

You know " are you, you know, a pervert or a " but I'm losing my battery here.
But
thank you very much for taking my comments.

KELLY: Thank you.

SUAREZ: Henry joining us from Detroit. We're going to talk later in the week about the school shortage in the United States. But we should talk about the kind of people also who are becoming teachers.

KELLY: One of the things that delighted me most " I have four grown children " and my youngest child was making an obscene amount of money " something like \$1600 or \$1800 a week as an assistant film editor for major movies. And she sat down and wrote a letter to Bank Street College (ph), which trains teachers, and said: "I am tired of making good money in bad movies. I want to be a school teacher."

And she took all her savings and took out a loan and sent herself to school to become a teacher. And taught for four years in the South Bronx, and loved it. I was " I don't know anything any of my children have done that has pleased me more than that. She really had her priorities straight.

And I " at Bank Street, many of the people there were switching careers. Many were 40 years old; a number of men; and many were lawyers.

SUAREZ: And it's probably, you know, truth be told, Marguerite, a kind of gratifying moment to watch your own children do something selfless and noble. You think maybe I didn't do such a bad job.

KELLY: Well, it's just " just such straight priorities. I think, who needs another violent movie, you know?

SUAREZ: My guest is Marguerite Kelly. We're going to take a short break right

now.

When we return, we'll take more of your calls at 800 989-8255, as we talk about the beginning of the new school year.

To contact us here at TALK OF THE NATION, you can send us E-mail at totn@npr.org or regular mail. Our address here, TALK OF THE NATION Letters, NPR News, 635

Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20001. Or visit us on the Web at www.npr.org. Look for the "Your Turn" section if you want to comment on this edition of TALK OF THE NATION, the day's news, or any NPR program.

BREAK

SUAREZ: Welcome back. I'm Ray Suarez.

Today with the new school season upon us we're getting back-to-school advice for parents and kids. My guest is Marguerite Kelly, author of the national syndicated column "The Family Almanac" and the book, "The Mother's Almanac Goes to School."

If you want to join us our number is 800-989-8255, that's 800- 989-TALK.

Betsy's with us now from Berkeley, California. Hi, Betsy.

KELLY: Hey, Betsy.

CALLER: Hi, Ray, thanks for the program. Well, I'm sitting here with my son in his first day of first grade, and he by the way has a male teacher and his kindergarten teacher was a male teacher, for the record this is a Columbus public school in Berkeley.

What I wanted to call about is the "I wanted to share something with the listeners about something that's been very helpful in our family in transitioning in to a new school year, which has been doing a right of passage or a ritual usually the day before he goes back, and

I started this at kindergarten 'cause it was just such a big step and we all felt it and felt like how, you know, there's so many ways to prepare. You can go visit the classroom, and meet the teacher, and you can talk about gee honey what do you think it'll be like and it's all really good stuff, but I just felt like I needed something more.

So I wanted " I wondered if I could just tell people what we did cause I...

KELLY: Please.

CALLER: ... just think it's a great way for a family to do this. So what I did was " in our backyard we have a flagstone path and it's kind of a curving path and so I took some sidewalk chalk and I printed a number on " from one to five for the five years of his life, and then next to each flagstone I made a very simple little photo album of just like a manila folder that I pasted four pictures in from that year of his life.

And so what his right of passage was a journey where he walked each flagstone and stopped at year one and opened his little photo thing and looked at oh, there you are having your first bath and all that stuff, so that by the time he got to five, to the age that he was at, he just had a tangible remembering of all the passages he'd already been through his pre-school graduation all that kind of thing. And at the end of his path I had woven some yarn across too I think I used like shovel or something stuck up in the ground so I had these two poles and I made a web of yarn and I gave him some scissors and he had to cut through and get through that barrier so it's that sort of primal mythic thing of breaking this barrier into the new life.

KELLY: Oh, I love it.

CALLER: And on the other side of that there was the gate, the neighbor's yard, and on the gate I'd made a big, you know, just stick figure of his new school and his picture waving and saying hola 'cause he's in a Spanish bilingual immer

sion program, and a little boy with
a lunch box. And it was just " and he got
" he touched the gate it was like he made it he
made it through, you know, and
then we drank a toast and gave him a little present and it
just meant so much t
o him. He talked about it all year and then this year when it was time
for firs
t grade it was like can we do it again.

LAUGHTER

CALLER: So I had to make " I made up a different one for this year. But it's v
ery
simple, you know...

KELLY: Yeah.

CALLER: ... and every family can make their own, but the idea, I think, is to r
eview what
the last year or the last years have...

KELLY: Do you mind of I steal that?

LAUGHTER

CALLER: Please do it take it. I've actually written an article about it for p
ublication if
people are interested they can write me and I can send it to them
, but I think you get the
idea.

KELLY: Oh, that's just so nice.

SUAREZ: Well, Betsy is this something that you imagined just getting through t
he
younger ages with or can you look down the road and see a somewhat longer fl
agstone path
with...

LAUGHTER

CALLER: Yeah, really.

SUAREZ: ... a sort of "Hon' here's your first razor..."

LAUGHTER

CALLER: Yeah, yeah. Well, I don't think he's gonna to let me stop I think I'm stuck.

LAUGHTER

CALLER: I'm trying to keep the price tags on the gifts low because this is gonna to get expensive over the years...

LAUGHTER

KELLY: But children are such concrete thinkers that's a great thing to do.

CALLER: Well, you know, I think that's exactly right there was something about that walk and the pictures and the " and the kind of adventure he didn't know what was coming he didn't know what was at the end. And I have to say for the record that his first day of kindergarten was so very hard. It didn't like solve everything. LAUGHTER

CALLER: But it...

SUAREZ: I'm glad you put that disclaimer in, Betsy.

CALLER: Oh, that's a whole other story.

LAUGHTER

CALLER: If anybody has a child who clung to their leg all morning you're not alone.

SUAREZ: Well, how did the first day of first grade go?

CALLER: Well, I haven't heard yet but all I know is when we came into that school yard
the feeling was so different. I felt it from one year to the next that
all of a sudden we were
among friends. It was exciting it was like oh, a place
how you doing Ms. Young good to
see you. You know it was so different than the
at awful strangeness and the bigness of his
little pre-school bunny hopping into
this huge, you know, wolf...

LAUGHTER

SUAREZ: So by June, if someone asked him, an aunt or an uncle, if you like school he
would say yes?

CALLER: He's crazy about it. He loves school. He's very excited about his new teacher
a little worried his new teacher wouldn't be as fabulous as his first
teacher. I mean, these
men "this first grade " I mean kindergarten teacher was
a phenomenal person.

So he's off to a great start.

KELLY: That's terrific.

CALLER: Yeah.

KELLY: That's the kind of encouragement every child needs.

CALLER: Right.

SUAREZ: Well, Betsy, thanks for your story and a good idea.

CALLER: Thanks for letting me tell it.

SUAREZ: Betsy in Berkeley, California. Let's go next to Seattle. Carl is with us. Hi,
Carl.

CALLER: Hello. Yeah, I...

KELLY: Hi.

CALLER: ... can't hear you very well. My comment was " is breaking up the school year. People often think that you have to end the summer then you've got these little ridiculously short breaks in between. My idea is to break it into three semesters for the whole year with three to four weeks in between each time and I'm back in school and I'm about 50-years-old and I find that that's far better in terms of just use of time, use of facilities, and people can take a little more time in terms of breaking up what they had to do instead of trying of think of what you gonna to do for three months you only have to think of what you're gonna to do for one month.

KELLY: Have they...

CALLER: Plus, there's also just an inherent efficiency in that aspect because you can go through it a lot faster. My niece is going to college and she's been going to school through all the semesters and she's actually coming out over a year ahead.

So it works and it works for people who want to get through that, but I " the reason I bring this up about grade schools because I'm finding that it seems that everybody has this inertia against the idea because they go all the way back to the grade schools say: well you can't do it there and I'm saying you have to do it there. You have to do it all the way through the system.

KELLY: I don't know any grade school that does it on that basis, do you?

CALLER: Well, no I'm saying that's the problem, I'm saying...

KELLY: Right.

CALLER: ... that they should be doing that...

KELLY: Right.

CALLER: ... bring it all the way up through the whole system. And so certainly we don't live in a society any longer where you can have those long times off in the summer, I mean, I grew up that way, but you can't walk the streets today like the idea when I was a kid and you can't do all those variety of things for a whole host of reasons.

So that's my comment and...

KELLY: Well, I thank you...

CALLER: ... you know I really would like to see people encouraged to think along those lines instead of breaking it up and certainly you can make those breaks in between, like, you could have a month off at the end of December or the middle of December and so on and so on. I mean, there's no need to tie all this nonsense to the football season, the baseball seasons and that sort of thing.

SUAREZ: Or tie it as it originally was tied to the...

KELLY: To the farmer.

CALLER: Right.

SUAREZ: ... seasons of the agricultural year...

CALLER: We're way past that.

KELLY: Right, right.

SUAREZ: Well, Carl, it also has some appeal in places where it gets very hot or very

cold because heating and cooling buildings is a tremendous expense for schools systems, but it's a tough...

CALLER: Well, I think it would average out because I came from the south and it was actually better to go to school 'cause then you got to be cool, because a lot " when I was growing up most of the homes didn't have air conditioning at that time. So I think it's "that's sort of a minimal aspect and I do believe that at that would even out over the course of the entire year, because you're going to be heating or cooling it in one way or the other whether you got people in there or not depending on what kind of buildings you've got and what kind of equipment you've got in there.

KELLY: Well, now I like your idea better than breaking up the summer.

CALLER: Yeah, I mean the idea is to have a long enough time off to where you kind of can rest, that's the real organic issue about why to have a break, and you can sort of leisurely move into your own time scale. And then you've got it coming up, you know, a month away, so you're not really at a complete loss as well what'll I do for my second month of the summer. There's a lot of kids that's where they " they just loose it, you know, they don't know what to do and I think most of the kids really do not have any kind of environment where they can have a lot of the advantages that a well-off parent, family can afford them.

KELLY: Right.

CALLER: What you're dealing with here is a more people who really can not utilize that long-term off and it just becomes an aggravation or worse.

SUAREZ: Well, then of course, you have to do the back-to-school ritual three different times across the year...

LAUGHTER

SUAREZ: ... but of course " you're not...

CALLER: Fine.

SUAREZ: ... climbing as high a rate...

KELLY: It's that darn path you've got to go inside...

CALLER: We certainly have a lack of ritual in our life any way so a little bit more would not be bad thing. SUAREZ: Carl in Seattle thanks a lot for your call...

KELLY: Thank you.

CALLER: Sure.

SUAREZ: ... and your suggestion. He's obviously thought this through...

KELLY: Indeed.

SUAREZ: ... and it's not a bad idea. La Mesa, California is next. Larry, welcome.

CALLER: Thank you, Ray, and you have an excellent accompaniment with Marguerite Kelly and a tea-whistling telephone interviewer.

KELLY: Thank you.

CALLER: After hearing so many excellent suggestions with creativity all over the place I'm a little reticent to make my suggestion now.

LAUGHTER

CALLER: You know, I was thinking that during the summer instead of, you know, moping around and maybe momma and dad are busy working, you know, to support a home

and all of that, I think it would be one heck of a good idea if we had a summer camp for all of the kids, okay? It " up till a certain age. It would be part of the educational system and I think that for it to be done, I think the ladies would be the ones to do it, because you know when you think of it, the school is our alma mater that means "other mother." It's only natural that they being home while daddy is working, generally speaking, that they be the ones to push this thing through. What do you think?

KELLY: That's an interesting idea. That's one more to put into the hopper and brood about when we can't get " when we wake up at two in the morning and can't get back to sleep. Thank you, Larry.

SUAREZ: Well, Larry, the one-third of the audience that listens to this program in the car is now trying to keep control of the steering wheel...

LAUGHTER

SUAREZ: ... as women " as you're suggesting that women run sort of a national civilian conservation corps for kids.

LAUGHTER

SUAREZ: Well, I'm sure it's an eye-opener for many people.

CALLER: Oh, but don't forget that during the summer the kids will be canoeing, playing baseball, and all " learning about the flowers and nature, and best of all, the kind of thinking and learning they will do will be more towards socially, don't you see, getting along together in a society " a civil society.

I really do think that it ought to be thought about and maybe done something about.

KELLY: Thank you.

SUAREZ: Larry in La Mesa, California. Thanks a lot for your call. Renny's next in
Worcester, Massachusetts.

CALLER: Hey, Hannah.

SUAREZ: Hi, ya Renny.

KELLY: Hey.

CALLER: Hi.

KELLY: How are ya?

CALLER: How you doing?

SUAREZ: Okay.

CALLER: You know, it's funny listening to Larry, I'm making assumptions from the
sound of his voice that he's maybe from an earlier era, because I'm sort of here to comment
about the previous caller who was a single mother and who was saying that there was a lack
of creativity in terms of programs offered during the summer, and you know, Larry sort of
touched on the "a point that's very valid, I mean, when his children were young and maybe
even that single mother from before was young 'cause she said she was a grandmother, she
was probably a minority single parent and she probably existed in an economy where she
was not the typical women out there working in the field.

You know that most of the mothers were at home being supported and had the time to
be parent volunteers and had the time to do these Girl Scout programs and be involved even
more in the church than they are maybe now or whatever. I don't think that people don't
have the creative ideas I think they're out there earning a paycheck and their paycheck
doesn't afford for them to send their kids to nice summer camps even if we'd like to.

KELLY: I don't know many people who actually can afford to send their kids to camp, but they are fortunately a lot of little almost peace meal " piecing it a nd patching activities together which are nice.

SUAREZ: Well, Renny, did you send kids back-to-school this fall?

CALLER: Oh, yes, yes just last week they started Tuesday.

SUAREZ: Oh, they started during August?

CALLER: They started during August, yes. This was their second week of school.

KELLY: How old are they?

CALLER: My youngest is six and " that's Amelia, and my middle daughter is eight, that's Hannah, and my oldest son, Tory, was the one who made me call you today.

LAUGHTER

KELLY: Oh, bless his heart.

LAUGHTER

SUAREZ: And how did it go?

CALLER: It went really well. They've returned to a school that they've been at since Tory was in kindergarten and I've sort of sat on the fence from both sides, I mean, I'm the single mother now, but when he was in kindergarten through the time up until two years ago, I was a very active parent volunteer and I ran programs at the school and I put a lot of effort into and then, you know, two years ago when I broke up with their father I went back to school myself, and now I see things from the other side of the fence. When I was in there doing al

I the volunteering I use to almost get upset at the other parents...

KELLY: Why aren't they here.

CALLER: ... thinking why aren't they here.

LAUGHTER

CALLER: So much more could be getting done if they were here and now the reality is,
you know, maybe it's not that they don't want to be here but they're just exhausted they've
worked long hard days and, you know, I mean it's a different reality and there's more of us
in the reality I'm in now than the, you know,
situation that I was in previous and I made
choices to give up things to be in
that situation.

But it isn't where most people have a choice to make.

KELLY: But there always are some choices you can make. I am particularly pleased,
I'm always bragging about my kids, but my eldest one has two daughters, one is 10 and one
is 14, and about three years ago she didn't feel her older child was reading enough so she
started a reading club on Sundays, she's a working
mom. Started at her house, boys and
girls, and this was sixth graders.

CALLER: Right.

KELLY: It went over very well and I think the main reason it went over so well is cause
it was boys and girls.

LAUGHTER

KELLY: And she got a bookstore to give a 10 percent discount and they would get the
books or get them from the library...

CALLER: Yeah.

KELLY: ... and they each read a different book every week, talked about it, then the younger one said it's not fair there's no book club for me so now there's...

CALLER: You had to start another one? It snowballed.

KELLY: But I know " but there are two book clubs back to back on Sunday afternoon and into the evening and they have cookies and Cokes and...

CALLER: And...

KELLY: ... it's a great social as well as a literary experience.

CALLER: Well, then it sounds like an absolutely wonderful thing that she's able to do and it always impresses me when there are women like her that are able to balance everything and I maybe felt there was a time when I was one of those women, but sometimes you get on this treadmill and you're running and running and you're trying to make a difference...

KELLY: Sure.

CALLER: ... and if somebody's not jumping on that bandwagon with you you can get burnt out just like a teacher sometimes get burnt out.

KELLY: And of course there are times in your life when you can do this and other times when you say, oh not...

CALLER: Well, it's somebody else's turn.

KELLY: ... yeah, it's not my turn.

CALLER: But, you know, I guess what I'm saying is that we shouldn't hold it against

the people who are in situations where they don't feel like they can be doing all those things
and not that they don't see that they need doing it's not
that they don't feel as if they'd like
to, and maybe some people just don't even think of them maybe there is a lack of
imagination out there I don't, you know, negate her point.

But I think sometimes it's economy driven it's...

KELLY: I agree with you.

CALLER: ... the reality of the world we live in now...

KELLY: Sure.

CALLER: ... a different place.

SUAREZ: Renny, have a great school year.

CALLER: Thank you.

SUAREZ: Best to your kids.

CALLER: And I'm going to school to be a teacher by the way.

LAUGHTER

KELLY: Oh, wonderful.

SUAREZ: Good for you.

KELLY: Terrific.

CALLER: Have a great day. Thank you.

KELLY: Take care.

SUAREZ: Renny with us from Worcester, Massachusetts. I'm Ray Suarez. You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION, from NPR NEWS.

These items from the e-mail bag. Brian writes from Columbia, Missouri: The common denominator for children who "have it all;" support at school, a creative life outside the school, has a parent with significant amounts of time.

I'm a man, I stay at home with our two-year-old. My sister stays home with her one-year-old. My brother's wife stays home with her two boys. It's a sacrifice financially but that's what parenting is about. Why aren't more parents making this obvious choice?

John writes from Medford, Massachusetts or should I say Medfed to be more local : I'm an inner city high school teacher in the Boston area and one of the things that bothers me the most is the sense of martyrdom that's attached to teaching especially in the inner city. As your guests said her daughter traded in her lifestyle to teach in New York, this is admirable, however, those of us who teach do so because we love it...

KELLY: Absolutely.

SUAREZ: ... we do not want people's sympathy. I love my profession and I'm proud of what I do. It's truly sad that people feel for whatever reason that those who teach are somehow unable to make an honest living in the private sector or are somehow making a great sacrifice in order to be a teacher.

We teach because we choose to do so and I wouldn't do anything else.

Gugermo writes from Cupertino (ph), California and " you see these smart people out here who listen to this radio show: Hello, Ray, EPGY is not at Johns Hopkins but at Stanford, but they're connected with the Johns Hopkins program.

Their program is called the Institute for the Advance " Academic Advancement of Youth, IAAY at Johns Hopkins University. The website for EPGY is <http://hypatia.stanford.edu/epgy>, e-p-g-y/ and their e-mail is epgy-info@epgy.stanford.edu. So go to the Stanford website and it's [epgy@stanford](mailto:epgy@stanford.edu) and [iaay@johnshopkins](mailto:iaay@johnshopkins.edu). These are the enrichment programs for elementary school kids.

And finally, G. Haselbrink writes: In our community school provides the best resource for our children. When it's closed for summer many children and their parents simply lose their best opportunity for learning and enjoying activities and this valuable resource is seriously under utilized.

Isn't the short answer simply this: make school available year round those who believe they can do better are free to do so, those who want to use and improve this resource are also free to do so. For us, school is not a necessary evil it is our greatest resource.

KELLY: Very nice.

SUAREZ: And, you know, it can be and it is in many places in the country open six days a week open after 3 o'clock, a place that's sort of a power plant for a neighborhood...

KELLY: It should be the whole community center.

SUAREZ: Marguerite Kelly the writer of "The Family Almanac" syndicated column, author of "The Mother's Almanac Goes to School" is with me in Washington and Judy is in Miami, Florida. Hiya, Judy.

CALLER: Hi. I've been holding on my drive home from my second day of my 30th year of teaching in downtown Miami in an inner city school.

KELLY: Bless you.

CALLER: And my point to you, Marguerite, is part of these 30 years of teaching I was also a single mother and in my day and age I didn't have a whole lot of choices as a female of what profession to go into.

I love teaching, but I wonder if your daughter would have been able to make that choice had she not had a lucrative position in the first place? There's no way that I could have switched professions even if I wanted to. We would have become homeless.

KELLY: Well, I think that the reason she could go to the school without having a very long term debt was because of her savings. But I " but teaching itself, that was a choice she felt that she could make should make. She just stuck with it.

CALLER: But my point is though that most of us who go into teaching from the beginning don't have the choice of switching to something because the amount of money that we make is barely enough to have savings if we're raising...

KELLY: Right.

CALLER: ... a family, which is one of the main reasons why men, who are the primary bread winners, can't go into it unless they start out with a lot of money.

KELLY: Yeah...

SUAREZ: Well, Judy, we're going to continue that conversation later in the week when we do a program on the teacher shortage, so I'm glad you called. Judy in Miami, Florida.

Ann in Elizabeth Town, Kentucky wants some quick advice on television, Marguerite.

KELLY: Right.

SUAREZ: How do you limit it or should you even limit?

KELLY: No TV on school nights, sweetie.

SUAREZ: Really?

KELLY: I don't do it.

SUAREZ: That cut and dry?

KELLY: That cut and dry. And no Internet play either then, that's just for school work.

SUAREZ: Well, thank...

KELLY: I'm a toughy there.

SUAREZ: Yeah, you are. Thanks for being with us.

LAUGHTER

SUAREZ: Marguerite Kelly is author of the nationally syndicated column "The Family Almanac" and the book, "The Mother's Almanac Goes to School." She joined me here in Washington's Studio 3A.

