

learning involves, and we generate a list:

- dd* Working hard
- dd* Concentrating
- dd* Solving problems
- dd* Making mistakes
- dd* Asking questions
- dd* Using resource materials
- dd* Practice
- dd* Discipline

ddAs we share ideas, I ask individuals to tell about times when they persevered in learning situations that were frustrating or challenging, but that resulted in the joy of accomplishment. Everyone has stories to share, and I contribute my own as well.)

ddThe more we add to the list and discuss, the more the kids begin to realize that learning is hard work and not always fun. My job as a teacher, then, is to help them discover that the long-lasting rewards of learning far exceed the momentary pleasures of superficial entertainment. I always know I'm making good progress when I stop hearing, "Is it going to be fun?" and see learners willingly

accepting challenges and working hard to do their best.

dd Betsy Motten, a teacher at Wallingford (Pa.) Elementary School, is currently on sabbatical. Publication#W\ P}P# 81. Investors Business Daily"Publication" #: \ P}P#June 16, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Is The End Near For Bilingual Ed?Headline #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# Bilingual education's days may be numbered. Taking a cue from voters, Congress

has picked up the baton of reform. Subhead#\ P}P# By John J. Miller Two days after California voters passed Proposition 227 on June 2, the House Education and Workforce Committee approved a bill by Rep. Frank Riggs, R-Calif., to give states and school districts more control over their language policies.

ddIt's about time. Bilingual education is one of those well-intentioned theories gone horribly wrong. Its inventors wanted to help Spanish-speaking children learn English. They thought that teaching kids in their native language might help.

ddBut the idea always seemed a bit fishy. How are children supposed to learn English by hearing Spanish?

ddThere is now a mountain of evidence ready to refute the half-baked claims of bilingual-ed bureaucrats. Mark Lopez of the University of Maryland showed recently that bilingual education makes it both more likely that students will drop out of school and less likely that they'll go to college. It also depresses their lifetime wages.

ddHispanic parents across the U.S. already know this. California's campaign was inspired by immigrant parents who boycotted a Los Angeles public school in '96 because their kids weren't being taught in English.

And parents in Brooklyn sued the school system there for failing to teach kids in English. "My son is confused between English and Spanish. I am unhappy with what he has learned in the bilingual-education program," said Maria Cruz, one of the plaintiffs.

The Center for Equal Opportunity surveyed Hispanic parents in '96. Some 81% of those polled believe that their children's academic courses should be taught in English rather than Spanish.

In fact, kids pick up a new language much more easily than adults do. The brain is developmentally hard-wired to help young children learn language. There is a small window of opportunity for educators to teach elementary school children in English and have them learn it well, often accent-free. But these are the same years in which students are most often kept out of English-language class rooms.

The result? Bilingual education is rigged to guarantee failure. Because money follows students, schools and teachers often lack incentive to move kids out of bilingual programs. Fewer students mean fewer dollars, and that means fewer jobs for teachers.

That's why the influential National Association of Bilingual Education fights virtually every reform effort, including the necessary shock therapy of Prop. 227 in California.

What's more, the U.S. Education Department, long in the pocket of the bilingual-education establishment, has coerced thousands of localities to introduce native-language maintenance programs - and Congress has done nothing about it. In the last budget, Republicans actually boosted federal bilingual-education funding to more than \$300 million.

There's good reason to think that bilingual education never was meant to succeed at teaching kids English.

"If Spanish should ever be forgotten, well, I am afraid that my competitor and I would be out of business," said Spanish-language radio executive Arthur Thomas during congressional hearings on bilingual education in 1967. Thomas wanted children taught in Spanish so his radio station could keep its market share.

This year, the biggest financial backer of the anti- Prop. 227 forces was A. Jerrold Perenchio, head of the Spanish-language Univision TV network. He personally donated \$1.5 million to the opposition.

The '90s aren't the first time schools have faced the challenge of helping children learn English. During the last great wave of immigration, millions of kids entered school knowing very little of their country's common tongue. The difference is that they were met by instructors who considered teaching English one of their most important duties.

Today, far too many educators believe that teaching kids in Spanish is their top task. The schools must recommit themselves to the old-fashioned idea that children learn English best when they're taught in English. Prop. 227 and the Rigg's bill are a good start.

John J. Miller is national political reporter for National Review and author of "The Unmaking of Americans: How Multiculturalism Has Undermined America's Assimilation Ethic" (Free Press, 1998).

Publication#W\ P}P# 82. Washington Post"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 16, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# A Community DisserviceHeadline #:\ P}P#
By James Youniss and Miranda Yates

A good idea is in danger of being subverted. Though Maryland public high school students are required to perform 75 hours of community service before graduation, many are evading the requirement by meeting the letter, but not the spirit, of the law. A friend who is an Episcopal priest recently spoke about the teenagers who came to ask him for service assignments so they could fulfill the requirement. Some had stipulations, such as wanting to get the task over with as quickly and painlessly as possible. One 18-year-old student added that he would dig ditches but did not want to do anything involving people.

Since the Maryland Board of Education first mandated the community service requirement six years ago, students at some schools have been allowed to claim credit for ordinary extracurricular tasks such as organizing a school dance or everyday kindnesses such as babysitting an older sister's infant. In fact, last year, when the first class to have to meet the new service requirement was about to graduate, some administrators had to devise last-minute, makeshift projects such as cleaning the campus grounds, filing school records and shelving library books. While there is a requirement, each school can implement it as it sees fit.

Well-designed community service is a good thing. It can help students learn what the world is really like. Young people who take on serious projects share social responsibility and gain a sense of citizenship. Several studies show that they are more likely to participate in volunteer charitable, civic, religious and business associations.

Effective service programs give students the chance to do meaningful work that produces tangible results, such as feeding the hungry or the homeless, or bringing comfort to the elderly. Group effort and shared reflection about the service experience are important parts of these programs, as are supportive teachers who assign readings that introduce students to philosophical and political thinking about the conditions behind social problems. It is also important to have staff at service sites who use real-life

events for teaching. Finally, parents can participate by sharing their own political and ethical views and relating them to their sons' and daughters' service experiences.

When these elements are in place, students are likely to look at society more realistically and to see themselves as citizens able to understand and do something about "social problems."

Service belongs in the public school curriculum and, moreover, it deserves the planning and support given to any rigorous academic subject or top-rated athletic program. Nothing can be done to make up for the opportunities lost to the first two graduating classes since the requirement has been in effect. But it is not too late to redefine community service so that future students will get the kind of challenging experience that helps shape active citizens.

Implementation of such programs on a statewide basis is complex. It is difficult to imagine the logistics of finding enough suitable sites for all of the students at the 48 public high schools in Montgomery, Prince George's and Howard counties. But overcoming practical limitations pales in comparison to the need to change current practices that allow service credit for taking out the family trash for a week, attending church services, mowing an elderly neighbor's lawn or working at a Saturday afternoon fund-raising car wash.

Such activities do not satisfy the intent of the authors of the requirement. "To make a contribution to the community and learning from that contribution helps one to become a lifelong learner," Nancy S. Grasmick, state school superintendent when the law was passed. "I can't think of a better example of character development than the lesson that what we take from the community we give back to the community."

Worse, because students have learned what they can get away with, we risk their coming to see service as a Mickey Mouse requirement that only a few oddballs take seriously.

The main issue is not conscious evasion, although some of that probably occurs, as when students treat service as just another credential for their college applications. The more important matter is missed opportunity. Students would take service seriously if they were offered the option of doing something significant with a clear supporting rationale.

In order not to let the present laissez-faire approach to service become the norm, and so that service does not become another annoyance to be overcome, we must change the way students are assigned service requirements. This will call for a new commitment from the state, school administrators, teachers, parents and social agencies at service sites.

ddThere are many models of programs that work. One takes place at a local private school, whose name we agreed to keep confidential in our 1997 book, "Community Service, and Social Responsibility in Youth." There, service is a mandated part of the academic curriculum, in this case, a religion class on social justice. (In a public school, it could have been a course on civics.)

ddOver the academic year, the entire junior-year class worked at a soup kitchen for the homeless. Teachers focused readings and class discussions on homelessness and related issues such as poverty and housing policy. The students worked alongside the staff, cleaning vegetables, serving sandwiches, mopping floors. The staff communicated with the teachers, and reinforced the message of social justice, by using spontaneous events such as outbursts of violence to discuss the need for drug rehabilitation, or the presence of hungry, crying infants, to point out that children have higher rates of poverty than adults.

ddThis kind of service program produced impressive results. Students become more tolerant and respectful of differences among people. Many students who began the course with negative stereotypes of the homeless, broke through that barrier to discover normal human beings living under unusual conditions. One male student told us his moment of awakening occurred when a homeless man thanked him for a sandwich and said, "I sure would enjoy a warm shower and shave," which made the student think, "Just like my dad wants every morning." A female student described an elderly woman who stopped in the food line to tell the girl how beautiful she was and that she reminded her of the daughter she hadn't seen in 10 years. The woman cried, saying, "I worry about her and hope she is all right." This allowed the girl to see the homeless woman as a "normal mother, worried about her daughter."

ddStudents also became freshly conscious of their own lives by noting stark contrasts with the homeless. They compared the fear and loneliness of life on the streets with their own loving, secure homes, and the pain and hunger of homeless people with their own assured availability of food and shelter. As one student put it: "I go crazy when I don't have money for McDonald's. What would happen to me, if I lived like they do?" Or as another said: "I feel fortunate. When I want food, all I have to do is go to the refrigerator or ask my mom."

ddStudents in other schools, where service programs are not as well thought out, tend to focus on the fun they had, the friends they met or a "feel-good" sense of self-esteem they gained. One 17-year-old girl said: "In February, I donated money and walked at the Help the Homeless Walk. It is a local D.C. charity to

help raise money for the homeless. I enjoyed doing this and was glad to see
th
at so many people volunteered their time to support the needy people in our com
munity." Another junior girl, who also participated
in a walkathon, said: "I me
t some people that I had worked with the previous year and it was nice to talk
to them again about things
that have happened since I last saw them. The people
are always very friendly and it is just a pleasant atmosphere to be around. We

walked for about five kilometers so we would raise money for the homeless."ddS
uch reflections lack political and moral focus and show signs of a lost opportu
nity. These two students are as capable as those
whose growth is described abov
e, but they were not given the chance to confront serious social issues head-on
. But it is interesting
that even students from these loosely structured progra
ms can see the potential in service. As one 17-year-old girl who spent a day
in

the District at So Others Might Eat, a program that feeds the homeless, told u
s: "If I were to do my service project again, I would
definitely change one asp
ect of it. I would try to interact with [homeless] people more often and more p
ersonally."

ddOur call for revision of the way the service requirement is implemented is st
imulated by the fear that when the impact of the
Maryland requirement is assess
ed, the mixed effects of diverse service programs will fall short of expectatio
ns. Poor results would
also play into the hands of critics of the idea of servi
ce. At that moment, the idea of service might be discarded as a costly but usel
ess

experiment. But service is only as effective as the program of which it is
part.

ddToday's young people are as competent and as ready to combat social ills and
advance democratic society as their parents and
grandparents were during World

War II or the civil rights era. It is our responsibility to afford them opportu
nities that engage their

minds and direct their energy. To maintain an ethical,
democratic state, individuals must act democratically with moral purpose.

Serv

ice is one means for the training of these practices. Surely we owe today's tal
ented youth the opportunity to become tomorrow's
responsible democratic citizen

s.

ddJames Youniss, of the Catholic University of America, and Miranda Yates, of t
he Menninger Foundation, are authors of
"Community Service and Social Responsib
ility in Youth" (University of Chicago Press).n

Headline#\ P}P# Student Loan RatesHeadline #:\ P}P#

Recent proposals to establish an auction of the right to make student loans a
s discussed in your June 5 editorial raise several
important issues you did not
address.

First is the assumption that the student loan marketplace is currently devoid
of competition. This is incorrect. In fact, competition
is so fierce that lenders

offer many incentives to borrowers, and over half of all borrowers either receive a discount on upfront fees
or are eligible for a reduction in interest rates based on making timely repayment.

Second, an auction may produce the lowest cost for the federal government but
not the best loan service for students and schools.

Under an auction system, students and schools will lose the opportunity to choose their student loan provider. An auction system
will eliminate the resources necessary for high-quality customer service and the technology to offer innovations, such as convenient online borrower access to account information.

The current student loan crisis was precipitated by a hastily conceived interest rate formula that experts now agree simply does
not work. To avoid repeating this mistake, federal policymakers should insist on a thorough study of market-based mechanisms for
determining student loan rates before taking any action.

JOE BELEW, President
Consumer Bankers Assn.
Arlington, Va.

Publication#W\ P}P# 84. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/16/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: OP-ED; Page A21

Headline#\ P}P# Toward Consensus On SchoolsHeadline #:\ P}P#
By E. J. Dionne Jr.

Perhaps you're as tired of "the education debate" as I am.
The subject, of course, is important. It matters to everyone who hopes to get
a good or better job, to anyone who has kids, to
employers who want workers who
know what they're doing.

But rarely is the debate about how to improve teaching. Usually, it rides political hobbyhorses "the dangers of "federal intrusion,"
the role of the teachers' unions, school choice programs and vouchers.

So it was refreshing to walk into a Senate office building last week and listen to people more interested in teachers than
hobbyhorses.

Consider the shortage of qualified instructors to teach math and science "not surprising in a high-tech economy where
mathematicians and scientists are in
great demand.

"Why would you teach mathematics for \$27,000 a year in San Jose when you can

walk across the street to a Silicon Valley firm?" and make three times as much, asked Kati Haycock. She is director of The Education Trust and was a lead speaker at the conference, organized by the centrist Progressive Policy Institute.

ddChester Finn, a former assistant secretary of education, suggested that schools could attract math teachers by paying them far more than teachers in fields where expertise is plentiful. Alternatively, Haycock said that the Silicon Valley mathematician might be encouraged to teach half-time and spend the other half of his working time in industry.ddBoth sensible ideas would require a more flexible education system " and taxpayers willing to pay for good math and science teachers.

ddOr take the problem of national standards. Using national tests to judge how well schools are doing makes perfect sense. But just say "national," and an army of politicians arises to thunder about the grave threats tests pose to "local control." Never mind that the tests would empower local parents to go to their local school board or their principal and demand that their local schools do better.

ddSen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) is for national testing. But as long as it's mired in ideology, he's pushing for a modest but sensible reform: Help move more qualified children into Advanced Placement courses.

ddAP courses, as they are known, embody what reformers extol: high standards in specific subjects, courses taught by teachers who know their field and national exams that test competence and knowledge. "The same people who are objecting to a voluntary national math test swell with pride when their own children do well on an AP exam," Bingaman said in an interview.

ddBingaman helped get \$3 million for this program last year, partly to pay for AP tests for low-income students. He says the federal government should spend more on this program, which combines the quest for social equity with the search for academic excellence.

ddAh, but do we have the teachers to teach the courses? Well, no. Many teachers teach subjects they know little about.

ddDiane Ravitch, a specialist on education issues, said that 36 percent of public school teachers have neither a major nor a minor in their main teaching field.

ddIn social sciences, 59 percent teach what they haven't studied. In natural sciences, it's 40 percent. The problem is worse in schools in low-income areas.

ddBut how do we set higher standards for teachers? Bingaman thinks one way is to end federal aid to schools of education from which fewer than 70 percent of graduates meet state licensing requirements. And teachers as well as students should be regularly tested.

ddBut wouldn't the teachers' unions go ballistic? One reason there's an opening

for reform is that the teachers' unions are worried
" about, among other thing
s, the spread of voucher programs (which won a victory when the Wisconsin Supreme Court last week
validated the constitutionality of vouchers in Wisconsin).
ddSandra Feldman, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, rejects
teacher bashing. "Teaching in the most difficult
places really is rocket science, it is brain surgery," she said in an interview. Fair enough. But she acknowledges that the quality of
teachers isn't high enough, especially in the toughest public schools. "If you can breathe, you can teach in most of these schools,
"

she says.
ddCan't we at least agree that we need more good teachers? That means honoring
them more than we do, paying them more,
especially in fields where there is a shortage. It also means looking beyond the education schools for teacher training and, yes, making
it easier to fire bad teachers. Feldman's mantra is: "We can't support schools that we wouldn't send our own children to." Every
teacher in
the country should want to be held to that standard.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 85. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/16/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 30, Column 5

Headline#\ P}P# Will Vouchers Ruin Public Schools?Headline #:\ P}P#
To the Editor:

ddYou assert (editorial, June 12) that the Wisconsin Supreme Court decision upholding a school voucher program "strikes at the
very heart of the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state." This is pure buncombe.
ddIn fact, the law allows the same thing through the charitable tax deduction.
Right now, one may donate money to religious
institutions, including churches and parochial schools, and deduct a percentage of it from one's taxes. This has
precisely the same
economic effect as a voucher program. This is constitutional
because the individual, not the government, chooses where the money
will go, thus making it religion-neutral.
ddJON P. BROSE
ddNew York, June 12, 1998
ddThe writer is a lawyer.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 86. The New Orleans Times-Picayune"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/14/98; Edition: THIRD; Section: METRO; Page B7

Headline#\ P}P# LET THE CHILDREN GO TO SCHOOLS OF
CHOICEHeadline #:\ P}P#

By Cal Thomas

Two businessmen, Ted Forstmann, a venture capitalist, and John Walton, heir to the huge Wal-Mart fortune, have pledged to raise

\$200 million that would allow at least 50,000 urban poor children to escape from failing public schools. Normally, this would be an ideal issue for liberals, who regularly wail against the "unfair advantages" enjoyed by "the rich." Not this time. The education establishment and the politicians who receive its political contributions think it's perfectly fine that kids can't read or write at grade level when they graduate from many of these schools. And the decay there is physical as well as intellectual and moral.

Forstmann and Walton have started what may turn out to be the greatest revolution in public education.

That there is a hunger for educational choice is beyond dispute. In New York City, 22,000 applications for the Choice Scholarship Program are received each year for the 1,000 slots available. In Washington, D.C., more than 7,000 applications were filed for about 1,000 scholarships. San Antonio has the first city-wide scholarship program for poor children, thanks to area businesses concerned

about the quality of employees they are getting from the government-funded and -controlled education system.

In wealthy Palm Springs, Calif., the Desert Sun reported last fall that for every 700 students enrolled at Palm Springs High School, 200 will drop out, 455 will receive their high school diploma and not enter college, 39 students will enter college and quit without graduating and just six students will graduate from college.

The education establishment predicted school choice wouldn't work and would drain public-school resources. They argued that more money is needed in a system that is already spending record amounts, but getting ever-lower returns on the public's investment.

If a mutual fund were performing as poorly as public schools, a good financial adviser would recommend the client to sell and find a better investment.

In Wisconsin, where school choice for low-income residents has been an option in some cities for more than seven years, and was affirmed June 10 by the state supreme court, even when the choice is for religious schools, the results are beginning to come in. Dr.

Howard Fuller, a former superintendent of the Milwaukee Public School system, says the magnitude of the improvements is so great he

recommends the choice program be expanded to new cities. Several studies from educational professionals indicate "quite large" gains in math achievement and reading. Surveys also indicate widespread parental satisfaction and more stability in attendance patterns.

A newer school-choice program in Cleveland shows similar academic gains, as well as markedly improved parental and child

satisfaction. In Milwaukee and Cleveland choice schools, academic achievement in several subjects improved dramatically after as little as three years in a new environment.

Only the teachers' unions and the politicians who need their votes and campaign money are upset. Unable to deny the evidence of improvement, many have taken to distorting the research and attempting to shut down choice experiments.

Professor Lawrence Stedman of the State University of New York illustrated the depth of the education problem for the minority community trapped in failed public schools. In a presentation last year to a Brookings Institution conference, Stedman said:

"(Twelfth-)grade black students are performing at the level of middle-school white students. . . . They lag four or more years behind in every area, (including) reading, math, science, writing, history and geography. Latino seniors do somewhat better than 8th-grade white students in math and writing but, in other areas, are also four years behind white 12th-graders."

While the federal government attempts to break up the alleged monopoly of the highly successful Microsoft, it tries to maintain a failing education monopoly.

Forstmann, Walton and their Choice Scholarship Program spell freedom and a future for students and parents who can't afford the "luxury" of private schools.

The politicians and education bureaucrats, who increasingly place their kids in private schools, want to leave poor children behind. Forstmann and Walton are like Moses crying to the education pharaohs: "Let these children go."

Cal Thomas is a syndicated columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

Publication#W\ P}P# 87. Greensboro News & Record"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/14/98; Edition: ALL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page F2

Headline#\ P}P# WE SHOULD DO WHAT WE CAN TO MOTIVATE STUDENTSHeadline #:\ P}P#

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I generally read the editorial page and have strong opinions about what I read there. A.R. Mayer struck a nerve with her criticism of the methods of rewarding a reading contest at Colfax School.

I applaud educators for doing whatever it takes to make children love to learn. The impressions that are made upon them at an early age will stay with them for the rest of their lives. If that impression is that learning can be fun, how motivating.

My son attends Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School in High Point. In February, our student body of about 280 children, K-8, won a radio promotion. The prize was an elaborate Eagle costume, which is our school mascot. Of course, the children and staff all felt a part of winning. Our principal, Frank McGrail

, was just as excited as the children. The radio station came for a live broadcast at a school assembly. After their departure, McGrail donned the costume and led our pep rally. After returning to his office, he suffered a massive heart attack and never regained consciousness. He passed away the following week. What a wonderful legacy of learning and making it memorable that he left our school. We will miss him and his innovative methods. Education gives the keys to almost any dream a child could ever have. Linda O'Connor High Point
Publication#W\ P}P# 88. The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star"Publication" #
:\ P}P# 06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: COMMENTARY; Page J3

Headline#\ P}P# BOOKS A KEY TOOL TO TEACHING BOYS
EMPATHYHeadline #:\ P}P#
By BILL RUEHLMANN

Amid the bleak crescendo of recent reports about boys and bullets appeared a sensible observation by Malcolm Watson, the Brandeis University psychology professor who studies aggression and toy gunplay. "Giving a kid a toy gun isn't the worst thing in the world," he said in a wire story "But it's not the best. Give him something that will teach him to be assertive, not aggressive." May I suggest a book? By making it possible for us to live extra lives, books encourage empathy. Books comfort us with the revelation that whatever particularly devastating situation we find ourselves in, somebody else has been there, done that, and actually survived. Books acquaint us with alternatives to violence. Also the consequences of it. Discerning suggestions for such useful volumes abound in Great Books for Boys : More than 600 Books for Boys 2 to 14 by Kathleen Odean (Ballantine Books, 384 pp., \$12.95). She is the longtime children's librarian and former member of the Caldecott and Newbery Award committees who supplied us with Great Books for Girls two years ago. In that selection, she sought titles featuring active females. In this one, she pursues entries that celebrate feeling males. "We are raising more girls who expect to work outside the home and be financially responsible as well as to take care of families and relationships," writes Odean, "but we continue to raise most boys as if their responsibilities as adults will end with their paychecks. We try to teach them to be competent and competitive, but we don't emphasize compassion and cooperation." It is possible to win without becoming insufferable; it is possible to lose without wreaking havoc. Honest, kids - professional sports to the contrary.

ddA typical Odean endorsement:

ddKonigsburg, E. L. The View from Saturday. 1996. Hardcover: Simon & Schuster. Paperback: Atheneum. Ages 10-13.

dd"Three boys and a girl tell the story of their eventful sixth-grade year, when they became friends and won a state Academic Bowl.

Noah accidentally serves a

s best man at the wedding of two old people - Nadia's grandfather and Ethan's grandmother. Nadia, whose parents are divorced, helps rescue baby turtles and take them to the Sargasso Sea.

dd"Ethan emerges from his quiet self when he is befriended by Julian, a newcomer to town, who draws the four together. The four distinct personalities express

a range of feelings as they describe changes in their lives. Answers to the difficult Academic Bowl

questions are at the back of the book, a nice touch."

ddHere's another:

ddFine, Anne. Step by Wicked Step. 1996. Hardcover: Little, Brown. Paperback: Dell. Ages 9-12.

dd"Three boys and two girls, who are schoolmates but not close friends, find a book labeled 'Richard Clayton Hardwick. Read and weep.' After they read Richard

's story about running away from his harsh stepfather, each of them tells a story about difficult changes in their families.

dd"The stories illustrate difficulties that divorce can cause children who find themselves with two homes, or an absent father, or unwanted new siblings and

stepparents. But in telling their stories, the children notice that other people in their lives, especially their new stepparents are also facing problems.

dd"As one child says to another, 'Everyone thinks that they're the only one,' but they feel a bit less alone after listening to each other, and readers with

similar family upheavals may feel the same."

ddOdean doesn't expect anybody to transform their children overnight by suddenly pushing these volumes at them.

ddShe suggests beginning by letting your kids see you read.

ddFollow up by reading to them. Leave appealing titles lying around the house.

And encourage them to hunt down a few of their own.

ddDo not criticize what they pick.

ddGoosebumps to Gulliver, ultimately it will teach them at least two things.

ddOne: Books rock.

ddTwo: Real men read books.

ddTake your son off the firing line and get him into a library.

Publication#W\ P}P# 89. The New Orleans Times-Picayune"Publication"#:\ P}P# 06/15/98; Edition: THIRD; Section: METRO; Page B04

Headline#\ P}P#GOING BACK TO EDUCATION BASICS GOOD SIGNHeadline#:\ P}P#

RE: the June 7 article, "Teacher's drills are raising scores."

ddThe return of the "direct instruction method" to our schools is much welcomed

ddTeaching fundamentals in a rigorous manner by repetitious drills may sound unsophisticated and old-fashioned, but it works.

However, the author points out that there is opposition.

ddThe author quotes Kenneth Goodman, a language, reading and culture professor critical of the method, as saying it's "rather psychology on poor, minority children. It's one that middle-class parents wouldn't stand for."

ddAs a middle-class parent, I beg to differ. I think most middle-class parents would be thrilled to know their children were being drilled in the basics known as reading, writing and arithmetic.

ddOur schools have become overwhelmed by revisionist relativity where there are no absolutes. We wonder why we are raising a generation of young people who can surf the net but can't compose a sentence.

ddOne does not contemplate the universe and how we relate to it without understanding fundamentals. A basic knowledge of math, spelling, grammar and phonics is the foundation on which a higher order of education is built, not vice versa.

ddThe opposition to this traditional teaching method further proves how far off track our educational system has become. I think we should applaud any effort that moves our primary schools back to being places of fundamental learning rather than places of political and social experiments.

ddMarlin Mullins

ddHammond

Publication#W\ P}P# 90. Buffalo News"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: VIEWPOINTS; Page H5

Headline#\ P}P# PROBLEM COLLEGE DRINKING IS ROOTED IN HIGH SCHOOLHeadline #:\

P}P#

By BARBARA ARRIGO

Alcohol and kids, again.

ddCollege drinking is the hot topic these days, but I think we're fooling ourselves if we target college drinking as the whole problem or even the primary problem.

ddCollege drinking rates are not all that much bigger than high school drinking rates. So a big part of the problem is that we're sending experienced drinkers off to college, and the worst of it is that kids seem to be developing their drinking patterns at dangerously young ages.

ddIf you want to fight alcohol consumption by minors, home is the place to do it, in the communities where they live before we send them off to college. And I

don't mean by beating up on the kids with even more laws and penalties for minors in possession. Let's start by making sure we've cut off their supplies to

he best of our ability.

ddMichigan's experiment with allowing 18-year-olds to drink, from 1972 through 1978, was a disaster, according to most people's recollection, including my own

. Far too much alcohol was finding its way into high schoolers' hands. I wonder if we've ever

recovered the ground we lost then.

ddSurveys show a pretty steady decline in teen drinking since the mid-'70s. Unfortunately, the surveys didn't begin until 1975, midway through the age-18 expe

riment here and in some other states. There is no way to know what the rates were before the

drinking age was lowered.

ddMy guess, though, is that we're still not back to where we were pre-1972. That's certainly the perception of parents, who see enormous peer pressure on kids

to drink and evidence that drinking is a major social activity these days. If it has lessened, I'm glad

I didn't have teen-agers in the 1970s.

ddBut even if there has been some improvement, there are good reasons to keep a very strong focus on drinking among

high-schoolers and " what's really appalli

ng " among middle-schoolers. In the last survey, 25 percent of eighth-graders said they

had had a drink in the last 30 days; 8 percent said they had been drunk in the last 30 days.

ddAnyone who starts drinking that young is a tragedy waiting to happen. One recent study links the age at which drinking begins with the development of alcoho

l-related problems. The results are mind-boggling: More than 40 percent of the people who began

drinking at age 14 (the age of a typical eighth-grader) or you

nger had been diagnosed with alcohol dependence at some point in their lives. T

hat percentage dropped steadily with each year of delay in the onset of drinking.

ddSome observers also believe that alcoholism, if it is going to occur, develops more rapidly when a drinker starts young. And once alcohol becomes a routine method of coping with life, emotional growth is often stunted.

ddThat can mean a lifetime of physical and emotional problems, and that's not even getting into the links between substance abuse and encounters with the poli

ce, or between substance abuse and lousy schoolwork.

ddSo it is really horrifying to know that a quarter of 14-year-olds say they have had a drink in the past 30 days, and that three-quarters think booze is easy

to get.

ddI worry a lot these days about the way children are seen as a market to exploit, and not as a group to shelter until maturity and good judgment develop.

ddIn terms of keeping them away from booze, I think we just about have to reinvent the wheel. For starters, we need to shame anyone and everyone " especially

retailers, but also older siblings and friends or parents (heaven forbid!) " wh

o help an underage drinker
get booze. Ask yourself who is making money off our
kids?
ddI know I probably seem too complacent about college drinking. I believe it is
a problem, especially when it turns into binge
drinking. But I also believe it
requires incremental, patient effort because of its long history.
ddEighth-grade drinking " or even the presumably lower level of 10th- and 12th-
grade drinking " doesn't qualify as historic. Let's
fight the battle here.

BARBARA ARRIGO is a columnist for the Detroit Free Press.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 91. Wisconsin State Journal"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/14/9
8; Edition: All; Section: OPINION; Page 2B

Headline#\ P}P# TWO VIEWS ON THE SCHOOL CHOICE RULING Headline #:\ P}P#Subhe
ad#[\ P}P# WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS WHO ARE LEFT BEHIND BY VOUCHER
SYSTEM?

Subhead#:\ P}P# By Terry Craney

It's the morning after for supporters of religious school vouchers.
ddHaving won the state Supreme Court ruling they so aggressively pursued, they
may be waking up to the question: "What have
we done?"
ddProponents of school vouchers have said their main goal is to improve Milwauk
ee Public Schools. Now they must accept
responsibility for the impact of this p
rogram on the achievement of the 90,000-plus students who continue to attend MP
S.
ddHere's what they face:
dd*Because of the extensive educational challenges resulting from the high pove
rty rate among students, Milwaukee's public school
district needs more resource
s than other districts but has fewer. A recent study found that class sizes in
kindergarten through fifth
grades in Milwaukee are 23 percent higher than state
wide averages.
dd*State-imposed revenue controls already have forced Milwaukee to make drastic
cuts in education programs.
dd*If the voucher program isexpanded to 15,000 students, Milwaukee will lose mi
llions of dollars in tax funds over time.
dd*As a result, class sizes will increase even more, building decay will accele
rate, and technology will fall even further behind. This
shift of funding will
create a new form of separate and unequal education.
ddResearch has found no evidence that the voucher program increases student ach
ievement even among participants, much less those
left behind.
ddBut the point is this: The success or failure of the voucher program will not
be measured by the achievement of students who move
to private and religious s
chools at taxpayers' expense. It will be measured by the achievement of student
s left behind in a severely
underfunded, deteriorating and sadly neglected publ

ic school system.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 92. The Atlanta Journal -Constitution"Publication" #:\ P}
P# 06/14/98Section: Editorial; Page D;08

Headline#\ P}P# Bilingual education Painful lessonHeadline #:\ P}P#
FOR THE JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

Regarding Cynthia Tucker's column "English-first bias hampers education" (June 7): I resent being called narrow-minded by someone who hasn't had children go through the farce of bilingual education. My children experienced that educational morass in

Southern California; one daughter had to receive outside tutoring because the Spanish-speaking children in the class received the bulk of the

attention while her skills suffered. This "reflects a desire to improve education"?

My children were not foreign-born, yet because we have a Spanish surname, they were placed in those classes and taught in

Spanish, then English. We pulled our

children from these classes and placed them in private school.

It's the stuff you're made of that determines your success, not bilingual education or busing or any other failed program. JOHN

C. VELARDE, Sharpsburg Stop

coddling immigrants I am an anesthesiologist who practices in Santa Cruz, Calif., a small,

agricultural/resort community. We have a large Hispanic population

with a high percentage of people who speak only Spanish.My Spanish-speaking patients want to know the risks of anesthesia for their 3-year-old child who is

undergoing surgery. They

want to know how to fill out job applications or welfare

forms. They want to be able to call up the principal and tell him about a gang

problem at their children's school. When these crises arise, they discover

that they don't have the skills. The majority of them don't

because they've been

led astray, coddled into a sense of injudicious comfort by a well-intentioned

, paternalistic system. Tucker

seems to assume that those of us who voted to

end bilingual education are some sort of Anglo-central chauvinists. This is incorrect.

We have realized that the present system isn't working. Too many people

have this aristocratic attitude that if those "poor immigrants"

are put in a

sink-or-swim language program, they will fail. They won't. They are as smart as we are.

Dr. CARLISLE PERCIVAL, Aptos, Calif.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 93. Wisconsin State Journal"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/15/98; Edition: ALL; Section: OPINION; Page 7A

Headline#\ P}P# WHO IS REALLY BEHIND 'SCHOOL CHOICE'
DRIVE?Headline #:\ P}P#

What does "school choice" really mean and who is pushing it? Sounds to me like

e a gimmick to divert public education tax dollars
to parochial schools.

ddMaybe a survey is in order to determine the religious affiliation of the supp
orters of "school choice." We know where Gov.

Tommy Thompson stands and why. I

want my tax dollars to go to public schools.

ddLloyd J. Paust, Columbus

dd

Thompson's ambitions are behind 'choice' push

ddWisconsin now has the honor of leading the nation in anti-abortion legislatio
n and government funding for religious schools.

Where is this coming from? Gov.

Tommy Thompson, who is running for president, and who needs the support of the
religious right.

ddWe cannot afford to leave this issue to the American Civil Liberties Union. G
iven half a chance, the religious right will overthrow

all our freedoms and rep

lace them with a corrupt and sanctimonious Christian dictatorship.

ddSteve Eardley, Madison

Publication#W\ P}P# 94. Wisconsin State Journal"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/15/9
8; Edition: ALL; Section: OPINION; Page 7A

Headline#\ P}P# SCHOOL CHOICE? THAT'S NOT NEWHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Donald P. Schmitz

The governor and the legislators of Wisconsin have received much state and ev
en national acclaim for their latest innovative idea
" school choice.

ddWell, I hate to spoil the fun and games, but school choice, especially in thi
s state, is as old as the hills.

ddFrom 1848 to 1962 there were hundreds of small, rural schools (little red sch
oolhouses), and thousands of students in those
schools, that had complete schoo

l choice when it came to high school. They simply didnot belong to any high sch
ool district.

ddThe students could go to any high school, but, naturally, they chose one that
was near enough so that they would be picked up
by one of their buses.

ddEvery spring, we superintendents, would go out to these little schools to try
to persuade the eighth grade students to come to our
high school. Sometimes as

many as three or four schools were close enough to these rural schools so that
all of these superintendents

made a trip or trips to meet these students.

ddThere were quite a few factors that helped these eighth graders and parents c
hoose a high school. Certainly, proximity was one
factor. Others were: where th

eir parents had attended, co-curricular offerings (athletics, music, etc.), bes
t superintendent judged by

his presentation. But, believe it or not, course off

erings were not much of a factor. We certainly tried to tell them all the acade
mic

offerings we had, but it just wasn't that big of a deal.

ddFinally, in the late 1940s, someone in the Legislature offered a bill to make

every student in this state part of a kindergarten through grade 12 school district. The rural people fought this tooth and nail. Not only were they satisfied with the educational set-up of their children but they didn't want to lose the center of their community. As so often happens, the first time this bill was presented it was overwhelmingly defeated. But legislators kept bringing it up every year until it passed around 1960. Since 1962 we have had all K-12 districts

except for about 10 union free high schools. So you see it is another of the brilliant new ideas that really just corrects what was done a little over 25 years ago. Whether school choice is good or not will have to be decided by each individual situation. My personal opinion, based on over 40 years in education and as the father of seven children who attended Wisconsin schools, is: If a child attends school on a regular basis, is willing to work and has parents or guardians who care and encourage him, then that student can go to any school in this state and receive a good education.

Publication#W\ P}P# 95. Chicago Tribune"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/14/98; Edition: CHICAGOLAND FINAL; C; Section: COMMENTARY; Page 21

Headline#\ P}P# SKIMMING OFF THE BEST STUDENTS HARMS THE RESTHeadline #:\ P}P #

By Joan Beck.

Hold the applause for the decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to allow Milwaukee to spend tax dollars to send children to parochial as well as non-sectarian private schools in a pioneering voucher system. The legal controversy isn't settled. And the

education benefits are still small and largely theoretical.

The Wisconsin high court carefully constructed its decision to meet the three criteria set by the U. S. Supreme Court in 1971 in

1st Amendment cases involvi

ng separation of church and state. But the ruling will certainly be appealed by civil rights groups and

teachers' unions"a move that voucher supporters welcome

and expect to win. There are many more parochial than private schools and unl

ess they can be included in voucher programs, opportunities for children to transfer will be far more limited.

Small, privately funded voucher programs are now in operation in 56 cities. Many of them give families only \$1,500 or \$2,000

to help pay for private school

tuition. Other programs may provide a voucher worth the full tuition cost of the private school or the

amount the public school would have spent on the student

in public school, taking the money out of the public school's budget.

The controversy over church-state issues in the Milwaukee case is of major importance and the Wisconsin decision may reflect

a relaxing of legal strictures

against the use of public money for religious activities and a less stringent definition of the separation

of church and state. Similar cases are pending in the supreme courts of Maine, Ohio, Arizona and Vermont.

But apart from that, there are still major problems with the concept of school vouchers that remain to be resolved. Here, for

example, are 10 good arguments

for vouchers and eight even better reasons to oppose the idea.

The case for vouchers:

1. By providing money that allows parents to transfer children to a private school of their choice, a voucher system is supposed

to bring free-market competition

to ailing public schools and force them to improve or close.

2. Parents who have a choice for their children get more involved in their education.

3. Private schools can escape much of the cumbersome and stifling regulations imposed by government. They have more freedom

to try new ideas, be more innovative

and creative.

4. Children shouldn't be forced into a one-size-fits-all education that may not be appropriate for their needs. A private school may

serve a youngster's need

better than the public school to which he is assigned.

5. Academic achievement improves for children when they transfer to a private school with the help of vouchers"although the

measurable difference seems to be

slight.

6. The total costs of education per child may be less in many private schools than in public schools"often because teachers are

paid less, administration expenses

are lower, there is more competition and tuition rates have to be based on market factors. But data

are conflicting.

7. Discipline problems are fewer in private schools because they can be selective, don't have to take kids with behavior problems

and get more cooperation from

parents. Even if a voucher system can't save all at-risk kids, it can help some.

8. Parents can choose a school that closely links their child's education with their religious faith, strengthening their own family

and value system in a way

that public schools cannot or do not.

9. Education is so important that poor parents should have the same choices that rich families do; if President Clinton could send

Chelsea to private school, the

same option should be available to everyone.

10. With more power to influence their child's school, parents could insist on higher achievement standards, more emphasis on

academics and more individual

accountability.

Arguments against vouchers:

1. Vouchers can provide for only a small percentage of the children in ailing public schools. Essentially, it's a triage system that

helps only students of

parents determined and savvy enough to work the system.

dd2. There is no good evidence that poor schools who are losing students can or do improve under a voucher system. They may get worse if their best students and most motivated parents bail out, taking tax dollars with them. As Richard Riley, secretary of education, has said, when a school is failing, it's no solution to give vouchers to 50 kids and leave 500 behind; the answer is to fix the whole school.

dd3. With private schools creaming off the best students, those who have to remain in public schools will be disproportionately the less able students, those with special needs or those who are discipline problems, many of whom have higher-than-average education costs.

dd4. Public schools are supposed to help provide a common ground for Americans and unify a diverse people. Allowing a large number of students to opt out undermines this democratic goal.

dd5. Some private schools, able to start up or expand rapidly with tax-paid vouchers and free from much government regulation, could provide even worse education than bad public schools or teach doctrine far out of the American mainstream.

dd6. Including parochial schools does shift public tax dollars to religious institutions, despite the ploy of giving vouchers to parents and not directly to the schools, however the Wisconsin Supreme Court justified it. Helping hard-pressed Catholic schools which educate so many inner-city poor children cost-effectively is appealing. But the decision could prompt the growth of schools run by religious groups far outside the American mainstream.

dd7. With fewer students in public schools, voter support for education could decrease, seriously cutting into school funding and reducing public commitment to education.

dd8. Efforts to design and implement a nationwide voucher program siphons off time, good will, money and energy that should go to finding better solutions to school problems that will help all children.

Publication#W\ P}P# 96. Los Angeles Times"Publication" #:\ P}P#* 06/14/98; Edition: Orange County Edition; Section: Metro; Editorial Writers Desk; Page B-11

Headline#\ P}P# Counselors Should Never DiscourageHeadline #:\ P}P# ddCongratulations to Nikki Pinkerton on her personal triumph over the public school system ("The Healing Power of Time," May 21).

ddThe qualifier "insensitive," applied to her high school guidance counselor, was generous. This person was incompetent, not to mention arrogant, sexist and elitist.

ddIt is the responsibility of the public school system and all its employees to help every student realize and reach his or her potential by always challenging them to think beyond limitations.
 ddSometimes that means pushing students to achieve at higher levels because they do not have high enough expectations for themselves. Sometimes that means supporting students as they move through the system and run into roadblocks. And sometimes it means painting a realistic picture of what it will take to realize one's dreams.
 ddIn no case does it mean to lower expectations, throw up roadblocks or destroy dreams. To have told any student to dummy-down on a dream would be grounds for dismissal, in my book. But to intimate that a student with a 4.0 average in accelerated classes was getting beyond her station in life is criminal.
 ddPeople working in education have incredible power to influence children, and guidance counselors are positioned to play a particularly important role.
 ddThe saddest part of the story is that there are many more students who, as a result of "insensitivity," have "dropped out," thinking that they were failures, when in fact it was the system that failed them.
 ddJULI QUINN
 ddSeal Beach

Publication#W\ P}P# 97. The Nation"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 29, 1998

ddHeadline#\ P}P# School's Out Headline #:\ P}P#By Katha Pollitt
 ddAnother semester down the drain, which means the Last Marxist won't be moaning on the couch on Tuesday nights as he reads his students' papers. This term, in addition to his usual philosophy courses, he was handed a class in basic composition "punctuation, paragraphing, organizing ideas or, as he put it, "how to write more than one sentence at a time." His students came from Korea, China, Taiwan, Bulgaria, Nigeria and the Greek and Italian communities of Long Island, a place with its own distinctive folkways and vernacular. In expressivity, inventiveness and charm, the foreign-born students outshone the homegrown ones. Of course, their English was problematic, but they worked hard and it got better. In fact, everyone improved, even the Long Islanders. At semester's end, the L.M. handed out an assortment of grades, reminded everyone to observe the serial comma rule and sent his students off to seek their fortunes.
 ddThis was a course for credit, offered without controversy or apology at an expensive (if unprestigious) private university; it was roughly equivalent to what I remember of Mrs. Elliston's ninth-grade English class, and to courses, sometimes called remedial and

sometimes called Freshman Composition or disguised as English 101, taught for credit at public and private colleges all over America

. But not, beginning next year, at the ten four-year colleges in the City University of New York system, whose board, acting at the behest of Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki, has just voted to ban them. Students accepted into CUNY will have to pass placement tests in reading, writing and math or be shunted off to remediate themselves at the system's community colleges, which are already overcrowded, or in no-credit summer crash courses, which will cost CUNY millions and do not yet exist. Nobody knows exactly how this will work, but overnight, CUNY, with its huge population of mostly working-class, immigrant and minority students, almost all of whom are working and many of whom are women with children, is supposed to become one of the most rigorous and inflexible undergraduate programs in the country. If you are ten years out of high school and have forgotten your algebra or, like many recently arrived Asian immigrants, are struggling with English but doing fine in the universal language of mathematics, you will be turned away.

Behind the CUNY reforms is a stereotype of its students as lazy underachievers fluent in Spanglish, Ebonics and welfare fraud, and of CUNY as a no-standards

free-for-all, with students taking half their lives to graduate. Never mind that "open admissions" hasn't existed since 1976; that even in its heyday students who had less than an 80 average were steered into the community colleges; that

the time-to-graduate rate (six years) is well within the national norm; that CUNY students pay in tuition and fees (\$3,200 a year) a higher proportion of the actual costs of their education than students at most other public universities. Never mind, either, that

CUNY students don't prep at Exeter.

Is it unfortunate that students have to learn basic math and English skills in college? Of course. Ask any professor, though, and you'll find that poor preparation is hardly limited to CUNY freshmen. For a lot of reasons, ranging from too much TV to teachers'

overreliance on multiple-choice tests, too many kids "and I mean well-off suburban kids "enter college without knowing how to write a

paper, how to think about a poem or story, how to spell "much less use the serial comma. "Think of freshman year as a kind of extra year of high school," a colleague of mine advised me when I was teaching freshman comp at an elite college a few years ago,

"because that's what it really is now."

Mayor Giuliani argues that high school is the place to acquire the necessary skills for college. In the abstract, sure. But this is the

same man who has slashed the public school budget, who supported Governor Pataki's veto of state funds for building new city schools, who tried to use public funds to send low-achieving students to private and parochial schools, and who, when informed that the Constitution disallowed that plan, helped raise the money privately. This is also the mayor who wants to cut \$15 million from the public library budget while giving \$65 million in city funds to the Museum of Modern Art, a private institution already swimming in money. For the city's poorest and newest students, the bar is being raised, while simultaneously the rug is pulled out from underneath.

Told about a Vietnamese immigrant student who might never have succeeded at CUNY under the new rules, Herman Badillo, the once-"progressive" city politician who has spearheaded the campaign for the new rules, brushed aside concern. The young man had "drive," he told the New York Times, and people like that always rise to the challenge. Maybe so. But should you have to have the makings of an Olympic athlete or a Nobel Prizewinner to go to college? Maybe there are some people whom nothing can deter from their goals. Maybe Herman Badillo is one of those people. But why should a society make education a test of iron determination, like climbing K2? What about all the people who are less like Herman Badillo and more like my grandmother, who dropped out of night school in 1921, bewildered by math class and ashamed of her imperfect English, and for the rest of her life felt unable to claim for herself the education she revered in others?

My grandmother knew Yiddish, Polish, Russian, German, Hebrew and English. She was the only girl in her shtetl to go to high school, and brought all her siblings safely through World War I after her mother died. If a woman like this could be made to feel unworthy of a seat in the classroom, maybe it's easier than Badillo thinks to discourage people who haven't been raised to see college as their birthright.

Publication#W\ P}P# 98. Salon"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 15, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Fight the power! Headline #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# HOW A CONSERVATIVE RADIO HOST IS BATTLING THE LEFTIST LOCK ON THE AMERICAN ACADEMY. Subhead#:\ P}P#

By David Horowitz

It's graduation time on America's college campuses. As these rites of passage scroll across C-SPAN, it's also a time to reflect on the near total domination of the left over our institutions of higher learning " a political control of a

academic life unprecedented in the history of our democracy.

ddTypical was the ceremony at the University of Michigan, whose invited speaker was racial extremist Mamphela Ramphele, a leader of South Africa's "black consciousness" movement. The four previous graduations at Michigan featured Hillary Rodham Clinton, Children's Defense Fund President and friend of Hillary Clinton, liberal cartoonist Cathy Guisewite and leftist educator Johnnetta Cole. By contrast, notable conservatives like Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman, thinker and writer William F. Buckley, bestselling novelist Tom Clancy and Supreme Court Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas were passed over not only by Michigan but by all 3,000-plus colleges and universities across the land.

ddEven greater political bias was revealed in university hiring practices. As the Wall Street Journal noted recently, the number of registered Democrats on the faculty of the University of Colorado exceeded the registered Republicans by 32-1. There was not a single Republican or conservative at Colorado in the English, psychology, journalism, philosophy, women's studies, ethnic studies and lesbian and gay studies departments. This in a state where Republicans outnumber Democrats by more than 100,000 voters and account for six of the eight members of its congressional delegation.

ddBased on my personal experience, I would guess this situation is fairly typical of colleges across the land. At the 75 college campuses I have spoken at in the last few years "in every region of the country, at state schools, private schools, religious schools and technical schools, I have found that the number of professors who are conservative in their outlook usually amounts to a mere handful. And I found them to be more isolated, more hesitant to express their views and more restricted in their opportunities for scholarly advancement than communist and pro-Soviet professors were in the McCarthy period.

ddOf the 75 colleges at which I spoke, only three invited me officially. By contrast, communists like Angela Davis and racial extremists like Kwame Ture (the former Stokely Carmichael) and the Nation of Islam's infamous Khalid Muhammad are regularly asked to speak by university administrators and student governments, and paid handsome sums to do so. This spring, Davis, whose reported fee is \$10,000, was the featured official speaker at the University of Chicago's Martin Luther King Day commemorations.

Conservatives like myself, by contrast, have to rely on small conservative student groups for invitations and off-campus organizations for expenses. Wherever I go, I ask the students who invite me how many conservative professors are available to be their official

campus advisors. Their answers invariably are: two or three. That is, two or three who are willing to identify themselves openly as conservatives.

This situation did not happen by accident. It is the result of calculated political hiring practices, systematic exclusion and an atmosphere of political intimidation to a degree seen only in communist, fascist and theocratic dictatorships. In this case, however, the state is not the enforcer of political orthodoxy. It is leftist faculty members.

The resulting intellectual environment has been described by literary critic Harold Bloom as "Stalinism without Stalin." ("All of the traits of the Stalinists in the 1930s and 1940s are being repeated in the universities in the 1990s," Bloom observed.) One faculty advisor to the College Republicans at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, Calif., put it another way in a letter to the Wall Street Journal:

"Republican faculty members operate on a 'don't ask, don't tell' basis to the best of our ability. At official faculty meetings, Democratic fund-raising requests, political buttons, bumper stickers and petitions are very publicly circulated, putting non-tenured faculty in a very difficult position."

After the letter-writer says she was "outed" as a non-liberal, a department colleague told her, "We would never have hired you if we'd known you were a Republican."

This situation is now being challenged in a suit brought against the University of California at Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism by Michael Savage, a top-rated and outspokenly conservative radio talk show host in the Bay Area. Savage also has a Ph.D., two master's degrees and 18 published works to his credit. Last year, Savage applied for the dean's job at the journalism school, which was advertised in the New York Times. Despite his qualifications, Savage says he was quickly informed by the chairman of the search committee, sociology professor Troy Duster, that he would not even be interviewed for the job.

Duster happens to be an old acquaintance of mine, a Berkeley radical who, clearly, has not had significant second thoughts.

The candidate actually selected for the deanship was Orville Schell, another old radical friend. Schell does not have a Ph.D., and although he was for many years a staff writer for the New Yorker and has written several critically praised books on China, his chief occupation before he acquired the deanship appeared to be operating a cattle ranch he then co-owned in Bolinas, just north of San Francisco.

Schell was what I used to call a Gucci Marxist; his chief credential for the

Berkeley deanship seems to be that he has similar politics as Duster and the faculty powers who control journalism school appointments. Savage believes that the placement of the advertisement in the New York Times was little more than a sham to cover a decision already made to hire a political comrade for the position.

Savage decided to fight. He turned to the Individual Rights Foundation (a public interest law group I created) for help. The legal director of the IRF, Patrick Manshardt, filed suit against the University of California Regents and also against Duster "both as an individual and in his capacity as chairman of the journalism school's search committee. The case rests on two contentions. The first is that the manner of Schell's appointment constitutes political patronage, which is illegal under the labor laws of the state of California. The second is that the political litmus test for the deanship is a violation of Savage's First Amendment rights, in this case that one may not be excluded from public employment because of political ideas.

The Savage case will perform a public service if it succeeds in highlighting the current political subversion of America's institutions of higher learning.

In today's polluted academic atmosphere, "Afrocentric" racists can expound theories of blood destiny and "queer theorists" can defend reckless sexual practices in the face of a mortal epidemic; and they can do so with the imprimatur and all the resources at the university's disposal. And while such charlatans and extremists control entire departments and liberal arts faculties, conservative scholars are treated as pariahs.

The politicization of the university and the debasement of the academic calling is a national disgrace. Savage's suit is a small but meaningful step toward the restoration of democracy and institutional integrity to the nation's university culture.

Publication#W\ P}P# 99. St. Paul Pioneer Press"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 15, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# State on right path with testsHeadline #:\ P}P#

There's encouraging news in a recent statewide Minnesota poll on student testing. Most responses show a lot of common sense.

The poll, done by the Pioneer Press, KARE 11 and Minnesota Public Radio, found that 65 percent of Minnesotans endorse statewide basic skills testing. People think these tests are one important measure of schools' effectiveness. I agree.

Some education groups strongly resisted statewide tests. They felt that the tests could narrow the curriculum and promote unfair

comparisons among schools.

These are important concerns " but so far the fears seem to be unfounded.

ddMany schools are concentrating more on helping youngsters master academic skills. The tests showed thousands of Minnesota

students needed more work on under

standing what they read and completing story problems in math. The state exams also showed

it wasn't just inner-city youngsters who needed more practice. Thou

sands of young people in suburban and rural parts of the state

also had problem

s with the tests.

ddThe results also reminded Minnesotans about the value of small schools. Every

year some of the highest passing rates have been

in rural areas with many low-

and moderate-income families.

ddCommon sense and statewide policy are helping ensure that schools won't just concentrate on reading, writing and math.

