, and not a moment too soon. New studies show that preschoolers who take piano lessons and participate in sing-alongs develop significantly better abstract reasoning and math skills than other preschoolers. Music helps to hardwire a child's brain for successful learning.

Stanford's Elliot Eisner reports that the

Yes, pianos and paintbrushes cost money. But the payoffs are great. No other set of disciplines can benefit our

arts are unparalleled in developing seven different intellectual abilities, including the ability to be imaginative, to make judgments in the absence of a rule, to think metaphorically, and to devise multiple solutions to a problem.

Businesses certainly recognize the value of such skills. In fact business people have led the charge to revive arts education. For them, it's a matter of enlightened self-interest.

IBM hires more music school graduates than any other employer. The software company Intuit actively recruits workers with arts backgrounds. Moreover, America's number one exporter, the entertainment industry, craves artistic employees.

As educators, however, preparing young people for the workforce is only part of our mission. We must also nourish the souls of our students so that they can grow up to be good and virtuous adults. And what a glorious abundance of soul nourishment there is in art, whether it be Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" or Lorraine Hansberry's "Raisin in the Sun," or Diego Velazquez's "Maids of Honor." Through the arts, students learn to "Give all thou canst/high Heaven rejects the lore/of nicely calculated less or more." (Wordsworth)

Students actively engaged in the arts are "better disciplined, more confident, and score higher on standardized tests," children developmentally, intellectually, economically, and spiritually quite the way the arts can. And some day those

notes Michael Marks, a high school dramatic arts teacher for 19 years and now head of the Mississippi Association of Educators.

Consider these facts. The Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C., has one of the lowest dropout rates in the country. Ninety percent of the Boys Choir of Harlem go on to college. A whopping 70 percent of last year's USA Today All-USA Academic Team are musicians. In 1996, students who took four years of high school art or music classes scored an average of 32 points higher on the verbal section of the SAT, and 23 points higher on the math, than students who took less art and music.

When children are absorbed in painting a mural, playing in a band, or rehearsing for a play, it gives them something to look forward to and aspire to each day. The arts can give a child hope and purpose.

Too many kids today are plagued by violence, drugs, neglect, and cynicism. Giving them a constructive way to channel their energies can make a pivotal difference in their lives. It can compel them to stay in school instead of dropping out, to develop a rehearsal regimen instead of a drug habit, to become a lead violinist instead of a teen mother.

children, through their art, will nourish a nation's soul. ■

65. Boston Globe

January 26, 1998

The state's education reforms are making things worse, not better

The students at many schools, such as those at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, where I work, are being hurt by Massachusetts education reform.

Although we certainly could improve our school, the requirements being imposed on us are making our school worse and are doing away with improvements we have worked hard for 40 years to develop.

Under state law, students must be in the classroom 990 hours a year. This 990 rule is extremely destructive. No one, certainly not an adolescent, learns best by sitting in a classroom hour after hour all day. The test requirements do away with all we have been striving for. Who believes that tests of short-term memory have anything to do with education? These reforms leave out everything that is

important: the individual growth of individual minds, the acknowledgment of the feminine as well as the masculine, the enlargement of cultural thought to include everyone, not just the history of Greece and England.

Where are the people who should be leading the fight against the destruction of our schools? Where are the deans of the schools of education?

Where are the college presidents? Where are the superintendents and principals? Where is the Massachusetts Teachers Association? I believe that it is up to parents, especially those who have children in elementary school now, to band together to fight this attempt by white male politicians to impose their

frustrations on our children.

There certainly are many reforms that could be made. For instance 84 percent of high school students are not interested in history because the way it is presented does not connect with them. The teaching of history should be reformed exactly opposite from the way it is now being

reformed.

Most students do not become proficient in another language because language instruction starts at the worst possible age. Learning of a second language should start in preschool.