Tune into TALK OF THE NATION at this time tomorrow to talk about the nationwide teacher shortage. How it's effecting the quality of education and what school systems are doing to attract new teachers.

In Washington, I'm Ray Suarez. NPR News. Have a great school year.

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Publication#W\ PP# 36. Morning Edition (NPR)"Publication" #:\ PP# 09/01/98Section: News; Domestic;

Headline#\ PP# Homework
Headline #:\ PP#Subhead#[\ PP# As school gets underway across the country, children

and parents will have to start dealing again with the nightly ritual of homework.

Subhead#:\ PP#

BOB EDWARDS, HOST: Some children have begun the new school year. Whether returning students prefer reading, writing or arithmetic, they're usually in agreement about homework.

MALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT #1: I do not like it. It's a big, fat waste of my time, 'cause once I'm finished, I have no time to watch any TV and I have to go eat dinner and then go to bed.

FEMALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT #1: I think that homework's great and it's preparing you for the real world out there.

FEMALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT #2: Sometimes it's OK, but sometimes it's too hard, and then if your parents are those working parents, they don't always have time to help you and stuff.

FEMALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT #3: I hate it.

MALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT #2: Man, I'll be getting English homework. Then I'll be getting math homework. Then I'll be getting Spanish homework. Then I'll be getting science homework. Man, that's like 20 pages right there.

EDWARDS: These children aren't the only ones with opinions on homework. Two teaching veterans, David Davenport and Alvin Samuels have their views. Samuels says it's an integral part of the U.S. educational system.

ALVIN SAMUELS, HISTORY TEACHER, GROVER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL, NEW YORK: As a high school history teacher entering my 30th year in the New York City school system, and as a parent of a daughter who graduated from the public schools, I have become witness to a decline in its effectiveness and success, and recognize

the strong
necessity for far tougher academic standards for our children.

Over the years, I have become increasingly cognizant of the fact that those students entering high school unable to read, write and perform basic mathematical skills are far too numerous to mention. We perform a huge injustice when we promote failing students. And we do a great disservice when we expect less from our children instead of more.

I firmly agree with those academics who have continuously been calling for reform. And I believe standards should be raised at all grade levels. I was more than satisfied with the superior education my daughter received in the public school system. I can recall two particular homework assignments which significantly shaped my daughter's academic development. As a contributor to a project in which my daughter investigated the growth of mung beans under different treatment conditions, I witnessed her application of the scientific method " a process that she would greatly build upon and utilize during her years as a psychology major in college.

When our family collaborated on a project to design and construct a newspaper from the days of the Spanish-American War, the library research skills involved in the creation of a periodical such as blocking, printing, editing " in addition to the historical research for this project " provided the foundation and confidence for all future research papers in college.

Projects such as these stimulated my daughter to exercise her mind outside of the classroom in creative and meaningful ways. I believe that this very same standard of academic education should be maintained for each and every child experiencing our school system.

The chancellor of the New York City Board of Education mandates all students receive between two and three hours of homework each school day. I firmly agree.

It is of vital importance for students to complete assignments independent of the classroom. And it is even more vital that parents take an interest in and encourage the same.

If both teachers and parents take an active role in expressing the importance of education, then more than likely their children will prove to be successful members of society. Our children are our future. If we care about their success in the 21st century, we must impose far tougher academic standards.

DAVID DAVENPORT, PRESIDENT, PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY: I've known since our oldest child entered school that I was different from the other parents. At back-to-school night, when a teacher announced that he did not believe in a lot of written homework for first graders, I applauded alone. The other parents turned to stare at me in disapproval.

A few years later, frustrated by the hours of homework our three children were bringing home each night, I wrote the principal to tell him that I felt like my relationship with my children during the week was essentially that of a homework monitor, and I resented it. Nothing, however, changed.

Now, our oldest child is in high school, where I would expect and support homework, of course. But last June, when our 11th grade daughter got a list of reading and writing assignments to complete during the summer to earn college credit " she is only 15 " I finally figured out my real objection. For most kids, mere acceleration of learning does not enrich his or her education and it can well be counterproductive.

Pressing students to learn to read at age three or four, instead of five or six; or studying geometry in the eighth grade instead of 10th, doesn't necessarily make them smarter and it may rob them of time for other kinds of experiences that would make them better adults.

Let's take the idea that top juniors in high school might take an American history course

sufficiently rigorous that they could pass an advanced college placement exam. The sales pitch for the course is that it is a way to get college credit inexpensively, and also enable the student to take a lighter load in college or perhaps finish early.

But thinking back to my own educational experience, I remember that we studied history in elementary school, again in junior high, and then again in senior high school "learning more each time. In college, the course involved reading multiple authors and taking a more critical view of history.

I have to wonder if my 15-year-old daughter's understanding of American history is enriched by taking a college-level course now, rather than taking both the high school and college courses in their proper time. I doubt it.

In short, I believe we have confused acceleration of learning with enrichment. Pushing kids to earn college credit is only the culmination of a series of misguided accelerations in children's educational lives. We have friends who worry at birth whether their child will get into the right preschool. And my own children have been nearly buried in well-meaning, but high-pressure acceleration opportunities of every kind. They feel stressed and I feel cut out of their development. The notion of free time for family, church or other enrichment is all but lost.

My plea to parents is this: Don't be seduced by mere acceleration. Summer school might be right for your child, but so might a long train trip with dad and mom or a visit to grandma. Doing homework every night might not be as important as going to a Bible study class or to Girl Scouts. Working in an ice cream store or volunteering at a hospital might be as much of a learning experience as collecting six units of college credit in the 11th grade.

I doubt that either our workforce or our society will be better off with people who did all

their homework and attended summer school but never had time to grow and develop in other ways.

EDWARDS: David Davenport is president of Pepperdine University and the father of three. Alvin Samuels is a high school history teacher at Grover Cleveland High School in New York. He has one daughter.

Thanks to Youth Radio for its assistance.

Publication#W\ PP# 37. Education Daily"Publication" #: \ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# SAT Math Scores Rise, Verbal Scores
StagnateHeadline #:\ PP#
by Eli J. Lake

The average Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) math score for college-bound seniors rose from 511 to 512 this year, the highest mark in 27 years, the College Board announced yesterday.

But verbal scores remained stagnant at 505, just 6 points above the record lows posted in 1991 and 1994.

College Board President Donald Stewart says the mixed results for the 1.2 million students who took the SAT may stem from greater emphasis on math and science courses in the nation's secondary schools, and an increase in the ratio of test-takers for whom English is a second language.

"We can point to increased math and science study as one reason for the current high in average math score, but the rock-steady verbal is more difficult to explain," Stewart said.

But while the College Board sees more students being steeped in math instruction, critics simply see more test-takers using calculators rather than relying on basic skills.

Starting with the 1993-94 academic year, the College Board allowed students, for the first time, to use calculators on the tests. Since 1994, math scores rose from 504 to 512.

Seppy Basili, executive director of pre-college programs for Kaplan Educational Centers, believes the rising math scores have a lot to do with the board's new calculator policy, especially since most high school math courses from the mid-80s let students use calculators on exams.

But the College Board disagrees. Gretchen Rigol, the board's vice president for guidance, access and assessment services, said yesterday that "when we introduced calculators, we took great care to make sure the test-taker did not need to use calculators to answer the questions."

The National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest), the board's most outspoken critic, agrees with Rigol. Bob Schaeffer, FairTest's public education director said, "the only advantage calculators give students is to check their work."

Rich And Poor Remain Separate

The chasm between students in the suburbs and the cities, as well as those who are from rich and poor families, narrowed slightly this year, but still is wider than 10 years ago.

In 1988, suburban students scored 14 and 15 points higher than the national average in the math and verbal SAT sections respectively.

In 1998, those scores jump to 17 and 20 points above the average.

In this same period, students from large cities have seen their scores drop further. In 1988, this population scored 11 and nine points below the average in verbal and math.

In 1998, the scores dropped to 13 and 11 points below the average.

Still, urban kids did one point better on math this year than in 1997, when they scored 12 points below the average. Their verbal scores in 1997 and 1998 were the same.

FairTest's Schaeffer attributes the rift partly to the extra money richer families spend on SAT preparation courses.

This subject is a particularly sore one for the board, which "until somewhat recently claimed the test measured aptitude and that no amount of test preparation would increase SAT scores.

Since 1994, the College Board has changed its tune. Today, it acknowledges the test measures reasoning skills, and that some preparation may result in a tiny increase in test scores (ED, March 30, 1993).

However, "There is no evidence that there are major benefits from shelling out hundreds of dollars and spending several Saturdays on SAT coaching," Rigol said, citing "numerous studies."

Women, Men Get Closer

Women averaged 496 on their math scores, while men averaged 531. The gap is not as wide for verbal, where women averaged 502 and men averaged 509.

In 1988, men averaged 38 points higher on the math test than women and 13 points better on the verbal. While women are closing the gap on the verbal scores, they remain 35 points behind men on the math tests.

Rigol says the math gap remains between women and men because more women are taking the SATs today than they were in 1988. Today, women make up 54 percent of the

test-taking population.

For more information, write Jan Gams, College Board, 45 Columbus Ave., N.Y., N.Y.

10023, (212)713-8175; Internet, www.collegeboard.org. "Eli J. Laken

Publication#W\ PP# 38. LRP Publications"Publication" #:\ PP#September 1, 1998

Headline#\ PP# College Entrance Exam Scores Signal
Improvement in Student Performance
Headline #:\ PP#

There's good news for educators concerned about student achievement: scores for the American College Testing program remained steady this year despite a record number of high school students taking the entrance exam for postsecondary institutions.

ACT, the Iowa City, Iowa, non-profit group that measures the scores, said 995,000 students - about 60 percent of America's entering college freshmen - took the exam, an increase of 35,000 over 1997.

The fact that the national average score has remained steady or increased slightly, while the tested population has grown, is a positive trend, said ACT president Richard Ferguson. "Whenever there's a substantial increase in the number of students tested, the additional students must be at least as well-prepared as those tested earlier or the average score will drop."

ACT said the average composite score was 21, the same as last year and up from 20.6 in 1989. By gender, males scored an average of 21.2 and females, 20.9. In 1990, the scores were 21 and 20.3 respectively, indicating that the gap between the sexes is closing.

Ferguson attributed the trend in ACT score averages to the fact that more high school students are taking higher level academic courses. "This period of steady or increasing scores coincides with nationwide efforts to emphasize the n

eed for more demanding college-preparatory coursework," he said. "That emphasis seems to be producing results."

Ferguson stressed that simply taking a certain number of courses would not prepare students for college. "It's a matter of taking the right courses in each sequence, especially the higher level courses," he said. "Students need to know that each sequence is like a ladder they can climb as high as they like, each rung representing greater chances of later success."

ACT studies also showed students need more assistance with career planning, because many of those in school had "aspirations...out of sync with the jobs that will be available for many of them," Ferguson said.

Despite the huge growth in computer engineering and science jobs available, most students still sought careers in health, business or social sciences such as psychology and law. Only about three percent of this year's college-bound high school graduates picked computer and information science as their first vocational choice.

"These percentages haven't changed in ten years, yet the outlook for the computer field has changed dramatically," Ferguson said, noting that educators, parents and policymakers should do more to help students prepare for life.

"We need to help students start their career exploration at earlier points in their development - - at least as early as the eighth grade," he said.

Publication#W\ PP# 39. LRP Publications"Publication" #:\ PP#September 1, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Administration Urges Congress to Pass High Hopes Initiative Headline #:\ PP#

Vice President Al Gore yesterday urged lawmakers to pass a Clinton administration initiative partnering education and corporate leaders to guide students a

long a
college-bound path.

"It's time for Congress to pass our High Hopes Program, which brings colleges and businesses together to provide mentoring and tutoring to young people so they stay in school and study hard for college," said Gore. "It gives them the support, the inspiration and the hope they need to succeed."

Education Secretary Richard Riley said the High Hopes initiative would give middle school students the academic guidance they need to realize that college can be a part of their future. Many students and families are unaware of the importance of taking core subjects, such as advanced math and science courses, in middle and high schools to prepare for college entrance exams, he said.

"Students who take high-level courses, including trigonometry, calculus and physics, in high school have a tremendous test advantage," Riley said. "Our challenge now is to get all students prepared for postsecondary education. Research shows that students are more likely to go to college when they receive early information about the right courses to take."

Under the proposal, an initial investment of \$140 million in 1999 would be used to establish a program in a single sixth- or seventh-grade class. An incoming class would be added each year, with a five-year goal of serving more than a million students in 2,500 middle and junior high schools. The program would target at-risk youth and provide mentoring, tutoring and other services to encourage them to stay in school and continue on to college.

Meanwhile, the Republican Congress so far has refused to fund the High Hopes Program along with the rest of Clinton's new education initiatives. Much of the funding for the administration's education agenda was to come from an expected tobacco settlement. However, since a settlement deal fell through earlier this year, GOP lawmakers now

maintain that not enough resources exist to support Clinton's proposals.

Publication#W\ PP# 40. Education Daily"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# News BriefsHeadline #:\ PP#

by Rebecca S. Weiner

Pa. Court To Hear Voucher Case: A Pennsylvania judge will hear arguments today over whether a school board has the authority to use public funds to pay for students to attend private and religious schools.

Giacomucci v. Southeast Delco School District (98-5805) "which will be argued before the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas "is one of a number of school voucher cases making its way through state and federal courts.

The district's school board voted unanimously in March to use public funds to pay tuition for any student within the school district who wants to attend a public or private school (ED, April 17).

A coalition of education and civil rights groups and parents filed suit to overturn the school board's decision. The district estimates it will cost at least \$1.2 million to fund vouchers for children already enrolled in private schools.

The Washington, D.C.-based People for the American Way, which is representing the Pennsylvania parents, filed an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court Monday to fight a voucher program in Milwaukee, Wis. (ED, Sept. 1). "Rebecca S. Weinern
Publication#W\ PP# 41. Education Daily"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Prisoners Help South Dakota Wire Schools To InternetHeadline #:\ PP#
by Jonathan Fox

In South Dakota's Brandon Valley, workers busy wiring the county's four schools to the Internet toil six days a week, 10 hours a day, making \$3 a day.

They aren't standard cable technicians: They sport orange shirts with "D.O.C." on the backs "short for Department of Corrections "and each night, they're bused back to a nearby prison.

As non-violent prisoners, they've been selected for a unique venture dubbed "Wiring the Schools," which has saved South Dakota schools millions of dollars in telecommunications costs. The program also has won praise for teaching inmates in-demand skills.

While state educators and parents originally were skeptical about the idea of inmates working in schools, the advantages of doing so have largely won them over.

"They're very professional," said George Gulson, schools superintendent of Brandon Valley County, a suburb of Sioux Falls. "If someone told me five years ago that prisoners would wire our schools, I'd probably have said, 'No way, that's not possible.' But I've been proven wrong."

The Price Wasn't Right

Two years ago, the state faced paying an estimated \$100 million to connect its schools to the Internet and update other wiring. It was Gov. William Janklow's idea to use inmates, who already performed maintenance duties at state fairs, in the state capitol and on state roadways.

Since then, 12 crews of seven inmates "10 all-male, two all-female "have installed state-of-the-art telephone, cable, electrical and Internet services in schools.

The result, according to project director Ray Christensen, is that classrooms, libraries and computer labs in South Dakota's 650 school buildings will be wired by early 1999 for a total cost of roughly \$12 million.

The crews are carefully screened. Only convicts serving time for minor, non-violent offenses, such as fraud, petty drug charges and check forgery, are permitted in the program.

The state provides labor and materials, while schools feed and house the working inmates. Often, if they are too far from their prisons, the workers are allowed to sleep in school auditoriums or in rented trailers.

For the most part, the prisoners like the labor because it makes hard time fly by quicker. "Most of them think it's great," Christensen said. "It's better than being in jail."

The prisoners stay in line, he said, because one infraction puts them back in regular lock-up. Incidents have been few, with one prisoner "walkaway," who was found two days later, and another who attempted to go to the prom with a high school girl that was infatuated with him.

A Second Chance

The initiative also has won acclaim as a rare rehabilitative success story.

Although official records aren't kept, Christensen estimates that at least 30 inmates in the program have gotten jobs as electricians after leaving prison. Two electrical firms have standing offers to recruit any program veterans who leave prison, he said.

The attitudes of convicts who work in the program often improve dramatically, Christensen. Inmates usually have backgrounds in which they received little respect, he said. In the schools, though, inmates get much-needed respect, which he

lps them mature.

One inmate who worked in the program told Christensen: "It's really scary when prisoners get out of prison. I was really scared before about what I would do, but now I know I can make it."

Because South Dakota has wired schools without using funds from the controversial

\$1.28 billion e-rate program, the state also has saved itself a lot of time.

"The e-rate has slowed the pace of technology because it's caused schools to wait," Christensen said. "Schools are really disgusted with what has happened."

Now that the South Dakota classrooms are wired, the schools need to figure out what to do with the new technology.

"We'll be able to connect all of our classrooms to the [district] mainframe," Superintendent Gulson said. "With the wiring of the schools they'll be able to do research in the rooms."

Publication#W\ PP# 42. Education Daily"Publication" #: \ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Senate Panel Proposes Few Education Hikes
Headline #:\ PP#
by William J. Cahir

The Senate education spending subcommittee yesterday passed a bill that would increase spending for Education Department programs by \$1.5 billion next year, about \$400 million more than a House spending plan.

But in passing the as-yet-unnumbered plan by voice vote, the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee temporarily skipped contentious policy debates on bilingual and special education.

The bill would provide \$30.95 billion in fiscal 1999 for ED, up from \$29.4 billion now. The full Senate Appropriations Committee plans to vote on the plan Thursday.

The House education funding bill, H.R. 4274, would level-fund Title I grants at \$7.49 billion, while yesterday's Senate plan would provide a \$271.7 million increase for Title I, to \$7.67 billion next year.

Like the House bill, however, the Senate bill would provide significant funding for Pell Grants and special ed, but for few other programs. Specifically, the bill would:

- * Raise the maximum Pell Grant by \$100 to \$3,100, fulfilling President Clinton's request. The administration estimates the change would increase Pell Grant spending by \$250 million, to \$7.59 billion over-all; * Increase special ed state grants for school-age disabled children by \$499 million, to \$4.3 billion, while boosting overall funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to \$5.3 billion overall; and * Provide \$151 million for "a new program to combat the increasing incidence of school violence," according to a bill summary that offered no further details.

Senate spending lawmakers yesterday tried to avoid rocking the boat when it came to funding other education and labor programs.

For instance, the House proposed cutting funding for Goals 2000 in half, from \$491 million to \$245.5 million, and letting states spend that money "normally targeted at helping them develop their own ambitious academic standards" as block grants.

Instead, the Senate would increase funding for Goals 2000 by \$5 million, to \$496 million.

The House bill would cut \$50 million from the Eisenhower professional development program, but the Senate would level-fund the teacher training program at \$335 million.

And the Senate panel voted to level-fund the summer jobs program at \$871 million, whereas the House bill would eliminate the program.

The Senate's proposal also would:

- * Increase funding for education technology grants by \$39.4 million to \$623.5 million, but falls \$97.5 million short of the administration's request;

- * Raise Impact Aid funding by \$2 million, to \$810 million, ignoring the House proposal to add another \$40 million;

- * Increase Work-Study funding by \$70 million, to \$900 million; and

- * Level-fund bilingual education at \$354 million, while refraining from limiting the duration of bilingual ed to two years, as proposed by the House.

Deferring Rancor

Unlike the House, the Senate education funding bill does not contain any provisions to eliminate the 45-day limits on alternative placements for disabled students who are deemed dangerous to themselves or others, or commit weapon- or drug-related offenses at school (ED, June 24).

Sen. Slade Gorton, R-Wash., said he would offer an amendment on the Senate floor to give schools greater latitude to discipline students with disabilities, but he did not offer specifics.

Also unlike the House bill, the Senate's measure would not require schools to place anti-smut monitors on computers purchased with federal money. "William J. Cahirn

Publication#W\ PP# 43. Philadelphia Inquirer"Publication" #: \ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Why teachers are staying away from

Phila. schools Headline #:\

PP#Subhead#\ PP# Low salaries are a factor. What may outweigh them:

Rigid po

licies and politics. Subhead#:\ PP#

By Dale Mezzacappa

INQUIRER STAFF WRITER Page A1

Heidi Butt didn't have to go far to find her dream school.

It was just two blocks from the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned her teaching degree. University City High School had what she wanted: hundreds of needy students who appreciated what she brought to a classroom.

"The first day, I thought, who am I, this privileged white girl coming in here? But the students embraced me," she said.

Butt, 23, was invigorated by the four months she spent student-teaching biology and math at University City, a place that typifies the problems and promise of inner-city education. She occasionally had a roach in the classroom ("We'll dissect it," she teased), and pondered why so many perfectly bright 16-year-olds had trouble doing simple math problems. But things like that just made her more determined. She loved the students, loved the principal, loved the staff she worked with.

To be sure, suburban districts were pursuing her, with her bachelor's degree in biology, minor in math, certification to teach both, research experience, and Penn master's degree.

And the highest score on the city's test for new biology teachers.

But the factors that lure so many top teaching prospects to suburban schools "higher pay, lower taxes and better working conditions" did not entice her.

Despite all this, Butt will not be teaching at University City this fall. Or anywhere else in Philadelphia.

She will be at Wissahickon High School in Montgomery County, facing students taking physical science and honors biology.

What happened to Heidi Butt is an example of a national phenomenon:

The most qualified, sought-after teachers typically do not end up in classrooms with students who need them the most.

Instead, poor inner-city minorities are most likely to get the underqualified teachers, often without either a college major or minor in the subject they teach.

