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WEST PADUCAH, Ky. (AP) - The parent of a teen-ager shot to death at Heath High School says there must be a national campaign against school violence.

"We have heard a lot of talk, and we believe it's now time for action," Sabrina Steger said in a statement Monday. "This continuing cycle of school-related violence carried out by young people must be broken."

She said plans for a national campaign will be announced soon.

"At the root of these tragedies we are discovering that no one was paying attention to the causes that led to the acts of violence. No one felt the need to be accountable," Mrs. Steger said.

"We hope to start our own effort to get all Americans to accept accountability by sharing their experiences and ideas to help us find ways to end the violence," she said.

The latest violent attack occurred Friday night in Edinboro, Pa., where a middle-school science teacher was shot to death at a graduation dance. An eighth grader, 14-year-old Andrew Wurst, was charged.

Mrs. Steger's daughter, Kayce, was killed in December as teens held a prayer meeting in the Heath High School lobby before classes.

Also killed were Nicole Hadley and Jessica James. Five other students were hurt. Another student, Michael Carneal, 14, is awaiting trial for murder.

Last month in Jonesboro, Ark., four children and a teacher were shot to death, allegedly by two boys lying in ambush outside Westside Middle School. Mitchell Johnson, 13, and Andrew Golden, 11, face five murder charges and 10 battery charges.

The seeming epidemic of school violence began in Pearl, Miss., in October, when

16-year-old Luke Woodham allegedly stabbed his mother to death, then gunned down two students at his high school.

In her statement, Mrs. Steger noted that, in every case, other students had at least an inkling of impending violence but did not take it seriously.

Publication#W\ P}P# 83. Denver Post"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 27, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Bilingual school's students double their knowledgeHeadline #:\ P}P#

By Janet Bingham
Denver Post Education Writer

BOULDER - Stephanie and Michael Moore drive more than 20 miles a day to get their second-grader, Kevin, to a school where he can learn in two languages - English, their own language, and Spanish.

"We value the way the world opens up when you can speak more than one language," Stephanie Moore said.

Martha Navarez, who knew little English when she moved to Colorado in 1991 from Juarez, Mexico, also wants her son Emmanuel to learn in two languages. "It's great to see him communicate in one language, then turn his head and communicate in another. It's two in one. For the future."

Both families have enrolled their children at Escuela Bilingue Washington - the Washington Bilingual School - a Spanish-English public school that draws children from throughout Boulder County.

Of the 288 children at the school, half are native English speakers and half are native Spanish speakers. The goal of the school is to ensure that all children can speak, read and write fluently in both languages by the time they leave fifth grade.

The school is succeeding so well that visitors come from far and near to see how it operates. Two similar schools have been started in Fort Collins and Brighton, and there has been some discussion in the foundation community of starting a similar school in Denver. Comparable programs operate in more than 200 schools in 22 states.

In the national debate over bilingual education, crucial differences among programs often are overlooked.

Research comparing various programs shows that the model used at the Washington

Bilingual School helps students become more proficient in their native language and in fundamental academic concepts even as they master a second language.

Two languages, two cultures, are emphasized in everything done at the school, from the secretary's cheerful telephone greetings and the signs reading "Bienvenidos!" and "Welcome!" to the storybook mural that arches over the entrance to the century-old building.

Painted clay figures created by children represent characters from storybooks they have read in Spanish and English - "The Cat in the Hat," "La Llorona," "Alice in Wonderland," "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe," "Black Beauty," "Los Tres Cerditos."

Families can gather on couches in the foyer while waiting to greet their children or see a teacher. "Parents feel very, very welcome here," Navarez said.

Children spend part of the day learning in their first language and part of the day learning in their new language.

Basic concepts in reading, writing and math are taught first in a child's native language. As children work daily to master the vocabulary and grammar of their second language, the concepts easily transfer, Principal Joann Trujillo-Hays says.

aid. Soon students are speaking,
reading and writing in the second language, to
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Native English-speakers and native Spanish-speakers come together for part of t
he day
to learn social studies, science, music, art and physical education. The
mixed group learns
in English for up to three weeks, then in Spanish for up to
three weeks, rotating back and
forth.

All teachers speak both languages but teach in only one. "When children come in
to my
classroom, they enter a 'country' where only Spanish is spoken," said se
cond/third-grade
teacher Melvid Ferry. "They must speak to me only in Spanish,
and I speak to them only in
Spanish."

For their English language learning, her children go to Marta Krewson's classro
om,
where they may speak only in English.

The two teachers work as a team, scheduling and planning together. Similar teac
her teams
work at all grade levels.

"It doesn't faze Kevin if his instruction is in English or in Spanish," Stepha
nie Moore said
of her second-grader. "He is already able to read and write in S
panish as well as in English.
The teachers are excellent."

Fifth-graders are expected to read novels, write long reports and stories, and
understand
presentations in both English and Spanish.

On one recent day, fifth-graders whose first language is English listened to a
science
lecture given entirely in Spanish.

Their teacher, Kathy Chumacero, was reinforcing some biology concepts previousl
y
presented in English. She used expressive gestures to make sure her students
understood the

Spanish words they would need to carry out a genetics assignment featuring inherited characteristics such as pecas (freckles), ojos grandes (big eyes), cutis seco y sensitivo (dry and sensitive skin) and pelo rizado (curly hair).

Across the hallway, fifth-graders whose first language is Spanish were in an all-English classroom, expanding their knowledge of the English words for body parts.

Both groups of fifth-graders that day worked together in a computer lab on long adventure stories they are composing in Spanish. In art class they listened to a lecture in English on famous portraits by artists ranging from Edouard Manet to Pablo Picasso and Andy Warhol.

As the children learn each other's languages, they learn to respect one another, said Navarez, whose 11-year-old son is now a fifth-grader.

She enjoys seeing Emmanuel speaking English, "and it is good to also see the English speakers, the boys and girls, speaking Spanish. It's great! I love that school!"

English-speaking parents are equally pleased. Molly Hardman said her 10-year-old son, Ryan, a fourth-grader, spoke such fluent Spanish on a recent family trip to Mexico that cab drivers and waiters turned to stare, wondering where he had learned it.

But children also use their Spanish closer to home. Eleven-year-old Jessica Novack and her brother Cody, 9, have discovered Boulder vendors who sell Mexican candies such as chilitos and tamarindos. "We talk in Spanish to them, and they give us discounts," Jessica said.

Their mother, Patty Novack, who remembers trying to learn a foreign language in high school, is envious. "By starting so young, they're not having to struggle

the way we did."

The Moores said they believe that knowing two languages will be a major asset for the children in the future. "As the world gets smaller, the need for more than one language is more apparent," Stephanie Moore said. Her husband, a mechanical engineer who travels internationally, "needs an interpreter to help him with negotiations in Central America. If he could speak Spanish, he could do the business himself," she said. "Those who have the language advantage will have the advantage over other applicants for numerous jobs."

Principal Trujillo-Hays has taught in other bilingual programs but said they do not compare to this one. "I've been in bilingual education 15 years, but I've been amazed to see what these children can do. I knew it was possible, but I've never seen a school where all children leave truly able to read and write in both languages."

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INTERNATL #:\ P}P#Publication#W\ P}P# 84. The Economist"Publication" #:\ P}P#04/25/98Section: The Americas; Page 37

Headline#\ P}P# The summiteers go to schoolHeadline #:\ P}P#

NOT so long ago, the president of the United States would have figured as headmaster at a "summit of the Americas". In Santiago last weekend Bill Clinton was only the biggest-true, far the biggest-boy in class; and almost in the dunce's cap for not having fast-track trade-negotiating authority. So, though the summit formally launched negotiations on the planned free-trade area of the Americas, the FTAA, the main subject at the Miami summit in 1994, lost its primacy to education.

That was a topic just as worthy of study, and indeed the whole weekend curriculum was worthy, ranging from commerce to civics, plus a stern warning against playground drug-snorting. True, head-prefect Eduardo Frei, of Chile, had to struggle to make the class stick to the timetable. Cheeky Carlos Menem, a senior boy

from Argentina, kept the rest waiting for the class photo. Several boys, led by Jean Chretien, from Canada, muttered in the corridors about the absence of a Cuban ex-pupil expelled for disobedience some years ago. Yet, all in all, the class was a success. The exams, though, are still to come.

In the absence of fast-track, the summitters emphasised the non-trade agenda:

"second-generation" reforms to shore up Latin America's still fragile democracies and market economies by reducing poverty, increasing personal security and giving ordinary people better opportunities.

Amid a host of good intentions, some ideas stood out. Democracy, the summit recognised, is not just a matter of free elections. Real justice and free media are needed for the exposure of corruption and wrongdoing, but both face threats from governments, criminals and the mighty in general. A training centre for judges and prosecutors is to be set up. And, though Peru and Mexico had doubts, the summit endorsed an American idea for the Inter-American Human Rights Commission—an arm of the Organisation of American States—to appoint, this year, a special watchdog for freedom of expression.

The OAS is also to establish an "objective procedure" for evaluating national efforts against drug-trafficking. Some countries hope this multilateral approach will prove effective enough to win repeal of the United States' law requiring yearly, unilateral "certification" (or not, in Colombia's case in 1996 and 1997) of its neighbours' drug-fighting zeal. White House officials hailed a new alliance against drugs; getting Congress to agree is another matter.

Trade apart, however, the big item in Santiago was education, a subject long neglected. Education and training are the key to any country's future, and without them free trade may prove more of a threat to Latin America than an opportunity. Yet it is desperately short of them—and unequal access to what exists makes

worse its already wide disparities of income.

At Miami in 1994, the leaders set themselves a modest goal: primary schooling for all children, and secondary for 75% by 2010. Yet progress has been slow: of the relevant age-groups, only 85%, at the latest count, were at primary school, 36% at secondary school, with fewer than 20% in higher education. The World Bank reckons 24m more school places are needed.