Educators, parents and the broader co

munity want schools to do more. Those views helped shape the Profile of Learning, the

second part of Minnesota's new high school graduation requirements.ddIn

order to graduate, students must pass basic skills tests. But they also are ex

pected to demonstrate skills and knowledge in other

areas, including research,

history, art and science.

ddIt's been tough making these requirements clear and comprehensive. But we've

developed a pretty good set of expectations. The

Legislature allocated millions

of dollars to give teachers time to revise curriculums to help students meet t

he mandates.

ddA second major result of the poll is that Minnesotans are deeply split about

whether schools should get rewards or be penalized

just on the basis of the sta

tewide tests. Between 40 percent and 50 percent of the poll respondents support

these ideas, and

approximately equal percentages are opposed.

ddPut me on the opposed side. Experience in other states shows plenty of proble

ms if rewards are offered for higher scores. Many

more students were referred t

o special education classifications where they didn't have to take the tests. S

ome schools cheated. It was

a mess.

ddLooking at statewide tests is something like looking at cars' miles per gallo

n ratings. Most people want to know this, but we want

other information, too. T

hat's the direction Minnesota is moving in. I agree with most Minnesotans " we

're moving in the right

direction.

ddJoe Nathan is director of the Center for School Change at the University of M

innesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.n

Headline#\ P}P# VIOLENT ACTS FROM KIDS IS BEHAVIOR WE
ALLOWHeadline #:\ P}P#

To the Editor:

ddRecently, a 12-year-old and a 15-year-old were arrested and charged with reporting bomb threats in city schools that caused evacuations and disrupted classes.

ddThe reaction of the greater number of children to these threats was either complete uninterest or the enjoyment of no school.

ddTwo pre-teens in Arkansas stand accused of killing other children and an adult over a broken romance.

ddTwo pre-teen girls in Florida are gang raped by teen-age boys because, as the boys stated, the girls were wearing suggestive clothing.

ddA 9-year-old is accused of raping an 8-year-old at Delaware School.

ddA 6- or 7-year-old "beauty queen" is found murdered. Television coverage of her competition shows her on stage discarding one item of clothing at a time.

ddA child in Oregon is accused of killing other children because his school disciplined him. Witnesses report his face was "blank."

ddWhat has happened to our children? When did innocence give way to street-smart sophistication? Might the answer possibly be found in what we adults allow to be permissible behavior?

ddWe applaud the death penalty in the name of "justice" but are completely mystified when teens kill each other for the same ideal.

ddWe tell them smoking is physically and morally wrong, but guns are physically and morally OK. We allow sexually explicit television and advertising and wonder at the record number of teen pregnancies; why pregnancy has become a "badge" ; why young children physically understand what rape is.

ddWe buy them action figures whose characters murder, kidnap, vaporize, cannibalize and dismember, and these are the "good-guy" action figures. Watch a small child play a video game and listen to his reaction when one of the figures is annihilated.

ddWe have all heard that it takes a village to raise a child. But when the village shows tacit approval of unacceptable behavior, we cannot then condemn the child whose care is the responsibility of the village.

ddLet our children be children. Let them experience the innocence of childhood and the gradual growing into adulthood. The kids today will be our future. The question before us: What kind of future do we want?

ddELIZABETH TUCCI
ddSyracuse

Publication#W\ P}P# 101. Memphis Commercial Appeal "Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/13/98; Edition: Final; Section: Viewpoint; Page A9

Headline#\ P}P# TEEN VIOLENCE SPAWNED BY GUNS AND
CULTURAL ROTHeadline #:\ P}
P#

By Albert R. Hunt

ddTHERE has been a predictable political response after the rash of tragic killings by children at schools from Springfield, Ore., to Jonesboro, Ark.

ddLiberals cry for tougher gun control laws: If only these deranged youths didn't have easy access to guns, many of these atrocities wouldn't happen, they say.

ddConservatives place much of the blame on popular culture; Hollywood and television are overwhelmingly violence-oriented, the argument goes, and the music industry is a real villain for pandering to the worst instincts of kids by glorifying sexual obscenities and bestial brutality.

ddBoth arguments are exaggerations. Some of these teenage perpetrators don't fit into any stereotypes. Slate, Microsoft's always interesting on-line magazine, noted that Kip Kinkel, the teenager in Springfield who is charged with killing his parents and two schoolmates, came from a good family that tried to teach him how to use guns safely and didn't give him easy access. His only known enter

tainment vices were cartoons.

ddOthers are simply mentally unbalanced kids, a type that has always existed: Luke Woodham, the 17-year-old Pearl, Miss., kid who killed his mother and two classmates, testified that demons instructed him to do it.

ddMore important, however, both sides also make important points. There is room for common cause, say some diverse but very smart people who worry a lot about violence: politicians such as Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.) and Bill Bennett, a prominent

Republican, and scholars such as criminologist John Dilulio and psychiatrist Alvin Poussaint.

dd"The music pounds and pounds with messages of violence and degradation of women; if you talk to people on the streets, they will tell you this is public enemy number one," says Dilulio of Princeton University. But he also suggests that for any antiviolence

program to work, "you have to make it impossible for kids to get easy access to guns."

ddSimilarly, Poussaint, who teaches at Harvard, notes that easy access to guns "makes the problems much worse. Gun defenders say you could still murder with a

knife but one kid I was interviewing pointed out that you can't have a drive-by shooting with a

knife." But he also believes the culture's romanticization of violence - in movies, television and music - "certainly contributes to a gener

al disregard for authority; children see or hear this over and over again and they become a little bit more numb to violence."

ddLieberman and Bennett have teamed up to try to focus public scrutiny on what they term "cultural rot," ranging from gangster rap music to Jerry Springer's t

elevison show. They have embarrassed some major corporations, such as Seagram'

s, by spotlighting how they reap big profits from these obscenities. Bennett, the conservative icon, says: "It's just dumb not to recognize how dangerous it is to so easily put guns in kids' hands."

Of course there are larger societal problems. But while violence in general has declined over the last several years, it is rising among teenagers, and certainly any short-term efforts to address this should focus on both guns and popular culture.

Movie actor Charlton Heston, the new president of the National Rifle Association, insisted this week that the school shootings were "a child issue, not a gun issue." Does Heston think that the people killed near Jonesboro would have been just as vulnerable to a bow and arrow? Or does he believe the 4-year-old in Greensboro, N.C., who shot and killed his 6-year-old neighbor in April is a "child problem"?

Next week the most important antigun legislation of this session will be offered in Congress by Democratic Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, a suburban New York nurse and mother who got into politics after her husband was killed by a crazed gunman on a commuter train. The measure would crack down on dealers who sell to kids, require manufacturers to make safer guns and penalize adults who allow children easy access to a firearm that is then used to kill or injure someone.

The gun lobby, with its huge campaign contributions, is convinced Republican congressional leaders will thwart this initiative. They probably are right, but some politicians may pay a price, as did McCarthy's NRA-backing predecessor. Polls indicate strong support for such measures.

There's also a growing public backlash against the plethora of violent movies, television, video games and music. David Walsh, director of the National Institute on Media and the Family, notes that it's estimated the average American kid has seen 200,000 acts of violence on television by the time he or she graduates from high school. Try to take your kids to a movie that is devoid of violence or sex. Or just look at some of the graphic violence in the best-selling video games.

Nothing is more offensive than some of the music. After Mitchell Johnson, 13, and Drew Golden, 11, killed five people and injured 10 at Westside Middle School near Jonesboro, one of the teachers conducted an exhaustive survey. The results showed that Mitchell Johnson was a fanatical devotee of two gangster-rap artists, the late Tupac Shakur and Bone Thugs & Harmony. Both are full of vulgarity, are degrading to women and advocate blasting people with guns. In the three-school survey, a majority of kids

listened to these groups and said their parents didn't have a clue as to their lyrics.
ddBill Bennett and Joe Lieberman know there are clear First Amendment issues here and wisely don't advocate any bans. But they want to embarrass those who produce this trash. "The weapon of choice for our side is shame," says Bennett. "We have to be ashamed instead of this anything goes crap."
ddDefenders of this rot insist there is no reliable data that link violence to culture. That flies in the face of common sense. If Frank Sinatra songs make people feel romantic and John Philip Sousa makes people feel patriotic, then the obscene violence of shock rocker Marilyn Manson or gangsta rapper Snoop Doggy Dog might encourage impressionable and troubled teenagers to feel perverted or violent.
dd Albert R. Hunt is a political columnist for The Wall Street Journal.
n

Publication#W\ P}P# 102. Seattle Times"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 16, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Taking a strong stand for affirmative action Headline #:\ P}P#

MOST pollsters believe Initiative 200, the proposal to unravel affirmative action in this state, will win next November. But the predictable could become unpredictable if people like University of Washington President Richard McCormick continue to show guts and leadership on this touchy issue.
ddCarefully, yet with a degree of boldness, McCormick used his part of the commencement proceedings at Husky Stadium last weekend to speak in favor of affirmative action in education.
ddIn his third spring commencement address, the UW president accurately described affirmative action as "an imperfect but highly effective means for expanding opportunity, broadening the pool of people considered, opening doors that used to be closed."
ddToday's colleges and universities, he noted, have five-and-a-half times as many African Americans as they did 30 years ago. In the last two decades, the number of Native American students increased 76 percent; the number of Chicano-Latinos jumped 200 percent.
dd"Who wants to turn his or her back on this record of American achievement?" McCormick asked. "Who wants to return to a time when only advantaged white men could obtain the most prestigious university degrees or advance to the most respected and lucrative positions in our society? Who wants to live in a country where opportunity depends on your gender or your race. Not I - and I hope not you."
."

ddNot us and not the dean of the College of Engineering, either. Dean Denice De
nton praised McCormick's words, adding she would
not be where she is today with
out affirmative action.
ddSome advisers urged McCormick not to get involved. Jittery lawyers combed thr
ough his speech. He never mentioned the
initiative by name and never specifical
ly urged anyone to vote in a particular manner.
ddMcCormick proved, however, he understands the leadership role he plays in thi
s community. He is to be congratulated for
advancing the discussion and taking
an important stand.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 103. New York Post"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 16, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# A FINAL PUSH FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS Headline #:\ P}P#
With legislative adjournment looming, a key item on Gov. Pataki's election-year
agenda remains unresolved: parental choice on
public schools.

ddThere are no one-size-fits-all answers when it comes to failing public school
s, but charter schools - the subject of a Pataki bill
dominating the discussion
in Albany this week - must play a huge role in any urban-education rescue effo
rt.

ddThere is reason to hope that Pataki's bill might actually pass. Which raises
the question: Why is this so crucial for the future of
New York state's schoolc
hildren?

ddCharter schools are non-traditional public schools. Funded solely by tax doll
ars, by law they cannot discriminate in admissions
and are subject to the same
oversight that public schools receive.

ddBut, unlike public schools, a charter school can be shut down for failure to
meet the educational objectives set down in its
incorporating document - its "c
harter."

ddThirty other states - including New Jersey and Massachusetts - permit charter
schools (as does the nation's capital). While not
every such school has been -
to put it mildly - an unqualified success, overall they've established a respe
ctable track record.

ddThis success poses a potentially mortal threat to the status quo - and, in pa
rticular, to public-school teachers' unions.

ddPataki's bill has been bitterly criticized - in public - by the United Federa
tion of Teachers. Neither the Board of Education nor
Schools Chancellor Rudy Cr

ew has had much positive to say about the governor's bill. And, just yesterday,
Assembly Speaker

Sheldon Silver appeared to rule out passage of the measure be
fore the Legislature adjourns at week's end.

ddBut supporters of the plan privately express measured optimism concerning its
chances. And opponents privately concede that
some version of the measure may
indeed become law this year.

ddPataki has some leverage. He holds the key to restoring salary bonuses for teachers - which some union leaders desperately need to secure their futures with rank-and-file voters. If New York City could get charter schools, the teacher bonuses would be a small price to pay, even at a cost of \$75 million. ddRudy Crew also wants something Pataki can give - hundreds of millions in new school construction that were explicitly denied to the school system by a vote of the public in November. To this, the governor must say no, whatever the consequences.

ddSupporters of public-school reform should cross their fingers this week and wish Pataki well in the smoke-filled rooms of Albany.

Publication#W\ P}P# 104. Christian Science Monitor"Publication" #: \ P}P#June 16, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Saving Public Education Headline #: \ P}P# Public education, the melting pot for each next generation of Americans, is healthy in much of the nation. But where it fails it does so calamitously.

ddThat's usually in inner-city schools. So it's not surprising that all kinds of cures are proposed to help what are often the students and families least able to help themselves.

ddThose cures have included: (1) creation of specialized public magnet schools, and moves to install teacher and pupil performance tests; (2) addition of state-approved charter schools to compete with lagging public schools; (3) provision of government-funded vouchers that help pay tuition for students switching to private or parochial schools.

ddWe continue to feel that the first two of these three cures are useful to improving public education quality. The third, despite good intentions, is a recipe for rescuing some and dooming a majority. In short, a recipe for tilting America toward the class divisions that in the past plagued parts of Europe. Last week, the direction of the American educational system veered in this risky direction.

dd* The Supreme Court of Wisconsin upheld a Milwaukee voucher program that allows public dollars to flow to private and parochial schools.

dd* House and Senate conferees put final touches on a bill that would federally underwrite, to the tune of \$1.6 billion over 10 years, tax-free educational savings

accounts to encourage parents to send their children to private schools.

dd* Two wealthy businessmen announced a national scholarship fund that will match money raised locally to allow poor children to attend private or church-affiliated schools.

ddThis last item, we hasten to say, is of less concern than the first two. Private efforts to expand educational opportunity, in this case led by New York financiers,

ancier Theodore Forstmann and Wal-Mart heir John Walton, deserve praise. But their decision to direct the aid exclusively toward private or parochial schooling adds to a picture that should give the public pause, for two reasons. First, the prospect that public schools will grow even weaker as money and students exit for private options. There simply aren't enough such options to absorb all the students - especially immigrant and minority children - who need better schooling. The improvement of public education remains a national priority.

Second, valid church-state concerns. Any public policy that channels tax dollars - by way of parents in the Milwaukee case - to institutions devoted to teaching not only the ABCs but religious tenets, violates the constitutional separation of church and state. Further, church-related schools taking this money are opening their doors to more interference from the state than they may now recognize.

So, encourage private philanthropists to fund whatever scholarships they can. But beware tendencies to disinvest in public education and ignore church-state concerns. History shows that road isn't nearly so bright as advocates proclaim.

Publication#W\ P}P# 105. Newsday"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/15/98; Edition: ALL EDITIONS; Section: VIEWPOINTS; Page A26

Headline#\ P}P# Investing in Ideas About Schooling - and in KidsHeadline #:\ P}P#

If it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to go to heaven, then three very rich New Yorkers, Theodore Forstmann and Leonard and Ronald Lauder, have made at least some headway in that difficult upward quest.

The Lauder brothers are the heirs to Estee Lauder, the cosmetics giant. While Leonard has been quietly running the family business, Ronald bought himself some political notoriety by waging a particularly nasty and expensive - \$12 million of his own money - campaign in the 1989 mayoral Republican primary against Rudolph Giuliani. But way back when, both Lauder boys graduated from one of the great U.S. educational institutions, the Bronx High School of Science. Now, older, wiser and a lot richer, they have together pledged \$1 million to their alma mater and promised to raise \$10 million more for an endowment for the school.

Forstmann, who made his money buying and selling companies, from Ziff-Davis to Gulfstream, chose a different philanthropic route. Last week he announced the creation of the Children's Scholarship Fund, whose goal is to provide \$200 million over the next

four years to finance private school "scholarships" for inner-city kids in New York, Washington, Chicago and Los Angeles. The Lauders are reinforcing public education, while Forstmann is pumping up private and parochial schooling in a way that could be a model for government-funded vouchers to pay for needy students' education. In looking to help youngsters learn, there is no one right approach; what is important is to see what works best in the marketplace of ideas. Meanwhile, a lot of kids will find their own individual upward paths made smoother and straighter, thanks to Forstmann and the Lauder brothers.

Publication#W\ P}P# 106. Seattle Post-Intelligencer"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/15/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page A7

Headline#\ P}P# ZERO OUT ZERO TOLERANCEHeadline #:\ P}P#

Zero tolerance. It sounds so right: No more whittling away at standards of conduct until the standards are gone.

Then comes reality. A boy brings a key-ring size plastic gun to school, something he could have found in a CrackerJack box, and he is suspended. Why? Zero tolerance.

No guns of any kind, whether carbon steel, plastic or folded paper.

It has struck us more than once that zero tolerance has become a synonym for zero thought, zero judgment and zero reasoning.

It is a policy devised by lawyers

to keep administrators out of arguments and out of court. It does so at the cost of making those administrators into fools.

That was illustrated neatly in a recent story from Denver. Last month, as part of a study of French culture, a group of 13- and

14-year-olds in Denver-area

schools went to Paris for a week of immersion in ways French. One of the behaviors of that alien culture

is to drink wine, even at the tender age of 13. On their

last evening, the students were given thimblefuls of red vino with their duck

and snails.

Word reached a parental adviser in Denver. "They tasted wine," the adviser said. "But it was not a wine-tasting. They did not rinse

and spit. They may have ingested alcohol."

Oh! It did not matter that wine was legal in France, where it is served in some high school cafeterias. The Cherry Creek School

District has a policy of zero

tolerance. No exceptions: not on trips abroad, under the supervision of adults, in the course of a large

meal and in a dose that could hardly inebriate a cat.

No. No. No. The school superintendent stepped in and transferred the principal

out of his job.

That principal was taught a lesson: Don't weigh the real meaning of things, don't make any judgments, don't think. Follow the rules.

ddn

Headline#\ P}P# YOUTH VIOLENCE CRIES OUT FOR ATTENTION
FROM STATE LEADERSHeadl

ine #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# A FATHER'S FEAR THAT HIS SON 'WILL WALK INTO SCH
OOL AND

SHOOT EVERYONE IN SIGHT' SERVES AS A WARNING.Subhead#:\ P}P#

Despite low voter turnout, Maine's political primaries have set the stage for
important state and federal elections this fall.

ddMeanwhile, in Washington, one of those election campaigns already is under wa
y. On Primary Day, first lady Hillary

Rodham-Clinton joined Maine Rep. Tom Alle

n and other Democrats to launch a major - and much-needed - expansion of federa
l

child-care legislation.

ddYet child care, so vital to working families, is only one of a broad spectrum
of problems involving children that challenge

candidates to think and act in n

ew and creative ways. Of those problems, none is more ominous than youth violen
ce.

ddNo stump speech can define it. No quick fix can cure it. No candidate's winni
ng personal charm can make it go away. Youth

violence, pervasive, sudden and un

predictable, is a national phenomenon. It is rooted in alienation, encouraged b
y a culture

marinating in violence and brought to flash point in schools by eas
y access to guns.

ddAll of those factors operating in the nation operate, too, here in Maine. And
here, as elsewhere, there exists a critical lag.

dd"(The schools') protocol is not comprehensive enough to deal with the issues
we are dealing with today. We need something more

consistent and more comprehen

sive," says Portland Police Chief Michael Chitwood. And Portland School Superin
tendent Mary Jane

McCalmon, with experience both in rural and urban Maine, agre
es.

ddAddressing school violence and school safety, calmly and effectively, is a ch
allenge worthy of the best Maine can bring to it. Gov.

Angus King can help. He

can convene a special commission to help map Maine's way through this deep and
dangerous thicket. And

he can do it this summer.

ddSchools will soon be out. That offers a breather, but no time to waste. The s
ooner that public and private leaders, educators, police
officials, parents, st

udents and mental health experts focus creative attention on youth violence, th
e safer for Maine kids.

ddThe need for decisive public action was driven home for me by an experienced
educator and counselor from central Maine who

contacted me shortly after I wrot

e about youth violence two weeks ago. Two concerned parents had brought their 1
2-year-old son

to her this spring to talk about placing him in an education program designed for children at high risk of failure in public school.

dd"On the evening I met with the parents and their son, I was shocked at how this child treated his parents and me," the 44-year-old counselor said. "He was rude, belligerent and totally defiant. He ended up walking out."

ddAfter he left, his father spoke a single sentence that chilled the counselor then, and chills her now. "His dad told me, 'He's the kid that will walk into school and shoot everyone in sight.'"

ddHow does this counselor, whose identity I agreed to protect, rate the risk of that father's words coming true? "I rate it as high, as definitely high, unless this kid is getting some serious help," she said. "I think it is a legitimate risk. And for a parent to say something like that, it scares the hell out of me. It really does."

ddIndeed, hell can be amazingly close at hand.

dd"This kid was scary," the counselor explained. So is his history. Angry emotional explosions and cursing are part of it - but only part. "When he was 10, he was throwing knives and threatening his mother with knives," the counselor said.

ddAt one point, the boy attacked his pregnant mother with a knife. At another, he stuffed a trowel full of dirt down a younger sister's throat.

ddThrough the horror stories reverberates the father's spoken fear: "He's the kid that will walk into school and shoot everyone in sight."

ddEven so, help for a child at such terrible risk is not easy to find. The boy refused the option the counselor represented. He has disappeared from her radar screen. "I have no idea where he is right now," she told me. "I left it open with his mom that she could contact me if she wanted to."

ddMeanwhile, the counselor hopes the troubled child, for child he is, is finding help within the walls of a residential treatment program. But sustaining that hope isn't easy.

dd"There's no place to put this kid," she said. Public education programs, she noted, are "all tied up in money - dollars and cents." And often the money runs out. Placements collapse, evaluations fall behind, backlogs build up, and with them rises the number of children for whom effective intervention may come too late.

ddThe counselor's bottom line: I think an awful lot of the needs of our kids are going unmet.

ddCount among them the basic need for safety in public school.

Publication#W\ P}P# 108. Tacoma News Tribune "Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/15/98
Section: Editorial; Page A8

Headline#\ P}P# TRUE VOUCHER TRIAL IN CLASS, NOT COURTHeadline #:\ P}P#
The Wisconsin Supreme Court last week strengthened the argument that state-fu

ned tuition vouchers - even when used at religious

schools - are constitutiona

l. That doesn't mean they are necessarily a good idea. The value of voucher s m
ust ultimately be proven

in the classroom, not the courtroom, and the education

al case for them has yet to be made. The Wisconsin ruling is welcome chiefly
be

cause it allows the nation's most important experiment with vouchers to proceed
in Milwaukee.

ddThe Wisconsin legislature launched this experiment in 1990 when it offered to
let Milwaukee's poorest children attend

nonreligious private schools at state

expense. The idea was to give poor families the same educational choices afflue
nt families enjoy

- and in the bargain force the city's failing public schools
to compete for students.

ddThe legislature extended the policy in 1995 to include religious schools, a m
ove that teachers unions and the American Civil

Liberties Union seized on to ar

gue that the program threatened the constitutional separation of church and sta
te.

ddLast week's ruling undercut that complaint. Relying on federal First Amendmen
t precedents, the court concluded that the program

had a legitimate secular pur

pose, was evenhandedly neutral in dealing with sectarian and nonsectarian schoo
ls, and didn't promote

excessive entanglement between government and religion.

It held in effect that the vouchers subsidized family choice, not religion
per

se.

ddOn the surface, the Milwaukee program seems consistent with established polic
ies that permit older students to use Pell grants,

G.I. Bill benefits and other

forms of government financial aid at church-affiliated colleges. Voucher oppon
ents plan to appeal to the

U.S. Supreme Court, but the Wisconsin ruling is at l

east arguably in line with the high court's recent thinking in related cases.

ddConstitutional or not, though, tuition vouchers are risky. Critics fear vouch
ers will enable the most motivated parents to move

the most capable students in

to private schools, turning public schools into dismal warehouses for the poor,
the unparented and the

handicapped.

ddThis is a serious enough concern that any private tuition subsidies should be
limited - as in Milwaukee - precisely to those poor

students whose school dist

ripts are already failing them and who have no real alternatives. If it can be
shown that vouchers don't hurt

public schools - or that the competition actual

y improves public education - the experiment should be expanded further. But no
t

before.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 109. New York Daily News"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/15/98Se
ction: Editorial; Page 22

Headline# \ P}P# THE MYTHS ABOUT SPECIAL EDHeadline #:\ P}P#
 SPECIAL-EDUCATION REFORMS proposed by a mayoral task force last week offer hope that tens of thousands of city school children languishing in an educational prison will have their sentences commuted.
 ddBut for that hope to become reality, New Yorkers must first discard the myths surrounding this emotional subject. It won't be easy.
 Educators whose jobs depend on special ed and "activists," who fear that any challenge to the status quo will jeopardize the truly disabled, are doing their best to cloud the truth.
 ddSo here are some key points to ponder:
 ddMyth: Every child in special ed really belongs there.
 ddReality: Only 10% of the 161,000 kids in special ed are the severely disabled children for whom the label was created. A 1995 New York University study showed that 15% of sampled children classified as learning disabled actually met the state's mandated criteria.
 ddReality: Those 10% have been assigned to the Board of Education's District 75. They will not be affected by any of the changes.
 ddReality: The special ed population has skyrocketed more than 370% since 1975 from 35,000 students to 161,000. Last year, the special ed rolls grew by 10,000 kids, while mainstream enrollment increased by only 7,000. Nearly 13.5% of the city's school population is in special education far above the national urban average of 10.4%. The program's budget now exceeds \$2 billion, about one out of every four dollars spent.
 ddReality: The Board of Ed spends \$300 million a year just to evaluate students for special ed and an average of about \$20,000 on each kid in the program each year, compared with \$6,183 for general-education students. But fewer than 2.2% progress enough to be mainstreamed back into regular classes. Thousands of children spend their entire academic life in special ed, leaving school with what amounts to an attendance diploma.
 ddSpecial education was shaped by a consent decree the city signed after a class-action suit, *Jose P. vs. Ambach*, charged the state had failed to provide for students with physical handicaps and mental illness.
 ddAs a result, the city established the most demanding and most absurd special-education requirements in the nation. Which, as the statistics show, have little to do with helping the truly disabled. And everything to do with creating jobs for teachers and teachers' aides, psychologists, evaluators, investigators, specialists and, of course, lawyers.
 ddWHO IS IN special education, and why? A disproportionate number are black and Hispanic males. Overall, 38% have reading difficulties and speech and counseling

ng needs. They may need some special help, but there is no reason why they can't receive it in regular classrooms.

The task force recommendations, shaped by Peter Powers, the former first deputy mayor, and Chancellor Rudy Crew, will make that possible. No state or city l

egislation is needed. Crew plans to impose some of the changes himself, and others need only Board

of Education approval. The board shouldn't hesitate. The changes are sensible and long overdue. They include:

Within two years, every child must be evaluated to determine who is truly disabled and who merely is being warehoused.

Evaluators and support staff will report to school principals. Currently, they report to a central board administrator who has no connection to the school.

Evaluations would be privatized to take them out of the hands of those who have the most to gain from expanding special ed the 1,000 three-member teams who

now enroll more than 85% of kids they see. The teams have no other duties, meaning they have hours each week of free time.

The evaluation process is supposed to answer two basic questions: Is this child disabled? Would this child benefit from special-education services?

For most kids, the answer to question 1 is no. But for question 2, it's safe to say that most students would benefit from special services smaller classes,

more individual attention, a focused reading plan, their own guidance session, speech services and a resource

room. But this mandate-driven method means the

90% of special ed kids who are not disabled are getting those services at the expense of all the other kids.

There is little doubt that money is the root of this evil. The funding imbalance is driven in part by wacky state formulas: The more kids in special ed, the

more money each school gets. It's simple math.

Beyond that, the evaluators all United Federation of Teachers members are paid more than teachers. And last year alone, they clocked more than \$10 million

in overtime. Overtime? They average 1.5 evaluations a week and are frequently seen playing cards

or lollygagging in their offices. That's not education, it's

larceny. And it's the kids who are being robbed.

Fortunately, all that can change. As soon as the heartrending myths of special education are tempered with reality.

Publication#W\ P}P# 110. New York Post"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 15, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# THE BIG MATH-SCORE SPIN Headline #:\ P}P#

A week after the folks down at 110 Livingston St. began popping champagne corks over some marginal improvements in reading

scores, a similar celebration broke

out with the announcement of marginal improvements in math scores. Marginal increases are

always better than marginal decreases. But a closer look at the data on the math scores reveals that there is less cause for celebrating than meets the eye.

The good news is that 63.1 percent of students who took the test scored at or above grade level, an improvement of 2.7 percentage points over last year.

Still, the objections we raised to the reading results remain valid. First, it is not entirely clear what "grade level" means anymore.

Second, the scores have been artificially inflated by the removal of a large part of the school population from the statistics.

Among the students who don't take the test are those in special ed. That sounds sensible, even though it does skew the numbers upward in a distorted way. It

's worth remembering that statistics like these are kept not to bolster self-esteem or to give press-release authors something to crow about. They are kept in order to give everybody an objective accounting of the state of the education of schoolkids in New York City.

But the special-ed case is arguable. The real game-playing comes with 21,000 so-called "Limited English Proficient" students who were also exempted from taking the test.

We're talking about a math test. What does a kid's limited ability to speak English have to do with his mathematics skills?

We could understand exempting large numbers of such students from, say, an English-reading test. But math is a bit different.

Math knows no language, and even where language is a factor - instructions and word problems, for example - translation can be provided.

Indeed, 22,065 "Limited English Proficient" students did take the test in Spanish, Chinese and Haitian Creole translations.

It's valuable to learn that they scored poorly - only 21.8 percent were at or above grade level. Knowing this is an aid to helping them improve in the future;

perhaps the low scores are indicative of the level of instruction they are receiving in a school system that

segregates them from their peers rather than immersing them in the English language.

That sad number also suggests why it was useful to keep those 21,000 other "Limited English Proficient" kids out of the mix -

because if they had taken the test, the champagne corks wouldn't have been popping on Livingston Street.

New Yorkers are not getting an accurate picture of exactly how well (or how poorly) the schools are performing. That's no cause for celebration.

Publication#W\ P}P# 111. The Sacramento Bee"Publication" #: \ P}P# 06/12/98; Edition: METRO FINAL; Section: EDITORIALS; Page B6

Headline#\ P}P# ZERO-TOLERANCE HYPOCRISY Headline #: \ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P#

SCHOOLS SHOULD BAN ALCOHOL-RELATED PROM KEEPSAKES

When a Bella Vista High School student tripped on the hem of her long gown at the senior ball recently, chaperones wondered if perhaps the girl was intoxicated. If so, she'd be guilty of violating the Fair Oaks school's policy of "zero tolerance" for alcohol and drugs "cause for immediate ejection from the ball, plus suspension from school and prohibition from attending all end-of-year festivities, including graduation itself.

Principal Jim Reidt won't talk about the case specifically, but says the strict rules were aimed at putting teeth in "zero tolerance" policies at a time when mere suspension from classes didn't seem to be impressing students. When the girl admitted that she and friends had earlier sipped a glass of champagne with her parents, before the kids piled into a limousine that took them to dinner and the ball, she was immediately suspended. Neither the girl nor her parents objected to her punishment of "social probation," but thought that excluding her from the graduation ceremony was a bit harsh.

However, the girl did get to keep the party favor that she purchased along with her senior ball ticket: a champagne flute, engraved with the high school's name. Engraved champagne flutes? Why not ashtrays, or perhaps silver-plated cigarette-paper holders?

Bella Vista is not alone. "That's exactly what we handed out at this school " the boys got a beer mug and the girls got a champagne glass," said a receptionist at San Juan High School. "We got a lot of calls from parents asking what we were doing."

It's no wonder parents didn't get it. Flutes, sniffers, beer mugs and goblets, engraved with such stirring phrases as "A Night in Paradise, (your school's name here)" or "Just Tonight" fill page after page of catalogs hawking prom paraphernalia to high school students. The message " the prom is a grown-up affair, and grown-ups drink alcohol " is as blatant as a billboard where only sexy people smoke.

Policies vary at high schools throughout the region, although all have strict disciplinary procedures for intoxication or student possession of alcohol. Some, such as Rio Americano, banned alcohol-related mementos several years ago in favor of photo-related souvenirs. In Sacramento city schools, students are responsible for choosing prom items, a spokeswoman said, and some opt for the glass ones, or candles inside champagne flutes, over alternatives such as engraved key chains and picture frames. Bella Vista's principal acknowledges the alcohol-suggestive keepsakes send mixed messages in an era of zero tolerance, adding that principals in the San Juan Unified School District have agreed to forbid them

beginning next year. It's a tough policy to change, he says, because even some parents were "clamoring" for the glassware. dd Sadly, not much can be done about parents who want to buy champagne glasses for their 17-year-olds, or send them off to the prom after having a drink. But high schools should put an immediate end to the hypocrisy of preaching sobriety while pushing the accouterments of drinking.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 112. The Seattle Times"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/13/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page A13

Headline#\ P}P# NEW TESTS IN SCHOOLS DEMAND NEW THINKINGHeadline #:\ P}P#

TESTS are the last thing kids will worry about this summer vacation. But for Washington educators, they are one of the first. dd Now is a critical time for Washington's public education system as the state's new assessment tests take hold. The people who designed the tests after the state Legislature in 1993 mandated education reform have two projects: making sure the public understands the tests, and figuring out what to do with the results. Both projects are under construction. dd For now, parents should heed the advice of state schools Superintendent Terry Bergeson, who stresses there are better ways to measure educational quality than by traditional rank-order lists of school test scores. When scores are announced this fall, it will be important to evaluate a school based on its own past performance, not its ranking relative to Mercer Island or other high-scoring schools. dd Even this method of evaluation has pitfalls, however, particularly when the state enacts rewards and sanctions for performance. For example, a principal might not want to start a magnet program that benefits children with dyslexia - or any program that could drag down a school's test scores. Bergeson and the Commission on Student Learning, which oversees the test, are discussing ways to weight test scores so that schools aren't punished for serving the needs of children with disabilities and special needs. dd As with anything unfamiliar and sweeping, the tests have a few bugs to work out. How much uniformity should there be in administering the tests? How much leeway for students with special needs? How much instructional time should be sacrificed for tests? Though relatively minor, these are the questions that shape credibility. dd Washington has made an enormous investment in education reform, both financially and philosophically. It will spend nearly \$5 million this year on the test alone, not including professional development. The next five years will reveal

whether the test is worth
it.

But already, classrooms statewide are starting to change as teachers help students better express their skills and knowledge. Politics and policies aside, that is where the joy of learning begins.

Publication#W\ P}P# 113. Sacramento Bee"Publication" #: \ P}P#June 15, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# High school dropouts: Keeping numbers down as expectations rise

e Headline #:\ P}P#

It was billed as good news, and from the "half-full, not half-empty" perspective, the latest high school dropout report does seem encouraging.

According to figures provided by high schools to the state Department of Education, the dropout rate has declined for the fourth year in a row, with improvement shown in every ethnic group. The numbers "down from 3.9 percent in 1995-96 to 3.3 percent

in 1996-97 " translate to 51,550 high school dropouts, 1,780 of them in Sacramento County.

Because schools could conceivably fudge on the numbers, collect data haphazardly or report it inaccurately, the report might mask a dropout rate that's high

er than the numbers reveal. But because the figures don't reflect students who go on to get their GED or return to school after months of absence, reality also could be rosier than the report indicates.

The notoriously troubled Compton Unified School District, for example, until 1995 was reporting unbelievably low dropout rates, on a par with the most successful districts in the state. (With new management, the district began reporting more realistic numbers, above 8 percent.)

As politicians call for an end to "social promotion," at the same time demanding higher standards and threatening low-performing schools with sanctions, it's

imperative that a more accurate system for collecting dropout and other data be put in place. Funding is

now available, and the Department of Education is in

the early stages of developing a computerized system able to track student attendance and progress accurately. Until that system is up and running statewide

, about three to five years from now, there's no way for the state to be certain

in which students are in school, or how well they're performing in the classroom.

Meanwhile, all the educational reforms in the world won't help kids perform if they don't stay in school. If the dropout rate is to go down as standards go up, school districts must be given support for alternative programs targeting students at risk of giving up on education altogether. Programs aimed at keeping pregnant teens in school, along with options for disengaged students "

independ
dent study and magnet and charter schools " are showing promise in districts a
ll over the state. Anti-truancy programs,
which combine strict reporting of abs
ences along with follow-through and services including tutoring for truant stud
ents, appear to
be working in Sacramento and elsewhere to keep kids from droppi
ng out. When handing kids higher expectations, schools shouldn't
lose track of
those already struggling to succeed.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 114. Boston Herald"Publication" #:\ P}P# 06/14/98; Editio
n: A1; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 030

Headline#\ P}P# Kids win in MilwaukeeHeadline #:\ P}P#
The nation's schoolchildren won a decisive victory in a ruling this past week
by the Wisconsin Supreme Court that allows Milwaukee
parents receiving publicly
funded vouchers to use those stipends at religious schools.
ddUnder the Milwaukee plan, children from poor families are given \$5,000 a year
in tax-funded vouchers to attend the private school
of their choice. Pending t
he resolution of a constitutional challenge, the program excluded religious sch
ools.
ddAccording to the justices, including parochial schools won't violate the Firs
t Amendment. A student qualifies for the program "not
because he or she is a Ca
tholic, a Jew, a Muslim or an atheist; it is because he or she is from a poor f
amily and is a student in the
embattled Milwaukee Public Schools," the court ru
led.
ddCurrently, 23 private schools take Milwaukee students under the voucher progr
am. Now, an additional 80 schools (mostly Catholic
and Lutheran) will be able t
o participate. In the past, a lack of schools - not a lack of applicants - has
held the program back.
ddAlso last week, the Boston City Council was told the city's public schools ar
e in hopeless disarray and only a return to
neighborhood schools will save them
.
ddAt the Woodrow Wilson Middle School, according to the organization Boston's C
hildren First, 94 percent of seventh-graders
scored poor or failing grades on a
standardized math test, but all were promoted to the next grade.
ddWhile there's nothing wrong with neighborhood schools, clearly they aren't th
e answer to the crisis in public education. Yes, a
return to neighborhood scho
ols will greatly increase the chances for genuine parental involvement, which i
n turn can only help
improve what goes on inside those facilities. But all of t
hat takes time and effort, and with every passing day some child is being lost
to a system grown complacent.
ddReal competition - through charter schools and private schools made available
through vouchers (publicly or privately funded)

- is the best way to make a difference.

ddThere's a growing awareness of this. A business group, the Children's Scholarship Fund, announced it will raise \$200 million to allow 50,000 inner-city children to attend private schools over the next four years. (Boston has been invited to participate.) Similar philanthropic initiatives have begun in a number of cities.

ddGiving poor children a choice in education is an idea so sensible - and in many ways so easy to accomplish - that it's beginning to make real progress in the courts and within the business community.

Publication#W\ P}P# 115. The Tampa Tribune"Publication" #: \ P}P# 06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: COMMENTARY; Page 2

Headline#\ P}P# Gore's tax finally shows up on radarHeadline #: \ P}P# Vice President Al Gore warns that pulling the plug on the E-rate program would close the door on our children's future. Some translation is required.

ddE-rate stands for "education rate," which is a euphemism for a new telephone tax being collected to connect schools and libraries to the Internet. "Pulling the plug" on this tax means pulling off its disguise as "cost breaks" for schools and libraries and clearly identifying it as a consumer tax.

ddWhat the vice president really hates is the term "Gore tax," but the name fits because he is one of its top advocates.

ddTo "close the door on our children's future" is to identify this tax on your telephone bill, because to identify it is to raise questions about it - questions

that Congress finds embarrassing, such as how did the federal government get so deeply involved in the operation of local schools and libraries?

ddThe Federal Communications Commission wants telephone companies silently to absorb more than \$2 billion in taxes each year.

That money goes to a brand-new bureaucracy, the Schools and Libraries Corp., which will sort through tens of thousands of requests for cash to decide who gets what.

ddThe plan is for schools and libraries to be reimbursed based on the percentage of subsidized lunches served to schoolchildren. The higher the percentage of needy children, the higher the payback, up to a maximum of 90 percent. For example, a school in a county in which 75 percent of the children get a subsidized lunch can qualify for a 90 percent payback: If it were to spend \$100,000 on new

wiring, it could pay \$10,000 and the contractor would bill the Schools and Libraries Corp. for the remaining \$90,000. Another agency, the Universal Service Administrative Co., would actually mail the check. ddThe subsidies cover such expenses as wiring, switches, all commercially available telecommunications services

es, and even what the government calls POTS, or "plain old telephone service."

ddWhether it makes sense for a county school to send its telephone bill to a federal bureaucracy for payment is a subject that hasn't received much debate in Congress. To question it now, according to Gore, the computer industry, school advocates and library champions, is to slam the door of progress in the faces of our children.

ddA spokeswoman for the American Library Association even called those who question the tax the "forces of darkness."

ddThe forces of light in this case are actually AT&T, MCI and the other long-distance providers who are telling their customers about the tax. Starting July 1, MCI residential customers will see a new line on their bills, a tax equal to 5.9 percent of interstate and international calls.

ddThe more long-distance calls you make, the more you must subsidize education through the Gore tax.

ddWhen we first heard of this tax early last year, we questioned whether a federal telephone tax is the best way to provide extra money for local education. We wondered if schools would lose their incentive to keep telephone bills low with the federal government picking up most of the tab.

ddWe wondered if state and local governments would be tempted to use this new tax as an excuse to cut the local education budget, just as the Legislature used lottery revenues to replace money going to schools from the general fund.

ddThese questions have not yet been debated, much less fully answered.

ddWith long-distance rates falling, the FCC apparently hoped it could grab a few percentage points of long-distance revenues without anyone noticing.

ddNow that the public has noticed, Gore and other defenders of the new bureaucracy are hiding behind the static of misleading words, such as E-rate, price breaks, discounts and slamming doors on children. What they don't want to talk about is a new tax that makes it 5 or 6 percent more expensive for children to call their grandmother if she happens to live out of state.

Publication#W\ P}P# 116. Denver Post"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 15, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Teaching the teachers Headline #:\ P}P#

When Boulder Valley students posted their highest gain in standardized test scores in two decades, they proved the worth of improved teacher training.

ddGrades three, five, seven and 10 took the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills in April. Scores released this week place them five to 13 points higher than anticipated in reading, with fifth-graders gaining 12 points on average in reading plus 16 points higher than expected in math.

ddThe Boulder Valley School District spent \$300,000 over the past year to improve

ve teacher training, primarily in reading for kindergarten through third grade.

ddGood teaching - with an emphasis on reading - is essential to such improvements, as Denver Public Schools also has learned. DPS spent \$2.7 million in 1996-97 to put 232 reading assistants in first-grade classrooms. At the end of that school year, standardized test scores were up for the first time in five years.

ddAnd after DPS added reading assistants to second grade and improved-teacher training for 1997-98, scores rose even more last month. Second-graders showed the biggest improvement on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, rising from the bottom third in the nation in 1993-94 to the 51st percentile this year.

ddFor both school districts, the proof is in the pudding. Student achievement soars when administrators improve teacher training and turn their focus to beginning reading.

ddThe National Institutes of Health deem reading problems a major public health threat. The heart of the problem, researchers say, is poor teacher training in reading instruction.

ddSays G. Reid Lyon, an NIH neuropsychologist, "Teacher preparation is a scandal. Most teachers will tell you they don't have any idea what we're talking about when we're talking about skills that kids should have."

ddBut parents who read to their children, early and often, can imbue their offspring with a remarkably increased chance of literacy.

Consider:

dd"We know that high achievers tend to be children whose parents began reading to them at an early age, who have books in the home and who demonstrate by example the importance and joy of learning." - U.S. Education Secretary William Riley

dd"The single most important thing that influences primary-grade reading achievement is having someone read to a child on a regular basis." - U.S. Department

of Education

dd"Reading to your child is as important as fastening his or her seat belt." -

William Trueheart, president of Reading is Fundamental Inc.

ddEnough said.

Publication#W\ P}P# 117. Miami Herald"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 15, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# When silence isn't goldenHeadline #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# STUDENTS' FREE SPEECH School Board was wise to leave its policy alone, allowing f

ull expression.Subhead#:\ P}P#

Not all student expression is as eloquent, as thoughtful, as that presented at last week's Miami-Dade School Board meeting.

Nevertheless, even the cruder content should be protected.

ddAre there boundaries? Of course. But wisdom in a democracy seeks the least restraint possible.

ddSo it is most encouraging that after a school year filled with examples that might lead weaker administrators to do otherwise, School Board members left the free-speech policy alone.

ddIt was a laudable rejection of a more-restrictive policy that would have subjected students' publications and speeches to prior review and censorship.

ddPassed in 1981, then strengthened in 1994, the current policy holds students and their faculty adviser responsible for the content of their publications and speeches " as well they should be.

ddHowever, this year some administrators crossed the line from holding students responsible to meting out punishment more stringent that warranted. The most c

ontroversial student publication " a crude and racist pamphlet that Miami Killian High's

principal understandably perceived to be a direct threat to his safety " was met with that principal's equally controversial move of having those

students arrested.

ddA student at American High was suspended after criticizing an administrator over the Internet. Most recently, the principal at

Northwestern High School init

ially forbade the valedictorian and salutatorian to address their classmates at graduation. Last year the

school's valedictorian had criticized administrator

s in her speech, so Principal William Clarke sought to gag this year's students

beforehand. He eventually reversed his edict.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 118. Forbes"Publication" #:\ P}P#June 15, 1998 Category: Comentary

Subhead#[\ P}P# The Coleman Report told us 32 years ago that you don't get better education

by flinging money at the schools. We're still flinging.Subhead#:\

P}P# Headline#\ P}P# Ignoring the facts Headline #:\ P}P#

By Dan Seligman

dd AND NOW, FROM THE ANNALS of policy research, an amazing saga involving the peaceful coexistence of two large facts that should logically be at war.

dd Fact No. 1 is the existence of solid data telling us that spending more on education does not, by and large, translate into kids learning more.

dd Fact No. 2 is the unending proliferation of lawsuits"many, maybe most of them, successful"by groups complaining that they are being unconstitutionally denied equal protection of the laws because spending in their own school districts is lower than

spending elsewhere in the state.

dd The solid data have been around since the 1966 publication of Equality of Educational Opportunity, a fact-freighted volume

more often referred to as the Coleman Report. Mandated by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and funded by a Great Society Congress, the report was widely expected to be a crashing bore that would just restate "what everybody knows" about education. It was expected to confirm the core belief that kids would learn more if only we spent more on their schools.

But the late James S. Coleman, a sociologist based at Johns Hopkins, led the research project, one of the largest in the history of social science. His findings reflected tests given to 570,000 schoolchildren and 60,000 teachers, and reflected exhaustive data-gathering at some 4,000 primary and secondary schools.

But the report was a shock to those who expected the usual message about the need for more money. The Coleman Report's message was that "educational outcomes""what the kids actually learn"are decisively affected by the kids' own family backgrounds. They are only marginally affected by spending on schools.

But class size makes virtually no difference. Ditto for teacher pay. Ditto for investments in teacher training. Ditto for spending on school libraries and labs.

These issues are all extremely important to folks making their living in the world of education, where the spending is substantially synonymous with their own incomes. But if your focus is on the actual process of learning, these issues ought to be largely irrelevant.

But the school and teacher effects were somewhat greater for minority children than for whites, but even among southern blacks, only 20% of the differences in educational achievement was related to the kinds of schools attended.

But for American kids as a whole, this was the Coleman Report's crisp summary: "The data suggest that variations in school quality are not highly related to variations in achievement of pupils." When Coleman controlled for differences in family background, he found that spending levels had an essentially zero correlation with learning among whites, northern blacks, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans and Asian-Americans.

Which brings us to the current pileup of lawsuits and legislation designed to ward off the allegedly ghastly possibility that more might be spent on some kids than on others.

In Texas the current row is an echo of an older argument, which appeared to have finally ended in 1995, when the state adopted a so-called Robin Hood plan. This had the legislature providing makeup payments to school districts with below-average resources.

But every year since then, the plan's adequacy has been challenged, and a recent report in the Bond Buyer indicates that the Texas

comptroller is now talking of a need for another \$8 billion to \$9 billion to equalize standards.

dd As of several weeks ago New Jersey had three major lawsuits challenging its own equalization formula. The most novel is a suit brought in April by a coalition of middle-class school districts claiming that the formula is forcing them to raise property taxes to levels far above the state average.

dd In New York several bands of activists are contemplating a massive class action challenge to school district spending disparities.

dd Vermont is having major hysterics over its own recently passed and monstrously involved plan to shift educational resources from richer to poorer school districts. Among the plan's special problems is that it clobbers poor families who happen to live in rich districts, and offers major tax breaks to rich families in poor school districts.

dd There is an eerie similarity to these efforts. The standard model is one in which a group argues that (a) schooling is essentially paid for by property taxes; (b) the rich districts therefore get better schools; and (c) the disparity violates an "equal protection" clause in the state constitution. This is all taking place at the state level because the U.S. Supreme Court long ago (1973) dismissed the argument at the federal level.

dd What is also eerie is the recurrent nonmention of the Coleman Report in these state-level rows. If you plug into the Nexis database and ask how many articles mention "equal protection," "property taxes" and "education," you are told that the total is 488 articles. If you ask how many of those articles also mention "Coleman," you are told only seven.

dd In other words, nobody is noticing that (b) does not follow from (a). It is truly weird.

dd Can the Coleman Report really still be relevant, 32 years after its initial publication? The answer is yes. In a recent (March 1998) magisterial article in Economic Policy Review, published by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Eric A. Hanushek, of the University of Rochester, reviewed a broad range of attempts to shoot down Coleman and found that they had all essentially failed

Pointing to the huge and steady growth in per-pupil spending (see chart) and basically unbudging student achievement, Hanushek concluded: "There is little reason to be confident that simply adding more resources to schools as currently constituted will yield performance gains among students."

dd Note: This is not the same as saying the school doesn't matter. That is not Hanushek's view, and it was certainly not Coleman's.

It is no secret that there are good and bad teachers, good and bad schools. What we don't exactly know

w is how to arrange matters
so that educational dollars get converted into go
od teachers and schools. Possibly the move to vouchers will boost our
underst
anding of this process.
dd Meanwhile, one is left wondering how long those class-action suits can keep
on winning on faulty premises.n

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===== ATTACHMENT 3 =====

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Daily Education News



Tuesday, June 16, 1998

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

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What Follows

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Teacher, volunteer shot at Armstrong
2. Associated Press
Two shot at high school in Richmond, Va.
3. The Washington Post
2 Are Shot At School in Richmond
4. Worldview (CNN)
Ninth Grader Under Arrest in Latest School Shooting in the U.S
5. Catholic World News
Brigham Young University Censured For Lack Of Academic Freedom
6. Newsday
2 Teens Are Presidential Scholars
7. Detroit Free Press
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8. Boston Globe
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9. Christian Science Monitor
Remedial Ed Loses Ground at Colleges
10. Christian Science Monitor
So That's What The Principal Looks Like
11. Christian Science Monitor
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12. Christian Science Monitor
Praying At School
13. Family News in Focus
Calif. School Enacts Civility Policy
14. Business Day (CNN)
FCC Trims Net Subsidies
15. The Washington Post
Debate on Wiring School for the Internet Ignores a Larger, Sillier Phone Subsidy
16. The Wall Street Journal

Low X-pectations: Here's Y the Teaching Of Algebra in the U.S. Has Been Such a Flop

17. Good Morning America (ABC)

TWO STUDENTS INJURED IN SCHOOL SHOOTING VISIT GMA

18. CyberTimes (New York Times on the web)

Family Sues Library for Not Restricting Children's Internet Access

19. Memphis Commercial Appeal

CONGRESS VOWS TO CUT SCHOOLS' INTERNET SUBSIDY

20. Orlando Sentinel

SCHOOL INTERNET HOOKUPS TO LOSE SOME FUNDING

21. Christian Science Monitor

Giving Parents a Peek at School Lesson Plans

TRADE

22. Education Daily

ED Issues Final Rules For Use Of Drug-Free Funds

23. Education Daily

Harkin Amendment Would Lower Student Loan Fees

24. Education Daily

Guide On Troubled Youths Due By Fall, Clinton Says

25. Education Daily

Mediation Helps Solve School-Religion Conflicts

26. Education Daily

FCC Trims, Saves E-Rate; Poor Schools Get Priority

LOCAL

27. Chicago Tribune

SCHOOLS CRACK DOWN ON KIDS' THREATS

28. Richmond Times Dispatch

Volunteers applauded for effort

29. Associated Press

State to pay most costs through '99

30. Dallas Morning News

More opt for choice of schools

31. Dallas Morning News

Summer students now must pass to move up

32. Austin American-Statesman

Schools considering increase in computer spending

33. The New York Times

Ex-Schools Chancellor Gets a New Post

34. San Diego Union-Tribune

Bersin unveils school reorganization

35. Miami Herald

Certification will pay off for talented teachers

36. St. Petersburg Times

Plan to prepare schools to deal with gunfire

37. Chicago Tribune

HIGH SCHOOLS GET TOUGH ON PRANKS

38. St. Paul Pioneer Press

St. Paul schools budget expected to top \$440 million

39. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Expulsions plummet in 2 big districts

40. Philadelphia Inquirer

- Academy entrance is altered*
41. Baltimore Sun
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42. Washington Times
Graduate's mom says school is a lifesaver
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FLAKE AIRS SUPPORT FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS
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45. Boston Globe
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47. Los Angeles Times
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53. Buffalo News
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54. Associated Press
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58. Worcester(Mass.)Telegram & Gazette
Worcester teacher works overtime for state tests
59. The Sacramento Bee
STATE VOWS CLEANUP OF ADULT EDUCATION 'MESS'
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61. The San Diego Union-Tribune
2 districts ordering Spanish textbooks
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Black graduate students in sciences still scarce
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ALLENTOWN PROBES TUITION-DODGING
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SO MANY TEACHERS, SO FEW JOB OPENINGS
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NATIONAL

1. Richmond Times Dispatch

June 16, 1998

Teacher, volunteer shot at Armstrong **Freshman, 14, faces five charges**

BY JIM MASON AND WES ALLISON
Times-Dispatch Staff Writers

A ninth-grader at Armstrong High School opened fire in the hallway yesterday morning, police say, wounding the basketball coach and a 75-year-old volunteer and shifting the nation's spotlight on school violence to Richmond.

Police quickly arrested and charged Quinshawn Booker, 14, after an officer assigned to the school chased him through some nearby woods and into the dragnet of other officers who responded.

Booker apparently had been pointing the gun in the direction of another student he had recently fought with, authorities said. Neither he nor any of the other students milling about in the first-floor hallway was hurt.

Richmond Schools Superintendent Albert Williams said hand-held metal detectors are randomly used at Armstrong, but they were not being used yesterday. And even if they had been, he said, the gun wouldn't necessarily have been discovered.

"I have two human beings who have been injured, I have a child in custody, and it's frustrating," Williams said.

Information on where the gun was obtained wasn't available yesterday, but Richmond City Councilman Leonidas B. Young, whose 7th District includes Armstrong, complained that "you can buy them anywhere on the street."

"Our children are being groomed by television and movies to believe the cool thing to do is to have a gun," Young said.

Greg Carter, 45, a social studies and history teacher and the Armstrong Wildcats boys basketball coach, was shot in the lower abdomen. He underwent surgery yesterday afternoon and was in stable condition at Virginia Commonwealth University's Medical College of Virginia Hospitals last night.

Eloise Wilson, 75, a longtime volunteer who worked with preschoolers in a Head Start program housed at

Meanwhile, the national attention that recently besieged schools after shootings

Armstrong, was shot in the shoulder after she heard a shot and went into the hallway to warn others, hospital officials said. She was treated at MCV and released yesterday evening.

A source close to the investigation said Booker had been a disciplinary problem at the school for some time. He had apparently been in a fight with the other boy on Friday, and had either been expelled or was in the process of being expelled.

The source alleged that Booker came to school yesterday about 10 a.m. with a handgun, confronted the other boy and then fired down the hallway. The first shot hit the coach. When Wilson then stepped into the hallway, she was hit in the shoulder.

Richmond police officer Ron Brown, who is assigned to Armstrong, said he was in the school's second-floor hallway when he heard gunfire and darted down a stairway. He chased a suspect out the back door while using his hand-held radio to report the shooting and call for backup.

Brown chased the youth a half-mile through some woods to the corner of Melton and S streets, where several officers arrested him. They also recovered a .32-caliber, semi-automatic pistol they believe was used in the shooting.

Booker is charged with two counts of malicious wounding, two counts of using a gun in a felony and one count of taking a gun into a school. He was being held last night in the city's Juvenile Detention Center, with a hearing scheduled for today in Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court.

Although he's considered a juvenile, state law allows prosecutors to try to charge him as an adult.

The shootings occurred on the next-to-last-day of school. Floyd Peace, a freshman at Armstrong, said he was taking an exam in a classroom on the second floor when he heard shots. The in Springfield, Ore., Jonesboro, Ark., and West Paducah, Ky. turned to Richmond.

shootings shocked him. "I've heard of this happening other places, but you wouldn't think it would happen here," he said.

Wilson was a longtime "foster grandparent" for the Capital Area Agency on Aging, which has about 80 senior citizens such as her working with at-risk children in hospitals, day-care centers, schools and Head Start programs.

Wilson, a retired teacher, had been helping 4-year-olds in a Head Start program held at Armstrong since 1993. Before that, she volunteered in a pediatric unit at MCV.

"Whenever she was out, the children missed her," said Barbara Lea-Kruger, a spokeswoman for the agency on aging. "She just loves children and wanted to help them."

At her home last night, Wilson's son, Bernard, said that his mother was shaken up and didn't want to talk about the shooting.

Carter, a teacher for 20 years, became the school's head basketball coach last season, and his shooting caps a violent year for his team: This winter, players Kennard Wyche and Bennie Callahan were wounded by gunfire off campus. Wyche, the team's top player, required surgery to repair his right knee and left ankle.

During an interview several days after the Feb. 7 shooting, Carter reflected on kinder times when he was growing up on Church Hill.

"Any family was your family. Everyone looked out for each other," Carter said. "Some of us teachers were talking the other day and saying we were glad we came up at the time we did. I see a lot of I-don't-care attitudes out there now. I see the lack of family. I see the lack of God."

Emergency room doctors extracted the bullet from Carter's right side during a 40-minute operation. He remained in stable condition last night and was expected to make a full recovery.

But City Councilman Young cautioned against a misdirected, knee-jerk response.

"There's going to be this tremendous push to increase security in the schools," with such things as metal detectors, he said. "But the problem is not in the schools. The problem is in the homes. The problem is in our young people."

Young has been trying to establish a private middle school in the East End for African-American males for more than a year. It would be aimed at children who have caused trouble in traditional schools.