*By Tom Hooper English Teacher
Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School* ■

EDITORIAL

66. The Charleston Post and Courier

January 24, 1998

Approve school reform plan

Public education in South Carolina is in a precarious state, both in terms of general student achievement and an increasing lack of public confidence. A comprehensive school accountability proposal now before the House of Representatives begins to address the most painful shortcomings of public schools on a statewide basis. Its passage should be a legislative priority this session. The Performance and Accountability Standards for Schools Act (or PASS) provides for broader testing of students and ranking of school performance, each giving parents and the community a better idea of where local schools rank in terms of new, tougher academic standards established for state schools and in comparison to national scores. It establishes an objective, statewide scale of achievement and would publicly rank each school and district with grades from A to F. A ranking of D or F would bring immediate state intervention. The bill provides a significant commitment of money to put top-flight teachers and administrators in

failing schools. House Majority Leader Bobby Harrell says the bill is designed to "create an atmosphere that causes change," recognizing that improvements will require broad support within the community and from the state. House Education Committee Chairman Ronald Townsend, R-Anderson, points out that it will end social promotion in the state, while instituting higher standards for student achievement. Both representatives served as ex officio members of the gubernatorial commission that prepared the reform proposal. Unfortunately, the legislation doesn't include sanctions to allow the state Department of Education to make necessary personnel or program changes in failing schools, even when they fail to respond to expert treatment, although changes can be recommended to the local authorities. Key legislators assure us that stiffened consequences will be the next step if the provisions of the bill are found to be insufficient. Those in the Legislature who are so committed should be prepared to amend the bill

accordingly. On Thursday, the House approved an important "choice" amendment that should hearten parents who fear their children could be trapped in a poor school with little recourse for transfer. The House endorsed a plan that allows parents to move their children from failing schools, assuming there is room elsewhere in the district. That provides a definite consequence for failing schools. As Rep. Harrell says, "It will create a sense of urgency in these schools" to make the necessary improvements. While there has been comment about the swift approval of such a major piece of legislation by a House committee, Speaker David Wilkins notes that it was the subject of extensive review before the Legislature convened. We hope that the Senate is similarly committed to act on a comprehensive plan that has the capacity to transform failing schools. Passage of a strong, workable bill for public school reform could easily be the Legislature's major achievement this year. ■

67. The Raleigh News & Observer

January 26, 1998

Opening the books

Colleges and universities can fight suspicions that they're gouging students by becoming more efficient, and by giving the public more information about how they're using tuition and fees.

An aptly titled new report contains as many questions as answers about the cost of higher education. But "Straight Talk," the product of a federal commission's five-month study, also carries a timely

threat, which should be taken seriously: Unless colleges and universities get a handle on their finances, they could face governmental price controls. That would be a bad idea, but it might beat the

alternative: losing the trust and confidence of the American public and possibly undermining the United States' educational and economic strength.

Anxiety about paying for a college

education has risen steadily in the last decade, mirroring a disturbing trend that has only recently begun to level off. Since 1987, American colleges' and universities' price tags have grown faster than their costs, families' income and inflation. The result? College diplomas moving farther out of reach for many students, requiring them to stay in school longer, to go deeper into debt or to skip higher learning altogether.

In many ways, the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education hit a brick wall in its effort to understand these discrepancies. The panel came up with some plausible explanations of what might be driving costs and prices up: greater demands on schools associated with changing (and growing) student populations; climbing capital costs as schools build up their facilities and invest in technology; time and money spent to comply with a tangle

of regulations. But it found little hard evidence for any of these explanations.

The group said fears about college being unaffordable might be exaggerated, especially since most students now receive some financial aid. But academic institutions' financial data are so impenetrable, they said, that few people — inside or outside the schools — understand where the money goes or what students' actual costs are. Accordingly, schools' first order of business is to make sense of that chaos, and then to explain it to students and families. That recommendation seems basic — and essential.

Other good ideas in the report include easing government regulations so schools can focus on performance; streamlining complex, duplicative accreditation procedures, which eat up faculty and administrators' time; and enhancing and simplifying federal

student aid programs.

But the group's sternest and most astute recommendation is also its simplest, and, appropriately, it is directed squarely at schools themselves: Colleges and universities just have to control their costs better. Sharing resources would help them become more efficient, but they'll also have to rethink the way they do a lot of other things, from purchasing supplies to teaching. Foundations and governments can and should help by supporting research on fiscal productivity in academia.

The commission was right to reject, for now, the unworkable idea of government price controls, but it was also right to lay it on the line: Colleges and universities must both contain their costs and convince the public that higher education is an affordable, worthwhile investment. Otherwise, it could cease to be either. ■

68. Miami Herald

January 26, 1998

Don't weaken the regents

FOR REACTING TO GAFFE Whether the University of Florida's president stays or goes, keep the system of governance.