While poverty is blamed for the low academic achievement of most inner-city students, evidence is mounting that exemplary teaching has at least as much influence on student learning as family circumstances " and well more than smaller class size.

Just last month, a prominent education advocacy and research group released a report summarizing studies in Texas, Tennessee and North Carolina showing that the gap in standardized test scores and other achievement measures between low-income minority students and others could be narrowed with comparable teachers.

"If we went further," said Kati Haycock, director of the nonprofit Education Trust, "and assigned our best teachers to the students who most need them, there's persuasive evidence to suggest we could entirely close the gap."

Philadelphia is Exhibit A in why it is so difficult for urban schools to get good teachers.

Over the summer, the district needed to fill more than 600 vacancies " 5 percent of its teaching force. But as of Monday, half the vacancies still were not filled.

And it is not because Philadelphia is being choosy.

Unlike suburban districts that frequently get hundreds of applications for one job, Philadelphia is likely to hire everyone who applies and meets the basic requirements.

Even so, when school opens next week, the district will be compelled to seek state waivers " as it must every year " so it can staff classrooms with teachers who are less than fully qualified for the subjects they must teach.

Most of these teachers will not be in schools in the Northeast, Chestnut Hill and Roxborough, but in the lowest-income neighborhoods.

Some of Philadelphia's problems are common to urban districts everywhere " lower salaries, larger classes, more troubled students.

But school district bureaucracy, teacher-union rigidity, and city and state politics have created an obstacle course that only the most dedicated or the most desperate job-seekers are likely to complete.

"When I came, I heard all the horror stories," said Marjorie Adler, the district's human resources director, who has spent the last year trying to modernize and rationalize the hiring process.

Anyone wanting a Philadelphia teaching job has to take a special qualifying test, the result of a state requirement that teachers for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh be hired according to a civil service-type ranking to prevent patronage.

Then, Philadelphia teachers must wait, sometimes until summer's end, before learning

what school, even what grade and subject, they will teach. And then there is the requirement of living in the city.

According to a district survey of new teachers last year, their job applications were lost in the mail, rude people answered their calls, and they could not get basic information. Comments about the system ranged from "stressful" to "incompetent" and "frustrating."

Adler, a former deputy mayor, has made headway in professionalizing the operation. For the first time, her office has a recruiting brochure and responds systematically to applicants.

Even so, worthy candidates get lost. Rosalyn Rice, 21, a Carnegie-Mellon graduate certified to teach both social studies and chemistry, was recruited by the city schools at a March job fair. But, she says, the city did not follow up and even failed to tell her about its test. She accepted a job in Wilmington.

Said Rice, who spent July in the city teaching in a program for at-risk teens called Summerbridge: "I deserve better than that."

The district did not forget about Heidi Butt. But the process made her nervous. There was only a slim chance for a science-teaching opening at her dream school, and she got anxious waiting to see what the choices would be.

Summer is when teachers play musical chairs in Philadelphia. In most districts, administrators choose who will fill vacancies; in Philadelphia it is the teachers who get to pick their schools " both teachers who are transferring and those who are brand new.

Vacancies are constantly created by shifts in enrollment and programs, retirements and resignations. Last week, for instance, there were 49 resignations.

Under the teachers' contract, vacancies are first offered to teachers already in the system, some of whom want a "better" neighborhood or a school closer to home.

The time-consuming practice of giving first crack at all jobs to those with seniority wreaks havoc on the effort to hire new teachers. Many new hires do not wait around to see where they might end up when the music stops. Instead, schools open with many vacancies plugged with long-term substitutes.

Those new teachers who do stay in the game find the process of picking a school akin to throwing darts. As they are brought in to select one of the remaining positions, they have just minutes to decide.

If they pick a kindergarten-through-eighth grade elementary school, they do not know whether they will be assigned to teach first graders or eighth-grade math. Most do not meet the principal or other teachers until the first day of work.

Meanwhile, principals have little power to build staffs that would work well together.

"The district should have the prerogative to assign new hires to where they need to go," said James M. Lytle, the former principal of University City High School and new superintendent in Trenton.

The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, however, chafes at giving principals such power, complaining that this would open the floodgates of favoritism.

Besides, it is how the system has always worked, even though it goes well beyond what the state code requires to thwart patronage. In Pittsburgh, under the same rules and the same union, principals do have a say in choosing teachers from among the top third of candidates.

In particular, Philadelphia middle schools "crucial years for students" are hurt by this system. Of the 300 vacancies as of Monday, the bulk were in middle schools. "We've told [the administration] we're willing to sit down and figure out a better system," said PFT president Ted Kirsch. But he said, "They've never told me how seniority is a problem. I don't think it is."

The state also contributes to the district's recruiting difficulties, even as it tries to raise standards for teachers and colleges of education. Harrisburg staunchly opposes more state funding, which could help Philadelphia compete in terms of salaries for better teachers.

While there is controversy over whether higher salaries produce better student achievement, it is a fact of life that since Philadelphia's salaries are now among the lowest in the region, attracting top teachers is harder.

Beyond that, last spring's legislation that would allow Harrisburg to take over the district and rein in its finances raises a specter of chaos that is scaring new teachers off.

Additionally, Pennsylvania does not offer certification for two types of teachers that Philadelphia, in particular, is crying for: teachers of children who do not speak English as a first language and teachers equipped to teach middle school.

This came as a surprise to Peter Martin, who was trained to teach English as a Second Language at the University of Pennsylvania and had planned to teach in the city, which has nearly 11,000 students who are not proficient in English.

"It didn't even occur to me that Pennsylvania didn't give ESL certification," he said. It is one of seven states without such certification.

To be permanently hired as an ESL teacher, Martin would have had to go back to school

to get certified in something else.

Martin " who speaks English, French and German and can get by in Spanish, Italian and Swahili " found a job in Washington, D.C.

As for the city's middle schools, they are left begging because elementary teachers typically prefer younger grades, and most secondary teachers want high school jobs.

Suburban districts, with fewer openings and more applicants, have less trouble filling their middle school slots, although officials there also complain that most teachers lack training for that age group.

Because there is no middle school certification, education schools do not emphasize working with young adolescents. State policymakers are studying whether to revise certification requirements to address middle school and ESL problems.

State Rep. Dwight Evans (D., Phila.) introduced legislation to forgive up to \$25,000 in student loans for teachers with high grades in hard-to-fill specialties who promise to work in urban and rural districts. So far, the bill has not caught on in Harrisburg.

Gov. Ridge and the state Board of Education are proposing one thing that could help the city: an alternative certification policy designed to recruit second-career professionals. But City Council's insistence on residency for teachers will likely thwart any mass movement of such teachers into Philadelphia, because many live in the suburbs.

Adler's efforts to modernize the district's hidebound hiring system are limited by pressure to slash administrative spending and put all available dollars directly in schools. With the need for 600 to 1,000 new teachers each year, she has just four teacher recruiters.

Other urban districts are spending money to recruit more aggressively. Dallas offers

signing bonuses to attract bilingual and math teachers. Baltimore gives new teachers \$5,000 housing allowances.

Adler traveled to Fairfax County, Va., to check out a sophisticated system designed to identify and screen urban teachers who are likely to be successful. To bring that system to Philadelphia, however, would cost money that does not exist.

Philadelphia did not lose Heidi Butt because of the \$10,000 difference in salary. " \$28,676 compared with \$39,076 in Wissahickon. She had made her peace with that. Nor was it working conditions " she found University City congenial and safe.

While she described the hiring procedure as nonsensical, slow and rigid, even that was not the main reason. As a measure of Adler's efforts, the district answered Butt's questions promptly and kept in touch. And with Butt's top-ranked biology score, she could have picked her school as early as July 12, immediately after the experienced teachers exercised their transfer rights.

She chose Wissahickon for two main reasons: one, she feared the district's precarious financial position and the possibility of a state takeover and layoffs.

And two, she was disappointed that there was no vacancy at University City. While the lumbering system later revealed many science openings at other city high schools, Wissahickon had already wooed her. "I am feeling incredibly guilty about this exodus, and I keep trying to justify it to myself," she said.

"I know it sounds like I'm copping out, but it would be unfair to me and my husband to pass up a job that I was wooed for to take one which required me to jump through hoops . . . that will pay me less, and could drop me like a bad habit when money gets tight," she

explained. "It frustrates me to think how I really wanted to teach in the city, but they made it so difficult."

She takes consolation in the words of her mother, also a teacher: "Anywhere you go, there'll be a kid to help."

Publication#W\ PP# 44. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ PP# 09/02/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B05

Headline#\ PP# D.C. Schools Off to a Better Start This
YearHeadline #:\ PP#Su
bhead#[\ PP# Officials Pleased By Easy Opening
Subhead#:\ PP# By Valerie Strauss
Washington Post Staff Writer

The District's 146 public schools opened as scheduled yesterday for the first time in four years " amid more moves by Superintendent Arlene Ackerman to restructure the troubled system.

Ackerman, who visited several schools during the day, said that all major roof repairs had been completed before school bells rang and that she was delighted with the enthusiasm she saw from teachers, principals, students and parents.

"This was the third thing we said we had to do to make people start to believe that things could change," she said. "We had to raise test scores, and we did, and we had to have a successful summer school, and we did. Now we've opened schools on time."

The new superintendent has reorganized more administrative functions in her push to make the system more efficient and accountable. Joe Carrillo, brought in a few months ago as personnel chief, is now associate superintendent in charge of a newly created office to oversee the system's emerging relationship with charter schools.

Nearly 20 charter schools, which are publicly funded but operate outside the traditional bureaucracy, are scheduled to open in the city next week.

Carrillo helped oversee firings this summer in much of the personnel office, long considered dysfunctional. Katrina Robertson Reed, president-elect of the American Association of School Personnel Administrators and a 30-year veteran of the Minnesota school system, has been hired as associate superintendent for administrative services "a newly organized office that will handle personnel, human resources, labor relations and management information systems.

Reed, who was acting superintendent of the Minneapolis school system for six months last year and was in charge of human resources there, recently served as an adviser to Ackerman.

In starting classes on time, Ackerman did have an advantage: There was no judge this year decreeing that repair work could not be done while classes were in session "a ruling that caused the school system to delay opening last year by three weeks.

But at several schools yesterday, there were some teacher shortages because the personnel office did not get the paperwork processed quickly enough, sources said. And at the African-centered School Within a School, none of the 156 students showed up because parents were concerned about the safety of the former Taft Junior High School building in Northeast Washington, where the students were told to report at the last minute because their regular school building is not ready.

At many schools, though, the first day went just fine, parents and principals said. Ackerman and her staff met daily for three months to make sure the opening went smoothly. They also took the unprecedented step of having junior and senior high school students pick up class schedules in August, so instruction could begin right away yesterday.

At Malcolm X Elementary School in Southeast Washington, new Principal Vaughn

Ki
mbrough rushed around organizing more than 700 students " most of them in unifo
rms
" into classes. The school was visited by Cora Masters Barry, wife of Mayor
Marion Barry,
who urged the youngsters to study hard.

At nearby Birney Elementary School, Marquette Jenkin, 7, was downright gloomy.
Asked whether he was glad to be back, the boy answered, "No." Asked why, he sai
d
sullenly, "Because."

But Michael Lynn Jackson, 10, who was hugged by Principal Yvonne Morse, said he
was
glad to be starting fifth grade. He was escorted to school by his mother a
nd grandmother,
the latter counseling, "Everything in life is related to math,
so study hard."
ART ph.,LUCIAN PERKINS CAPTION: At Birney Elementary, T'Aira Phillips, 9, hu
gs
her pal Sabrina Smith, 7, as she talks with her mother before beginning the
first day of the
new school year.n

Publication#W\ PP# 45. Sacramento Bee"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Lawmakers put schools at front of
class: But bills on promotion
s called
flawedHeadline #:\ PP#
By Marcos Bret;n Bee Staff Writer

Although hailed as a crucial reform for education in California, three bills he
aded for the
governor's desk and intended to stop the promotion of students who
don't make the grade
may have one major flaw.

Even the bills' strongest supporters worry that the reforms ultimately could fa
ll far short
of fixing the problem of "social promotion" in public schools " t
he practice of passing
students on to a higher grade even though they are not p
roficient in their studies.

Likely to be signed by Gov. Pete Wilson, the bills go further than any previous
legislation on the issue by establishing that school districts could use subst
andard test scores

and grades to hold back students between the second and sixth grades.

Almost everyone in education expects that if signed into law the bills will drive up the number of students "retained" by their teachers.

Some worry, however, that projections of 250,000 children likely to be retained could prove to be too low. If so, the \$115 million " also approved Monday " for remedial programs to help the students would fall short as well.

"I would anticipate there will be a greater need after the first year," said Assemblyman Michael Sweeney, D-Hayward, who authored AB 1639, which requires that students who are retained participate in tutoring programs.

"I think you'll see more pressure with increased demand

You will see that most parents will want to make sure kids have the opportunity to get the academic instruction they need to stay at their grade level," Sweeney said.

For years, California lawmakers and educators have clashed over the controversial issue of "social promotion" with little success. Often, the debate would bog down somewhere between the desire of lawmakers for tougher standards and educators' concern that students could be stigmatized by repeating a grade.

Agreement on how many students are not making the grade and what it would cost to help them also has long been a sticking point.

In 1997, for example, the blue-ribbon California Rewards and Interventions Advisory Committee found that as many as 3 million state students were below or well below proficiency levels. The price tag to fix the problem as seen by the committee: \$600 million.

In a state budget process with so many competing interests, that much money simply was not going to be allocated, said Marian Bergeson, the state secretary of child development and education.

The \$115 million approved by the legislature Monday is earmarked for enhanced summer school and after-school programs for students who are retained. It was contained in a bill by state Sen. Richard Polanco, D-Los Angeles.

Bergeson defended the allocation in Polanco's bill as "substantial remediation."
"

Wilson has 30 days to sign the "social promotion" bills, the third of which is a bill by Assemblyman Howard Wayne, D-San Diego, that spells out the criteria districts would use to determine whether a student should be retained. Wilson staffers said Tuesday that the governor has appeared agreeable to all three.

As currently proposed in the legislation, the State Board of Education would be required to "adopt levels of student performance" based on new state standardized tests for reading, English language and math. The board would require that "minimum levels" of satisfactory performance be met before a student could advance to the next grade.

A pupil's grades also would be taken into account. But in a victory for educators, students who don't meet the still-unadopted standards could be passed to the next grade if their teacher can state in writing to state officials why they should not be retained.

This provision, as well as the proposed \$115 million for summer school and after-school remedial programs, helped sell the "social promotion" bills to administrators of some of the larger Sacramento-area districts.

General Davie, superintendent of the San Juan Unified School District, said: "The funds will allow us to expand our programs to intervene when we see students

not making the
grade."

Dave Gordon, superintendent of the fast-growing Elk Grove Unified School District, said: "It was very encouraging that the bill gives teachers discretion. One of our big concerns was that if there were more rigid (criteria) implemented, we would be squandering the experience teachers are paid to give."

Local administrators say it is still too early to determine how many students could be retained. At San Juan Unified, for example, only 1 percent of the district's K-6 students were retained last year.

"I wouldn't even venture a guess as to how that number would be affected in the future," said Davie.

Still, while educators wait for Wilson's signatures and for new policies that will determine which students should be retained, some worry about the effect of the bills.

"I think both low-income and blue-collar kids will be inordinately affected because they're going to schools with the worst facilities and the highest proportion of unaccredited teachers," said Bruce Fuller, co-director of Policy Analysis for California Education.

"This raises the false hope that somehow, after years of poverty and poor schooling, we'll have kids totally turned around based on an eight-week summer session."

Publication#W\ PP# 46. San Francisco Chronicle"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Teaching in Plain English Schools, students struggle with Proposition 227 restrictionsHeadline #:\ PP# Nanette Asimov, Suzanne Espinosa Solis, Chronicle Staff Writers

It was math time yesterday at Downer Elementary School in San Pablo, and 6-year-old Omar stared at his workbook, perplexed.

“Que debe de hacer?” asked the first-grader, wondering aloud in Spanish what he should do.

Omar's teacher, Kathleen Madison, said in English, “You start on this page.” Omar gazed at his book, uncomprehending. He repeated his question. “Que debe de hacer?”

Madison pointed to the English words and slowly explained: “You go from this page to this page.”

That clicked. “OK!” the boy said, and proceeded to fill out the book correctly, counting in Spanish as he did so.

As the first school year of the new English-only era begins across California, children may speak in any language they like. It is their teachers who must use English or risk lawsuit from angry parents under Proposition 227.

How California teaches its 1.4 million children who speak little English has become the state's most politicized education issue. Most teachers argued to keep “but improve” the bilingual education system used for more than 20 years.

But 61 percent of voters in June agreed with the backers of Proposition 227, who hammered at a single theme: Children can learn English faster if they're taught in English.

Now, amid a bewildering patchwork of official pronouncements and legal challenges to the initiative, parents, teachers and students are struggling with how much English is enough.

The new law lets parents request a waiver from English-only classes, but their

children
must wait at least 30 days before receiving alternative instruction.

In Madison's class of 20 students, however, not one parent has requested a waiver.

"I'm amazed," she said. "These parents really want their kids to learn English."

In Oakland, where school begins Tuesday, Catalina Santillan attended a parent meeting at which district officials explained the blizzard of new options. The classes had complicated titles like "sheltered English," "specially designed academic instruction in English," "primary language instruction" and "mainstream English."

Explanations and waiver forms in Cambodian, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Spanish covered the information tables at Garfield Elementary School. Santillan puzzled about what to do.

Her son, Jaime, is 9. Born here after his family arrived from Mexico a decade ago, he has attended Garfield for years.

Yet Jaime cannot speak, read or write in English.

"I want Jaime to be able to speak English so that he can defend himself outside of the neighborhood," Santillan said. "But I don't want him to lose Spanish."

Her friends Carolina Aguayo and Maria Gallegos also considered whether to request bilingual education. If they stuck with English, they would not understand their children's homework. And they fear their children could grow distant as they assimilate.

But bilingual classes presented other problems. Their children might never learn English, and their test scores could remain low.

Finally, Aguayo said, "Parents should be the ones to teach children their language. And schools should teach them English."

In the end, all three mothers checked off box No. 4: No waivers.

Although Oakland is offering the English classes, it is also one of nine Bay Area districts asking that the state Board of Education exempt them from Proposition 227. The others are Berkeley, Fremont, Hayward, Napa Valley, Palo Alto, Ravenswood City, San Mateo-Foster City and West Contra Costa.

The San Francisco district has not appealed to the state, maintaining that a federal court order forces it to provide bilingual education.

At Marshall Elementary in San Francisco, which has been open for a week, teacher Andres Tobar posed a question to the 18 first-graders sitting in a circle on the floor: "Did anyone go to the park last weekend?"

"I went to Dolores Park!" called out a little girl in a blue dress.

"Me, too!" said the boy next to her.

But here's how the conversation actually sounded: "Quien fue al parque este fin de semana?" asked Tobar.

"Yo fui al Parque Dolores!" said the girl, Nelia.

"Yo tambien!" said Carlos.

Each morning, Tobar teaches in Spanish. He reserves afternoons for English.

In districts without bilingual court orders, teachers say they are already having a tough time speaking just in English to children who barely understand the

language.

At Brentwood Elementary, in Contra Costa County's Brentwood Union district, Jennifer Lund's first-grade students worked on reading and language exercises in English. Last year, Lund would have presented the lesson in Spanish as well.

One little boy was stumped as he stared at the picture of a firefighter and tried to figure out if the word began with "f."

Lund leaned over and said quietly into his ear: "Bombero, Fireman."

Down the hall, teacher Rosie Camacho urged her second-graders in Spanish to sound out their vocabulary words. She said she often gets blank stares when she speaks only in English.

"It is much more difficult for them," she said. "You can see it in their faces, and just me explaining it to them afterwards doesn't help enough."

When a student asked Camacho if he could read a book called "Clifford" in Spanish, she answered, "You don't want to read it in Spanish. Go and get an English book."

At Santee Elementary School in the Franklin-McKinley district of East San Jose, teachers are required to speak in English 60 percent of the time to satisfy Proposition 227. Virtually all the 740 students are Latino, Cambodian or Vietnamese and about 70 percent speak little English.

One first-grade girl in Pam West's class tugged on West's skirt, plaintively asking, "Maestra? Maestra?" meaning "teacher."

West responded kindly in English, "Is my name Maestra? No, it's not. Do you remember my name?"

After a moment the girl replied, "Miss West?"

When West gives instructions in English, some children respond immediately. Others watch for cues or wait for the instructions to be repeated in Spanish.

As recess approached, the children formed a neat line at the door, and West rewarded them each with a stick of red licorice. Then she said, in clearly enunciated English, "Everybody, go put your candy on top of your desk and get back in line. We can eat the candy after recess."

A few children reluctantly walked to their desks. The rest clutched their licorice even harder " until West repeated the instruction in Spanish.

Although most parents of Cambodian and Vietnamese children at Santee have opted for classes in English only, most Latino parents are choosing some form of bilingual education after the mandatory month of English immersion, said Principal Suzanne LaBare.

After the switch, said West, she won't have to count her words quite so carefully.

Publication#W\ PP# 47. Austin AmericanStatesman"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# New ratings hand out F's on training for teachersHeadline #:\ PP#Subhead#[\ PP# Not enough students passed test in 35 of 85 Texas programsSubhead#:\ PP# By A. Phillips Brooks American-Statesman Capitol Staff

Forty-one percent of Texas college and university programs aimed at training future teachers " including two Austin-area institutions " failed to make the grade under a new state rating system released Tuesday.

The first-ever ratings show 35 of 85 teacher preparation programs did not have enough

students passing a state teacher certification exam to qualify for state accreditation. The failing programs include St. Edward's University and Huston-Tillotson College.