"We have a problem, and there has been a problem for some time," Young said. "We know some children live in home situations that cause them a tremendous degree of stress and pressure, and we haven't done anything to get them out."

By setting up what he called "alternative education sites," the city could take such children out of traditional schools "before they explode."

Melvin D. Law, Richmond School Board chairman, also blamed the media, and said he was astonished to see 20 television trucks covering an isolated shooting.

"As long as the media cover events like this the way they have in the past, students are likely to continue this kind of behavior, because it draws this kind of attention," he said.

"No one could have prevented what happened today — you can only minimize the possibility by having adequate security," Law said. "I believe our superintendent and our security

people have a firm grip on what has happened, and they have a firm grip on what has to be done."

Staff writers Gordon Hickey, Bill Wasson, Alan Cooper and John O'Connor contributed to this report.

NATIONAL

Springfield, Ore.: May 21 — Two students are shot to death and two dozen wounded at Thurston High School. A 15-year-old boy is charged.

Fayetteville, Tenn.: May 19 — A boy is shot to death in a parking lot at Lincoln County High School. An 18-year-old honor student, whose ex-girlfriend had been dating the victim, is charged.

Pomona, Calif.: April 28 — Two teen-age boys are shot to death and a third is wounded as they play basketball at an elementary school. A 14-year-old boy is charged.

Edinboro, Pa.: April 24 — A science teacher is shot to death in front of his students at a graduation dance at Parker Middle School. A 14-year-old student is charged.

Jonesboro, Ark.: March 24 — Four girls and a teacher are shot to death and 10 other people are wounded at Westside Middle School. Two boys, 11 and 13, are charged.

West Paducah, Ky.: Dec. 1, 1997 — Three students are killed and five wounded in a hallway at Heath High School. A 14-year-old student is charged.

Pearl, Miss.: Oct. 1, 1997 — Nine students are shot, two fatally, at Pearl High School. A 16-year-old boy, also accused of killing his mother, has been convicted.

VIRGINIA

Fairfax: April 29 — A former student at George C. Marshall High School is shot in the school parking lot. Two teen members of an Asian youth gang are charged in the slaying.

RICHMOND AREA

Fairfield Middle School: Feb. 8 — Two teen-age boys and a 25-year-old man are shot and wounded while they play basketball in the school gym on a Sunday. A 19-year-old is charged. The school was open under a Henrico County recreation program.

George Wythe High School:

Dec. 20, 1997 — A teen is wounded when at least 10 shots are fired on a parking lot after a basketball game.

Henrico High School: Oct. 24, 1997 — A 19-year-old man is wounded in the school parking lot during a football game with Highland Springs. Three men are charged.

John F. Kennedy High

School: Oct. 30, 1995 — Four students are shot and wounded outside the school. An 18-year-old is convicted.

George Wythe High School:

Sept. 13, 1993 — An 18-year-old junior is wounded in the cafeteria by someone who did not attend the school. ■

2. Associated Press

6-15 7:01p

Two shot at high school in Richmond, Va.

By BILL BASKERVILL
Associated Press Writer

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — A 14-year-old student opened fire Monday with a pistol in the hallway of a high school as students took final exams, wounding a basketball coach and a volunteer aide, police said.

The injuries weren't life-threatening, doctors said. Several students were in the hallway at the time of the shooting, and investigators believe one of them was the intended target, not the coach or aide, police said.

A second teen was held for questioning, but was not involved in the shooting.

Gregory Carter, 45, a basketball coach and a history teacher for 20 years at the

The student was arrested and will be charged as an adult with two counts of aggravated assault and two counts of using a firearm in a felony. Police refused to identify him.

Monday's violence follows recent fatal school shootings in West Paducah, Ky.; Pearl, Miss.; Jonesboro, Ark.; and Springfield, Ore.

The boy was held in the Richmond Juvenile Detention Center pending a detention hearing Tuesday.

The shooting followed an argument earlier in the day between two groups of school, underwent a 40-minute operation to remove a bullet from his abdomen. He was in stable condition and expected to fully recover.

Eloise Wilson, 74, a volunteer aide,

juveniles but was not gang-related, said Deputy Police Chief Theresa Gooch. Witnesses said nine or 10 shots were fired.

The shots were fired from a .32-caliber Llama semiautomatic handgun, police said.

Ron Brown, a police officer assigned to the school, heard shots and called in an alarm to the police station. He then chased down the suspect and arrested him three blocks away.

suffered a flesh wound when a bullet grazed her right arm. She was treated and released.

Students were in classrooms taking exams on the next-to-last day of school

when the shooting occurred around 10 a.m.

Ninth-grader Floyd Peace said he was taking an exam in a classroom on the second floor when he "heard shooting

and screaming" outside the main school office on the first floor.

"I'm stunned, shocked. I've heard it happened other places, but I never thought something like this would

happen in Virginia," the 15-year-old Peace said.

School was dismissed for the day.■

3. The Washington Post

06/16/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: A Section; Page A01

2 Are Shot At School in Richmond

Coach, Aide Hurt; Boy, 14, Arrested

By Donald P. Baker and

Spencer S. Hsu

Washington Post Staff Writers

A ninth-grader arguing with another student opened fire today in a crowded hallway at Richmond's Armstrong High School, wounding a popular coach and a volunteer aide as youths who had gathered for the confrontation scattered, police said.

Students at Armstrong, a school on the city's lower-income East Side that has been troubled by violence in recent years, described a chaotic scene in the hall outside the school office as the suspect fired eight or nine rounds from a .32-caliber, semiautomatic pistol.

"People were falling over each other, trying to get up the stairs," said Mellisa Heart, 16, who said she was heading to her 11th-grade history class when she heard other students yelling, "Fight! Fight! Fight!" Most of the students rushed toward the fight, but Heart said she ran away, hearing gunshots as she fled.

The victims, neither of whom suffered life-threatening injuries, were identified as Gregory Carter, 45, a social studies teacher who also coaches the school's basketball team, and Eloise Wilson, 74, who has volunteered in a Head Start program the last five years. The program, which helps prepare preschoolers for school, is located in part of the 700-student high school.

Although today's shooting had a different sort of genesis from the tragic school shootings in Oregon, Arkansas and elsewhere across the nation in recent months, it nonetheless rattled school

Armstrong High draws its students from low-income, predominantly black neighborhoods, including some of the city's larger public housing developments. The school and its community have been the scene of several violent incidents in the past few years. Armstrong has stationary metal detectors, and security guards occasionally use hand-held ones, but

officials and politicians from here to Washington. No one was killed at Armstrong today, but everyone there — students, school administrators and police — knew someone could have been.

Virginia Gov. James S. Gilmore III (R) called the shootings "a terrible experience for everyone involved" and said that "the shocking pattern of violence that is terrorizing our nation's schools must end. Students cannot learn and teachers cannot educate in an unsafe environment."

At the White House, presidential press secretary Michael McCurry said that although the Richmond shooting was different in many respects from the random, fatal shootings at other schools, "it is again a reminder of the difficulty of dealing with these situations."

"It raises issues with respect to . . . the copycat nature of some of this violence," he said. "It calls for further exploration of what we know and what can we understand about the motivations of young people who do this."

Richmond School Superintendent Albert J. Williams said today's shooting "should bother every human being in our society."

School-related violence nationwide actually has declined in recent years, but it remains a top concern at many schools and in surrounding neighborhoods. Nationally, 15 people have been killed and 42 have been wounded in multiple-victim school shootings during the past nine months. In the District, two teenagers were killed during that period near their high schools, and in February a neither were in use today.

The students, who were in the midst of final exams when the shooting occurred, were sent home today, but Williams said that Armstrong will reopen Tuesday for the last day of the school year. With the help of extra security, Williams said, "I feel confident that the safety of the children can be assured."

Authorities and several students said

former student at Fairfax County's Marshall High School was fatally shot while sitting in his car outside the school.

Richmond prosecutors said tonight that they will seek to have Quinshawn Booker, 14, the suspect in today's shooting, charged as an adult on two counts of aggravated assault, each of which could bring 20 years in prison; two counts of using a firearm in a felony, which could bring a total of eight years; and possession of a firearm in a school, which carries a sentence of up to five years.

Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Todd Stone said he will try to have the case moved to the adult court system during a hearing before a juvenile court judge on Tuesday.

City Council member Leonidas B. Young, who represents the Church Hill neighborhood where the shootings took place, said police told him that Carter "was trying to warn students that something was going on" when he was shot and that Wilson was shot "when she stepped into the hall."

"They weren't singled out to be shot," Young said. The teenage gunman "was just shooting down the hall."

Carter, who was shot in the right side, underwent a 40-minute operation at the Medical College of Virginia Hospital to have a bullet removed from his abdomen. He was listed in stable condition tonight. Wilson, known as "Grandma" to the preschoolers who meet in a room at the rear of the high school, was grazed in the right shoulder. She was treated and released.

that the argument that led to the shooting may have been a continuation of a dispute that began last week.

Toward the end of the school year at Armstrong, student Heart said, "there are a whole bunch of fights" as students, especially those from rival neighborhoods, try to settle old scores "because they know they won't see each other over the summer."

Deputy Police Chief Teresa Gooch said that authorities last night had not identified the intended victim of the shooting but were continuing to interview witnesses.

After the shooting, Booker was chased down by a uniformed city police officer who was stationed at the school as part of a program to beef up the school system's security force.

The officer, Ronald Brown Sr., said he was on the second floor of the building about 10 a.m. when he heard shots fired on the main floor. "I raced downstairs," Brown said, "and was told, 'He went

thataway,' " motioning to the rear of the two-story red-brick building.

Brown radioed for help, and other officers, dispatched from a nearby precinct house, cordoned off a field several hundred yards from the school, where they caught Booker. After questioning him, police found what they believe to be the weapon used in the shooting.

Before the Richmond schools were integrated in the early 1970s, Armstrong had a rich history as a historically black school. Among its graduates is L. Douglas Wilder, who went on to become

Virginia's governor, the first black elected governor in the nation.

In recent years, however, the neighborhood has been plagued with violence.

On Feb. 26, 1997, three people, including a 14-year-old boy, were wounded nearby in a midday shootout in which nearly two dozen bullets were fired. In October 1996, after an argument over a girl, three young men crashed into an Armstrong classroom and struck an 18-year-old student with a chair. ■

4. Worldview (CNN)

June 15, 1998

Ninth Grader Under Arrest in Latest School Shooting in the U.S

JUDY WOODRUFF, CNN ANCHOR: A ninth grader is under arrest and charged with aggravated assault in the latest school shooting in the United States. It happened Monday morning at Armstrong High School in Richmond, Virginia. A teacher and a school volunteer were injured. Police say the shooting was apparently prompted by an argument between students.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DEP. CHIEF TERESA GOOCH, RICHMOND POLICE: We have arrested a 14-year-old suspect who's a student at Armstrong High School. In addition we have recovered the weapon we believe was used in the shooting. At this time, we still have a lot of leads that we need to cover, a lot of leads we need to track down.

We believe there is a possibility that other juveniles may have been involved

and we're not certain now, but the adults are not — were not the intended victim. We believe the shooting resulted between a feud between juveniles.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WOODRUFF: Police say a policeman was on duty inside the school, when the shooting began. He chased the student into a wooded area and arrested him. ■

5. Catholic World News

June 16, 1998

Brigham Young University Censured For Lack Of Academic Freedom

SALT LAKE CITY (CWNews.com) - The American Association of University Professors issued a public censure of Brigham Young University on Saturday, saying the Mormon university promotes a poor climate of academic freedom.

The 45,000-member association cited the university's refusal to grant tenure to Gail Turley Houston, an English

professor who has publicly spoken against teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. University officials said Houston attacked the school in speeches and in an article published in an off-campus newspaper, including encouraging students to pray to a "Mother in Heaven as well as a Father in Heaven."

The university will be placed on a list of censured institutions, but the school's accreditation will not be affected. A university spokesman downplayed the action, and said less than 5 percent of US university professors belong to the association. ■

6. Newsday

06/14/98; Edition: NASSAU AND SUFFOLK; Section: NEWS; Page A31

2 Teens Are Presidential Scholars

By Victor Manuel Ramos.
STAFF WRITER

When he is not studying, 18-year-old Neil Patel tries to beat the stock market

by buying and selling shares over the Internet from a computer in his Woodbury home.

His work in and out of school has

earned him dividends: The Syosset High School student is one of 141 high school seniors nationwide named as presidential scholars by the U.S. Department of

Education. He is one of only two Long Island students to receive the award.

The other Long Island winner, Alan E. Schoenfeld, 18, of Hewlett, enjoys existential philosophy, literary theory and criticism. The Hewlett High School senior also writes a weekly column for the South Shore Record.

"Their accomplishments in scholarship, leadership, community service and the arts serve as a model for all," U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley said of the winners. Students were selected from among 2.5 million graduating high school seniors across the country, the Department of Education said.

The winners and their favorite teachers visited Washington yesterday and today to be honored at a White House ceremony. Patel asked retired math teacher John Titterton and Schoenfeld chose English teacher

Marilyn Maxwell to accompany them to the ceremony.

"I guess it's a nice honor," Schoenfeld said. "I enjoy everything I do and I find a way to make time for it, so I see them more as fun than as challenges."

Schoenfeld, who plans to attend Yale University, has won other national and local awards, as well as school prizes, for his academic and community activities. The co-salutatorian of his class, Schoenfeld coordinates a food collection program at his school for homeless people on Long Island.

"He is a humanitarian and a very intelligent young man," said Maxwell, his teacher in Advanced Placement English. "It's funny, but I see him more as a colleague than a student, because he is so mature and intelligent."

Hewlett High School principal Donald C. Robbins said Schoenfeld plans to become a teacher, like his sister and

parents.

Patel also has earned several academic awards and has an ability with languages: besides excelling in English class, Patel is president of the National Spanish Honor Society and speaks Gujarati, a Hindu dialect. He was accepted to Harvard University and plans to combine study of science with knowledge of the market to manage a chemical research company.

"I love science because it explains a lot about the world around us. It is so interesting to learn how many things come together to make the life that we live," Patel said.

"We are honored and thrilled for him," said Syosset High School principal Jorge Schneider. "He is brilliant, because he excels academically and is active doing other things." ■

7. Detroit Free Press

June 16, 1998

Cream of crop scholars

High school seniors make prestigious presidential list

BY PEGGY WALSH-SARNECKI AND
MARYANNE GEORGE
Free Press Staff Writers

Who says you can't be perfect?

Michigan's winners in the 1998 U.S. Presidential Scholar awards, arguably the nation's most prestigious, must earn perfect high school grade point averages or perfect scores on the SAT college entrance exam.

They also can be selected as one of the country's most gifted high school artists.

"They are the cream of the crop of the nation's high school seniors," said David Thomas, spokesman for the U.S. Department of Education. The scholars will be honored at a White House

"She will make a mark making the world a better place. She is a very unique individual," Wilkins said. "Through all the steeliness needed to win tennis matches and succeed, she has a real warmth."

Hiniker is perfect on the tennis court, winning all 86 of her matches.

The scholars' achievements include the following:

Cotner has a 4.3 grade point average and a perfect 1600 SAT. Activities include: all-academic, all-state soccer player on a top 10 Class B team, debate

ceremony today.

Michigan's winners include James Cotner of Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern High; Eluehue Crudup II of Saginaw's Center for the Arts and Sciences and Arthur Hill High School; Susan Hiniker of Ann Arbor Pioneer High School and Sophie Liao of Novi High School.

Despite earning the kind of sterling high school records that would make any parent brag, the scholars don't see themselves as academic stars. They are modest about their outstanding achievements.

"I didn't think there was any chance I would ever get it," said Liao, 18. "I know team and volunteering for the Kidney Foundation. He's heading to Harvard University, where he will major in biology and literature. He hopes to become a lawyer or a doctor. His uncle, John Vestal of Dallas, was a presidential scholar from Arkansas in 1969.

Crudup was selected as one of 20 winners nationally in the arts. His selection was based on five poems he submitted to a national talent search through the National Endowment for the Arts. He earned a 3.5 GPA and a 25.5 on the ACT. He will attend Western

there's so many amazing people out there.

"I still don't feel I'm really up there."

Hiniker, also 18, said she was thrilled to learn she had been named one of the nation's top students.

"I am especially excited about meeting all the incredible people" at the award ceremonies, she said.

Their teachers say they have managed to find the balance between scholarly success and being just plain nice.

Mary Jean Wilkins, Hiniker's counselor at Pioneer, said Hiniker's ability to balance her academic and athletic achievements "is just amazing."

Michigan University and major in elementary education.

Hiniker has a 4.0 GPA and a 1600 SAT score. Activities include: school newspaper editor and volunteer teacher's aide in special education classes. She was cocaptain of the womens varsity tennis team and was named state high school Division I womens singles champion. She'll attend Yale University this fall, majoring in biology. She is considering a career in medicine.

Liao has a 4.0 GPA and a 1600 SAT score. Activities include: student senator,

president of Interact and International clubs and cocaptain of the debate team. She will be a premed major at the University of Michigan this fall and plans to attend U-M's medical school. Her sister, Peggy Liao, 21, now at Duke University, was a semifinalist in 1994.

The award carries no financial prize — winners receive a medallion. And while Michigan's four winners have collected tens of thousands of dollars in

scholarship money, they said the award is likely the most prestigious they've received.

The program was established by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. Each year, outstanding high school seniors are honored for academic and artistic success, leadership and their involvement in school and community affairs.

About 2,600 seniors from across the

country make the initial list, based on their SAT or ACT scores. These students are asked to submit essays, transcripts and letters of recommendation. From this group 500 semifinalists are picked.

Finally, 141 scholars are chosen: at least two from each of the 50 states and, to be fair to students in more populous states, 15 additional scholars are chosen at large. Another 20 scholars are chosen based on artistic achievement. ■

8. Boston Globe

June 16, 1998

Four area students among Presidential Scholars honored by Clinton

By Estella Duran, Globe Correspondent,
WASHINGTON - President Clinton honored 141 Presidential Scholars, including four Massachusetts high school graduates, yesterday by saying their "brain power could light up this entire city."

In a South Lawn ceremony, Clinton awarded medals to Sarah B. Lamb of Brookline, Christopher J. Hossfeld of Concord, Neal E. Rosenberg of Sharon, and Jessica J. Bulman of Amherst and other students from across the country for their accomplishments in arts, academics, leadership and community service.

"I used to think the Presidential Scholars award was a final honor for all of the work I did in high school, but I realize now that it is only the beginning," said Hossfeld, 18, from Concord-Carlisle Regional High School. "This is really an inspiration to go on and do more."

Hossfeld, who received the award for his skills as a composer, said he will be attending Harvard this fall.

"You don't get many students in the course of your career who do everything well - I mean everything," he said. "It was

Each student was asked to nominate an outstanding teacher, who would also receive a presidential award.

Hossfeld nominated his chorus teacher, Roger Mansen, who said he was honored to receive an award but was beaming with pride for his pupil.

"I've been teaching for 25 years, and Chris has been the absolute finest student I've ever had," Mansen said. "I definitely think we will be hearing from him soon in the arts."

Those in Washington will be hearing from Hossfeld as soon as tomorrow, when one of his compositions, "Sonata for Solo Viola," will make its debut at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. A fellow classmate, Sarah Darling, will perform the piece.

Also winning an arts award was Lamb, 17, from Brookline High School, a ballet dancer.

"This was just wonderful, and getting to meet all of these interesting, accomplished people is great," she said. To the point that I had to put Neal's papers on the bottom of the stack when I was grading, because his papers always raised

"I really give a lot of credit to my school, Brookline, for giving me the quality education it took to get this far. I feel lucky that I was able to go to such a good school."

Lamb plans to enroll in the Boston Ballet School after working a year for the Boston Ballet. She nominated her ballet teacher, Tatiana Legat, for the teachers award.

A perfect SAT score of 1600 helped Rosenberg, 18, from Sharon High School, earn his medal. "It's a great honor - a once in a lifetime thing, and I'm just trying to enjoy every minute of it," he said.

Rosenberg, who will major in finance at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business this fall, said he hopes to work on Wall Street after college.

Rosenberg's English teacher, Tony Pane, who was honored with a presidential award for educators, said his former student amazed him.

the standard for everybody else." ■

9. Christian Science Monitor

June 16, 1998

Remedial Ed Loses Ground at Colleges

Mark Clayton, Staff writer
of The Christian Science Monitor

WORCESTER, MASS. — Higher education in Massachusetts threatened to get tough this year with would-be college freshmen like Benjamin Chin. And it has.

Instead of relaxing this summer before his first year at a public four-year college, Mr. Chin spends his days in remedial

algebra and English classes at Quinsigamond Community College here.

He knows it's the price he must pay if he's going to attend nearby Worcester State College this fall. Mr. Chin graduated with "decent" grades from high school two weeks ago. But poor SAT scores "threw me away," he says.

Even so, in prior years Worcester

State would have accepted him, no questions asked, and allowed him to take remedial courses as a freshman. This year, the school told Chin that before enrolling he must first pass remedial classes.

In Massachusetts, as in many other states, public concern and political rhetoric are heating up over the one-third

of all college freshmen nationwide who are taking at least one remedial math, reading, or writing course, according to government surveys.

While much blame is cast at high schools, fixing the problem involves raising the bar at four-year colleges, some say. And that increasingly means trimming out courses that help freshmen get up to speed. Remedial or "developmental" courses water down curricula and represent "paying twice" to educate a student up to college-level ability, advocates say.

"From coast to coast, the quality of academic excellence in our colleges and universities is going down," says James Carlin, chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. "If a student is not prepared for four-year college work, that student should not be in the institution. It's not fair to the taxpayer."

Raising the bar at college will pressure high schools to perform better, too, if they find their graduates are not being admitted to four-year institutions, he says.

Remedial work in colleges expanded greatly in the 1980s, following the 1970s adoption of "open-admissions" policies by most public institutions. Dropping most admissions requirements fundamentally "democratized" higher education, opening it to the masses. For that reason, and the opportunity it brings, many tout remedial education in higher education as a vital tool.

"We need all Americans," says Robert McCabe, a senior fellow at the League for Innovation in Community Colleges. "We can't throw any people away. If we have large numbers of people who don't

have the skills society is calling for, then we lose in every way."

The changes under way at colleges vary by state, ranging from simply cutting funding for remedial courses - as South Carolina did at several research universities - to Louisiana, which funds three tries at passing a remedial course. In Oklahoma and Wisconsin, colleges charge extra for such courses. "Containment" is the policy in Massachusetts - transferring most, but not all, remedial courses out of public four-year colleges into community colleges. The number of freshmen at four-year colleges who may take remedial classes has been capped at 10 percent, dropping to 5 percent next year.

Even more radical, trustees at City University of New York (CUNY) last month approved chopping remedial classes out of its 11 four-year colleges. Students who do not pass placement exams in reading, writing, and arithmetic can't attend a four-year CUNY college until they do.

The impact is potentially huge. Some estimate 13,000 freshmen and transfer students - about half those who enroll in CUNY's senior colleges - will have to boost skills at a community college first. "We are cleaning out the four-year colleges and putting remediation where it belongs," Anne Paolucci, chairman of CUNY's board of trustees said recently.

Critics say colleges have themselves to blame for lowering admissions standards to keep enrollments up. At CUNY, remedial courses were up to 12 percent of total instruction. The focus will now shift to retraining these students in community colleges.

Remedial ed still offers a tempting target for budget cutters. But strictures like those imposed at CUNY are penny wise and pound foolish given the benefits and relatively low cost of remedial education, says Hunter Boylan, director of the National Center for Developmental Education in Boone, N.C. "I find it interesting that legislators who have starved public high schools of the funds necessary to provide college preparatory courses, are now complaining students aren't prepared for college," he says. "We're getting what we paid for."

A study by the Brookings Institution in Washington pegs the cost for remedial education in the nation's colleges at about \$1 billion a year. That is less than 1 percent of the nation's higher education budget, Dr. Boylan says.

But even if the CUNY decision does limit access to a four-year education for some, it still represents a major step in the right direction, says Bradford Wilson, executive director of the National Association of Scholars, a think tank on higher education,

"It [CUNY] provides the most powerful incentive now at our disposal to get high schools to live up to their obligations to prepare students for college-level work," he says. "Until now, high schools have not had to live with the consequences of poor preparation: having their students get shut out of four-year colleges."

Even Chin, laboring over summer homework, agrees: "Maybe this is good for Worcester State. Instead of carrying a boatload of people - maybe they'll get a lot more people who want to learn."■

10. Christian Science Monitor

June 16, 1998

So That's What The Principal Looks Like

Marjorie Coeyman,
Staff writer
of The Christian Science Monitor

NEW YORK — A squawking voice crackling out of a small black speaker above the chalkboard: That's the way most baby boomers remember starting the day in high or middle school. But for many of their children, the beginning of the school day has recently come to include a different sort of ritual. In a number of schools today, morning announcements are coming to kids the same way their favorite sitcoms do: on a television screen.

"At some schools the impetus for this comes from Channel One," explains one high school principal. Channel One is the in-school commercial TV network beamed to 12,000 middle and high schools in 47 states. In addition to wiring schools to receive its own broadcast, Channel One also provides equipment that can be used to create original shows. About 60 percent of the Channel One schools now rely on that equipment to produce a quick morning TV show that substitutes for announcements done over the public-address system, says Susan Tick, spokeswoman for Channel One.

In most schools students either prepare or help to prepare the TV broadcasts, and according to Ms. Tick, "Some of these kids are wildly, wildly creative. They put on costumes, make interesting use of colors, or run videos behind them" to create a background as they speak. "It's infinitely more interesting than the disembodied voice of some grownup," she says.

But not all schools involved in the trend are Channel One subscribers. At Oakcrest High School in Mays Landing, N.J., a group of students comes in early every morning to prepare a 10-minute TV

show providing their fellow students with the information they need to get through the day. Principal Dennis Foreman sees the show as a valuable means of building a sense of community within the school. In fact, Mr. Foreman is so insistent that no student will miss the broadcast that between 9:11 and 9:21 when it airs, physical-education classes are cancelled

and no hall passes are granted.

The old public-address system, however, has not been dismantled at Oakcrest. Two or three times a week Foreman follows up the TV broadcast with his own announcements - done the old-fashioned way.

But not everyone agrees the reliance on TV is a good thing. "I kind of like the

old way," says Faye Santero, the secretary and receptionist at Casa Grande High School in Petaluma, Calif., who puts together the announcements that are read in her school by students each morning. "They do the pledge [to the flag] at the same time and then the announcements. It kind of brings their ears to attention and they listen." ■

11. Christian Science Monitor

June 16, 1998

Parents Go Back to School to Help Their Children

Marjorie Coeyman,
Staff Writer

of the christian science monitor

NEW YORK — In an effort to see their children better taught, about 700 South Bronx parents are finding themselves back in the learner's seat.

The advocacy group "Mothers on the Move" is determined to shape neighborhood parents into a highly informed and powerful lobbying group on behalf of their children's education. In order to help parents understand how the system works, whom they should be speaking to, and what they should be asking for, MOM regularly offers workshops and open meetings.

Some of the topics covered in these meetings are understanding the power structure of the school system; what makes an effective school; how to advocate for your child; how to turn around a failing school; how to interpret statistics on school success and failure; and how school-board elections work.

The group has also invited successful public school principals from other districts in as guest speakers in an effort to learn from their stories. Recently, a group of parents traveled to Chicago to meet with several local school councils there to garner ideas about school government.

But for MOM member Lisa Ortega,

one of the most exciting learning opportunities occurred two years ago when two of the group's members ran for the local school board. Ms. Ortega still remembers the enthusiasm she and others - many of whom had previously known or cared little about such elections - felt about canvassing the neighborhood to get the votes out.

"People who had never voted before, not even for the president, they voted," she recalls. "It was exciting, like another world. We always used to think that we're the poor people, that politics has nothing to do with us." ■

12. Christian Science Monitor

June 16, 1998

Praying At School

Amelia Newcomb, Staff writer
of The Christian Science Monitor

BOSTON — Does prayer belong in public schools?

Just over a week ago, the House of Representatives said no - barely. In its first vote on school prayer in 27 years, the House narrowly rejected a proposal for a constitutional amendment to allow prayer in schools and religious displays in federal buildings.

But amid all the adult sparring over establishment of religion and freedom of speech, one point seems to have been lost: Lots of students around the United States are already praying while on school grounds - and they're doing it legally.

In the early morning, at lunch, or after the last bell rings, thousands of high school classrooms host gatherings of kids of varying faiths. There, sandwiched in between jobs, team practices, and homework, students congregate to pray

about everything from upcoming tests to how to keep their school safe.

It's a phenomenon that may puzzle, anger, or thrill many of their parents, most of whom came of age in schools governed by the 1963 Supreme Court ruling that banned compulsory prayer in public schools and, for practical purposes, forbade religious activities while at school.

But the 1984 Equal Access Act is shaping a younger generation in an equally profound way. By 1990, when the act was upheld by the Supreme Court, federally funded schools were told they had to allow religious meetings if they also hosted other clubs not related to the curriculum. To skirt concerns about impositions on nonparticipants, it stipulated that prayer clubs be voluntary, student-led, and held outside class hours.

Since then, prayer clubs have become a hot ticket. First Priority, a Southern Baptist organization in Tennessee, has

helped form clubs in 3,000 schools. Challenge 2000 Alliance, a group of Christian youth organizations, says there are more than 10,000 student-run Christian clubs in US high schools. The Fellowship of Christian Athletes has seen prayer "huddles" jump from about 3,400 in 1990 to about 6,500 today.

The rapid proliferation of groups, most of which are Christian, raises some concerns. Students of other faiths may feel left out or pressured to join in. The act's demand that clubs be student-run needs close monitoring to prevent adult manipulation. School officials also need to ensure that club members promote their activities in a way that doesn't offend others.

But in schools where clubs of different faiths operate, students can learn to coexist, to be sensitive to different points of view while still strengthening their own spiritual and moral values. Kids can see that faith doesn't have to be put on

the bookshelf while at school, but can be a useful tool in times of need.■

13. Family News in Focus

June 16, 1998

Calif. School Enacts Civility Policy

By Karen Johnson, KWVE Radio,
San Clemente, Calif.

One of Orange County, Calif.'s largest school district has enacted a policy to enforce discipline. The new rules, however, are not intended for children. They are aimed at parents who become unruly. San Juan Capistrano Unified is punishing parents who display uncontrollable behavior toward any of the district's 4,000 educators. Dr. James Fleming is superintendent.

(James Fleming) "When you come into a school and berate a teacher, that

teacher is upset and will not be at her optimum that day."

A first violation carries a warning. If the parent does not respond, a written report is filed with the superintendent's office and the parent is subject to a cooling-off period lasting up to 30 days. If no agreement is reached, legal action is the next step. Fleming admits the downfall is a temptation to abuse the policy.

(James Fleming) "If the district is not careful about enforcing the policy it becomes a short fuse situation allowing

educators not to deal with parents."

Karen Everett is the PTA president for the district's Aliso Niguel High School. She is convinced that will not happen.

(Karen Everett) "You will always be able to speak to a teacher first. If you don't have success with that, you can move on to an administrator. That avenue is always open to you."

In the first 60 days, four incidents were severe enough to get written-up. Dr. Fleming says all of them were resolved.■

14. Business Day (CNN)

June 15, 1998

FCC Trims Net Subsidies

DEBORAH MARCHINI, CNN
ANCHOR: The Federal Trade Commission retreats some on its plan to force telecom companies to finance the link up of schools and libraries to the Worldwide Web.

Steve Young has that and more in this morning's "Digital Jam Minute."

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

STEVE YOUNG, CNN
CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The Federal Communications Commission is scaling back its program to wire schools and libraries to the Internet under

pressure from Congress. The FCC will collect \$650 million from telecommunications companies for the program in the second half of this year, far less than the original target. Congress has been urging the FCC to reform the program or scrap it altogether, hearing it will lead to phone companies hiking consumer bills.

Meanwhile, Vice President Al Gore announced the launch of a new \$450 million program to help public television stations make the transition to digital TV. The money will also support interactive

learning programs that combine TV and the Internet.

And a U.S. district court shot down an attempt by Cable & Wireless to prevent MCI from selling Internet assets to any other firm within the next 10 days. Last month, MCI agreed to sell its Internet backbone business to Cable & Wireless for \$625 million in an effort to appease regulators opposed to MCI's merger with WorldCom.

And that's the "Digital Jam Minute." I'm Steve Young.■

15. The Washington Post

06/16/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Financial; Page C03

Debate on Wiring School for the Internet Ignores a Larger, Sillier Phone Subsidy

By Allan Sloan

If you want to understand the current Washington flap about phone rates, don't bother reading the latest pronouncements from the Federal Communications Commission or listening to the sound bites emanating from political heavyweights such as House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) or Vice President Gore. Instead, trot down to your local video store, rent a Three Stooges movie and watch Moe, Larry and Curly whack

each other around.

Why compare a multibillion-dollar phone fight to slapstick comedy? Because the fight is slapstick. Gingrich and Gore are fighting over a small, symbolic phone subsidy program — which assesses telecommunications companies to pay for wiring schools and libraries to the Internet — but are ignoring a much bigger, sillier phone subsidy. To wit: the incredibly random way we subsidize some "high-cost" and "rural" phone

systems. Why obsess over wiring schools while ignoring the subsidy that pays \$4.5 million a year to a phone company that is 51 percent owned by Walt Disney Co. and serves Disney World? That helps keep phone rates low for multimillion-dollar villas in Telluride, Colo.? And if you're worried about boondoggles, the school-wiring program is a rounding error compared with the recently passed \$200 billion highway bill.

The FCC voted 3-2 Friday to cut the school-wiring program's cost to \$1.28 billion a year from its previous maximum of \$2.25 billion. The Democratic majority wanted to preserve the plan; the Republicans voted to kill it. "Giving our kids access to this technology is more important than political battles," FCC Chairman William E. Kennard said in an interview. But the political battle is coming. By the way, even though this program is one of Gore's favorite things — which helps explain why Gingrich hates it — this isn't a

Republican-Democrat battle. Some Republicans, such as Sen. Olympia J. Snowe of Maine, favor the program, while Democrats such as Sen. Ernest F.

AT&T says it's trying to break even, not scuttle the plan. "We want only to recover the costs we're incurring for universal service," says Joel Lubin, an AT&T vice president. True, but universal service includes not only the schools-and-libraries assessment but also the rural and high-cost subsidies that AT&T and other carriers had absorbed for years. By my math, AT&T's costs were increasing by about 2.5 percent for the new programs, but it was planning to recover its entire 5 percent cost for universal service payments. In other words, a hidden rate increase. AT&T disputes my conclusions — Lubin even says he could have justified a 6.5 percent increase — but there's no space to go into

Hollings of South Carolina oppose it.

Before this debate turns purely political, let's try to apply a little history and a little math. The schools-and-libraries program was approved as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which ordered the FCC to assess telecom companies to wire these institutions to the Net. (It also covers rural hospitals, but to keep things simple, we'll ignore them.) The program was classic Washington something-for-nothing: The pols would take credit for wiring schools and the telecom companies would bury the costs deep in their books.

The FCC started collecting money for wiring schools and libraries in January, detail. Note that I'm not blaming AT&T or MCI. Long distance is brutally competitive. If you were AT&T, wouldn't you prefer to advertise a 10-cents-per-minute rate and surcharge it by 5 percent, rather than advertise a 10.5-cent rate?

The real problem isn't whether AT&T and MCI want to collect more than their extra schools-and-libraries costs. The problem is that phone service is amazingly complicated: Long distance subsidizes local phone rates, call waiting subsidizes lifeline rates and on and on. Focusing on only the schools-and-libraries piece and calling it a tax is misleading. "If you insist on phone bills showing all the subsidies,

and long-distance companies promptly started adding surcharges to business phone bills. Some companies with few residential customers, such as Qwest Communications International Inc., started surcharging residences, too. These charges set off minor rumblings. Earthquake City arrived on May 26, when AT&T Corp. notified the FCC that it planned to start charging its millions of residential customers an extra 5 percent for interstate long-distance calls — and to break it out as a surcharge on millions of phone bills. MCI Communications Corp. soon followed, with a proposed 5.9 percent surcharge. Kiss those wired schools and libraries goodbye.

your monthly bill will be the size of the Manhattan phone book," says former FCC chairman Reed E. Hundt, a Gore buddy who is a telecom consultant. "Untangling all of this is like trying to straighten out an elephant's intestines." A delightful prospect.

I tried to get Gingrich and Gore to discuss things, but I couldn't get either side to say anything of substance. So get ready to watch a telecom food fight. Maybe we can buy the combatants pies to throw at each other. And enshrine them in the Three Stooges Hall of Fame.

Newsweek's Keara Ketchum and Rich Thomas contributed to this report. Sloan is Newsweek's Wall Street editor. His e-mail address is sloan@panix.com ■

16. The Wall Street Journal

06/16/98 Page A1

Low X-pectations: Here's Y the Teaching Of Algebra in the U.S. Has Been Such a Flop

For Starters, Most Students Fear It, and Then Comes The Ninth-Grade Crunch — Milwaukee Looks for Answers

By June Kronholz

Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal
MILWAUKEE — It's a rainy Saturday morning and, in a lecture hall at the University of Wisconsin campus here, a cheer goes up among a hundred middle-school kids and their parents for . . . linear equations.

A cheer? For algebra?

Yes, algebra. And it doesn't get many.

Does any word strike greater fear in the hearts of American ninth-graders — and their parents — than algebra?

Students dread algebra, approach it as if it were toxic and, not surprisingly, do badly at it. In the Third International

Math and Science Survey, or TIMSS, a huge world-wide comparison, U.S. high schoolers finished close to the bottom in math, largely because they didn't understand algebra.

For all that, algebra is what teachers call a gatekeeper course; you have to go through it to reach the possibilities beyond. Algebra is the language of math and science, "the language of problem solving," says University of Chicago math professor Zalman Usiskin. It deals in abstractions — using letters to generalize math operations — that expand thinking skills. In a technology-fueled society, says Mr.

Usiskin, not knowing algebra "limits what you can do."

Youngsters who take algebra tend to go to college, research shows, and low-income youngsters who take it are almost as likely to go to college as middle- and upper-income kids. The gap in test scores between students in private school and those in public school largely disappears if they take upper-level math courses, beginning with algebra.

That's why, on a morning better suited to sleeping in, James Newton Jr., a Milwaukee bus driver with a sense of the future, has brought his daughter, Charonda, to a Saturday math class. It is

part of a program designed by the College Board to get youngsters into college by first getting them through algebra. An 11-year-old, Charonda is a C student in math who faces algebra in two years.

So all semester she has spent part of her Saturdays studying graphing, measuring and density. Now, in a graduation exercise, kids and parents alike labor over equations, cheering themselves wildly as they answer. And amid the din, Mr. Newton sounds an optimistic note. "We're looking at the big

But TIMSS does more than just show how U.S. students perform; it also helps explain why. The U.S. teaches math cursorily, often with teachers who have only a few more math courses than the kids they're hired to teach. It tracks youngsters into courses they're certain to pass, instead of into courses they're going to need. William Schmidt, an education professor at Michigan State University in East Lansing, studied 1,500 math textbooks from 50 countries under a contract with TIMSS. His conclusion: U.S. math education is a mile wide and an inch deep, a failing that begins with textbooks.

Publishing a math book is expensive: A new high-school math series being developed with a \$5 million National Science Foundation grant and published by Tribune Co., involves professors from five universities working for 10 years to write four books. But almost every district wants something different from its math books: some start multiplication in second grade, some in third. Commercial publishers try to accommodate as many districts as possible, and boost sales, by including every math topic imaginable in every grade.

Ten years ago, James Flanders, now an educational consultant in Colorado Springs, Colo., surveyed four math series to see how much new material was added to books from one grade to the next. He found that only 40% of the material in a second-grader's book wasn't a repeat of first grade, and only 30% of the material in eighth-grade books was new. "It really was a message that we're going to sit here in limbo and practice arithmetic," says Mr. Flanders. He has looked at new math books and found "not much has changed."

Indeed, U.S. schools do teach arithmetic well; the TIMSS scores for fourth-graders (TIMSS tested children in grades four, eight and 12) showed U.S. kids scoring above average. But they

picture here," he says. "We're looking at college."

To sign on to this College Board program, the Milwaukee Public Schools agreed five years ago to require algebra of all ninth-graders. There are two ways to look at that decision. On the one hand, fewer than two-thirds of Milwaukee ninth-graders passed algebra in 1996, the latest year for which numbers are available. On the other hand, twice as many Milwaukee ninth-graders passed algebra in 1996 as even took it in 1991. And with algebra guarding the gates to teach it over and over again, instead of assuming students have learned, say, fractions after a couple of years. In his study of textbooks, Mr. Schmidt found that U.S. books covered up to 35 different math topics a year — that means teachers fly through them at a speed of one a week — and didn't drop any of them until seventh grade.

If some topics are taught over and over, algebra usually isn't taught at all until ninth grade because . . . well, because ninth-grade algebra has always been an American tradition. But isolating algebra that way means that about 90% of a ninth-grade math book is new material — a huge blast of abstract thinking after years of easy-going arithmetic.

Assuming that math teachers will make up for curriculum lapses isn't the answer. Teacher licensing varies from state to state, but Ohio, with among the toughest requirements, asks a teacher to take only three math courses, aside from how-to-teach-it classes, to be licensed through eighth grade. That's because education colleges stress teaching skills like classroom management, and state legislatures increasingly want classes on social issues, like understanding diversity. "The subject people" — the math and English departments — "tend to lose because the state requirements affect health and safety," says Lynn Steen, a math professor at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn.

Even when states toughen teaching requirements, they often then ignore them. Nationally, one-fourth of new teachers either aren't licensed to teach the course they are hired for, or haven't any license at all, says the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, based at Columbia University in New York. Postgraduate teacher training doesn't fill many gaps either. Most states require teachers to return to college either for periodic recertification or to earn pay raises. But Glenda Lappan, a Michigan State math professor, says there's a divide

college, that, says Chicago's Mr. Usiskin, "may be the more important number."

The TIMSS results hit a nerve in a country that is smug about its technological prowess and riding an economic surge. One-third of U.S. 12th-graders couldn't compute the price of a \$1,250 stereo that was on sale for 20% off. Only one in nine could plot a graph. Even the best U.S. students, presumably the next engineers, scored miserably.

between what returning teachers need to learn — a deeper look at a grade-school subject — and the research-oriented courses that many graduate departments want to teach. "There's no conversation going on between the universities and the schools," she says.

And because many districts ask how many credits teachers earn, not what they learn, Mrs. Lappan remembers one summer school where teachers bypassed the academic courses and enrolled "by the hundreds" in a dress-for-success class.

When kids also take the easy way out, it is even more troubling. Grouping by ability largely was dropped in U.S. schools in the 1970s — except in math, where even second- and third-graders often are still divided by skill level. "The powerful message children learn from tracking is, 'I'm not very smart in math,'" says Jeannie Oakes, an education professor at the University of California in Los Angeles.

Worse, it sticks with them in high school, where they can opt for dumbed-down math courses, with names like commercial math or vocational math. One reason 12th-graders scored so badly in TIMSS, Ms. Oakes says, is that two-thirds of them "have never been in a classroom where these subjects are taught."

The College Board decided to tackle math reform after **Department of Education** researchers concluded eight years ago that the gap in college — going rates between minorities and whites, and between haves and have-nots, was caused by math. "We looked at the variables, to see what would close the gap, and it was math," says Vanetta Jones, director of the program, which is called Equity 2000.

Indeed, there's a 100-point gap between the average scores of black and white students on the College Board's SAT exam, and a 50-point gap between whites and Hispanics. The reason, says the College Board, is that minorities just

aren't as likely to take the tough math courses that will boost their scores.

The only obligation, when a school district signs on to Equity 2000, is that it require algebra of all its ninth-graders and geometry of all 10th-graders. The College Board then offers workshops on the nuts and bolts of math. Eight cities belong now; five more are joining. Equity 2000 has only the barest proof that it's succeeding. But a look at how math reform is going in Milwaukee points out the depth of the problem and some glimmers of hope.

Next door, Nora Lofy's algebra class is plotting a graph, and she coos that almost everyone got an A on a big exam the week before. But an hour from now she has a "reteach class" for the 10th-graders who failed algebra last year. Milwaukee youngsters must pass algebra and a math-proficiency test to graduate, and 90 of Vincent's 220 seniors recently took the proficiency test for the third time.

Downstairs, Audrey Reineck's algebra class is taking its weekly turn in the computer lab, working problems about an oil embargo, construction supplies, a downhill skier's speed. Keeping up with the new technology that teachers are expected to master is "like being on the freeway," she says. "You can't stop for anything or you get passed by."

Five years ago, fewer than one in four Milwaukee blacks and Hispanics took algebra, half as many as whites, and whatever their race, about one in four or five failed it. Not only is the abstraction of algebra befuddling, it's often the first class that parents can't help with — they either never took algebra themselves or can't remember it — and for many kids, there's no where else to turn.

So Equity 2000 promotes safety-net programs: tutoring, Saturday workshops, college mentors. Fort Worth, Texas, schedules parent nights where it outlines its math program, offers help with algebra anxiety — and, to boost

The math department commands an entire well-equipped wing of sprawling Vincent High School, where inspirational messages (your brand of sneakers won't matter in 10 years; your education will) compete for space on the bulletin board with the district weapons policy. In Milton Bond's ninth-grade algebra class, there are moans that the day's lesson, multiplying variables, is "too easy" — a complaint to cheer any teacher's heart. But for all that, this is an inner-city school with compelling social problems.

A boy who concedes he has been attendance, provides dinner. Memphis, Tenn., holds a summer algebra camp and pays bus fare for youngsters to attend. Milwaukee devotes \$600,000 a year to algebra tutoring.

Teacher training is stepped up: Nashville, Tenn., holds 80 or 90 classes a year, including summer school and weekend workshops on how to use a graphing calculator. Guidance counselors are counseled themselves to raise youngsters' aspirations. School districts and nearby universities are forming links: University of Wisconsin professors help teach Milwaukee's Saturday Academy, then finetune their own curriculum based on what they see.

Certainly, not all is going well. Milwaukee's strong teachers' union demands that perks like training sessions, which often come with extra pay, go to the most senior teachers instead of those who need them most. A community tutoring program collapsed when the tutors dropped out. The insurance company that supported the Saturday Academy has withdrawn its funding; its customer base in Milwaukee is too small to justify the \$62,000 grant.

Textbook math often remains disconnected from real-life math: At Vincent High, a class struggles to square the product of X times Y — a classic algebra problem without much practical application and, in any event, one that

coming to class only once a week strolls in, vows that "I'm gonna start coming two times a week; you don't know what's going on in my life," and strolls out. A girl launches into a monologue on a favorite singer and, when admonished, answers coolly, "I'm not talking to you." A youngster who finished his work handily reads a magazine; another, apparently lost in the complexity of it all, puts his head in his arms and feigns sleep.

calculators now solve.

And most dauntingly, math scores are still weak. Milwaukee's 10th-graders scored in the 37th percentile on a standardized math test this year; that means that, on average, 63 of every 100 sophomores in the country scored higher. Moreover, because everyone is taking algebra now, not just the brightest, pass rates have plunged.

Still, on the dreary landscape of urban education, Milwaukee offers some promise. A year from now, all middle schools will begin using the same math textbooks and curriculum; amazingly, it will be the first time every sixth-grader in the 104,000-student system will be taught the same thing. That will include some algebra in sixth and seventh grades. Algebra will become an eighth-grade requirement, and youngsters will have to pass it to get into high school, where they face three more years of math.

Meanwhile, Emmett Upchurch Jr., a Milwaukee eighth-grader, figures the Saturday academy has raised his math grade to an A from a B in preparation for algebra next year. He has also put his sharpened math skills to practical use. He has calculated how much it will cost him — tuition, room and board, "everything, including weekend parties" — to attend Atlanta's Morehouse College in 2003. ■

17. Good Morning America (ABC)

06/15/98Section: NEWS;

TWO STUDENTS INJURED IN SCHOOL SHOOTING VISIT GMA

By KEVIN NEWMAN

KEVIN NEWMAN, Host: Well, as Lisa just told you, President Clinton was talking about children and violence on the West Coast this weekend. He also stopped in Springfield, Oregon, where he

visited Thurston High. That was the scene of that horrific school shooting in May. Now, the President met privately with shooting victims and their families, and then he addressed the school, promising to do all he can to prevent

another such tragedy.

And joining us this morning from Eugene, Oregon, are two of Thurston High School students wounded in the attack, Tony Case and Jake Ryker. That's Jake on the left. And he was the varsity

wrestler who first tackled gunman Kip Kingle. Good morning, guys.

TD TONY CASE, Thurston High School Shooting Victim: Good morning.

JAKE RYKER, Thurston High School Shooting Victim: Good morning.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Let's get caught up with how you're doing physically. Jake, you took a bullet in the chest. How are you feeling now?

JAKE RYKER: A little bit sore, hurts — still hurts a little to breathe.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Now, you've been taking some rehabilitation to your foot, and I gather the President, that was one of the things when he visited your high school, talked to you about in your private meetings?

TONY CASE: Yes, we talked about the differences between our therapies, and how rigorous a workout he had.

KEVIN NEWMAN: What other things did you talk about?

TONY CASE: We talked about his saxophones, because we're both very musical, and about how he receives them from different countries. And we talked about Chelsea.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Now, Jake, did you have a chance to talk to the President?

JAKE RYKER: Yes, just briefly.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Just a very brief conversation? Did you exchange any information at all?

JAKE RYKER: Not really. We said hi. I got to meet him.

KEVIN NEWMAN: OK. One of the things the President said on the weekend in his radio address is that parents, having seen what happened in Thurston High, he said, "Parents cannot permit easy access to weapons that kill." Now, both of you have a very intimate understanding of weapons and what they can do to you. I'm interested in what you guys think about the debate, what's happening right now, mostly among adults, whether or not kids have too easy access to guns. Tony, why don't you give

KEVIN NEWMAN: Yes? You're still in a fair bit of pain?

JAKE RYKER: No, it's just usually if I turn wrong.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Did — is — was there a tear in your muscle, or are you in rehabilitation, or...

JAKE RYKER: It went through my lung.

KEVIN NEWMAN: It went through your lung.

JAKE RYKER: And broke a rib, so... me your answer to that first?

TONY CASE: I think definitely that they do have easy access to guns, but they have easy access to everything. And taking care of the gun problem is not going to solve it. They're going to make a bomb, or they're going to do something destructive no matter what.

KEVIN NEWMAN: So you think if they have it in their souls to do this, that they'll find a weapon no matter what's out there.

TONY CASE: They're going to find a way to do it.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Jake, what do you think about this?

JAKE RYKER: I think basically what Tony does. If they wanted to, they'll find anything to use. The gun is just usually what they're picking up first. And...

KEVIN NEWMAN: Yes, but — you know, Kip — or the shooter in this had a .22 caliber rifle. Now, that shoots off several rounds at once. And, you know, there were 50 rounds that were shot in your high school, Jake. I mean, does — why does a kid need to have a rifle that's a semiautomatic?

JAKE RYKER: Why does he need to have a grenade? He had one of those in his bedroom. He had bombs. He had dynamite with him.

KEVIN NEWMAN: But his parents didn't buy him the grenade. His parents bought him the gun.

JAKE RYKER: Well, he didn't buy one of the guns that he had either. He stole that.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Now, Tony, you took a couple of bullets. I think they're still in you, are they?

TONY CASE: Yes, there's two still in me, and they took two out during surgery.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Which ones are still in you, and where are they?

TONY CASE: There's one still by my right shoulder blade, and one in my stomach.

KEVIN NEWMAN: But the — yes, but the — his parents did buy him a gun, and it's possible to do that. You don't think that's an issue?

JAKE RYKER: My dad bought me a gun, and I'm not out there shooting anybody.

KEVIN NEWMAN: You're a hunter?

JAKE RYKER: Yes.

KEVIN NEWMAN: All right. Tony, let's talk about the future for a minute. You said you had an injured leg. You're a pretty good ball player, I understand. What's the prognosis for that?

TONY CASE: It's kind of a wait-and-see kind of thing right now. Mostly right now, it's nerve damage. So we're kind of just waiting and seeing if it'll grow back and when it'll grow back.

KEVIN NEWMAN: You get to toss out a ball in a game tomorrow, I think?

TONY CASE: Yes.

KEVIN NEWMAN: Yes? I hear your pitch is still pretty strong.

TONY CASE: It's all right. I kind of use my upper body. But I can get it in there.

KEVIN NEWMAN: All right, good for you. And Jake, thank you, and we hope your wrestling career continues soon too. Take care, you guys.

TONY CASE: Thank you very much.

JAKE RYKER: Thank you.

(Commercial Break)

(Local News)

(Commercial Break)

■

18. CyberTimes (New York Times on the web)

June 15, 1998

Family Sues Library for Not Restricting Children's Internet Access

By PAMELA MENDELS

In what is believed to be the first lawsuit of its kind, a public library is being sued for having failed to restrict young patrons' access to the Internet. The

lawsuit was filed following an incident in which a 12-year-old boy is said to have downloaded sexually graphic images from computers at a Livermore, Calif., library, and then printed them at a

relative's home.

The suit, filed May 28 in California State Superior Court in Alameda County, asks among other things that Livermore officials be barred from spending public

money on the city's public library computer system so long as minors can use it to find sexual material considered "harmful to minors" under California law.

"The library is violating its basic duty to the community: to provide a safe place to acquire knowledge," said Michael D. Millen, a lawyer who brought the case on behalf of a mother identified only as

"There is no effective way of screening the Internet without interfering with First Amendment rights," said Daniel G. Sodergren, the assistant city attorney for Livermore. "Filters take out material protected by the First Amendment."

Nonetheless, the suit suggests that American public libraries are now between a legal rock and a hard place, as some patrons demand filters while others ask the courts to ban them. Late last year, in a federal case that could be seen as the mirror opposite of the Livermore suit, the Loudoun County, Va., public library system was sued by some patrons for providing only filtered access to the Internet. That case is still pending, but the anti-filtering forces have won an important preliminary court victory.

Millen says that his client's son, identified as "Brandon P.", now 13, visited the Civic Center main library branch of Livermore over a period of about 10 days last June and used computers there to visit Internet sites containing sexually graphic images. The boy downloaded the images onto a disk, used a relative's computer to reproduce them on paper and showed them to

"Kathleen P." in court papers.

The suit does not directly ask that the library be required to use filters — software products that block access to Internet content deemed inappropriate. But in a letter to the city, Millen suggested that one solution would involve the use of filters.

A lawyer for the city said the library friends, according to Millen.

He said the boy obtained "several dozen" images, and that they ranged from mildly pornographic depictions of semi-clothed women, to what he considers obscenity: images of fully-nude women engaged in sexual encounters.

Millen believes that most of these images run afoul of California law, either because they are obscene, a legal term referring to graphic sexual material that has no free speech protection, even for adult viewing, or because they are "harmful to minors," material that is protected for adults, but not for those under 18 years of age.

But determining what is "obscene" or "harmful to minors" is a matter for juries and judges to decide, not individuals like Millen, asserted Ann Brick, staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California, which is watching the Livermore case closely.

Millen contacted the library about the incident in March, and urged library officials to come up with a way to fence off minors from pornographic material online. One solution, he suggested, was to install filtering software on computers that children have access to — allowing

intends to aggressively defend its current practice of providing open Internet access to all patrons, because library board officials, in keeping with the policy of the American Library Association, believe there is no mechanism for cordoning off arguably offensive material without also trampling on basic free speech rights.

minors to use other unfiltered terminals with parental permission.

However, the library board — like many public libraries across the country — opposes filters, viewing them as a flawed instrument that too often blocks not just inappropriate sites but legitimate information as well, such as health or art-related material.

The suit puts Livermore at the forefront of a growing national debate about the wisdom of installing filters on computers used by children in public settings, such as schools and libraries. Last year, in a case now pending in federal court for the southern district of Florida in Palm Beach, a mother sued the Broward County School Board, demanding, among other things, that filters be put on local public school computers providing Internet access to students.

The Livermore suit is probably the first to make a similar demand on libraries, according to David W. Burt, a Lake Oswego, Ore. librarian and founder of a pro-filtering group called Filtering Facts. ■

19. Memphis Commercial Appeal

06/13/98; Edition: Final; Section: News; Page A6

CONGRESS VOWS TO CUT SCHOOLS' INTERNET SUBSIDY

By Mary Deibel

Federal regulators, under sudden fire from Congress, voted Friday to scale back funding for subsidized Internet hookups that more than 30,000 schools and libraries hoped to share this year.