Some countries, such as Chile, Argentina, Peru and Jamaica, should have little trouble meeting the target. Nor should Brazil, where enrolment in secondary schools jumped to 52% last year, says Paulo Renato de Souza, its education minister. Poorer countries have far to go: on present trends, says UNESCO, secondary-school enrolment in Bolivia, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua by 2010 will still be under 45%, and in Haiti just 17%.

Quality varies widely. Rich children often attend good private schools (and the chance may go on, as in Brazil, to benefit disproportionately from subsidised public universities). Standards in most Latin American public schools are low. The school day in many countries is only five hours, because classrooms have to be used in two shifts. Teaching materials are often poor; and teacher training has been neglected.

More money will be needed. So will political commitment. In the past, even if reform was planned, often it did not happen, thanks to frequent changes of education ministers and weak bureaucracies. But things are moving. Brazil (where Mr de Souza has been three years in his job) is directing more of its spending to the poorest schools in its north-east. Chile has extended the school day. Argentina has raised the school-leaving age. Costa Rica plans to put a computer in every school. Bolivia and Colombia have decentralised school management. But much more needs to be done—in teacher training, for example.

Santiago may mark a turning-point for Latin American education. Spurred by the

summit,
the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank have rejigged their priorities:
between them, they are offering \$8.2 billion over the next three years for education, an area they once ignored. In June, education ministers will meet in Brasilia to discuss the use of new technology in schools, development of common school testing systems, and teacher exchanges.

Ironically, Latin America's most effective educational performer was not in Santiago. Mr Chretien, whose country will hold the next summit in "two or three" years' time, said he would like Cuba invited then. The United States will block that unless Fidel Castro meanwhile proves he has learnt the lesson of democracy. Perhaps others could learn not from the content but the zeal of education in Cuba?

Publication#W\ P}P# 85. The Economist"Publication" #:\ P}P#04/25/98Section: Britain; Page 58

Headline#\ P}P# Private education: Money no objectHeadline #:\ P}P#

FIVE years ago the outlook for private schools was fairly bleak. After a long recession, parents had become reluctant to commit themselves to paying fees of thousands of pounds each year until their child reached 18. Despite their successes in recruiting more foreign pupils, boarding schools were in sharp decline, as the feeling grew among Britain's middle classes that sending one's progeny away to school was a form of child abuse. And a Labour government was looking ever more likely: the party no longer vowed publicly to abolish all private schools but still seemed determined to penalise them somehow.

But things have been looking up ever since. The incomes and job prospects for Britain's professional classes have improved sharply, encouraging more to take the plunge and sign up their children for private education. Boarding is still in decline but the number of day pupils is now showing marked growth. The annual survey of the Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS), published on Apr

il 23rd, showed that pupil numbers (day plus boarding) grew by 1.6% in the past year, despite a fall in the number of foreign pupils because of financial crises in East Asia.

The survey covers the 80% of private schools (also known as independent or, confusingly, public schools) which are affiliated to ISIS. It suggests that the total number of British pupils in private education is now around 625,000, a level not seen since the early 1980s. About 6% of British children now attend a private school, up from 5% in the mid-1970s. Comparisons with other countries can be difficult: in France, for example, 17% of pupils go to nominally "private" schools, but many of these are Catholic ones, heavily subsidised by the government, whose British counterparts are counted as part of the state sector. But in America, where there are constitutional barriers to state financing of religious schools, around 10% of pupils go private.

The Labour government's impact has been only mildly hostile. It has dropped its threats to impose value-added tax on school fees, and to remove the other tax breaks that most private schools get by virtue of being registered charities. But it is phasing out, from this autumn, the assisted-places scheme, which currently pays all or part of the fees for about 40,000 pupils.

However, some parents who would have qualified for assistance are likely to pay the fees themselves. Others will get bursaries from new trusts that many schools have set up, financed from appeals to former pupils. And some Conservative local councils are considering whether to create their own private-school bursaries (though the schools bill, now going through Parliament, grants the government a veto over such schemes).

Given all this, and the rise in demand for private education, pupil numbers seem likely to go on rising in the next few years, despite the loss of assisted places. At Dulwich College in London, for instance, the £1.2m raised for bursaries

will replace only a fraction of the assisted places that are being lost. But applications this year, from those able to pay their own fees, are up 40% on the average for the previous five years.

Schools now earn K160m a year from their 18,000 foreign pupils. East Asia provides around two-fifths of such recruits, so there is concern at the drop in applications from Hong Kong since the handover to China, and the fall in recruitment from South Korea and Thailand. It is too soon to tell whether these downturns will be permanent. But private schools are widening their recruitment drive anyway. ISIS, which is their marketing body, recently ran promotional trips to mainland China and South America, where there is growing demand for English-language education.

A few schools have ventured further into the export market by franchising their name and their curriculum to newly created schools in East Asia: both Dulwich College and Harrow, for instance, now have franchised schools in Thailand, with mainly British staff.

Only the strong survive

Though pupil numbers are now rising steadily, the shake-out among private schools in the early 1990s is continuing. Big, famous boarding schools are finding it easier to fill their places-enrolments for Ampleforth in North Yorkshire are up 10% this autumn after eight years of decline. Such schools are having to invest heavily to please parents, who increasingly demand that their children be kept in hotel-quality accommodation, not draughty dormitories. But smaller, less prominent schools often lack the capital to upgrade their facilities or to market themselves and are being squeezed out. This week, for instance, Douai School in Berkshire, set up in 1615 by Benedictine monks, announced its closure. Of the 2,500 private schools, 92 closed and only 64 opened last year.

As some schools close, others are being reorganised. Some educational charities

are merging with each other and buying up struggling schools run by sole proprietors, to create chains of schools with shared administrative costs. And chains of for-profit schools are being set up, with capital from City investors. The largest of these, Nord Anglia, has 24 schools in Britain and Eastern Europe, and is listed on the stockmarket. Others are catching up, such as the expanding Jigsaw Group, which now has 14 nursery schools and aims to be the "Marks and Spencer of early-years education".

Increasingly, religious and ethnic minorities are choosing to set up their own schools. There are now around 50 of these, mainly in the inner cities. Parents seem to be choosing them partly to escape racism in state schools and partly for fear that their children are rejecting their cultural and religious roots. Inspectors find that most such schools create a strong ethos of learning. Often, though, their lack of capital means they are unable to teach a broad curriculum, are short of books and other materials, and are stuck in unsuitable (or even dangerous) buildings. But in many cases the aim is to convince the government to provide full funding for the school, as with the many existing Catholic, Protestant and Jewish state schools. Progress on this has been slow, but this week Islamia School in London, set up by Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens, a 1960s pop star), became Britain's first state-financed Muslim school.

Most private-school pupils get good exam results and go on to university and a well-paid career. But then most come from affluent families whose parents are clearly committed to supporting their children's education (otherwise they would not be paying so dearly for it). These children might be expected to do well in any school, so it is not immediately obvious what their parents are getting in return for their school fees. Parents often cite the much smaller class sizes of private schools compared with state ones; but a number of studies have suggested that, except for the youngest pupils, class size has little effect on the quality of

education.

However, some research published last month, by a team led by Professor Geoff Whitty of London University's Institute of Education, showed that private schools are justified in claiming that their good results are not just a function of their intake. The researchers monitored the progress of 347 people, all from the most academically able third of the population, some of whom went to state schools and some to private schools. Those who went to the private schools got a much better set of A-levels than those in state schools, went on to the most prestigious universities and ended up in the best jobs.

For those from poor families, whose parents had few academic achievements, who got into private school via the assisted-places scheme, the benefits were especially marked. A shame, then, that such pupils, whom the government would regard as more deserving than those from privileged backgrounds, will be the main casualties of its decision to abolish the scheme.

Publication#W\ P}P# 86. Christian Science Monitor"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Mathematics Educators: Make Use of Technology Headline #:\ P}P# Brian Smith

MONTREAL " At a recent mathematics conference I witnessed a computer algebra system do in minutes what, with pencil and paper, took me weeks in the 1960s. When as a young teacher I abandoned the slide-rule and square-root tables for hand-held calculators and simple programming languages, I could not have foreseen the wealth of technological aids available today.

I have incorporated technology into my classroom ever since I began teaching college classes in 1970. My fascination with technology as a medium for education has accompanied me through a 27-year career in the two-year college system, from which I

recently retired, and continues in my current position teaching undergraduate mathematics and statistics.

Graphing calculators and computer algebra systems are - contrary to the assertions of a few backward thinkers - remarkable innovations. They put within our grasp, neophytes and old pros alike, the ability to solve our equations, and then to see those solutions come alive before our eyes.

The capacity to visualize answers to complicated abstract and real-world problems, to graph slope fields for systems of differential equations, to immerse oneself in the twists and turns of three-dimensional surfaces and curves - these are no mere tricks of the trade. They are profound breakthroughs.

Think of aviation without modern navigational techniques. No serious pilot would do without radar, and no one expects apprentice pilots to learn how to fly using only the tools that were available to the previous generation. The mathematics educator who refuses to teach the use of graphing calculators because they were not around when he or she went to school is like the pilot who refuses to exploit modern instrumentation because of a reluctance to rely on newfangled gadgets.

In my doctoral research I spent many hours in search of solutions to complex systems of partial differential equations. Would reliance on the computer have made me a less accomplished mathematician? On the contrary; it would likely have made me more productive.

What of the criticism that students who are allowed (or encouraged) to use technology will never develop the basic mathematical skills necessary to survive in the modern world? This argument has been used to resist every technological advance since the Industrial Revolution. Somehow, we are intelligent enough to survive technological innovation, to

acclimatize ourselves to our strange new environment and to bend it to our needs.

The mathematics reform movement struggles with the issues created by the rapid progress of technology. We adapt curricula to the new capabilities that are, literally, at our fingertips. We redefine examinations to exercise old skills and enhance new ones.

Math organizations at all levels - serving K-12 educators, two-year-colleges, and universities - offer sessions on innovative and appropriate use of the new technologies. Conscientious teachers enthusiastically present their ideas and report on their successes.