"The majority of our schools are getting the job done as we wanted," said Sen. Teel Bivins, R-Amarillo, who helped craft the 1995 law requiring the accountability ratings.

But as Bivins and others applauded the rating system, some questioned whether it could diminish efforts to produce more classroom teachers at a time when the state needs more.

"We are destroying our system of teaching," said Rep. Irma Rangel, D-Kingsville, chairwoman of the House Higher Education Committee. "This amounts to a scarlet letter."

Efforts to produce teachers at historically black colleges and universities would especially suffer, some say. Six of the state's seven traditionally black colleges and universities failed to make the grade. Under the law, schools that do not meet standards for three consecutive years will lose their teaching accreditation.

"This is a clear indication of what is going to happen to minorities," said Judith Loreda, chairwoman of the division of education at Huston-Tillotson, a historically black college.

The new rating system "the first of its kind in the nation, according to Jim Nelson, chairman of the State Board for Educator Certification" is aimed at bolstering teacher preparation programs across the state in the same way the state's rating system for public schools has increased student performance on Texas' achievement test.

The ratings are based on the number of people who passed the educator certification test, called the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas, or ExCET. The system looks at overall student performance on the ExCET and at s

pecific categories: male, female,
black, Hispanic, white and other.

Two grades were awarded " accredited and accredited under review. To receive t
he
passing grade, at least 70 percent of first-time test-takers had to pass the
ExCET in 1997-98.
Programs also made the grade if 80 percent of students passe
d on the second try during the
1996-97 and 1997-98 academic years.

St. Edward's University is appealing its rating because it missed the mark by o
ne student.

"I was caught a little off guard," said Frank Smith, dean of education at St. E
dward's.
"We only had one student who took the test and failed."

He said the school would appeal its accreditation status. An appeal would likel
y result
in a change in the accreditation rating, said Stephanie Korcheck, dire
ctor of policy and
planning for the educator certification board that released
the ratings. Nineteen other
schools, including Baylor University in Waco, are e
ligible to appeal the ratings because they
were based on the passing rate of a
demographic group containing fewer than 10 students.

Sixteen schools, including Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, t
he state's
largest teachers college, cannot appeal under state guidelines. At S
tephen F. Austin, 83
percent of all first-time test-takers passed, but only 54
percent of blacks and 57 percent of
Hispanic first-time test-takers passed. Sim
ilarly, at Austin's Huston-Tillotson, more than
two-thirds of all students pass
ed the test but only 53 percent of black students passed on the
first try.

Huston-Tillotson officials and graduates defended the program, saying that rati
ngs should
not be based solely on test results.

"The education I received at Huston-Tillotson College was excellent and prepare
d me to

go on to earn my master's at the University of Texas," said Karen Terry, a sixth-grade social studies teacher at Mendez Middle School in Southeast Austin. She was certified in 1988 after graduating from Huston-Tillotson.

In response to the ratings, Huston-Tillotson is raising its standards and accepting only A and B students in its educator preparation program, Loredo said. Only one student met those standards this year; a year ago, the program enrolled nine students. Historically, the school has allowed C students into the program, many of whom have become "excellent teachers," Loredo said.

"The way it is looking, you are going to have to recruit the cream of the crop. Today, minorities can go into engineering, law and medicine," she said. "Why would they come to teaching to earn \$22,000 a year?"

Texas, with 3.8 million students enrolled in public schools, is facing a teacher shortage because students are passing up teaching for more lucrative professions, Korchek said. Of the 17,000 teachers the state certifies each year, only half end up in the classroom the following term. In survey after survey, teachers cite low salaries and benefits as the reason they stop teaching, Korchek said.

Some lawmakers, including state Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin, will push for a \$5,000 across-the-board pay raise to boost Texas teachers' salaries to the national average. Texas teachers averaged \$33,000 a year last year, though beginning teachers often make significantly less.

Publication#W\ PP# 48. Dallas Morning News"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Does the GED pass or fail? Headline #:\ PP#Subhead#[\ PP# Educators, researchers debate value of alternative diploma Subhead#:\ PP# By Brian Boney Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

Mary Cantrell has definite goals.

She wants to run her own real-estate business, own her own home and be able to buy the finer things such as jewelry. She believes that, as a 17-year-old high school dropout, her chances of reaching those goals are slim to none without more education and academic credentials.

Her first step in the pursuit of those goals is to pass the General Educational Development Test, or as she says, "earn my GED."

"It took a month of deciding, but my fiancé encouraged me to get the GED," she said.

"When I was trying to find out about earning a GED, I found out that later on you'll need education to get a job. I'm getting the GED to get a better job, to go back to school . . . to get a better life."

But is the GED really the key to that better life?

Employers say it helps, but only to a point. College admissions directors say it makes the academic road smoother. Educators say it's a must. But researchers aren't convinced that it helps everyone. All agree it can't hurt, but none agree on its true value.

Passing the GED serves as a marker that shows prospective employers that an applicant has made an effort to improve his or her life. Having a GED makes applicants more attractive than having nothing at all, but it's only a part of the overall skills package employers have come to expect.

In 1992, William Kolberg, former president of the National Alliance of Business, addressed the value of the GED in a speech at the organization's national convention.

"The GED diploma is preferred by employers, many of them, as well as many of our

r
members, who say to me that the GED shows specific accomplishments recently made in computing, in reading, in math skills. . .," he said. "It says to employers, 'Here's a person who came back and tried hard, put themselves together and got through it.' "

Learning on the job

"I haven't seen employers look down their nose at GED graduates," said Carl Henry, a GED teacher at Lincoln Adult Education Center. "They know if students pass the GED, they can read and write. You can't always say that about high school graduates... The GED graduates] know their stuff."

Charles Thrash, manager of employee development for the City of Dallas, said his staff looks the same at earners of GEDs and earners of traditional high school diplomas.

"To us there's no difference, but we're mainly looking at whether they can perform the job for which they applied," he said. "We want to know, for example, if a welder has the technical experience to do the job. In that case, a diploma or a GED isn't that important. We'll give them the job, though, with the stipulation that they get a GED. We'll provide them that work environment."

Mr. Thrash said Dallas offers its employees flexible schedules, and in some cases provides classroom space in city buildings, in order to advance their education. He said the city benefits because the education level of its employees increases, making them better workers and citizens.

He added that there are too many reasons for not earning a high school diploma to make that an automatic disqualification for employment.

"So many things can go wrong along the way," Mr. Thrash said. "Some aren't citizens

when they come to this country, but they're good workers. They bring a lot of talents, even if they don't have a diploma."

But if employers have changed their attitudes toward the GED over the past five years, it's because they've had to, says Laurie Larrea, president of WorkSource, a nonprofit countywide company that works to improve job skills of prospective workers.

"Five years ago, a high school diploma was given more credence," she said. "But because the market is so tight, and because employers are struggling to fill jobs, anyone with credentials can get a job. Employers have lost the distinction between the two."

Ms. Larrea said her company has been cautioning those with whom it works to continue pursuing their education, warning them that the job market won't be so rosy in the future.

"We all know it will turn. And when it does, it'll be more difficult if you don't have the credentials," she said. "Training and capability are what the employers look for. They want outcomes. Credentials like the GED will get you in the door, but that's all."

Preparing for college

College admissions directors say the same thing - that the GED doesn't guarantee acceptance, but it is a key component.

"The GED is meaningless if a student doesn't have other academic credentials," said Dr.

Shirley Binder, vice president for student enrollment at the University of Texas at Arlington.

"We ask them to take the SAT or the ACT. And of course they have to pass the TASP (Texas Academic Skills Program). And we need to see their high school transcripts. It's impossible to say someone will never get in to college without passing the GED, but not passing makes it much harder. Earning the credentials is important."

According to the American Council on Education, the organization that administers the GED, more than 60 percent of those taking the GED do so to move into post-secondary education. The need to pass the GED for academic reasons is a distinction that educators impress upon their students.

Dorris Baker, a specialist with the Adult Basic Education Department of the Dallas Independent School District, said students who pass the GED are given more respect than in the past.

"Employers don't look down on the GED. They don't favor the high school diploma more than the GED," she said. "Employers know there are a lot of reasons why people don't finish high school. It's not just that they were lazy or couldn't do the work. Passing the GED shows that they're interested in improving themselves. But they have to go further than the GED and acquire some job skills, some more specific training."

Dropping back in

Ms. Baker estimated that roughly 4,500 students enroll in GED preparation courses each year. Ms. Cantrell is one of those 4,500. She dropped out one year ago during her parents' divorce, which she said put too much emotional pressure on her to handle school. "The divorce caused a lot of problems. I had a lot of problems at school," she said. "At the time I didn't feel like I could take the pressure."

To further the training of DISD students, the district has formed partnerships with local companies and organizations to provide job training. The district works to provide the academic skills while others provide the job skills.

The latest research regarding the value of the GED supports the need for adding job

skills. But it questions the GED's economic value. A 1996 Harvard University study produced by John Tyler, Richard Murnane and John Willett found that for those who don't pass the GED with flying colors the benefits are minimal. And for non-whites who barely pass, they're nonexistent.

"There is a signaling factor for whites who pass the GED as compared to those who don't.

The test is used to differentiate between the two. It's seen as a sign of motivation," said Dr.

Tyler, now an assistant professor of education, economics and public policy at Brown University. "For the least skilled dropouts, those who fare the worst in the labor market, it makes a definite difference. It's the first step in the screening process."

The group's research found that the GED is worth only \$1,500 annually for young white GED holders who barely pass. Non-whites, however, received no boost.

"According to our research, we can't say the GED is working for non-whites, at least those non-whites who barely pass," Dr. Tyler said. "If you compare two non-whites, and one has a GED and one doesn't, we found the GED isn't used as a signaling factor. We think it's because employers use other signals, such as language skills."

As Ms. Cantrell approaches her first attempt at the GED, she realizes the GED won't guarantee riches in years to come. But to her, future earnings are only a part of the motivation to pass the GED. The rest, she says, no one can put a price on.

"I want the respect. Most who don't get a diploma get less respect. People think you don't know anything," she said. "I want to prove I can do it."

Publication#W\ PP# 49. Miami Herald"Publication" #: \ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Aiming high: More Dade students are taking college placement testsHeadline #:\ PP#
By JODI MAILANDER FARRELL

Herald Staff Writer

Five public high schools in Miami-Dade County rated among the top 100 in the country for having the highest number of 1998 graduates taking Advanced Placement exams, an indicator of the increasing number of students here aspiring to go to college.

The county's largest schools — Coral Gables, Braddock, Killian, Palmetto and Sunset Park high schools — ranked tops among schools across the nation administering the greatest number of AP exams, according to a report Tuesday from The College Board, which distributes AP exams as well as the SAT college entrance test.

AP exams are taken here in a wide variety of subjects, including English, European history, foreign languages and physics. Students who score between 3 and 5 on the difficult, essay-driven exams typically are awarded credits by colleges, enabling them to save tuition money and possibly graduate early.

Scores were not available to determine how many of Dade's 1998 grads achieved scores in the 3-5 range. But in the past, 45 percent to 55 percent of the AP test-takers at those schools have earned results that high.

Dade's school district has been encouraging more students, especially minorities, to enroll in AP courses in the past few years, an attempt to challenge more students and give them the chance to shoot for a college education.

“It indicates that college is becoming a goal, at the least,” said Janice Gammon, spokeswoman for the board. “As AP permeates the system, eventually students will respond.”

The number of AP exams taken by Florida students has nearly doubled over the past 10 years, with 37,034 students taking 62,955 exams in 31 subject areas this year. Florida is second in the country in the number of AP exams taken by black

students and third in the number of exams taken by Hispanics, the board reports.

Two Broward County public high schools " Nova and Marjory Stoneman Douglas " as well as the private Pine Crest Preparatory School also made the top 100 schools in the country for administering the most AP exams.

Publication#W\ PP# 50. Raleigh News & Observer"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# State also continues gains Headline #:\ PP#Subhead#[\ PP# But after making the largest 10-year SAT improvement of any state, North Carolina is still 48th. Some educators call the rank misleading.Subhead#:\ PP# By TIM SIMMONS, Staff Writer

North Carolina extended its gains Tuesday in one of the best-known barometers of school success, posting a four-point increase in 1998 SAT scores for high school seniors. It's the eighth time in nine years that the state's Scholastic Assessment Test scores have improved. North Carolina now has the largest increase of any state over the past 10 years " a jump of 34 points. Nationally, average scores increased one point to 1,017 out of a possible 1,600. North Carolina's score of 982 brought it within four points of the Southeast average. But the state's national ranking remains mired at 48th " above only Georgia, the District of Columbia and South Carolina.

After suggesting for years that North Carolina's national ranking on the SAT is a poor way to judge its public education system, state officials attacked the issue directly Tuesday. "The SAT is an important test for students going to college," said state schools Superintendent Mike Ward. "But it would be hard to pick a less relevant number when it comes to judging the entire state." Several national groups have come to North Carolina's defense, with some even trying to recalculate rankings to make the test more comparable among states. Such efforts, such as one released Tuesday by the Southern Regional Education Board,

suggest North Carolina would be more accurately ranked about 40th. But any comparison is fraught with problems. The SAT, taken by 40,000 high school students in a state of 1.2 million schoolchildren, is a voluntary test. In some states, as few as 4 percent of high school students take it. In Washington, D.C., 80 percent do.

The rankings also ignore important variables over which schools have no control, such as the average family income in a state, parents' education levels or the mix of rural, urban and suburban schools. "It's not that the SAT doesn't matter, but it isn't meant to provide apples-to-apples comparisons," said Suzanne Triplett, a former director of North Carolina's testing program who works for the National Center for Education Statistics. A decade ago, when there was little else that could be used to measure schools, the focus on rankings was understandable, Triplett said. But accountability programs have generated a wealth of data since then, and several national exams have been designed to compare student achievement state-by-state.

The one most educators and researchers prefer is the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Sometimes called "The Nation's Report Card," it uses a random sample of students in various grades and subjects. It paints a significantly different picture of the state's school system. In its most recent math exam in 1996, fourth- and eighth-graders in North Carolina scored near or above the national average. An eighth-grade science test that year showed similar results. The report card clearly mirrors two other trends that have emerged from North Carolina's own statewide testing program. First, Tar Heel students have made steady gains since the early 1990s, when the state made a concerted effort to focus on basic skills such as reading and math. And second, the state has a long way to go before its average students master the skills requested of them. The report card, which uses rigorous standards, shows that only 20 percent of North Carolina's eighth-graders are "proficient" in math.

Only 56 percent possess "basic skills." By comparison, the state's standards suggest that almost 70 percent of grade-school children are proficient. The state figures drop sharply in high school, where only 55 percent appear to be doing grade-level work in high school courses such as biology, English and algebra I.

Large gaps between state and national standards also are reflected in the analysis of the SAT data provided by the College Board, the group that oversees administration of the exam. North Carolina students who are in the top 10 percent of their class, for example, lag 27 points behind the SAT average for top students nationally. Students who have an "A" average in North Carolina scored 50 to 65 points behind their peers nationally. The SAT is broken into two sections, math and verbal. The highest possible score in each section is 800. The SAT also can be broken down in other ways. American Indians, African-Americans and Asian-Americans in North Carolina trail their counterparts nationally, for example, while Hispanic students in North Carolina did much better than Hispanic students nationally.

By using SAT data in this way, and then combining it with the results of other national exams, Ward says, a relatively complete picture of the public schools can be painted for educators, parents and others. "It won't fit on a button, such as the ones I sometimes see among the people who support voucher programs for private schools," Ward said. "The buttons say '48th No More.' That's nice, but it pretty much ignores the reality of things."

Publication#W\ PP# 51. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Freshman enrollment booms at area collegesHeadline #:\ P P#Subhead#[\ P P# UWM, Marquette, others benefit from increase in youth population in 1990s Subhead#:\ PP# By Jack Norman of the Journal Sentinel staff

Paced by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's biggest new freshman class in 13 years, Milwaukee-area colleges begin the school year this week with a bountiful crop of entering students.

About 2,680 students start classes today at UWM, 8% more than last year and 48% more than the entering class in 1994, the school reported Tuesday. The figure does not include freshmen who are continuing from last year.

But UWM, the Milwaukee area's largest university, isn't alone in having a sizable freshman class.

At Marquette University, about 1,740 freshmen started Monday, the biggest entering class in nine years, said John Hopkins, vice president for communications.

When combined with last year's surge at Marquette, the result is a 23% growth in the freshman class in two years, "the biggest two-year increase in history," Hopkins said.

Strong numbers were posted throughout the area.

Concordia College in Mequon will have its 15th consecutive record freshman class, close to 400 students, up 3% from last year, spokesman Jeff Bandurski said.

Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design is up about 30% from last year, to a record freshman class of nearly 200, said registrar Vita Gebauers.

Wisconsin Lutheran College, in Wauwatosa, has its biggest freshman class ever, about 125, up 14% from last year, said admissions director Jeff Weber.

Milwaukee School of Engineering is up 20% from last year. The class of about 535 isn't a record, but it's one of the best ever, said Tim Valley, dean of enrollment management.

And while some other schools, such as Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University and Mount Mary College, aren't registering growth, their enrollments are stable and strong, spokesmen said.

What's driving the booming freshman enrollments?

Ask the college officials and they talk about the attractions of their school.

The big UWM increase, for example, prompted Chancellor Nancy Zimpher to issue a written statement saying "it reflects the expanding recognition of UWM as an outstanding university. More of our prospective students make UWM their first choice for college because they realize that UWM has the quality they want in a location they desire."

But demographics also are a major factor. The youth population is up in the 1990s.

In southeastern Wisconsin, for example, public school enrollments fell throughout the 1970s and '80s but began climbing again in the 1990s, said Bruce Rubin, chief land use planner for the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

The number of high school graduates in Wisconsin jumped 14% from 1994 to 1997 (the latest year for which figures are available), according to the state's Department of Public Instruction.

At UWM, the number of entering freshmen who are African-American rose 8% from last year, to 262, or 10% of the class. The number of Hispanics climbed 13%, to 119, or 4% of the class.

American Indian enrollment was up 69%, but from a small number, jumping from 16 to

27, or 1% of the freshman class. Asian-American freshman enrollment was up 28%, to 131 or 5% of the class.

UWM expects a total enrollment of about 22,450, although numbers won't be available for weeks. That would be the biggest overall enrollment in four years.

Enrollments at UWM and the UW System statewide peaked in the mid-1980s. Fall numbers for the rest of the UW System weren't available Tuesday.

Publication#W\ P P# 52. Richmond Times Dispatch"Publication" #:\ P
P#September
r 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Classroom management 'different
today'Headline #:\ PP#Subhead#
[\ PP# Drugs, guns issues not relevant in yesteryear Subhead#:\ PP#
BY ELIZABETH WILKERSON
Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

School safety always has been an issue, but it's one that waxes and wanes with the headlines, a teacher educator says.

"I guess it's the events," said Sandy Cohen, who directs teacher training at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education.

Education schools long have taught classroom management, but the management issues of yesteryear didn't include dealing with students with guns or drugs.

"Obviously, it's different today. It's very different today," she said.

All good teachers know how to manage classrooms, but in many ways the recent acts of violence in schools weren't events that teachers or teacher training could prevent, said Cohen.

"It's not things the school is doing wrong" but more of a societal or community problem."I think it's a dangerous thing to think that only schools need to change " that it's 'school violence.' "

After all, she wondered, if the violence took place in churches, would we be saying that the

churches have to change?

"Kids' worlds are in school, so when a kid acts violently there are two main places to act
" school and home."

Nowadays teachers and administrators need to be much more aware of antisocial behavior or signals, and take action before they build to violent actions, she said. "There have to be more supports." Teachers have always managed behavior, but now they need to set the structure and the controls more. "It is different from a generation ago."

The classroom environment needs to balance structure and flexibility. Students need to know what the rules, expectations and consequences are for achievement and transgressions alike, said Cohen. "Along with that comes a great deal of emphasis on understanding what role reinforcement plays, along with what role punishment would play."

Things that could help teachers and children include providing more time for teachers "a luxury, really" to talk about their students' problems. "You end up talking about only the most severe." Supports such as mental health services need to be increased, she said, and efforts need to be coordinated among schools, churches and community groups.

Dewey Cornell is an associate professor at U.Va.'s education school and a nationally recognized expert on juvenile violence. He recently published a guidebook, "Designing Safer Schools for Virginia: A Guide to Keeping Students Safe from Violence."

Urban schools have the highest rate of violence, he said, but rural schools hav

e more
serious crimes than suburban schools.

He speculates that rural schools are less well staffed, have fewer prevention programs and
are "more likely to have the view that it can't happen," he said.

"Complacency could be a problem in any school."

Among the violence-prevention programs he cites as particularly effective are:

conflict resolution and peer mediation programs;

violence prevention training;

bullying-reduction campaigns;

early intervention programs;

community-based programs, such as recreation programs and mentoring; and

drug education programs.

"I think some schools are certainly improving," he said. "Other schools I think
are being
a little complacent and keeping their fingers crossed and hoping nothing happens."

James M. Kaufman, a U.Va. education professor who teaches behavior management,

said many educators think behavior management is something teachers should learn on
the job " "a preposterous notion spoken out of horrible ignorance," he said.

He urges teachers who have student behavior problems to look to their own teaching first.
You can't have a good behavior management program without teaching that's appropriate
to a student's experience and ability, he said. "If you don't

have that, you haven't started
where you need to start."

Children in situations where they can't meet expectations, "where they cannot experience excitement," will tend to turn toward trouble. "You're going to disconnect or you're going to be a behavior problem and get out of there."