The Federal Communications Commission, on a 3-2 vote, said it will provide \$650 million in discounts for hookups between July and December this year, bringing the total for 1998 to \$1.275 billion - almost half of what the FCC originally sought.

"You're never going to satisfy everyone," said FCC Chairman Bill Kennard, who has been fighting to keep

the program alive in the face of a flare-up of congressional opposition to the program that President Clinton made a centerpiece of his promise to improve public schools.

The 1996 telecommunications deregulation act authorized telephone companies to collect money to lower Internet rates for schools, libraries and rural health facilities in the expectation competition unleashed as a result of the new law would drive down phone bills enough to more than offset the subsidy.

However, the issue has taken on a life of its own since AT&T and MCI announced recently that they will start

adding a 5 percent surcharge to long-distance bills starting in July to reflect the subsidy.

The \$650 million the FCC authorized Friday will come from this surcharge.

Clinton used a commencement address at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology last week to defend the program so that future generations of students aren't digitally deprived, and Vice President Gore carried on the call for support this week.

But lawmakers in both parties on Capitol Hill have promised to block the program.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.)

blasted what he labeled the "Gore tax" and said Congress will move to kill it before the month is out.

Gingrich also attacked the FCC, saying, "It is wrong for five unelected,

Consumer groups that have criticized phone companies for being slow to cut bills and fees also have been outraged by

appointed commissioners to be able to establish a tax on every telephone line in the United States."

Gore countered by calling on Congress and industry to put politics the schools and libraries program. The Consumer Federation of America's Gene Kimmelman contends that phone bills

aside and work to put 21st Century educational technology in every classroom and library.

could rise by more than \$1 billion as a result of the school and library discount.■

20. Orlando Sentinel

06/13/98; Edition: METRO; Section: A SECTION; Page A14

SCHOOL INTERNET HOOKUPS TO LOSE SOME FUNDING

WASHINGTON - Federal regulators decided Friday to scale back rather than eliminate money for cheap Internet hookups for schools and libraries. The Federal Communications Commission, in

a 3-2 vote, agreed to provide \$650 million in subsidies for the connections in the second half of the program's first year. That would bring the total for 1998 to \$1.275 billion, a 43 percent cut from

the \$2.25 billion the FCC originally sought. The program is paid for through fees the FCC imposes on telecommunications companies, which pass them on to customers. ■

21. Christian Science Monitor

June 15, 1998

Giving Parents a Peek at School Lesson Plans

Lawrence J. Goodrich, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON — When a group of parents in Chapel Hill, N.C., obtained the reading materials for the school system's "multicultural action plan for the promotion of respect for diversity," they were upset by what they saw.

A required English course included works by gay and lesbian authors that contained material the school board would not allow to be read out at a public meeting, says John Reinhard, a biologist whose son is a local high school student.

"If the salacious depiction of homosexual, sadomasochistic behavior might be inappropriate for a school-board meeting, why would it be suitable for our children?" Mr. Reinhard asked a recent hearing of a House subcommittee.

Opinions about what is or isn't appropriate for school use vary widely. Some parents' groups have objected to students reading Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" because it ends in teenage suicide, or Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" because it deals with witchcraft.

So a group of mostly conservative House Republican lawmakers has responded to complaints from parents about the content of school curricula, tests, and surveys, introducing the Parental Freedom of Information Act.

The proposal would require states and local schools to let parents review textbooks, manuals, and audiovisual materials used in the classroom. In addition, parents would have the right to see any testing materials administered to students, except for copyrighted exams. The measure would also require written permission from a parent before any student could be required to undergo any medical, psychological, or psychiatric testing or treatment while at school, except in emergencies.

In the event of a dispute, the measure provides for mediation and arbitration at the school district's expense.

The bill's sponsors, led by Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R) of Kansas, say they mean to clarify the 1974 Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, which requires that parents have the right to their children's school records.

"This legislation is about removing barriers from including parents in their children's education," Representative Tiahrt says. He says he introduced the legislation after "an alarming number" of cases in which parents had to file lawsuits to gain access to materials used in schools. "Plain and simple, parents should not have to go into the courtroom to find out what is going on in their child's classroom."

Ahead of the curve

Some school districts already have these types of policies in place. Jim Means, principal of Wichita High School West in Wichita, Kan., told the subcommittee that public schools in his city allow parents to inspect any instructional materials, including teacher's manuals.

"Need for this policy became apparent as district programs approached sensitive materials, such as sex and AIDS education, [and] advisement programs, which included goal-setting and decisionmaking," Mr. Means said. "Also some parents had voiced concern about surveys given in the school setting which inquired about issues which those parents felt were private family matters or were not relevant to the educational programs of the school."

The policy gives parents the right to request that their children "opt out" of sex and AIDS education. "Though the efforts are time intensive, they do provide the school, students, and parents ... a certain sense of security that these issues are understood by all parties involved," Means said.

Friends in high places

The Tiahrt proposal has some powerful friends: House majority leader Dick Armey (R) and majority whip Tom

DeLay (R), both of Texas, are among the co-sponsors. But the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers'

Among things the NEA wants to clear up is whether the bill would preempt state requirements that teachers and administrators investigate and report suspected child abuse. As it is written now, the bill makes exceptions only for federal child-abuse laws.

"How would this bill practically work, and will it benefit children, or is there a chilling effect created that would be to the detriment of those children who need that help?" Ms. Robinson asks.

The union also wants to clarify the definitions of terms such as

union, is taking a wait-and-see approach to the bill. "We're still in the question stage," says Adele Robinson, an NEA "psychological."

"When I give an essay test about 'The Crucible' or about the actions that Romeo and Juliet took, is that a psychological exam?" Robinson asks. If a teacher suspects a student is being sexually harassed or is smoking in the bathroom and asks about it, is that prying into that student's life?

Other critics say the bill goes in the wrong direction by setting federal mandates for matters that should be left up to states and school boards. Larry Davis of the Association of Texas

lobbyist. "We certainly don't have a problem with parents seeing the curriculum. That's not an issue."

Professional Educators, a group that opposes both federal-education requirements and national teachers' unions, called for a policy that state officials and school boards could use to develop their own approaches to parental access.

The bill was up for consideration last week by the full House Committee on Education and the Workforce, but was pulled for further work. Tiahrt says he expects the committee to send it to the House floor as part of another measure within two weeks. ■

TRADE

22. Education Daily

June 16, 1998

ED Issues Final Rules For Use Of Drug-Free Funds

by Pam Moore

The Education Department has issued final rules on how state and local education grant recipients can use funds under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program.

The rules, effective July 1, emphasize research-based practices for reducing or preventing drug use, violence or disruptive behavior among youths.

They also call for a needs assessment and thorough analysis of data about drugs and violence in the schools and

communities to be served.

Under the grant rules, grant recipients will be required to:

- * Design programs to meet measurable goals, focusing on outcomes that include information about changed behaviors or attitudes related to violence or drug use; and

- * Evaluate programs periodically to determine progress and fine-tune programs.

For a free copy and information on "Principles of Effectiveness", contact

William Modzeleski, (202)260-3954, or the Education Department, (800)USALEARN; Internet, www.ed.gov.

For information on drug and violence research, see Preventing Drug Abuse Among Children and Adolescents via the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, (800)729-6686. — Pam Moore ■

23. Education Daily

June 16, 1998

Harkin Amendment Would Lower Student Loan Fees

by Eli J. Lake

Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, wants to lower the insurance premium students pay on federally subsidized loans, and he's willing to take back money from guarantee agencies to do it.

Harkin plans to offer an amendment to S. 1881, the Senate's Higher Education Act reauthorization proposal, that would lower student loan origination fees on family education loans (FEL) and direct student loans from 4 percent to 3 percent.

If the amendment is approved, students could save as much as \$171.25 in fees they pay the Education Department and state loan guarantors to

insure and service student loans.

In order to pay for the students' savings, the amendment would eliminate the 1 percent fee guarantors are currently allowed to collect on subsidized student loans and require them to give the fees they collect on unsubsidized loans to the U.S. treasury.

State guarantors are concerned that Harkin's proposal would quickly deplete the already scarce federal reserve fund these agencies count on to pay banks for defaulted loans.

A 1996 balanced budget agreement requires guarantee agencies to return over \$1 billion in these reserve funds to the

federal government (ED, June 12, 1997). The House and Senate HEA proposals would siphon another \$215 million from this account.

Both the Senate and House HEA proposals would restructure the accounts of guarantors so that these reserve funds could only be spent on reimbursing banks for defaulted loans and undertaking default aversion activities (ED, March 17).

"The reserve fund would be depleted rapidly if this [provision] was signed into law," said Brett Lief, President of the National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP).

While the guarantee agencies are predictably alarmed by Harkin's proposal, ED, students and university groups are applauding the Iowa senator's plan.

In a June 3 letter to Harkin, 11 university groups—including the American Council on Education—said the amendment "creates a benefit that

will be extended to all students, and in particular, those with significant financial need."

Despite this support, until recently it appeared unlikely Harkin's plan would pass the Senate in light of estimates that showed the amendment would add costs to an already expensive law.

But Senate sources say they are very close to a deal with the Congressional Budget Office, and expect the proposal would not increase federal spending.

The Senate could take up the HEA bill this week. —Eli J. Lake■

24. Education Daily

June 16, 1998

Guide On Troubled Youths Due By Fall, Clinton Says

by Darren Goode

President Clinton yesterday called for the Education and Justice departments to prepare a guidebook by September for parents, teachers and students describing early warning signals of "deeply troubled" youths.

Clinton, speaking at a high school in Springfield, Ore., the site of a deadly

May 21 school shooting — said the guidebook should "describe all the kinds of early warning signals that deeply troubled youth sometimes give — not just bringing a gun to school, but maybe other things as well."

Americans must "learn more about the people with whom we live, and the kinds of signals that are coming out," Clinton

said.

Clinton also labeled as a "very good suggestion," a bill introduced yesterday by Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., that would order youths be placed in a juvenile holding center for 72-hour evaluation if they bring a weapon to school. —Darren Goode■

25. Education Daily

June 16, 1998

Mediation Helps Solve School-Religion Conflicts

by Rebecca S. Weiner

NEW YORK — Two-way discussions between religious organizations and school officials often cool conflicts over students' religious rights, a panel of religious advocates and school children told the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on Friday.

"It's a matter of people not understanding," said Cruz Reynoso, the commission's vice-chairman, at the group's second meeting on religion and schools in New York City Friday. "Things are worked out once people understand what the ground rules are."

Vincent McCarthy, senior regional director for the American Center for Law and Justice, said his group—which represents students in religious liberty disputes—often merely sends a letter to schools outlining federal and state laws to clear up religious conflicts.

"When the school is informed of the law, we've been able to resolve the situation," he said.

A group of New York elementary school students, represented by McCarthy's group, said once their school

officials met with the center's attorneys, their religious conflicts were resolved out of court.

Rebekah Gordon, 9, said her teacher told her she couldn't sing the song "Happy Birthday Jesus" at a December assembly. After a lawyer from McCarthy's group met with Gordon's principal, she was able to sing the song.

"The Constitution says we have freedom of religion and speech," Gordon told the commissioners. "When they said I couldn't sing the song, they took away something from the Constitution."

Laying The Groundwork

The commission, holding the second of three hearings on religion and schools, expects to deliver a preliminary report on the issue to Congress by Sept. 30. The commission heard from civil rights advocates earlier this month at a hearing in Washington, D.C. (ED, May 22).

After the first two hearings, the commission's chairperson Mary Frances Berry, said there doesn't appear to be an acute problem with religion in schools.

"From the witnesses we've heard so far, it is a less serious problem than it was

in the past," she said in an interview. "The mere dissemination of information has been helpful to principals."

Berry was referring to guidelines issued by the Education Department in 1995 that outline acceptable schoolsite religious expression by students and teachers (ED, Aug. 18, 1995).

The department announced last week that it plans to expand the guidelines regarding the wearing of religious garb in public schools, and when children should be excused from class for religious reasons (ED, June 2).

The commission's hearings came on the heels of state and national activity regarding religion and schools.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled last week that public funds could support vouchers to help low-income students attend private religious schools in Milwaukee (ED, June 4).

And the House voted down a provision that would have guaranteed prayer in public schools (ED, June 8). —Rebecca S. Weiner■

26. Education Daily

June 16, 1998

FCC Trims, Saves E-Rate; Poor Schools Get Priority

by Jonathan Fox

Resisting calls from Congress to suspend the controversial e-rate program, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted late Friday to instead cut funding for the program by nearly half.

While more than 30,000 schools have requested \$2.02 billion in subsidies for the e-rate, the FCC will only disburse \$1.275 billion this year, all but assuring that many schools' requests — but not those from the poorest schools — will be partly unfulfilled.

"This nation has an obligation to make sure out neediest kids have an on-ramp to the network that leads to tomorrow's opportunities," said FCC Chairman William Kennard. "I hope our actions will allow us to get past the controversies, distractions and false choices, and focus on the promise communications holds for education."

The new funding level will be accomplished by collecting \$325 million from telecommunications companies for each of the last two quarters of 1998, the FCC said in a statement. During the first half of 1998, \$625 million was collected.

All schools that applied will receive full support for telecommunications services, such as long-distance and local phone service, as well as Internet access, while only the neediest schools will receive funding for internal wiring, the agency said.

Every school that met the early filing deadline "will get at least some funding," an FCC spokeswoman said.

E-Rate Survives, At A Cost

Education groups and the Clinton administration had mixed reactions to the FCC decision, which was influenced by strong GOP opposition on Capitol Hill.

"The funding plan endorsed by the FCC moves us in the direction of helping

the poorest schools in this nation overcome the digital divide," said **Education Secretary Richard Riley**, who expressed disappointment not all demand would be met.

The Council of the Great City Schools, a collective of urban educators, was pleased by the decision, but the National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest teacher union, condemned the cutback.

"We can talk all we want about how much we love our children," said NEA President Bob Chase, "but when push came to shove, profits for the telecommunications industry were apparently more important than our kids' futures."

Chase also said the skimpier discounts would create "chaos" in many communities, since "thousands of school districts have already signed contracts and set budgets based on the discounts they were promised."

Lawmakers Still Upset

Despite the FCC's decision to move forward, however, the e-rate program is not certain.

Some lawmakers want to kill the program. On Thursday, Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., introduced H.R. 4032, which would repeal the entire e-rate program. More anti-e-rate legislation could be introduced soon.

Despite the cuts, the top two telecommunications lawmakers were outraged by the decision.

"The FCC blew it," said Rep. Thomas Bliley, R-Va., chairman of the House Commerce Committee. "The Telecommunications Act called for lower phone rates, not the 'Gore Tax,'" a reference program backer Vice President Gore.

"The FCC has shown yet again that it is incapable of exercising the responsible

judgment that Congress has a right to demand," said Senate Commerce Committee chairman John McCain, R-Ariz, who vowed to push for legislation to "stabilize" the e-rate program.

Meanwhile, House and Senate lawmakers are moving forward to redirect a 3 percent excise tax on telephone charges, first instituted to pay World War I costs, toward the e-rate.

Phone Companies Started Squabble

Republicans' ire was raised when both AT&T and MCI announced plans to add surcharges to phone bills to pay for the program.

Many Republicans in Congress then condemned the e-rate as a hidden tax on consumers, but the FCC maintains it provided long-distance companies access fee reductions to fully compensate them for the program.

On June 4, Bliley and McCain, as well as Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., and Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., fired a salvo that shook the FCC, ordering Kennard to stop the program. That missive led to speculation the program would be halted or that the FCC would have its budget zeroed out (ED, June 8).

Long-distance companies promised to study the decision to decide whether they will lower fees that will be charged in July to pay for the program, as well as other longstanding universal service costs that were previously "hidden" on customer bills.

AT&T has indicated it may levy a flat 90 cent fee on customer bills instead of a 5 percent surcharge. The FCC's Kennard has said he supports such a move because it provides more "clarity." — Jonathan Fox ■

LOCAL

27. Chicago Tribune

June 16, 1998

SCHOOLS CRACK DOWN ON KIDS' THREATS

By Stephanie Banchemo
Tribune Staff Writer

Twelve-year-old Ryan Davies wonders why a friend got in trouble for saying he was going to kill someone after

getting a bad grade on a math test. Ahmer Zaidi, 13, does not understand why a student got suspended for joking about shooting a classmate.

The youngsters are not the only ones

with questions.

As the nation's schools endure one of the most violent years in recent memory — in the latest attack, a basketball coach and volunteer aide was shot in

Richmond, Va., on Monday in the hallways of a high school, allegedly by a 14-year-old student —educators and child's rights advocates are grappling with the issue of threatening comments. Some believe the punishments do not always fit the crimes, but others say stern vigilance is the only safe response.

Until recently, talk of harming a teacher or a classmate likely would have been shrugged off as childhood braggadocio, landing the pupil in the principal's office for a stern admonishment or even a paddling.

But in today's charged atmosphere — spurred by proof that some students make good on threats of unthinkable violence —educators and law enforcement officials are taking each utterance seriously. In the last two weeks, police nationwide have arrested at least nine students for making threatening comments. And even though some of the incidents were deemed nothing more than pranks, school officials have employed the full force of the law.

"We don't know what we can say anymore," said Davies, a 7th grader at Jerling Junior High School in Orland Park. Davies cannot remember ever making such a remark himself, but he said a lot of his friends do.

"It's like we're afraid we're going to get in trouble for every little thing we say," added, Zaidi, a freshman at Sandburg High School in Orland Park.

School violence, and the threat of it, has so befuddled educators and law enforcement that the two groups are gathering in unprecedented numbers to discuss the issue. Last week, officials from Springfield, Ore., Jonesboro, Ark., and Paducah, Ky. —cities that experienced schoolyard shootings — came together to seek ways to head off the tragedies that struck their cities. In Illinois, Atty. Gen. Jim Ryan organized a task force to suggest ways to keep children safe. During a meeting last week

Kysilko said the current national mood about threats mirrors an attitude adopted in the early 1990s after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that students who are sexually discriminated against can sue their schools for monetary compensation. A slew of highly publicized and questionable suspensions followed, including a 6-year-old North Carolina boy who was suspended after he kissed a classmate.

"I think a lot of them were reacting to the frightening possibility of lawsuits, and we may be seeing the same scenario today in regard to threats," Kysilko said.

in Chicago, the group discussed the seeming proliferation of student threats.

And some school officials already are rewriting student manuals and suspension policies to specifically address threatening comments.

"It's an issue we all have to take a long, hard look at because it's coming at us full steam ahead, whether we're ready or not," said David Kysilko, of the National Association of State Boards of Education. "But I think it's a good thing. I think it's time we began paying more attention to what kids say, now that we have seen where it can lead."

In a rash of school shootings, the alleged triggermen talked to others before embarking on their murderous schemes. In Springfield, Ore., a teen accused of gunning down two students in the school cafeteria allegedly told friends he was going to kill. In Jonesboro, Ark., a 13-year-old accused in the ambush murder of five, supposedly warned a classmate he planned to kill an ex-girlfriend. And in Edinboro, Pa., a teen charged with fatally shooting a teacher during a prom allegedly bragged to friends that he wanted to "kill some people."

None of these threats was taken seriously. And in each case, a grieving nation wondered why. So, like airport officials, school authorities are treating even a seemingly joking comment about violence with the utmost seriousness.

Last month, a Glenbard North High School freshman allegedly told a friend he was going to kill classmates. A few weeks later, a 15-year-old New Jersey boy showed a teacher a drawing of a man in the cross hairs of a rifle. And two weeks ago, a 13-year-old Will County boy was on a phone in the school office when he allegedly was overheard saying he was "going to kill someone" because his mother wouldn't let him leave school early.

In each of these cases, and many like Students, meanwhile, are pondering what the line is and whether the apparent consequences of crossing it will deter the flippant remarks. Davies, of Orland Park, said he's not convinced it will.

"It won't matter, because a lot of kids just say things when they're mad, and they don't really mean it or think about it before they say it," he said. "Even if they know they're going to get in trouble, they can't stop themselves because they just say what they're thinking."

Rajan Sharma, 13, of Elk Grove Village, said punishment should depend on the situation and the student's history.

them across the nation, the students did not directly threaten a classmate or teacher, nor did they use physical violence or bring a weapon to school. Yet in each instance, the student was questioned by police, suspended from school and charged in juvenile court with crimes ranging from assault to solicitation to commit murder. Most were ordered to undergo psychological evaluations.

This newfound, uncompromising stance, while widely hailed by parents and educators, has left children's rights advocates wondering if the fallout from the schoolyard killings has prompted an overzealous response.

"These types of comments need to be taken seriously, but school administrators and prosecutors are not using their discretion wisely to discriminate between comments made by children who are disturbed and pose a threat, and typical adolescent bravado," said Steven Drizin, supervising attorney at Northwestern University Legal Clinics, Children and Family Justice Center. "This sort of abandonment of discretion is a mistake. It teaches students the wrong lesson when the punishment is so overbearing that it doesn't fit the conduct."

Educators counter that they must take each comment seriously, or risk tragedy.

"We have a different cultural experience today than we had a few years ago in terms of violence and young people in the schools," said Supt. Julius Rogus, of Summit Hill School District 161, which recently suspended a student when he allegedly made a threatening comment about a teacher to other students. "With the recent shootings, we have to be more vigilant because we don't want to take the chance that the joke might become a reality."

No one keeps track of the number of students charged for making threatening comments, but anecdotal evidence suggests the number is growing.

"If you get a bad grade on a test and tell your friend you're going to kill the teacher, I don't think you should get in trouble for that," said Sharma, an 8th-grader at Mead Junior High School. "But if it's a kid who's always saying things like that and getting in trouble all the time, they should get kicked out of school."

"Sometimes we just have to say things because we are frustrated," Davies said. "I mean, you can say 'I hate my mom or I hate my dad' when you're mad, but that doesn't mean you really hate them. Just 'cause you say you're going to kill

someone doesn't mean you're really going to."

Steve Glink, who has spent two decades defending children in juvenile court cases, said educators may be turning to the judicial system too quickly.

"It may seem like the easy answer, but the end result is we have put a bunch of kids in front of juvenile court judges and stigmatized them — maybe for life — for actions that are nowhere near criminal," said Glink, who worked in the Cook

County public defender's office for nine years before going into private practice. "It's a quick fix, but very short-sighted."

■

28. Richmond Times Dispatch

June 16, 1998

Volunteers applauded for effort School shooting underscores 'need for support'

BY GARY ROBERTSON AND
WES ALLISON
Times-Dispatch Staff Writers

About 1,800 volunteers are active in Richmond's 60 schools.

And despite the shooting yesterday of Eloise Wilson, a 75-year-old volunteer in the Head Start program at Armstrong High School, volunteer efforts received a strong endorsement. Head Start, although designed for preschoolers, uses space at Armstrong.

One of those endorsements came from the Capital Area Agency on Aging, where Wilson was among about 80 so-called "foster grandparents."

They volunteer with young people in hospitals, schools and day-care centers. None had been injured in a violent episode until yesterday.

Barbara Lea-Kruger, a spokeswoman for the agency, said her organization and its volunteers remain "committed to helping children at risk," no matter where they are.

But the shooting likely will prompt the agency to address the safety of its volunteers, she said.

"We'll probably be in touch with our contact at Head Start, and we'll probably discuss it with our other foster grandparents," she said.

Judy Austin, chairwoman of the NationsBanks Richmond Volunteer Council, also had strong praise for the efforts of school volunteers.

"Tragedies in our community, particularly those that affect our schools, do not lessen our volunteerism," Austin said. "On the contrary, they underscore the need for community support."

"Our volunteer involvement in area schools, through the Lunch Buddies Program, will continue to be one of our strongest activities."

A NationsBanks spokeswoman said that 15 of the bank's employees serve as Lunch Buddies at Blackwell and Overby-Sheppard elementary schools.

Under the Lunch Buddies program, adults eat lunch with their assigned students, help them with

homework or play games with them, among other activities.

Virginia Power has about 70 participating in the Lunch Buddies

program at Blackwell.

"The reason we support these programs is that they encourage involvement in the schools," said Marjorie Grier, manager of community affairs for Virginia Power.

"Statistics tell us that parental involvement is one of the main reasons for a child's success in school. We feel strongly, by extension, that adult involvement in the schools is really what can make the difference with a child."

Grier said the company is "balancing trying to help the schools, but making sure [our] employees are safe when they go into the schools."

The community affairs manager noted that recent school shootings nationwide have raised concern about the volunteer program and the safety of employees.

"It's really an issue we need to focus our attention on, and that's what we intend to do this summer when school is out," Grier said. "We have a volunteer advisory council that will be meeting this summer. And that will be a big item." ■

29. Associated Press

6-16 10:49a

State to pay most costs through '99

NEW YORK (AP) - The cost of desegregating Yonkers' classrooms will be paid mostly by New York state over the next two years, a federal judge has ruled.

Federal Judge Leonard Sand decided Monday that the state must pay three-fourths of this school year's \$50 million costs and two-thirds of next year's \$85 million.

The ruling came as a relief to Yonkers officials, who had feared a 50-50 split would be ordered. They had argued that raising city taxes to pay for the costs

would push middle-class residents out of the city.

In 1985, Yonkers' schools were found to be racially divided. Sand ruled last year that the state was liable because its neglect caused damage that denied black and Hispanic children the same education as whites.

Sand's new decision said Yonkers had borne the entire cost of the first 11 years of the desegregation program, which concentrated on placing minority students in the same classrooms as whites. The current phase aims to close

the achievement gap between white and minority students by reducing class size, adding computers and books and helping teachers better serve a diverse student population.

The ruling includes long-range expense estimates that eventually shift the burden to the city, but Mayor John Spencer and federal monitor Joseph Pastore said they thought only the estimates for 1997-98 and 1998-99 could be considered realistic. ■

30. Dallas Morning News

June 16, 1998

More opt for choice of schools

1 in 10 Texas students forsake closest campus

By Terrence Stutz

The Dallas Morning News

AUSTIN - More and more Texas students are leaving their neighborhood schools to get an education elsewhere, the Texas Education Agency reported Monday.

About one in 10 students this year - 337,000 statewide - voluntarily attended a campus away from their neighborhood or in another school district, according to a survey by the agency.

Education officials said the number of students transferring out of low-rated schools increased eightfold this year, as more than 400 students participated in the school-choice program. Last year, only about 50 transferred.

Those students were eligible to go to another campus because their regular schools either were rated "low performing" or had more than 50 percent of their students fail the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills.

"We have quite a high degree of instructional choice opportunities," said Joe Wisnowski, a TEA administrator who

reported the numbers to a House committee on Monday.

The figures are significant because there is a growing movement in the state to give parents and their children greater school choice.

Gov. George W. Bush has joined school-choice advocates seeking a limited voucher program in Texas that would allow students to attend private schools using tax dollars to pay tuition.

Critics have contended that vouchers would deprive public schools of badly needed funds. They say students already have choice within public schools.

The TEA survey found that 176,000 students attended magnet schools or other schools that offered specialized curricula outside their neighborhoods.

Public school students in Texas generally are assigned to one campus based on where they reside.

An additional 113,000 students attended schools outside their neighborhoods because they live in open enrollment districts, such as the Garland school district. Those students are

permitted to enroll in any school within their district.

Finally, 48,000 students attended schools outside the district where they resided. Some of those paid tuition, while others enrolled in a neighboring district because a parent was employed there as a teacher or administrator.

Voucher supporters said the number of students attending schools outside their neighborhoods only shows how much parents want more choice.

"We are happy they have some choice within the public school system, but we want to give parents all the choices they need to get the best education for their children," said Greg Talley of Putting Children First, a pro-voucher group.

In 1997, the Legislature rejected a voucher measure but expanded other school-choice options such as independent charter schools and the state's Public Education Grant program, allowing students to transfer out of low-rated schools. ■

31. Dallas Morning News

June 16, 1998

Summer students now must pass to move up

Attendance alone no longer ensures promotion

By Linda K. Wertheimer

The Dallas Morning News

The Dallas assistant principal marched over to the seventh-grader slumped in his classroom chair and tapped him on the arm. The boy sat up straight.

This year, in particular, no slouching is allowed in summer school.

Last year in Texas, students could have slept through summer classes and still moved up to the next grade. This summer, because of a change in state education rules, simply showing up is not enough. Students must pass the course.

So Marvette Sturges, an assistant summer school principal at Rusk Middle School in the Love Field area, has made it a point to roust slouching and sleeping

students and urge them to pay attention.

"They're going to have to make the grades," Ms. Sturges said. "I've walked through the classes and said, 'You've got to be serious about your work.'"

The change in rules affects about 160,000 students in 657 Texas school systems that accepted state money for summer school. Most of them began summer classes in recent weeks.

Students from kindergarten through seventh grade who didn't pass the required courses in the regular school year are assigned to summer school. Since 1995, those attending 90 percent of the classes were promoted to the next grade level.

As a result, less than 5 percent of

summer school students typically have been held back in Texas, said B.J. Gibson, the Texas Education Agency's senior director of accelerated instruction.

Texas legislators adopted the change during the last session, but the new rule didn't go into effect until this summer.

The stricter requirements fit in with Gov. George W. Bush's goal to stop "social promotion," the practice of passing students simply because they're old enough for the next grade.

Changing the rules caused no controversy in the Legislature, said Rhonda McCollough, the TEA's director of governmental relations.

"It was generally acknowledged that it made sense for students in the summer

program to actually do the work," Ms. McCollough said.

Officials from some of the affected schools and districts welcomed the change.

"At some point, kids need to understand they're going to have to show they know the material to be promoted," said Olga McAdams, principal of Rusk's summer school. "You're doing kids an injustice when you just promote them."

The rule change is good for educators, too, said Joe Stubbs, director of planning for the Houston Independent School District.

"By forcing teachers and all of us to look more carefully at kids, it makes us be more accountable for their learning," Mr. Stubbs said. "Hopefully, we will be intervening sooner."

Dallas and Houston are trying to get the "must pass" message across to nearly 10,000 students in each of their state-funded summer programs.

Arlington didn't qualify for state money this summer but will next year. In preparation, the district is applying the new rule to this year's 911 summer students, said Dr. Nancy Bower, executive director of elementary instruction.

Arlington also lowered its traditional summer class size from 16 to 12 students

per teacher and sent letters to parents warning of a stricter promotion policy.

"We had parents early on getting tutors and asking what else they could do," Dr. Bower said. "They did take it very seriously."

Teachers in Dallas and Houston are using new forms to keep a closer watch on students' performance, marking students' weak points and their progress each step of the way.

If students don't pass, the forms follow them back to their regular school, said Suzanne Roberts, who oversees Dallas summer schools. Schools then must create plans to help students who are held back, including providing tutoring, she said.

Teachers, meanwhile, are trying to make classes even more exciting to reach students who failed during the school year.

All Dallas middle schools are using fake checkbooks in math classes. If students answer bonus questions correctly, they get play money to put in their checking accounts. They also have to accurately record the money in their checkbooks.

"It motivates me more," said Ruben Pineda, 15, who hopes to pass Rusk's summer school classes so he can become a ninth-grader. "It deals with money, and

that's something in reality. Reality is more fun than regular math."

The toughest challenge, teachers and administrators said, is changing students' overall attitudes about school.

Students were aware of the previous state rule and realized they could attend class without doing the work, said Ms. McAdams, a former high school counselor who said she saw the results of lax promotion policies.

"When you keep passing a student up until the ninth grade, in their mind, they think, 'I'll always be promoted,'" Ms. McAdams said. "All of a sudden, kids get to high school, and it's a different ballgame. You don't get socially promoted" in high school, she said.

Students at Rusk said the new rule was a good idea, even though some of them liked the old rule.

Ruben said he knows how he would react if he just had to attend class to pass:

"I would just sit there. I would have no reason to learn," he said.

James Garza, 14, said he didn't worry about doing all of his work last summer. This year, he's studying more.

"It's different when you have to do something and you want to do something," James said. "I want to pass. I don't want to stay in eighth grade." ■

32. Austin American-Statesman

June 16, 1998

Schools considering increase in computer spending

By Andy Alford

American-Statesman Staff

Austin school district officials want to speed classrooms into the future by spending \$8.25 million on computers for students and teachers in the next school year.

A preliminary budget for 1998-99 would increase spending in the district's instructional technology department by about 45 percent — to \$16 million from \$11 million last year. Officials say the money would pay for computers, computer and software upgrades, a maintenance van and materials, and teacher training.

Austin trustees will consider the matter at a budget work session today at 6:30 p.m. at the district's boardroom, 1111 W. Sixth St. The board plans to hold a public hearing June 24 and vote on the budget June 29.

Stephanie Hamilton, director of the instructional technology department, said

the proposed money would also go toward hiring computer network technicians "to support all the technology that the bonds are building."

Voters approved technology improvements as part of a \$369 million 1996 bond election. The district has since made wiring all campuses for computers and Internet access a priority. But weaving computers into everyday classroom curriculum has been slow and inconsistent, some parents say. Often, students are better trained and more experienced in using personal computers than their teachers.

"They're being a little slow about it," Austin parent Victor Rodriguez said. "I'm fearful that by the year 2000, AISD will just barely have all its schools wired up. I just think, with all the money earmarked in the bond package, that AISD is dragging its feet."

Since 1996, about 1,000 teachers and principals have received laptop

computers, but some say they go unused because not all teachers have been trained to use them.

Hamilton said about 12 percent of the district's teachers have been trained to use district computers and teaching programs. She added that some teachers may be competent without training.

To help speed training, the University of Texas has incorporated Austin computer competency requirements into classes for student teachers. Marilyn Kameen, associate dean for teacher education, said about 50 percent of Austin's new teachers come from UT.

Austin school board President Kathy Rider said long-term spending on technology will have to be reconsidered.

"We planned on adding 2 cents to the tax rate every year to fund technology," Rider said. She said those plans are being re-examined because the district may have to share tax revenue with poorer school districts in the 1999-2000 school

year. The state's so-called share-the-wealth law requires a district to share revenue when its property wealth exceeds \$280,000 per student. Austin's current tax rate is \$1.40 per \$100 of assessed property value, one of the lowest in the area.

District officials will consider raising taxes to recoup revenue that it will share with other districts. Rodriguez and other parents said they would rather pay more in taxes than cut educational programs.

"My son and all the children in AISD deserve a quality education," Rodriguez

said. "If that calls for a tax hike, then I'm all for it. If they're going to cut something, let's start by looking for ways to do more with less people at the administrative level."■

33. The New York Times

06/16/98Section: Metropolitan Desk; Section B; Page 3, Column 1

Ex-Schools Chancellor Gets a New Post

By SOMINI SENGUPTA

Anthony J. Alvarado, a former New York City Schools Chancellor who resigned amid questions of financial misconduct but later earned national distinction as the leader of an innovative Manhattan school district, announced yesterday that he would leave New York's public schools next month to become the second-in-command of the San Diego school system.

At a news conference in San Diego, Mr. Alvarado was vague about his reasons for leaving the New York

With his new job, Mr. Alvarado will move from the helm of a district of 22,000 students to the No. 2 administrative job in a district of 137,000. Although friends and associates said Mr. Alvarado was motivated by a desire to seek a new challenge, some board members in District 2 noted that he had also sometimes been blocked in his efforts to make changes in his district by Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew. In addition, they cited a widely publicized rift between the two men last year after Mr. Alvarado allowed a group of parents at a Greenwich Village elementary school, P.S. 41, to raise money to pay the salary of a fourth-grade teacher whose job was being eliminated.

At the time, the Chancellor described Mr. Alvarado as having violated "Administrative Judgment 101" by not seeking permission from his office; he ultimately allowed the teacher to be hired, with money from Mr. Alvarado's budget.

Mr. Alvarado "was unhappy because he felt the Chancellor was not being responsive and making it more difficult for him," a member of the District 2 board, Doug Robinson, said yesterday. "The Chancellor blamed him for the P.S. 41 issue, which was ludicrous."

But at his news conference yesterday, Mr. Alvarado said the P.S. 41 debate had nothing to do with his departure. "We expect disagreements about decisions,"

schools. He focused instead on his new job and new boss, saying that the San Diego Schools Superintendent, Alan D. Bersin, was "a superintendent with a view toward making this the quintessential urban school system in America."

In his first year, Mr. Alvarado pledged, San Diego's test scores will improve. "Within a very, very short time, you will see results," he said.

In his 11 years as Superintendent of District 2, Mr. Alvarado, 56, was credited with setting into motion measures later embraced by the rest of the city school he said. "But disagreements do not a spat make."

Asked about the rifts between the two men over P.S. 41, the Chancellor's spokeswoman, Chiara Coletti, said: "I can't imagine that would make Tony retire. He is a very large figure in the school system."

In a statement yesterday, Dr. Crew described Mr. Alvarado as "an educator who in the many roles he played inspired and nurtured teachers and students alike."

"His ability to think outside the box helped shape outstanding schools and restored confidence in public education," the statement said.

Under Mr. Alvarado, District 2's results on standardized tests improved steadily; the district, which sprawls from working class immigrant neighborhoods in Chinatown to the Upper East Side, now ranks second in the city in reading and math scores. "We are so saddened," said Karen Feuer, president of Community School Board 2. "He is a visionary. For the last 11 years he has really achieved institutionalized reform within the confines of this bureaucratic system. He's been able to build a culture that everybody is a lifelong learner."

But for all the attention he received as Superintendent in District 2, Mr. Alvarado will also be remembered for his brief tenure as Schools Chancellor from 1983 to 1984.

Mr. Alvarado was accused of violating

system — including intensive teacher training programs, an extended school day and the establishment of academic standards to be met by all students.

"He created a culture where to be a teacher in District 2 means to be immersed in your profession, the theory and practice of moving kids forward," said Frank DeStefano, a former principal in Mr. Alvarado's district who is now the Superintendent of District 15 in Brooklyn.

ethical standards by promoting or awarding overtime to employees who lent him money and of submitting false information on mortgage applications. He resigned several days before he was to face a disciplinary hearing on charges of professional misconduct.

An investigation by Elizabeth Holtzman, then the Brooklyn District Attorney, later found no evidence to warrant prosecution. But Ms. Holtzman said Mr. Alvarado had agreed to pay the board \$569.32 as "restitution" for improperly using board employees to paint his home and baby-sit for his children during hours in which the employees were being paid by the board.

In 1995, as a finalist for the job of School Superintendent in Boston, Mr. Alvarado expressed contrition over the incident, saying, "My conduct was inappropriate, unprofessional, unethical." And yesterday, Mr. Bersin said Mr. Alvarado had made "an enormous misjudgment and an ethical lapse but he was held accountable."

"He is here," Mr. Bersin added, "because he is a world-class educator."

The District 2 board later this week is expected to name Elaine Fink, the deputy superintendent in the district, as Mr. Alvarado's replacement until a search committee selects a new superintendent. Under a state law enacted last year, the Chancellor must approve the appointment.

In the San Diego school system, the nation's eighth largest, Mr. Alvarado will become chancellor of instruction, responsible for academic affairs from teacher training to student assessment, a

system spokeswoman, Ursula Kromer, said yesterday.

His salary will be \$150,000 when he begins full time in San Diego, up from \$128,000 in New York; school officials

there expect him to begin working full time by this fall, but his contract allows him to work three days a week for the first 18 months of his two-year contract, Ms. Kromer said. ■

34. San Diego Union-Tribune

June 16, 1998

Bersin unveils school reorganization

Top N.Y. educator to be head of new learning institute

By Maureen Magee STAFF WRITER

One hundred days after Alan Bersin was chosen to be San Diego schools chief, the superintendent-designate has set into motion a major reorganization of the district's administration in an effort to drive education reform to the classroom.

During a luncheon yesterday for principals, administrators and the city's top civic leaders, Bersin announced a plan aimed at implementing in San Diego schools effective education policies from

One of the most sought-after superintendents in the country, Alvarado has been credited with raising student test scores, breaking through the barriers of socioeconomic and ethnicity. He has raised math and reading scores in the slums of lower Manhattan as well as in the more affluent Upper East Side.

"Anthony Alvarado is good news for San Diego because he has done what we need to do," said Ron Ottinger, school board president. "This is just the beginning. We are doing things that are going to improve student achievement and shrink the achievement gap among students."

Alvarado's appointment, along with reducing the district's management team, will make it easier to bring reform to the classroom, Bersin said.

"What we have in Anthony Alvarado is a proven leader," Bersin said. "We need these kind of changes so teachers and principals can do their jobs and focus on instruction."

But such changes will be expensive at a time when the district is facing a budget shortfall of more than \$8 million. With an annual salary of \$150,000 and some hefty benefits and cash incentives, Alvarado's contract rivals that of most superintendents.

"I am happy to have Anthony Alvarado, but I am worried about the costs and I am worried that he won't be full-time right off the bat," said trustee Frances O'Neill Zimmerman.

across the country.

About two weeks before Bersin assumes leadership of the 137,000-student district, he has organized a leaner administration that will "exist only to improve student achievement by supporting teaching and learning in the classroom."

"There will be two types of district employees: those who teach and those who support teaching and learning. That's it," he said.

The plan includes a new Institute for Alvarado will resign from New York's Community District Two this month. But the 56-year-old educator will remain chairman of the advisory board for the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center.

He will work at least three days a week in San Diego, and his salary will be prorated based on his schedule.

In addition to Alvarado's substantial paycheck, his cross-country commuting costs for "personal and professional responsibilities" are included in his contract for the first 18 months and are estimated to cost up to \$70,000.

But in an unusual arrangement, the nonprofit San Diego Community Foundation has agreed to reimburse the district for those costs in an effort to help the district develop its learning institute and implement school reform.

The son of a Cuban father and Puerto Rican mother, Alvarado was born in Manhattan and raised in the South Bronx. A former teacher and principal, he is a member of the Pew Forum on Educational Reform and teaches at the Harvard University Institute for School Leadership.

Alvarado has been called by many the nation's premiere educator. When he took over the superintendency in New York in 1987, the Manhattan district ranked 10th out of 32 in the number of students who could read at or above grade level. Today, the district is second.

Learning, which will be run by a top New York educator with a national reputation for reform. The center will focus on teacher training with the goal of improving student performance.

Anthony Alvarado, who runs a 24,000-student school district covering much of Manhattan's East Side, will commute from New York to California to head the institute as the district's new chancellor of instruction.

Gordon Amback, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, D.C., called Alvarado one of the "most innovative and successful major city superintendents in the United States."

"It sounds to me like the position of chancellor is ideally suited for the talents that Tony has," said Amback, who advocates for state departments of education in Washington, D.C. "His reputation is to focus all of his attention on the classroom."

Although Alvarado's work in curriculum and instruction has been called first rate, he is haunted by bad decisions and fiscal improprieties that forced him out of New York City's top education post.

Shortly after he succeeded in turning around an East Harlem school district, Alvarado took over as chancellor of New York City's school system, the largest district in the nation. But a year later, in May 1984, he resigned amid disclosures that he had borrowed \$80,000 from subordinates, lied on mortgage applications, and used a limousine service to get around the city at taxpayer expense.

"There was a time in my life when I engaged in activities that were inappropriate," Alvarado said. "I made massive mistakes."

Alvarado has been able to overcome a controversy big enough to kill a career. A co-founder of the University of

Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning, he has helped other large urban school districts reform their schools while maintaining a successful New York district.

"No matter what mistakes he has made, Tony is a brilliant and passionate person when it comes to education and instruction," said Judy Johnston, an administrator at the Institute for Learning. "He would lay down on the railroad tracks to get principals what they need for better instruction."

Plans for San Diego's Institute for Learning are still in the development stages. Although Alvarado is likely to borrow from the successful East Coast program bearing the same name, he said San Diego's institute will be new and innovative.

"I don't think this is an issue of emulation," he said. "Every reform has to be built in the soil of its city."

In addition to the development of the institute, Bersin yesterday unveiled a management system that will eliminate some positions, create others and over

time streamline the administration.

Based on the attendance of yesterday's luncheon and news conference, the community is backing Bersin and his plans to revamp the schools. Mayor Susan Golding, county Supervisor Ron Roberts, top university officials and business leaders were among those in the audience.

"This is what we want," said Tyler Cramer, chairman of the Greater San Diego Chamber of Commerce education panel. "More accountability, better student test scores and a lean administration."

Under Bersin's plan, the posts of assistant superintendents will be eliminated in favor of "instructional leaders," who will report to Alvarado and Bersin. Those positions will be filled and announced this month.

The district's controller, Henry Hurley, will become its chief administrative officer, overseeing finance, business and information services and human resources. The

Office of the Superintendent will include new hire Terry Smith, a former supervisor with the California Border Alliance Group, who will be Bersin's chief of staff.

Deputy Superintendent Frank Till will become senior deputy to the superintendent. Meanwhile, Bersin is working to hire an internal auditor, school police chief and staff attorney.

Bersin, who officially resigned yesterday as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California, has immersed himself in education since he was named superintendent 100 days ago. He has met with Harvard education professors, top policy-makers and scores of educators from across the country.

He often refers to himself as a "quick study," but Bersin is the first to point out that his skills are rooted in leadership, not education.

"I'm in charge. I'm responsible (for the district). But I also know what I don't know," he said. "I was not hired to pretend to be an educator." ■

35. Miami Herald

June 16, 1998

Certification will pay off for talented teachers

By MARK SILVA Capital Bureau Chief
TALLAHASSEE — For the first time in more than a decade, Florida's most motivated public school teachers will have a way to earn more money than peers with the same years of service.

This time, educators say, Florida is offering more than "merit pay" for outstanding teachers — an experiment of the mid-1980s that failed amid complaints of favoritism. This time, it's a matter of challenging teachers to achieve a difficult national certification that few have.

"It is like a revival, a way of looking at the things you do and asking why," says Rona Wolfson, a seasoned fifth-grade teacher at Nob Hill Elementary School in Sunrise who achieved national certification in 1995.

"There is something of a passion for it. Once you understand that mission, you want to get the message out

There is a feeling that better teachers will make for better schools will make for better education."

There will be a \$3,500 pay raise in it next year for teachers who successfully undergo the four-month review of their work and then eight hours of testing involved in certification by the National

Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Only 915 teachers nationwide have this, just 17 in Florida — seven of those in Broward, three in Miami-Dade, two in Palm Beach counties.

In addition, for nationally certified teachers who take on additional duties as mentors for colleagues, the state will offer another \$3,500 in pay.

The combined bonus of \$7,000 — a 20 percent boost in the average salary Florida pays schoolteachers — places the state ahead of the nation in the financial incentives that teachers are offered for seeking accreditation. Twenty-six states offer their teachers varying forms of incentives.

"The applications are flying into the office

We're going to have national board-certified teachers beating down the door," says Larry Rosso of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, a Michigan-based, not-for-profit and foundation-sponsored organization formed in 1987 to set rigorous standards in many fields of teaching.

The Florida Legislature approved the plan this spring, and set aside \$12 million for it. Gov. Lawton Chiles, who signed

the bill (H 3389) two weeks ago, joined legislators and educators Monday in a ceremonial approval — "National certification raises the bar, and sets a higher standard."

State Sen. Jim Horne, who promoted it and won approval in the final hours of the 1998 session, says the goal is keeping talented teachers in the classroom. "We talk about class sizes and buildings and curriculum, but seldom do we talk about teachers," says Horne, R-Orange Park. "This starts providing us with incentives for teachers to stay in the classroom."

Now, teachers are paid according to years of service and academic credentials — additional pay for advanced degrees — but without regard for performance. Starting pay with a bachelor's degree in Miami-Dade's schools is \$28,650 a year; \$28,410 in Broward's. Each year brings a pay-ladder raise, but that ends at the top of the pay scale — \$51,500 with 20 years of service in Miami-Dade, \$50,213 with 25 years in Broward.

"The old, inflexible system of salary schedules etched into stone . . . needs to give way," says Florida Education Commissioner Frank Brogan. In its place, he says, will come "a system that recognizes achievement." 2 teach at one

school

Two of Miami-Dade's nationally certified teachers work at one school: George Washington Carver Middle School — Patricia Soto and Genevieve Gillen.

"I was a good teacher before I went through national board certification," Soto says. "But I am a better teacher now that I have gone through the process . . . This was really genuinely measuring a teacher's performance in the classroom."

For Amanda Heinemann, a longtime elementary teacher who started teaching eighth-grade science at Miami Lakes-Hialeah High School this year, national certification was a welcome advancement.

"It's like you're at the top of your profession," Heinemann says. "There are not a lot of levels as a teacher. To be able to show that you are a professional is a wonderful thing."

It will be next summer before Florida's next class is certified. But for the 17 already recognized, a \$3,500 raise is in

This is different from Florida's earlier attempt at "merit pay."

In 1985, the state identified 2,073 "associate master teachers" and awarded them \$3,000. But ultimately, with more than 35,000 applying, honors going to fewer than 3 percent of all teachers and unions complaining of favoritism, the Legislature cut off the funding.

Unions back plan

This time, the unions have supported Horne's plan, with union leader Pat Tornillo hailing it as a way of cultivating better faculties statewide.

The national board's certification is offered to teachers with bachelor's degrees who have taught for at least three years.

Applicants undergo a school-year review by the board, focusing on teachers' knowledge of their subject area and success with students. This is gleaned from submissions of teaching store this year. "We're not in it for the money," says Debi Barrett-Hayes, a board-certified teacher in Tallahassee.

plans, videotapes of their teaching and samples of their students' work and progress in class over four months. It ends with summer testing, eight hours of essays on situations in teaching.

It costs \$2,000 to apply for certification — the state and local school boards are sharing \$1,800 of each teacher's application fee.

Since 81 teachers initially were certified in 1995, the board has added hundreds more. The most, about 300, teach in North Carolina, which has offered 12 percent pay raises for obtaining the certification. Applications are doubling, 2,000 more applying for certification this year.

Rosso, a board consultant for state and local relations, says Florida's combined incentive — 10 percent more pay, plus 10 percent more for mentors — is the nation's highest and should spur more applications.

"But

I'm not gonna turn it down."■

36. St. Petersburg Times

June 16, 1998

Plan to prepare schools to deal with gunfire

By LINDA CHION-KENNEY

TAMPA — The rash of student shootings nationwide has prompted Hillsborough school officials to consider a formal procedure for what to do if someone fires a gun at school here.

"Every time there has been a firearm incident in the country, everyone in the school district thought, 'There but for the grace of God goes Hillsborough,'" said Mark Hart, the spokesman for Hillsborough schools.

"There's a randomness to these acts that makes everyone in public education rightfully concerned. It would be naive to think it couldn't happen here."

The School Board today is to vote on an updated emergency action checklist that tells principals what to do in the case of bomb threats, chemical spills, fires, civil disturbances, lightning strikes, hurricanes and tornadoes.

The new section on firearm discharge requires educators to immediately call law enforcement should a suspicious or unknown person loitering on school grounds refuse to leave. Should a gun be fired on or near campus, educators are to call 911, move children to a secure

classroom, lock the doors and "have students get in crouched positions on the floor and away from windows."

Just having such a policy may alarm parents, Hart said, "but God forbid something happens on campus and we didn't have a procedure in place."

During the 1997-98 school year, six firearms and two toy guns were confiscated in Hillsborough schools, down from 34 in 1993-94, Hart said.

"But even one (gun) is too many," he said.

Hillsborough has its own school security department, but it also has Tampa police officers and Hillsborough County sheriff's deputies serve as school resource officers in every middle and high school.

The school system and law enforcement agencies split the \$3.6-million cost of the program, Hart said.

About 50 of those school resource officers met Monday at Tampa Bay Technical College to discuss safety concerns at their schools.

They said more resources are needed to help the large numbers of students in

crowded schools deal with their personal problems. Some said that every school should have a school psychologist, as opposed to many schools sharing the services of one psychologist.

They asked to be better informed about new students who arrive with criminal records.

And they complained that too many parents depend on the schools to do their parenting for them and don't take responsibility for the actions of their troubled children.

Halfway through the meeting, U.S. Rep. Jim Davis, D-Tampa, reported that a school shooting had just occurred in Richmond, Va., where a 14-year-old student shot a teacher and a school volunteer.

That shooting followed a spate of small-town, multiple-victim student shootings that have shocked the nation.

"We haven't had a school shooting yet, but who's to say we're exempt from this?" said Deputy Carlos Somellán, school resource officer for 2,931-student Gaither High School. "Our turn is around the corner, if we don't take control and take control immediately."■

37. Chicago Tribune

June 16, 1998

HIGH SCHOOLS GET TOUGH ON PRANKS

By Dimitra DeFotis,
Tribune Staff Writer.

Freelance writer Mary Beth Hoerner contributed to this report.

Associate Principal Volker Engel remembers when senior pranksters at Barrington High School let a hog run wild in a busy hallway on one of the last days of school. At the end of another school year, a student drove his motorcycle through the hallowed halls to stick it to administrators.

It used to be that when such

These days, administrators also aren't afraid to play the ultimate trump cards—banning students from graduation ceremonies or even summoning students to court so a judge can dole out the punishment.

Take the case of four Rolling Meadows High School graduates who streaked through school last week, where classes for freshmen, sophomores and juniors still were in session. Each graduate now faces a July court date and fines of up to \$500 apiece.

And when 14 students released more than 20 mice into a busy Palatine High School hallway June 4, administrators banned some from participating in the graduation ceremony, though they still received diplomas.

Some of the students' parents were outraged that their children wouldn't don caps and gowns.

Cathy Zimmerman said she is

shenanigans happened after final exams and the celebratory senior gatherings, school administrators could do little more than slap students on the wrist for bad behavior. But times have changed.

In 1991, with pranks escalating and attendance in the final months of school dropping to intolerable levels, Barrington High School established a policy that has whipped students into shape: Seniors with good behavior and attendance records who also carry at least a C grade-point average can avoid final devastated that her son could not graduate with his friends. His only crime, she said, was contributing \$2 toward the purchase of the mice.

"Graduation was taken away because of one mistake in judgment," she said.

But others see it differently.

"Participating in a graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right," Engel said.

Rolling Meadows Deputy Police Chief Doug Larsson said even seemingly frivolous shenanigans can "offend the public conscience." "People expect a certain amount of order in society and decorum in schools," he said.

So will students cram the halls of justice for squeezing toothpaste into lockers and smearing shaving cream on their pals?

"The juvenile pranks have to be treated on a case-by-case basis," Larsson said. "These were seniors out of the

exams as long as no one in the senior class does anything crazy in the last days of the semester.

Barrington was among the first local high schools to crack down on end-of-the-year pranks with this zero-tolerance philosophy.

"If people do not abide by the rules, I don't have any problem dealing with them," Engel said. "Classes watch and try to outdo each other. You can't have it."

district control. We'll bring in the court and the message is clear for next year: This will not be tolerated."

Not every administrator agrees. Bill Geist, assistant principal at Schaumburg High School, said he thinks yanking a student from graduation ceremonies punishes parents instead. At his school this month, students sneaked in a few mice and spray-painted a part of the building after graduation ceremonies, but no one was caught.

"In my mind, the ceremony would be the last thing you'd want to take away for something silly and immature," he said. "Zero tolerance might be easier administratively . . . but in any situation, you have to look at the whole picture and the person who did it. I still think common sense is important."

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38. St. Paul Pioneer Press

June 16, 1998

St. Paul schools budget expected to top \$440 million

PAUL TOSTO STAFF WRITER

St. Paul schools will spend about \$27 million more on education next year, with much of that paying for increased student enrollment and for services to help schools that serve mostly low-income students.

Total spending for the district will come in at about \$442 million for the 1998-99 budget year, which begins next month. The district expects to teach about 45,400 students, about 1,000 more than this year. The school board is expected to approve the budget at a meeting tonight.

The budget earlier this year had threatened to become a tricky task for board members. Initial forecasts showed

a gap of as much as \$8 million between projected spending and money expected from local, state and federal governments.

The Legislature this year closed that gap, however, sending millions of unanticipated dollars to St. Paul and other cities. That money will go for a range of programs, from teacher training for Minnesota's new graduation standards to more "compensatory" aid for schools in high poverty areas.

Schools in St. Paul, for instance, use compensatory aide to hire more teachers and teaching assistants and provide special programs for students who are falling behind.

With the state coming through with extra money this year, district leaders were able to avoid making many painful cuts.

"Even then, we don't feel we have enough money to do the job the way we'd like to," said Mary Thornton Phillips, board chairwoman.