Suppose politicians and business leaders were demanding the scalp of assertive college presidents and

Yet the regents can't remain strong enough to resist being told whom to fire if they lose their authority over whom to hire — or keep. So Floridians who are understandably upset over the regents' treatment of the University of Florida's President John Lombardi ought to think long and hard before lending their support to proposals to weaken the regents.

After all, if a particular set of regents is performing poorly, there's already a remedy: Appoint better regents. And if a particular governor consistently nominates weak regents, the Senate already can deny them its confirmation.

Yet these checks are not enough for some lawmakers. Among them are several who often have feuded bitterly with the regents and chancellor. Example: Sen. John Grant, R-Tampa. Miffed last year that gay Olympic diver Greg Louganis was paid to speak at the

controversial professors. Floridians who care about academic freedom would be glad that there's a strong Board of University of South Florida, Mr. Grant intensified earlier efforts to put student-activity fees under legislative control. Now, exploiting the controversy over Dr. Lombardi, he'd weaken the regents by shortening their terms and subjecting the chancellor to Senate confirmation.

With the regents effectively neutralized, the only force left standing to oversee the university system would be . . . the Legislature itself. Any college presidents who imagine that they'd have more autonomy by dealing directly with the Legislature are dreaming.

Rather, the universities likely would face the same kinds of problems that have beset Florida's public schools. There, an ever-changing succession of legislative-committee chairmen, eager to leave a mark, have pushed through questionable "reforms" and pork-barrel projects for their districts.

Regents to buffer higher education from politics and special interests.

In contrast, the Board of Regents and chancellors, especially the departing Chancellor Charles Reed, generally have been forceful advocates and prudent policy makers for the university system.

Did the regents overreact to Dr. Lombardi's gaffe? Possibly. Are some regents using that gaffe — referring to new chancellor Adam Herbert, who is black, as an "Oreo" — as a pretext to dump Dr. Lombardi because of past differences? Probably. Would firing Dr. Lombardi be a mistake, given his abject apology for his offensive remark? Quite likely, though some argue that what his admirers see as "independence" sometimes verges on insubordination.

Yet this dispute is not reason enough to gut the regents' authority or to scuttle a system of governance that has served Florida and its universities quite well. ■

69. Richmond Times-Dispatch

January 25, 1998

Higher Apathy

The New York Times recently reported the following unsurprising news:

A survey of college freshmen confirms what professors and administrators said they have been sensing, that students are increasingly disengaged and view higher education less as an opportunity to expand their minds and more as a means to increase their incomes.

The annual nationwide poll by researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles shows that two suggested goals of education — "to be very well off financially" and "to develop a meaningful philosophy of life" — have switched places in the past three decades.

In the survey taken at the start of the fall semester, 74.9 percent of freshmen chose being well off as an essential goal and 40.8 percent chose developing a philosophy. In 1968, the numbers were reversed, with 40.8 percent selecting financial security and 82.5 percent citing the importance of developing a philosophy.

It is using education more as a means to an end, rather than valuing what is being learned, said Linda Sax, director of the survey, first taken 32 years ago, at the

— When a college degree has become a precondition for landing a job that doesn't necessarily require a traditional college education, is it any wonder that students attend universities primarily to groom themselves for the workforce? Moreover, the elevation of a college

Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA.

Now: Reasonable men can — and unreasonable men do — debate the nature and purposes of higher education. Cardinal Newman, for instance, had some ideas relating to the subject. And others might wonder if a year such as 1968 should serve as a benchmark for anything but rampant silliness. Nevertheless, the survey probably dismays the dwindling band believing colleges and universities ought to be devoted to higher education, not to mere training.

The researchers also found increased levels of "academic and political disengagement" among young scholars. (The less charitable might remark on the students' blasé ignorance.) Numerous reasons could explain the survey's results.

— Television plays a corrosive role. As the founder of the survey notes, students entering college today belong to the generation that grew up — literally — with the tube. The more TV youngsters watch, the more materialistic and less engaged they apparently become. Tuning in encourages them to tune out.

— Policy-makers themselves define education as a means toward an degree to the level of political right inevitably has attracted — if that's the word — students with scant interest in real learning.

— Here's a final hmmm: Perhaps today's students aren't so sanctimonious as their Sixties peers.

economic end. What is School-to-Work if not a scheme for transforming education into training? And when arguing for increasing government funding, college presidents and others cite the economic benefits — not only for students but also for the general community — of an ever-expanding and ever-costlier university empire. Has economic development become not a by-product but the *raison d'être* of higher ed?