A much larger although less severe problem, in Kaufman's view, is "the aggression, bullying, coercion in schools that is at a much lower level."

"We start to see the typical as acceptable. If typical is for kids to shove each other around and call each other [expletive deleted]," that behavior can start to be accepted, he said.

Schools can do more to prevent that sort of mean-spiritedness than they can to prevent shootings and stabbings, he said.

"You can't necessarily see a kid's inner life, but you can see what kids do."
Publication#W\ PP# 53. Washington Times"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# Amazingly, schools in D.C. open on
timeHeadline #:\ PP#
By Susan Ferrechio
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Parents and teachers welcomed the sound of school bells ringing across the District yesterday, which for the first time in three years opened on time. "It caught me by surprise," said Anita Weems, whose daughter Amara was sharply dressed in the navy-and-yellow uniform of Birney Elementary in Anacostia. "I didn't expect things to be working out as well as they are this year." Schools Superintendent Arlene C. Ackerman said more good things are yet to come for the 77,000 students in what is often billed as the worst urban school system in the nation. "Everybody in this community wanted to open these schools on time," said Mrs. Ackerman, who was hired a year ago to reform the system's academics but took over

er as superintendent after Gen. Julius W. Becton Jr. resigned. The mood was markedly different from last year, when the halls of 147 school buildings were empty while construction workers hammered away at roof replacements and fire-code repairs that dragged on weeks past summer deadlines. Because of the repairs and a now-dismissed lawsuit over building safety, students were not permitted inside until every hard hat and ladder were removed. By the time school doors opened, it was Sept. 22 and parents were angry. No so this year. "It's a nice turn of events," said Delabian Rice-Thurston, executive director of Parents United for the D.C. Schools, an advocacy group and the plaintiff in the fire code lawsuit that dictated the late opening last year. Students and parents were all smiles at Bell Multicultural High School, which was shut down repeatedly last year because of a leaky roof. Robert Reyes, 17, a senior at the Mount Pleasant school, was happy the building opened on time so he could begin searching for college scholarships.

Last year he said he "had nothing to do" and was "bored" when his school was closed.

"I'm happy I am not a month behind on scholarships and college applications," said

Robert, who is campaigning to serve as his senior class president. Flora Bravo, 46, and Esther Miranda, 50, are relieved their daughters will get more time to study this year at Bell.

"I think it is better this year because they will take more time to study," Mrs. Miranda said.

The \$80 million allocated in the city budget for repairs to the crumbling buildings was used to hire the Army

Corps of Engineers to oversee the work. "Our hope is that the school system has

shown itself competent and the [D.C. Council] and Congress will continue to fund

and the system to continue to make these kind of improvements," Mrs. Rice-Thurston said.

Construction work will continue throughout the year on window replacements, boilers and

chillers. The opening day was not without its glitches. Workers were still removing asbestos

from the Rebault building that will house the Bethune-Woodson African-Centered School,

one of 11 "school-within-a-school" programs. It had to bus its 165 students to the former Taft Junior High, Mrs. Ackerman said. When the doors swing open for the first time this morning at the Cesar Chavez Public Policy Charter School, 60 ninth-graders will begin high school in a cramped basement in Waterside Mall with classrooms separated only by partitions. The new charter school's small but determined staff and legion of supporters found out in midsummer that their permanent space in the mall would not be renovated on time. Last evening, as phones rang, boxes were still being emptied and people scrambled to take care of last-minute details, volunteer Dale Robinson said she was happy but harried, planning to work well into the night.

"It's chaos, exciting chaos," said Mrs. Robinson, president of the board of trustees. The school "one of 15 publicly funded, privately run charter schools opening this year" will move to a larger space in the same building in about a month. At Birney, teachers were relieved to get started on time. Last year, the delay in September forced officials to extend the school day by 30 minutes each day. "Things are pretty much starting on the right foot," music teacher Gary Stanley said. Parents were equally happy to get their children off to school early, but some of their children complained that summer seemed too short. More than 20,000 students were enrolled in the system's summer-school program aimed at boosting scores on reading and mathematics tests. Elementary students who scored more than 25 percent below the basic level on the Stanford 9 achievement test were required to go to summer school, which ended a month ago. Joshua Sands, 8, was one of those students and will have to repeat the third grade at Birney. "I'm upset about it," said his mother, Walleeta Sands. "He needed extra help and didn't get it." Other parents were aggravated by the new requirement that they prove residency with three forms of identification. That prevented Darrell Carter from enrolling his four children in kindergarten and the second, third and fifth grades. The children congregated in the lobby at Birney while their father pleaded with Principal Yvonne Morse.

"I guess I'll be taking the day off to find out where my kids are supposed to go to school," said Mr. Carter, a plumber. Despite some bumps, Mrs. Ackerman touted the first day as "great." "We're on the right track, and we're moving forward," she said, noting that all of the schools opened yesterday with supplies and appropriate textbooks. Mrs. Ackerman, who was up at 2 a.m. yesterday with first-day-of-school anxieties, said the parents and students she spoke with were pleased with the first day. Von Garland said despite the system's record of late openings, she never doubted her three children would be walking through the doors at Birney yesterday. "I figured it was going to be right this time," she said. "I think they learned their lesson last year."

Jeremy Redmon, Leslie Koren and Andrea Billups contributed to this report.

Publication#W\ PP# 54. Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ PP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PP# City sets a hard-line policy on truancy Headline #:\ PP#
By Beth Daley, Globe Staff

Boston public school police will visit parents of children who play hooky more than three times this year as part of a sweeping plan announced yesterday to put a stop to the system's severe truancy problem.

Boston students have one of the highest rates of absenteeism in the country, with more than a quarter of them absent three or more weeks last year. Some high schoolers don't show up for weeks at a time, able to escape detection because of poor record-keeping and enforcement.

Now, a \$70,000 grant spread among five high schools by Boston Duck Tours will provide unusual incentives for students to get to school on time. At Greater Eagleton Community High School, all students will be given watches and alarm clocks. At Boston High, pizza parties and movie tickets will greet students who improve attendance. And

English High will enter students with perfect attendance in to a raffle for cash prizes.

Meanwhile, more truancy officers will be hired, and police sweeps will increase in areas where truant students hang out, like Downtown Crossing. Local attendance panels will meet with chronically absent students and their parents to help get children to attend regularly.

And if all efforts fail, a tough new promotion policy will give them an extra boost in the rear: failure if a student has no legitimate excuse for missing more than 12 days a year. Until this year, students could miss as many as 27 days a year and still be promoted.

"Children have to be in school to learn," Mayor Thomas M. Menino said yesterday in announcing the plan, which involves city, community, state, and school officials. "And if they are not in school they are not going to learn ... If you don't go to school, you don't get promoted. It's simple."

Boston's new attendance policy will be one of the country's strictest. Chicago, which began a new policy three years ago, allows students 20 unexcused absences a year.

While suburban schools often track down parents after even one missed class, urban districts around the country have suffered from a lack of money, poor record-keeping, and a massive number of students who cut classes.

Yesterday, parents of high schoolers welcomed the news and said it has been far too easy for teens to skip class undetected. Most high schools have automated telephone machines that call home when a child is absent. But many students simply take the call while their parent or parents are at work. Others show up only for homeroom to be counted present for the day, then leave.

"It's necessary for the school system to get serious," said Sandra Joseph, a

Dorchester

parent of two teenagers who regularly attend Boston high schools. ``

A lot of parents don't know their child is absent until they get the report card

."

The plan largely revolves around identifying chronic truants early. A three-yea

r,

\$214,000 federal grant will pay for four additional truancy officers to make

home visits and

track down students.

A student's first and second unexcused absence will result in a phone call or letter home.

After the third absence, the parent will meet with school staff and

sign a plan promising to

address the student's absenteeism. If a parent doesn't

show up, Boston School Police will

visit the home until they respond.

After the fourth absence, a parent must meet with the principal and go over the attendance

plan again.

Meanwhile, all students truant more than six times during the year will be assigned to one

of 25 attendance boards made up of police and social service officials.

Students interviewed on Blue Hill Avenue in Mattapan yesterday said the plan was

ambitious.

``I know a lot of people who just don't go," said Charlene Scott, a junior at Boston High

School. ``It sounds like there might be more kids in school now."n

Publication#W\ PP# 55. The Hartford Courant"Publication" #:\ PP# 09/01/98; Edition: 1W NEW HAVEN COUNTY; Section: TOWN NEWS; Page B3

Headline#\ PP# PUBLIC SCHOOLS FINDING A

NEW BREED OF TEACHERHeadline #:\ PP#

By MARYELLEN FILLO

Courant Staff Writer

A combination of factors " including enhanced salaries, changing trends in employment

patterns and the growing popularity of the alternative teaching certification program " have

formed a new breed of teacher, who many agree will bring a fresh perspective to both the classroom and the teachers' lounge.

"I'm cool," kidded Robert Lasbury, a former semi-pro pitcher who will teach math at Southington High School. Lasbury, who quit college in his junior year to sign with the Colorado Rockies baseball team, said a foundering athletic career and some nudging from a former basketball coach prompted him to make the jump to teaching.

"Baseball changed me a lot. I met so many people and saw so many things. I think my past career will be a good segue into the classroom," he said. "I think my students, especially the males, will relate to me a little better because of my past. I think one of the big things in teaching is to get students to like you first and then they will perform. My baseball career will be a good way to break the ice and establish a rapport with them."

School officials in several towns reported hiring new teachers who are a little older than usual and have worked at some other profession. In Plainville, new teachers include former chiropractor John Montague, who will teach science, chemistry and biology at Plainville High School. In Bristol, a Southington lawyer, Gary Gworek, will teach language arts at Northeast Middle School in Bristol.

Thomas Murphy, a spokesman for the state board of education, estimated there are about 2,500 new teachers in the state this year, including about 150 who parlayed job experience, bachelor's degrees and the alternative route certification program into teaching jobs.

"These teachers provide a new depth, not only to the classroom but to the teacher's room as well," Murphy said.

The alternative certification program allows degree-holding professionals to take teaching courses and do their student teaching at a special eight-week summer

r program. The program has provided teachers for hard-to-fill areas such as science, foreign languages and math.

Some critics complain the training is too short and the fledgling teachers are not properly equipped. Others argue, however, that the majority of graduates are qualified for the dynamics of the classroom because they are older, are often parents and usually have management experience.

Mary S. Hyde, who traded competitive corporate life for a desk at Chippens Hill Middle School in Bristol, said she expects both her professional and personal life will benefit her students and her school.

"Those of us with a past career know what's out there," said Hyde, who decided to pursue teaching after she was laid off as an environmental manager at Stanley Hardware last year.

A high school dropout who went on to get a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a master's in environmental management and policy, Hyde said her past will give her an edge when it comes to working with adolescents.

"A past profession brings a tremendous amount of breadth to the classroom," Bristol School Superintendent Ann Clark said. "These people can explain to students how you use what you learn in the classroom when you go into a career. Students enjoy hearing about other people's experiences."

But Barbara Smyth, president of the New Britain teachers' union, said she thinks students' interest in "second career" teachers will wane.

"I think for the first year or two, students might find it interesting that someone had a previous job," Smyth said. "But as time goes on, you just become another teacher."

Headline#\ P P# Highway links students to the
computer ageHeadline #:\ P!P#

By Joseph Szadkowski

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The new school year is upon us, and efficiency in learning now includes the mighty Internet as a homework resource, conduit for lessons and place to share in formation.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education 's Read Write Now! initiative, the

Alphabet Superhighway provides a leading example of how the World Wide Web melds the traditional classroom and the computer age.

CREATOR: A team of programmers, educators, designers, information specialists and students created the Alphabet Superhighway in the Educational Technology Laboratory at the University of Delaware. Richard L. Venezkr, professor of computer and information science and linguistics, and Vanu A. Ney, visiting associate professor in the Department of Educational Studies, directed the project.

CREATOR QUOTABLE: "We felt that we could create an engaging, interactive and fun environment that while teaching the users would also be an ongoing learning experience and project for our students," Mr. Venezkr says.

"We wanted a site that would be easy to navigate, attractive without being garish and filled with useful information that stressed high standards and innovative approaches to education."

WORD FROM THE WEBWISE: Students from kindergarten through 12th grade are contributing to this exciting and content-rich Web site. The main page, the Exhibit Hall, contains seven different areas of information - the Earth, Peoples and Cultures, Technology, Matter & Energy, Space, Mind & Body, and Living Things.

These sections are presented on seven different levels and feature the classroom projects

of students from Delaware, New Jersey, Chicago and Istanbul.

Some of the more interesting undertakings include the Everyday Math project by a high school class in Newark, Del. For this assignment, the students designed and planned the materials needed to build a deck. The project explains how the students used various math functions such as basic arithmetic, geometry and simple algebra to turn the design into a structure.

Viewers also contribute to the site's Cyberzine, a magazine by and for children. Students can submit either written or artistic works for inclusion in the magazine's feature story, poetry, news and reviews or art gallery sections. Contributions to the Cyberzine come from all ages and from all over the United States.

The Library area offers an excellent resource and reference stop that includes a dictionary, thesaurus, maps and English composition manual. Other features include an Acronym and Abbreviation list, "how-to" search engine tips, a Directorate of time (to find out the exact time as designated by the U.S. Naval Observatory) and a perpetual calendar to find out on what day of the week any date might have fallen.

More items and links of interest include directories and who's who listings of past and present persons in the White House, Senate, U.S. House of Representatives and justices of the Supreme Court. For the advanced user are two versions of the Periodic Table of Elements.

For those who like a brain teaser, Challenge Chaser contains word scrambles, anagrams, a graph game and a treasure hunt in which the player searches the Internet to find answers to questions.

Finally, for parents and teachers, the Teacher's Lounge and Parents Place provides ideas, classroom plans and activities to help young people become excited.

Both areas have numerous links to other relevant Web sites.

CREATOR KUDOS: Much applause for an excellent site for both user and creator. The Alphabet Superhighway puts forth a well-developed and easy-to-navigate collaborative effort that makes for a great educational experience. The only annoyance is that some large and slow-loading graphics pepper the site and may put off some students who are in a hurry to finish their homework.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: The Alphabet Superhighway is looking for classrooms to contribute projects to the Exhibit Hall. At this writing both the Matter & Energy and Space halls are without projects. Classrooms can design a project based on the existing subject matters or review the Ideas for Exhibits provided by the site.

Once a project is chosen, the teacher should contact the site administrator through the Teacher's Lounge and the Teacher's Guide to Constructing Exhibits, where all the obvious questions are answered.

Through this area, teachers can submit a Preliminary Information Form and communicate with administrators. This area also includes detailed instructions and ideas on how to guide the classroom in creating the project as well as the technological requirements of contributing to the Web site.

CYBERSITTER SYNOPSIS: This site encourages users to seek learning opportunities found throughout the Internet. Normal safety procedures, such as monitoring of younger children, apply.

FAMILY FUN FACTOR: 100 percent.

INFORMATION GRADE: A+.

Have a cool site for the family? Write to Joseph Szadkowski at Webwise, The
Washington Times, 3600 New York Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002; call 202/636-3016
; or send an e-mail message

(joseph@twtdmail.com).
ART Photos (color), A&B) Parents and children can access the Alphabet Superh
ighway
on the Internet by clicking www.ash.udel.edu/ash/index.html.

Publication#W\ P"P# 57. Bangor (Maine) Daily News "Publication" #:\ P#P# 09/
01/98; Edition: ALL;

Headline#\ P\$P# Back to multiage classroomsHeadline #:\ P%P#
By Brenda Power
Across the country, the same back-to-school rituals are taking place in homes.
Parents are
rifling through closets, seeing what clothes still fit their child
. Children are selecting new
notebooks and trying to adjust to earlier bedtimes
and the sound of alarm clocks.

For many children, there is also stress associated with returning to school in
September.

There will be a new teacher, and many new faces in the classroom. It
will be days, even
weeks, before some children and their teachers feel they kn
ow each other well. Teachers feel
the same anxiety, wondering what their new st
udents will be like, and how they will learn
so many new names and faces so qui
ckly.

But in some Maine classrooms, there is less back-to-school anxiety this ye
ar than last.

These children and teachers are in multiage classrooms, and they
will see many of the same
classmates and teachers they waved goodbye to in June

Multiage teaching involves a child working with the same teacher for at least t
wo years.

For example, a child may enter a multiage class as a first grader, an
d not leave until they are
finished with second or third grade. Each year, new
students are added to the mix, as older students leave. Children in multiage cla
sses often span an age range of three or more years.

For teachers, multiage classrooms can be appealing because teachers get to work

with the same students for an extended period of time. Getting to know each child well helps teachers target the best instructional practices for that particular child.

Teachers also enjoy the chance to get to know the parents of their students well. When a teacher works with the same child for two or three years, she has the chance to develop a close relationship with the child's parents.

Parents have more of an opportunity to support their child's learning, because less conference time is needed to get to know the teacher, and more time can be spent addressing specific needs of their child.

Research shows that the academic gains in multiage classrooms are the same as those in single-grade classrooms. Where multiage children leap ahead is in the social and affective realms. Multiage teachers try to foster a sense of family in the classroom. The youngest students in the class have the opportunity to watch and learn from older, more experienced peers. The oldest students have a chance to lead and help teach their youngest classmates.

Some parents are concerned about how challenged older students will be in a multiage class. Most multiage classes include some time where the more capable students are working on different activities than the youngest students. Lessons and projects are regularly adapted to be more challenging for older students, and less difficult for the youngest learners in the class.

Watch any group of youngsters playing baseball in the waning days of summer, and you'll be amazed at how readily children can adapt the game for kids of different ages. Five-year-olds get extra strikes; older children have to pitch underhand. Learning to make these adaptations and work with others is a skill children develop naturally when they play together, and these skills can be built upon in multiage classrooms.

In real life, we pick our friends based on interests and personality, not on age. My best friend is 10 years older than I. I've never felt "gifted" because I have an older best friend (and she's never felt "developmentally impaired" because I'm younger than her!).

In multiage classrooms, you see similar friendships evolve. There is no reason why a ten-year-old can't be close to a 7-year-old "siblings" have that closeness all the time.

Many small rural schools in Maine have always had multiage classrooms, simple because there are too few students to fill single grade classes. Multiage classrooms have even been mandated in some states, notably Kentucky and Oregon. They aren't a mandate in Maine, which is a good thing. It's not an instructional style that all teachers, parents and students would be comfortable with, and Maine has a strong history of local control in schools and parent choice.

Fall is a favorite time of year for many people. There is a crispness in the air. Children have new clothes, new book bags and new hopes for the school year. One thing that isn't new for many of these children is their teacher, and that makes the back-to-school transition a lot more enjoyable for everyone.

Brenda Power is an associate professor of literacy education at the University of Maine.

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Publication#W\ P&P# 58. The Las Vegas Review-Journal"Publication" #:\ P'P# 08 /31/98; Edition: Final; Section: NEWS; Page 7A

Headline#\ P(P# Number of teacher strikes down, charter schools up, trends show
wHeadline #:\ P)P#

As the school year begins, few teacher strikes if any are causing delays, more students are attending charter schools and native-language instruction for people whose home language is not English is restricted in California and elsewhere.

Trends in schools this fall:

-The number of teacher strikes has dwindled over the past few years. School boards and union officials say both sides have become more cooperative in their approaches to bargaining.

Also, "Many school districts are addressing pay and benefits issues because of the increasing teacher shortage," said Jamie Horwitz, spokesman for the American Federation of Teachers.

-About 200,000 public school students will attend more than 1,000 charter schools, up nearly 300 schools from last year.

An alternative to private schools, charters are public schools, generally small, allowed to operate outside many of the usual rules and regulations. Schools may stress a subject area, such as the arts or sciences, or have a stronger emphasis on core subjects.

-In California, it's the beginning of the end for bilingual education because of Proposition 227, although a federal judge has made an exception for San Jose schools. In Chicago, bilingual education will be limited to three years per student.

But in Durham, N.C., Spanish-speaking students in some high schools and middle schools will get reading and writing classes in their own language. The idea is that those skills have to be learned in the language where students are most proficient. Many didn't acquire those skills in their home countries.

"We're using Spanish for native speakers as a bridge to acquiring literacy in English," said Portia Wilson-Whitaker, in charge of programs to teach English as a second language.

Publication#W\ P*P# 59. New York Times"Publication" #:\ P+P#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ P,P# Poorest New Jersey Districts Race to

Be Ready for Preschoolers

Headline #: \ P-P#

By MARIA NEWMAN

Just a few days before the start of the new school year, the Superintendent in Phillipsburg, N.J., learned that two of his special-education teachers were quitting. Then, after the bombings at two embassies overseas, he and his elementary school principal had to negotiate with the Department of Defense about increasing security at temporary classrooms they were leasing in an old armory.

If that was not complicated enough, workers had to try to cope with sinkholes that developed during the summer at another school in time for the first day of classes today.

The start of a new school year typically brings headaches, but this year, Superintendent Thomas Seidenberger in Phillipsburg, like his counterparts in 27 other districts, is also struggling to meet a strict deadline to submit plans for the arrival of thousands of new students: 3- and 4-year-olds who will be required to be in half-day preschool in the fall of 1999.

For Phillipsburg, a district that is already too crowded, it could mean setting up another 25 new classrooms.

In May, the State Supreme Court ordered New Jersey to begin half-day preschool programs in the poorest districts beginning in September 1999.

The program is expected to involve 33,000 students in the 28 districts.

The court's directive was part of the settlement of a 1981 class-action lawsuit on behalf of Phillipsburg and other districts that sought to equalize financing between the state's poorest and wealthiest school systems.

As part of the settlement, the poorest districts received well over \$248 million in extra financing last year, but now they face the formidable task of making

many changes required
by the court.