At this point, the only controversy in next year's budget comes from one of its smallest pieces. The district plans to spend about \$750,000 on its lawsuit against the state regarding what it alleges is inadequate financial support. That figure is up from about \$500,000 this year.

That's one reason board member Tom

Conlon plans to vote against the budget tonight.

"My problem with that is it should be a legislative decision, not a judicial one," he said of school financing. The money budgeted for the lawsuit is "going down a rathole. Lawyers get rich."

The board wrangled in earlier sessions over whether to maintain funding for Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, or JROTC, programs. The military training program has drawn protests at some school board meetings from people concerned about the military's presence in schools. Money for JROTC remains in the 1998-99 budget.

While the Legislature helped St. Paul avoid more battles, some budget watchers are worried about the future. Spending in the district's general fund — the part of the budget that covers most programs directly related to education — will rise nearly 10 percent next year, a pace some say isn't sustainable.

The Citizens' Budget and Finance Advisory Committee, a group of private citizens who track St. Paul's budget and make spending recommendations, said they were deeply concerned about spending trends.

The jump in spending "waves the yellow flags that if long-term growth is at

this rate we're going to have some serious issues to deal with," said Tom Graham, co-chairman of that group.

The committee recommended the board take a hard look at its practice of selling debt to pay for deferred school maintenance and to cut spending for "unsuccessful programs." In its response, the district agreed on the need to cut unsuccessful programs, but mentioned only two fairly low-budget programs under consideration. Both of those, the New Arrivals School and the DARE drug education program, are popular. ■

39. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

June 16, 1998

Expulsions plummet in 2 big districts

Waukesha and Elmbrook say zero-tolerance policies may have deterred students

By Paul Gores
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Expulsions from Waukesha County's two largest school districts decreased dramatically in the just-completed school year, officials said Monday.

While officials in the Waukesha and Elmbrook school districts had trouble identifying the cause of the big drop, one theorized that heightened awareness from last year's expulsions may have served as a deterrent to drug or weapons offenses by students in the district this year.

The number of students expelled from the Waukesha School District fell from 35 in the 1996-97 school year to only 17 in the year ending last week.

The Elmbrook School District, which kicked out a record 9 students last year, expelled only 3 in 1997-98, all for marijuana possession.

The Waukesha district, with about 13,200 students, is the county's biggest public school district. Elmbrook, with enrollment of about 7,000, is second-largest.

Other county school districts contacted Monday reported expulsion figures similar to last year's. The Mukwonago School District, for example, had three expulsions, compared with two in 1996-97.

Although officials in both Waukesha

and Elmbrook were reluctant to offer a precise cause for the large decrease in expulsions, both noted that they have zero-tolerance policies toward illegal drugs.

"Here, there's no second and third chances," said Gilbert Wilkins, executive director of administrative services for the Waukesha School District. "If you bring a marijuana pipe that has marijuana in it, or marijuana in a Baggie or whatever, you're expelled." Elmbrook Superintendent Matthew Gibson said the number of expulsions related to drugs or weapons last year may have made students think twice this year.

In addition, Gibson noted that Brookfield Municipal Judge Richard Steinberg began a crackdown on drug users last winter, imposing fines as large as \$2,000 to those caught with even small amounts of marijuana. Gibson said the steep fines also may have been a deterrent.

Wilkins said expulsions for drug possession took a steep drop this year in the Waukesha district.

"Last year, we had over two dozen times during the school year when we expelled somebody for possession of a drug, and this year it didn't happen as often. That's the main difference," Wilkins said.

Wilkins said that of the 17 expulsions this year, "I would say it was less than 10 drugs and the rest behavior."

"I don't think you can deduce anything from one year, but obviously we're happy about it," Wilkins said.

Gibson said the increased staff-student contact that resulted from splitting one large middle school into two smaller ones this school year also may have helped keep some students out of serious trouble.

"Basically, there were fewer students in one place, and opportunities for more engagement of those students with the affairs of the day," Gibson said.

Neither district had an expulsion related to a weapons offense this school year, although Wilkins said one Waukesha student would have been expelled for bringing a BB gun to school if he hadn't withdrawn voluntarily from the district.

"It's very rare that we have to deal with a weapon. Most of our problems are repeated refusal to follow school rules-type problems or marijuana possession," Wilkins said.

Wilkins said it was difficult to explain why expulsions were down in Waukesha schools, but he would like to see it become a trend.

"We can always hope," he said. ■

40. Philadelphia Inquirer

June 16, 1998

Academy entrance is altered

The lottery-only system for special-interest schooling has been scrapped. Other standards are added.

By Richard Jones
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

The Board of Education voted yesterday to amend a controversial policy for admission to special academic

Under the old system, admission to such programs was determined almost exclusively by lottery and largely ignored such factors as attendance and achievement. That policy was crafted by the district in 1995, in part as a response to persistent criticism that such programs were enclaves for white, middle-class students in a school district that is mostly minority.

Through the policy approved yesterday, the board decided to effectively combine use of admission criteria with the lottery system. The admission requirements could vary with each program, but they could include attendance, grades, extracurricular activities, community-service projects and an entrance exam. About 18,000 students are served through the programs and the district's vocational schools, which were also affected by the vote. Although they attract students from around the city, the programs are different from magnet schools because they are usually housed in traditional high schools.

Also called "academies" or "motivation programs," the classes are intense learning environments where students can incorporate interest in a specialized topic — ranging from medicine to the arts — with traditional high school studies. The programs have been known to give students a leg up when they apply for colleges or enter the world of work.

Parents like the programs not only because of the rigorous academic work but also because the classes are usually safer and less turbulent. Teachers like them because they have a motivated audience that is genuinely interested in the subject matter.

Some of the programs, which include

programs, ending a three-year-old dispute that evolved from the complaints of a few parents into an issue for Philadelphia's political power brokers.

With the unanimous vote, the board William Penn High School's communications program and Lincoln High's business institute, have existed for a quarter-century.

Supporters of the old lottery method, including school Superintendent David Hornbeck, thought the district was being more egalitarian by relying almost entirely on the lottery. For three years, critics — mostly a loose collection of parents from around the city — railed against that system to no avail.

But in March, Mayor Rendell offered his support for the use of criteria. Prompted by that not-too-subtle nudge, the school board set about trying to reconcile standards and equity.

And after the board yesterday adopted the recommendations of a task force of educators and politicians who investigated the issue, parties on both sides seemed pleased. "I don't think anyone got everything they wanted out of the process, but everyone signed on," said City Councilman Michael Nutter, co-chair of the task force. "We have reached a kind of consensus that gives us confidence we can produce legal — and fair — criteria for special-admission programs."

Said Hornbeck: "I think the policy is a good one

The equity piece and the admissions criteria issue have been brought together in a way that makes sense."

"We think the task force has taken into account the needs of the families whose children are interested in those programs and the school district's concerns for the need to be equitable and responsible in assigning those slots," said Kevin Feeley, Mayor Rendell's press secretary.

And parents who said the old policy sent a message to students that no matter how hard they worked, their fate would

approved the use of such criteria as student achievement for admission to the school district's roughly three dozen special-interest programs.

still be determined by lottery, also praised the new policy. Suzanne Tracy, a critic of the former system, said the new policy helped schoolchildren see the rewards — and consequences — of their school performance.

"Now kids see that you can't be messing around and that school is something to be really taken seriously," said Tracy. "They're introduced to that idea as early as fourth, fifth or sixth grades

That's a lesson they'll have for life."

Under the new system, interested students who meet the standards for entry to the programs will be selected via lottery, with preference given to students who live near the school. Formerly, any student who applied was automatically entered into the lottery without having to meet any standards. In other district business yesterday:

The board voted to increase the enrollment of three existing charter schools and two others that were scheduled to open in September. In addition, the board also said that organizers of the Christopher Columbus Charter School and the Math Science Technology Charter would have to reapply for their charters. The two schools had received approval to start up in September, but told the board last month that they would not be ready to open.

The board voted to seize a property at Fourth Street and Lehigh Avenue for construction of the new Julia De Burgos Bilingual Middle Magnet School.

The board honored Colleen Wisler, head of the Reynolds Elementary School, 24th and Jefferson, as the winner of the Frances Schwartz Principal of the Year Award. ■

41. Baltimore Sun

June 16, 1998

Scholarships supply high-tech incentive

Enticement: The state is hoping new scholarships will lure college students into high-technology fields — and encourage them to work in Maryland.

By Timothy B. Wheeler Sun Staff

With high-technology workers in demand these days, college graduates like Carroll S. Little Jr. find themselves in a job-seeker's paradise.

A month after picking up his bachelor's degree in computer science — such valuable workers for Maryland's own booming high-tech industry, the state is launching a new scholarship program. Its aim is to double enrollments in engineering and computer-related fields at state colleges and universities.

"We are trying to entice young people into this as a career," explained Patricia S. Florestano, state secretary of higher education. "These are not easy programs. Sometimes you need a little incentive."

Starting next year, the Science and Technology Scholarship would offer Maryland high school graduates with a 'B' average \$3,000 annually to study engineering, computer science or information technology. Students majoring in related fields at two-year community colleges could get \$1,000 annual awards.

Recipients would have to agree to work in Maryland for as many years as they received financial aid, or else repay the grants.

"We shouldn't be training people to go to California," Florestano said.

The scholarship would cover three-fourths of the \$4,000-a-year average in-state tuition for Maryland's public colleges. For community college students, about half of their average \$2,000 tuition bill would be paid.

The Maryland service requirement may deter some from applying. But the scholarship is already turning the heads of some high school students who know about it. Justin Brown is one. The rising senior at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute is wavering between two careers: electrical engineering or public relations. If he settles on engineering, Justin said he's planning to apply to three universities out-of-state and two in Maryland: Morgan State and College Park.

While he'd like to go to college in another state, Justin said, "probably with the scholarship, Morgan or College Park would be No. 1."

from University of Maryland, Baltimore County, the 22-year-old from Olney is headed to Arizona to work for Motorola Corp. as an analyst. Starting salary: \$41,000.

"I was surprised," Little said, at how many companies wooed him — six —

The science and technology scholarship program aims to boost the number of Maryland college students majoring in engineering or computer fields from 2,200 to 4,300 by 2003. If successful, it could cost taxpayers nearly \$10 million a year by then.

Gov. Parris N. Glendening proposed the science and technology tuition grants a year after the General Assembly refused to back a more sweeping — and far more costly — proposal to give "HOPE" scholarships to students from low- or middle-income families who attend college in Maryland. That was pared down to target technical careers for which the state has a pressing need, Florestano said.

Up to 20,000 information technology jobs are going begging in the Baltimore-Washington area, by some estimates.

"It's a nationwide issue, not just local," said Kathy Manning, chief operating officer for the Maryland High-Technology Council, which represents 650 private companies, federal government laboratories and educational institutions. A study earlier this year estimated there were nearly 350,000 computer-related vacancies nationwide.

"We are always constantly looking for IT (information technology) people — entry level, experienced, you name it," said Thomas Mitchell, human resources director for Tracor Systems Technology Inc., a large engineering firm with about 3,000 employees in the Washington area. At any one time, Mitchell estimates, the firm's local office has 30 openings.

Despite the demand, Maryland's colleges have been producing fewer graduates trained in these fields.

The number of bachelor's degrees in engineering awarded by state schools declined from 950 in 1992 to 871 in 1996, according to the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Computer science bachelors' degrees have fluctuated between 700 and 750.

and how eager they were to pay so much for someone fresh out of school. A Maryland company offered him the most — \$45,000 — but Little opted for Motorola because it would bring "high visibility."

Students are not flocking into computer science "because it's hard," said Freeman A. Hrabowski, president at UMBC, which produces more degrees in the field than any other Maryland school. But he contended college students also shy away from technical majors because they get poor math and science preparation in secondary school.

Engineering schools also saw fewer students in the early 1990s, a result of economic disruptions and shrinkage of the aerospace industry.

But even before the state approved the new science and technology scholarships, computer and engineering class enrollments began to rebound. At the University of Maryland, College Park, which produces more engineering degrees than all other state schools combined, the freshman class has grown by 10 percent each of the past two years, said William Destler, engineering dean.

"It's almost chic to be a nerd," said Jack Suess, acting director of computing at UMBC, where the number of computer-related majors has been climbing 150 to 200 a year the past couple years.

Indeed, college officials say they are more worried now about coping with rising enrollments in high-tech courses than with trying to attract new students.

To overcome that potential obstacle, College Park, UMBC and five other institutions in the state, including the Johns Hopkins University, have begun planning to hire more faculty and acquire more equipment and class space. With high-tech enrollments already on the rise, some might question the need to spend taxpayer money on attracting more students. But Destler, the College Park engineering dean, says financial aid can help lure more women and minority students into technical fields, where they have traditionally been under-represented. ■

June 16, 1998

Graduate's mom says school is a lifesaver

By Francesca C. Simon

LEESBURG, Va. Ibrahim Zarou — a 1996 graduate of the Leesburg Christian School — works side by side with his father, Kahlil, at Manhattan Deli in Reston, Va. "He would not have made it without the school," his mother Donna, 41, said recently. "He'd be out there on the street causing a ruckus." She credits the Leesburg Christian School in Loudoun County, Va., with straightening out her "goofball" son. But two days after her second son, Christopher, graduated from the school on June 7, Leesburg Christian burned and was gutted. Authorities believe the fire was the work of an arsonist. The fire in the two-story brick building, the school's main structure, caused an estimated \$300,000 in damage and destroyed school records, a computer lab, several classrooms and all of the school bathrooms. Four classroom trailers near the building were not damaged. The school will use the trailers for summer school classes, which will begin as scheduled on Monday. Administrators will rent portable bathrooms to accommodate the 50 students. The fire "was deliberately set," said Pastor Terry Overstreet, who runs

the conservative Christian school. "The computer room had been vandalized. We were able to see what had gone on. There were computers in the hallways." The scene, Mr. Overstreet said, looked like "kids had gone in." Officials said there were no immediate suspects. "We don't even know for sure what we have," said Loudoun County Fire and Rescue spokeswoman Mary Maguire. "The investigation could take some time." Fire officials have sent samples of the debris to the lab for analysis. A nearby resident first spotted the flames after midnight. Mr. Overstreet said classes will resume in September inside trailers. Mr. Overstreet's Believers Baptist Church purchased Leesburg Christian School in 1988. The school educates 150 students from kindergarten through 12th grade. The school buildings were insured for more than \$300,000, but that will not be enough to pay to rebuild. The church's goal is to build an all-purpose room that will double as a gym and a worship space where the church will be able to hold services. That would cost \$800,000. Church members now meet in one of the school's four trailers. The church is not

affiliated with any supporting organizations. "That makes things a lot tougher," said Mr. Overstreet, who describes Believers Baptist as "a conservative church committed to young people." Tuition at the school ranges from \$3,300 yearly for kindergarten to \$3,850 for high school. The two-story building that was destroyed housed classrooms used by 60 children, including two kindergarten classes and the first grade. The school covers 16 acres and runs buses to Sterling and nearby Leesburg to pick up students. Mrs. Zarou says the school was her son's salvation. "They don't normally accept kids that have been kicked out of other schools," she said. "He was a goofball — he wasn't all that interested in school." But Ibrahim abided by the rules and made it through. "It's the love and care and concern — they really want to see the kids make it," said Mrs. Zarou, who lives with her family in Ashburn. "I count my blessings everyday," she said. "I don't know what we would have done with him." ■

43. New York Post

June 16, 1998

FLAKE AIRS SUPPORT FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS

By FREDRIC U. DICKER

ALBANY - The Rev. Floyd Flake kicked off a last-minute \$35,000 advertising campaign on black radio yesterday to rally support for Gov. Pataki's "charter schools" proposal.

Flake, the former Queens Democratic congressman who heads the huge Allen AME Church in Jamaica, said he wants Pataki to "hold his ground and have a sense there is a constituency out there demanding a change" in the public-school system.

The ads, which will run on four black-oriented stations through tomorrow, urge listeners to call Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan)

and tell him to drop his opposition to charter schools.

Just hours after the radio ads began, Silver flatly said there was no chance to reach a compromise agreement on charter schools before the Legislature recesses for the summer later this week.

An aide to Silver later said a compromise was still possible.

Pataki's plan, which is bitterly opposed by the United Federation of Teachers, would allow a new kind of publicly funded school to be created by special charters issued by the Board of Regents, the city's schools chancellor, the mayor, colleges and universities, and a special panel created by the governor.

The plan is favored by many critics of the public-school system, including many prominent conservatives - in New York and nationally - and Democrats have charged that the Republican governor is backing the plan to further his national political aspirations.

Flake said politics had nothing to do with his support of Pataki's proposal.

"This is not a political issue for me," said Flake, who supports City Council Speaker Peter Vallone for governor.

"It is strictly an issue of quality education for most kids in urban New York." ■

44. New York Post

June 16, 1998

SCHOOL PRAYER GETS TEACHER AXED

By ANGELA MOSCONI and
SUSAN EDELMAN

A Bronx junior-high-school teacher has been fired for talking about God and leading her sixth-graders in prayer.

Board of Education officials said Rosario, who was fired Friday, violated laws requiring the separation of church and state.

"We do follow the Constitution and state laws regarding the teaching of religion," said spokesman David Galarza.

Rosario - who showed up at the school yesterday to clear out her desk - waved the Bible, hugged teary-eyed students and said her firing was unfair.

"A lot of programs are brought into our schools where they talk about condoms, drugs and everything else, but we cannot talk about God," she told *The Post*.

"This is an injustice. Without Him, nothing is possible."

Rosario, 43, a member of the Pentecostal church and mother of two, was booted on Friday from her job at IS 74 - one of a dozen low-performing schools under the direct supervision of Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew. She has taught at the school since September.

Her firing followed a complaint from the guardian of one of the students in the class, an 11-year-old girl who is a Jehovah's Witness.

"It shouldn't have happened in school," said the woman who blew the whistle, the child's sister-in-law.

Rosario said the subject came up June 8 after a student in her homeroom class

Mildred Rosario, a self-described born-again Christian, told students at IS 74 in Hunts Point that a drowned classmate was "in heaven" and that "Jesus, our Savior," came "to save all the questioned her about the recent death of fellow sixth-grader Christopher Lee.

Lee, 11, was stepping over rocks in the Bronx Kill a week earlier when he was pulled under by a rising tide and drowned.

"Mrs. Rosario, did Christopher Lee go to heaven?" an 11-year-old girl asked.

"Of course, he went to heaven," the teacher replied.

Rosario said she then told the students if they wanted to sit and talk about God it was their "free will" and right to do so.

"I told them whoever doesn't want to participate in this conversation should go use the computer or read some books," said Rosario, who teaches mostly bilingual sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders at the Bryant Avenue school.

Rosario said all 29 students remained for the discussion.

Rosario said she told students about heaven and said that Chris is "at peace ... I told them about the great love of God, that he sent Jesus, our Savior, to die for us, and that he came to save all the human race."

She then led the prayer.

"I told the principal our public school system is messed up because we're taking Jesus, prayers, and God out of school," she said. "Why do we have to hide something so special and beautiful that

human race."

She then prayed with the 11- and 12-year-old kids by going from one to the other and placing her hands over their heads.

the students want to know?"

Civil libertarians were aghast at Rosario's "poor judgment" and "inappropriate behavior."

"She was teaching Christian doctrine, and there might have been children of other faiths in that room for whom Christ was not the messiah," said Sheldon Friedberg, executive director of the Greater New York Region of the National Conference for Community and Justice, a group founded by Christians and Jews.

"When you teach a single point of view without letting the students know - particularly at that impressionable age - that there are other viewpoints as well, then you're treating them unfairly. You may be planting ideas in their heads that their parents don't want put there."

While a prohibition against prayer in public schools has sparked protests and court fights in Alabama and several other states, the issue has rarely arisen in New York City with its rainbow of religions.

"I've never heard of anything like this," said Norman Siegel, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union.

"This is the first time I've heard of such an explicit recognition of Jesus Christ and God in a public school."■

45. Boston Globe

June 16, 1998

Tensions, fear send Cambridge principal fleeing

By Jordana Hart, Globe Staff

CAMBRIDGE - After nine months of escalating racial tensions at one of the city's most popular public schools, the principal of Agassiz School yesterday left town abruptly after reporting a fire, possibly set, next to her car.

Peggy Averitte said the crumpled newspaper she and a friend found burning next to her car Saturday night put her in imminent fear for her safety: Bags hastily packed, Averitte left town for good, a week before her scheduled departure.

Authorities said they are taking the fire seriously, coming as it does after

bitter discord, threats, and accusations of racism and elitism that have split many of the school's white and minority parents.

Cambridge arson investigators are trying to determine whether the fire was set. Averitte and Gloria Murray, her sorority sister visiting from Virginia, discovered the fire at 10:30 p.m. on the damp sidewalk next to the rear passenger-side wheel of Averitte's black Range Rover. She was parked outside a friend's home on Sacramento Place, around the corner from her own Wendell Street home near Harvard Square.

Averitte, a 44-year-old black educator from Indianapolis, resigned this month

after only a year on the job. Her last official school day was Friday, but she said she had planned to go on vacation this week and leave next week to return to her Indianapolis home.

Yesterday, Averitte finished packing her bag in her bedroom as friends waited in her kitchen downstairs. A police cruiser sat outside her home, as it had since Saturday night. She took calls from friends and wept as she described what had happened.

"Look at me. Do you have to ask how I feel?" she said, sitting on her bed. "When you are black and something is burning near you like that, you get the

message. The fire told me to go now, and I am going. I certainly had not planned to escape with things thrown in a suitcase."

Cambridge Mayor Frank Duehay said yesterday that he believes the fire was directed at Averitte.

"This is a bizarre incident that can only be described as something verging on a hate crime," Duehay said. "One would not think this could happen in Cambridge, but it has. I visited Ms. Averitte and she was very shaken by this."

"The riddle that we can't seem to answer," said city councilor and former mayor Kenneth Reeves, "is that we chose a well-qualified candidate who performed splendidly, and yet she was treated such that she gave up."

"This parting salvo," said Reeves of the recent incident, "seems to be the soliloquy of the sick to make her life miserable... It's an intolerant spirit that does not have a place in Cambridge."

Averitte had come to the Agassiz School with high hopes of reforming a school that lacked what some parents perceived as structure and strong leadership. Prior to Averitte, the school had gone through five principals in 10 years.

But Averitte's strict, no-nonsense approach, which by all accounts was an abrupt departure from past practice at the Agassiz, annoyed many parents, said her detractors. The principal, for example, began requiring that students no longer call teachers by their first names, and she also began locking the school entrance after the school day began. Averitte's move was in line with a system-wide safety policy, but it caught parents by surprise.

Many parents, who had often stepped in to help run the school or simply sit in on classes, resented the locked door policy. They said Averitte repeatedly limited their participation in the classroom and their access to her.

While declining to call the fire pure coincidence, one Averitte critic, James Kerr, father of an Agassiz third-grader,

On Sunday, city officials visited Averitte in her home to apologize and offer her comfort. Last night, the City said, "It is highly unlikely someone who objected to Ms. Averitte could be that angry. But if so, it is shocking and the person should be caught and punished to the fullest extent of the law."

Kerr and other parents who have had concerns about Averitte's leadership said they are being unfairly portrayed as racist.

"People had philosophical objections to the educational approach Averitte took in the school," said Kerr. "Legitimate dissent was lumped together with reported incidents of racial harassment. The result is that white parents generally at the Agassiz have been tarred with the charge of racism."

Averitte's supporters, mostly parents of color, said some white parents appeared threatened by the increasing number of minority students at what has long been a largely white school, located at the corner of Sacramento and Oxford streets near Harvard Law School. According to school data, 48 percent of the students are white, 24 percent are black, 21 percent Asian, and 6 percent are Hispanic.

The school atmosphere deteriorated to such a point that there were arguments between Averitte and parents in the school hallways. During a particularly tense meeting last winter, one white parent called Averitte a "black clown," according to Harvard professor Allen Counter, a black Agassiz parent who was at the meeting. And a white parent, who asked not to be named, said he was threatened by the school's black janitor.

Last fall, just three months into her first year at Agassiz, Averitte reported to police some anonymous calls to her home, including a death threat. Police confirmed yesterday that they gave Averitte a modem linked to the station, and an emergency calling device to wear around her neck while at or near her home to call police in an emergency. After the fire, they provided her with a

Council denounced the incident and asked police to report the results of their probe by the end of the month. cellular phone with speed-dial to the station.

"If I got prank calls and someone threatened to kill me, and then I see a fire set next to my car, I would assume it was directed at me," said the police source.

The fire has reignited simmering racial tensions between some Agassiz parents. The year-long turmoil seemed to reach a crescendo in mid-winter, shortly after Averitte encouraged the school superintendent, Bobbie D'Alessandro, to fire a popular second-grade teacher.

The morning after the teacher was fired, a group of parents assembled outside Averitte's office, seeking an explanation for his dismissal. While parents who congregated in the hallway insist they were not trying to intimidate Averitte or other school officials, others say the group was threatening the principal and arguing loudly in front of children.

"I walked into the school one morning and saw a mob of 30 people standing in front of her office, wanting a meeting with her," said Counter. "It was frightening to the children."

At the time, Averitte also received a telephone call threatening her safety, which required a police officer to come to the school. School officials said they installed a caller identification device on her phone in case of further threats.

Soon after that incident, D'Alessandro brought in professional mediators to undo the communication knot between Averitte and the angry parents, an unusual step that cost the city \$81,000. In a report issued March 9, the mediators found fault with Averitte's communication skills, but also found that some parents treated her with "racial slurs, threats, and rude, disrespectful behavior."

The mediation effort failed.

The city has launched yet another nationwide search for a principal at the Agassiz School. ■

46. Boston Globe

June 16, 1998

Appeal of ruling on exam-school admissions policy is set for July 30

By Beth Daley, Globe Staff

An appeal of a federal court decision upholding Boston's controversial,

race-based exam-school admissions policy will be heard July 30, according to an order from the US Court of Appeals

for the First Circuit.

Boston lawyer Michael McLaughlin filed the appeal for Sarah Wessmann, a white ninth-grader who claims she was unconstitutionally passed over for entrance in Boston Latin School, despite scoring better than 10 minority students who were admitted.

Late last month, a federal court judge said Wessmann's case did not have merit, and upheld one of the country's most scrutinized affirmative action policies. The policy admits 50 percent of students solely on merit and the remaining 50

percent using a combination of merit and race.

The First Circuit court granted the appeal, which had been expected to be heard in the fall. However, McLaughlin asked that the case be heard this summer so Wessmann, who now attends Latin Academy, could attend Boston Latin School in September if the court rules in her favor. Boston schools did not protest the new appeal date.

Such an accelerated timetable is usually granted if the appeal is of

pressing need to the public or those involved in the case.

The case revolves around whether a diverse student body is reason enough to use race when considering applicants to the city's exam schools. In his decision, US District Court Chief Joseph L. Tauro said public schools had a unique mission to ensure diversity, and the city's exam schools provide "academic excellence in a diverse setting."■

47. Los Angeles Times

* 06/16/98; Edition: Home Edition; Section: Metro; Op Ed Desk; Page B-7

School Choice Is Religion Neutral

Vouchers used at the parents' discretion benefit the student, not a school, public or private.

By DOUGLAS W. KMEC

Douglas W. Kmiec is a professor of constitutional law at Pepperdine University

When the Wisconsin Supreme Court upheld a pilot voucher program for disadvantaged children that included religious schools late last week, we heard the predictable wailing that such funding breaches the wall of separation of church and state. This metaphorical wall is no where to be found in the U.S. Constitution. What is found there is a double guarantee of religious freedom—that government has no business establishing a church or telling us how to worship. This guarantee is vital, and aptly called "America's first freedom."

However, the Wisconsin decision is a landmark because it makes it abundantly clear that keeping church and state in their proper corners does not authorize discrimination against religion.

Since 1995, the state of Wisconsin has been trying to deliver \$4,400 scholarships to as many as 15,000 children in highly troubled Milwaukee schools. Because of counterfeit constitutional claims, only 1/10th of that number have been able to participate and more than 80 capable private schools of various religious denominations have been off-limits.

For the last two decades, the U.S. Supreme Court has been refining its constitutional jurisprudence as it relates to religion. This task has been difficult

Every child is unique. My five children have attended both public and religious schools, and have benefited from each. In fairly allocating the public

since the avoidance of improper religious favoritism can easily slip into overt religious hostility. In the 1960s and '70s, the court rightly reminded public schools that they had no special gift or authority to devise prayers, or even lead them. So, too, particular programs that allocated public money especially and directly to private religious schools were struck down. Such was religious favoritism.

But it has been different when the federal or state governments have created general programs of assistance that flow to religious schools by virtue of parental choice. Since 1983, the U.S. Supreme Court has decided case after case affirming the twin principles of evenhandedness and parental direction. This should not have been a surprise since as far back as the 1940s, the court allowed public funds to be used to support bus transportation to public and religious schools alike.

Under this standard of nondiscrimination, the U.S. Supreme Court has sustained a Minnesota tax credit for tuition at public, private or religious schools, the use of state vocational assistance in Washington to allow a blind student to study for the ministry, the University of Virginia's funding of a religious student publication on the same terms as other nonreligious student activities and federal assistance for remedial instruction at both religious and nonreligious schools.

Wisconsin applied the same principle education fund, Wisconsin parents are now better able to exercise their constitutionally protected liberty to direct their child's upbringing. Californians

of nondiscrimination to sustain its voucher program. The participating schools are selected on religiously neutral grounds, each child gets equal funding regardless of the school chosen and the funds are directed to chosen schools—public or private—by the parents.

The Wisconsin court also made short work of objections posed under two state constitutional provisions. Many state constitutions have provisions expressly denying the funding of religious schools. Eerily illustrating how history repeats itself, these provisions were often the product of outright bias and a 19th century nativist movement that sought to deny public benefits to new American immigrants, many of whom didn't speak the language and worshiped in Hebrew temples or Catholic or Lutheran churches. Rightly, the Wisconsin high court said these state provisions could not be understood to undermine federal constitutional right. When public funds are allocated by parents, said the court, the primary benefit of the funding is not the school, religious or not, but the student.

As the Wisconsin high court made plain, the voucher project is not anti-public school, but pro-student, giving families a range of educational choices, from a neighborhood public school to a public school in a different district, to specialized public schools, to private schools that are either religious or nonreligious.

surely want the same, and it may well prove significant that Dan Lungren has made vouchers a centerpiece of his campaign for governor.

When Thomas Jefferson penned his "wall of separation" metaphor more than a dozen years after the Bill of Rights in a

private letter decrying, not school choice, but the wholly improper coerced establishment of the Congregationalist

Church in Connecticut, he didn't mean otherwise. ■

48. Los Angeles Times

* 06/16/98; Edition: Home Edition; Section: Metro; Metro Desk; Page B-3

4 Charter Schools Win L.A. Unified's Endorsement **Board approves five-year contracts allowing innovative campuses to keep operating independently.**

By DUKE HELFAND
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Four independently run charter schools won official votes of confidence Monday as the Los Angeles Board of Education unanimously endorsed new five-year mandates for the campuses.

Teachers, parents and other supporters had packed the board's hearing room downtown, hoping that they would be rewarded for plunging into the waters of school reform.

TD

Charter schools operate outside most state and school district guidelines, controlling such things as curriculum and finances in exchange for pledges of higher student achievement.

The audience erupted in applause moments after the school board voted 7 to 0 in favor of renewing the charters for Vaughn Next Century Learning Center in Pacoima, Fenton Avenue Charter School in Lake View Terrace, Westwood Charter School and the Open Charter School in the Mid-City area.

"We have earned credibility," an elated Vaughn Principal Yvonne Chan told her assembled teachers after the vote. "They see school folks taking responsibility."

The board's decision came one week after an outside evaluation praised the charter schools for generally outperforming non-charter campuses while building strong parent and staff ties.

The appraisal concluded that the schools had met some, but not all, of their goals and that shortcomings were

often the result of aims set too high.

Teachers embraced the findings as well as the board's approval Monday.

"I think they see the benefit of what we've started," said Jody Sabah, a teacher at the Westwood school. "We have a tremendous energy among our faculty and we want to continue that."

Board members offered their own applause even as one of them complained about not having enough time to study the outside appraisal, a document as thick as a telephone book that arrived on board members' desks just last week.

"I think we have a lot to learn from you," board member Victoria Castro told the charter advocates. "[You're] definitely headed in the right direction."

Monday's vote culminated a frenzied weekend of activity for the charter schools.

District administrators had sent all four schools lists of conditions required for receiving five-year contracts.

The Westwood and Open schools had no problems with the lists, administrators said. But Vaughn and Fenton, which both administer their own finances, sounded alarms.

Among other things, they took issue with a condition requiring the two schools to continue paying 3% of their per-pupil funding to the district to cover administrative costs. They argued that such costs should be charged on a "fee-for-service" basis.

District representatives spent five hours Monday negotiating with the two schools. By day's end, both sides reported that differences over most of 21

conditions had been resolved.

District administrators called the flap a misunderstanding, saying that they simply wanted to clarify details such as precise time frames of the new charters.

Indeed, the term "conditions" was amended in documents to "clarifications." District administrators noted that answers to virtually all of the issues they raised are contained in the new charter proposals.

An outside arbitrator will be employed to help resolve the few remaining issues, including the 3% charge. Vaughn and the district also need to work out a system for maintaining school buildings constructed by the charter campus.

Despite the goodwill after the day of negotiations, a top district official apologized publicly Monday to the charter schools for creating confusion over the weekend.

"Some of the late transmissions may have caused anguish," Richard K. Mason, the district's general counsel, told the charter school people. "We apologize for that."

But apologies and haggling seemed to fade in the early evening Monday as the charter school founders celebrated their long-sought victory.

Chan treated more than a dozen of her teachers, administrators and parents to dinner in Chinatown.

"We fought hard for this school," Vaughn teacher Suzanne Llamas said. "And we're showing everybody we're doing it." ■

49. Los Angeles Times

* 06/16/98; Edition: Orange County Edition; Section: Metro Desk; Page A-1

1st-Year School Learns Pluses, Minuses of County's Growth

By NICK ANDERSON
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Nostalgia descends on most school campuses about this time of year as

teachers watch children fly out the door for summer, bound for another grade in

another classroom come September.

But the sentiment will run especially thick when the last bell before vacation rings this afternoon at Wagon Wheel Elementary School in the outlying canyons of South County. There, both a community and its students have come of age during the last school year.

TD

One of about a dozen new public schools in Orange County, Wagon Wheel Elementary opened nine months ago with hopes of becoming a center of public life in a rapidly growing neighborhood of gated subdivisions next to Gen. Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park.

It also was overcrowded from Day One.

How this school came to life for 178 days of learning is a story with details that resonate with principals, teachers and parents anywhere.

There was the installation of an urgently needed stoplight in front of the school last fall to ease the pre-8 a.m. and post-2 p.m. traffic jams. There was the addition of nine portable classrooms last winter, an equally urgent task to accommodate smaller classes for third-graders.

A mascot had to be picked (the Mustangs), a PTA organized (it raised about \$60,000), even a vintage hay wagon with rusted wheels procured (a local business lent one for the school's front entrance).

Dozens of Internet-capable computers were installed. A barbecue in October and a sock hop in March drew crowds so large that parked cars filled the school ball field.

*

"That school really binds us as a community. It's a fabulous school," said Jill Harmon, 44, a retail consultant and parent volunteer. She moved to the neighborhood a year ago from Long Beach, in part to transfer her two elementary-age daughters out of an urban school system.

Indeed, plans for how to accommodate more kids in this "home" have progressed all year and will continue well into the future. That is the way in South County, in places like 33,000-student Saddleback Valley Unified School District and 40,000-student Capistrano Unified School District, Wagon Wheel Elementary's parent agency. The supercharged real estate market is drawing new families with school-age children to this region as fast as builders can pave new six-lane roadways leading to new hillside homes with two- and

A reporter's visit to Wagon Wheel Elementary last week, following a tour before it opened in September, found that the school was still very much a work in progress.

Even as students were taking their last quizzes and polishing their last book reports, a backhoe was grading a far corner of the playground in preparation for another dozen portable classrooms. Enrollment in this school designed for 722 students is expected to surge to 1,050 in the next year. That's a lot of extra backpacks slung onto the backs of a lot of extra, pint-sized classroom seats.

Can the restless fifth-graders in Elise Pieper's class, headed soon for middle school, understand what it took to launch this school? Probably not. But Pieper, 26, herself a first-year teacher, knows.

"It's an incredible amount of work," she said during recess one morning. Pieper allowed that she's a bit choked up at the prospect of closing down her class in Room 22 today. "I'm really going to miss these kids. It's hard to lose your family after you've created a family."

*

In most classrooms, an academic diary of sorts can be found among the student projects and laminated materials that teachers staple and tape onto the walls. Pieper's was no exception. One wall, labeled "To Infinity and Beyond!" held pictures of the solar system, satellites, comets and the phases of the moon.

On another wall, Pieper tacked up a scroll containing the results of an inquiry into the stock market. Students were assigned to invest a hypothetical \$10,000 in such companies as Disney, AT&T, Microsoft or Netscape and track their fluctuating value for a month through graphs. The total class "profit" was \$334.39, the charts indicated, for an annualized "return" of more than 40%.

A third wall was adorned with student drawings and writings about the future. Samples: "Just in case modeling doesn't work out, I will be a vetranaryan and three-car garages."

Principal Dick Campbell expects the school to have 27 portable classrooms by September—five more than its permanent structure holds. That's not counting a satellite school, from kindergarten to second or third grade, expected to open in Coto de Caza in September 1999 to relieve the pressure at Wagon Wheel.

The unbridled growth worries some parents who came here expecting the best in public education that Orange County—and California—have to offer. Harmon, the parent from Long Beach,

work with animals."—Jessie; "In ten years I will be in college hopefully at UCLA. I will get good grades and have a porche."—Casey; "I will be a professinal soft-ball player and hit a lot of home runs."—Ashley.

Tim Johnson, one of 29 of Pieper's students scheduled to go through a "completion" ceremony today—they don't call it graduation in fifth grade—was for the penultimate week the class captain. That meant leading the flag salute and wielding the all-important power of choosing the order of class dismissal for recess and lunch.

Tim's summary of his year and the class zeitgeist: "I've learned a lot about math and fractions and decimals, and I learned about the stock market. . . . I play the trumpet. . . . I like art. . . . I don't like history. . . . I don't really want to go [to middle school] because it might be kind of hard. . . . I'm always happy to go to summer vacation because there's no school. . . . I might go to Disneyland."

*

For her part, Pieper said the year was exhausting but satisfying. The kids all know their state capitals, can work with fractions, can read and analyze good books such as Madeleine L'Engle's "A Wrinkle in Time," and can look up astronomy references on the Internet via the three Macintosh computers in the class.

In September, Pieper had marveled at the good fortune she had in finding her first full-time teaching job here. "This school is so new and fashionable, I felt like I was being introduced to a million-dollar home," Pieper said at the time.

Now, mindful of the school's biggest challenge, Pieper chuckles at that quote. "It's still too small," she said of the school. "That's the only problem: It's a million-dollar home with a family of 900."

said daughter Katie's second-grade class began the year without a permanent room and was forced to roam from space to space for two months until one was found.

Sally Garber, 40, who moved to Coto de Caza from Texas last year, has a son finishing second grade at Wagon Wheel and a daughter finishing sixth at nearby Las Flores Middle School, which is growing just as fast. She sees the crowding firsthand as a lunch monitor at the elementary school.

Surveying a cramped patio where kids

eat lunch in brief, staggered shifts, Garber said she wished that California education officials could cap the size of schools as easily as they cap the size of classes. "At some point, you begin to jeopardize safety and quality," she said.

But Campbell points out that Wagon Wheel Elementary occupies 13 acres, "a big chunk of land," with plenty of room for expansion. Two or three urban schools might fit in the same space.

*
The principal, who was starting his second school in five years, said he was amazed at the number of people—nearly 2,000—who came to the '50s-style dance on a Friday night in March. In part, he said, the turnout was a function of public curiosity and the sheer newness of the school. But there was something else at work too. Until this year the neighborhood never had a public school to call its own.

"I have never in my whole life seen so many people come to an elementary school event," Campbell said. "It's a testimony to the fact that the school is the center of the community."

(BEGIN TEXT OF INFOBOX / INFOGRAPHIC) School's Out

Last Day of Classes for Orange County School Districts

Elementary School Districts:

Anaheim City, June 26 (all schools are year-round; some tracks start as early as July 7)

Buena Park, June 12

Centralia, June 18
Cypress, June 17 for traditional school year; also has year-round schools

Fountain Valley, June 12

Fullerton, June 11

Huntington Beach City, June 11

La Habra City, June 10

Lowell Joint, June 12

Magnolia, June 18 for traditional school year; also has year-round schools
Ocean View, June 12

Savanna, June 18

Westminster, June 15 High School Districts

Anaheim Union, June 12

Fullerton Joint Union, June 11

Huntington Beach Union, June 11

Unified Districts

Brea-Olinda, June 17

Capistrano, June 16 for traditional school year; also has year-round schools
Garden Grove, June 17

Irvine, June 17 (year-round schools start July 29)

Laguna Beach, June 17

Los Alamitos, June 16

Newport-Mesa, June 18

Orange, June 12 for traditional school year; also has year-round schools

Placentia-Yorba Linda, June 11

Saddleback Valley, June 18

Santa Ana, June 17 for traditional school year, also has year-round schools
Tustin, June 17

Source: Districts Wagon Wheel's Rookie Year

By the Numbers:

School district: Capistrano Unified

Opened: Sept. 8, 1997

Year end: Today

Grades: Kindergarten through fifth

Construction: March 1996-July 1997

Construction cost: \$11 million

Number of teaching days: 178

Number of teachers: 39

Number of portable classrooms: 15

Number of portables to be added over summer: 12

Computers per classroom, average: 3

Designed enrollment: 722

Enrollment on opening day: 824

Enrollment today: 900

Enrollment expected next year: 1,050

Students per teacher in kindergarten: 15*

Students per teacher in grades 1-3: 20

Students per teacher in grades 4 and 5: About 30

Amount raised by Wagon Wheel PTA: \$60,000

Cost of awning planned for student lunch area: \$10,000

Estimated minutes required to drop off students when school opened: 15

Estimated minutes after stoplight was installed outside school: 7

For half the school day. Ratio is higher in other half. Enrollment

Designed enrollment: 722

Opening day: 824

Today: 900

Expected next year: 1,050

Sources: School officials, Times reporting.■

50. The New York Times

06/16/98Section: Metropolitan Desk; Section B; Page 5, Column 6

Teacher Ousted For Leading Class in Prayer

By DAVID W. CHEN

A substitute teacher at an intermediate school in the Bronx has been dismissed for praising Jesus Christ and leading her sixth-grade students in prayer, school

"Her written statement indicated that she had a religious sense of obligation to advocate her choice of Christianity," said Ms. Coletti about Ms. Rosario, a Pentecostalist. "She had very clearly crossed the line."

Attempts to reach Ms. Rosario by telephone last night were unsuccessful. But since her dismissal on Friday, her predicament has elicited public calls of support from several parents at the school, Intermediate School 74 in Hunts Point.

officials said yesterday.

Mildred Rosario, 43, was dismissed on Friday after a Board of Education hearing determined that she had violated laws requiring the separation of church

It was not immediately clear when Ms. Rosario, who has been a substitute teacher since September, began talking explicitly about religion in her classes, Ms. Coletti said.

But the subject of God apparently came up in one of her classes when a student asked about the death on June 4 of a classmate, Christopher Lee, 11, who drowned after stumbling on the slippery rocks along the Bronx Kill while trying to take a shortcut home.

According to Ms. Coletti, the student

and state, said Chiara Coletti, a spokeswoman for the Board of Education.

asked if Christopher had gone to heaven, and Ms. Rosario replied that he had. She then "preached about born-again Christianity and the need to take Jesus as one's personal savior."

Ms. Rosario then led the students in prayer.

Shortly after the incident, a student complained to her parents, who then complained to school officials, Ms. Coletti said. A subsequent investigation then prompted Friday's hearing, at which time Ms. Rosario was dismissed.■

51. Orlando Sentinel

06/15/98; Edition: METRO; Section: LOCAL & STATE; Page C3

DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN MAY GET SPECIAL SCHOOL

RADER IS LIKELY TO TEACH TROUBLEMAKING MIDDLE-SCHOOLERS

By Catherine Hinman
of The Sentinel Staff

They are every teacher's biggest headache: students who are rowdy, rude and ready to fight.

Many of them eventually will be suspended for their behavior. In the process, these few will have disrupted their classmates' learning and will have lost critical academic ground themselves. TD Middle school teachers know these kids are the future dropouts and troublemakers of high schools. But in a class of 30 students, what can they do?

Orange County Public Schools, beginning this August, wants to test a special school as possible relief.

On Tuesday, the School Board is expected to approve a proposal for an academy for middle-schoolers with behavioral problems.

Middle school principals have been asking for this for years, said Margaret Gentile, director of student alternative programs for Orange County. In fast-growing Florida, middle schools are not small, nurturing environments, she said, but large institutions with 1,200 and more students.

The new middle school academy, proposed for the northern part of the county, would be a place where parents could get extra attention for their children.

"When you start seeing your 12-year-old becoming totally frustrated

Joyner will be area superintendent for the "North Learning Community." This geographic area, one of five zones created under a new administrative plan, will be the site of the middle school pilot program. If it's successful, four more alternative schools could be created, Joyner said.

and alienated from school, you want to stop that as soon as you can," Gentile said. "I think this will provide some answers."

The school, which would serve 150 students from five Orange County middle schools, isn't likely to be big enough though to solve the discipline problem in public schools.

Out-of-school suspension rates at those five middle schools - higher than the district on average - ranged from 19.9 percent at Apopka Middle School to 38.8 percent at Carver Middle in 1996-97 school year, according to a state report. That would be more than 1,600 students behaving badly enough at some point during the year to be suspended.

Alternative schools for troubled and hard-to-reach children are a growing industry. State officials said almost every school district in Florida now has some program for disruptive or violent students, especially those who have been expelled.

Orange County's newest proposal is different in a couple of ways.

For one, it would be voluntary - not mandatory. In addition, Orange County officials are planning on calling in specialists to run the program. They say it would be a way of tapping into extra expertise but also maintaining yearly accountability for results.

The program would be managed by The Rader Group, a nonprofit Okaloosa

Like Excel, the Rader Group offers a specialized approach to dealing with rebellious and angry youngsters. Founder Bill Rader, former associate dean of the College of Education at the University of West Florida in Pensacola and a 20-year veteran of teacher education, calls his technique "intensive care for kids."

County company that operates a similar school as a charter in the Panhandle. Rader would receive 90 percent of the money the state hands out for each student and would be eligible for up \$60,000 in bonuses if it gets results.

The bonuses would be contingent upon standards in student attendance and academics. There's another bonus tied to how well students behave after they return to traditional schools.

"What they are doing that is very trend-setting, very cutting-edge {is} they are looking at student outcomes," said Mary Jo Butler, director for dropout intervention and prevention services at the Florida Department of Education.

Orange County already has seen some rewards from offering financial incentives linked to results.

The Rader contract is modeled after an agreement with Excel Alternatives of Sanford, which has just completed its first year of running Orange County's alternative school for expelled students. In contrast, Rader would take students who have been getting into trouble but whose offenses aren't so severe as to cause them to be expelled.

At Excel, attendance rates catapulted from 40 percent when the program was managed by the district to 93 percent under Excel, said Joe Joyner, associate superintendent for secondary education.

Rader's strategy includes a strict dress code, lots of structure and individualized guidance. One teacher - who is mentor, role model and academic coach - works with a group of students in classes no larger than 15 and sometimes smaller. SEQN: 81660024■

52. The Hartford Courant

06/15/98; Edition: IS SHORELINE; Section: TOWN NEWS; Page B1

SCHOOL DAY GROWS LONGER **TEACHERS' NEW CONTRACT ADDS 15 MINUTES**

By CHARLES STANNARD

Courant Correspondent

Students in all seven town schools will

receive an additional 15 minutes of daily instruction in the next school year under an agreement between the Guilford Education Association and the board of education.

The additional instruction time was provided under the three-year teacher contract approved earlier this year by the board and association. The board last week approved new schedules for the four elementary schools, two middle schools, and the high school.

Nancy Casinghino, assistant superintendent of schools, said school administrators are looking forward to the longer school day. "We're thrilled by it because it means more instructional time for students," she said.

Board vice chairman Michael Brown said board members had noticed in the state Department of Education's annual strategic school profiles that Guilford schools were "kind of in the middle of the pack" in the amount of time spent on daily instruction.

"We decided to make a concerted effort in the teacher contract negotiations to increase the amount of time spent on task with instruction," he said.

Brown said school administrators have been directed to develop the daily schedules for their buildings to ensure the additional 15 minutes is spent in actual classroom instruction.

Casinghino said the schedule at the high school will be revised to add five minutes to three class periods that were only 40 minutes long. She said the daily schedules at the middle and elementary schools are being revised by teachers and administrators to ensure that the additional minutes are dedicated to classroom instruction for the new 45-minute periods.

Rose Dostert, a middle school teacher and president of the teachers' association, said the board's proposal to lengthen the school day with a guarantee that the extra minutes would be spent on instruction was "well received" by the teachers. "It's

not just tacked on at the end of the day, it has to be actual classroom time," she said.

"I think this speaks well for the teachers, that we have the students' interest first and foremost," Dostert said.

Teachers will receive a 4 percent salary increase in the 1998-99 school year, with 3 percent pay increases in each of the remaining two years of the contract that expires on June 30, 2001.

The high school will be in session from 7:25 a.m. to 2:05 p.m., five minutes earlier and 10 minutes later than the current opening and closing times. Sessions at the middle schools will begin at 8:15 a.m. and end at 2:36 p.m., also five minutes earlier and 10 minutes later than current times.

The school day for elementary school students will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 3:17 p.m. The elementary schools are currently open from 9:13 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. ■

53. Buffalo News

06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: NEWS; Page A3

PUSH FOR VOUCHER PROGRAMS REFLECTS FRUSTRATION WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By GWEN FLORIO

The idea of school vouchers — giving money to public-school students in poor districts so they can attend private, presumably better, schools — has been around for a long time.

But it leapt into prominence this month when Wisconsin's Supreme Court

But the most measurable effect of school vouchers will be seen in San Antonio, where \$50 million in vouchers will be provided by a private group for students in the impoverished Edgewood Independent School District. Never before has such a large voucher program been targeted at a single district.

"We wanted to have an impact on the system," said Fritz Steiger, president of CEO America, which stands for Children's Educational Opportunity, the group that announced last month it would fund the program. "And we wanted to choose a district that wasn't performing up to par."

Edgewood qualifies.

Its 14,000 students make up the ninth-poorest public school district in Texas. Until recently, they performed abysmally on state tests.

Edgewood was so bad that Elizabeth

ruled that taxpayer money could fund vouchers for attendance at religious schools. Philadelphia's Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua recently proposed a similar plan for the city and 10 suburban districts.

Wisconsin's court ruling followed by one day the announcement, by two Espinoza, who attended its schools as a child, vowed things would be better for her own children.

"When I was there, I was lucky if I could read a sentence, let alone write an essay," she said. "When it was time for my kids to go to school, I sent them to private schools without hesitation."

When things didn't work out in those schools, Espinoza got ready to leave Edgewood.

She told her mother, "If I've got to put them in public schools, I'm going to move." Under no circumstances, she declared, would her children go to Edgewood schools.

Voucher programs are aimed at the Elizabeth Espinozas of this nation, parents who decry the incompetence of many urban and very rural schools but who are too poor to move to the comfortable suburbs that have some of

wealthy businessmen in New York, of the \$200 million Children's Scholarship Fund for poor children who want to attend private schools.

The Wisconsin case involves students in Milwaukee; the Children's Scholarship Fund will give money to children nationwide. the nation's best public districts.

The idea is to provide money — from taxes or from private scholarship groups — to those parents so that they can send their children to good schools.

The movement for vouchers has gained considerable support in the last decade. It stems from the same frustrations with public education that spawned charter schools, which are public schools that operate autonomously within a district.

Since last year, seven states have considered legislation that would provide either vouchers or tax credits to parents whose children attend private schools, according to the Education Commission for the States.

So far, only Milwaukee and Cleveland use tax money for vouchers, while at least a dozen private groups offer vouchers in the United States. In the Philadelphia

area, the Southeast Delco School District approved a voucher plan, but it faces a court challenge.

State-funded programs brush up against the constitutional barrier that separates church and state. The American Civil Liberties Union will appeal the Wisconsin ruling, which upheld a Milwaukee voucher program.

Critics such as the ACLU contend that using state money to send children to religious schools is unconstitutional.

Most of the schools involved in voucher plans have religious affiliations.

As to privately funded programs, such as CEO and the new Children's Scholarship Fund created by venture capitalist Ted Forstmann and Wal-Mart heir John Walton, some contend that the money would be better spent improving the below-par public districts.

"What could I do with \$50 million?" said Dolores Munoz, superintendent of the Edgewood district, referring to the

CEO plan to provide \$5 million a year for 10 years to help students leave her district.

Proponents of vouchers argue that public school systems would mismanage the funds, that their bureaucracies are like governments, spending and spending with no appreciable results.

Ms. Munoz sides with those who point out that suburban districts have always outspent the urban ones and that their students perform better as a result. ■

54. Associated Press

6-16 0:02a

Legislation designed to curb school violence

By ALIAH D. WRIGHT
Associated Press Writer

HARRISBURG (AP) - As a high school chemistry teacher in Doylestown who taught a former student who killed both of his grandparents years ago, Pennsylvania State Education Association President David Gondak knows all too well the necessity of curbing school violence.

"As it was I had no clue that he was capable of that kind of violent act, which I believe could just as easily have been directed at someone else at school, or even me," Gondak said Monday.

That is one of the reasons why Gondak said he joined Sen. Stewart Greenleaf, R-Montgomery, in the state Capitol Monday pledging the support of one of the state's largest teachers' unions

-Establishing a six-school pilot program for unruly students.

Both men also said the legislation would provide for enhanced penalties for school-related assaults and terroristic threats, but they did not say to what extent.

Dan Langan, spokesman for the state Department of Education, noted that the proposal Monday "generally seems to be consistent with a lot of the provisions in ... the (current) safe schools act and other statutes and regulations in the Commonwealth."

He would not say whether the Ridge administration would support the package. The administration established an Office of Safe Schools within the **Education Department** in 1995. That office provides technical and financial assistance to school districts to develop

in efforts to stop violence in schools before it starts.

"My hope is that the shooting deaths of the 1997-98 year, including the killing of a teacher in our own state, will galvanize efforts for safer schools," Greenleaf said. Science teacher John Gillette was killed in April by a 14-year-old student at a high school in Edinboro in western Pennsylvania.

Another 14-year-old student opened fire Monday with a pistol in the hallway of a Virginia high school as students took final exams, wounding a basketball coach and a volunteer aide, police said. Doctors said the injuries weren't life-threatening.

Greenleaf said he hopes to have the legislation drawn up before the Senate Education Committee has public hearings on school violence. The House Majority violence, crime and substance-abuse prevention programs in schools.

He also noted that during the Ridge administration, the state invested \$18 million in alternative education programs for unruly students. The money allows districts to develop programs, and about half of the 501 school districts have received money to do this.

Greenleaf, however, implied that there is always room for improvement.

"We have laws on the books now regarding safe schools but that's not necessarily going to stop someone from (committing criminal acts) and maybe this legislation may not either," he said.

But "we've looked at this situation, we do have tell-tale signs when a child is in jeopardy, when a child is at a potential for violent behavior, and we want to step in early to prevent that from happening."

Policy Committee is also planning forums this month to address school violence.

Greenleaf also said he hoped the bill would be considered before the end of the legislative session.

Some highlights of their package, which they hope the state legislature will take up this fall:

-Requiring teachers and students to report threats of violent acts to school officials;

-Giving legal protections to school employees who use reasonable force to stop violent behavior and assist injured students;

-Providing conflict resolution programs for teachers and students;

-Providing guidance programs for students in grades K through 12;

Other school shootings since October have occurred in West Paducah, Ky.; Pearl, Miss.; Jonesboro, Ark.; and Springfield, Ore.