Incorporating technology into math has breathed new life into my lectures and generated a sense of discovery that exhilarates teacher and student alike. I am gratified that the new technologies permit me and my students to see the world anew.

* Brian Smith teaches mathematics and statistics at the Faculty of Management at McGill University in Montreal. He is the author of 'Simplifying Mathematics using the TI-82/83 or TI-85/86,' (Mathware, Urbana. Ill.).
Publication#W\ P}P# 87. London Guardian"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Those great expectations Headline #:\ P}P#Subhead#\ P}P# Roy Hattersley questions whether Labour is fulfilling the spirit of its pledges
Subhead#:\ P}P#

Like every other element of government policy, Labour's first education year has to be judged against four different and distinct criteria - the promises of the manifesto, the needs of the nation, the aspiration of the socialists who once inspired the party, and the Government's obsession with winning the next general election. At least two of these objectives have been completely achieved. The limited promises that the party made before the election have been undoubtedly fulfilled. The Assisted Places Scheme has been abolished and the consequent

savings are to be used to finance the extension of nursery education. Those decisions deserve unequivocal support. And the determination to reduce infant class sizes to a maximum of 30 should be a cause of unrestrained rejoicing.

But a problem has arisen over the achievement of the other obligations. Education policy has helped to maintain the allegiance of the suburban middle classes. But, in order to win their support, the Labour Party has abandoned its commitment to universal comprehensive education.

All that needs to be said on the subject was included in Baroness Blackstone's speech to the House of Lords as she tried to reconcile her loyalty to the Government with her almost unrivalled understanding of education policy. Asked to explain why a Secretary of State - who had promised "no selection by examination or interview" - was actually extending selection by aptitude, she replied, "The researchers defined 'ability' as an all-embracing factor which suggests whether a candidate will be successfully able to undertake a course of study and 'aptitude' as being narrower, determining whether someone has the capacity to be trained and developed." The academic care with which Baroness Blackstone attributed those bizarre views to 'researchers' may have escaped some of their lordships. So, just to emphasise the point, she added, "That may not satisfy (her questioners) but that is what the researchers came up with." The sub-text to that explanation is clear enough. New Labour - far from ending selection - has actually extended it. Incorporating the existing 163 grammar schools into the comprehensive system is made intentionally difficult by the organisation of the parental ballots which are to determine the pattern of secondary education. Meanwhile schools may select by ability. That, all the legitimate researches confirm, advantages exactly the same pupils who would have benefited from 'the scholarship' and won grammar school places under the old 11 plus. The middle classes can sleep easy in their beds.

The Blessed Blackstone, in what was the year's most plausible defence of the Sc

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Standards and Framework Bill, gave one glorious hostage to political fortune. It ought to result in her full canonisation. Asked to comment on the government's slogan, 'standards, not structures', she replied that the two are "intimately linked". That is self-evidently right.

It is also a modern heresy. The distinction between performance and organisation is central to the Government's attempts to improve overall results without antagonising the vested interests of those who want something special for their children. It is the 'standards, not structures' shibboleth which enables the Government's education policy to fit into the thrust of New Labour's general philosophy. Education is to be improved by changes to the 'supply side' - not by increased investment.

More money has been made available - though rather less than appears to be the case once it is realised that the transfer for the reserves was anticipated by the previous government. But the whole emphasis has to be on individuals - teachers as well as pupils - doing better. That is the justification for 'naming and shaming' - the identification of schools which are said to have failed. The idea is that humiliation will act as a stimulus for improvement. No serious educationist accepts that analysis. Like 'selection by aptitude', the extension of league tables and the increasing involvement of the Secretary of State in day-to-day teaching methods, 'naming and shaming' has less to do with improving performance than polishing the Government's image.

Not all this year's initiatives have been motivated by such venal considerations. The calculated decision to diminish the role of local education authorities - like the involvement of private companies in the management of Education Action Zones - is entirely consistent with the philosophy of 'the third way'. It is hard to imagine how a great city could successfully organise its secondary admissions policy or its programme of pre-school education without some overall coordination of policy. And we have yet to be told what

special stimulus private enterprise can provide to the improvement of education in the inner cities.

But breaking down the old bureaucracies and harnessing the talent of independent entrepreneurs is the sort of thing in which New Labour honestly, if incoherently, believes. The policy is misguided but genuine.

However Labour has become disastrously detached from teachers - once the intellectual, as well as organisational, backbone of the party. Nobody wants or expects David Blunkett to capitulate to the extremists of the NUT annual conference.

But hardworking teachers, without an independent political agenda, expected more from Labour than the Government has provided. If they are not to receive the money they deserve, they ought at least to enjoy the respect which they are due. The Labour Party has alienated teachers who ought to be its friends. If, even by its own standards, its education policy begins to fall apart, its attitude towards teachers will almost certainly be to blame.

Publication#W\ P}P# 88. London Guardian"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Still more to be done Headline #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# David Blunkett tells John Carvel about his achievements and his concerns Subhead#:\ P}P#

Reflecting on the first year in office, David Blunkett talks as much about the mountain still to be climbed as the journey so far through the foothills of government. The anniversary of Labour's election victory may be the moment for a brief look back, but the Education and Employment Secretary's priority is the move to the next base camp.

In legislative terms, the Government will have fulfilled its manifesto commitments on education when the current bills complete their passage through Parliament. But implementation is another matter. That will need resources and the outcome of the Treasury's comprehensive spending review is still uncertain.

So Mr Blunkett's attempts to claim due credit for an energetic year with relatively few political upsets are interrupted by flashes of anguish about the continuing inadequacy of parts of the education service.

First the optimism. "There is nothing that we promised to do that we haven't done - and we have done a great deal more than we promised," he said. "We dampened expectations. As a party, we were very cautious. We tried to make sure people didn't expect more than could be delivered. But the problem is people didn't hear that. Their expectations of early progress were very high. They got more than we promised and more quickly, but now they put that in their pocket and ask for more." For example, the Government made faster progress than expected on implementing plans to improve pre-school education. All but one of the local authorities had early years development plans in place for September and there would be 65,000 more places for 4-year-olds. "People say: very good, we thought you

would do that. They forget that in fact they didn't." The same applied to the extra funding for education in the July Budget. "If we hadn't got that money, it would have been a disaster. Without those resources we would not have been able to hold the line. It was a crucial change." Increased spending on capital works helping to lift morale. "People seeing the buildings improving - even if it's in a neighbouring school - get new hope and that gradually begins to seep its way through into the classroom." Mr Blunkett claims to detect a mood swing in the schools over the last three months. Instead of 75 per cent of the staff grumbling, "75 per cent are talking positively about what they are trying to do and their hopes for the future." But this possibly over-rosy vision of walking already through the sunlit uplands does not last long. Mr Blunkett is soon firing off the statistics showing the dreadfulness of the funding for further education. The sector looks after 60 per cent of 16- to 19-year-olds. Student numbers have increased by 22 per cent over five years, but income has been progressively cut by four per cent a year in real terms.

"Those figures are staggering. We have an enormous mountain to climb to put the sector back together again. It may not be the sexiest part of the portfolio, but it's the sector in the greatest depression and we must help them to help themselves." That is no doubt part of the case that Mr Blunkett is making to the comprehensive spending review. He is worried by international comparisons showing the percentage of French and German teenagers getting the equivalent of five good passes at GCSE is double the figure for British youngsters.

Labour's preparation in opposition was uneven. It developed a clear agenda on schools, but was vaguer on post-16 education. Within the DfEE, there is no equivalent on the further education side to Michael Barber, the professor brought in to head the school standards unit.

Mr Blunkett had to spend a lot of time in the early weeks of this year rewriting badly-worked drafts of the lifelong learning green paper, to avoid its derailment. He praises Michael Bichard, his permanent secretary, but notes that the DfEE civil servants "are having to learn how to take on a new way of developing ideas, including the art of writing policy papers".

They were evidently surprised by his interest in administrative efficiency - a hangover from his days as leader of Sheffield city council. The ingenuity learned while running a rate-capped authority in the early 1980s may have helped him find savings worth about 500 million, providing growth money for other education projects in this no-growth period of Government spending.

He is unrepentant about the early decision to put pressure on failing schools and incompetent teachers. "We were tough because we had to be. Otherwise people would have let out a sigh of relief and said our standards drive was just an election ploy. And that won't do. For the first three or four months it was necessary to establish that we meant business.

Then we could talk about more positive things, to broaden the area of appeal and start to put the jigsaw together."

There have been rumblings of speculation that Tony Blair might switch Mr Blunke
it in the summer to a new portfolio as welfare supremo, exploiting his background
and salesmanship talents in a difficult area of policy. But there are no signs of
the Education Secretary wanting to move on. "If things turn out as I hope from the spending
review, we really could see a total transformation of the life chances of young people in this
country... I want to be there for the length of time needed to show we can achieve the targets
we have set. I want to have
been given the chance to do a decent job of work," he said.

Publication#W\ P}P# 89. Sydney Morning Herald"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Now lower income families choose private schools
Headline #:\ P}P#
By STEPHANIE RAETHEL
Education Writer

Middle-income families are paying thousands of dollars a year to secure places in
non-government schools, according to official new figures that show not only wealthy
families opt for private education.

The figures, based on information from the Bureau of Statistics census, show that even
in the lower-income bracket, where families earn below \$26,000, almost one in five families
has opted for private education.

Among families earning between \$26,000 and \$41,500, about 22 per cent opted for
private schools while the figure rose to 28 per cent for families in the \$41,500 to \$61,000
bracket.

At the other end of the income scale, about 50 per cent of families earning more than
\$104,000 a year send their children to government schools.

It is the first time the ABS has collected data linking family income to the type of school children attend and the new data comes as the Federal Government reviews funding arrangements for non-government schools.

The Federal Government has already lifted restrictions on the setting up of new non-government schools, making it easier for low-fee independent schools to open their doors.