— The colleges themselves have degraded the liberal arts. Deconstructionism (a/k/a destructionism) and the other isms and fads to which the professoriat is prone generate indifference among students preferring knowledge to ideology. Russia and its former satellites have gotten the message the academy has not. The enemies of the liberal arts lie within the ivied walls. If students consider history, English, and philosophy irrelevant, then perhaps it is because their professors treat the humanities as though they were. Why should students respect the so-called canon, when noisemakers inside the academy treat it with contempt?

Some thinkers will lament the survey's findings; others won't give a rip. But no one should be amazed. The culture in general and the educational system in particular always will reap what they sow. ■

70. Tulsa World

January 26, 1998

Demo School

THE THOREAU INITIATIVE, approved unanimously last week by the Tulsa Board of Education, has created a small measure of controversy, most of it among regular critics of the Tulsa Public Schools.

But despite the controversy, the idea of a demonstration middle school, which will blend enriched programs in science and languages with a diverse student population from throughout the Tulsa district, is an exciting one.

The demonstration school, to be housed in the former Thoreau Junior High School, 7370 E. 71st St., marks an expansion and continuation of outstanding educational offerings in two specialty elementaries — the Mayo

Demonstration School, which emphasizes science, and the Eisenhower International School, which includes a foreign language immersion program. It also will serve as a training site to learn the latest research-based instruction techniques.

Parents of children in the Mayo and Eisenhower schools have had a valid complaint, namely that there are no middle-schools where students can continue the accelerated progress made in the demonstration elementaries. Their choices are to transfer to private schools or go back into regular science and language classes in which they will essentially redo what they have already done.

The Thoreau Initiative solves that problem by offering accelerated science and language programs for middle schoolers. It also will offer enriched programs in other subject areas.

The Thoreau Initiative is an opportunity to offer enriched, accelerated programs that aren't in demand, or can't, as a practical matter, be offered, in every middle school. School officials assure that students from all parts of the district will be allowed — and encouraged — to enroll in it.

This is the best possible use for a top-notch school building that was re-acquired by the district last year. ■

71. Newsday

January 26, 1998

Making the Grade

Pataki's school-funding proposals may not be perfect, but at least they're a good start.

After three years of seeming more interested in spending on ball parks than on education, Gov. George Pataki has pitched a 1998-99 state school-aid proposal that looks very much, well, in the ball park. Legislators shouldn't hesitate to make adjustments to Pataki's funding priorities but, unless a lot of real extra revenue rolls in, they should be wary of adding too much to his proposed overall spending increases. Pataki would raise the main source of school-district funding by 4.4 percent - or about twice the rate of inflation - to a total of \$11.5 billion. Considering that districts received an increase of \$650 million in the fiscal year ending March 31, after lawmakers boosted Pataki's inadequate offering, his \$450 million provides more

than enough money for most systems to do the job. But there are problems, old and new, that need to be addressed. In any given year, some schools, particularly in poor and minority neighborhoods, are failing or crumbling and need more help. Others, even in middle-class communities, are underfunded because school-aid formulas don't recognize the true propertytax burden on homeowners. A recent problem for all schools is the cost of meeting higher academic standards. The Board of Regents has recommended targeting \$200 million - for a total aid increase of more than \$700 million - to help districts prepare for tougher exams and other new graduation requirements. Pataki himself says he'd like to see

average class size dip to 20 within a few years. Fine. But this won't come cheaply. Lawmakers should apply any increases above Pataki's aid proposal toward improving standards. And they should provide money for remedial services aimed at keeping mildly disabled children out of special education. As for the issue that is most likely to blow up state budget negotiations, school construction, the state needs to set aside a more substantial increase than the \$120 million Pataki has proposed. Lawmakers should look for creative ways of dealing with this issue, although it's going to take more than one year. At least, Pataki has a school-aid package that can be taken seriously. Unlike in years past, he's on the field and part of the game. ■

72. Philadelphia Inquirer

January 26, 1998

The fair funding fight

A judge makes sense on Jersey school programs; now it's up to the state to find the money

Imagine the surprise and outrage of the many Trenton lawmakers who went about telling voters last fall that they'd put New Jersey's long battle over fair funding for urban schools to rest.