Since the string of school shootings nationwide, 28 state legislatures have proposed school-safety legislation either to introduce or amend current law, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

For example, in Illinois it is now a felony to discharge a weapon on school property; in North Carolina principals are held accountable for the safety of schools; and New York has prohibited the sale of weapons within 1,000 feet of school grounds and also has increased the penalty for crimes involving firearms on school grounds, according to ■

55. Portland Oregonian

06/13/98; Edition: SUNRISE; Section: WIRE STORIES; Page A07

BILL AIMS TO PREVENT SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

By JIM BARNETT
of the Oregonian Staff

In an effort to prevent new schoolhouse tragedies, Sens. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Gordon Smith, R-Ore., want to offer incentives for states to detain and evaluate students who take guns to school.

A bill the senators introduced Friday would make states eligible for a 25 percent increase in federal juvenile justice grants if they pass laws requiring 72-hour detentions and psychological evaluations.

"When a kid brings a gun to school, we need to get them out of the classroom, off of the streets and in front of a professional who can determine what steps to take next," Wyden said.

The bill follows the May 21 shooting at Thurston High School in Springfield. Kipland P. Kinkel, 15, is accused of killing two classmates and wounding 22 others in a shooting spree in the Thurston cafeteria. He also is accused of killing his

parents the evening before.

A day before the shooting, Kinkel had been suspended and released to his parents after being caught with a gun at school. Afterward, people who knew Kinkel said he had joked about killing people, but they had not taken him seriously.

Like other states' laws, Oregon's does not require that a student carrying a gun be detained by police or other authorities. But the bill is intended to help states find troubled students before they turn to violence.

The senators borrowed the idea for their bill from Springfield Mayor Bill Morrisette. Morrisette, a state House candidate and former social studies teacher at Springfield High School, proposed that Oregon adopt a similar law.

"I can't fault what (the police) did," Morrisette said Friday. "I think they acted within the realm of the existing law, and so I began thinking that we needed to

change the law."

The timing of the Wyden-Smith bill is key. Wyden is scheduled to accompany President Clinton today during his visit to Springfield, giving him an opportunity to enlist the president's support.

This year, states are eligible for a total of \$95.1 million in grants through the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, an aide to Wyden said. States that comply with the Wyden-Smith proposal by October 2000 would receive a 25 percent increase in grants.

In Oregon, where more than 100 students were caught last year taking guns to school, the grants total about \$1 million in 1998, the aide said.

Morrisette, who also is scheduled to meet with Clinton, said he would ask the president for money to hold a conference at the University of Oregon and to develop a national clearinghouse of information about school violence. ■

56. Lexington(Ky.) Herald-Leader

June 15, 1998

Plan would open magnets to all children

Flynn calls for elimination of tests, auditions

By Linda J. Johnson
HERALD-LEADER
EDUCATION WRITER

In a proposal sure to be controversial, Superintendent Peter Flynn wants to open Fayette County's magnet schools to all students.

The proposal would do one of two things for the magnet schools, depending on whom you believe:

It would put the public back in all public schools as Flynn suggests, or, in the minds of some critics, it would kill the programs at three of the district's most successful magnet schools: Lexington Traditional Magnet School, the School for the Creative and Performing Arts at Bluegrass, and the Math, Science and Technology Center at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School.

Flynn's proposal would:

Create geographic attendance boundary areas for magnet programs which now have none; children living in any school's designated neighborhood would have first choice of attending that

school.

Eliminate entrance tests and auditions at magnet schools. After neighborhood children are enrolled, the remaining slots would be open to any child in the district, "based strictly upon a lottery controlled only for diversity ... without auditions or entrance tests," he wrote in his proposal.

Of the district's 20 magnet programs, only LTMS, SCAPA and Dunbar's program have some sort of entrance requirement beyond the lottery that attempts to control enrollment for gender and racial equity.

"It's to open the process up to anyone whose parents think they can withstand the rigors of those programs," Flynn said recently of his proposal. He said it's time "to rethink what we're doing with magnet schools. Should we have more and if so, under what circumstances?"

Opponents of Flynn's proposal are galvanizing; and they're bringing out the big guns. At tonight's board meeting, former state lawmaker and Lexington developer Bill Lear, and four others, have

signed up to speak about LTMS.

Lear said Friday that he likes the idea of preference areas for all schools, but objects to eliminating entrance exams and discipline standards. His daughter, who just graduated from Henry Clay High School, attended LTMS.

He said he sees Flynn's proposal as the first step in eliminating the magnet schools altogether.

If the district has magnet schools and wants them to be successful, he said, "standards are an important part of that."

If the goal is to debate their existence, "that's fine," Lear said. "But do it in a straightforward way. Don't try to inhibit the effectiveness of (existing) magnet schools." Flynn was adamant that students admitted to magnet schools "on any basis, lottery or entrance requirements, will still be held to the same standards of the magnet school."

His purpose in offering the position statement, he wrote, was to start a dialogue "and eventually clarify the nature of magnet schools in our school

district."

In a written statement yesterday, Flynn said district leaders have been discussing for the past year whether it should stop adding magnet programs.

Another part of the proposal sets out stringent criteria for establishing new magnet programs. And that, said Flynn, is the bigger issue.

Board chairman Jerry Devine favors Flynn's proposal.

"It frightens me when places are so exclusive that people have to go through hell or high water to get in," he said. Devine, the only African-American on the board, said

Flynn's proposal would have the added benefit of increasing the number of minorities at LTMS.

"It's a very good thing," he said. "I want all children to have the opportunity

and that's what I have screamed about since I have been on the board."

LTMS sits in the heart of downtown, in a mostly African-American neighborhood. According to district records for the school year just concluded, LTMS, SCAPA and Dunbar's program meet the board's goal of having between 12 percent and 30 percent minority students. In all, about 23 percent of the district's 32,800 students are black.

Dunbar Principal Jon Akers would like to support Flynn's proposal. "However," he said, "there are some programs that I think warrant some kids' special attention."

Just as the district has programs for children with learning problems and special needs, he said, so too should there be programs for kids on the other end of the spectrum.

"If they don't have the skills coming into the program, then they are really setting themselves up for failure," he said. Brian Teague, a 16-year-old who will be a junior at Dunbar's magnet center this fall, fears for the center's future if Flynn's plans are approved by the board.

"I have firsthand knowledge of the ability, maturity and motivation required by the curriculum," he said. Abolishing the entrance exam "would essentially abolish the center as a whole."

Devine doesn't see it that way.

"Those standards can be met by those children (if) we give them those expectations," he said. "I don't think we can just say broadly that they will not meet our requirements or our standards." ■

57. Worcester(Mass.)Telegram & Gazette

06/12/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: LOCAL NEWS; Page B1

Biggest ever school budget wants more

By Clive McFarlane;
Telegram & Gazette Staff

WORCESTER - It was a time to bask in prosperity. It was a time to pinch pennies. It was a time to rejoice. It was a time to lament.

In short, last night's School Committee meeting was about the Worcester public schools' unveiling its largest school budget ever - while asking the state for even more.

"I am appreciative of the fact that our state legislators have worked to provide funding and support for the reform proposals implemented in the Worcester public schools," said Superintendent James L. Garvey in presenting the committee with a \$170 million school budget proposal.

The budget, which includes \$110 million from the state, will bring the school system close to the per-pupil funding level set for the district by the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, Garvey noted.

But despite the state's generosity, School Committee members found themselves soliciting the **Department of Education** for additional funding in order to keep the construction of a new Roosevelt Elementary School on schedule.

The school building project was approved by the state initially for \$15 million. But because of site construction problems, the cost has jumped to \$22.77

million - \$4 million more than the \$18.7 million maximum reimbursement allowed under the state's school building assistance program.

The School Committee is now asking the state to change the maximum allowable reimbursement from \$18.7 million to \$22.7 million.

School Committee members Philip J. Niddrie and Brian A. O'Connell said there could likely be delays in the project if the state does not act promptly on the request.

"The timetable was very ambitious from the beginning," O'Connell said. "There was very little room for construction problems. A delay of even three months could put us in the next school year."

Also last night, committee members began to tweak the proposed budget for savings that could possibly go toward programs of their choice.

So far, however, they have only been able to cut \$100,000 from the proposed \$5.5 million transportation budget, and that cut came with warnings of reduced bus service next year.

Committee members also began to look closely at Garvey's alternative programs for at-risk students. According to the budget, the cost of these programs is climbing, sometimes dramatically.

The cost of providing alternative education to regular-education students who are expelled from school is going

from \$300,000 a year to \$448,000, for example.

One reason for the increase, Garvey said, is that principals are exercising their rights under state law to expel or suspend students charged with or convicted of a felony, even if the offense occurred outside of school.

According to the administration, 20 students were suspended or expelled under this law last year. That number has since climbed to 48, and school officials are expecting the number to continue to grow.

In other business, committee members were told that the cost of cleaning up the recent storm damage to Grafton Street School stands at just over \$20,000, with more work to be done.

Committee members were also told that it will cost approximately \$500,000 to repair the school, and that the repairs will be completed in time for the start of the next school year.

Also last night, the committee voted Garvey a 3 percent salary increase and recognized Louise M. Palanzi, a Granite Street School teacher, as Worcester "Teacher of the Year."

Claire Cunningham of Tatnuck Magnet School and Susan Spellane of City View School were recognized as runners-up.

Voke goes "public"

WORCESTER - It may be a first-time event: The Worcester School Committee

has honored Vocational School students.

The City Council voted to put both systems under one umbrella July 1.

Deputy School Superintendent James A. Caradonio said as far as he knows this is the first time vocational students' achievements have been recognized by the public schools.

The students won gold, silver and bronze medals or became state officers at the statewide competition of the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America.

Those honored were: Krystle Bourbeau, Trung Cao, Heather Denaris, Rachel Howell, Miquel Torres, Matthew Cooke, Mark Caribo, Jessica Simmons,

Matthew Atkins, Yameka Leon, Shanique Gravely, Kelly Agostinelli, Yaritza Rosado, Angela Billings, Emily Northway, Marc Groccia, Trung Cao, Laura Holbrook, Daniel Bethiaume, Wanda Velasquez and Melissa Ponusky.■

58. Worcester(Mass.)Telegram & Gazette

06/12/98; Edition: ALL; Section: NEWS; Page A1

Worcester teacher works overtime for state tests

By Mark Melady;
Telegram & Gazette Staff

WORCESTER - James E. McDermott helped write the statewide standards for teaching English in public schools, as well as the test to assess how those standards have been taught and learned.

Now McDermott, the language arts liaison for the city's public schools, is going to help decipher the handwriting of fourth-, eighth- and 10th-graders and arbitrate the responses to questions for which there are no right or wrong answers.

"What can I say? I'm a glutton for punishment," said McDermott, an English teacher in Worcester since 1969. "But I was in it at the beginning, and I just wanted to see this through, to see how it came out."

McDermott will be an assistant chief reader during the three weeks the open-ended questions - essay responses from 210,000 students - are pored over by graders. They will be sitting around tables in July and August in Holyoke, Mansfield and in Worcester at Holy Cross College.

The much heralded Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems tests in math, science and English were taken this spring.

Advanced Systems of Dover, N.H., hired by the state Department of Education to develop the tests, will score the multiple choice questions.

McDermott was on an advisory committee of Massachusetts school administrators that wrote the open response questions and developed basic scoring guidelines to evaluate the answers.

The essay responses - 22 for fourth- and eighth-graders and 30 for 10th-graders - will be read and scored by Massachusetts teachers hired for \$500 a week.

Each of the three parts of the test includes written responses. In Parts 1 and

2, brief essay questions ask for analysis and argument related to a piece of writing in the test.

"We want the students to form an opinion and back it up," McDermott said in an interview this week. "It's a fundamental part of education."

Part 3 is a long essay. Students had 45 minutes to compose a response and 45 minutes to rewrite and edit it, although the teacher could allow more time.

"It's wide open, and that scares people," McDermott said.

Fourth-graders were asked to write a letter to third-graders describing life in the fourth grade.

Eighth-graders were asked if a panel of adults should censor violence on television for viewers under age 16.

Tenth-graders were given the first paragraph of Flannery O'Connor's short story "Good Country People," and asked to predict what would happen to the characters.

PSYCHIC OR IMAGINATIVE?

"That one's drawing ire," McDermott noted. "One woman said you'd have to be a psychic to answer the question. I guess to her only psychics have imagination."

The essays will be graded using six-point and four-point scales. The six-point scale will be used to rate how well the student develops, focuses and logically supports an argument and uses subtleties such as inference and varied sentence structure. Grammar, spelling and usage will be rated on the four-point scale.

Each response will be read by two teachers. The final grade will be a compilation, with a maximum score of 20.

McDermott said a difference of more than one point between the two readers' scores would require a third reading.

"If there's still a problem, then it comes to me," McDermott said. After that, it would go to the chief reader. Anything unresolved at that point would

be taken up by officials from the state Education Department or Advanced Systems.

"I'm going to always give the benefit of doubt to the student," McDermott said. "I'm going to do everything I can to make sure the student gets a good shake."

HANDWRITING FACTOR

The essays are expected to take graders an average of four minutes to read, McDermott said. However, because the responses are handwritten, one of the great unknowns facing the graders will be the quality of the students' handwriting.

"Neatness doesn't count, but it does," McDermott said. "If you have trouble making out poor handwriting, it's only human nature that it would bother you. I told the kids to print if they were concerned about their handwriting. The idea is to see what students can do rather than what they cannot do."

McDermott was on the original 26-member statewide committee that drafted the teaching frameworks for language arts for kindergarten through 12th grade. After two years, a mountain of feedback from parent-teacher groups and several drafts, the work was found wanting by the state Board of Education and its chairman, John R. Silber.

"They didn't like what we'd done because it wasn't in the classical mold," McDermott said. "We came up with an integrated approach to teaching English that combined reading, writing, speaking, listening and presenting."

Though innovative, the approach was strange to many people, McDermott said. "It was not the traditional classical approach of composition, literature, media and language."

RECONSTITUTED COMMITTEE

Silber named six new members to the committee, including two Harvard University faculty members and a Cambridge writer.

"We had worked so hard to represent every nook and cranny in the state, and

the six new members all came from the Boston side of (Route) 128," McDermott said. "Because of the way it happened, everyone was a little antagonistic. The first meeting was awful."

McDermott said the final draft, which established 28 language arts learning

McDermott said the MCAS language arts test reflects the 28 learning standards.

"There's not a question on the test that does not come out of the framework," he said.

PASSING GRADE

The grading will be completed by mid-August, but the scores won't be available to teachers until November,

standards, preserved the original committee's core philosophy while incorporating the traditional aspects of composition, reading and literature.

"It took a few meetings, but we got over our human foibles and did what was right for the kids," McDermott said. "In McDermott said.

The state has not determined what constitutes a passing grade for the first year. Passing the 10th-grade test will be a high school graduation requirement in 2003.

"It's going to be tough for teachers to grade tests, not knowing what is a passing score," McDermott said.

The test would have been difficult for

the end, we came up with a stronger document.

"But the truth is," he said, "these standards have been implemented by good teachers forever."

a Boston University sophomore, McDermott said.

"It's a tough exam," he added. "It's made all of us reassess what we do in education. For the students it's like sending them out on a mountain to ski by themselves for the first time. A lot of them are going to fall, and we have to be ready to help them up."■

59. The Sacramento Bee

06/12/98; Edition: METRO FINAL; Section: MAIN NEWS; Page A4

STATE VOWS CLEANUP OF ADULT EDUCATION 'MESS'

By Deb Kollars Bee Staff Writer

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin and members of her staff pledged Thursday to review past problems and provide more careful monitoring of a state adult education program that is under investigation by the federal government.

"This department had some very serious problems," Eastin said, adding that the adult education office now has a new lineup of administrators to address the situation. "They are good managers who will clean this mess up."

Eastin's comments came during a state Board of Education meeting in downtown Sacramento Thursday that was tinged with politics and emotion. During the meeting, the board discussed publicly for the first time a current investigation by the U.S. Department of Education and the FBI into federally funded programs administered by the state that provide language and citizenship classes for immigrants.

The state Department of Education doles out about \$38 million a year in federal money to community-based

organizations, schools and other groups providing adult literacy services.

The investigation is focusing on whether 10 community-based groups serving Latino communities in Central and Southern California misused the federal money, and whether the state Education Department provided adequate oversight of the money.

In recent years, the groups in question collectively have received between \$4 million and \$5.5 million a year in federal funds, said Douglas Stone, director of communications for the state Department of Education.

The federal agencies served subpoenas in April on the state Education Department, requesting documents relating to the 10 groups for the years 1994 through 1997, said Henry Der, state deputy superintendent for educational equity, access and support. The department is cooperating with the investigation, he said.

The U.S. Department of Education would not comment.

Der said Thursday that the state Department of Education had to navigate

some tricky political waters recently, particularly with the Legislature, in administering the federal grants for literacy services to immigrants.

Der acknowledged that the department had been lax in monitoring the flow of money and student progress in some of the programs. The department is now in the process of reviewing records on the 10 organizations, he said. In addition, his staff will be making site visits and is now requiring all providers to submit completed auditing forms before receiving their final payments for the current year.

"We have had personnel changes. . . . The situation will be remedied," Stone said.

At Thursday's hearing, several board members were critical of the department's role in the adult education funding problems. They cited internal staff memos going back several months in which staffers raised questions about possible fraud.■

60. The Florida Times-Union

06/12/98; Edition: GEORGIA; Section: METRO; Page B-1

Failing test derails plans

No diploma could mean no college

By James Salzer
Times-Union staff writer

ATLANTA — Mary Banks says her daughter Julie was devastated when she

narrowly failed the science portion of the state graduation test this spring.

Now the Rincon mother is upset that Julie Banks, an honor student eligible for a HOPE scholarship, can't get into

State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko said yesterday that Georgia public colleges ought to consider accepting top students like Julie Banks who failed the test.

"Colleges should look at transcripts, SAT scores, and the level of classes taken {in high school}," Schrenko said. "They shouldn't automatically be disqualified.

"I think they should consider admitting these students. Some people have test phobia, some don't do well on multiple-choice tests, they do better on essays."

Educators like Schrenko have been flooded with questions in recent weeks as seniors began realizing they would not get a diploma because they didn't pass every section of the graduation test.

Arlethia Perry-Johnson, spokeswoman for the University System of Georgia, said students must have a diploma or pass the General Education Development test to enter one of the state's 34 public colleges.

Students with good grades who failed a section of the graduation exam could take the GED test and enter college if they pass, but they would be ineligible for a full HOPE scholarship.

They need a diploma to get a HOPE, which pays full college tuition, fees and books. With a GED, they are eligible for \$500 a year.

Steve Tompkins of the state Student Finance Commission's HOPE division said students with a GED can get a full scholarship after completing a year of

college because she doesn't have a diploma.

"She wants to be a doctor, a college with a B average. The HOPE would be retroactive, minus the \$500.

At least for this year's seniors who failed the test, that may be their only hope.

The state school board decided Wednesday against waiving the graduation test requirement, but Chairman Johnny Isakson said the Department of Education would send out letters to colleges, explaining why students didn't get diplomas.

It's still not known how many students did not pass all portions of the test, but state officials say 5,351 students — about 8.3 percent — failed the science portion in five attempts.

Only about 6.5 percent of last year's graduating class repeatedly failed other portions of the test. Science was added as a requirement for this year's graduating class.

High schoolers usually begin taking the test as juniors. They have four more chances to pass sections they fail before graduation time their senior year.

Those who still haven't passed by graduation can take it again in August.

However, that's too late for some students to start college in the fall.

Banks said her daughter, who has attended South Effingham High, passed the graduation test on the first try in every section but science. She came within six points or less of passing the science test on four occasions, her mother said.

After the last failure, Banks said, "Her

pediatrician. That's all she's wanted to be," Mary Banks said. "Now I'm afraid she won't go {to college}."

ego is about gone. She was absolutely scared to death, because this was it."

Julie Banks planned to attend Armstrong Atlantic State University this fall. But if she tries the test again, she won't find out the results until the day after classes start, Banks said.

Schrenko is somewhat puzzled by the problems with the science section of the test because Georgia students did well this year on that part of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The superintendent said the board is discussing granting diplomas with "restrictions," a kind of asterisk. They could be used for students who meet other requirements but don't pass the test.

She said by next year, the new diploma may be in place.

That, however, will raise questions about whether the Department of Education is lessening the meaning of a diploma, or whether such a degree will be good enough to earn HOPEs and college admission.

However, Schrenko said colleges already should be looking at not only test scores, but what kind of classes students are taking in high school. A 'C' grade in some tough classes might be worth more than an 'A' in easy ones, she said.

Because of the adherence to test scores and grade-point-averages, she said, "They are letting these students in who we don't certify as being ready for college."■

61. The San Diego Union-Tribune

06/12/98; Edition: 2 3 4 5; Section: LOCAL; Page B-2

2 districts ordering Spanish textbooks

By Anna Cearley
STAFF WRITER

Despite a new state law that places students with limited-English skills in a one-year English-language immersion course, at least two area school districts are ordering reading materials in Spanish.

Escondido Union elementary and middle school district placed orders for about \$230,000 in Spanish-language books for kindergartners through fifth-graders to be used during the one-year period.

And the Oceanside Unified district, which is set to approve an alternative bilingual education program for three "There is no way to transition a child if

years, will be placing orders for an unspecified number of books.

The quandary over textbooks is a fallout from voter approval of Proposition 227. It converts bilingual programs, which can stretch from four to six years, to a one-year crash course in learning English. After the year, students would be placed in regular classes taught in English.

But the initiative is unclear on how much Spanish or other non-English languages can be used in the classroom, according to area administrators. The law allows parents to opt out of the one-year you are using Spanish textbooks," said

program for a bilingual education program, which could raise the demand for Spanish-language books. Those factors have administrators guessing about the need for books in Spanish.

"We won't finalize the order until the state department (of education) provides us with clearly defined instructions," said Sue Coyle, assistant superintendent of educational services with the Escondido Union district. Backers of the initiative to dismantle bilingual education said that using such books may violate the new law.

Sheri Annis, spokeswoman for the

campaign that sponsored the initiative. "You are taught English by learning in English, and if there is Spanish and English in the textbooks, we would want them to concentrate on the English."

The district is ordering the books primarily for kindergartners and first-graders, said Coyle. Superintendent Nicolas Retana said these students will need the most help since they enter the district with the most limited-English skills.

Trustees backed the superintendent's recommendation during the school board meeting Monday night, voting 5-0 to place the orders.

Despite pleas from some parents to proceed with bilingual programs and to purchase reading materials for all grades,

Retana said the district will have to comply with the law and that he hopes the bilingual material can be used to assist the language learners.

"Teachers and principals have to realize we are going to shift and the state will give us some direction," he said.

Coyle said the books are the Spanish equivalent of English books used for language and reading instruction, and they could be used as supplementary materials as students learn English.

Many districts in the state, such as the elementary and middle school Escondido district, have already placed orders for Spanish textbooks with the understanding the orders would be renegotiated if the initiative passed.

The initiative provides a waiver option

for students to be placed in regular bilingual programs at their parents' request. District officials said they are waiting for additional information from the state on how that would work. The number of those who seek waivers would also affect the need for additional bilingual textbooks.

About 20 Hispanic parents attended the Escondido Union school district meeting to voice their support for bilingual education and to try to persuade trustees to proceed with purchasing the materials.

"I don't have any complaints about this program and I would like my children to continue in it," said Lilia Alvarez, who has a child in kindergarten and another in first grade. ■

62. Newark Star-Ledger

06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: PERSPECTIVE; Page 010

Black graduate students in sciences still scarce

Those who succeed say financial strain and bias discourage many after college

By Jayne Noble Suhler and Ed Timms

Ashley Scott beat the odds: He's one of only a few hundred African-Americans pursuing doctoral work in the sciences.

"This is just the beginning of a long mountain I have to climb," said Scott, 25, who is working on a doctorate in chemistry at the University of Texas at Dallas. "There are going to be people who don't like me coming into this field. . . who will scrutinize my every move."

Most African-Americans never get as far as Scott. Whites and foreign students dominate most science, math and engineering graduate programs. University faculties are still mostly white.

By definition, minorities start off at a numerical disadvantage. But that alone doesn't explain the disproportionately low number who are enrolled in graduate programs - especially African-Americans.

Overall, minorities are less likely to have the money to finance a graduate school education and exposure to the kind of rigorous scholastic preparation needed to excel in science. Some promising minorities with undergraduate degrees are diverted from graduate school by lucrative jobs in the private sector.

And there is another, more disturbing "One of the real sadnesses of affirmative action is that it really does benefit the middle class," said Rodolfo de la Garza, who teaches government at the University of Texas at Austin. "I know of

explanation.

"There definitely is a bias by many scholars who feel that minorities . . . cannot do science," said Arthur Walker, a physicist and the only black science professor on the faculty of Stanford University's school of humanities and science.

Scott said that while he was an undergraduate at the College of Charleston in Charleston, S.C., an adviser suggested he find another major.

"He didn't think I was going to be able to finish" a chemistry degree, he said.

"As soon as he said that, I told him, 'Thank you very much,' and I advised myself for the next three years," said Scott. "I was the only black to graduate in the chemistry department in 1996."

Scott believes blacks and Hispanics do not enter graduate programs because they are discouraged along the way, especially in upper-level science classes.

"When you walk into a study group, the subject would change; you can tell you're not wanted there," he said. "There is no one to relate to."

Compounding the problems for minority students today is a nationwide backlash against affirmative action in higher education. Several recent polls show some colleagues who demand that their children get all kinds of perks out of affirmative action. My response is, 'If anybody in the world should create an environment that will privilege children,

have documented the anger of whites and the perception that minorities are prospering at their expense. California has rolled back programs in higher education and Texas is under a court order that bans race-based college admissions.

As a result, both states have seen a precipitous drop in enrollment among blacks and Hispanics, particularly in graduate programs and law and medical schools. At the same time, enrollment among some Asian groups and noncitizens is on the rise in some fields.

For many years, some universities, foundations, government institutions and private industry have supported outreach programs seeking to bring minority students into the science disciplines. But court decisions also have hobbled some of those programs, as well as race-based scholarships.

Money is a big issue for many minority students. Some complain that even race-based scholarships, if not also need-based, tend to help middle-class minority students who had better educational opportunities through secondary school - to the exclusion of underprivileged minorities who need help most.

it's you."

Sometimes, disadvantaged students go wanting because they are unaware that scholarships may be available.

"More educated parents are aware of

opportunities," said Harvard professor of social policy William Junius Wilson.

"There are many very capable students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds that just aren't aware of the scholarship opportunities."

Statistically, black and Hispanic students are more likely than whites to come from lower economic backgrounds. And they are more likely to take out loans to help finance their undergraduate education.

Scott, who grew up in a working-class family and attended a racially diverse Charleston high school, said many of his friends have felt pressured to go to work as soon as they get out of college.

"Because of their family background and the disadvantages they've had, they really feel like once they get out of undergraduate (school), they really have to start working and help the family," he said. "Graduate school is too big of a sacrifice."

Scott's mother did not go to college, and his father, a construction worker, attended a technical school. But they instilled in him a passion for education.

He played high school football and received two athletic scholarships - to Georgia Tech and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. A back injury prevented him from playing college ball and, because his parents could not pay for his education, Scott took out federal low-income loans. He also worked to make up the difference: construction jobs, fixing cars and even bagging groceries.

Until the recent court decisions

apparently discouraged students, law schools, medical schools and graduate business programs traditionally had an easier time attracting minority applicants than other graduate programs because they offered the potential of greater financial reward.

Historically, African-Americans "have pursued degrees in which there is a place for them in the economy," said Morris A. Graves of Stanford University.

Similarly, many students with an undergraduate degree in science or engineering can earn more in the private sector than they would in academia after going to school several more years and earning a doctorate.

"When you come out of undergraduate school with this load of debt, you don't have the luxury of facing five to eight more years of study as a graduate student and then moving on to a position that pays at best a middle-class wage," said Nell Painter, director of African American Studies at Princeton University. "If you spend three years in law school, you go and make more than a tenured professor right away."

While American minority students may see little incentive in getting a doctoral degree, it can be very lucrative for foreign students. They often can earn far more in the United States than at home, even if they stay in academia. Some experts said that such students also are appealing to American businesses, because they are willing to work for a lower salary than Americans.

Many noncitizens come to doctoral programs much better prepared than their

American counterparts because they are exposed to advanced math and sciences courses at a very young age, said Bill Perry, dean of faculty at Texas A&M University.

"A career in science and mathematics is already lost by the time students enter high school . . . if they haven't received adequate training," said Walker, the Stanford physicist. "Sometimes people can catch up, and it's possible to do it, but it's tough."

The only way to truly level the playing field is to improve the educational opportunities for young American minorities, say many educators and students.

"This isn't going to change until people not only from the universities but from the community go out to (elementary and high) schools, talk about their experiences in higher education, become mentors," said 27-year-old Andrew Garza, who is pursuing a doctorate in higher education administration from Texas Tech University. He said that although his department is fairly diverse, some departments, including engineering and math, have few, if any, minority faculty members or graduate students.

Scott said he and a friend, who also is black and working on his doctoral degree in chemical engineering, would like to start a program to encourage minorities in the sciences.

"We keep saying we have to get back out there and let young kids see our faces and hear our stories," he said. ■

63. Allentown Morning Call

06/13/98; Edition: THIRD; Section: LOCAL/REGION; Page B07

ALLENTOWN PROBES TUITION-DODGING

STUDENTS SUPERINTENDENT TELLS BOARD SHE'S CHECKING OUT TIPS ABOUT CHILDREN OUTSIDE CITY IGNORING RULES TO ATTEND THE DISTRICT.

By SUSAN SNYDER

The Morning Call

Allentown Superintendent Diane Scott said she is investigating two cases of high school students improperly attending the district.

The investigation came to light during a heated discussion among board members on whether to launch a pilot program allowing volunteers to move their children to less crowded schools instead of forcing moves. The district plans to move nearly 70 students to new

She said she received a tip from School Board President James LeVan that two students — one from Allen and one from Dieruff — lived outside the city, attended city schools and did not pay the required tuition, which amounts schools in the fall, including 17 from Union Terrace to Muhlenberg Elementary.

A group of parents from Union Terrace who object to the move again urged the board to try a pilot volunteer program. Union Terrace Parent Teacher

to about \$6,000 a year. The students have since graduated, she said.

"If I can prove it, I'll be charging them tuition," Scott said in an interview after a school board meeting Thursday night.

Association President Lisa Higgins Pechter offered a revised proposal on how to launch a volunteer program.

Board members, however, voted 6-3 to keep the current system of forced moves intact. Directors Sandra Stecker, Dick Nepon and Peter Deringer voted

against keeping the system. Directors Robert Agonis, Janice Williams, Carol Watters, Carol Budick, Vice President Patricia Hoffman and LeVan voted in favor.

LeVan, however, said he did want a pilot program, but believed it was not up to the school board to vote for it. He said it was within the administration's power to try a pilot.

Scott disagreed.

She said administrators have chosen not to make exceptions or conduct a volunteer pilot program largely because it would be unfair to the hundreds of students who were forced to move to new schools in previous years.

Unless the board orders a pilot volunteer program, the administration will continue its policy of forced moves, she said.

LeVan said if the administration intends to force moves, then it should make sure that every student is attending his or her designated school. He asked

the administration to do a review of every pupil in the district.

"If it's the choice of the board to have us spend our time doing that, we'll do it," Scott said, asking for a vote on the matter. "We need direction if you want us to investigate the residency of every student in the school system."

LeVan then said he knew of instances where the rules are not being followed but did not want to elaborate because it "would be an embarrassment to this district."

Scott responded that LeVan recently made her aware of the two high school cases and that she is investigating.

LeVan objected to Scott's request for a vote on his direction that the residency of every student be looked at. All he's doing is asking administrators to make sure the current policy is being enforced, he said.

If the board and administrators believe a vote is necessary to enforce policy, "it's a sorry day in my book," he said.

School employees investigate pupil

residency when a complaint is made, Scott said. Employees have visited residences to confirm that a student lives there, she said. And employees have discovered some students who were wrongly attending a school within the district. The students were ordered to return to their home school, she said.

"We do whatever is in our power," Scott said.

The two high school cases are the first complaints of students who live outside the district illegally attending school in the city, she said.

If a student moves out of the district, he or she must transfer to the new school immediately or begin paying tuition, Scott said.

She encourages people to contact central administration if they know of any cases of students improperly attending a school. Scott's number is 821-2621.

"We don't want that to happen," she said. ■

64. The New Orleans Times-Picayune

06/12/98; Edition: ST. TAMMANY; Section: METRO; Page B1

SO MANY TEACHERS, SO FEW JOB OPENINGS

By STACEY MacGLASHAN
St. Tammany bureau

The sentiments expressed Wednesday afternoon by prospective St. Tammany teacher Stephanie Bosco likely were shared by many others who joined her at the school system's ninth annual job placement fair.

"I'll take anything," said Bosco, a Lacombe resident seeking to teach any grade between first and eighth. "I don't want to be working at The Gap."

The recent Southeastern Louisiana University graduate was one of 383 applicants interviewing this week for 131 available positions throughout the parish. Job seekers gathered Wednesday morning for orientation, then signed up for as many interviews with as many principals as they wished to squeeze in before the fair ends this afternoon.

While attendance - about 64 percent of

A growth spurt years ago inspired local school officials to seek an alternative to one-on-one interviewing to fill numerous teaching vacancies, Jabbia said. East Baton Rouge had a job fair that attracted attention, and St. Tammany now follows a similar pattern of visiting universities across the state, screening applications and making invitations to the event.

the 600 people invited - was similar to that at previous job fairs, the number of openings was slightly lower this year, said Pete Jabbia, the St. Tammany School Board's personnel director.

"We didn't grow as much this past year as we have in the past," he said.

Twelve of the parish's 49 public schools are posting no openings for next year, and others filled all their vacancies through transfers from within the system, Jabbia said.

With the midafternoon heat and humidity undoubtedly taking their toll Wednesday, Sherra Moody was getting a bit discouraged.

"I'm beginning to think this is a waste of time," said the high school English teacher relocating from San Antonio. "There are too many people and too few jobs."

Moody, who said she stood in line

"This gives people the opportunity to schedule interviews with any school that has a vacancy in their certification area," Jabbia said. "Before they might have been limited to one or two schools."

Any certified teacher, whether graduating from college, relocating from another state or seeking to move from another parish, may apply to be invited to the job fair, Jabbia said.

with five other people seeking the same job, planned to interview for all four openings matching her certification.

But at the encouragement of school officials, Moody also said she would consider taking a special education job and going back to school to earn a related degree.

Special education and science are St. Tammany's greatest areas of need for teachers, Jabbia said.

"It's not that we have a teacher shortage, we just have an imbalance," he said. "We don't have teachers where we need them. . . . The universities are not graduating people into those fields."

Meanwhile, prospective elementary school teachers annually attend the job fair in droves. This year about 200 such applicants are vying for about 25 positions, Jabbia said.

Principals must make hiring recommendations within a week, and administrators will start calling applicants within two.

While the market is tight and encountering hundreds of potential competitors can be intimidating, applicants overall found the job fair a positive experience.

"It's fabulous," said Julia Ann

Hodgson, a Madisonville resident certified as a high school business teacher and guidance counselor. "It's very well organized and offers the opportunity to get a lot of work done in a short time."

Jason Mills, who scheduled only one interview for a position in the talented art and theater program, said he liked the

approach.

"It's very quick," he said. "You're in and out and that's it."

Bosco planned 12 interviews over three days and called the event "the fairest way to do things in this parish."

"It allows all the applicants the opportunity to seek employment," she

said. "In the past, the jobs went to people who knew they were available."

And though the fair annually means three grueling days for them, principals also like the system, Jabbia said.

"They know it's either this or all summer long we'll be sending them people," he said. ■

65. Tulsa World

06/13/98; Edition: FINAL HOME EDITION; Section: NEWS; Page 14

Sperry schools is latest target of Title IX lawsuit

By DAVID HARPER

Sperry Public Schools was sued Friday in federal court in the seventh Title IX lawsuit to be filed in Oklahoma.

Title IX is the federal law requiring equity in boys' and girls' sports in public schools and universities.

Similar suits against school districts in Tulsa, Owasso, Inola, Norman and Noble have been settled.

Plaintiffs' attorney Sam Schiller said Friday that settlement discussions with officials in Guymon are continuing.

Friday's civil lawsuit was filed in Tulsa by the parents of five female students in Sperry.

It alleges that Sperry Public Schools has intentionally denied its female students an equal opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics.

The plaintiffs allege that Sperry Public Schools has discriminated against girls in equipment and supplies, scheduling of games and practice times, travel, opportunity to receive qualified coaching, assignment and compensation of coaches, provision of locker rooms and facilities both for practice and games and publicity

given to sports.

The lawsuit also claims that Sperry Superintendent Jerry Burd has consistently refused to sponsor additional participation opportunities for female athletes.

It says Burd has refused to remedy the alleged unequal treatment and benefits "despite the numerous complaints of named plaintiffs and other parents and athletes."

However, Burd said Friday that no one has complained to him about any supposed Title IX violations.

Burd said he did not have any idea that a lawsuit was about to be filed.

"It caught me off guard," Burd said. "I don't understand."

Burd said, "We're very proud of our girls' athletics."

Burd said he contacted counsel after he was informed about the lawsuit Friday afternoon.

He says he anticipates that Sperry Public Schools will be represented by Tulsa lawyer Karen Long.

Long also has been the defense

attorney in the other Title IX lawsuits filed in the Northern District of Oklahoma: Tulsa, Inola and Owasso.

The Sperry case has been assigned to U.S. District Judge Sven Erik Holmes.

Holmes has presided over both the Tulsa and Inola Title IX cases.

Schiller and Ray Yasser have been the plaintiffs' attorneys in all the Title IX lawsuits in Oklahoma.

Yasser said Friday that some school districts in Oklahoma have taken note of the publicity surrounding other Title IX cases and have begun good faith efforts to comply with the law without the necessity of a lawsuit being filed.

But he claimed that some school systems "just don't get it."

Yasser said he was contacted by Sperry parents in April.

Schiller and Yasser said there appears to be a "second wave" of Title IX suits on the horizon.

Yasser said he anticipates three new Title IX lawsuits being filed this summer: one in Oklahoma and two in other states. ■

66. The Cleveland Plain Dealer

06/12/98; Edition: FINAL / ALL; Section: NATIONAL; Page 1A

GRADUATES DON'T HAVE RIGHT STUFF FOR WORK

STUDY DOCUMENTS OHIO HIGH SCHOOL SKILL DEFICIENCIES

By MARY BETH LANE
PLAIN DEALER BUREAU

Ameritech Ohio President Jacqueline F. Woods remembers the difficulty her company had three years ago in finding skilled workers to hire.

It wasn't just Cleveland. Ameritech faced the same challenge in other Ohio cities as it tried to hire 1,000 workers to replace newly retired employees.

"In Cleveland, we tried to hire 200

people in a short time," Woods recalled. "We had to interview 2,000 to find 200. It was very similar in Columbus. And the people who were hired were not doing well in the training. They were not prepared on skills or didn't understand the workplace operation. There was a disconnect."

So, Woods was not surprised at the results of a study, released yesterday, that showed only one in 14 Ohio high school

seniors was prepared to learn and perform most skilled, entry-level jobs. Of the 100,000-plus students who were seniors in the 1996-97 school year, 14,474 from 119 high schools participated in the random-sample study.

The Ohio Business Roundtable and the Ohio Department of Education paid for the \$100,000 study, performed by ACT Inc. of Iowa.

ACT tested the seniors' basic skill

levels in applied mathematics, reading for information, applied technology and locating information. ACT, best known for administering a college entrance exam, then compared the test results with the skills required in such career areas as business/operations, science, technical, arts and social service.

Among the key findings: Just one in 14 seniors met the standards in all four skill areas. The seniors were strongest in applied mathematics and reading for information. They performed poorly in applied technology and locating information - in part, the study said, because those skills are not now included in most students' curriculum.

Also, seniors headed to college did better in the tests than those who were not. Urban seniors consistently scored lower than suburban and rural seniors.

"Ohio has a significant skills gap today," said Ohio Business Roundtable President Richard Stoff, who released the study yesterday with state schools Superintendent John Goff. "The skills do

not match the demands of the workforce. This skill gap is Ohio's greatest economic challenge today."

Although Stoff and Goff portrayed the study results as sobering, they emphasized that the study was not meant to bash Ohio public schools but to help in the debate over how schools can better prepare students for the workplace.

"This study is going to be the beginning of a cooperative effort to close that gap," Goff said. "It's not education-bashing. It's saying the workplace will require a different person than we've been producing in the public schools."

Gov. George V. Voinovich's spokesman, Michael Dawson, said the study shows that Ohio was wise to ratchet up academic requirements. Last year, the governor and legislature enacted an academic-accountability law that, among other things, increases the minimum credits needed to graduate from 18 to 21 and imposes a 10th-grade proficiency test - up from the ninth-grade proficiency test

- as the exit exam students must pass to graduate as of 2005.

"It shows we're on the right path in Ohio in terms of raising standards and demanding more of our schools and students so they are prepared to enter the work force," Dawson said.

At the same time, the study is a wake-up call, he said, adding, "It will demonstrate to parents and kids how competitive the workplace is becoming. The knowledge and skills they get in school are extremely important to their future."

Thomas Saterfiel, senior vice president of ACT, said Ohio should be congratulated as the first state to do such a study, documenting the gap between what seniors know and what they need to know to succeed.

Ameritech's Woods said she welcomed the study.

"Facilitating the conversation between business and educators is difficult," she said. "The report puts the dialogue in a factual-based context." ■

67. The Detroit News

06/12/98; Edition: Final; Section: Metro; Page C1

Retirements open more teaching jobs **Schools find qualified, eager, young applicants.**

By John U. Bacon / The Detroit News

Twenty years ago, it was almost impossible to find a teaching job in Metro Detroit. This spring, the schools are looking for candidates as aggressively

When the Grosse Pointe district offered a buyout three years ago, 104 of their 550 teachers took it. Not surprisingly, the majority of those who accepted were experienced teachers.

"With age comes wisdom, and you lose some real good folks," said Chris Fenton, the district's assistant superintendent. "We had a lot of dedicated, hard-working teachers, and you're sad to see many of them go."

Fenton added, however, that Grosse Pointe has had no difficulty finding qualified, eager young teachers.

Michigan pays well — the statewide average salary is fifth highest in the nation. In Wayne County, the average is \$48,519, in Macomb it's \$54,599, and in Oakland, it's \$53,853.

Some certification programs, such as Michigan State's, require teachers to

as the candidates are seeking jobs.

This year alone, 7,000 of Michigan's 88,000 teachers retired, continuing a trend under way for almost a decade.

While there may be spot shortages, the complete a four-year degree, then finish a one-year internship to get certified. Many districts have noticed a marked rise in the caliber of candidates who've had to pass the tougher course to certification.

"They come to us highly trained and highly skilled," said Larry Wesley, executive director of human resources for the Rochester school district.

According to Wesley, it's not just Rochester that's enjoying this boom. At meetings of the Michigan Association of School Personnel Administrators, "we all just rave about the quality of applicants we're getting. I've been doing this for 28 years, so I'm not given to gushing," he said.

Wesley has, however, noticed a shift in the demographics of those who leave the district. Rochester loses about 40 of its 780 teachers each year, but only about

Michigan Department of Education says most districts aren't having much trouble signing up new teachers.

15 of those retire for good. The rest leave teaching mid-career to pursue more lucrative fields.

But one generation's famine is another's feast. The Livonia district had so many teachers sign on in the '60s, and so few students enroll in the '70s, that they could only hire four new teachers from 1980-1985. But as the flower-power teachers have begun to retire, and enrollment has increased, Livonia has hired about 70 new teachers a year in the past decade.

Said Ed Navoy, Livonia's director of personnel: "We're losing experience, but we're gaining enthusiasm."

The upshot: Another wave of teachers is building, one every bit as powerful as the first. ■

68. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

06/12/98; Edition: SOONER; Section: STATE; Page B-6

MILLIONS TO BE REBATED TO THOSE IN COLLEGE TUITION PREPAY PLAN

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thousands of families who have been saving for college through the Pennsylvania Tuition Account Program will receive refunds of as much as \$7,500 because fees they once paid are no longer necessary, state Treasurer Barbara Hafer announced yesterday.

"It's the right thing to do," Hafer said. "Every additional dollar we credit to an account will help a family meet its college savings goals."

The tuition account program, which started in 1993, allows participants to buy college tuition at today's rates - no matter how much tuition goes up by the time the child reaches college age. Anyone can open an account, and credits can be used to pay tuition at any accredited college, university, trade or technical school anywhere in the country.

Hafer said she would credit \$4.3

million worth of fees that 17,000 families paid into the program since it started.

Only a couple accounts will grow by \$7,500, but about 1,000 families will receive at least \$1,000 and more than 7,000 accounts will get at least a \$100 refund.

All premiums will be retroactively abolished, and Hafer said she did not expect they would be imposed again. The fund is "solidly in the black," she said.

Until now, when families bought their tuition credits, the fees were charged in addition to each school's actual price for tuition. The program's actuary, Ernst & Young, thought the premiums were necessary to ensure the solvency of the fund, treasury spokesman Robert Gentzel said.

The amount of the fees changed from year to year, because they were based on stock market predictions and anticipated

tuition inflation. They varied from 2 percent to 20 percent, based on the school of choice and the stock market's performance.

The actuary "expected more inflation, and the stock market was not expected to do as well as it did," Gentzel said. "This created extra money. It's not something that normally happens. This is a windfall for these people."

The number of accounts affected and the total amount of the refunds for them in six Western Pennsylvania counties are: Allegheny, 1,832 accounts, \$427,711; Armstrong, 73 accounts, \$10,642; Beaver, 195 accounts, \$53,653;

Butler, 269 accounts, \$48,850; Washington, 331 accounts, \$60,552; Westmoreland, 691 accounts, \$177,183. ■

69. Philadelphia Inquirer

June 15, 1998

Clerics demand school equity

A city group is trying to spur congregants into action. Suburbs spend far more than Phila., its members point out.

By Angela Couloumbis

INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

They've read the reports and heard the accounts.

They've waded through the numbers and winced over their meaning.

And so yesterday, they came together before the pulpit to say, with one collective voice, no more. No more gaps. No more disparity. No more tolerance.

"Public education is the bedrock of our community," said the Rev. Robert P. Shine Sr., pastor of the Berachah Baptist Church in the West Oak Lane section of Philadelphia and a member of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia, which represents 400 churches. "It is our sustenance. When are our state legislators going to say it is time to fund all our public schools equally?"

The same question was posed yesterday to the group's 300,000 congregants in 400 churches across the city as part of "Education Sunday," a day designated by the clergy to put out the call for rank-and-file citizens to stand up

for public education.

The churches circulated a petition with two basic, unequivocal demands: that all students, whether in elementary, middle or high school, have access to the same educational opportunities, regardless of where they live, and that state and local officials support reforms for smaller class sizes, more textbooks, better teacher training, and programs aimed at increasing parental involvement.

"Our motto is, 'Spend to educate, not to incarcerate,'" Mr. Shine told about 100 congregants who gathered at Berachah for morning services. "Send a message to your legislators. Send a message that you will mobilize, that you will make equal funding for public education your number-one priority."

Yesterday's Education Sunday was the first in what will be a series of events scheduled this summer to support public education. It is part of a statewide campaign launched three weeks ago by the Pennsylvania Campaign for Public Education, a coalition of 30

organizations, including the Black Clergy, representing teachers, parents, students, churches, nonprofit and community groups, and organized labor.

Pointing out that suburban districts in the state annually spend about \$2,000 more per student than urban districts, the coalition aims to unite community leaders in key legislative districts throughout the state to shed light on the disparity and mobilize voters to make education their priority at the polls in 1998 and 1999.

"At the heart of this is an effort to get regular folk knowledgeable on the issues and the realities of public education in our state, so that they can then ask their legislators the right questions," said Sandra Dungee Glenn, president of the American Cities Foundation and chief organizer of the statewide campaign, which has its office in Center City.

And while the Philadelphia School District is one of the coalition's main focuses, it is not the only one. The campaign aims to shed light on battles being fought in lesser-known school

districts across the state, such as Lancaster's, that are struggling with the same sorts of problems.

A little more than three weeks ago, Philadelphia's schools, threatened by a state takeover, received letters of credit from PNC Bank and First Union Corp. The letters will make it easier for the school system to borrow \$250 million — money needed to meet the district's basic

operating expenses, such as payroll.

The school district has drawn national attention for a series of lawsuits alleging that Harrisburg's funding has been unfair to city schoolchildren, who are mostly poor and minority.

"It's not just a Philadelphia problem," Glenn said. "There are 200 underfunded school districts across the state."

Through events such as Education

Sunday, Glenn said, the coalition hopes to spread the word and get people reenergized over an issue that has been confined to legislative circles rather than grassroots organizations.

"People need to understand the magnitude of the problem," she said. "Only then can they bring change."■

70. The Dallas Morning News

06/12/98; Edition: HOME FINAL; Section: NEWS; Page 26A

Mauro says TEA ignoring class-size limits

Associated Press

AUSTIN - Democratic gubernatorial candidate Garry Mauro, promoting his proposal to borrow money from the state's public school trust fund to build classrooms, accused the Texas Education Agency on Thursday of ignoring state law limiting class size in the lower

"Most districts go to great lengths before they apply for a waiver. They really are truly hardship cases by the time they even apply," she said. "I don't know what could give him the idea we're ignoring it {the law}."

Karen Hughes, spokeswoman for Republican Gov. George W. Bush, said, "Garry Mauro is routinely ignoring the facts. The facts are that during the 1996-97 school year . . . the statewide average in Texas was 15.5 students per teacher {in kindergarten through 12th grade} which we think is a very good and low ratio."

Such an average would include the smallest school districts. There are 366 Texas school districts with fewer than 500 students and 579 with fewer than

grades.

TEA spokeswoman Debbie Graves Ratcliffe responded that agency officials "certainly do not ignore state law" limiting classes in kindergarten through fourth grade to 22 students per teacher.

The law, however, allows school districts to get TEA waivers from the 1,000, Mrs. Ratcliffe said.

Mr. Mauro has pointed to the Houston Independent School District, which faced problems with space and sought a class-size waiver for 1,244 classrooms. Mrs. Ratcliffe said the waiver was granted.

"When I'm governor, we'll build new schools and give the schoolchildren of Texas the small class sizes they deserve," Mr. Mauro said in a statement, which contended that the TEA has "routinely ignored" the class-size limit.

Mr. Mauro proposes paying for \$2 billion in new schools and technology by taking the money from the Permanent School Fund. The proposal would require a constitutional amendment approved by voters.

limit if they don't have enough teachers or classroom space, she said. The limit was established in 1984 education reforms.

According to the most recent figures available from the TEA, 301 school districts out of 1,043 received class size waivers in the 1996-97 school year.

Opponents say that by taking \$2 billion from the \$17 billion fund, Mr. Mauro's proposal would eliminate interest that otherwise would be earned and distributed to schools.

He said the money would be repaid with interest from the general revenue fund - the state's main bank account - over a 30-year period. He said there would be no decrease in the Available School Fund, the cash that goes to schools.

Ms. Hughes said, "Governor Bush believes that raiding a long-term investment fund for a short-term spending purpose is a prescription for bankruptcy that is not sound financial management. It will lose money for the state."■

71. The San Diego Union-Tribune

06/12/98; Edition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8; Section: NEWS; Page A-3

Prop. 227 hearing is July 15

From Union-Tribune news services

SAN FRANCISCO — A federal judge has scheduled a hearing July 15 on a suit by civil rights groups to block Proposition 227, the initiative that would virtually end bilingual education in California.

The suit was filed June 3, the day after the measure was approved by 61 percent of the voters. The measure would abolish a program that allows 1.4 million public school students to be taught in their native languages as a transition to English, and instead provide a one-year

English immersion class. Limited, short-term bilingual instruction would be allowed locally at the request of a group of parents. The suit contends Proposition 227 violates a federal law that requires schools to take "appropriate action to overcome language barriers."■

72. The Dallas Morning News

06/12/98; Edition: HOME FINAL; Section: PLANO; Page 1K

Technology funding may rest on meeting

School officials fear politics will play role

By Sandy Louey
Staff Writer
of The Dallas Morning News

A meeting in Washington on Friday may determine if the Plano school district can spend another \$1.64 million on technology. But school officials are concerned that politics may short-circuit the funding.

The Federal Communications Commission is to meet to determine funding for its new E-rate program, which would help thousands of schools and libraries get Internet access. The

The Plano school district is eligible for a 39 percent discount on those services. Under the program's guidelines, the district would be able to reallocate \$1.64 million to spend on projects that were not included in the budget, such as the replacement of computers, staff training and other needs, said Jim Hirsch, executive director of technology for the district.

program has suffered setbacks as telecommunications companies and some in Congress have questioned its financing and administration, said Liz Rose, a spokeswoman for the FCC.

Plano school district spokeswoman Carole Greisdorf said it is frustrating to see an effort that would provide equal access for students become embroiled in politics.

"It seems to be turning into a political football," she said.

There were 30,000 applications for the program, which was added to the

But he said he cannot move ahead with some projects until a decision is made on the E-rate program.

"We can't do any hard planning," he said.

Mr. Hirsch said that even if the funding questions are resolved this summer, none of the work in the schools can begin until late August or early September at the earliest.

Universal Service Program in the 1996 Telecommunications Act. The program was created to provide discounts for schools and libraries on telecommunication services, Internet access and internal networking equipment.

Under the E-rate program, schools and libraries are eligible for discounts of 20 percent to 90 percent on telecommunications services such as basic telephone service and installation of high-speed Internet cabling known as T-1 lines.

The holdup will not affect telephone services and other technology needs in the three new Plano schools that are opening this fall because they were funded under the district's budget. Currently, all of the district's schools and classrooms have Internet access because of the 1996 technology bond, he said. ■

INTERNATIONAL

73. The Vancouver Columbian

06/15/98 Section: Opinion;

PARENTS, NOT LIBRARIES, MUST POLICE INTERNET

By Michael Zuzel
for the editorial board

Pornography in the library. Who's in favor of that?

Not many people, certainly. And if everyone agreed on what's pornographic; and if every page, image and message on the Internet page were accurately labeled as "pornography" or "not pornography," then it might be possible for the Fort Vancouver Regional Library to make sure that no library patron, child or adult, would ever see such material.

Even then, though, it wouldn't be right.

In response to pressure from a group of library patrons concerned about children accessing pornography over the Internet, the library has been developing a new policy on access to electronic information. The result will be up for public comment at 7 tonight at library

headquarters in Vancouver's Central Park.

The proposed policy, which the library's board of directors will be asked to adopt, won't please the critics. It reaffirms the library's longstanding commitment to free exchange of information. It notes that parents, not library personnel, are the only ones responsible for deciding which materials are suitable for their own (and, by implication, no one else's) children. And the policy states directly that the library will not block access to offensive Internet sites.

To do so would be impossible in any case. The Internet is a constantly changing, global conversation in which anybody with even modest computer skills can participate. The World Wide Web is growing at the rate of thousands of pages per day, many of which sure

contain material that some parents would deem unsuitable for their own children's consumption.

Software 'filters' simply do not work.

Critics of the library's open-access policy frequently tout "filtering" programs, which are designed to screen out Internet material of an offensive nature.

"Offensive," though, is an entirely subjective standard. Not all nudity is pornography, and not all (or even most) pornography is illegal. And even the best programs inadvertently screen out nonpornographic Internet sites. One "family friendly" filtering program, for example, blots out breast cancer information from a New Jersey medical school. Another, ironically, denies access to the American Family Association, an anti-gay, anti-porn organization that has criticized the rise of sexual material on

the Internet.

Critics say filters may be imperfect but are necessary to protect children and others from harmful porn. But the scientific evidence that pornography encourages deviancy is thin; some studies actually suggest that porn serves as a sexual outlet and thus helps curtail aberrant behaviors. The fact that some criminal sexual offenders are consumers of pornography confuses correlation with causation. Countless millions of people — even children — have been exposed to sexually explicit material over the ages, and only a tiny minority have turned into Ted Bundys.

We all want to protect our children from harm. But there is only one way for the library to ensure that objectionable

Such steps will allow parents to guide their children through the electronic realm in whatever manner and direction they think best. That really is the key. A public library cannot be in the business

material never grazes the eyes of young or sensitive patrons. And that is to rip out every Internet-accessible computer terminal in the library.