The executive director of the Australian Parents' Council, Ms Josephine Lonergan, said the figures exploded the myth that only the rich send their children to non-government schools.

She said the argument that the growth of non-government schools could lead to government schools being marginalised was also not supported by the figures, with about 50 per cent of high-income earners sending their children to government schools.

While the majority of enrolments in private schools were in Catholic schools, 7 per cent of families earning between \$31,200 and \$52,000 enrolled children in other independent schools and this figure climbed to 10 per cent for families earning up to \$78,000.

The executive director of the NSW Association of Independent Schools, Mr Terry Chapman, said the figures showed that independent schools were not the sole domain of the wealthy and that not all wealthy people sent their children to private schools.

"The shift to private schools is not because families have become more wealthy," he said.

"It appears to be families right across the socio-economic spectrum focusing more on what they are looking for in schools."

Headline#\ P}P# Today's lesson: how private can pay
off Headline #:\ P}P#
By HUGH MACKAY

WE ARE in an era of extraordinary parental interest in the formal education of children.

Older Australians report that their parents rarely came near their schools, rarely attended sporting events, rarely met the teachers and scarcely knew what their children were being taught.

The parent's ritual question, "What did you learn at school today?", was regarded in many families as a kind of running gag. The ritual response - "nothing much" - was usually interpreted as welcome reassurance that no boats were about to be rocked.

Reactions are not always so benign today, certainly not in the upper reaches of the middle class. A child coming home from school with such a bland report of the day's activities might well send its parents into a frenzy, precipitating a visit to the school to demand a transfer to a more goal-focused, outcome-orientated, child-centred learning environment.

This is part of a larger trend. It is as though parents, naturally wishing their children to be happy and successful, have decided that the way to achieve this is to ensure that they have the best of everything: the best boat, the best car, the best holiday, the best computer, the best study area ... and certainly the best available teacher.

It's a trend driven partly by materialism, and partly by the parents' conviction that their children need to be equipped to face a tougher and more competitive world than the one they faced.

Add to this the emerging economic imperative, "user pays" (which breeds the conviction that you get what you pay for), and you have the basis of a growing tendency for parents to consider the private-school option.

Three factors influence their thinking. One is the sense of control that fee-paying parents feel they can exert over the education process. "If I'm paying," the argument runs, "I can call the shots. If I'm not happy with the product then, like a consumer in any market, I have the right to complain."

Taxpayers have the same right to complain, of course, about inadequacies in the public education system but, in the private sector, the voice of the fee-paying parent can demand a more immediate response.

A second factor is the belief that private schools will typically place more emphasis than public schools on discipline, and that the staff will be more committed to a set of explicit moral and philosophical ideals.

This leads, in turn, to the expectation that they will be more willing to accept pastoral responsibility for their pupils. All of this is thought to civilise a child to an extent not demanded, or expected, of the State system.

And then there's the question of getting a job. For some parents, private schools are still associated with high marks in the HSC as a stepping-stone to tertiary qualifications, though that situation is rapidly changing under the influence of the selective high schools.

By refining their entrance requirements and placing their heaviest emphasis on academic achievement, the selective high schools will soon be clustered at the top of the HSC league table.

But HSC marks are only part of the job story. As the employment outlook for the rising generation remains bleak, a growing number of parents are prepared to make big sacrifices to give their children whatever advantages - tangible or intangible - a private-school education might be thought to offer.

This thing called "education" can be interpreted pragmatically or idealistically, rationally, or emotionally, spiritually, culturally, academically or socially. However it may be interpreted, a better education is precisely what parents believe they are buying from private schools. Why else would they pay all that money?

Publication#W\ P}P# 91. London Daily Telegraph"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Parents can demand that class sizes be cutHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Rachel Sylvester
Political Correspondent

PARENTS will be able to demand an extra teacher or classroom at their child's school if they fear that the drive to cut class sizes is putting education standards at risk.

The Government yesterday announced plans to increase the power of parents to influence the make-up of schools as it set out proposals for reducing the pupil-teacher ratio. Education authorities will be required to publish a detailed strategy for fulfilling Labour's manifesto pledge to have no more than 30 children in infant classes. According to a consultative document published yesterday, they will also have to consult parents before implementing any of their proposals.

There have been fears that limits will lead to children being taken from popular schools to fill surplus places elsewhere. However, Stephen Byers, the schools standards minister, said parents would be able to object to specific plans if they thought that they would damage their children's education. Special protection will be given to pupils at village schools. Ministers acknowledge that children could suffer if a blanket rule on class sizes is imposed in remote communities.

Parents will be able to demand that the education authority allocates money for

extra
teachers if children have to travel long distances to other schools. Ministers have also
decided that the authorities will not be able to reduce classes by shifting children around
from good schools to bad ones. Parents will have
the power to ask for additional resources
to fund staff or to build new classrooms in over-subscribed schools rather than being forced
to send their children
elsewhere.

The Government has allocated 22 million to pay for more infant teachers and 40 million to build extra classrooms. Mr Byers said 100,000 pupils aged five to seven would
benefit from smaller classes from September. Extra places should be created in popular
schools, if necessary, by expanding the number of teachers and improving the infrastructure.

He stressed that the Government's new drive should increase rather than decrease the
power of parents. He said: "The regulations and guidance make it clear that at local education
authorities will have to consult parents, schools, churches
and others to make their plans
reflect local needs and parental preferences. In
the longer term LEAs should seek to increase
the proportion of provision in successful

Publication#W\ P}P# 92. London Daily Telegraph"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28,
1998

Headline#\ P}P# Teachers attack drugs education for
infantsHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Philip Johnston and Liz Lightfoot

GOVERNMENT plans to educate children as young as five about the dangers of drugs,
as part of a long-term strategy to curb abuse, were criticised by teachers' leaders last night.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union
of Women Teachers, also accused Tony Blair of setting a bad example by courting pop stars.
He said: "As always, politicians expect others to act. The Prime Minister could probably
achieve more than 1,000 lessons in drugs education
if he set a good example and refrained

from inviting pop stars associated with the drugs scene to receptions at No 10."

Guests at Downing Street have included Noel Gallagher, of Oasis, who said last year that taking drugs might now be as normal as "getting up and having a cup of tea in the morning".

Mr de Gruchy also attacked the Government for "dumping social problems on to schools.

It is unrealistic to expect schools to fill the moral vacuum created by so many different forces at work in society. Dumping on schools is a cop-out by Government and society."

A White Paper published yesterday said that the national curriculum should include lessons introducing pupils aged five to the dangers of drugs. Keith Hellawell, the so-called drugs tsar, who devised the strategy, defended the proposal, though some ministers believe that eight or nine would be a more suitable age.

Mr Hellawell said: "We do not intend to start talking to children aged five about crack cocaine and all the paraphernalia, but they need to understand the consequences that drugs have. They need to understand resistance so that they can make a choice. It's crucial that we get to the children before the drug dealers do."

Jack Straw, Home Secretary, said: "If schools don't spell out the facts, then for sure children will have them spelt out in the playground or on the street corner."

Many primary schools teach children about drugs as part of the science curriculum.

Teachers are advised to emphasise that all drugs can be harmful if misused.

Under Government guidelines, children can be taught about illegal drugs and their harmful effects from the age of seven. In secondary schools, the curriculum covers drugs and their use and misuse in more detail.

Mr de Gruchy said there was little evidence that drugs education for the very young would succeed. He said: "I question the wisdom of involving all five and six-year-olds in a programme of this kind because one or two youngsters have been found with drugs in primary schools."

Despite an enormous increase in drugs education in schools over the past decade, the problem seemed to be as bad as ever. David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Headteachers, said too many were "streetwise" about drugs. Teachers had to balance protecting pupils from abuse against encouraging experimentation.

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said:

"Learning about drugs does not encourage children to experiment. Many already know more than their teachers about drug use."

Publication#W\ P}P# 93. Financial Times"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/28/98; Edition: London Edition; Section: NATIONAL NEWS; Page 10

Headline#\ P}P# Government campaign to target schoolchildrenHeadline #:\ P}P#

By Simon Buckby
Social Affairs Correspondent

A long-term strategy to tackle the growing use of illegal drugs was unveiled by the government yesterday amid controversy over its plan to focus on drug education for all schoolchildren.

The new strategy is contained in a white paper which follows a review of policies impacting on the problem by Keith Hellawell, former chief constable of West Yorkshire police. He began work as the country's first anti-drugs co-ordinator in January.

Mr Hellawell estimates the government spends GBP 1.4bn combatting a problem, which costs the country more than GBP 4bn a year in crime and sickness bills. International drugs trafficking accounts for 8 per cent of total world trade, according to the United Nations.

The government's aim to shift resources from reacting to the consequences of the problem to preventing misuse, was highlighted by an announcement that assets seized from drug dealers would be invested in anti-drugs work. Last year, more than GBP 5m was recovered from drug barons.

Plans for a nationwide drugs-education programme for children between five and 16

years was attacked by Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of NASUWT, the teachers' union.

He said: "There is little hard evidence that drugs education of this kind will achieve its purpose. I question the wisdom of involving all five and six year olds in a programme of this kind because one or two youngsters have been found with drugs in primary schools."

However Jack Straw, the home secretary, whose teenage son was cautioned earlier this

year for selling cannabis, said: "If schools don't spell out the facts, then for sure children will have them spelt out in the playground or on the street corner."

Tony Blair, the prime minister, praised Mr Hellawell for getting to the "root of the

problem". He said a series of government initiatives would impact on drug use. "They are often part of a complex web of difficult social problems. We are tackling inequalities with a programme of reform in the welfare state, education, health, criminal justice and the economy."

Mr Hellawell said he would set monthly and annual targets for reducing the number of

people under 25 reporting the use of illegal drugs. Targets would also be set for reducing repeat offending, increasing participation in treatment programmes and reducing the availability of drugs to children between five and 16 years.