The ruling reflected the national trend toward providing classes for younger children. At least 33 states now spend some funds on preschool programs, and about two dozen have substantially increased such spending in recent years. In New York City, 14,000 4-year-olds will be enrolling in prekindergarten classes this month, although officials have had to place about a third of them in private and parochial schools because there is not enough classroom space in public schools.

For the next few months, officials in the 28 New Jersey districts affected by the court ruling will face a series of deadlines to show they are making progress.

Last week, they had to give the state's Education Commissioner their plans for management teams at each school made up of teachers, parents and community leaders who will share budgetary and operational decisions with administrators. By Nov. 2, they must submit details of where they will place the new students, whether they will have enough qualified teachers and what curriculum they will follow.

And by January, they must submit five-year plans for any new construction and other educational programs they want financed.

The regulations guiding implementation of the court's decision say that districts can apply to the Commissioner for extensions on deadlines, but that ultimately the Commissioner has the authority to order any necessary changes if districts are not complying.

"It's impossible," said Peter Carter, the Superintendent in Irvington, one of the 28 districts. He said he wrote a letter to the Commissioner last week telling him the deadlines were "professionally and humanly impossible to meet." The Commissioner, Leo F. Klagholz, has not responded, he said.

Carter said that his district of 8,100 students was already overcrowded, and that at it now had only half-day kindergarten and no preschool classes. He said school officials would be hard-pressed to find the space for the 3- and 4-year-olds, especially since they have no idea how many new students there will be.

Steve Block, director of the school reform initiative for the Education Law Center in Newark, which brought the original lawsuit on unequal financing, complained that Commissioner Klagholz had met with the superintendents as a group only once since the court's decision in May, and that the regulations were coming down too fast and with very little input from the districts. "People are struggling to put it all together on time," Block said.

But state officials noted that the regulations are the result of a lawsuit in which the districts won almost everything they wanted.

"These are not deadlines set up by us, but by the court," said Peter Peretzman, a spokesman for the Commissioner. He also said the Commissioner had met recently with Superintendent Seidenberger, the newly elected president of the Urban Superintendents' Association, and that the meeting seemed to go well.

While many officials in the 28 districts are complaining about the pace, almost all acknowledge that they have already benefited from the court decision. The new funds have enabled many of the districts to buy technology and equipment previously unheard-of in their districts.

Only 15 of the 28 affected districts offer a full day of kindergarten, while 4 offer a half-day. The others offer a mixture of full-day programs for some students and a half-day for others. A few work with community-based groups to provide preschool programs for some students.

Many superintendents are considering accepting help from the groups, as allowed by the court ruling, but they all worry about what standards to follow, and whether the groups can provide teachers who are qualified to provide an adequate academic program.

District officials say they will have to consider every detail, from how many waterproof pads to order for cots for napping 3-year-olds to what kind of training the teachers should have.

"A 3-year-old is not a 4-year-old a year younger," said Carter, of Irvington. "A 3-year-old is a baby."

Not all the districts feel unprepared. Two years ago, the Newark school district, the largest of the 28, began offering full-day kindergarten for all eligible students after the district was taken over by the state for corruption and poor performance and was put under the direction of a new superintendent.

This year, Newark will provide preschool for 830 4-year-olds with the help of three nonprofit, community-based groups, but that is just a small fraction of the estimated 4,200 who will be eligible in September 1999.

In Phillipsburg, a district of 3,500 students whose high school takes students from five surrounding school districts, the main problem, as in many others, will be finding space for more students.

Already, 11 trailers are being used for classes. The district is trying to rent two old elementary schools that the neighboring Pohatcong district is vacating because they were considered too old and dilapidated.

"We're praying to get a discarded building," Superintendent Seidenberger said. "We're

landlocked. We have no room to grow."

And certainly, educators say, the value of preschool is clear. Gerald Kohn, Superintendent in Vineland, in Cumberland County, said that his district did not offer preschool and that kindergarten students there are much less prepared than those in a poor Massachusetts school district where he worked that had a full day of preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. He said the Vineland kindergartners are also less prepared than those in Millburn, a wealthy school district in New Jersey where he also worked, where parents could afford to send their children to private preschool programs.

"Preschool is what makes a difference in a poor school district," he said.

Publication#W\ P.P# 60. Houston Chronicle"Publication" #:\ P/P#September 1, 1998

Headline#\ P0P# TSU agrees to pay feds \$10.5 millionHeadline #:\ P1P#

Subhead#[\ P2P# Payment settles debts caused by improper aid to studentsSubhead#:\ P3P#

By LYDIA LUM

Texas Southern University will pay the federal government about \$10.5 million to settle debts caused by students getting financial aid improperly, school officials said.

Terms of the settlement still are being finalized. But payments are likely to stretch over 10 years without forcing TSU to tap into \$10.4 million in state bailout funds, TSU President James Douglas said.

Douglas said he and his staff are deciding how TSU will budget for those payments.

The \$10.5 million to the government is the penalty for financial aid overpayments made beginning the 1993 fall semester through the 1996 spring semester, said

Department of
Education spokesman Rodger Murphey.

"We continue to have concerns about TSU, but we are working with them to resolve all the matters," Murphey said.

In 1996, the Education Department began requiring TSU to issue federal grants and work-study monies up front to students, then file for reimbursement. A department review had determined that TSU administrators had doled out the financial aid without getting proof the students were eligible.

Last year, the Education Department also began requiring TSU to issue federal loans up front to students and file for reimbursement.

Douglas said he and others are negotiating with the government to end the reimbursement process during the 1999 spring semester and have the government resume funneling the financial aid directly to students.

That change would help TSU better finance the \$10.5 million in reparations, the president said. The reimbursement requirement is forcing the university to cough up about \$3 million each semester for student Pell grants and work-study funds, he said, adding that he was unsure how much more was issued each semester in loans.

"The idea is to wipe the slate clean and move forward," Douglas said. "We won't begin payment of the (\$10.5 million) settlement immediately because now we are needing a lot of money for this reimbursement process."

The president said he won't consider resorting to the emergency state funds because "if the university is responsible for creating the problem, it's my responsibility to manage the problem, to manage the debt."

He compared the situation to having car trouble. "If the car breaks down, you may not know right away where you're going to get the money, but you find a way," he said.

The Education Department had estimated TSU's total liabilities at \$40 million, figuring the amount of financial aid improperly issued, plus penalties and fines. TSU had initially offered the Education Department \$1 million to settle the matter.

TSU's total tab to the government is actually \$15.1 million, Murphey said, but \$4.6 million was paid in June. That chunk was a loan payment TSU owed for borrowing monies to build campus apartments. But amid negotiations over the financial aid matter, the housing loan was included in the total to lower the interest rates in both matters, Douglas said.

He said he was "thrilled we are about to reach a settlement and move on," saying that the financial aid problems have hindered efforts to recruit students.

State appropriations are based on enrollment. Douglas predicted about 7,000 students will register for classes this semester. Official figures won't be available for at least a week.

Several state and federal lawmakers, including U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Houston, and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, were among those assuring the Education Department that TSU can settle its bill.

State Rep. Garnet Coleman, a Houston Democrat whose district includes TSU, said the deal gives the university more time to pay the tab than the government has given to other schools in such a predicament. The standard deadline is five years, rather than 10, Coleman said.

"The positive side to this is that the hit is still minimized," he said. "We all believe this is something that is manageable by the school. I'm a little more confident that things are

moving along."

Publication#W\ P4P# 61. San Francisco Chronicle"Publication" #:\ P5P#September 1, 1998

Headline#\ P6P# Governor Says Schools Must Test All
StudentsHeadline #:\ P7P#
Subhead#[\ P8P# Limited-English exemption vetoedSubhead#:\ P9P#
Robert B. Gunnison,
Greg Lucas, Chronicle Sacramento Bureau

In a slap at Bay Area school officials, Governor Pete Wilson vetoed a bill yesterday that would have exempted pupils with limited English skills from statewide academic achievement tests. "It is inappropriate to deny one class of individuals the opportunity to participate in the educational benefits of the test based solely on the individual's English language proficiency," the governor said in his veto message. The bill, supported by San Francisco Unified School District, would have exempted from testing "limited English proficient" pupils with fewer than 30 months of English instruction. Wilson announced the veto as the Legislature inched toward the Monday recess of a session that so far has been largely devoid of major accomplishments. Election-year ambitions, rookie leadership, and political struggles between a lame-duck Republican governor and a slim Democratic majority were a recipe for inaction, delay and inability to reach agreements. Among the victims were a \$1.7 billion bond that would have prohibited any spending on a new peripheral canal in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and a so-called school accountability program that Wilson wanted. The bond bill crashed amid finger-pointing and name-calling between Wilson and Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, D-San Francisco. On the school bill, lawmakers from both parties agreed in broad terms on the need for the measure, which would create a program to track pupil performance. But Wilson denounced the effort as "toothless" in a letter to the bill's author. Without an agreement, \$40 million of state money for schools will remain in state accounts. Also defeated was a measure that would have repealed the Smog Check II and revived the less-restrictive and cheaper biennial

smog inspection program that existed previously
. The smog bill, opposed by Wilson, was
bottled in an Assembly committee for the
rest of the year. On the politically hot issue of
health insurance, Democrats
sent Wilson measures that seem certain to be vetoed. One
would prevent health
maintenance organizations from denying care to critically ill patients
without
a second physician's exam. The other would create a new state board to oversee
HMOs and other health plans. Last month, the Legislature defeated Wilson's plan
to blend
existing state agencies to regulate the industry. Wilson's late after-
noon veto of the school
testing measure yesterday provoked a sharp response from
Assemblywoman Carole Migden,
D-San Francisco, who said his rejection of her bill
"will demoralize students, cost taxpayers
millions of dollars and will only
tell us what we already know, that they cannot read
English." But Wilson said
Migden's measure broke an agreement with lawmakers made last
year about how the
test would be administered, and "would compromise the value of the
data obtained
this year." Results of the new test released in July showed California pupils
read, spell and calculate below the national average, but 20 percent of those
tested do not
understand English. All California pupils in grades 2 through
11 took the exam this spring
in reading, language, math and spelling to show
comparisons between schools and individual pupils against a national average. Several
other states use the same exam, but only
California, with 1.4 million pupils
listed as "limited English proficient," requires all pupils
to take the tests
in English. In July, School officials from San Francisco and Berkeley filed
a
suit in an attempt to prevent the results from being made public because they
included
non-English speaking pupils. But a judge eventually allowed the state
to release the scores
after individual districts made the results public. Wilson
contends that testing all children
in English sets a standard for measuring
progress. Proposition 227, approved by voters in
June, severely limits bilingual
education in California, so more pupils will be receiving
instruction in English.
In their lawsuit, lawyers for Berkeley and San Francisco schools
warned that
immigrant children risked being steered into less-challenging classes if the
ir low

test scores were put in their school records. Judge David Garcia ruled last month that the state cannot force schools to place 1998 scores in the records of children who have been in the nation less than 30 months, or make academic decisions based on the scores, or even give the scores to parents. Migden's bill also would have exempted pupils who entered school with no reading skills and had been enrolled for fewer than 180 days. Wilson said this hurt "pupils from highly migratory families and effectively excludes these pupils from participation in a fundamental component of the state's education system."

In other action, the Assembly sent Wilson a bill that would require health insurance plans to offer the same benefits to domestic partners as they provide dependents.

The bill by Migden was passed 41 to 36, with a smattering of Republican support. A similar bill was vetoed last year, and it is likely Wilson will reject it again. "There's no requirement for employers to offer it," Migden said. "The only requirement is for insurers to offer domestic partner benefits as part of the plan for selection by employers."

Voting against the measure was Assemblyman Tom McClintock, R-Simi Valley, who said, "This is a mandate on health plans. Every time you place a mandate on a health plan, you're increasing the cost of insurance."

Publication#W\ P:P#62. Lexington (Ky.) HeraldLeader"Publication"#: \ P;P#September 1, 1998

Headline#\ P<P#Grants aim to desegregate schoolsHeadline#:\ P=P#Subhead#[\ P>P#\$3.85 million may draw diversity to 8 magnetsSubhead#:\ P?P#
By John Cheves
HERALD-LEADER STAFF WRITER

The Fayette County school system yesterday announced a \$3.85 million, three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education that local officials hope will strengthen eight of the district's magnet schools " and win attention from more minority parents.

The magnets are a key part of the district's efforts to desegregate the public schools.

Faced with some schools that remain predominantly white or black, school officials have opened 20 magnet programs "including 11 last year" to offer specialized curriculums and attract students from diverse neighborhoods across the county.

However, the magnets are enjoying only mixed success in attracting racially diverse student populations. For this school year, 361 black students applied to enroll in the district's magnet programs, a 43 percent drop from the 1997-98 school year when 634 black students submitted magnet applications.

That's where the grant comes in, officials said yesterday. Eight magnet elementary schools, with a combined student population of 3,500, will use the money to hire new math, science and reading specialists, purchase new computers, expand a volunteer-tutor reading program, and install dance and music facilities, among other improvements.

The schools were chosen because they need to improve their diversity, said Superintendent Peter Flynn. They include predominantly white Clays Mill High Intensity Learning Center Magnet, Stonewall Traditional Magnet, Veterans Park Math, Science and Technology Magnet, Rosa Parks Language and Communications Magnet and Linlee/The Academy at Lexington, and predominantly black Booker T. Washington Montessori Magnet, Russell Magnet (M.I.A.M.I.) and Russell Cave Model Magnet.

Also, \$189,000 will be spent on an aggressive marketing campaign, including television and radio spots, to win the attention of minority families who have been reluctant to apply for their children's admission to the magnets, officials said.

Cathy Bell, principal of Veterans Park, said improving the magnets will do plenty to market the schools, even without a formal advertising campaign. Her school

I will receive \$217,854 to improve academic and technology training, and parents of all races will notice those changes, she said.

"Marketing is fine, but you know what's the best thing? Word of mouth," Bell said.

"Because of word of mouth, we already have had numerous families move into our neighborhood so their children can be enrolled in our program, and these are families from all different backgrounds."

But the predominantly white magnets will continue to struggle with black recruitment if their treatment of black families doesn't improve, said Sam Jones, member of the Buffer Group, which formed last year to demand racial equality in the school system.

"One of the things that discourages black people from attending these schools isn't so much the quality of the education, but it's the attitude that greets black students and their parents at white schools," Jones said.

"It's not hostile, but it's condescending," Jones said. "I'm not asking for you to roll out the red carpet if I'm a black student. Just don't treat me like I have leprosy. And if I'm a parent, don't treat me like the village idiot."

Still faced with a 1972 federal desegregation order, the Fayette County schools are one year into a three-year redistricting plan to bring minority enrollment at each school to 12 percent to 35 percent of student enrollment. The concern is that schools that remain predominantly black historically have received less attention from the school district.

Even among the eight magnet schools sharing the federal grant, Veterans Park " which is 84 percent white, according to 1997-98 school data " enjoys a shiny, year-old building with new computers and equipment. Russell Cave " which is 42 percent white, 44 percent black and 13 percent Hispanic " uses a 72-year-old

building and some aging equipment,
including outdated Tandy computers.

However, the school district has remodeled Russell Cave's building and is planning to upgrade its computer laboratories. The school isn't ignored, said Principal Della Burrus.

"Not with our faculty and staff," Burrus said, laughing. "If we don't get what we want, we make sure to holler about it."

Publication#W\ P@P# 63. Associated Press"Publication" #:\ PAP#09-02 5:10a

Headline#\ PBP# Census report: S.C. public school
spending in line with national average
Headline #:\ PCP#
By CARRIE ARMSTRONG
Associated Press Writer

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) - While South Carolina's SAT scores and teacher salaries lag, the Palmetto State spends about the same percentage of its public funds on education as the rest of the country, the U.S. Census Bureau says.

Nationally, about \$276 billion, or 30.9 percent of government spending, went to public schools in fiscal 1997. South Carolina allocated \$3.9 billion, or 30.4 percent of its expenditures, for education, the Census Bureau said in a report released today. The figures include federal, state and local money.

The news came the day after South Carolina learned it once again came in last in the country on average Scholastic Assessment Test scores.

On education spending, South Carolina came in next to last compared with the 14 other states that make up the Southern Regional Education Board: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

Georgia led the way with 40.7 percent going to education, while Maryland came in last at 27.2 percent.

Nationally, Utah was tops with 44.4 percent, and New Hampshire ranked last, designating only 18.8 percent for schools.

However, comparing percentages doesn't necessarily give an accurate picture when it comes to how much money is actually spent on public education. Breakdowns like South Carolina's annual In\$ite report can give a better idea of how much reaches the classroom.

South Carolina was the first state to use In\$ite, a school-by-school report showing where every education dollar is spent.

The results for the 1996-97 school year, which were released last month, show \$4.12 billion went directly into local districts, while about \$31 million went to the state Education Department.

The In\$ite totals are higher than the census numbers because they are calculated by academic years instead of fiscal years.

In\$ite showed South Carolina spent \$5,701 per student, up from \$5,433 the year before.

Spending on classroom instruction and support like librarians increased to \$3,758 per student, up from \$3,553 the previous year.

District administrative costs dropped from \$74 per student in 1995-96 to \$70 per student the following school year.

Publication#W\ PDP# 64. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ PEP# 09/02/98Section: Metropolitan Desk; Section B; Page 2, Column 1

Headline#\ PFP# School Sign-Up Plan PraisedHeadline #:\ PGP#
By JACQUES STEINBERG

A week before New York City's 1.1 million public-school children are to descend on their new classrooms, their principals opened their doors yesterday to register students new to the

city, the school system and, in some instances, the country.

In contrast to the protracted, confusing crush that has characterized the registration gantlet in years past, when the inspection of transcripts and immunization forms was often relegated exclusively to opening day, parents and school officials recounted a generally smooth experience yesterday.

At Public School 22 in Flushing, Queens, for example, where registration forms have been translated into Greek, Vietnamese, Chinese, Urdu and eight other languages, virtually all 10 families that showed up at 9 A.M. yesterday were able to enroll their children within an hour.

They included Shefaka Raufi, 5, a prospective kindergartner newly arrived from Afghanistan. Though there were no forms in Shefaka's native language of Fershin, an 8-year-old neighbor, Nadia Nabizada, proved an able interpreter.

"It was easy," Shefaka's mother, Aziza Raufi, said afterward.

For years, the Board of Education offered only limited registration before the opening of school " and then, only for prospective kindergartners, for a few days in the spring " leaving the bulk of families seeking to enroll or transfer students no choice but to compete with any number of other distractions on the first days of school.

But this year, the Board of Education scheduled periodic casting calls for new students in July and August, and every public school is scheduled to be open for registration every day this week, from 9 A.M. to noon.

Gloria Wagner, the principal of P.S. 24, another crowded elementary school in Flushing, said that the early effort had enabled her staff to plan better than before, anticipating weeks ago that the school would need to add another fourth-grade class " and to move a

kindergarten class, as a result, to another school.

Asked yesterday if he was ready to go back, Zamir Zayfert, age 8, stopped bouncing a tennis ball at Bowne playground in Queens only long enough to signal his ambivalence, with a shrug.

"Say, 'Yes,' Zamir," his mother implored him. "You know you have to learn."

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Publication#W\ PHP# 65. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ PIP# 09/02/98Section: Metropolitan Desk; Section B; Page 2, Column 1

Headline#\ PJP# Teachers Imported From Spain To
Teach Spanish in the BronxHead
line #:\ PKP#
By RANDAL C. ARCHIBOLD

It may seem odd, in a city with more than a million households in which Spanish is spoken, that the Board of Education has gone all the way to Spain to find people to teach Spanish.

But that it did, hiring seven experienced teachers for a pilot program that will send them to two school districts in the Bronx to teach Spanish to middle school pupils.

The Spaniards, all of whom have been teachers for at least four years, waved off warnings from friends about the perceived dangers of the city (a few were advised to see the films "Fort Apache, the Bronx" and "The Bonfire of the Vanities"). They had fears about finding affordable housing on their \$29,654 annual salaries (most have settled in apartments near Pelham Parkway in the Bronx). And they heard American schoolchildren can be unruly in comparison to Spanish schoolchildren.

But a sense of adventure and a desire to teach in a diverse environment overcame any concerns, and they arrived a couple of weeks ago, around the same time as a group of Austrian math and science teachers. Both groups start work when school opens next Wednesday.

"I heard in general that the kids misbehave in terms of respect," said Miguel

Angel Casado Arroyo, 44, who is on leave from his job teaching English as a second language at a private school in Bilbao, Spain. "It may be true or not. But I think if we respect them, they will respect us."

The arrival of teachers from abroad marks the beginning of a renewed experiment that could develop into a trend. Education officials in Scotland and Switzerland, hearing about the 25 Austrians who will teach this year, also have contacted the New York City Board of Education about sending teachers to the city to fill vacancies in math and science instruction, said Gary Barton, who oversees teacher hiring.

As in previous years, a handful of foreign teachers from places like Germany and Switzerland traveled to New York on their own this summer and found jobs in the system, which is seeking to fill 300 vacancies before school opens.

The Spaniards will help alleviate a shortage of 30 to 40 teachers of Spanish, who are difficult to find because New York City requires that they not only speak the language but also have 36 credits in the subject in college, Mr. Barton said.

The seven Spaniards are part of a program sponsored by their country's Education Ministry, which sends several hundred teachers to schools across the United States to teach Spanish and bilingual education each year. They will stay for two years and work in middle schools in Districts 10 and 12 in the Bronx.

This is the first time Spain has sent teachers to New York City since a failed program in the early 1980's. That program was discontinued after the teachers complained of a lack of advice and support both from their Government and the New York City Board of Education.