If it did so, however, the library could not to stop there. A lot of the books and magazines in the library's collection could be described as sexually explicit, too. Those would have to go. And because the library is financed and frequented by a large and diverse community, it couldn't stop at sex. Other subjects equally objectionable to certain people would have to be tossed out, as well. Violence, war, racism, religion, government, public education, conventional medicine, alternative medicine environmentalism, unionism, professional athletics — you name it, of deciding what material is suitable for its patrons. Nor can it assess which patrons are mature or responsible enough to handle certain materials. It is purely the duty and responsibility of parents.

someone will take umbrage at it.

Remove every book and magazine from the library? Of course, that's not practical. But sanitizing the Internet isn't any more so.

To their credit, the library staff has been sensitive to the concerns of parents about what their children see and read. The proposed policy states that all Internet-accessible computer terminals will be equipped with search programs that, at the user's discretion, provide access only to particular sites. Moreover, privacy screens and computer placement will be used, as the policy puts it, "to minimize unintentional viewing of the Internet."

Currents

Voice your opinion about this issue at about this issue at www.columbian.com/currents■

74. BBC News

June 13, 1998

'Keep drug users in school'

Excluding drug-using pupils from schools can cause greater harm than leaving them in full-time education, the UK deputy anti-drugs co-ordinator has told headteachers.

"Too often, schools simply exclude these pupils," said Mike Trace. "Yet exclusion can actually cause even greater harm by reducing educational opportunities and increasing the risk of unemployment later in life.

"We have to reduce exclusions for drug-related incidents," he told a National Association of Head Teachers drug education conference in

Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

Instead of exclusion, Mr Trace looked to health education as the key to reducing drug abuse among the young.

"Giving children the skills to resist drugs cannot start too early. Of course, teaching a five-year-old will be different to teaching a 14-year-old.

'Education works'

"The key is education appropriate to the age group. But our goal is healthy, confident young people, free of the harm caused by drugs," he said.

Ann Taylor, the Cabinet minister leading the government's anti-drugs

strategy, told the conference: "Appropriate drug education works. We know it helps children, from primary school onwards, to develop the life skills they need to resist drugs misuse.

"Teachers have a vital role to play. In many schools, drug education for children runs in tandem with education for parents. That can be an effective approach," she said.

Later this year, the Department for Education and Employment will issue guidance on drug education in schools and the Health Education Authority will issue updated advice for parents.■

75. BBC News

June 15, 1998

Israel drops new teaching plan for east Jerusalem

The Israeli government has abandoned proposals to have the Israeli curriculum taught in schools in east Jerusalem, the predominantly Arab area of the city.

Such a move would have meant teachers in state schools there being obliged to place an emphasis on Jewish history and the Holocaust, as well as the work of Hebrew writers and poets such as Bialik and Chernihowsky.

There had been predictions of riots if

the move was forced on Arab teachers.

Israel radio reports that the Ministerial Committee on Jerusalem is now seeking a return to the Jordanian curriculum, which has been used in Arab schools in east Jerusalem since Israel captured the territory in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

In the past few years, the Palestinian educational system has gained ground in east Jerusalem's schools - much to the dismay of the Israelis.

Secret

The newspaper Yediot Aharonot, the largest-circulation Hebrew paper in Israel, reported that a secret committee headed by the Education Ministry Director-General, Ben-Tziyon Dal, was formed to tackle the "problem".

Senior Palestinian sources told the newspaper: "It will never come to be. East Jerusalem is occupied territory, and we will not teach according to the Israeli

curriculum."

Palestinians regard east Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. However, Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, recently said that

Israel would never give up sovereignty over east Jerusalem.

"Israel will never return to undefendable borders, with its back to the sea, and Jerusalem will never again be

divided," he said during a ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary of the Jewish state. ■

76. BBC News

June 15, 1998

Violence greets new exam for Greek teachers

Greece's main teaching union has called a 24-hour strike in protest at the introduction of new examinations for graduates who want to become teachers.

It is the latest move in a wave of protests which have greeted the change in the system of appointing staff for the country's state schools.

Under the previous system teachers had to wait years for a state job, but graduates who have been on the waiting list for several years are now required to take the new exam.

They argue that their university degrees should be the only qualification necessary.

Centres where the new exam is being taken have become the focus of sometimes violent demonstrations over the past week.

Police protection

On Sunday, riot police used tear gas to disperse teachers from outside a centre in central Athens.

Teachers smashed several cars and shop windows, firebombed one vehicle

and threw rocks at police. Eight arrests were made.

Although protesters tried to prevent candidates from entering exam halls, two-thirds of the candidates managed to take the exam under police protection.

In major cities throughout the country, protesters marched on exam centres, calling for the resignation of the Education Minister and the cancellation of the exam.

The teachers' union is preparing to challenge the new rules in court. ■

77. Sydney Morning Herald

June 16, 1998

State teachers in protest over funds for private schools

By STEPHANIE RAETHEL
Education Writer

Teachers in NSW government schools will stop work tomorrow in protest over Federal Government changes to the funding of schools, which they say increase funds to private schools at the expense of public education.

Teachers in the State's public schools will stop work for two hours tomorrow morning to attend a televised link-up.

The meeting is backed by the NSW Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations and hundreds of parents are expected to attend meetings.

The NSW Teachers Federation wants an end to government funding for the wealthiest private schools and cutbacks in indirect subsidies, such as transport for private school students.

But on the eve of the meeting the State's peak union for teachers in non-government schools, the Independent Education Union, has announced it will campaign for an increase in funding to private schools.

Its general secretary, Mr Dick Shearman, said most non-government schools operated at resource levels that, even including fees, needed a 20 per cent

boost to reach the State school level. "We are determined that there is a fair and just funding regime," he said. "The reality of Australian schooling is there are non-government schools and government schools, and to suggest that only one type of school, run by the Department of Education, deserves funding is nonsensical and it is not going to happen." The president of the Teachers Federation, Ms Sue Simpson, said tomorrow's meeting would tell State and Federal politicians that public education must be taken seriously and funded properly. She said the enrolment benchmark adjustment (EBA), used to calculate funding when students move from a public into a private school, must be scrapped and restrictions on setting up new private schools reintroduced.

Under the enrolment benchmark adjustment, the States must pay back about \$1,700 to the Commonwealth for each student who moves to the private system as the percentage of students in non-government schools increases.

NSW had to pay back \$4.3 million this year and this is expected to rise to up to \$60 million a year by 2006, even though the number of students in

government schools is increasing.

The Department of Education and Training said parents should contact schools about supervision during the stop-work.

The selective schools test, to be taken by about 15,000 Year 6 students on the same day as the stop-work, will not be affected, according to the department.

A spokesman for the NSW Minister for Education, Mr Aquilina, said the Government did not support any action that disrupted students' learning but understood the anger at what the Federal Government was doing to schools. "There is nothing wrong with funding non-government schools, but it must not be and cannot be at the expense of government schools, and that is what the EBA does," he said.

The Opposition's education spokesman, Mr Stephen O'Doherty, said Mr Aquilina had to decide whether he was the minister for all schools.

"The logical consequence of what he has been campaigning for in recent months is that the Labor Party wants to take money away from private schools." ■

COMMENTARY

78. Manchester (N.H.) Union-Leader

June 16, 1998

Phone Tax — Thank Al Gore for Those Bigger Bills Come July

Look closely at your telephone bill when it arrives next month. You will find a new 2.5 percent tax listed. Al Gore is the mug to thank for this new federal levy on your phone privileges. Over Republican protests, the Federal Communications Commission last Friday imposed the E-rate, as it is officially called, or the Gore Tax as we prefer. This tax is another of Mr. Gore's blinding flashes of genius. Unfortunately, Mr. Gore's latest brainstorm will cost the American taxpayers \$7 billion by 2003, an amount roughly equal to what we will pay in federal gasoline taxes. What will the feds do with the money? Wire school classrooms and libraries to the Internet, another of Mr. Gore's many New Age

fevers. Mr. Gore and his co-conspirator, former FCC commissioner Reed Hundt, slipped the E-rate into the behemoth 1996 telecommunications bill, a monstrosity so immense and complicated that not even its most avid proponents pretended to understand it. Little wonder the Gore Tax went all but unnoticed. Unfortunately for Mr. Gore's utopian visions, markets move faster than government bureaucrats. Although the FCC is just now getting around to imposing the Gore Tax, at least 80 percent of the nation's schools and libraries already are hard-wired into the information superhighway. Mr. Gore, however, rarely allows such inconvenient things as facts to get in the way when he is busy doing good "for the children." Of

course, Mr. Gore's fawning admirers in the teachers' unions are all ga-ga over the E-rate windfall, which they see as yet another source of taxpayer money to raid, if not for the Internet then for other vital educational needs. Condoms, perhaps. Mr. Gore and his education establishment cronies simply ignore recent research findings that the educational benefits of the Internet are vastly overstated, at best, and just another faddish gimmick at worst. Nevertheless, the taxpayers must cough up another \$7 billion on their phone bills. Thus does the plundering of the American taxpayer continue. Voters should remember the Gore Tax and who gave it to them each month when they sit down to pay their telephone bills. — *Richard Lessner*■

79. San Diego Union-Tribune

June 16, 1998

Kip Kinkel: listening to Prozac?

Arianna Huffington

Speaking Saturday at Thurston High School in Springfield, Ore., President Clinton lamented kids' "easy access to guns in a culture where they've been exposed to lots and lots and lots of violence." He considered this a "combustible combination" for troubled children. But there is one element in the combustible mixture the president did not mention: the phenomenal increase in prescriptions of Prozac and other anti-depressants written for children — even though these drugs have not been approved for pediatric use by the Food and Drug Administration.

Kip Kinkel was one of those children.

If some good is to come out of the Springfield tragedy, maybe the fact that the 15-year-old who opened fire in the

A good start would be to make available to the public information about the drugs Kip has been on, who prescribed them, what were the dosages and what were the side effects. Did he experience the mental and physical agitation many Prozac users describe? And how did the famed "assertiveness"

school cafeteria had been on Prozac will spur the public to demand a national conversation not just about gun control, but about drug control. I don't mean the costly and questionably effective war on illegal drugs, but rather control of legal drugs like Prozac, which are being prescribed to younger and younger kids — including, preposterously enough, 1-year-olds.

Kip will be arraigned today, and piecing together his medical history is not easy now that there is a gag order on all litigants. But according to Diane Sheldon, a family friend who went on vacation to Costa Rica with the Kinkels in June 1996, Kip had just been put on Prozac. His mother made repeated references to Kip's taking the drug and how pleased they were with the outcome. Prozac induces affect a disturbed teen-ager who clearly needed less self-confidence and more self-doubt about his dark fantasies?

According to Mark Sabitt, Kip's lawyer, his office has received many calls and letters from members of the public concerned about what impact Prozac had

"The Prozac is working," she kept saying. Kip seemed happy and was showing enthusiasm for something other than firearms.

But what was being wrought underneath this apparent improvement in his behavior? In multimillion-dollar ads in national magazines, a wilting tree is transformed, thanks to Prozac, into a bright evergreen. But is the glowing tree rotting within? The trend line is ominous. Children ages 6 to 18 received 735,000 prescriptions for Prozac and other anti-depressants in 1996 — up a staggering 80 percent since 1994. The need for more hard data about a powerful drug that may be poisoning our children is urgent.

on the boy's behavior. Prozac has been claimed as a mitigating factor in criminal cases so many times that such a strategy has its own name: "the Prozac Defense."

There have already been more than 270 lawsuits against Eli Lilly, Prozac's manufacturer. One, brought by the children of a man who stabbed his wife

15 times while on the drug, will be heard in Honolulu's federal court in October. The judge preliminarily ruled that "Lilly may have acted wantonly, oppressively or with such malice as implies a spirit of mischief or criminal indifference."

Rep. Dennis Kucinich, D-Ohio, who sits on the Human Resources Subcommittee (which oversees the FDA), wrote a letter to the Drug Enforcement Administration expressing his concerns about "expanding the availability of Prozac to underage children." But to his surprise, the congressman learned that unlike Ritalin, Valium, Halcyon and Xanax, Prozac is not covered by the

Controlled Substances Act.

This is yet another of the many unanswered questions about Prozac: Why doesn't the DEA closely monitor a drug whose usage is skyrocketing and whose side-effects remain disturbingly unexplored? Last week, Kucinich fired off another letter to the DEA castigating as "unfortunate and short-sighted" the agency's decision "to absolve itself of issuing a position on the FDA's consideration of expanded Prozac sales to children."

As of yet, Kucinich is alone in his quest. What could be inhibiting others on the Hill from joining him? Perhaps an

addiction to pharmaceutical companies' campaign contributions?

Maybe the carnage in Springfield will push the nation to act. Finding out as much as we can about Kip's history with Prozac would shed a lot of light on its impact. If he was, indeed, put on Prozac in the summer of 1996, how long did he stay on it? And if he was taken off, what were the withdrawal symptoms? Was he prescribed it after a full psychological evaluation? If not, how, and why? And on that fateful day when he opened fire on his schoolmates, was he still listening to Prozac? ■

80. Christian Science Monitor

June 16, 1998

Learning to Love Learning, Even if It Isn't Always 'Fun'

Betsy Motten

BOSTON — When my fourth-graders began asking, "Is it going to be fun?" too often, I became concerned. Perhaps because they are growing up with TV, videos, and computer games, children in our society have come to expect that whatever they are involved in will be fun. Knowing such an expectation is not always reasonable, I designed assignments that would help students begin to understand the balance between the pleasant and unpleasant aspects of daily tasks.

During the first week of school, children in my class must now interview a parent or adult relative about his or her job (in or out of the home). I ask them to list what the adult says is fun and not fun about the job. Then they write a paragraph explaining how the person interviewed copes with the less appealing aspects of a job.

When we share the results, I always appreciate the wisdom imparted by the interviewees in comments such as:

"She asks people for help when she needs it."

"He tries to have a positive attitude."

"He keeps reminding himself that he

has to be patient with people who aren't cooperative and that if he doesn't do things well the business will fail."

"She just has to grin and bear it because she knows her job is important."

"He thinks about our family and reminds himself that he works hard to take good care of us."

Needless to say, the comments about coping stimulate valuable discussions. This leads naturally into the next assignment, which is to brainstorm about being a student. First I list what I enjoy and do not enjoy about being a teacher. I also explain how I cope with some of the undesirable aspects of my job while encouraging the kids to think about how they might handle what they don't like about being students.

After completing the assignment, the children list all the ways they could cope with the less pleasant aspects of being students. This list is posted and serves as an excellent source of reassurance and encouragement for the class.

We also talk about learning in general. I ask them to tell me what they think learning involves, and we generate a list:

* Working hard

* Concentrating

* Solving problems

* Making mistakes

* Asking questions

* Using resource materials

* Practice

* Discipline

As we share ideas, I ask individuals to tell about times when they persevered in learning situations that were frustrating or challenging, but that resulted in the joy of accomplishment. Everyone has stories to share, and I contribute my own as well.)

The more we add to the list and discuss, the more the kids begin to realize that learning is hard work and not always fun. My job as a teacher, then, is to help them discover that the long-lasting rewards of learning far exceed the momentary pleasures of superficial entertainment. I always know I'm making good progress when I stop hearing, "Is it going to be fun?" and see learners willingly accepting challenges and working hard to do their best.

Betsy Motten, a teacher at Wallingford (Pa.) Elementary School, is currently on sabbatical. ■

81. Investors Business Daily

June 16, 1998

Is The End Near For Bilingual Ed?

Bilingual education's days may be numbered. Taking a cue from voters,

[Tape Restoration Project Hex-Dump Conversion]

Congress has picked up the baton of reform.

By John J. Miller

Two days after California voters passed Proposition 227 on June 2, the House Education and Workforce Committee approved a bill by Rep. Frank Riggs, R-Calif., to give states and school districts more control over their language policies.

It's about time. Bilingual education is one of those well-intentioned theories gone horribly wrong. Its inventors wanted to help Spanish-speaking children learn English. They thought that teaching kids in their native language might help.

But the idea always seemed a bit fishy. How are children supposed to learn English by hearing Spanish?

There is now a mountain of evidence ready to refute the half-baked claims of bilingual-ed bureaucrats. Mark Lopez of the University of Maryland showed recently that bilingual education makes it both more likely that students will drop out of school and less likely that they'll go to college. It also depresses their lifetime wages.

Hispanic parents across the U.S. already know this. California's campaign was inspired by immigrant parents who boycotted a Los Angeles public school in '96 because their kids weren't being taught in English.

And parents in Brooklyn sued the school system there for failing to teach kids in English. "My son is confused between English and Spanish. I am unhappy with what he has learned in the bilingual-education program," said Maria Cruz, one of the plaintiffs.

The Center for Equal Opportunity

surveyed Hispanic parents in '96. Some 81% of those polled believe that their children's academic courses should be taught in English rather than Spanish.

In fact, kids pick up a new language much more easily than adults do. The brain is developmentally hard-wired to help young children learn language. There is a small window of opportunity for educators to teach elementary school children in English and have them learn it well, often accent-free. But these are the same years in which students are most often kept out of English-language classrooms.

The result? Bilingual education is rigged to guarantee failure. Because money follows students, schools and teachers often lack incentive to move kids out of bilingual programs. Fewer students mean fewer dollars, and that means fewer jobs for teachers.

That's why the influential National Association of Bilingual Education fights virtually every reform effort, including the necessary shock therapy of Prop. 227 in California.

What's more, the U.S. **Education Department**, long in the pocket of the bilingual-education establishment, has coerced thousands of localities to introduce native-language maintenance programs - and Congress has done nothing about it. In the last budget, Republicans actually boosted federal bilingual-education funding to more than \$300 million.

There's good reason to think that bilingual education never was meant to

succeed at teaching kids English.

"If Spanish should ever be forgotten, well, I am afraid that my competitor and I would be out of business," said Spanish-language radio executive Arthur Thomas during congressional hearings on bilingual education in 1967. Thomas wanted children taught in Spanish so his radio station could keep its market share.

This year, the biggest financial backer of the anti- Prop. 227 forces was A. Jerrold Perenchio, head of the Spanish-language Univision TV network. He personally donated \$1.5 million to the opposition.

The '90s aren't the first time schools have faced the challenge of helping children learn English. During the last great wave of immigration, millions of kids entered school knowing very little of their country's common tongue. The difference is that they were met by instructors who considered teaching English one of their most important duties.

Today, far too many educators believe that teaching kids in Spanish is their top task. The schools must recommit themselves to the old-fashioned idea that children learn English best when they're taught in English. Prop. 227 and the Riggs bill are a good start.

John J. Miller is national political reporter for National Review and author of "The Unmaking of Americans: How Multiculturalism Has Undermined America's Assimilation Ethic" (Free Press, 1998).■

82. Washington Post

June 16, 1998

A Community Disservice

By James Youniss and Miranda Yates

A good idea is in danger of being subverted. Though Maryland public high school students are required to perform 75 hours of community service before graduation, many are evading the requirement by meeting the letter, but not the spirit, of the law. A friend who is an Episcopal priest recently spoke about the teenagers who came to ask him for service assignments so they could fulfill the requirement. Some had stipulations, such as wanting to get the task over with as quickly and painlessly as possible. One 18-year-old student added that he would dig ditches but did not want to do

anything involving people.

Since the Maryland Board of Education first mandated the community service requirement six years ago, students at some schools have been allowed to claim credit for ordinary extracurricular tasks such as organizing a school dance or everyday kindnesses such as babysitting an older sister's infant. In fact, last year, when the first class to have to meet the new service requirement was about to graduate, some administrators had to devise last-minute, makeshift projects such as cleaning the campus grounds, filing school records and shelving library books. While there is

a requirement, each school can implement it as it sees fit.

Well-designed community service is a good thing. It can help students learn what the world is really like. Young people who take on serious projects share social responsibility and gain a sense of citizenship. Several studies show that they are more likely to participate in volunteer charitable, civic, religious and business associations.

Effective service programs give students the chance to do meaningful work that produces tangible results, such as feeding the hungry or the homeless, or bringing comfort to the elderly. Group

effort and shared reflection about the service experience are important parts of these programs, as are supportive teachers who assign readings that introduce students to philosophical and political thinking about the conditions behind social problems. It is also important to have staff at service sites who use real-life events for teaching. Finally, parents can participate by sharing their own political and ethical views and relating them to their sons' and daughters' service experiences.

When these elements are in place, students are likely to look at society more realistically and to see themselves as citizens able to understand—and do something about—social problems.

Service belongs in the public school curriculum and, moreover, it deserves the planning and support given to any rigorous academic subject or top-rated athletic program. Nothing can be done to make up for the opportunities lost to the first two graduating classes since the requirement has been in effect. But it is not too late to redefine community service so that future students will get the kind of challenging experience that helps shape active citizens.

Implementation of such programs on a statewide basis is complex. It is difficult to imagine the logistics of finding enough suitable sites for all of the students at the 48 public high schools in Montgomery.

This kind of service program produced impressive results. Students become more tolerant and respectful of differences among people. Many students who began the course with negative stereotypes of the homeless, broke through that barrier to discover normal human beings living under unusual conditions. One male student told us his moment of awakening occurred when a homeless man thanked him for a sandwich and said, "I sure would enjoy a warm shower and shave," which made the student think, "Just like my dad wants every morning." A female student described an elderly woman who stopped in the food line to tell the girl how beautiful she was and that she reminded her of the daughter she hadn't seen in 10 years. The woman cried, saying, "I worry about her and hope she is all right." This allowed the girl to see the homeless woman as a "normal mother, worried about her daughter."

Students also became freshly conscious of their own lives by noting stark contrasts with the homeless. They compared the fear and loneliness of life on the streets with their own loving, secure homes, and the pain and hunger of

Prince George's and Howard counties. But overcoming practical limitations pales in comparison to the need to change current practices that allow service credit for taking out the family trash for a week, attending church services, mowing an elderly neighbor's lawn or working at a Saturday afternoon fund-raising car wash.

Such activities do not satisfy the intent of the authors of the requirement. "To make a contribution to the community and learning from that contribution helps one to become a lifelong learner," Nancy S. Grasmick, state school superintendent when the law was passed. "I can't think of a better example of character development than the lesson that what we take from the community we give back to the community."

Worse, because students have learned what they can get away with, we risk their coming to see service as a Mickey Mouse requirement that only a few oddballs take seriously.

The main issue is not conscious evasion, although some of that probably occurs, as when students treat service as just another credential for their college applications. The more important matter is missed opportunity. Students would take service seriously if they were offered the option of doing something significant with a clear supporting rationale.

In order not to let the present laissez-faire approach to service become homeless people with their own assured availability of food and shelter. As one student put it: "I go crazy when I don't have money for McDonald's. What would happen to me, if I lived like they do?" Or as another said: "I feel fortunate. When I want food, all I have to do is go to the refrigerator or ask my mom."

Students in other schools, where service programs are not as well thought out, tend to focus on the fun they had, the friends they met or a "feel-good" sense of self-esteem they gained. One 17-year-old girl said: "In February, I donated money and walked at the Help the Homeless Walk. It is a local D.C. charity to help raise money for the homeless. I enjoyed doing this and was glad to see that so many people volunteered their time to support the needy people in our community." Another junior girl, who also participated in a walkathon, said: "I met some people that I had worked with the previous year and it was nice to talk to them again about things that have happened since I last saw them. The people are always very friendly and it is just a pleasant atmosphere to be around. We walked for about five kilometers so

the norm, and so that service does not become another annoyance to be overcome, we must change the way students are assigned service requirements. This will call for a new commitment from the state, school administrators, teachers, parents and social agencies at service sites.

There are many models of programs that work. One takes place at a local private school, whose name we agreed to keep confidential in our 1997 book, "Community Service, and Social Responsibility in Youth." There, service is a mandated part of the academic curriculum, in this case, a religion class on social justice. (In a public school, it could have been a course on civics.)

Over the academic year, the entire junior-year class worked at a soup kitchen for the homeless. Teachers focused readings and class discussions on homelessness and related issues such as poverty and housing policy. The students worked alongside the staff, cleaning vegetables, serving sandwiches, mopping floors. The staff communicated with the teachers, and reinforced the message of social justice, by using spontaneous events such as outbursts of violence to discuss the need for drug rehabilitation, or the presence of hungry, crying infants, to point out that children have higher rates of poverty than adults.

we would raise money for the homeless."

Such reflections lack political and moral focus and show signs of a lost opportunity. These two students are as capable as those whose growth is described above, but they were not given the chance to confront serious social issues head-on. But it is interesting that even students from these loosely structured programs can see the potential in service. As one 17-year-old girl who spent a day in the District at So Others Might Eat, a program that feeds the homeless, told us: "If I were to do my service project again, I would definitely change one aspect of it. I would try to interact with [homeless] people more often and more personally."

Our call for revision of the way the service requirement is implemented is stimulated by the fear that when the impact of the Maryland requirement is assessed, the mixed effects of diverse service programs will fall short of expectations. Poor results would also play into the hands of critics of the idea of service. At that moment, the idea of service might be discarded as a costly but useless experiment. But service is only as

effective as the program of which it is part.

Today's young people are as competent and as ready to combat social ills and advance democratic society as their parents and grandparents were during World War II or the civil rights era. It is our responsibility to afford them

opportunities that engage their minds and direct their energy. To maintain an ethical, democratic state, individuals must act democratically with moral purpose. Service is one means for the training of these practices. Surely we owe today's talented youth the opportunity to become tomorrow's responsible

democratic citizens.

James Youniss, of the Catholic University of America, and Miranda Yates, of the Menninger Foundation, are authors of "Community Service and Social Responsibility in Youth" (University of Chicago Press). ■

83. Los Angeles Times

* 06/16/98; Edition: Home Edition; Section: Metro; Letters Desk; Page B-6

Student Loan Rates

Recent proposals to establish an auction of the right to make student loans as discussed in your June 5 editorial raise several important issues you did not address.

First is the assumption that the student loan marketplace is currently devoid of competition. This is incorrect. In fact, competition is so fierce that lenders offer many incentives to borrowers, and over half of all borrowers either receive a discount on upfront fees or are eligible for a reduction in interest rates based on

making timely repayment.

Second, an auction may produce the lowest cost for the federal government but not the best loan service for students and schools. Under an auction system, students and schools will lose the opportunity to choose their student loan provider. An auction system will eliminate the resources necessary for high-quality customer service and the technology to offer innovations, such as convenient online borrower access to account information.

The current student loan crisis was precipitated by a hastily conceived interest rate formula that experts now agree simply does not work. To avoid repeating this mistake, federal policymakers should insist on a thorough study of market-based mechanisms for determining student loan rates before taking any action.

JOE BELEW, President
Consumer Bankers Assn.
Arlington, Va. ■

84. The Washington Post

06/16/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: OP-ED; Page A21

Toward Consensus On Schools

By E. J. Dionne Jr.

Perhaps you're as tired of "the education debate" as I am.

The subject, of course, is important. It matters to everyone who hopes to get a good or better job, to anyone who has kids, to employers who want workers who know what they're doing.

But rarely is the debate about how to improve teaching. Usually, it rides political hobbyhorses — the dangers of "federal intrusion," the role of the teachers' unions, school choice programs and vouchers.

So it was refreshing to walk into a Senate office building last week and listen to people more interested in teachers than hobbyhorses.

Consider the shortage of qualified instructors to teach math and science — not surprising in a high-tech economy where mathematicians and scientists are in great demand.

"Why would you teach mathematics for \$27,000 a year in San Jose when you can walk across the street to a Silicon Valley firm?" and make three times as much, asked Kati Haycock. She is director of The Education Trust and was

a lead speaker at the conference, organized by the centrist Progressive Policy Institute.

Chester Finn, a former assistant secretary of education, suggested that schools could attract math teachers by paying them far more than teachers in fields where expertise is plentiful. Alternatively, Haycock said that the Silicon Valley mathematician might be encouraged to teach half-time and spend the other half of his working time in industry.

Both sensible ideas would require a more flexible education system — and taxpayers willing to pay for good math and science teachers.

Or take the problem of national standards. Using national tests to judge how well schools are doing makes perfect sense. But just say "national," and an army of politicians arises to thunder about the grave threats tests pose to "local control." Never mind that the tests would empower local parents to go to their local school board or their principal and demand that their local schools do better.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) is for

national testing. But as long as it's mired in ideology, he's pushing for a modest but sensible reform: Help move more qualified children into Advanced Placement courses.

AP courses, as they are known, embody what reformers extol: high standards in specific subjects, courses taught by teachers who know their field and national exams that test competence and knowledge. "The same people who are objecting to a voluntary national math test swell with pride when their own children do well on an AP exam," Bingaman said in an interview.

Bingaman helped get \$3 million for this program last year, partly to pay for AP tests for low-income students. He says the federal government should spend more on this program, which combines the quest for social equity with the search for academic excellence.

Ah, but do we have the teachers to teach the courses? Well, no. Many teachers teach subjects they know little about.

Diane Ravitch, a specialist on education issues, said that 36 percent of public school teachers have neither a

major nor a minor in their main teaching field. In social sciences, 59 percent teach what they haven't studied. In natural sciences, it's 40 percent. The problem is worse in schools in low-income areas.

But how do we set higher standards for teachers? Bingaman thinks one way is to end federal aid to schools of education from which fewer than 70 percent of graduates meet state licensing requirements. And teachers as well as students should be regularly tested.

But wouldn't the teachers' unions go ballistic? One reason there's an opening for reform is that the teachers' unions are

worried — about, among other things, the spread of voucher programs (which won a victory when the Wisconsin Supreme Court last week validated the constitutionality of vouchers in Wisconsin).

Sandra Feldman, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, rejects teacher bashing. "Teaching in the most difficult places really is rocket science, it is brain surgery," she said in an interview. Fair enough. But she acknowledges that the quality of teachers isn't high enough, especially in the toughest public schools. "If you can

breathe, you can teach in most of these schools," she says.

Can't we at least agree that we need more good teachers? That means honoring them more than we do, paying them more, especially in fields where there is a shortage. It also means looking beyond the education schools for teacher training and, yes, making it easier to fire bad teachers. Feldman's mantra is: "We can't support schools that we wouldn't send our own children to." Every teacher in the country should want to be held to that standard. ■

85. The New York Times

06/16/98 Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 30, Column 5

Will Vouchers Ruin Public Schools?

To the Editor:

You assert (editorial, June 12) that the Wisconsin Supreme Court decision upholding a school voucher program "strikes at the very heart of the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state." This is pure buncombe.

In fact, the law allows the same thing through the charitable tax deduction. Right now, one may donate money to religious institutions, including churches and parochial schools, and deduct a percentage of it from one's taxes. This has precisely the same economic effect as

a voucher program. This is constitutional because the individual, not the government, chooses where the money will go, thus making it religion-neutral.

JON P. BROSE

New York, June 12, 1998

The writer is a lawyer. ■

86. The New Orleans Times-Picayune

06/14/98; Edition: THIRD; Section: METRO; Page B7

LET THE CHILDREN GO TO SCHOOLS OF CHOICE

By Cal Thomas

Two businessmen, Ted Forstmann, a venture capitalist, and John Walton, heir to the huge Wal-Mart fortune, have pledged to raise \$200 million that would allow at least 50,000 urban poor children to escape from failing public schools.

Normally, this would be an ideal issue for liberals, who regularly wail against the "unfair advantages" enjoyed by "the rich." Not this time. The education establishment and the politicians who receive its political contributions think it's perfectly fine that kids can't read or write at grade level when they graduate from many of these schools. And the decay there is physical as well as intellectual and moral.

Forstmann and Walton have started what may turn out to be the greatest revolution in public education.

That there is a hunger for educational choice is beyond dispute. In New York City, 22,000 applications for the Choice Scholarship Program are received each year for the 1,000 slots available. In

Washington, D.C., more than 7,000 applications were filed for about 1,000 scholarships. San Antonio has the first city-wide scholarship program for poor children, thanks to area businesses concerned about the quality of employees they are getting from the government-funded and -controlled education system.

In wealthy Palm Springs, Calif., the Desert Sun reported last fall that for every 700 students enrolled at Palm Springs High School, 200 will drop out, 455 will receive their high school diploma and not enter college, 39 students will enter college and quit without graduating and just six students will graduate from college.

The education establishment predicted school choice wouldn't work and would drain public-school resources. They argued that more money is needed in a system that is already spending record amounts, but getting ever-lower returns on the public's investment. If a mutual fund were performing as poorly as public

schools, a good financial adviser would recommend the client to sell and find a better investment.

In Wisconsin, where school choice for low-income residents has been an option in some cities for more than seven years, and was affirmed June 10 by the state supreme court, even when the choice is for religious schools, the results are beginning to come in. Dr. Howard Fuller, a former superintendent of the Milwaukee Public School system, says the magnitude of the improvements is so great he recommends the choice program be expanded to new cities. Several studies from educational professionals indicate "quite large" gains in math achievement and reading. Surveys also indicate widespread parental satisfaction and more stability in attendance patterns.

A newer school-choice program in Cleveland shows similar academic gains, as well as markedly improved parental and child satisfaction. In Milwaukee and Cleveland choice schools, academic achievement in several subjects improved

dramatically after as little as three years in a new environment.

Only the teachers' unions and the politicians who need their votes and campaign money are upset. Unable to deny the evidence of improvement, many have taken to distorting the research and attempting to shut down choice experiments.

While the federal government attempts to break up the alleged monopoly of the highly successful Microsoft, it tries to maintain a failing education monopoly. Forstmann, Walton and their Choice Scholarship Program spell freedom and a

Professor Lawrence Stedman of the State University of New York illustrated the depth of the education problem for the minority community trapped in failed public schools. In a presentation last year to a Brookings Institution conference, Stedman said: "(Twelfth-)grade black students are performing at the level of middle-school white students. . . . They future for students and parents who can't afford the "luxury" of private schools. The politicians and education bureaucrats, who increasingly place their kids in private schools, want to leave poor children behind. Forstmann and

lag four or more years behind in every area, (including) reading, math, science, writing, history and geography. Latino seniors do somewhat better than 8th-grade white students in math and writing but, in other areas, are also four years behind white 12th-graders."

Walton are like Moses crying to the education pharaohs: "Let these children go."

Cal Thomas is a syndicated columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate. ■

87. Greensboro News & Record

06/14/98; Edition: ALL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page F2

WE SHOULD DO WHAT WE CAN TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS

I generally read the editorial page and have strong opinions about what I read there. A.R. Mayer struck a nerve with her criticism of the methods of rewarding a reading contest at Colfax School.

I applaud educators for doing whatever it takes to make children love to learn. The impressions that are made upon them at an early age will stay with them for the rest of their lives. If that impression is that learning can be fun, how motivating.

My son attends Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School in High Point. In February, our student body of about 280 children, K-8, won a radio promotion. The prize was an elaborate Eagle costume, which is our school mascot. Of course, the children and staff all felt a part of winning. Our principal, Frank McGrail, was just as excited as the children. The radio station came for a live broadcast at a school assembly. After their departure, McGrail donned the

costume and led our pep rally. After returning to his office, he suffered a massive heart attack and never regained consciousness. He passed away the following week. What a wonderful legacy of learning and making it memorable that he left our school. We will miss him and his innovative methods.

Education gives the keys to almost any dream a child could ever have.

Linda O'Connor High Point ■

88. The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star

06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: COMMENTARY; Page J3

BOOKS A KEY TOOL TO TEACHING BOYS EMPATHY

By BILL RUEHLMANN

Amid the bleak crescendo of recent reports about boys and bullets appeared a sensible observation by Malcolm Watson, the Brandeis University psychology professor who studies aggression and toy gunplay.

"Giving a kid a toy gun isn't the worst thing in the world," he said in a wire story "But it's not the best. Give him something that will teach him to be assertive, not aggressive."

May I suggest a book?

By making it possible for us to live extra lives, books encourage empathy. Books comfort us with the revelation that whatever particularly devastating situation we find ourselves in, somebody else has been there, done that, and

actually survived. Books acquaint us with alternatives to violence.

Also the consequences of it.

Discerning suggestions for such useful volumes abound in Great Books for Boys: More than 600 Books for Boys 2 to 14 by Kathleen Odean (Ballantine Books, 384 pp., \$12.95).

She is the longtime children's librarian and former member of the Caldecott and Newbery Award committees who supplied us with Great Books for Girls two years ago. In that selection, she sought titles featuring active females. In this one, she pursues entries that celebrate feeling males.

"We are raising more girls who expect to work outside the home and be financially responsible as well as to take

care of families and relationships," writes Odean, "but we continue to raise most boys as if their responsibilities as adults will end with their paychecks.

"We try to teach them to be competent and competitive, but we don't emphasize compassion and cooperation."

It is possible to win without becoming insufferable; it is possible to lose without wreaking havoc.

Honest, kids - professional sports to the contrary.

A typical Odean endorsement:

Konigsburg, E. L. The View from Saturday. 1996. Hardcover: Simon & Schuster. Paperback: Atheneum. Ages 10-13.

"Three boys and a girl tell the story of their eventful sixth-grade year, when they

became friends and won a state Academic Bowl. Noah accidentally serves as best man at the wedding of two old people - Nadia's grandfather and Ethan's grandmother. Nadia, whose parents are divorced, helps rescue baby turtles and take them to the Sargasso Sea.

"Three boys and two girls, who are schoolmates but not close friends, find a book labeled 'Richard Clayton Hardwick. Read and weep.' After they read Richard's story about running away from his harsh stepfather, each of them tells a story about difficult changes in their families.

"The stories illustrate difficulties that divorce can cause children who find themselves with two homes, or an absent father, or unwanted new siblings and stepparents. But in telling their stories, the children notice that other people in

"Ethan emerges from his quiet self when he is befriended by Julian, a newcomer to town, who draws the four together. The four distinct personalities express a range of feelings as they describe changes in their lives. Answers to the difficult Academic Bowl questions their lives, especially their new stepparents are also facing problems.

"As one child says to another, 'Everyone thinks that they're the only one,' but they feel a bit less alone after listening to each other, and readers with similar family upheavals may feel the same."

Odean doesn't expect anybody to transform their children overnight by suddenly pushing these volumes at them.

She suggests beginning by letting your kids see you read.

are at the back of the book, a nice touch."

Here's another:

Fine, Anne. *Step by Wicked Step*. 1996. Hardcover: Little, Brown. Paperback: Dell. Ages 9-12.

Follow up by reading to them. Leave appealing titles lying around the house. And encourage them to hunt down a few of their own.

Do not criticize what they pick.

Goosebumps to Gulliver, ultimately it will teach them at least two things.

One: Books rock.

Two: Real men read books.

Take your son off the firing line and get him into a library. ■

89. The New Orleans Times-Picayune

06/15/98; Edition: THIRD; Section: METRO; Page B04

GOING BACK TO EDUCATION BASICS GOOD SIGN

RE: the June 7 article, "Teacher's drills are raising scores."

The return of the "direct instruction method" to our schools is much welcomed.

Teaching fundamentals in a rigorous manner by repetitious drills may sound unsophisticated and old-fashioned, but it works. However, the author points out that there is opposition.

The author quotes Kenneth Goodman, a language, reading and culture professor critical of the method, as saying it's "rat psychology on poor, minority children. It's one that middle-class parents wouldn't

stand for."

As a middle-class parent, I beg to differ. I think most middle-class parents would be thrilled to know their children were being drilled in the basics known as reading, writing and arithmetic.

Our schools have become overwhelmed by revisionist relativity where there are no absolutes. We wonder why we are raising a generation of young people who can surf the net but can't compose a sentence.

One does not contemplate the universe and how we relate to it without understanding fundamentals. A basic

knowledge of math, spelling, grammar and phonics is the foundation on which a higher order of education is built, not vice versa.

The opposition to this traditional teaching method further proves how far off track our educational system has become. I think we should applaud any effort that moves our primary schools back to being places of fundamental learning rather than places of political and social experiments.

Marlin Mullins
Hammond ■

90. Buffalo News

06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: VIEWPOINTS; Page H5

PROBLEM COLLEGE DRINKING IS ROOTED IN HIGH SCHOOL

By BARBARA ARRIGO

Alcohol and kids, again.

College drinking is the hot topic these days, but I think we're fooling ourselves if we target college drinking as the whole problem or even the primary problem.

College drinking rates are not all that much bigger than high school drinking rates. So a big part of the problem is that we're sending experienced drinkers off to college, and the worst of it is that kids seem to be developing their drinking patterns at dangerously young ages.

If you want to fight alcohol consumption by minors, home is the place to do it, in the communities where they live before we send them off to college. And I don't mean by beating up on the kids with even more laws and penalties for minors in possession. Let's start by making sure we've cut off their supplies to the best of our ability.

Michigan's experiment with allowing 18-year-olds to drink, from 1972 through 1978, was a disaster, according to most people's recollection, including my own.

Far too much alcohol was finding its way into high schoolers' hands. I wonder if we've ever recovered the ground we lost then.

Surveys show a pretty steady decline in teen drinking since the mid-'70s. Unfortunately, the surveys didn't begin until 1975, midway through the age-18 experiment here and in some other states. There is no way to know what the rates were before the drinking age was lowered.

My guess, though, is that we're still not back to where we were pre-1972. That's certainly the perception of parents, who see enormous peer pressure on kids to drink and evidence that drinking is a major social activity these days. If it has lessened, I'm glad I didn't have teen-agers in the 1970s.

But even if there has been some improvement, there are good reasons to keep a very strong focus on drinking among high-schoolers and — what's really appalling — among middle-schoolers. In the last survey, 25 percent of eighth-graders said they had had a drink in the last 30 days; 8 percent said they had been drunk in the last 30 days.

Anyone who starts drinking that young is a tragedy waiting to happen. One recent study links the age at which drinking begins with the development of alcohol-related problems. The results are mind-boggling: More than 40 percent of the people who began drinking at age 14

(the age of a typical eighth-grader) or younger had been diagnosed with alcohol dependence at some point in their lives. That percentage dropped steadily with each year of delay in the onset of drinking.

Some observers also believe that alcoholism, if it is going to occur, develops more rapidly when a drinker starts young. And once alcohol becomes a routine method of coping with life, emotional growth is often stunted.

That can mean a lifetime of physical and emotional problems, and that's not even getting into the links between substance abuse and encounters with the police, or between substance abuse and lousy schoolwork.

So it is really horrifying to know that a quarter of 14-year-olds say they have had a drink in the past 30 days, and that three-quarters think booze is easy to get.

I worry a lot these days about the way children are seen as a market to exploit, and not as a group to shelter until

maturity and good judgment develop.

In terms of keeping them away from booze, I think we just about have to reinvent the wheel. For starters, we need to shame anyone and everyone — especially retailers, but also older siblings and friends or parents (heaven forbid!) — who help an underage drinker get booze. Ask yourself who is making money off our kids?

I know I probably seem too complacent about college drinking. I believe it is a problem, especially when it turns into binge drinking. But I also believe it requires incremental, patient effort because of its long history.

Eighth-grade drinking — or even the presumably lower level of 10th- and 12th-grade drinking — doesn't qualify as historic. Let's fight the battle here.

BARBARA ARRIGO is a columnist for the Detroit Free Press. ■

91. Wisconsin State Journal

06/14/98; Edition: All; Section: OPINION; Page 2B

TWO VIEWS ON THE SCHOOL CHOICE RULING WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS WHO ARE LEFT BEHIND BY VOUCHER SYSTEM?

By Terry Craney

It's the morning after for supporters of religious school vouchers.

Having won the state Supreme Court ruling they so aggressively pursued, they may be waking up to the question: "What have we done?"

Proponents of school vouchers have said their main goal is to improve Milwaukee Public Schools. Now they must accept responsibility for the impact of this program on the achievement of the 90,000-plus students who continue to attend MPS.

Here's what they face:

*Because of the extensive educational challenges resulting from the high

poverty rate among students, Milwaukee's public school district needs more resources than other districts but has fewer. A recent study found that class sizes in kindergarten through fifth grades in Milwaukee are 23 percent higher than statewide averages.

*State-imposed revenue controls already have forced Milwaukee to make drastic cuts in education programs.

*If the voucher program is expanded to 15,000 students, Milwaukee will lose millions of dollars in tax funds over time.

*As a result, class sizes will increase even more, building decay will accelerate, and technology will fall even further behind. This shift of funding will

create a new form of separate and unequal education.

Research has found no evidence that the voucher program increases student achievement even among participants, much less those left behind.

But the point is this: The success or failure of the voucher program will not be measured by the achievement of students who move to private and religious schools at taxpayers' expense. It will be measured by the achievement of students left behind in a severely underfunded, deteriorating and sadly neglected public school system. ■

92. The Atlanta Journal -Constitution

06/14/98 Section: Editorial; Page D:08

Bilingual education Painful lesson

FOR THE JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION
Regarding Cynthia Tucker's column "English-first bias hampers education" (June 7): I resent being called narrow-minded by someone who hasn't

had children go through the farce of bilingual education. My children experienced that educational morass in Southern California; one daughter had to receive outside tutoring because the

Spanish-speaking children in the class received the bulk of the attention while her skills suffered. This "reflects a desire to improve education"?

My children were not foreign-born,

yet because we have a Spanish surname, they were placed in those classes and taught in Spanish, then English. We pulled our children from these classes and placed them in private school.

It's the stuff you're made of that determines your success, not bilingual education or busing or any other failed program. JOHN C. VELARDE, Sharpsburg Stop coddling immigrants I am an anesthesiologist who practices in Santa Cruz, Calif., a small, agricultural/resort community. We have a large Hispanic population with a high

percentage of people who speak only Spanish.

My Spanish-speaking patients want to know the risks of anesthesia for their 3-year-old child who is undergoing surgery. They want to know how to fill out job applications or welfare forms. They want to be able to call up the principal and tell him about a gang problem at their children's school. When these crises arise, they discover that they don't have the skills. The majority of them don't because they've been led astray, coddled into a sense of injudicious

comfort by a well-intentioned, paternalistic system. Tucker seems to assume that those of us who voted to end bilingual education are some sort of Anglo-central chauvinists. This is incorrect. We have realized that the present system isn't working. Too many people have this aristocratic attitude that if those "poor immigrants" are put in a sink-or-swim language program, they will fail. They won't. They are as smart as we are.

Dr. CARLISLE PERCIVAL, Aptos, Calif. ■

93. Wisconsin State Journal

06/15/98; Edition: ALL; Section: OPINION; Page 7A

WHO IS REALLY BEHIND 'SCHOOL CHOICE' DRIVE?

What does "school choice" really mean and who is pushing it? Sounds to me like a gimmick to divert public education tax dollars to parochial schools.

Maybe a survey is in order to determine the religious affiliation of the supporters of "school choice." We know where Gov. Tommy Thompson stands and why. I want my tax dollars to go to public schools.

Lloyd J. Paust, Columbus

Thompson's ambitions are behind 'choice' push

Wisconsin now has the honor of leading the nation in anti-abortion legislation and government funding for religious schools. Where is this coming from? Gov. Tommy Thompson, who is running for president, and who needs the

support of the religious right.

We cannot afford to leave this issue to the American Civil Liberties Union. Given half a chance, the religious right will overthrow all our freedoms and replace them with a corrupt and sanctimonious Christian dictatorship.

Steve Eardley, Madison ■

94. Wisconsin State Journal

06/15/98; Edition: ALL; Section: OPINION; Page 7A

SCHOOL CHOICE? THAT'S NOT NEW

By Donald P. Schmitz

The governor and the legislators of Wisconsin have received much state and even national acclaim for their latest innovative idea — school choice.

Well, I hate to spoil the fun and games, but school choice, especially in

Every spring, we superintendents, would go out to these little schools to try to persuade the eighth grade students to come to our high school. Sometimes as many as three or four schools were close enough to these rural schools so that all of these superintendents made a trip or trips to meet these students.

There were quite a few factors that helped these eighth graders and parents choose a high school. Certainly, proximity was one factor. Others were: where their parents had attended, co-curricular offerings (athletics, music, etc.), best superintendent judged by his presentation. But, believe it or not, course offerings were not much of a

this state, is as old as the hills.

From 1848 to 1962 there were hundreds of small, rural schools (little red schoolhouses), and thousands of students in those schools, that had complete school choice when it came to high school. They simply did not belong to any factor. We certainly tried to tell them all the academic offerings we had, but it just wasn't that big of a deal.

Finally, in the late 1940s, someone in the Legislature offered a bill to make every student in this state part of a kindergarten through grade 12 school district. The rural people fought this tooth and nail. Not only were they satisfied with the educational set-up of their children but they didn't want to lose the center of their community. As so often happens, the first time this bill was presented it was overwhelmingly defeated. But legislators kept bringing it up every year until it passed around 1960. Since 1962 we have had all K-12

high school district.

The students could go to any high school, but, naturally, they chose one that was near enough so that they would be picked up by one of their buses.

districts except for about 10 union free high schools.

So you see it is another of the brilliant new ideas that really just corrects what was done a little over 25 years ago. Whether school choice is good or not will have to be decided by each individual situation.

My personal opinion, based on over 40 years in education and as the father of seven children who attended Wisconsin schools, is: If a child attends school on a regular basis, is willing to work and has parents or guardians who care and encourage him, then that student can go to any school in this state and receive a good education. ■

95. Chicago Tribune

06/14/98; Edition: CHICAGOLAND FINAL; C; Section: COMMENTARY; Page 21

SKIMMING OFF THE BEST STUDENTS HARMS THE REST

By Joan Beck.

Hold the applause for the decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to allow Milwaukee to spend tax dollars to send children to parochial as well as non-sectarian private schools in a pioneering voucher system. The legal controversy isn't settled. And the education benefits are still small and largely theoretical.

The Wisconsin high court carefully constructed its decision to meet the three criteria set by the U. S. Supreme Court in 1971 in 1st Amendment cases involving separation of church and state. But the ruling will certainly be appealed by civil rights groups and teachers' unions—a move that voucher supporters welcome and expect to win. There are many more parochial than private schools and unless they can be included in voucher programs, opportunities for children to transfer will be far more limited.

Small, privately funded voucher programs are now in operation in 56 cities. Many of them give families only \$1,500 or \$2,000 to help pay for private school tuition. Other programs may provide a voucher worth the full tuition cost of the private school or the amount the public school would have spent on the student in public school, taking the money out of the public school's budget.

The controversy over church-state
10. With more power to influence their child's school, parents could insist on higher achievement standards, more emphasis on academics and more individual accountability.

Arguments against vouchers:

1. Vouchers can provide for only a small percentage of the children in ailing public schools. Essentially, it's a triage system that helps only students of parents determined and savvy enough to work the system.

2. There is no good evidence that poor schools who are losing students can or do improve under a voucher system. They may get worse if their best students and most motivated parents bail out, taking tax dollars with them. As Richard Riley, secretary of education, has said, when a school is failing, it's no solution to give vouchers to 50 kids and leave 500

issues in the Milwaukee case is of major importance and the Wisconsin decision may reflect a relaxing of legal strictures against the use of public money for religious activities and a less stringent definition of the separation of church and state. Similar cases are pending in the supreme courts of Maine, Ohio, Arizona and Vermont.

But apart from that, there are still major problems with the concept of school vouchers that remain to be resolved. Here, for example, are 10 good arguments for vouchers and eight even better reasons to oppose the idea.

The case for vouchers:

1. By providing money that allows parents to transfer children to a private school of their choice, a voucher system is supposed to bring free-market competition to ailing public schools and force them to improve or close.

2. Parents who have a choice for their children get more involved in their education.

3. Private schools can escape much of the cumbersome and stifling regulations imposed by government. They have more freedom to try new ideas, be more innovative and creative.

4. Children shouldn't be forced into a one-size-fits-all education that may not be appropriate for their needs. A private school may serve a youngster's needs behind; the answer is to fix the whole school.

3. With private schools creaming off the best students, those who have to remain in public schools will be disproportionately the less able students, those with special needs or those who are discipline problems, many of whom have higher-than-average education costs.

4. Public schools are supposed to help provide a common ground for Americans and unify a diverse people. Allowing a large number of students to opt out undermines this democratic goal.

5. Some private schools, able to start up or expand rapidly with tax-paid vouchers and free from much government regulation, could provide even worse education than bad public schools or teach doctrine far out of the American mainstream.

better than the public school to which he is assigned.

5. Academic achievement improves for children when they transfer to a private school with the help of vouchers—although the measurable difference seems to be slight.

6. The total costs of education per child may be less in many private schools than in public schools—often because teachers are paid less, administration expenses are lower, there is more competition and tuition rates have to be based on market factors. But data are conflicting.

7. Discipline problems are fewer in private schools because they can be selective, don't have to take kids with behavior problems and get more cooperation from parents. Even if a voucher system can't save all at-risk kids, it can help some.

8. Parents can choose a school that closely links their child's education with their religious faith, strengthening their own family and value system in a way public schools cannot or do not.

9. Education is so important that poor parents should have the same choices rich families do; if President Clinton could send Chelsea to private school, the same option should be available to everyone.

6. Including parochial schools does shift public tax dollars to religious institutions, despite the ploy of giving vouchers to parents and not directly to the schools, however the Wisconsin Supreme Court justified it. Helping hard-pressed Catholic schools which educate so many inner-city poor children cost-effectively is appealing. But the decision could prompt the growth of schools run by religious groups far outside the American mainstream.

7. With fewer students in public schools, voter support for education could decrease, seriously cutting into school funding and reducing public commitment to education.

8. Efforts to design and implement a nationwide voucher program siphons off time, good will, money and energy that should go to finding better solutions to

school problems that will help all children.■

96. Los Angeles Times

* 06/14/98; Edition: Orange County Edition; Section: Metro; Editorial Writers Desk; Page B-11

Counselors Should Never Discourage

Congratulations to Nikki Pinkerton on her personal triumph over the public school system ("The Healing Power of Time," May 21).

The qualifier "insensitive," applied to her high school guidance counselor, was generous. This person was incompetent, not to mention arrogant, sexist and elitist.

It is the responsibility of the public school system and all its employees to help every student realize and reach his or her potential by always challenging them to think beyond limitations.

Sometimes that means pushing

students to achieve at higher levels because they do not have high enough expectations for themselves. Sometimes that means supporting students as they move through the system and run into roadblocks. And sometimes it means painting a realistic picture of what it will take to realize one's dreams.

In no case does it mean to lower expectations, throw up roadblocks or destroy dreams. To have told any student to dummy-down on a dream would be grounds for dismissal, in my book. But to intimate that a student with a 4.0 average

in accelerated classes was getting beyond her station in life is criminal.

People working in education have incredible power to influence children, and guidance counselors are positioned to play a particularly important role.

The saddest part of the story is that there are many more students who, as a result of "insensitivity," have "dropped out," thinking that they were failures, when in fact it was the system that failed them.

JULI QUINN
Seal Beach■

97. The Nation

June 29, 1998

School's Out

By Katha Pollitt

Another semester down the drain, which means the Last Marxist won't be moaning on the couch on Tuesday nights as he reads his students' papers. This term, in addition to his usual philosophy courses, he was handed a class in basic composition —punctuation, paragraphing, organizing ideas or, as he

This was a course for credit, offered without controversy or apology at an expensive (if unprestigious) private university; it was roughly equivalent to what I remember of Mrs. Elliston's ninth-grade English class, and to courses, sometimes called remedial and sometimes called Freshman Composition or disguised as English 101, taught for credit at public and private colleges all over America. But not, beginning next year, at the ten four-year colleges in the City University of New York system, whose board, acting at the behest of Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki, has just voted to ban them. Students accepted into CUNY will have to pass placement tests in reading, writing and math or be shunted off to remediate themselves at the system's community colleges, which are already overcrowded, or in no-credit summer crash courses, which will cost CUNY millions and do not yet exist. Nobody knows exactly how this will work, but overnight, CUNY, with its huge population of mostly working-class,

put it, "how to write more than one sentence at a time." His students came from Korea, China, Taiwan, Bulgaria, Nigeria and the Greek and Italian communities of Long Island, a place with its own distinctive folkways and vernacular. In expressivity, inventiveness and charm, the foreign-born students outshone the homegrown ones. Of immigrant and minority students, almost all of whom are working and many of whom are women with children, is supposed to become one of the most rigorous and inflexible undergraduate programs in the country. If you are ten years out of high school and have forgotten your algebra or, like many recently arrived Asian immigrants, are struggling with English but doing fine in the universal language of mathematics, you will be turned away.