Government advisers believe by the age of 14 some pupils may be "drinking regularly and/or smoking" and "almost all pupils will be aware of at least some ille

gal drugs". Mr
Hellawell said young people's use of legal drugs was linked with
illegal drug use and should
be addressed within the same strategy.

The Standing Conference on Drug Abuse, a think-tank, welcomed the new initiative. But
Roger Howard, its chief executive, called for increased investment. "The
strategy and vision
will not amount to much unless the government can find the
resources to invest more in
prevention, education and rehabilitating addicts."

Mr Hellawell said drug problems did not occur in isolation, and were often connected to
"unemployment, low self-esteem, educational failure, boredom and physical, psychological
or family problems".

Mr Straw said efforts had to be linked to the government's working party on anti-social
behaviour by young men. He said dealing with under-skilled and under-educated young men
was the "most serious social problem we face". Tackling Drugs
To Build A Better Britain,
Stationery Office, 0171 873 0011. GBP 6.50.n
Publication#W\ P}P# 94. Associated Press"Publication" #:\ P}P#4-28 5:18a

Headline#\ P}P# Japan to implement new planHeadline #:\ P}P#

TOKYO, April 28 (Kyodo) - The Education Ministry revised its education reform
program Tuesday, outlining a schedule for such measures as implementation in fiscal 2002
of a five-day school day system for elementary, junior and senior high schools.

The revision followed a report submitted by an advisory panel to Education Minister
Nobutaka Machimura in March calling for the five-day system and urging parents to take
more responsibility for the education of children at home following a series of crimes
committed by knife-wielding teenagers.

Machimura said at a press conference, "It is unusual for the administration to

deal with
education of children outside school hours, but it is necessary to do
so since the educational
capacities of homes and local communities has been lo
st these days."

The program aims at enriching students' minds and realizing a school system whi
ch
enables them to develop their personality.

It is also intended to allowing individual schools to be independent from the m
inistry in
constructing their own school programs, as well as promoting researc
h studies at
universities.

Under the program, a complete five-day school system will be implemented in fis
cal
2002, which ends in March 2003, after the ministry finishes compiling textb
ooks for the new
school system. Currently, elementary and junior high schoolchi
ldren, as well as public high
school students, get every other Saturday off.

It also includes setting up counseling rooms in schools where professional coun
selors can
help children with problems.

The ministry will call on TV networks to check the contents of their programs a
nd make
regulations to protect children from harmful broadcasts, such as progra
ms depicting violence
and explicit sex.

The ministry's program also calls on fathers to review their work-oriented life
styles and
take a more active role in the family.

It also gives instructions on matters of common sense which are apparently negl
ected at
home, such as the need for parents to firmly scold their children when
ever they do anything
bad.n

Headline#\ P}P#Republican, White House battle on
education a play for votesHe
adline #:\ P}P#

By JACK GERMOND
& JULES WITCOVER

WASHINGTON " The confrontation between President Clinton and Republicans in
C
ongress over education is another of those sham battles intended to con the fol
ks back
home.

From the outset, neither side has had a realistic chance of winning. The Republ
icans lack
the votes to override Mr. Clinton's veto of their measure. The Democ
rats lack the votes to
pass their own.

So what the whole exercise is about is political positioning for the midterm el
ections in
November. Both the White House and the Republicans understand fully
that so long as the
economy remains as healthy as it is today, education is the
single issue most important to
most Americans.

Education gets an especially high priority from women voters, who make up a maj
ority
of the electorate and have been splitting clearly for the Democrats.

So it is not far-fetched to believe that the issue could be decisive in some cl
ose contests
for seats in the House of Representatives, the principal battlegro
und in a year in which the
Democrats could regain control by picking up 11 seat
s.

But both sides are guilty of gross rhetorical excesses in the cases they are ma
king for their
own proposals and in their attacks on the opposition.

The heart of the Republican plan is a proposal that would allow parents to crea
te
education savings accounts, the interest on which would be tax-exempt if use
d to pay tuition
at private or public schools. The Democrats are depicting this
as another example of
Republican welfare for the affluent. But the fact is tha
t the most a parent might realize from
the bill would be \$37 a year, hardly a m

ake-or-break savings for a well-to-do family.

But this initiative is essentially a Republican attempt to establish the principle of public help for private schools, the same principle involved in their support for school vouchers that could be used for tuition anywhere.

It's one of the key legislative proposals for Christian conservatives, perhaps the single most influential Republican constituency and run a lot of private schools of their own. For them, tuition vouchers rank right behind opposition to abortion and support for prayer in public schools.

The Republican plan has other, more intriguing political ramifications. Like the voucher plan, the proposal has divided the Democrats and attracted some of the most liberal to the Republican view. The reason is obvious: Help in paying for private schools is important to many low-income, inner-city families who want to send their children to parochial schools but find it too expensive.

The counter argument from the president and Democratic congressional leaders is that the Republican plan is another attempt to undermine the public schools and that the best remedy for those inner-city parents is more help to improve the public schools.

So the Democratic plan has two principal planks " interest subsidies to provide \$22 billion in loan guarantees to build or modernize 5,000 public schools over several years and, second, \$7.3 billion to add 100,000 teachers.

However, neither party's plan has the potential to have a major effect on schools nationally. The reality is that federal money accounts for less than 7 percent of national spending on elementary and secondary schools.

The Republicans are feeling some pressure to emphasize their credentials on education

because, as many of them concede, Mr. Clinton has been so successful in identifying himself with concern for children. Some of his proposals, such as those for computers in every classroom and more use of school uniforms, have been modest or vague. But they have identified the president and his party as the most devoted to U.S. schoolchildren.

There is a serious issue in education today. The public schools have been under attack from all levels of government because of their inadequacies in so many communities. But universal public education is one of the fundamentals on which U.S. democracy rests. And so is the separation of church and state. Neither fundamental should be undermined by the political needs of the moment.

The debate going on now, however, doesn't directly confront those fundamentals. Instead, it is all about how the candidates will be seen by the voters in November.

Jack W. Germond and Jules Witcover write from The Sun's Washington bureau.

Publication#W\ P}P# 96. The Newark Star-Ledger "Publication" #: \ P}P# 04/24/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 026

Headline#\ P}P# Whitman plan would harm higher educationHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Abby Demel-Brown

Gov. Christie Whitman's plan to reward colleges and universities that meet certain criteria and punish others that don't is flawed for three essential reasons.

First, it would all but guarantee that struggling colleges and universities decline further.

Second, it would create an unhealthy competition based on so-called objective statistics.

Finally, it would open the door wide for political patronage. A governor could demand loyalty from college and university administrations and punish them financially.

The Governor has proposed rewarding colleges and universities that keep tuition down.

But we have to ask whether it makes sense to cut funding to a school whose tuition is too

high. Would that not force the school to further increase tuition or cut programs, thus guaranteeing the same outcome the following year? It would certainly be unfair to students, who would see their program options decline while their tuitions increase.

Another criterion for reward is the graduation rate. Forcing colleges and universities to compete in an effort to increase graduation rates would inevitably lead to decreasing standards. It would be a disservice to students, and to employers who hope to hire qualified graduates, to make funding dependent on graduation rates, which are easily manipulated by college and university administrations. It is a crime that so many students are permitted to graduate from high school without achieving a third-grade reading level. It would be an even greater crime if the Governor's proposal spread such practices into our higher education institutions.

The Governor's proposal would open the doors of our colleges and universities wide to politics. College and university administrations would have to behave the way the Governor wishes or risk retribution through the budget process. The Governor could use supposedly objective criteria to mask arbitrary funding decisions. This would be even more easily accomplished since there is no universal agreement on which criteria really matter. Thus the Governor's choice of criteria is necessarily subjective.

The Governor's approach to college and university funding would mean merit pay, a system she wishes to apply to state government at a time when many businesses are abandoning the practice after discovering that it reduces productivity because it breeds animosity between staff and supervisors and among workers.

The Governor's plan is yet another budget gimmick. It sounds good, but on closer inspection, it is apparent that higher education would suffer greatly as a result of it.

The real answers to the problems facing higher education in New Jersey (tuition costs, lack of access and diversity and diminished educational quality) are quite simple.

Affirmative action, increased financial aid and full funding of college and university salary and fringe benefit accounts are investments in New Jersey's future that will pay for themselves in the long run. The difficulty lies in finding the money in the short run. Real leadership, not gimmickry, will get us there.

Publication#W\ P}P# 97. The Charleston Gazette"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/24/98
Page P7A

Headline#\ P}P# Read to Me Day Headline #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# Reading to
your kids helps their brainsSubhead#:\ P}P#
By Jeff Crist

READING TO CHILDREN is one of the most important activities for building knowledge required for success later in life.

We know from research on infant brain development that the brain grows primarily by connections between neurons, or nerve cells.

These connections make it possible to think and learn.

Although most nerve cells are present at birth, the wiring between them has yet to stabilize. Research shows that a loving, nurturing and stimulating environment encourages the growth of these connections and lays the foundation for healthy physical, emotional and mental development.

The issue of early childhood development has drawn significant attention recently due to new imaging technology which provides concrete evidence about earlier theories of brain development.

According to neurologists, 90 percent of human brain growth occurs by age three

However, reading to children at any age provides stimulation that is crucial

to brain
development.

Because of the impact reading can have on children's lives, the West Virginia Kids Count Fund endorses the third annual "Read To Me" day April 29 throughout the state.

West Virginia Public Television, the state Library Commission, Read Aloud West Virginia, the West Virginia Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals, and the West Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, spearhead Read To Me as an opportunity to promote awareness of the importance of reading to children every day.

Although babies learn from the moment they are born, the brain of a baby that lacks appropriate stimulation, such as being read to, played with, or touched and held, will not develop as well as the brain of a baby who receives such stimulation. A baby's intelligence can be increased or decreased by how parents interact with the child.

This fact makes Read To Me day all the more important as parents, educators and the business community see the importance of what they do and how it affects their children.

Crist is communications director of the West Virginia Kids Count Fund.