But last year Education Ministry officials contacted the board about sending a small

group on a pilot basis. After a lengthy exchange of letters, Lillian Hernandez, the director of the board's Office of Bilingual Education, and the superintendents from District 10 and 12, Irma Zardoya and Mary Rivera, flew to Spain and came back with commitments for the seven teachers.

Ms. Hernandez said the teachers would receive more support this time than the ones in the previous program. They will take a course at Columbia University's Teachers College to learn their pupils' cultures.

Officials from Spain's consulate in New York also plan to keep close tabs on them. The consulate paid for the students' traveling expenses, housed them in the Vanderbilt YMCA in Manhattan for two weeks and helped them find apartments.

INTERNATL#\ PLP# INTERNATIONAL #:\ PMP#yq 'ddy
INTERNATL #:\ PNP#Publication#W\ POP# 66. Financial Times"Publication" #:\ PPP# 09/02/98; Edition: USA Edition; Section: US AND CANADA; Page 7

Headline#\ PQP# College intake's ethnic mix growsHeadline #:\ PRP#
By Adrian Michaels

This year's US college intake has higher grades and is more ethnically diverse than previous years but there is a growing gap in the preparedness of different ethnic groups, according to a study released yesterday.

The report, by the College Board, a national education association, looks at the scores of the 1.2m students who took the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and left high school this year.

"This year minority students are a record one-third of the SAT population," said Donald Stewart, board president. But while college-bound black and Hispanic students "continue to make progress", the report states that their levels of course study are substantially below those of white and Asian students.

The report states that SAT students took an average of 19.2 year-long courses in school before going to college, but this figure dropped to 18.1 for black and

Hispanic students and
climbed to 19.6 for white and Asian students.

SAT scores in the suburbs are above the national average and rising, while scores in
urban and rural areas are falling further below the average. Mr Stewart said the growing
disparity was "particularly troublesome" because 40-50 per cent
of black and Hispanic
students who took the SAT lived in large cities.

The survey also says scores of students from less educated families are falling
further
below the national average, while scores from well-educated families are rising further
above it.

Almost a third of state expenditure went on education in 1997, the US Census Bureau
announced yesterday. State governments spent nearly \$276bn on education out of a total
nationwide expenditure of \$893bn. Public welfare accounted for 23
per cent at \$203bn.

Publication#W\ PSP# 67. Columbia (S.C.) State "Publication" #:\ PTP#September
2, 1998

Headline#\ PUP# Vouchers can be used to improve
education Headline #:\ PVP#
By JAMES F. CAHALAN
Special to The State

E. Ray Moore (The State, July 17) concedes that school vouchers would lead to
improvement of education in both private and public schools because schools would be
forced to raise standards to compete with better schools. Most private and
religious schools
cost less per student than public schools. Therefore, each student moved into a religious
school by a voucher program would save between \$1
,400 and \$3,200. That money could be
used to hire more teachers, build better libraries and add extracurricular activities and new
technology in the public schools.

Despite these advantages, Mr. Moore opposes vouchers because he fears they will
lead

to corruption of religious schools and because he thinks they will foster dependency among those who use them.

And yet, what greater dependency could there be than that on the public school system?

Few can escape it. Most parents cannot afford private schools, and home schooling is simply unrealistic for most families.

But the monopoly of the public schools is even worse than suggested. Religious schools are available least where needed most " in urban ghettos. Thirty years ago, religious schools provided opportunity for poor, urban families who wanted to give their children a quality education, a sense of discipline and freedom from the influence and violence of gangs. But the congregations that supported those schools left the inner cities, and the churches and schools followed or closed.

Cities like Philadelphia and Jersey City lost 50 percent of their religious schools, leaving inner-city families with no alternative but the looming disaster of a full generation raised with far substandard education. A voucher program would revive those religious schools and offer hope again where there is none now.

Mr. Moore fears a new entitlement. But the public school system was our first, and remains our best and most democratic, publicly funded entitlement. Vouchers would not create a new entitlement; they would preserve and restore the best one we already have.

Mr. Moore's greatest fear is government corruption of religious schools. He confuses vouchers, which are grants to parents and/or students, with grants to the schools. Grants to schools do threaten government interference, but school vouchers do not. Many veterans have used government grants under the G.I. Bill to attend secular and religious schools. Those schools have not been subverted.

He thinks we must prevent government from corrupting religious schools. Of course we must. If government regulation is harmful, then we must reduce or eliminate government regulation.

Like so many conservatives today, Mr. Moore continues to accept at face value the terms and concepts liberals have developed to channel and control political debate and solutions. The problem is not that "federal money" might lead to corruption of private schools. The problem is the idea of "federal money."

There is no such thing as "federal money." It is my money, your money, your neighbors' money. The big-government crowd wants you to think that, because the federal government takes our money, it belongs to the politicians and to the bureaucrats. They want you to believe that those people have the right to attach conditions on the use of money when they ever-so-generously give it back to us.

Mr. Moore buys into this liberal thinking and, therefore, in pursuit of keeping government out of the private school system, urges that our only hope to avoid corruption is to refuse to take our money back. That is not the solution.

The real solution is quite simple. Don't give the money to the federal government in the first place. Reduce taxes and leave the money in state, local and private hands. And implement good ideas, such as the school voucher program to fix the mess in our public schools.

Mr. Cahalan holds a doctorate in history from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a Georgetown businessman and, with his wife, owns Mansfield Plantation Inc.

Publication#W\ PWP# 68. St. Paul Pioneer Press"Publication" #:\ PXP#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PYP# School starts to terrorist attacks, U.S. has better things to worry aboutHeadline #:\ PZP#

Rhonda Chriss Lokeman

Contrary to opinion polls and news reports, not every American has an opinion about
"that woman, Ms. Lewinsky," her presidential paramour or the president's
bright but
enabling spouse.

To the man who gave this country a "don't ask, don't tell" approach to sexuality in the
military, millions of Americans seem to have adopted a "didn't ask,
not surprised, don't
care" position with regard to lies about his affair with
the former White House intern.

Here, after all, is a man who, weeks before his grand jury testimony about Monica
Lewinsky, stopped a presidential motorcade and got out of the limo to embrace
model
Christie Brinkley.

This gets old after a while.

So, we interrupt this day's edition of Monica mania to bring you this news bulletin:
Vacation is over. School is in.

Many Americans are far too busy getting children back to school to worry about
the latest bimbo and dumbo eruptions in Washington.

Some parents, including yours truly, have been much too busy making sure that
backpacks were filled with the appropriate school supplies. We've spent weeks scouring the
malls for back-to-school clothes and have wrestled small, uncooperative feet into new
sneakers and patent leather shoes.

Our time was spent going over supply lists and making certain not to purchase
"college-rule paper" instead of "wide-rule paper" or vice versa. We have turned cities
upside down looking for notebooks that must be "yellow, spiral, 70
sheets" only to find out
that such an item is available only on the black market by some guy who sells them out of

his van.

The final weeks of August were spent hiking and biking trails, visiting theme parks, lakes and oceans, and otherwise trying to squeeze out the final remnants of family vacations before getting down to serious stuff like sharpened No. 2 pencils and Brownie vests.

Who has time to keep up with Bill and Hillary's domestic problems when we've domestic chores of our own?

It took U.S. strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan to cause many Americans to look up from raising families, running households and trying to make a living.

When President Clinton returned to Washington from Martha's Vineyard to tell the nation about a U.S. military response to the Osama Bin Laden terrorist network, accused of being responsible for the U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa, now that it got some people's attention. Rightly so.

When Defense Secretary William Cohen warned terrorists via the airwaves that there would be "no safe place, no safe refuge from the long arm of justice," and when Gen. Hugh Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, described the U.S. military action as "an act of self-defense for an imminent threat," it did lift some Americans from personal distraction.

But how odd it was to see Shelton and Cohen speaking in Washington about a foreign theater at the exact time that Roy Romer, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, was in Chicago talking about the theater of the absurd, Clinton and Lewinsky.

Romer, his address broadcast live via C-SPAN, said, "We need to get this issue behind us, so we can get back to the business of America."

Not to excuse whatever crimes emerge from Ken Starr's grand jury probe, but some

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Americans are trying to get back to business. Some are simply trying to survive day to day.

Far from the capital paparazzi who have made Monica the new Diana, citizens in the Carolinas were tracking Hurricane Bonnie and Texans were under water from Tropical Storm Charlie.

There is in this country a parallel universe where Clinton-Lewinsky-Starr is only a freak show, one not every person can spare the time to duck into.

Publication#W\ P[P# 69. Investors Business Daily"Publication" #:\ P\P#September 2, 1998

Headline#\ PJP# Teacher Training In The Tank Headline #:\ P^P#Subhead#[\ P_P# In 24 years as a school administrator, I never once received a query from a teacher-training institution requesting an evaluation of its product. Call it complacency. Worse, call it apathy. Subhead#:\ P`P#

Not a week goes by, it seems, without some new study lamenting the poor showing of American students. Students fail for a number of reasons. But poor teacher training is one that is continually overlooked.

Until the mid-'60s, earning a teaching license took effort. It required considerable course work in teaching methods and included rigorous student-teaching experience.

I recall two six-week sessions under the tutelage of highly qualified, demanding "master teachers." Every lesson required a detailed plan and a thorough evaluation of its success or failure.

Student teachers were barred from taking extra courses and urged to drop part-time jobs so they could focus on learning their profession. Ten-hour workdays were the norm. It was tough. But we left college ready to teach.

Teachers aren't trained that way anymore. Many colleges no longer define what it means to be a "master teacher." Theory has overtaken hands-on training. Clear and complete guidelines essential for a neophyte teacher's success are out the window. Schools, desperate for teachers, will take almost anyone just to fill classrooms.

During my tenure as principal of an elementary and junior high school in northern California, I interviewed nearly 1,000 graduates from dozens of teachers colleges. Most were critical of their student-teaching experiences.

One conscientious young man from Sonoma State University begged me to place him with a qualified master teacher at my school. He had suffered through six weeks with a permissive, disorganized young teacher who taught him nothing. Such experiences, I found, were all too common.

Part of the reason for this: No teacher training is required to be a college professor. High-quality teaching is simply not a priority at America's colleges and universities. Despite the growing demand for a "back to basics" curriculum in schools, that philosophy is sneered at by liberal-leaning faculties in education schools.

In fact, education professors have strikingly different priorities from the public they supposedly serve. A '97 poll by New York-based Public Agenda found that just 37% of education professors believe maintaining discipline is important for a schoolteacher. Just 19% of ed-school professors think teachers should stress correct punctuation, grammar and spelling. And only 12% believe that expecting student punctuality is important.

A statewide panel commissioned to overhaul teacher training in California made its report earlier this year. It's pretty good and offers some helpful suggestions for improving training.

But before our colleges and universities can provide the teachers America needs, there needs to be some housecleaning. Here are some of my recommendations:

Eliminate the unconscionable practice of training teachers in unproved and often untested fads such as "whole language" reading instruction, "inventive spelling" and "new math."

Recruit "back to basics" professors to provide ideological balance.

Impose a far more rigorous and systematic process for defining and selecting master teachers. Good teachers have told me over and over that the key to their success in the classroom was a strong student-teaching experience.

Place teaching on as high a pedestal as research and publication.

Make ed-school professors accountable for their product - the graduates they're placing in America's classrooms - through routine and systematic evaluations.

Require every applicant for a teaching credential to pass a subject-matter competency test. This would weed out many people who have no business setting foot in a classroom, as the recent widespread failure of teaching applicants in Massachusetts made abundantly clear.

In short, raise the bar. There can be no better way to help good teachers secure the status and remuneration they deserve.

Without serious restructuring and ongoing evaluation of our teacher-training colleges, American education is doomed to continued mediocrity.

Ray Parnay is a retired principal and former district superintendent of the Forestville Union School District in Sebastopol, Calif.

Headline#\ PcP# Test scores may reflect change in
teaching Headline #:\ PdP#
By Sandra Faiman-Silva Bridgewater

State higher education chairman James Carlin, citing three reasons prospective teachers are doing so poorly on teacher tests, fails to include the most fundamental factor ("Test score analysis released," Metro, Aug. 18). US educational philosophy and teaching methods implemented in K-12 classrooms since the 1970s have radically changed, departing drastically from pre-1970s instructional techniques that emphasized rote factual learning methods in mathematics and writing competency instruction.

Today's K-12 students are taught to "think" and not simply to memorize. Our students, although often poorly grounded in basic math and literacy skills when they come to our colleges, are more thoughtful, sensitive, and sophisticated adults. Rather than simply mastering multiplication tables or diagramming sentences, as we did routinely in 1950s and 1960s classrooms, today's students spend 12 years asking "Why?" "How?" "What does this all mean?"

Is Carlin aware of these educational trends and how they might relate to low test results on state-sponsored teacher tests? Perhaps Carlin needs to listen to the experts on our state college and university campuses before he administers bogus tests whose results mean nothing, or plays the "blame game" for which he is notorious.

Publication#\ PeP# 71. The Washington Times"Publication" #:\ PfP# 09/01/98;
Edition: 2; Section: E;FAMILY TIMES;HOME-SCHOOLING TODAY; Page
E6

Headline#\ PgP# Packaged curriculum or
do-it-yourself?Headline #:\ PhP#
By Kate Tsubata

Many home-schooling parents swear by the carefully constructed, pricey program as a family can buy for each home scholar. One woman I know put three teen-agers through one particular program and gives glowing testimony to the program's effectiveness.

Her eldest graduated from high school at age 16 and enrolled at a Christian university, where she not only is pulling great grades, but has a job, lives in her own apartment and is conducting a long- distance courtship with her fiancé).

The second child, who was held back one grade in the course of regular school, has been accepted, at age 19, at the same college, which he enters as a freshman this year. Her third is on an accelerated track and also is doing well.

For some families, the prepared curricula are wonderful aids to home teaching. Parents like the texts, the workbooks, the testing process, the correspondence with teachers and the support system.

Students can go as fast, or as slow, as they wish. This flexibility gives them control of their learning and makes grading and college applications a bit easier because of the similarity to standard schooling.

On the downside, these programs are expensive. A family easily can spend hundreds and even thousands of dollars per student for the books and other services. Also, some families do not use the traditional educational structures in their home education plan. They may be operating according to core curriculum methods or using the unschooling approach to education.

These families may prefer to create their own learning plans by searching out materials and resources that fit their unique structure - and their budgets. This process can be exciting.

It begins with some brainstorming. The family members discuss their wish lists of subject areas to cover. Do not expect children to know in advance what is covered in a certain subject. They may not say, "I want to study geology and physics," but, rather, they may talk in terms of "I want to learn about diamonds" or

r "I want to find out how astronauts know they're going to get to the moon."

The brainstorming step may take weeks or months. Anything may stimulate a child's interest: a movie, a book, an interesting experience. As the child asks more questions about it, the parent can ask, "Do you think we should study that?" As the student realizes that the answers to the questions lie in a certain academic area, the child is motivated to delve into that topic. Thus, the student makes the decision about the academic subjects to study.

Do not assume that a child is too young or too old to study a topic. If he shows interest, he can study virtually anything. At what level he will be studying depends only on his academic skills. Try not to let your concepts get in the way of letting the child's interests guide the subject choices.

Also, do not worry about what you know. So many parents believe themselves incapable of helping their child in subjects they remember as being difficult. The truth is, you can relearn these subjects, side by side with your child.

Dealing for many years with mortgages, interest rates, car mileage rates and cost-of-living wage increases has probably made courses such as algebra much more understandable to you now.

After deciding on the subject areas or a general direction (core) that each child wants to pursue, the search for materials begins. Here are some little-known places where you can find resources at very reasonable costs:

Thrift stores. Many thrift shops have a book section. You may be surprised to find everything from children's books to Gray's Anatomy to zoology.

Yard sales. Families periodically want to get rid of textbooks, encyclopedias, reference books and other materials. Also, if you happen upon a box of old National Geographic

magazines - buy them. National Geographic is one of those timeless sources of great articles and photos on nations, history and natural phenomena.

Home-school conventions. One of the biggest attractions at any gathering of home scholars is the opportunity to recycle learning tools. Pass on those that your children have outgrown, and pick up the ones you think you will be using. This type of exchange is a real plus for home educators on a budget.

Libraries. Most libraries hold periodic book sales, with reference works, literature, magazines and even audio recordings on sale. For as little as \$1 per book, you can pick up some great materials.

Gifts. Many home-school families will give away the expensive materials, computers, programs, charts and other educational tools they no longer are using. Let people know that you home-school, and you will be surprised at some of the gifts you receive. Even families that do not home-school will give you valuable materials simply because they know you will use them.

Public agencies. Public information offices of various government and academic institutions can be good resources for free materials. Maps, reports, brochures, books and free services are all available to the public. It does not hurt to make a phone call or send a letter requesting information on materials available to the public.

Finally, let your children decide on a daily and weekly schedule for themselves and then draw up their study plan. You will be surprised by how well they keep to the schedule they designed.

Whether you choose a commercial curriculum or you create your own, you and your children should implement it with full enthusiasm. Whichever path you choose, you can experience pride and satisfaction in your accomplishment. Take on some

new challenges,
and have a great year.

Kate Tsubata, a home-schooling mother of three, is a free-lance writer living in Maryland. She can be reached by e-mail (Kate@huskynet.com).

Publication#W\ PiP# 72. The Baltimore Sun"Publication" #:\ PjP# 08/31/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 9A

Headline#\ PkP# Charter schools, competition at workHeadline #:\ PIP#
By Neal R. Peirce
IN ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., the Metropolitan Ministries Academy, a charter school, has opened inside a homeless shelter, working with children who're often deeply scarred by their parents' poverty and personal misfortunes.

In Boston, although teachers unions are often hostile to charter schools, unionized carpenters and electricians in the Dorchester neighborhood have donated tens of thousands of dollars of their labor to restore an unused convent for the new Neighborhood House Charter School.

The Colin Powell Academy, a charter in a blighted area of Detroit's East Side, is tailored specifically to its neighborhood, requiring uniforms and a strict code of conduct. Its students have posted a 22-point gain in fourth-grade reading, 57 points in fourth-grade math, and 13 points in fifth-grade science.

Colin Powell Academy's close attention to curriculum is what most schools of Detroit's sprawling 180,000-student system simply can't offer, Deputy Superintendent Arthur Carter told the Detroit News. "This is the history of American education," said Mr. Carter. "In the beginning, public schools were one-room schoolhouses with lay {school} boards."

Detroit has turned so friendly to reform that the city's school board last May approved seven new charters. There's said to be a new "charter politics" in town: teachers unions opposed, but preachers in favor.

In California, the Legislature in April passed a bill permitting up to 250 charter schools in the 1998-1999 school year, and 100 more every year afterward. The new legislation, removing all sorts of impediments unions and professional education groups seek to impose, now ties California with Michigan for the nation's strongest charter school law, according to the Washington-based Center for Education Reform.

None of this means charter schools, financed by taxpayer funds but independent of central school administration, are welcomed everywhere.

Only a dozen or so states " Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Texas, South Carolina, Louisiana, Florida and Pennsylvania among them " make it relatively easy to start charters. Many states limit the numbers of charters, oblige sponsors to get the blessing of the local school board, or impose extensive regulations.

And the more charters spread " the country now has close to 800, serving some 150,000 students " the more dust they stir up. Take Washington, where 19 charter schools are now open and many more are in the works. Three principals and some 100 teachers have quit the public schools to work for charters. Critics are saying it's wrong for the public school system to have to compete with charters for personnel and dollars.

Competition, though, is precisely what the public schools have lacked for so long. Why would thousands of parents, as in Washington, think of dispatching their children to charters, often cramped into temporary space, lacking the standard playing fields, gymnasiums auditoriums? Precisely because they think the scrappy upstart educators behind the charters will provide more personalized, dedicated education for their kids.

Smallness, indeed, is the key, argue three development consultants " Michael Garber, R. John Anderson and Thomas DiGiovanna " in a just-published monograph titled

tled "Scale
& Care: Charter Schools and New Urbanism."

They contend that the growth of schools with enormous attendance, combined with impersonal, bureaucratized central control, has alienated the children, families and even the communities. The number of schools in the nation has plummeted 68 percent since 1930, even as the K-12 population has grown 64 percent.

It's been a tragic mistake, the team argues, to apply the business world's mass production/distribution process to school governance and construction. Smaller-scale neighborhood schools provide a learning environment in which students are known by name, are more accountable, participate more in class and extracurricular activities.

The pedestrian friendly, old-town environments of the New Urbanist movement could mesh well with the charter school movement, suggest Mr. Garber, Mr. Anderson and Mr. DiGiovanna. Charter schools' inability to secure affordable, safe, quality facilities has been their biggest problem. New Urbanist design for neighborhoods could place school facilities within or close to libraries, playgrounds, public meeting space and restaurants.

That way, if a charter closes, the space is easily adapted for other neighborhood needs. And some charters will close because they can't attract enough students, because of mismanagement, or because they fail to meet student performance objectives.

One is left with a gnawing doubt, though: Will charters, as teachers unions and school boards routinely argue, in fact, harm the public schools?

Not so, argues Harvard economics professor Caroline Hoxby. She found that in regions where parents have more choice, through charters or parochial schools, there's a small but significant increase in the reading and math scores of children in the regular public schools.

Americans instinctively support open competition. It works in business. With contracting out, it helps control government service costs. Now we're finding it works in education, too.

Neil Peirce is a syndicated columnist.

Publication#W\ PmP# 73. Raleigh News & Observer "Publication" #:\ PnP# 09/01/98; Edition: Final; Section: Editorial/Opinion; Page A11

Headline#\ PoP# Ease off the student acceleratorHeadline #:\ PpP#

By DAVID DAVENPORT

MALIBU, Calif. " I've known since our oldest child entered school that I was different from the other parents. At back-to-school night, when a teacher announced that he did not believe in a lot of written homework for first-graders, I applauded - alone. The other parents turned to stare at me in disapproval.