Now, here comes another judge telling them they'll have to come up with a whole lot more money to give children in those schools an even chance at success in the nation's second-wealthiest state.

Last week, appellate court Judge Michael King, having studied the issue at the behest of the state Supreme Court, ruled that the state should put another \$312 million a year into supplementary education, and up to \$2.8 billion into repairing and expanding school buildings.

That's on top of the \$247 million Trenton finally found last year to bring the 28 districts in the court case to parity with affluent districts.

The 1990 Supreme Court ruling that made it the state's constitutional duty to

achieve such parity said another wise thing. Because many children in poor communities come to school less prepared than other kids, the court said, "their special disadvantages must be addressed" with extra programs. Judge King, relying on nationally recognized research and his own school-side observations, made lots of sense in putting some flesh on that goal. He ordered the state to fund full-day kindergarten for all students in the 28 poorest districts, and full-day preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. The Clinton administration is moving in the same direction nationally, though too slowly.

These programs would be phased in over three years in coordination with local councils made up of representatives of Head Start, health- and day-care centers.

Finding the funds will be hard because Gov. Whitman cut state tax revenues in the face of the high court's edicts. Equally

challenging for the state is making sure the money's spent wisely and well. That means upgrading college training for early childhood teachers, retraining current teachers and coming up with safe, adequate facilities.

The judge gave the state the OK to see whether it could achieve results through an intensive reading program for these students, rather than through the more expensive, but research-tested approach of reducing class size. The court needs to keep monitoring whether the state's touted "whole school" reforms are more than just bureaucratic lip service.

The court also might want to offer whining legislators a little walk down memory lane, reminding them that they've had eight years to save for this moment. Instead, they took the bows for cutting tax revenues, and cramped the youths of many a schoolchild. ■

73. Philadelphia Inquirer

January 24, 1998

Taming the tiger

Princeton has two ideas worth emulating to reduce the tuition burden on middle-income families.

Princeton University's proposal to cut back student loans in favor of direct grants is a creative way to help middle-income families afford an elite school.

It is a shrewd response to parental complaints about a stunning upward price cycle in higher education. The total price of attending college has risen at twice the rate of inflation for the last 15 years.

Soaring college costs are not just a problem for parents and students. They're a problem for the nation when students carry such a load of debt that they feel they can't enter low-paying but vital professions.

Here's Princeton's answer: First, the university would replace loans with scholarships for students with family

What's great about Princeton's plan is that it reduces the need for undergraduates to strap on thousands of dollars in debt because they have no other choice. At Princeton, students already getting financial aid typically borrow \$4,000 a year.

incomes of \$40,000 or less and set loans on a sliding scale for families earning \$40,000 to \$57,500.

Second, Princeton would remove home equity from its calculation of assets for families earning less than \$90,000. Those with higher incomes also would see home equity play a smaller role in determining their portion of tuition. To meet the cost, estimated at \$4 million to \$6 million a year, Princeton plans to tap its abundant endowment, raise funds from generous alumni, and cut other expenses.

Princeton estimates that the new scholarships would benefit up to 600 students, and the home-equity proposal would help about 1,200. The school's board of trustees is set to vote on the plan

Princeton justifies its pricetag by pointing to its small size (6,000 students), historic and high-maintenance campus, and a world-class faculty supported by a tremendous library. Even so, it's seeing the wisdom of discounting tuition if that means being able to attract a more

today. If approved, it will take effect in the fall.

Princeton frankly acknowledges that it's trying to cut the sticker shock of its bill: almost \$32,000 for this academic year. Officials suspect families see that price and automatically dismiss Princeton without considering what their cost would be after deducting financial aid.

That's a mistake, says the American Council on Education. Parents should count the net costs before they rule out any college — even the Ivies. At Smith College, for example, which has annual costs of about \$28,000, 62 percent of this year's freshmen are getting financial aid of about \$20,000. (That includes loans, grants and work study.)

diverse student body.

Private colleges can't become the preserve of only the very rich and the poor. This is an experiment worth watching. ■

74. The Washington Times

01/25/98; Edition: 2; Section: B; COMMENTARY; EDITORIALS; Page B2

For D.C. schools: quality, not rubber stamps...