Publication#W\ P}P# 98. The Las Vegas Review-Journal"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04
/24/98; Edition: Final; Section: EDITORIALS; Page 15b

Headline#\ P}P# Casinos vs. schoolsHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Ken Ward

Who says casinos don't care about education? They care plenty when confronted with a plan to fund scholarships through abolition of the gaming tax deduction.

Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., doesn't like the idea that gamblers can write hundreds of millions of dollars off their federal taxes each year. He figures that money could be better spent helping low-income children exercise school choice.

The Hoosier lawmaker's scheme was a clever device to keep Republicans in the education debate. Alas, he folded his hand when fellow senators, notably Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., bailed out this week. But Coats has resurrected a question that won't go away: Why should unlucky gamblers be subsidized by the U.S. Treasury?

Currently, a player who hits a \$2,000 jackpot doesn't have to pay any taxes if he, say, also loses \$2,500. Under Coats' erstwhile bill, that person would pay taxes on the \$2,000 win - and eat the \$500 net loss.

Sens. Richard Bryan and Harry Reid, D-Casino, responded in full battle mode. They expressed outrage at this accounting assault on their monied patrons in the gaming industry. They pointed out, correctly, that deductions are standard tax policy for activities that generate taxable income.

But does that make it right when we're talking about an activity that is essentially nonproductive and ultimately degenerate?

Whatever the merits of Coats' educational agenda, he exposed the tax deduction for the crass shell game it is. To put it another way, casinos are getting fat and the feds are providing the slop.

The charade is particularly egregious in Nevada, where the gaming tax has been stuck at 6.25 percent since 1989. During that time, hundreds of other taxes and levies have gone up on individuals. Sales taxes have surpassed the gaming tax as the state's chief source of revenue. And, contrary to popular myth, only about a quarter of those sales taxes are paid by tourists.

As if that weren't enough, casino mogul Steve Wynn got the 1997 Legislature to enact a tax break on publicly displayed art. He recently sold about \$74 million in company stock, and his ensuing purchase of pricey paintings for the Bellagio

o will qualify him for a tax reduction.

A few people, including state Sen. Joe Neal, have questioned this arrangement. The North Las Vegas Democrat and gubernatorial candidate says that such artful deals shortchange the state and, inevitably, take dollars away from schools.

Would our Education Governor really let that happen? Perhaps. Yet one thing is certain:

No one at the state level is coming up with a dime to help Nevada's schools keep pace with the explosive and ongoing demand for new classrooms.

Instead, the Clark County School District will be asking voters this fall to pass a \$2 billion construction bond. It will be cleverly advertised as a "tax freeze" because it pledges no increases for 10 years. That, of course, is marketing obfuscation. What it really means is that your property taxes won't go down, something that voters were promised when they approved previous bonds.

But back to Washington. Sen. Coats has obviously set off the casino alarms. Lot t & Co. have answered the bell this time. And American Gaming Association President Frank Fahrenkopf, a Nevadan who formerly served as chairman of the Republican National Committee, helpfully offered support in seeking other federal subsidies to cut in an effort to fund Coats' scholarship program. Most magnanimous.

Thus the industry's message is clear: We care about education ... just don't expect it to come out of our pocket.

Ken Ward is a free-lance writer who covers education. n

Publication#W\ P}P# 99. Portland Oregonian"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/25/98; Edition: SUNRISE; Section: EDITORIAL; Page E09

Headline#\ P}P# CHARTER SCHOOLS IMPROVE
EDUCATION THROUGH
COMPETITION AND CHO
ICEHeadline #:\ P}P#

Congress is debating the merits of a school voucher system, which would allow the use of tax dollars for private education. Many Republicans claim that parents should be permitted to choose their children's schools, even if that means opting out of the public education system. Most Democrats argue that vouchers would lead to widespread abandonment of public education. But a middle ground exists in this argument: charter schools.

Twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia now host charter schools. (A bill authorizing charter schools in Oregon narrowly failed to pass in the last legislative session.) Success stories abound on how these schools have improved education and alleviated overcrowding, especially in urban areas.

Charter schools are essentially deregulated public schools that are given the freedom to develop innovative methods of teaching. If we passed a charter-school bill here in Oregon, parents would have the option of enrolling their children in either a charter school or a mainline school. Charter schools therefore upgrade educational standards by forcing schools to compete against one another and by attracting new educators who can provide challenging environments for learning.

Charter schools bring needed competition and choice to our educational system, yet unlike vouchers, charters affirm our country's commitment to public education. Charter schools encompass the strengths of vouchers without depleting the resources of public education.

STATE SEN. TOM HARTUNG

Chairman, Senate Education Committee Northwest Portland

Publication#W\ P}P# 100. The Columbus Dispatch"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/25/98
; Edition: Home Final; Section: EDITORIAL & COMMENT; Page 09A

Headline#\ P}P# PROPOSAL IS WRONG WAY TO
PAY FOR EDUCATIONHeadline #:\ P}P#

The conditions that brought the school-funding suit before the Ohio Supreme Court are straightforward. An inequality exists in the education available to children in poorer districts compared with that in wealthier districts.

This inequality results from an overreliance on the property tax for school funding. The goal should be to shift toward a larger contribution from the state, together with a base-line contribution from every community.

The first task was to decide what constitutes an adequate education and its cost. After that, how to fund it and then how to administer the funds. Fortunately, in its eagerness to avoid responsibility, the General Assembly has given voters the option to turn the plan down.

The voters rejected what was perceived to be a flawed workers' compensation law. The same fate should befall State Issue 2, the current school-funding proposal.

Some say that the legislature raised too little money. When using the legislature's own numbers, this view appears to be right. In House Bill 650 (the implementation bill) \$4,063 per pupil is set as the necessary base for 1999. Yet provisions are made for only \$3,851. Even in 2000, the amount specified is below the 1999 base. Assuming 2 percent to 3 percent inflation, the amount still is insufficient in 2001, and only in 2002 does it approach the base plus inflation.

Ninety percent of the districts spend more than the base amounts. Do legislators really think that all those school district officials so love levy campaigns that they propose them for unnecessary programs?

There are others who say that the tax is not necessary. For 1999, they are probably right, but what about down the line? Their projections are based on an ever-expanding economy. If this did not occur, then cuts in other state services would be necessary. Most notably,

published figures show deep cuts in higher education. Does it make sense to have to cut the top of the educational pyramid at a time when more education is necessary to prepare students for global competition?

Cutting the reliance on the property tax can be achieved in two ways:

Give a rebate to homeowners, as State Issue 2 proposes.

Give sufficient funds to the schools to diminish the need for levies.

The current proposal is unfair. A sales tax is very regressive and all are taxed but the rebate is given to only a few. Only homeowners benefit. If levies are made less necessary, all would benefit - renters, whose landlords would not have to pass on the tax, as well as business, which would not see its real estate and personal property taxes increased.

Abramo Ottolenghi, former member

Worthington Board of Education

Worthington

Publication#W\ P}P# 101. San Antonio Express-News"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/26/98; Edition: Metro; Section: Editorial; Page 02G

Headline#\ P}P# Affirmative action need starts earlyHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Veronica Flores

Foes of affirmative action in higher education should get to know a little girl I'll call Lisa. The grade-schooler, Hispanic and from a poor family, attends classes in an inner-city public school and her future is anything but bright.

Hers is the story seldom heard when talk turns to affirmative action.

Lisa is the symbol of an uneven playing field. For affirmative action opponents, Lisa's

story isn't even on their radar. But if they want to eliminate the need for affirmative action programs, it should be.

Her lessons in various subjects regularly consist of a teacher handing out copies of a page from a workbook. Students complete the sheet and turn it in at the end of class. No more, no less, as if a teacher could do any less. Lisa will be lucky if she is motivated enough to make it through high school.

It would be an overly broad generalization to say all inner-city public schools in Texas operate this way. Most do the best they can. A few shine. But more than 30 years after schools were desegregated and affluent folks, then mostly Anglos but today a rainbow of hues, took their money and their children to the suburbs, students in the inner city still are in poorly funded, segregated campuses.

Observers often point to the disparities that remain between the quality of education offered in such school districts as Edgewood and Alamo Heights. The respectively poor and rich systems have come to exemplify the gaps in public education.

Money buys good teachers, nice buildings, good books and equipment. And if you think the latter three have nothing to do with a student's ability to do well in school, try sitting in class with rusty science equipment while water drips on your head.

What does any of this have to do with affirmative action?

It's the front end of the school bus - arguably, the most critical part - that those who are so quick to kill affirmative action in higher education don't consider. They don't make the connection between the quality of public education and a child's readiness for college. The state attorney general's office made the connection when it argued the Hopwood case. But the ruling of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals indicates the judges didn't get it.

The architects of affirmative action in higher education, a patronizing lot who meant well, didn't think of it either. Had they, public education in this entire nation would be in less of a sorry state and there would be less need for race-based solutions.

Remedies now come too late for the many generations that have fallen through the cracks of public education in this state. And it's almost too late for Lisa. But Latino children soon will be the majority in the state's public schools, together with black children making up a majority minority. Will we wait until it's too late for them?

Publication#W\ P}P# 102. Philadelphia Inquirer"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# The threat to take over Philadelphia's schools Headline #:\ P}P#

I really hope Gov. Ridge follows through and takes over Philadelphia's public schools (Inquirer, April 22).

While the magnet schools are terrific, the pathetic elementary schools keep pushing a large portion of the middle class " those who cannot afford two, three or more private-school tuitions " right out into the suburbs.

This exodus had slowed for several years, but now that the economic expansion has finally reached the mid-Atlantic region, families are seizing the chance to sell their houses and get out. Friend after friend has told me this spring that their house is on the market.

Mayor Rendell has squandered the opportunity to restructure the city in a way that will attract " not repel " taxpaying middle-class residents. Without school vouchers to offer real educational opportunities, and with nothing but pennies cut from the wage tax, the financial penalties on middle-class families are far too great for any but the uppermost few to bear.