A few years later, frustrated by the hours of homework our three children were bringing home each night, I wrote the principal to tell him that I felt like my relationship with my children during the week was essentially that of a homework monitor, and I resented it. Nothing, however, changed.

Now two of our children are in high school, where I would expect and support homework, of course. But last June, when our 11th-grade daughter got a list of reading and writing assignments to complete during the summer to prepare for an advanced college placement test and to earn college credit (she's only 15), I finally figured out my real objection: For most kids, mere acceleration of learning does not inherently enrich his or her education, and it can well be counterproductive.

Pressing students to learn to read at age 3 or 4 instead of 5 or 6 or studying geometry in the eighth grade instead of 10th doesn't necessarily make them smarter. And it may rob them of time for other kinds of experiences that would make them better adults.

Let's take the idea that top juniors in high school might take an American history course sufficiently rigorous that they could pass an advanced placement college-level exam. The sales pitch for the course is that it is a way to get college credit inexpensively and also would enable the student to take a lighter load in college or finish early.

But thinking back to my own educational experience, I remember that we studied history in elementary school, again in junior high and then again in senior high school, learning more each time. In college, the course involved reading multiple authors and taking a more critical view of history.

I have to wonder if my 15-year-old daughter's understanding of American history is enriched by taking a college-level course now rather than taking both the high school and college courses in their proper time. I doubt it.

I believe we have confused acceleration of learning for enrichment.

Peer pressure is drawing more and more students into such an approach. Indeed, 15 times more students take the advanced placement exams than when I was in high school, and the number has doubled in just the past 10 years. These kids, who have been pushed from birth to achieve, believe that their college applications won't measure up if they don't include advanced placement and accelerated courses.

So they line up - at Malibu High School, where my daughter is a student, 40 kids crowded into the summer school class - to get a head start on earning college credit.

Of course, classes should be available to kids who are behind in their coursework, but it is not necessarily healthy or productive for kids who are already in the middle and fast lanes of learning to spend all their summer hours in school.

Pushing kids to earn college credit is only the culmination of a series of misguided accelerations in children's educational lives. We have friends who worry at birth whether their child will get into the "right" preschool. And my own children have nearly been buried in well-meaning but high-pressure summer school and formal acceleration opportunities of every kind.

They feel stressed and I feel cut out of their development. The notion of free time for family, church or other enrichment is all but lost.

My plea to parents is this: Don't be seduced by mere acceleration. Summer school might be right for your child, but so might a long train trip with dad and mom or a visit to grandma. Doing homework every night might not be as important as going to a Bible study class or to Girl Scouts. Working in an ice cream store or volunteering at a hospital might be as much of a learning experience as collecting six units of college credit in 11th grade.

I doubt that either our work force or our society will be better off with people who did all their homework in summer school but never had time to grow and develop in other ways.

Publication#W\ PqP# 74. Memphis Commercial Appeal "Publication" #:\ PrP# 09/01/98; Edition: Final; Section: Viewpoint; Page A7

Headline#\ PsP# EDUCATION IDEA SEES FREE TUITIONHeadline #:\ PtP#

By Reed Branson

Free community colleges may be the sleeper issue in next year's statewide elections in Mississippi.

While candidates were clawing for attention last month at the Neshoba County Fair - an early political testing ground - with standard anti-crime themes, there was little evidence of new vision or fresh ideas.

But one idea that is likely to appeal to education groups, many business leaders and anxious voters in a global economy is being floated and simply await

s a political sponsor.

Olon Ray, director of the state's community college system, is discussing with key constituencies the idea of throwing open the doors of the state's two-year schools to students who exhibit academic and personal responsibility.

The big questions are cost and how the program would be funded. Ray is still working on those, but expects to present an affordable proposal. Full-time tuition at the state's community colleges averages \$972 a year.

Ray was part of the first generation of his family to continue his education beyond high school. Northwest Mississippi Community College in Senatobia was his gateway to higher education, including Ole Miss and The University of Southern Mississippi, and ultimately a doctorate.

Ray went on to run Biloxi's public schools and advise Gov. Ray Mabus on education issues. Seven years ago he became the top administrator in the community college system.

More than 127,000 people attend full- or part-time classes at one of the state's 33 community college campuses or branches. They earn associate degrees and transfer to four-year universities or gain technical expertise in a variety of trades.

About four years ago, Ray says, the Republican whom Mabus had defeated in a gubernatorial election - Tupelo merchant Jack Reed - approached him with the idea of opening the doors to community college.

Today, Ray is floating the idea in general terms and promising specifics in the near future. But he stressed he is not talking about simply extending high school to anyone who wants it. Rather, he wants to eliminate tuition for students who prove in high school they can achieve academically.

Too many families, says Ray, have no generational habit or role models for higher education. Increasingly, unskilled jobs are moving overseas and American companies are looking for workers with higher skills and ability to learn.

"The time is here," he says. "We're kidding ourselves if we think the present state of education will carry us into the 21st Century."

The plan will invite criticism from the quarters already reluctant to provide adequate funding to public schools. Universities may at first feel threatened as well, though Ray believes this plan would more likely encourage a non-college-bound student to consider college and less likely rob universities of their freshman classes.

Ultimately, he hopes, it would increase the talent and number of students applying to universities.

Politically, the idea seems to answer deep-rooted voter anxieties about an economy that appears strong at the moment but always reminds us of the uncertain future.

Lawmakers here are typically quick to embrace tuition credits and prepaid tuition programs. Georgia Gov. Zell Miller, a Democrat, survived a Republican landslide throughout the South in 1994 by promising free college to good students.

The North Carolina Senate has approved a bill that would waive two years of community college tuition for graduates of the Class of 1999 if they attend a community college full-time.

Voters are ready to think about learning and higher education in new ways. Political leaders will not be far behind.

Publication#W\ PuP# 75. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ PvP# 09/02/98Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 30, Column 1

Headline#\ PwP# Improving Security in the SchoolsHeadline #:\ PxP#

A draft proposal to give New York City's Police Department significant new control over

security in the schools offers a compromise to a long-running disagreement between Schools

Chancellor Rudy Crew and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. In earlier years, the Mayor has pushed

for more police in the schools and more control over school security matters. Dr. Crew has

resisted sending more armed officers into schools and has long argued that educators cannot be cut out of school security decisions.

The tentative plan, reportedly agreed to by both sides, offers a way out of the stalemate.

In a radical move, 3,200 school safety officers would become Police Department employees

but remain unarmed. Since the school bureaucracy has done a dismal job of selecting and

training safety officers, a Police Department takeover makes sense.

Even so, Dr. Crew would retain the final say on where the safety officers are deployed,

and principals would still control most security and disciplinary decisions in the buildings,

such as suspending students for unruly behavior. That makes sense because security should

be addressed within the context of a school's educational mission.

The plan would not increase the number of regular police officers already patrolling 130

schools at the invitation of the principals. Nor would any school be assigned a police officer

absent a request from a principal. That is also appropriate. The issue of police in the schools

has been controversial in many minority communities where high levels of suspicion exist about police tactics.

Many details are still being negotiated, such as the need to maintain confidentiality of

student records. But the schools need help improving security, and the Police Department

is the place to get it.

Publication#W\ PyP# 76. The Baltimore Sun"Publication" #: \ PzP# 08/31/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 8A

Headline#\ P{P# New year, new leader for Baltimore schoolsHeadline #:\ P|P#Subhead#[\ P}P# Booker's challenge: New CEO must create stability even as he continues to change system.Subhead#:\ P}P#

FOR THE PAST three decades, Baltimore's public schools have been in constant turmoil.

Superintendents have changed frequently; there have been endless reorganizations. A state-mandated overhaul last year created more ripples " but also a rare opportunity for radical improvement in the city's dysfunctional education system.

Now comes the moment of truth. As some 100,000 students report to classes today, Robert Booker, the recently hired chief executive officer, will begin new procedures and programs that seek to alter the school system's culture. Among concepts to be introduced are strict performance evaluations of principals and teachers.

Such measures may be commonplace elsewhere. In Baltimore, they are unprecedented " and essential for turning around the school system.

"We don't have a lot of time," says J. Tyson Tildon, the school board's chairman, referring to the system's need to prove that reforms are working.

For Dr. Booker and the board, the new school year will be a balancing act.

They must create stability amid continuing change and adjustments. Unless a well-functioning, basic infrastructure is established, Baltimore may again fall victim to a curse of its past: a pendulum swing of philosophies and practices when the top leadership changes again. The school board's role is crucial in making sure this doesn't happen.

It is encouraging that Dr. Booker has identified stronger parental support groups as one

of his first priorities. Parents and guardians must take a more active role at home and in schools if the education system is to make good on its promise of a turnaround that benefits every child.

Increasing adult involvement will not be easy, though. Only about 70 of Baltimore City's 184 schools currently have accredited PTAs.

"I will be aggressive in increasing PTA membership," Dr. Booker pledges. If needed be, "I will ask the principal to knock on the doors in the neighborhood."

The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance also has pledged to work to boost parental involvement. Leaders say they hope to attract more than 5,000 parents and other adult volunteers to city schools by the end of the 1998-1999 school year.

Rallying the teachers will present another challenge.

The Baltimore Teachers Union, so far, generally has cooperated with the school board's efforts to improve education standards. But friction has increased as it has become evident some underperforming teachers will be placed on probation. Tensions also are likely to intensify once negotiations begin in November on a new teachers' contract.

Dr. Booker, much of whose career has been in fiscal management, wants the freedom to address the system's problems. This includes flexibility in personnel assignments.

When it became apparent that the schools would open today with a shortage of about 100 teachers, he caused a minor panic at the schools' North Avenue headquarters by saying he wanted central administrators with teaching experience to help out in classrooms. "The classroom has to be the first priority," he noted.

Dr. Booker projects the image of an unflappable veteran professional. "You deal

with a problem by being calm," he said recently, adding he wants to listen and lead by example.

In the end, though, the new school chief is likely to be just as impatient about the need for better results as a more excitable executive.

As they report to classrooms, students, teachers and staff ought to be on notice that it isn't business as usual. More than ever before, their performance will be under scrutiny as internal and external assessments are made about the success of Baltimore's school overhaul.

Publication#W\ P}P# 77. Lancaster (Pa.) New Era "Publication" #: \ P}P# 08/31/98Section: COMMENTARY; Page A-6

Headline#\ P}P# Computers in the schools can aid educational growthHeadline #: \ P}P#

The computer revolution is quietly but relentlessly taking over our schools. Students returning to Lancaster County schools this week will find more computers in classrooms and web sites in every public district and most private schools.

As a Friday New Era story noted, Manheim Central will be sending computer games home with fifth and sixth graders to help improve their reading skills. Warwick will be adding computers to wood and metal shop classes. Solanco will be using collapsible, easily-movable computers in English classes.

These and other computer additions are designed to help students learn everything from math and science skills to how to read and write.

Most students, growing up with computers and video games, readily accept the technology as a learning tool. Computerizing classrooms is sometimes more of a challenge for teachers. Many parents are struggling to keep up.

One caution: Computers can never entirely replace traditional educational methods.

ds.
Books are still important. Electronics is no substitute for memorizing basic rules of grammar and mathematical formulas.

A New Era story earlier this summer highlighted the importance of basic math computations (without the aid of a calculator) and reading and writing skills to today's military. Recruiters don't want students who don't know the essentials.

Business leaders testifying before a committee reviewing Pennsylvania's academic standards last week said too many job applicants, with high-school diplomas, fail math tests targeted at those with an eighth-grade education.

To the degree that computers help students better prepare for college or the world of business or the military, they can be extraordinary resources. But computers should be kept in perspective: they are just one more tool in the educational toolbox.

Publication#W\ P}P# 78. St. Louis Post-Dispatch"Publication" #:\ P}P# 09/01/98; Edition: FIVE STAR LIFT; Section: EDITORIAL; Page B6

Headline#\ P}P# NO MORE EXCUSESHeadline #:\ P}P# EDUCATION

The 1998-99 school year isn't exactly the most propitious moment in the history of public education.

Last year's schoolyard shootings shook the nation. President Bill Clinton's plans for putting 100,000 new teachers in the classroom are tied up by a congressional leadership more interested in helping private and parochial schools with vouchers than public schools with teachers.

In Missouri, recent state tests show that only about a quarter of third graders are proficient in reading and writing, and the results in math are even more discouraging. Only 8 percent of 10th graders are proficient in math on the challenging Missouri Assessment

Program test.

More daunting still are the educational challenges in the St. Louis public schools. The district is starting the school year with about 270 teacher vacancies - partly because it hasn't done much recruiting. In addition, despite last Friday's pep rally, the district is almost certain to fall short of state accreditation standards when it is evaluated later this school year.

Yet, there may actually be more reason for hope than despair - at least when looking at the big picture.

For one thing, people often don't realize the extraordinary gain in achievement that minority students have scored nationwide over the last two decades. A recent report by the Rand Corp. found that blacks made unprecedented gains and substantially closed the achievement gap with whites on the National Assessment of Educational Progress between 1971 and 1996 - with the biggest gains occurring during the years when schools were desegregated.

In addition, some big urban school districts seem to be deciphering the indecipherable - how to improve achievement in schools with a high proportion of poor students. Chicago, Memphis and El Paso have all made important strides. The common themes among these experiments are improved teacher training and greater accountability for individual student performance.

Both the Missouri and Illinois Legislatures took important steps last year to improve education. Illinois passed a long-sought law to bring greater equity to school funding by raising the basement - providing more money for the poorest districts. Many Metro East districts will benefit, including the beleaguered District 189 in East St. Louis. Whether the additional money and the consolidation of storied Lincoln High at East St. Louis High School will result in better education is an open question.

The Missouri Legislature took the even bolder step of passing a bill that would provide a way to end court control of the St. Louis schools while continuing funding for the desegregation programs with the best results: magnet schools and the city-county transfer program. The Legislature also opened the door to charter schools - a sensible way to experiment with school choice - and took steps to provide more state money to inner-ring suburbs that have been left out of past education funding reforms.

Last week, the three members of the new, transitional school board in St. Louis were appointed - James H. Buford, president of the Urban League, Thomas B. Kleborn, a Monsanto executive and Lisl King Williams, director of career services at Washington University Law School. They seem like good choices.

For the time being, the main job of the transitional district is to figure out whether St. Louis voters are more likely to approve an increase in the property tax or sales tax to raise the approximately \$20 million a year needed to trigger an additional \$40 million in state aid. That money would be needed to make up for lost desegregation money once the desegregation court case is settled. The transitional board also oversees the switch to a smaller, seven-person school board.

The transitional board could have a much bigger role in a couple of years. It takes over the district entirely if St. Louis loses accreditation from the state. In that event, the St. Louis School Board appointee, Mr. Buford, drops off and the governor appoints a chief executive to run the district.

Robert E. Bartman, state commissioner of elementary and secondary education, warned the St. Louis district last December that it was in danger of losing accreditation because of scandalously low graduation rates and low student achievement. The city schools lost the warning letter a couple of times, but finally the

state and city met to begin addressing the problem.

The state offered to provide the city with a team of experts, like the one it provided with good results to the Wellston district. The city has been slow taking up the state's offer, but is moving in that direction.

There is really no excuse for the city's entering a new school year with a big teacher shortage for the second consecutive year. Cleveland, which is in even worse shape educationally than St. Louis, has figured out how to recruit teachers for inner-city districts. Last year's shortage should have provided St. Louis with plenty of warning.

A measure of how well the School Board is doing will be the implementation of its plan for improving the education at 10 of the poorest performing schools. Some of these schools will be totally reconstituted with new faculties. One of the 10, Vashon High School, offers the School Board a big opportunity. Voters approved \$30 million for a new Vashon last spring. If this School Board is wise, it will use the money not just to build new walls, but to educate the students more successfully. A shiny new building, full of lagging and failing students, is unacceptable.

St. Louis School Superintendent Cleveland Hammonds Jr. complains that the failures of the city schools are front-page news while the accomplishments get little attention.

Mr. Hammonds is a hard-working superintendent and may have a point. But defensiveness isn't going to get the job done. Mr. Hammonds and the School Board have the tools to make major improvements. If they don't get the job done now, a new board is waiting in the wings. There is no more time for excuses.

Headline#\ P}P# A Good Year for SchoolsHeadline #:\ P}P#

California legislators left Sacramento early Tuesday morning after writing a significant record of achievement in 1998, greatly enabled by a \$4.4-billion state surplus. There is some question whether lawmakers should have voted to spend so much of the revenue bonanza when the stock market was in chaos and economic warning signs were flashing nearly everywhere. Even so, Republican Gov. Pete Wilson and Democratic leaders in the Legislature were correct to push a broad education agenda this year, highlighted by a \$9.2-billion bond issue placed on the November ballot to build and repair facilities from kindergarten through graduate school.

The Legislature also enacted other public school reforms, some of them long championed by Wilson. They include lengthening the school year to 180 days, allocation of \$250 million for new textbooks and banning the automatic advancement of poor-performing pupils from one grade to the next. Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles) called it "the year of education," and he deserves much of the credit for finally shepherding the bond measure through the Legislature.

Villaraigosa and Senate President Pro Tem John Burton (D-San Francisco) were effective in other matters as well. In the final hours of the session, they managed to achieve two major goals, shared with Wilson, that had been fraught with conflict and controversy. Those are approval of \$235 million to underwrite a significant farm-to-city water transfer agreement in Southern California and \$245 million for the purchase of endangered old-growth redwood forests in the north.

There are still some loose ends. Wilson succeeded in blocking, for the third consecutive year, pay raises for the majority of state workers because of an impasse over Civil Service rules. And no agreement could be reached on overall reform.

rm of health maintenance organizations. Those items definitely should be on the 1999 agenda.

Both Villaraigosa and Burton were new to leadership, but in the end they held their own with the governor. Their major achievement in fashioning a \$76-billion budget was to blunt Wilson's initial demands for a \$3.6-billion tax cut that would have used up much of the budget surplus. Eventually, the Legislature approved a more moderate mix including \$1.4 billion in tax reductions. Further cuts were approved for future years, but they are contingent on even rosier economic conditions than the state has enjoyed in the past several years. Even better than a tax cut would have been more spending on long-term investments such as school facilities, transportation and natural resources.

While the basic California economy seems strong, there are obvious concerns. It would not take a dramatic downturn to plunge the state budget back into red ink again just as a new governor takes office, as happened when Wilson became governor in 1991. Wilson now leaves because of term limits. But if Democrats remain in the majority in the Legislature, Burton and Villaraigosa presumably will be back as leaders, and they will need to be prepared to cope quickly if such an eventuality arises.

Publication#W\ P}P# 80. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ P}P# 09/02/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: Editorial; Page A22

Headline#\ P}P# For Montgomery School BoardHeadline #:\ P}P# CONTINUES to be the top concern in Maryland's state and local elections " intensified this year by the pressures of swelling, changing school populations. In Montgomery County, still the home of a highly acclaimed school system, financial support has been strong. For parents as well as the greater number of voters who do not have children in public schools, the focus in the school board elections ought to be on what balance of board members could best determine how to spend wisely and on what. Reductions in class sizes, curriculum revisions and the selection of a new superintendent are among the complex decisions to come.

Voters throughout the county will be choosing one candidate at-large to fill the seat being vacated by Alan Cheung, and one candidate who lives in District 3 for the seat being vacated by Ana Sol Gutierrez. The top two finishers in each primary contest will run off in the November general election.

Members who will remain on the board in any event are Nancy King of District 1 and Reginald M. Felton of District 5, both running unopposed. Holdovers this time are at-large member Beatrice Gordon and Mona Signer of District 2. District 4 member Blair Ewing is running for the county council; if he wins, the board chooses a replacement, and if not, he would remain.

That is a nucleus of talented, generally middle-of-road members. In the at-large race, there are several strong candidates in a crowded field. Our choice is Luella Mast, who offers not only long and valuable service as a county PTA leader but also a record of working with competing interests in reaching balanced decisions. In the District 3 race, two knowledgeable and experienced candidates lead the field. We give the edge to Linna Barnes. Both she and Patricia O'Neill have worked long and well with PTA groups and understand the importance of balancing fiscal concerns with needs to reduce class sizes and improve teacher training. Ms. Barnes has had more countywide experience, which we believe could be an advantage.

Publication#W\ P}P# 81. U.S. Newswire"Publication" #:\ P}P#09-01 1:10p Category: Press release

Headline#\ P}P# Education Secretary Statement on 1998 SAT Test ResultsHeadline #:\ P}P# To: National Desk, Education Writer

Contact: Julie Green of the U.S. Department of Education ,

202-401-3026

WASHINGTON, Sept. 1 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Following is a statement by Education Secretary Richard W. Riley on the 1998 SAT test results:

These test results show that more and more students are realizing the importance of a college education and that efforts to raise academic standards and encourage students to take tougher courses are very important. Students who take high-level courses including trigonometry, calculus, and physics in high school have a tremendous test advantage.

Unfortunately, it seems that many students and families still need to know about the importance of taking core subjects and advanced math and science courses in middle and high schools to prepare them for college entrance tests and the rigors of postsecondary education.

Our challenge now is to get all students prepared for postsecondary education. Research shows that students are more likely to go to college when they receive early information about the right courses to take, and the availability of financial aid. That's why I will continue to work with Congress to pass the President's High Hopes for College initiative to give middle school students the academic and financial guidance they need to realize that college can be part of their future.

===== END ATTACHMENT 4 =====

===== ATTACHMENT 5 =====

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