Council member Kathy Patterson, one of the most ardent of legislative watchdogs in D.C., is a little miffed about Superintendent/CEO Julius Becton's plans to fire any teacher who is not "certified" by Jan 31. At a hearing on D.C. public schools, she told the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Relations "this is a policy disaster waiting in the wings," "a headline waiting to happen." Well, not to brag, but that headline has already run. "D.C. ready to jettison uncertified teachers: Becton talks tough in speech to staff" is the headline from an A-1, Aug. 27 headline in The Washington Times. The story went on to say 600 or so principals and administrators heard the warnings, warnings which, by the way, were issued four weeks before the opening day of the delayed 1997-98 school year. That gave teachers five full months to get licensed

and certified. Mrs. Patterson estimates 1,000 teachers fall into the "not certified" category. That translates into approximately 1-in-5 of the estimated 5,000 teachers.

But the real question is who is or who is not a quality educator. And the answers cannot be found on certification documents stating Teacher X has had Y numbers of hours in the Z courses at Alphabet University. Or inquiring whether she is a member of Zigma Zelda Zo sorority. The answers are in the noggins of her students. Certification programs do not guarantee quality teachers and can cover up the truly bad ones. Either way students suffer.

TD The teachers and principals who are not qualified know who they are. Their schools are the ones with the lowest of the low test scores. The unions know too, as they push certification as a

way of weeding out the competition - that is the best and the brightest. Like merit pay, charter schools and other education-reform issues, the key is to forge ahead at the first bark from the teachers' unions.

The reformers who took over the D.C. school system more than a year ago must now take another giant step and drop current teacher certification requirements. Good schools need well-educated teachers, people who are proficient in their specialty fields. The bad teachers, certified or not, must go.

And be sure, the Becton administration had better not conduct wholesale firings based on a few slips of paper. A quality teaching staff is what parents pay for, and a quality teaching staff is what students deserve. Surely, Mrs. Patterson and the Becton administration want the same ■

75. The Washington Times

[Tape Restoration Project Hex-Dump Conversion]

... for Virginia: a school report card

Parents of children attending Virginia's public schools will be among the most well-informed public-education consumers in the nation this fall. One day after a nonpartisan research group released a study demonstrating that parents throughout the country are extremely uninformed about the relative quality of the public schools, the Virginia state Board of Education unanimously voted to require each public school to send a detailed report annually to parents outlining the school's test scores, crime record and attendance rate. What a splendid idea.

When school performance is "Employers and college professors reach dramatically different conclusions from parents, students and K-12 teachers over whether public school students are academically prepared for the work place or college," Public Agenda concluded. How "dramatically different"? Consider: "Sixty-three percent of employers and 76 percent of professors ... believe a high school diploma from a local public high school is no guarantee that a student has learned the basics, but only 26 percent of K-12 teachers, 32 percent of parents and 22 percent of high school students have similar concerns," Public Agenda reported. Nearly two out of three

inadequate, even as state and local taxes have exploded to finance ballyhooed "reforms," parents and other taxpayers, armed with incontrovertible data detailing the failures, will be in a much better position to demand accountability.

For years, parents have expressed differing opinions about public schools in general and the public schools their children attend. Aware that the state of elementary and secondary public education had been declining precipitously over the years, parents, especially those in the suburbs, nonetheless expressed confidence in the public schools in their community. But employers and professors rated the basic math skills of high school graduates as "poor" or "fair," the same ratings handed out by 77 percent of bosses and professors for grammar and spelling skills. As for the ability to write clearly, professors were equally disappointed with 81 percent of public high school graduates.

"Reality Check" polling also revealed that most parents either know "a little" or "don't have information" about "where your child stands academically compared to other students" in their grade (57 percent of parents responded "a little" or "don't have information"), in the same

in Virginia, at least, this discrepancy will now stand exposed.

"Reality Check," an eye-opening report recently released by the nonpartisan Public Agenda research organization, showed how successful the public-education establishment was at hiding the failures of local schools from the parents. As Carol Innerst of The Washington Times reported recently, "Reality Check" revealed that most public high school graduates are seriously unprepared in the basic academic skills required for college and work.

state (73 percent), in the country (80 percent) or in the world (87 percent).

Education analysts expect that Virginia's newly mandated "report card" will be the most comprehensive document available to parents anywhere in the country. Clearly, the data from the "report cards" will replace the typical hodgepodge of misinformation, disinformation. The establishment's whining and complaining in response to Virginia's new mandate merely confirmed how desperately needed and how long overdue the "report cards" were■