When will we stop pushing our last hope out of town?

Michael Woods

Philadelphia

From the outset, it was no secret that the "Children Achieving" plan of Philadelphia School Superintendent David Hornbeck was going to be expensive. But those in power over Hornbeck have tied his hands. They've given him a job to do, but not enough money to do it. Now they plan on stripping away his authority as we all (Inquirer, April 22). I'm very surprised he hasn't walked away in disgust.

Yes, Children Achieving is an expensive plan, but it is obvious that the old way wasn't working. The state has wasted so much money in the past, why not give Hornbeck enough money to implement his plan and see what happens? Give him enough rope to hang himself, or give him the chance to fail. I have a feeling we will all be pleasantly surprised.

Our superintendent came into his position with some excellent ideas, and he hasn't been allowed to put many of them into action. If things stay the same, how does anyone expect anything to ever change?

My son attends first grade at Thomas Holme Elementary. I volunteer in his classroom as often as I can. I see firsthand that, contrary to what State House Majority Leader John M. Perzel (R., Phila.) says, the Philadelphia School District is not "a total failure." The teachers and staff at my son's school are very dedicated, but their efforts would be more successful with more money available. Cutting down the class size alone would give all children a tremendous advantage.

Give David Hornbeck a chance before he quits and walks away.

Laura Brook Neubauer

Philadelphia

Czechs, Poles deserve NATO As a Czech, I am horrified by the voices against the planned expansion of NATO (Inquirer, April 20).

The critics demonstrate very little political wisdom and a lack of knowledge of the political and historical development and the importance of the Central European region. Some are incredibly nearsighted, lacking sensitivity and psychological understanding of the situation.

Ted Galen Carpenter, of the Cato Institute, worries that U.S. troops might very well die defending those countries (presently, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary). Isn't it clear that troops of those countries might very well die defending other NATO countries, including ours? Fighting against Nazi Germany, didn't Czech fliers fight for Great Britain, didn't Czech and Polish soldiers die in the battles of World War II, while some countries who are already members of NATO did very little or nothing for the defense of Europe?

Czechoslovakia was created with the considerable help and understanding of President Woodrow Wilson, and it developed into one of the more splendid democracies between the wars. It was let down by the Munich agreement and by the agreement of Yalta, both without the presence of any Czech representative. It was let down in 1968 when the Russians invaded the country that started to be too independent under the leadership of Alexander Dubcek.

Which European countries have shown as much dedication to defending democracy and freedom as the Czechs and the Poles? They were already accepted by all NATO members except us. Should we be the only ones rejecting them? Should we be again responsible for

a divided Europe?

J. Klugar

Lansdale

Judging Paul Robeson Frank Tempone (Letters, April 24) chooses to compare Nazism to communism in what appears to be an attempt to forgive the way this country treated one of its greatest men, Paul Robeson.

To paraphrase Tempone, let us imagine an American entertainer in the 1930s who, despite being an all-American end in football, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the valedictorian of his class at Rutgers University, and earning a law degree from Columbia University, is still treated as a second-class citizen in his own country. Imagine turning to the entertainment field largely because of racism in the first place. One of the final insults he endured as a lawyer was from a stenographer who refused to take dictation from a black man.

It's very easy to say now, after the demise of the Soviet Union, that Paul Robeson was wrong about communism. But it's also very understandable why a man such as he would find Marxism appealing. Its rhetoric was full of ideas about equality, and it held the working man in high esteem. We must not forget that in the 1930s this country was in the midst of a terrible Depression. Robeson was not alone in thinking that maybe Karl Marx had a better way.

But it was not until 1950 that our government chose to revoke his passport, crippling his career as a performer. Contrary to Tempone's opinion, that indeed is attributable to McCarthyism.

Tempone ends his letter saying that a man must be judged by all his actions. I agree. But if we are to do so, let's not pretend that being a communist is the

moral equivalent of being
a Nazi.

Stephen C. Prentice

West Chester Overhaul campaign financing While it is refreshing to see someone actually attempting to address the need for judicial campaign-finance reform (Inquirer, April 16), it is a shame that the approach is so limited and that a glaring loophole exists in the proposal.

In terms of the report submitted by the special Supreme Court panel, the proposed monetary limits should also apply to the candidates and their families. If you do not apply the monetary limits to them, an uneven playing field will continue to exist. The wealthy will continue to have a distinct advantage in judicial elections. The special panel should close this loophole immediately.

The fact that the proposals are limited to judicial elections is understandable, considering the lack of power inherent in the Supreme Court on this issue. Nevertheless, it would seem that the first step should be to address the need for campaign-finance reform in all statewide elections. The members of the Pennsylvania judiciary are the least inclined to abuse their power as elected officials. Why focus on them first?

The current system of financing elections must be scrapped. Mere tinkering will not suffice in addressing the problem. The public rightfully believes that politicians are bought and sold by the wealthy and by special-interest groups. It is indeed sad " but perfectly understandable " that our citizens are disillusioned, frustrated and downright apathetic regarding elections.

To restore the citizens' faith and continued participation in the democratic process, we must insist on fundamental changes in the way we finance the election of all public officials.

P. Andrew Schaum

West Chester

A day to pray All through history, America has turned to God in times of conflict and in peace. Yet we are systematically removing mention of God from our children's training. What can bring America back? Prayer can.

The first Thursday of May is the National Day of Prayer. Designated since 1988, this is a great opportunity for all Americans to unite in recognition of our incredible need for God. The theme for May 7 is "America, Return to God." It is only through the working of God within our society, our laws, our judgments and our hearts that America will know the healing of God's power upon our land.

William H. Woehr

Warrington

Arts center parking plan I agree that 150 parking spaces under the Regional Performing Arts Center is not adequate for the needs of the public (Letters, April 21).

I propose the following: Demolish the woefully inadequate Food Rite market on the southwest corner of 15th and Spruce Streets, along with the three other stores: a Chinese restaurant, a vacant store and a pizza restaurant. Build a multi-level parking garage on this site with an enclosed bridge over 15th Street, directly connecting to the Performing Arts Center. Build a high-quality supermarket on the current parking lot on the northwest corner. The lot is large enough to include parking for supermarket patrons.

This proposal offers solutions to three problems: It provides parking for the Regional Performing Arts Center. It provides all-weather access to the center. And it provides a much-needed modern

supermarket for those of us who live in the area.

William A. Loeb

Philadelphian

Publication#W\ P}P# 103. Orlando Sentinel"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/27/98; Edition: METRO; Section: EDITORIAL; Page A11

Headline#\ P}P# 15 YEARS LATER, A NATION AND ITS SCHOOLS STILL AT RISKHeadline

#:\ P}P#

By Tait Trussell

Special to The Sentinel

'Our nation is at risk.'

Those were the first words of a historic educational document that jarred the country 15

April ago. Tragically, we are still at risk, as shoddy academic records keep piling up in Central Florida and elsewhere in the United States.

The "A Nation at Risk" report, subtitled "An Imperative for Educational Reform," was issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education on April 26, 1983.

Its purpose was to "define the problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions."

"Children born today," stated the report, "can expect to graduate from high school in the year 2000." But, alas, one-third of the class of 2000 in Central Florida is on the brink of failure, the latest grades show. New state standards applied to freshmen for the first time last year dictate that they must have a C average to graduate from high school.

In Lake County, for example, 40 percent of freshmen had D or F averages. A recent poll of Leesburg High School students found that many of them expected school to be "easy" and "fun." Alternative schools have been started to help some of the at-risk kids. Some Orange County students receive remedial help with reading when they enter high school.

Money spent per pupil nationally has more than doubled since the "At Risk" report was issued. And the Florida Legislature has just approved new spending, averaging \$197 a year more per student.

But the real problem in public education has not been financial as much as structural, with too few effective incentives and expectations for improved student performance, according to most researchers.

The report of 15 years ago, focusing on high schools, declared dramatically:

"The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity. ... If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

Among other findings, the report stated, "About 13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youth may run as high as 40 percent."

The report called for greatly strengthened graduation requirements, including four years of English, three of mathematics and three of science and social studies; a longer school day or school year; school discipline "consistently enforced"; more qualified teachers paid on the basis of performance; and minimal federal "intrusiveness."

It also warned parents that their children should be "of strong character and well educated in the use of language, science, and mathematics" and "disciplined work" with "more demanding courses."

To students, the report stated: "Even with your parents' best example and your teachers'

best efforts, in the end it is your work that determines how much and how well you learn."

But many of the recommendations have been brushed aside.

How has the nation progressed educationally during these past 15 years?

Not just Florida is lagging academically. A 21-nation survey, the Third International Mathematics and Science Study released a few weeks ago, showed that high-school seniors throughout America ranked near the bottom in international test scores in advanced mathematics and physics.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 17-year-olds were reading slightly more at home than in years past but also were spending more time in front of the television. Their proficiency in mathematics and science had increased a bit. But a gap still remained between whites and minorities.

The typical school year is still 180 days. Half of all 12th-graders still take no science courses. One of three takes no math during the final year of high school.

The head of the National Education Association, the country's largest teachers union, Bob Chase, complained that teachers' salaries are too low to attract qualified instructors. So, 28 percent of high-school math teachers and 55 percent of physics teachers don't have college degrees in the subject they teach.

Meanwhile, reportedly 500,000 jobs in the information-sciences field are open in California's Silicon Valley, home of many computer and software manufacturers. Some 23 percent of the workers there now are immigrants, largely Asians whose culture gives a high priority to education and disciplined learning, which America has yet to do.

Headline#\ P}P# BILINGUAL EDUCATION
TRANSLATES INTO A REAL PLUS
FOR EVERYONEHe

adline #:\ P}P#

By Myriam Marquez
of The Sentinel Staff

Veronica Garcia has to make a decision soon. Should she go to Emory University in Atlanta or the University of Florida?

The 23-year-old University of Central Florida graduate applied and has been accepted to attend medical school at Emory University, UF and more. Not bad for a kid with dirt-poor roots, the product of her farmworker-parents' labor of love.