Behind the CUNY reforms is a stereotype of its students as lazy underachievers fluent in Spanglish, Ebonics and welfare fraud, and of CUNY as a no-standards free-for-all, with students taking half their lives to graduate. Never mind that "open admissions" hasn't existed since 1976; that even in its heyday students who had less than an 80 average were steered into the community colleges; that the time-to-graduate rate (six years) is well within the national norm; that CUNY students pay in tuition and fees (\$3,200 a

course, their English was problematic, but they worked hard and it got better. In fact, everyone improved, even the Long Islanders. At semester's end, the L.M. handed out an assortment of grades, reminded everyone to observe the serial comma rule and sent his students off to seek their fortunes.

year) a higher proportion of the actual costs of their education than students at most other public universities. Never mind, either, that CUNY students don't prep at Exeter.

Is it unfortunate that students have to learn basic math and English skills in college? Of course. Ask any professor, though, and you'll find that poor preparation is hardly limited to CUNY freshmen. For a lot of reasons, ranging from too much TV to teachers' overreliance on multiple-choice tests, too many kids —and I mean well-off suburban kids —enter college without knowing how to write a paper, how to think about a poem or story, how to spell —much less use the serial comma. "Think of freshman year as a kind of extra year of high school," a colleague of mine advised me when I was teaching freshman comp at an elite college a few years ago, "because that's what it really is now."

Mayor Giuliani argues that high school is the place to acquire the

necessary skills for college. In the abstract, sure. But this is the same man who has slashed the public school budget, who supported Governor Pataki's veto of state funds for building new city schools, who tried to use public funds to send low-achieving students to private and parochial schools, and who, when informed that the Constitution disallowed that plan, helped raise the money privately. This is also the mayor who wants to cut \$15 million from the public library budget —while giving \$65 million in city funds to the Museum of Modern Art, a private institution already swimming in money. For the city's poorest and newest students, the bar is being raised, while simultaneously the rug is pulled out from underneath.

Told about a Vietnamese immigrant student who might never have succeeded at CUNY under the new rules, Herman Badillo, the once-"progressive" city pol who has spearheaded the campaign for the new rules, brushed aside concern. The young man had "drive," he told the New York Times, and people like that always rise to the challenge. Maybe so. But should you have to have the makings of an Olympic athlete or a Nobel Prizewinner to go to college? Maybe there are some people whom nothing can deter from their goals. Maybe Herman Badillo is one of those people. But why should a society make education a test of iron determination, like climbing K2? What about all the people who are less like Herman Badillo and more like my

grandmother, who dropped out of night school in 1921, bewildered by math class and ashamed of her imperfect English, and for the rest of her life felt unable to claim for herself the education she revered in others?

My grandmother knew Yiddish, Polish, Russian, German, Hebrew and English. She was the only girl in her shtetl to go to high school, and brought all her siblings safely through World War I after her mother died. If a woman like this could be made to feel unworthy of a seat in the classroom, maybe it's easier than Badillo thinks to discourage people who haven't been raised to see college as their birthright.■

98. Salon

June 15, 1998

Fight the power!

HOW A CONSERVATIVE RADIO HOST IS BATTLING THE LEFTIST LOCK ON THE AMERICAN ACADEMY.

By David Horowitz

It's graduation time on America's college campuses. As these rites of

Typical was the ceremony at the University of Michigan, whose invited speaker was racial extremist Mamphela Ramphele, a leader of South Africa's "black consciousness" movement. The four previous graduations at Michigan featured Hillary Rodham Clinton, Children's Defense Fund President and friend of Hillary Marian Wright Edelman, liberal cartoonist Cathy Guisewite and leftist educator Johnetta Cole. By contrast, notable conservatives like Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman, thinker and writer William F. Buckley, bestselling novelist Tom Clancy and Supreme Court Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas were passed over not only by Michigan but by all 3,000-plus colleges and universities across the land.

Even greater political bias was revealed in university hiring practices. As the Wall Street Journal noted recently, the number of registered Democrats on the faculty of the University of Colorado exceeded the registered Republicans by 32-1. There was not a single Republican or conservative at Colorado in the English, psychology, journalism, philosophy, women's studies, ethnic studies and lesbian and gay studies

passage scroll across C-SPAN, it's also a time to reflect on the near total dominion of the left over our institutions of higher departments. This in a state where Republicans outnumber Democrats by more than 100,000 voters and account for six of the eight members of its congressional delegation.

Based on my personal experience, I would guess this situation is fairly typical of colleges across the land. At the 75 college campuses I have spoken at in the last few years — in every region of the country, at state schools, private schools, religious schools and technical schools, I have found that the number of professors who are conservative in their outlook usually amounts to a mere handful. And I found them to be more isolated, more hesitant to express their views and more restricted in their opportunities for scholarly advancement than communist and pro-Soviet professors were in the McCarthy period.

Of the 75 colleges at which I spoke, only three invited me officially. By contrast, communists like Angela Davis and racial extremists like Kwame Ture (the former Stokely Carmichael) and the Nation of Islam's infamous Khalid Muhammad are regularly asked to speak by university administrators and student governments, and paid handsome sums to do so. This spring, Davis, whose reported

learning — a political control of academic life unprecedented in the history of our democracy.

fee is \$10,000, was the featured official speaker at the University of Chicago's Martin Luther King Day commemorations. Conservatives like myself, by contrast, have to rely on small conservative student groups for invitations and off-campus organizations for expenses. Wherever I go, I ask the students who invite me how many conservative professors are available to be their official campus advisors. Their answers invariably are: two or three. That is, two or three who are willing to identify themselves openly as conservatives.

This situation did not happen by accident. It is the result of calculated political hiring practices, systematic exclusion and an atmosphere of political intimidation to a degree seen only in communist, fascist and theocratic dictatorships. In this case, however, the state is not the enforcer of political orthodoxy. It is leftist faculty members.

The resulting intellectual environment has been described by literary critic Harold Bloom as "Stalinism without Stalin." ("All of the traits of the Stalinists in the 1930s and 1940s are being repeated in the universities in the 1990s," Bloom observed.) One faculty advisor to

the College Republicans at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, Calif., put it another way in a letter to the Wall Street Journal: "Republican faculty members operate on a 'don't ask, don't tell' basis to the best of our ability. At official faculty meetings, Democratic fund-raising requests, political buttons, bumper stickers and petitions are very publicly circulated, putting non-tenured faculty in a very difficult position."

After the letter-writer says she was "outed" as a non-liberal, a department colleague told her, "We would never have hired you if we'd known you were a Republican."

This situation is now being challenged in a suit brought against the University of California at Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism by Michael Savage, a top-rated — and outspokenly conservative — radio talk show host in the Bay Area. Savage also has a Ph.D., two master's degrees and 18 published works to his credit. Last year, Savage applied for the dean's job at the journalism school, which was advertised in the New York Times. Despite his qualifications, Savage says he was quickly informed by the chairman of the search committee, sociology professor Troy Duster, that he would not even be interviewed for the job. Duster happens

to be an old acquaintance of mine, a Berkeley radical who, clearly, has not had significant second thoughts.

The candidate actually selected for the deanship was Orville Schell, another old radical friend. Schell does not have a Ph.D., and although he was for many years a staff writer for the New Yorker and has written several critically praised books on China, his chief occupation before he acquired the deanship appeared to be operating a cattle ranch he then co-owned in Bolinas, just north of San Francisco.

Schell was what I used to call a Gucci Marxist; his chief credential for the Berkeley deanship seems to be that he has similar politics as Duster and the faculty powers who control journalism school appointments. Savage believes that the placement of the advertisement in the New York Times was little more than a sham to cover a decision already made to hire a political comrade for the position.

Savage decided to fight. He turned to the Individual Rights Foundation (a public interest law group I created) for help. The legal director of the IRF, Patrick Manshardt, filed suit against the University of California Regents and also against Duster — both as an individual and in his capacity as chairman of the

journalism school's search committee.

The case rests on two contentions. The first is that the manner of Schell's appointment constitutes political patronage, which is illegal under the labor laws of the state of California. The second is that the political litmus test for the deanship is a violation of Savage's First Amendment rights, in this case that one may not be excluded from public employment because of political ideas.

The Savage case will perform a public service if it succeeds in highlighting the current political subversion of America's institutions of higher learning. In today's polluted academic atmosphere, "Afrocentric" racists can expound theories of blood destiny and "queer theorists" can defend reckless sexual practices in the face of a mortal epidemic; and they can do so with the imprimatur and all the resources at the university's disposal. And while such charlatans and extremists control entire departments and liberal arts faculties, conservative scholars are treated as pariahs.

The politicization of the university and the debasement of the academic calling is a national disgrace. Savage's suit is a small but meaningful step toward the restoration of democracy and institutional integrity to the nation's university culture. ■

99. St. Paul Pioneer Press

June 15, 1998

State on right path with tests

There's encouraging news in a recent statewide Minnesota poll on student testing. Most responses show a lot of common sense.

The poll, done by the Pioneer Press, KARE 11 and Minnesota Public Radio, found that 65 percent of Minnesotans endorse statewide basic skills testing. People think these tests are one important measure of schools' effectiveness. I agree.

Some education groups strongly resisted statewide tests. They felt that the tests could narrow the curriculum and promote unfair comparisons among schools. These are important concerns — but so far the fears seem to be unfounded.

Many schools are concentrating more on helping youngsters master academic skills. The tests showed thousands of Minnesota students needed more work on understanding what they read and completing story problems in math. The state exams also showed it wasn't just

inner-city youngsters who needed more practice. Thousands of young people in suburban and rural parts of the state also had problems with the tests.

The results also reminded Minnesotans about the value of small schools. Every year some of the highest passing rates have been in rural areas with many low- and moderate-income families.

Common sense and statewide policy are helping ensure that schools won't just concentrate on reading, writing and math. Educators, parents and the broader community want schools to do more. Those views helped shape the Profile of Learning, the second part of Minnesota's new high school graduation requirements.

In order to graduate, students must pass basic skills tests. But they also are expected to demonstrate skills and knowledge in other areas, including research, history, art and science.

It's been tough making these requirements clear and comprehensive. But we've developed a pretty good set of expectations. The Legislature allocated millions of dollars to give teachers time to revise curriculums to help students meet the mandates.

A second major result of the poll is that Minnesotans are deeply split about whether schools should get rewards or be penalized just on the basis of the statewide tests. Between 40 percent and 50 percent of the poll respondents support these ideas, and approximately equal percentages are opposed.

Put me on the opposed side. Experience in other states shows plenty of problems if rewards are offered for higher scores. Many more students were referred to special education classifications where they didn't have to take the tests. Some schools cheated. It was a mess.

Looking at statewide tests is

something like looking at cars' miles per gallon ratings. Most people want to know this, but we want other information, too. That's the direction Minnesota is moving

in. I agree with most Minnesotans — we're moving in the right direction.

Joe Nathan is director of the Center for School Change at the University of

Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. ■

100. Syracuse Post-Standard

06/13/98; Edition: Metro; Section: Editorial; Page A7

VIOLENT ACTS FROM KIDS IS BEHAVIOR WE ALLOW

To the Editor:

Recently, a 12-year-old and a 15-year-old were arrested and charged with reporting bomb threats in city schools that caused evacuations and disrupted classes.

The reaction of the greater number of children to these threats was either complete uninterest or the enjoyment of no school.

Two pre-teens in Arkansas stand accused of killing other children and an adult over a broken romance.

Two pre-teen girls in Florida are gang raped by teen-age boys because, as the

We buy them action figures whose characters murder, kidnap, vaporize, cannibalize and dismember, and these are the "good-guy" action figures. Watch a small child play a video game and listen to his reaction when one of the figures is annihilated.

boys stated, the girls were wearing suggestive clothing.

A 9-year-old is accused of raping an 8-year-old at Delaware School.

A 6- or 7-year-old "beauty queen" is found murdered. Television coverage of her competition shows her on stage discarding one item of clothing at a time.

A child in Oregon is accused of killing other children because his school disciplined him. Witnesses report his face was "blank."

What has happened to our children? When did innocence give way to street-smart sophistication? Might the

We have all heard that it takes a village to raise a child. But when the village shows tacit approval of unacceptable behavior, we cannot then condemn the child whose care is the responsibility of the village.

Let our children be children. Let them

answer possibly be found in what we adults allow to be permissible behavior?

We applaud the death penalty in the name of "justice" but are completely mystified when teens kill each other for the same ideal.

We tell them smoking is physically and morally wrong, but guns are physically and morally OK. We allow sexually explicit television and advertising and wonder at the record number of teen pregnancies; why pregnancy has become a "badge"; why young children physically understand what rape is.

experience the innocence of childhood and the gradual growing into adulthood. The kids today will be our future. The question before us: What kind of future do we want?

ELIZABETH TUCCI

Syracuse ■

101. Memphis Commercial Appeal

06/13/98; Edition: Final; Section: Viewpoint; Page A9

TEEN VIOLENCE SPAWNED BY GUNS AND CULTURAL ROT

By Albert R. Hunt

THERE has been a predictable political response after the rash of tragic killings by children at schools from Springfield, Ore., to Jonesboro, Ark.

Liberals cry for tougher gun control laws: If only these deranged youths didn't have easy access to guns, many of these atrocities wouldn't happen, they say.

Conservatives place much of the blame on popular culture; Hollywood and television are overwhelmingly violence-oriented, the argument goes, and the music industry is a real villain for pandering to the worst instincts of kids by glorifying sexual obscenities and bestial brutality.

Both arguments are exaggerations. Some of these teenage perpetrators don't fit into any stereotypes. Slate, Microsoft's

always interesting on-line magazine, noted that Kip Kinkel, the teenager in Springfield who is charged with killing his parents and two schoolmates, came from a good family that tried to teach him how to use guns safely and didn't give him easy access. His only known entertainment vices were cartoons.

Others are simply mentally unbalanced kids, a type that has always existed: Luke Woodham, the 17-year-old Pearl, Miss., kid who killed his mother and two classmates, testified that demons instructed him to do it.

More important, however, both sides also make important points. There is room for common cause, say some diverse but very smart people who worry a lot about violence: politicians such as Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.) and Bill

Bennett, a prominent Republican, and scholars such as criminologist John Dilulio and psychiatrist Alvin Poussaint.

"The music pounds and pounds with messages of violence and degradation of women; if you talk to people on the streets, they will tell you this is public enemy number one," says Dilulio of Princeton University. But he also suggests that for any antiviolence program to work, "you have to make it impossible for kids to get easy access to guns."

Similarly, Poussaint, who teaches at Harvard, notes that easy access to guns "makes the problems much worse. Gun defenders say you could still murder with a knife but one kid I was interviewing pointed out that you can't have a drive-by shooting with a knife." But he also

believes the culture's romanticization of violence - in movies, television and music - "certainly contributes to a general disregard for authority; children see or hear this over and over again and they become a little bit more numb to violence."

Lieberman and Bennett have teamed up to try to focus public scrutiny on what they term "cultural rot," ranging from gangster rap music to Jerry Springer's television show. They have embarrassed some major corporations, such as Seagram's, by spotlighting how they reap big profits from these obscenities. Bennett, the conservative icon, says: "It's just dumb not to recognize how dangerous it is to so easily put guns in kids' hands."

Of course there are larger societal problems. But while violence in general has declined over the last several years, it is rising among teenagers, and certainly

Nothing is more offensive than some of the music. After Mitchell Johnson, 13, and Drew Golden, 11, killed five people and injured 10 at Westside Middle School near Jonesboro, one of the teachers conducted an exhaustive survey. The results showed that Mitchell Johnson was a fanatical devotee of two gangster-rap artists, the late Tupac Shakur and Bone Thugs & Harmony. Both are full of vulgarity, are degrading to women and advocate blasting people with guns. In the three-school survey, a

any short-term efforts to address this should focus on both guns and popular culture.

Movie actor Charlton Heston, the new president of the National Rifle Association, insisted this week that the school shootings were "a child issue, not a gun issue." Does Heston think that the people killed near Jonesboro would have been just as vulnerable to a bow and arrow? Or does he believe the 4-year-old in Greensboro, N.C., who shot and killed his 6-year-old neighbor in April is a "child problem"?

Next week the most important antigun legislation of this session will be offered in Congress by Democratic Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, a suburban New York nurse and mother who got into politics after her husband was killed by a crazed gunman on a commuter train. The measure would crack down on dealers who sell to kids, require manufacturers to make safer guns majority of kids listened to these groups and said their parents didn't have a clue as to their lyrics.

Bill Bennett and Joe Lieberman know there are clear First Amendment issues here and wisely don't advocate any bans. But they want to embarrass those who produce this trash. "The weapon of choice for our side is shame," says Bennett. "We have to be ashamed instead of this anything goes crap."

Defenders of this rot insist there is no reliable data that link violence to culture.

and penalize adults who allow children easy access to a firearm that is then used to kill or injure someone.

The gun lobby, with its huge campaign contributions, is convinced Republican congressional leaders will thwart this initiative. They probably are right, but some politicians may pay a price, as did McCarthy's NRA-backing predecessor. Polls indicate strong support for such measures.

There's also a growing public backlash against the plethora of violent movies, television, video games and music. David Walsh, director of the National Institute on Media and the Family, notes that it's estimated the average American kid has seen 200,000 acts of violence on television by the time he or she graduates from high school. Try to take your kids to a movie that is devoid of violence or sex. Or just look at some of the graphic violence in the best-selling video games. That flies in the face of common sense. If Frank Sinatra songs make people feel romantic and John Philip Sousa makes people feel patriotic, then the obscene violence of shock rocker Marilyn Manson or gangsta rapper Snoop Doggy Dog might encourage impressionable and troubled teenagers to feel perverted or violent.

Albert R. Hunt is a political columnist for The Wall Street Journal.

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EDITORIAL

102. Seattle Times

June 16, 1998

Taking a strong stand for affirmative action

MOST pollsters believe Initiative 200, the proposal to unravel affirmative action in this state, will win next November. But the predictable could become unpredictable if people like University of Washington President Richard McCormick continue to show guts and leadership on this touchy issue.

Carefully, yet with a degree of boldness, McCormick used his part of the commencement proceedings at Husky Stadium last weekend to speak in favor of affirmative action in education.

In his third spring commencement address, the UW president accurately described affirmative action as "an

imperfect but highly effective means for expanding opportunity, broadening the pool of people considered, opening doors that used to be closed."

Today's colleges and universities, he noted, have five-and-a-half times as many African Americans as they did 30 years ago. In the last two decades, the number of Native American students increased 76 percent; the number of Chicano-Latinos jumped 200 percent.

"Who wants to turn his or her back on this record of American achievement?" McCormick asked. "Who wants to return to a time when only advantaged white men could obtain the most prestigious

university degrees or advance to the most respected and lucrative positions in our society? Who wants to live in a country where opportunity depends on your gender or your race. Not I - and I hope not you."

Not us and not the dean of the College of Engineering, either. Dean Denice Denton praised McCormick's words, adding she would not be where she is today without affirmative action.

Some advisers urged McCormick not to get involved. Jittery lawyers combed through his speech. He never mentioned the initiative by name and never specifically urged anyone to vote in a

particular manner.

McCormick proved, however, he understands the leadership role he plays

in this community. He is to be congratulated for advancing the discussion and taking an important stand.■

103. New York Post

June 16, 1998

A FINAL PUSH FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS

With legislative adjournment looming, a key item on Gov. Pataki's election-year agenda remains unresolved: parental choice on public schools.

There are no one-size-fits-all answers when it comes to failing public schools, but charter schools - the subject of a Pataki bill dominating the discussion in Albany this week - must play a huge role in any urban-education rescue effort.

There is reason to hope that Pataki's bill might actually pass. Which raises the

Pataki's bill has been bitterly criticized - in public - by the United Federation of Teachers. Neither the Board of Education nor Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew has had much positive to say about the governor's bill. And, just yesterday, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver appeared to rule out passage of the measure before the Legislature adjourns at week's end.

But supporters of the plan privately express measured optimism concerning

question: Why is this so crucial for the future of New York state's schoolchildren?

Charter schools are non-traditional public schools. Funded solely by tax dollars, by law they cannot discriminate in admissions and are subject to the same oversight that public schools receive.

But, unlike public schools, a charter school can be shut down for failure to meet the educational objectives set down in its incorporating document - its its chances. And opponents privately concede that some version of the measure may indeed become law this year.

Pataki has some leverage. He holds the key to restoring salary bonuses for teachers - which some union leaders desperately need to secure their futures with rank-and-file voters. If New York City could get charter schools, the teacher bonuses would be a small price to pay, even at a cost of \$75 million.

Rudy Crew also wants something

"charter."

Thirty other states - including New Jersey and Massachusetts - permit charter schools (as does the nation's capital). While not every such school has been - to put it mildly - an unqualified success, overall they've established a respectable track record.

This success poses a potentially mortal threat to the status quo - and, in particular, to public-school teachers' unions.

Pataki can give - hundreds of millions in new school construction that were explicitly denied to the school system by a vote of the public in November. To this, the governor must say no, whatever the consequences.

Supporters of public-school reform should cross their fingers this week and wish Pataki well in the smoke-filled rooms of Albany.■

104. Christian Science Monitor

June 16, 1998

Saving Public Education

Public education, the melting pot for each next generation of Americans, is healthy in much of the nation. But where it fails it does so calamitously.

That's usually in inner-city schools. So it's not surprising that all kinds of cures are proposed to help what are often the students and families least able to help themselves.

Those cures have included: (1) creation of specialized public magnet schools, and moves to install teacher and pupil performance tests; (2) addition of state-approved charter schools to compete with lagging public schools; (3) provision of government-funded vouchers that help pay tuition for students switching to private or parochial schools.

We continue to feel that the first two of these three cures are useful to improving public education quality. The third, despite good intentions, is a recipe

for rescuing some and dooming a majority. In short, a recipe for tilting America toward the class divisions that in the past plagued parts of Europe. Last week, the direction of the American educational system veered in this risky direction.

* The Supreme Court of Wisconsin upheld a Milwaukee voucher program that allows public dollars to flow to private and parochial schools.

* House and Senate conferees put final touches on a bill that would federally underwrite, to the tune of \$1.6 billion over 10 years, tax-free educational savings accounts to encourage parents to send their children to private schools.

* Two wealthy businessmen announced a national scholarship fund that will match money raised locally to allow poor children to attend private or church-affiliated schools.

This last item, we hasten to say, is of

less concern than the first two. Private efforts to expand educational opportunity, in this case led by New York financier Theodore Forstmann and Wal-Mart heir John Walton, deserve praise. But their decision to direct the aid exclusively toward private or parochial schooling adds to a picture that should give the public pause, for two reasons.

First, the prospect that public schools will grow even weaker as money and students exit for private options. There simply aren't enough such options to absorb all the students - especially immigrant and minority children - who need better schooling. The improvement of public education remains a national priority.

Second, valid church-state concerns. Any public policy that channels tax dollars - by way of parents in the Milwaukee case - to institutions devoted to teaching not only the ABCs but

religious tenets, violates the constitutional separation of church and state. Further, church-related schools taking this money are opening their doors

to more interference from the state than they may now recognize.

So, encourage private philanthropists to fund whatever scholarships they can.

But beware tendencies to disinvest in public education and ignore church-state concerns. History shows that road isn't nearly so bright as advocates proclaim. ■

105. Newsday

06/15/98; Edition: ALL EDITIONS; Section: VIEWPOINTS; Page A26

Investing in Ideas About Schooling - and in Kids

If it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to go to heaven, then three very rich

The Lauder brothers are the heirs to Estee Lauder, the cosmetics giant. While Leonard has been quietly running the family business, Ronald bought himself some political notoriety by waging a particularly nasty and expensive - \$12 million of his own money - campaign in the 1989 mayoral Republican primary against Rudolph Giuliani. But way back when, both Lauder boys graduated from one of the great U.S. educational institutions, the Bronx High School of Science. Now, older, wiser and a lot richer, they have together pledged \$1

New Yorkers, Theodore Forstmann and Leonard and Ronald Lauder, have made at least some headway in that difficult million to their alma mater and promised to raise \$10 million more for an endowment for the school.

Forstmann, who made his money buying and selling companies, from Ziff-Davis to Gulfstream, chose a different philanthropic route. Last week he announced the creation of the Children's Scholarship Fund, whose goal is to provide \$200 million over the next four years to finance private school "scholarships" for inner-city kids in New York, Washington, Chicago and Los Angeles.

upward quest.

The Lauders are reinforcing public education, while Forstmann is pumping up private and parochial schooling in a way that could be a model for government-funded vouchers to pay for needy students' education. In looking to help youngsters learn, there is no one right approach; what is important is to see what works best in the marketplace of ideas. Meanwhile, a lot of kids will find their own individual upward paths made smoother and straighter, thanks to Forstmann and the Lauder brothers. ■

106. Seattle Post-Intelligencer

06/15/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page A7

ZERO OUT ZERO TOLERANCE

Zero tolerance. It sounds so right: No more whittling away at standards of conduct until the standards are gone.

Then comes reality. A boy brings a key-ring size plastic gun to school, something he could have found in a CrackerJack box, and he is suspended. Why? Zero tolerance. No guns of any kind, whether carbon steel, plastic or folded paper.

It has struck us more than once that zero tolerance has become a synonym for zero thought, zero judgment and zero reasoning. It is a policy devised by lawyers to keep administrators out of arguments and out of court. It does so at the cost of making those administrators

into fools.

That was illustrated neatly in a recent story from Denver. Last month, as part of a study of French culture, a group of 13- and 14-year-olds in Denver-area schools went to Paris for a week of immersion in ways French. One of the behaviors of that alien culture is to drink wine, even at the tender age of 13. On their last evening, the students were given thimblefuls of red vino with their duck and snails.

Word reached a parental adviser in Denver. "They tasted wine," the adviser said. "But it was not a wine-tasting. They did not rinse and spit. They may have ingested alcohol."

Oh! It did not matter that wine was

legal in France, where it is served in some high school cafeterias. The Cherry Creek School District has a policy of zero tolerance. No exceptions: not on trips abroad, under the supervision of adults, in the course of a large meal and in a dose that could hardly inebriate a cat. No. No. The school superintendent stepped in and transferred the principal out of his job.

That principal was taught a lesson: Don't weigh the real meaning of things, don't make any judgments, don't think. Follow the rules.

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107. Portland Press Herald

06/14/98; Edition: CITY; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 5C

YOUTH VIOLENCE CRIES OUT FOR ATTENTION FROM STATE LEADERS

A FATHER'S FEAR THAT HIS SON 'WILL WALK INTO SCHOOL AND SHOOT EVERYONE IN SIGHT' SERVES AS A WARNING.

Despite low voter turnout, Maine's political primaries have set the stage for important state and federal elections this fall.

Meanwhile, in Washington, one of those election campaigns already is under way. On Primary Day, first lady Hillary Rodham-Clinton joined Maine Rep. Tom Allen and other Democrats to launch a major - and much-needed - expansion of federal child-care legislation.

"(The schools') protocol is not comprehensive enough to deal with the issues we are dealing with today. We need something more consistent and more comprehensive," says Portland Police Chief Michael Chitwood. And Portland School Superintendent Mary Jane McCalmon, with experience both in rural and urban Maine, agrees.

Addressing school violence and school safety, calmly and effectively, is a challenge worthy of the best Maine can bring to it. Gov. Angus King can help. He can convene a special commission to help map Maine's way through this deep and dangerous thicket. And he can do it this summer.

Schools will soon be out. That offers a breather, but no time to waste. The sooner that public and private leaders, educators, police officials, parents, students and mental health experts focus creative attention on youth violence, the safer for Maine kids.

The need for decisive public action was driven home for me by an experienced educator and counselor from central Maine who contacted me shortly after I wrote about youth violence two weeks ago. Two concerned parents had brought their 12-year-old son to her this spring to talk about placing him in an

Yet child care, so vital to working families, is only one of a broad spectrum of problems involving children that challenge candidates to think and act in new and creative ways. Of those problems, none is more ominous than youth violence.

No stump speech can define it. No quick fix can cure it. No candidate's winning personal charm can make it go away. Youth violence, pervasive, sudden education program designed for children at high risk of failure in public school.

"On the evening I met with the parents and their son, I was shocked at how this child treated his parents and me," the 44-year-old counselor said. "He was rude, belligerent and totally defiant. He ended up walking out."

After he left, his father spoke a single sentence that chilled the counselor then, and chills her now. "His dad told me, 'He's the kid that will walk into school and shoot everyone in sight.'"

How does this counselor, whose identity I agreed to protect, rate the risk of that father's words coming true? "I rate it as high, as definitely high, unless this kid is getting some serious help," she said. "I think it is a legitimate risk. And for a parent to say something like that, it scares the hell out of me. It really does."

Indeed, hell can be amazingly close at hand.

"This kid was scary," the counselor explained. So is his history. Angry emotional explosions and cursing are part of it - but only part. "When he was 10, he was throwing knives and threatening his mother with knives," the counselor said.

At one point, the boy attacked his pregnant mother with a knife. At another, he stuffed a trowel full of dirt down a

and unpredictable, is a national phenomenon. It is rooted in alienation, encouraged by a culture marinating in violence and brought to flash point in schools by easy access to guns.

All of those factors operating in the nation operate, too, here in Maine. And here, as elsewhere, there exists a critical lag.

younger sister's throat.

Through the horror stories reverberates the father's spoken fear: "He's the kid that will walk into school and shoot everyone in sight."

Even so, help for a child at such terrible risk is not easy to find. The boy refused the option the counselor represented. He has disappeared from her radar screen. "I have no idea where he is right now," she told me. "I left it open with his mom that she could contact me if she wanted to."

Meanwhile, the counselor hopes the troubled child, for child he is, is finding help within the walls of a residential treatment program. But sustaining that hope isn't easy.

"There's no place to put this kid," she said. Public education programs, she noted, are "all tied up in money - dollars and cents." And often the money runs out. Placements collapse, evaluations fall behind, backlogs build up, and with them rises the number of children for whom effective intervention may come too late.

The counselor's bottom line: I think a awful lot of the needs of our kids are going unmet.

Count among them the basic need for safety in public school. ■

108. Tacoma News Tribune

06/15/98 Section: Editorial; Page A8

TRUE VOUCHER TRIAL IN CLASS, NOT COURT

The Wisconsin Supreme Court last week strengthened the argument that state-funded tuition vouchers - even when used at religious schools - are constitutional. That doesn't mean they are necessarily a good idea. The value of vouchers must ultimately be proven in the classroom, not the courtroom, and the educational case for them has yet to be made. The Wisconsin ruling is welcome chiefly because it allows the nation's most important experiment with vouchers to proceed in Milwaukee.

The Wisconsin legislature launched this experiment in 1990 when it offered to let Milwaukee's poorest children attend nonreligious private schools at state expense. The idea was to give poor families the same educational choices affluent families enjoy - and in the bargain force the city's failing public schools to compete for students.

The legislature extended the policy in 1995 to include religious schools, a move that teachers unions and the American Civil Liberties Union seized on to argue

that the program threatened the constitutional separation of church and state.

Last week's ruling undercut that complaint. Relying on federal First Amendment precedents, the court concluded that the program had a legitimate secular purpose, was evenhandedly neutral in dealing with sectarian and nonsectarian schools, and didn't promote excessive entanglement between government and religion. It held in effect that the vouchers subsidized

family choice, not religion per se.

On the surface, the Milwaukee program seems consistent with established policies that permit older students to use Pell grants, G.I. Bill benefits and other forms of government financial aid at church-affiliated colleges. Voucher opponents plan to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, but the Wisconsin ruling is at least arguably in line with the

high court's recent thinking in related cases.

Constitutional or not, though, tuition vouchers are risky. Critics fear vouchers will enable the most motivated parents to move the most capable students into private schools, turning public schools into dismal warehouses for the poor, the unparented and the handicapped.

This is a serious enough concern that

any private tuition subsidies should be limited - as in Milwaukee - precisely to those poor students whose school districts are already failing them and who have no real alternatives. If it can be shown that vouchers don't hurt public schools - or that the competition actually improves public education - the experiment should be expanded further. But not before. ■

109. New York Daily News

06/15/98Section: Editorial; Page 22

THE MYTHS ABOUT SPECIAL ED

SPECIAL-EDUCATION REFORMS proposed by a mayoral task force last week offer hope that tens of thousands of city school children languishing in an educational prison will have their sentences commuted.

But for that hope to become reality, New Yorkers must first discard the myths surrounding this emotional subject. It won't be easy. Educators whose jobs depend on special ed and "activists," who fear that any challenge to the status quo will jeopardize the truly disabled, are doing their best to cloud the truth.

So here are some key points to ponder:

Myth: Every child in special ed really belongs there.

Reality: Only 10% of the 161,000 kids in special ed are the severely disabled children for whom the label was created. A 1995 New York University study showed that 15% of sampled children classified as learning disabled actually met the state's mandated criteria.

Reality: Those 10% have been assigned to the Board of Education's District 75. They will not be affected by any of the changes.

Reality: The special ed population has skyrocketed more than 370% since 1975 from 35,000 students to 161,000. Last year, the special ed rolls grew by 10,000 kids, while mainstream enrollment increased by only 7,000. Nearly 13.5% of the city's school population is in special education far above the national urban average of 10.4%. The program's budget now exceeds \$2 billion, about one out of every four dollars spent.

Reality: The Board of Ed spends \$300 million a year just to evaluate students for special ed and an average of about \$20,000 on each kid in the program each year, compared with \$6,183 for general-

education students. But fewer than 2.2% progress enough to be mainstreamed back into regular classes. Thousands of children spend their entire academic life in special ed, leaving school with what amounts to an attendance diploma.

Special education was shaped by a consent decree the city signed after a class-action suit, *Jose P. vs. Ambach*, charged the state had failed to provide for students with physical handicaps and mental illness.

As a result, the city established the most demanding and most absurd special-education requirements in the nation. Which, as the statistics show, have little to do with helping the truly disabled. And everything to do with creating jobs for teachers and teachers' aides, psychologists, evaluators, investigators, specialists and, of course, lawyers.

WHO IS IN special education, and why? A disproportionate number are black and Hispanic males. Overall, 38% have reading difficulties and speech and counseling needs. They may need some special help, but there is no reason why they can't receive it in regular classrooms.

The task force recommendations, shaped by Peter Powers, the former first deputy mayor, and Chancellor Rudy Crew, will make that possible. No state or city legislation is needed. Crew plans to impose some of the changes himself, and others need only Board of Education approval. The board shouldn't hesitate. The changes are sensible and long overdue. They include:

Within two years, every child must be evaluated to determine who is truly disabled and who merely is being warehoused.

Evaluators and support staff will report to school principals. Currently,

they report to a central board administrator who has no connection to the school.

Evaluations would be privatized to take them out of the hands of those who have the most to gain from expanding special ed the 1,000 three-member teams who now enroll more than 85% of kids they see. The teams have no other duties, meaning they have hours each week of free time.

The evaluation process is supposed to answer two basic questions: Is this child disabled? Would this child benefit from special-education services?

For most kids, the answer to question 1 is no. But for question 2, it's safe to say that most students would benefit from special services smaller classes, more individual attention, a focused reading plan, their own guidance session, speech services and a resource room. But this mandate-driven method means the 90% of special ed kids who are not disabled are getting those services at the expense of all the other kids.

There is little doubt that money is the root of this evil. The funding imbalance is driven in part by wacky state formulas: The more kids in special ed, the more money each school gets. It's simple math.

Beyond that, the evaluators all United Federation of Teachers members are paid more than teachers. And last year alone, they clocked more than \$10 million in overtime. Overtime? They average 1.5 evaluations a week and are frequently seen playing cards or lollygagging in their offices. That's not education, it's larceny. And it's the kids who are being robbed.

Fortunately, all that can change. As soon as the heartrending myths of special education are tempered with reality. ■

110. New York Post

June 15, 1998

THE BIG MATH-SCORE SPIN

A week after the folks down at 110 Livingston St. began popping champagne corks over some marginal improvements in reading scores, a similar celebration broke out with the announcement of marginal improvements in math scores. Marginal increases are always better than marginal decreases. But a closer look at the data on the math scores reveals that there is less cause for celebrating than meets the eye.

The good news is that 63.1 percent of students who took the test scored at or above grade level, an improvement of 2.7 percentage points over last year.

Still, the objections we raised to the reading results remain valid. First, it is not entirely clear what "grade level" means anymore. Second, the scores have been artificially inflated by the removal of a large part of the school population from the statistics.

Among the students who don't take the test are those in special ed. That sounds

sensible, even though it does skew the numbers upward in a distorted way. It's worth remembering that statistics like these are kept not to bolster self-esteem or to give press-release authors something to crow about. They are kept in order to give everybody an objective accounting of the state of the education of schoolkids in New York City.

But the special-ed case is arguable. The real game-playing comes with 21,000 so-called "Limited English Proficient" students who were also exempted from taking the test.

We're talking about a math test. What does a kid's limited ability to speak English have to do with his mathematics skills?

We could understand exempting large numbers of such students from, say, an English-reading test. But math is a bit different. Math knows no language, and even where language is a factor - instructions and word problems, for

example - translation can be provided.

Indeed, 22,065 "Limited English Proficient" students did take the test in Spanish, Chinese and Haitian Creole translations.

It's valuable to learn that they scored poorly - only 21.8 percent were at or above grade level. Knowing this is an aid to helping them improve in the future; perhaps the low scores are indicative of the level of instruction they are receiving in a school system that segregates them from their peers rather than immersing them in the English language.

That sad number also suggests why it was useful to keep those 21,000 other "Limited English Proficient" kids out of the mix - because if they had taken the test, the champagne corks wouldn't have been popping on Livingston Street.

New Yorkers are not getting an accurate picture of exactly how well (or how poorly) the schools are performing. That's no cause for celebration. ■

111. The Sacramento Bee

06/12/98; Edition: METRO FINAL; Section: EDITORIALS; Page B6

ZERO-TOLERANCE HYPOCRISY

SCHOOLS SHOULD BAN ALCOHOL-RELATED PROM KEEPSAKES

When a Bella Vista High School student tripped on the hem of her long gown at the senior ball recently, chaperones wondered if perhaps the girl was intoxicated. If so, she'd be guilty of violating the Fair Oaks school's policy of "zero tolerance" for alcohol and drugs — cause for immediate ejection from the ball, plus suspension from school and prohibition from attending all end-of-year festivities, including graduation itself.

Principal Jim Reidt won't talk about the case specifically, but says the strict rules were aimed at putting teeth in "zero tolerance" policies at a time when mere suspension from classes didn't seem to be impressing students. When the girl

Policies vary at high schools throughout the region, although all have strict disciplinary procedures for intoxication or student possession of alcohol. Some, such as Rio Americano, banned alcohol-related mementos several years ago in favor of photo-related souvenirs. In Sacramento city schools, students are responsible for choosing

admitted that she and friends had earlier sipped a glass of champagne with her parents, before the kids piled into a limousine that took them to dinner and the ball, she was immediately suspended. Neither the girl nor her parents objected to her punishment of "social probation," but thought that excluding her from the graduation ceremony was a bit harsh.

However, the girl did get to keep the party favor that she purchased along with her senior ball ticket: a champagne flute, engraved with the high school's name. Engraved champagne flutes? Why not ashtrays, or perhaps silver-plated cigarette-paper holders?

Bella Vista is not alone. "That's prom items, a spokeswoman said, and some opt for the glasses, or candles inside champagne flutes, over alternatives such as engraved key chains and picture frames.

Bella Vista's principal acknowledges the alcohol-suggestive keepsakes send mixed messages in an era of zero tolerance, adding that principals in the

exactly what we handed out at this school — the boys got a beer mug and the girls got a champagne glass," said a receptionist at San Juan High School. "We got a lot of calls from parents asking what we were doing."

It's no wonder parents didn't get it. Flutes, sniffers, beer mugs and goblets, engraved with such stirring phrases as "A Night in Paradise, (your school's name here)" or "Just Tonight" fill page after page of catalogs hawking prom paraphernalia to high school students. The message — the prom is a grown-up affair, and grown-ups drink alcohol — is as blatant as a billboard where only sexy people smoke.

San Juan Unified School District have agreed to forbid them beginning next year. It's a tough policy to change, he says, because even some parents were "clamoring" for the glassware.

Sadly, not much can be done about parents who want to buy champagne glasses for their 17-year-olds, or send them off to the prom after having a drink.

But high schools should put an immediate end to the hypocrisy of preaching sobriety while pushing the accouterments of drinking. ■

112. The Seattle Times

06/13/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page A13

NEW TESTS IN SCHOOLS DEMAND NEW THINKING

TESTS are the last thing kids will worry about this summer vacation. But for Washington educators, they are one of the first.

Now is a critical time for Washington's public education system as the state's new assessment tests take hold. The people who designed the tests after the state Legislature in 1993 mandated education reform have two projects: making sure the public understands the tests, and figuring out what to do with the results. Both projects are under construction.

For now, parents should heed the advice of state schools Superintendent Terry Bergeson, who stresses there are better ways to measure educational quality than by traditional rank-order lists of school test scores. When scores are

announced this fall, it will be important to evaluate a school based on its own past performance, not its ranking relative to Mercer Island or other high-scoring schools.

Even this method of evaluation has pitfalls, however, particularly when the state enacts rewards and sanctions for performance. For example, a principal might not want to start a magnet program that benefits children with dyslexia - or any program that could drag down a school's test scores. Bergeson and the Commission on Student Learning, which oversees the test, are discussing ways to weight scores so that schools aren't punished for serving the needs of children with disabilities and special needs.

As with anything unfamiliar and

sweeping, the tests have a few bugs to work out. How much uniformity should there be in administering the tests? How much leeway for students with special needs? How much instructional time should be sacrificed for tests? Though relatively minor, these are the questions that shape credibility.

Washington has made an enormous investment in education reform, both financially and philosophically. It will spend nearly \$5 million this year on the test alone, not including professional development. The next five years will reveal whether the test is worth it.

But already, classrooms statewide are starting to change as teachers help students better express their skills and knowledge. Politics and policies aside, that is where the joy of learning begins. ■

113. Sacramento Bee

June 15, 1998

High school dropouts: Keeping numbers down as expectations rise

It was billed as good news, and from the "half-full, not half-empty" perspective, the latest high school dropout report does seem encouraging.

According to figures provided by high schools to the state Department of Education, the dropout rate has declined for the fourth year in a row, with improvement shown in every ethnic group. The numbers — down from 3.9 percent in 1995-96 to 3.3 percent in

As politicians call for an end to "social promotion," at the same time demanding higher standards and threatening low-performing schools with sanctions, it's imperative that a more accurate system for collecting dropout and other data be put in place. Funding is now available, and the Department of Education is in the early stages of developing a computerized system able to track student attendance and progress accurately. Until that system is up and running statewide, about three to five

1996-97 — translate to 51,550 high school dropouts, 1,780 of them in Sacramento County.

Because schools could conceivably fudge on the numbers, collect data haphazardly or report it inaccurately, the report might mask a dropout rate that's higher than the numbers reveal. But because the figures don't reflect students who go on to get their GED or return to school after months of absence, reality years from now, there's no way for the state to be certain which students are in school, or how well they're performing in the classroom.

Meanwhile, all the educational reforms in the world won't help kids perform if they don't stay in school. If the dropout rate is to go down as standards go up, school districts must be given support for alternative programs targeting students at risk of giving up on education altogether. Programs aimed at keeping pregnant teens in school, along with

also could be rosier than the report indicates.

The notoriously troubled Compton Unified School District, for example, until 1995 was reporting unbelievably low dropout rates, on a par with the most successful districts in the state. (With new management, the district began reporting more realistic numbers, above 8 percent.)

options for disengaged students — independent study and magnet and charter schools — are showing promise in districts all over the state. Anti-truancy programs, which combine strict reporting of absences along with follow-through and services including tutoring for truant students, appear to be working in Sacramento and elsewhere to keep kids from dropping out. When handing kids higher expectations, schools shouldn't lose track of those already struggling to succeed. ■

114. Boston Herald

06/14/98; Edition: A1; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 030

Kids win in Milwaukee

The nation's schoolchildren won a decisive victory in a ruling this past week by the Wisconsin Supreme Court that allows Milwaukee parents receiving publicly funded vouchers to use those stipends at religious schools.

Under the Milwaukee plan, children from poor families are given \$5,000 a year in tax-funded vouchers to attend the private school of their choice. Pending the resolution of a constitutional challenge, the program excluded religious schools.

According to the justices, including parochial schools won't violate the First Amendment. A student qualifies for the program "not because he or she is a Catholic, a Jew, a Muslim or an atheist; it is because he or she is from a poor family and is a student in the embattled Milwaukee Public Schools," the court ruled.

Currently, 23 private schools take Milwaukee students under the voucher

program. Now, an additional 80 schools (mostly Catholic and Lutheran) will be able to participate. In the past, a lack of schools - not a lack of applicants - has held the program back.

Also last week, the Boston City Council was told the city's public schools are in hopeless disarray and only a return to neighborhood schools will save them.

At the Woodrow Wilson Middle School, according to the organization Boston's Children First, 94 percent of seventh-graders scored poor or failing grades on a standardized math test, but all were promoted to the next grade.

While there's nothing wrong with neighborhood schools, clearly they aren't the answer to the crisis in public education. Yes, a return to neighborhood schools will greatly increase the chances for genuine parental involvement, which in turn can only help improve what goes on inside those facilities. But all of that takes time and effort, and with every

passing day some child is being lost to a system grown complacent.

Real competition - through charter schools and private schools made available through vouchers (publicly or privately funded) - is the best way to make a difference.

There's a growing awareness of this. A business group, the Children's Scholarship Fund, announced it will raise \$200 million to allow 50,000 inner-city children to attend private schools over the next four years. (Boston has been invited to participate.) Similar philanthropic initiatives have begun in a number of cities.

Giving poor children a choice in education is an idea so sensible - and in many ways so easy to accomplish - that it's beginning to make real progress in the courts and within the business community.■

115. The Tampa Tribune

06/14/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: COMMENTARY; Page 2

Gore's tax finally shows up on radar

Vice President Al Gore warns that pulling the plug on the E-rate program would close the door on our children's future. Some translation is required.

E-rate stands for "education rate," which is a euphemism for a new telephone tax being collected to connect schools and libraries to the Internet. "Pulling the plug" on this tax means pulling off its disguise as "cost breaks" for schools and libraries and clearly

The plan is for schools and libraries to be reimbursed based on the percentage of subsidized lunches served to schoolchildren. The higher the percentage of needy children, the higher the payback, up to a maximum of 90 percent. For example, a school in a county in which 75 percent of the children get a subsidized lunch can qualify for a 90 percent payback: If it were to spend \$100,000 on new wiring, it could pay \$10,000 and the contractor would bill the Schools and Libraries Corp. for the remaining \$90,000. Another agency, the Universal Service

identifying it as a consumer tax.

What the vice president really hates is the term "Gore tax," but the name fits because he is one of its top advocates.

To "close the door on our children's future" is to identify this tax on your telephone bill, because to identify it is to raise questions about it - questions Congress finds embarrassing, such as how did the federal government get so deeply involved in the operation of local Administrative Co., would actually mail the check.

The subsidies cover such expenses as wiring, switches, all commercially available telecommunications services, and even what the government calls POTS, or "plain old telephone service."

Whether it makes sense for a county school to send its telephone bill to a federal bureaucracy for payment is a subject that hasn't received much debate in Congress. To question it now, according to Gore, the computer industry, school advocates and library champions, is to slam the door of progress in the

schools and libraries?

The Federal Communications Commission wants telephone companies silently to absorb more than \$2 billion in taxes each year. That money goes to a brand-new bureaucracy, the Schools and Libraries Corp., which will sort through tens of thousands of requests for cash to decide who gets what.

faces of our children.

A spokeswoman for the American Library Association even called those who question the tax the "forces of darkness."

The forces of light in this case are actually AT&T, MCI and the other long-distance providers who are telling their customers about the tax. Starting July 1, MCI residential customers will see a new line on their bills, a tax equal to 5.9 percent of interstate and international calls.

The more long-distance calls you make, the more you must subsidize

education through the Gore tax.

When we first heard of this tax early last year, we questioned whether a federal telephone tax is the best way to provide extra money for local education. We wondered if schools would lose their incentive to keep telephone bills low with the federal government picking up most of the tab.

We wondered if state and local governments would be tempted to use

this new tax as an excuse to cut the local education budget, just as the Legislature used lottery revenues to replace money going to schools from the general fund.

These questions have not yet been debated, much less fully answered.

With long-distance rates falling, the FCC apparently hoped it could grab a few percentage points of long-distance revenues without anyone noticing.

Now that the public has noticed, Gore

and other defenders of the new bureaucracy are hiding behind the static of misleading words, such as E-rate, price breaks, discounts and slamming doors on children. What they don't want to talk about is a new tax that makes it 5 or 6 percent more expensive for children to call their grandmother if she happens to live out of state. ■

116. Denver Post

June 15, 1998

Teaching the teachers

When Boulder Valley students posted their highest gain in standardized test scores in two decades, they proved the worth of improved teacher training.

Grades three, five, seven and 10 took the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills in April. Scores released this week place them five to 13 points higher than anticipated in reading, with fifth-graders gaining 12 points on average in reading plus 16 points higher than expected in math.

The Boulder Valley School District spent \$300,000 over the past year to improve teacher training, primarily in reading for kindergarten through third grade.

Good teaching - with an emphasis on reading - is essential to such improvements, as Denver Public Schools also has learned. DPS spent \$2.7 million in 1996-97 to put 232 reading assistants in first-grade classrooms. At the end of that school year, standardized test scores

were up for the first time in five years.

And after DPS added reading assistants to second grade and improved-teacher training for 1997-98, scores rose even more last month. Second-graders showed the biggest improvement on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, rising from the bottom third in the nation in 1993-94 to the 51st percentile this year.

For both school districts, the proof is in the pudding. Student achievement soars when administrators improve teacher training and turn their focus to beginning reading.

The National Institutes of Health deem reading problems a major public health threat. The heart of the problem, researchers say, is poor teacher training in reading instruction.

Says G. Reid Lyon, an NIH neuropsychologist, "Teacher preparation is a scandal. Most teachers will tell you they don't have any idea what we're

talking about when we're talking about skills that kids should have."

But parents who read to their children, early and often, can imbue their offspring with a remarkably increased chance of literacy. Consider:

"We know that high achievers tend to be children whose parents began reading to them at an early age, who have books in the home and who demonstrate by example the importance and joy of learning." - U.S. Education Secretary William Riley

"The single most important thing that influences primary-grade reading achievement is having someone read to a child on a regular basis." - U.S. Department of Education

"Reading to your child is as important as fastening his or her seat belt." - William Trueheart, president of Reading is Fundamental Inc.

Enough said. ■

117. Miami Herald

June 15, 1998

When silence isn't golden

STUDENTS' FREE SPEECH School Board was wise to leave its policy alone, allowing full expression.

Not all student expression is as eloquent, as thoughtful, as that presented at last week's Miami-Dade School Board meeting. Nevertheless, even the cruder content should be protected.

Are there boundaries? Of course. But wisdom in a democracy seeks the least restraint possible.

So it is most encouraging that after a school year filled with examples that might lead weaker administrators to do

otherwise, School Board members left their free-speech policy alone.

It was a laudable rejection of a more-restrictive policy that would have subjected students' publications and speeches to prior review and censorship.

Passed in 1981, then strengthened in 1994, the current policy holds students and their faculty adviser responsible for the content of their publications and speeches — as well they should be.

However, this year some administrators crossed the line from holding students responsible to meting out punishment more stringent than warranted. The most controversial student publication — a crude and racist pamphlet that Miami Killian High's principal understandably perceived to be a direct threat to his safety — was met with that principal's equally controversial move of having those students arrested.

A student at American High was suspended after criticizing an administrator over the Internet. Most recently, the principal at Northwestern

High School initially forbade the valedictorian and salutatorian to address their classmates at graduation. Last year the school's valedictorian had criticized

administrators in her speech, so Principal William Clarke sought to gag this year's students beforehand. He eventually reversed his edict.■

118. Forbes

June 15, 1998 Category: Commentary

The Coleman Report told us 32 years ago that you don't get better education by flinging money at the schools. We're still flinging.

Ignoring the facts

By Dan Seligman

AND NOW, FROM THE ANNALS of policy research, an amazing saga involving the peaceful coexistence of two large facts that should logically be at war.

Fact No. 1 is the existence of solid data telling us that spending more on education does not, by and large, translate into kids learning more.

Fact No. 2 is the unending proliferation of lawsuits—many, maybe most of them, successful—by groups complaining that they are being unconstitutionally denied equal protection of the laws because spending in their own school districts is lower than spending elsewhere in the state.

The solid data have been around since the 1966 publication of *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, a fact-freighted volume more often referred to as the Coleman Report.

For American kids as a whole, this was the Coleman Report's crisp summary: "The data suggest that variations in school quality are not highly related to variations in achievement of pupils." When Coleman controlled for differences in family background, he found that spending levels had an essentially zero correlation with learning among whites, northern blacks, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans and Asian-Americans.

Which brings us to the current pileup of lawsuits and legislation designed to ward off the allegedly ghastly possibility that more might be spent on some kids than on others.

In Texas the current row is an echo of an older argument, which appeared to have finally ended in 1995, when the state adopted a so-called Robin Hood plan. This had the legislature providing makeup payments to school districts with below-average resources. But every year since then, the plan's adequacy has been challenged, and a recent report in the Bond Buyer indicates that the Texas

Mandated by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and funded by a Great Society Congress, the report was widely expected to be a crashing bore that would just restate "what everybody knows" about education. It was expected to confirm the core belief that kids would learn more if only we spent more on their schools.

The late James S. Coleman, a sociologist based at Johns Hopkins, led the research project, one of the largest in the history of social science. His findings reflected tests given to 570,000 schoolchildren and 60,000 teachers, and reflected exhaustive data-gathering at some 4,000 primary and secondary schools.

The report was a shock to those who expected the usual message about the need for more money. The Coleman Report's message was that "educational outcomes"—what the kids actually comptroller is now talking of a need for another \$8 billion to \$9 billion to equalize standards.

As of several weeks ago New Jersey had three major lawsuits challenging its own equalization formula. The most novel is a suit brought in April by a coalition of middle-class school districts claiming that the formula is forcing them to raise property taxes to levels far above the state average.

In New York several bands of activists are contemplating a massive class action challenge to school district spending disparities.

Vermont is having major hysterics over its own recently passed and monstrosly involved plan to shift educational resources from richer to poorer school districts. Among the plan's special problems is that it clobbers poor families who happen to live in rich districts, and offers major tax breaks to rich families in poor school districts.

There is an eerie similarity to these efforts. The standard model is one in which a group argues that (a) schooling

learn—are decisively affected by the kids' own family backgrounds. They are only marginally affected by spending on schools.

Class size makes virtually no difference. Ditto for teacher pay. Ditto for investments in teacher training. Ditto for spending on school libraries and labs. These issues are all extremely important to folks making their living in the world of education, where the spending is substantially synonymous with their own incomes. But if your focus is on the actual process of learning, these issues ought to be largely irrelevant.

The school and teacher effects were somewhat greater for minority children than for whites, but even among southern blacks, only 20% of the differences in educational achievement was related to the kinds of schools attended.

is essentially paid for by property taxes; (b) the rich districts therefore get better schools; and (c) the disparity violates an "equal protection" clause in the state constitution. This is all taking place at the state level because the U.S. Supreme Court long ago (1973) dismissed the argument at the federal level.

What is also eerie is the recurrent nonmention of the Coleman Report in these state-level rows. If you plug into the Nexis database and ask how many articles mention "equal protection," "property taxes" and "education," you are told that the total is 488 articles. If you ask how many of those articles also mention "Coleman," you are told only seven.

In other words, nobody is noticing that (b) does not follow from (a). It is truly weird.

Can the Coleman Report really still be relevant, 32 years after its initial publication? The answer is yes. In a recent (March 1998) magisterial article in *Economic Policy Review*, published by the Federal Reserve Bank of New

York, Eric A. Hanushek, of the University of Rochester, reviewed a broad range of attempts to shoot down Coleman and found that they had all essentially failed. Pointing to the huge and steady growth in per-pupil spending (see chart) and basically unbudging student achievement, Hanushek concluded: "There is little reason to be

confident that simply adding more resources to schools as currently constituted will yield performance gains among students."

Note: This is not the same as saying the school doesn't matter. That is not Hanushek's view, and it was certainly not Coleman's. It is no secret that there are good and bad teachers, good and bad

schools. What we don't exactly know is how to arrange matters so that educational dollars get converted into good teachers and schools. Possibly the move to vouchers will boost our understanding of this process.

Meanwhile, one is left wondering how long those class-action suits can keep on winning on faulty premises.■