"I couldn't have gotten where I am without the bilingual-education program," Garcia told me recently. She began the bilingual program in second grade at Apopka Elementary School. Her Mexican parents had just moved to the area. By fifth grade Garcia was totally fluent in English and a great academic performer.

"A child needs to learn certain material by a certain age," she said. "If I had not had the help of the bilingual program, I would have fallen behind in science and math and social studies."

Blecks St. Hubert also praises the bilingual program that helped him succeed in school. He recently was elected a student-government senator at Valencia Community College, the first Haitian student to win such a prestigious seat.

Garcia and St. Hubert went before the Orange County School Board earlier this month to get a commitment from the superintendent and school-board members that they won't dismantle bilingual-education programs. The board's chambers were packed with people whose children are being taught English as a second language.

Sister Ann Kendrick and Sister Cathy Gorman, two Catholic nuns who run the Office for Farmworker Ministry in Apopka, wanted the board to see how much those pa

rents care
about their kids getting ahead in school.

For months there had been rumors that Superintendent Dennis Smith was being pressured by some school principals and administrators to give up on bilingual programs. Back in February, Smith told me that he supports bilingual education, so long as there are clear goals and timetables to ensure that children are learning English.

He figured that the rumors took off because he used to be in the school system in California, where a voter referendum may do away with bilingual education.

California's bilingual programs are a mixed bag. Some work well for kids, many of whom move back and forth between Mexico and California. But lots of those programs are so focused on keeping kids fluent in Spanish that the children aren't progressing in English.

That's not the type of program that helps children succeed in this country, and Sisters Ann and Cathy made that clear to the board, too.

Nonetheless, the sisters were worried. There had been a proposed name change for the bilingual program, which Sister Ann said could signal "subtle shifts in value or direction" of the program.

Orange County School Board member Linda Sutherland promised that the school system here is committed to expanding bilingual education - not gutting it. "I'm such a strong believer that all children should be bilingual, which is why we're seeding the idea of having more elementary schools involved in second-language acquisition for English-speaking students."

Sutherland is right on the mark. We know from child-development research that young children can learn many languages simultaneously and that it helps children better

understand other disciplines, such as math and science.

This is a wonderful nation. A strong nation. There's no reason American children of every background can't be learning more than one language. It can only help keep America strong.
Ask Veronica Garcia.

Publication#W\ P}P# 105. Chicago Tribune"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/27/98; Edition: NORTH SPORTS FINAL; N; Section: COMMENTARY; Page 14

Headline#\ P}P# MINORITY WOES AT UIC
MEDICAL SCHOOLHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Marsha Brazley M.D.
Secretary, Cook County Physicians Association.

Whoever wrote the editorial "Biting the hand that feeds them" (March 7) obviously is unaware of what is being dished out to "them" in the College of Medicine and other HealthScience Colleges at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The editorial found it ironic that a dozen past and present minority medical students have filed complaints of racial discrimination.

What is ironic is that after being sued year after year for unfair practices, the UIC administration has not corrected its policies. And that the university applied for additional resources to alleviate the underrepresentation of minorities in the health professions and now doesn't know how to carry out that mandate.

The UIC does enroll more minority students than any other public medical school in the state, but it also enrolls more whites than any other public medical school.

UIC's obligation to deal with the under-representation of minorities in the health profession is the result of a contractual obligation that the university sought through the Illinois State Board of Higher Education. In essence the university has said to the taxpayers, "Give us the money and we will effectively and efficiently perform the duty of improving the representation of African-American, Latino and Native Americans in the health field."

UIC received upwards of \$1.2 million a year in state and federal funds to rectify ethnic disparity in the health-service profession. We don't have adequate documentation that this money was utilized to help those students for whom it was intended. In fact, more than \$10 million disbursed to the university and its six health-professions colleges has not been accounted for. A good question would be, "Where is the money, and how was it spent"?

The editorial stated that the college is mentoring minorities, but who are these mentors? Are they Latino and African-American faculty? Are they knowledgeable about the plight of blacks in a white-dominated society?

I doubt that's the case when there are fewer than three tenured black and Latino salaried faculty among the approximately 300 tenured faculty in the College of Medicine. I doubt that with the number of tenured-track minority faculty forced out of this public institution annually there would be enough left to mentor that 25 percent of the student body to whom you refer.

UIC has many serious problems related to issues concerning minority medical students, minority faculty/staff and accountability of funds mandated to the institution for the Urban Health Program. The issues raised by the students and staff should prompt UIC to evaluate its existing policies and procedures. Those UIC administrators responsible for the current situation should be replaced.

Publication#W\ P}P# 106. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/28/98;
Edition: FINAL; Section: OP-ED; Page A17

Headline#\ P}P# The Educational Importance of RaceHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Lee Bollinger and Nancy Cantor
Until fairly recently, our society enforced the separation of the races in virtually all important areas " social, economic, political and educational. As a result of racial isolation, African Americans and white Americans often learned about each other by relying on unfounded images and stereotypes. Demeaning and hurtful images proliferated in the media, in textbooks, in movies and on radio

and television. There were no countervailing institutions to perform the function of education and understanding. By design, we did not know each other.

In the decades since *Brown vs. Board of Education*, institutions of higher education have strongly influenced a change in this design. They have opened their doors and aggressively recruited minority students "African Americans at first, and then other underrepresented minority students, to create remarkably diverse student bodies.

TD Today, with a campus where nearly 14 percent of students are African American, Hispanic and Native American, the University of Michigan is the target of a lawsuit that seeks to prohibit us from ensuring a racially diverse student body by using race as one factor in admissions. The suit, brought by the Center for Individual Rights (CIR), is at the center of a great public debate over one of the most important issues of our time: how our governing constitutional principles permit us to use race to achieve a truly integrated society.

Virtually all institutions with selective admissions consider race when they choose among applicants who experience shows can thrive in and contribute to a more vital educational environment. This practice was explicitly upheld against constitutional challenge in the Supreme Court's 1978 decision in *University of California v. Bakke* " and wisely so, for now that we have the design in place, we have begun to know each other.

Institutions of higher education have pursued a conception of education that emphasizes the joys of variety and the benefits of engaging those with different experiences and perspectives. This means we ask of every applicant: What will you contribute to the whole, not where do you stand in splendid, isolated comparison with everyone else?

A first-class education is one that creates the opportunity for students, expecting differences, to learn instead of similarities. Likewise, encountering differences rather than one's mirror image, is an essential part of a good education

n. Race is educationally important for all students, because understanding race in America is a powerful metaphor for crossing sensibilities of all kinds.

Our public universities have always cast a wide net in admitting students. Selecting a student body is not a simple matter of drawing a line through some rank ordering of individual applications. Universities have been especially watchful for merit wherever it is found. They have been alert to the potential of those who may not have had full opportunity to manifest their talent (immigrants, for example), those who have served the country (e.g., veterans), or who have unconventional talents. They must be responsive to the communities from which they derive (e.g., state residents) as well as to the nation itself (through geographic diversity).

The CIR lawsuit presumes that admissions is an atomized process in which each applicant is evaluated according to his or her "qualifications" and measured against every other applicant. They offer up grids that have been used in our undergraduate admissions process. These grids assign different weights to a variety of factors "academic grade-point average, test scores, alumni relationship, race, residency and so on" that help us make an admissions decision. Different outcomes will follow, depending on any variety of factors. CIR's real argument is not with our use of these grids. There are no grids in the law school process, yet CIR challenges our use of race there, too. Rather, to CIR the fact that race is one of these factors at all is what makes the process unacceptable.

CIR's challenge to "affirmative action" in higher education is a challenge to our philosophy of education and to the historical purposes of our great public universities. Implicit in its claim is a presumption that we admit some students who are not qualified. Let us be clear: All students admitted to the University of Michigan meet threshold requirements establishing that they are fully qualified to do the work of a demanding undergraduate

program. That being the case,
surely CIR's objectives rest on an oversimplified idea of what
is, in fact, a complex process of selecting students, as well as on a constricted view of the
role of universities and the nature of merit. They also rest on a profoundly mistaken
conception of education and the role of race in a modern education.

CIR seeks to eliminate all consideration of race in college admissions. If it is successful,
as it was in an earlier lawsuit against the University of Texas, we will in all probability soon
return to a largely segregated system "de facto" rather than de jure, to be sure, but segregated nonetheless. The University of
Texas Law School now has only four entering African American students, where
former classes had more than 30. We are particularly alarmed at the significant
drop in minority admissions at the most selective institutions in the University
of California system, which operates under an affirmative action ban.

The country cannot afford to deprive institutions of higher education of the ability to
educate generations of young Americans "minority and nonminority" in an environment
that enables all to flourish, and understand each other, in a truly integrated society.

Lee Bollinger is president of the University of Michigan. Nancy Cantor is the university's
provost.

Publication#W\ P\# 107. The New York Times "Publication" #: \ P\# 04/28/98
Section: Editorial Desk; Section A; Page 18, Column 6

Headline#\ P\# After-School Help
Headline #: \ P\#
To the Editor:

An April 23 news article on Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew's proposal to require
New York City schoolchildren to meet minimum academic standards by fourth and sixth
grades notes that outside assistance will be needed to achieve this goal.

TD Such assistance is already in place in 66 public elementary schools through the
Y.M.C.A.'s Virtual Y after-school literacy program. Every day some 3,000
second, third and

fourth graders stay after school to concentrate on reading and getting homework help.

Sponsors of Virtual Y sites, primarily large corporations, will enable us to establish the program in 200 schools " one-third of elementary schools " by 2000, strong testimony to the business community's commitment to boost scholastic achievement in New York.

BENJAMIN R. JACOBSON

Chairman, Y.M.C.A. of Greater N.Y.

New York, April 24, 1998

Publication#W\ P}P# 108. The Wall Street Journal"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/28/98
Headline#\ P}P# Let Those Who Can, TeachHeadline #:\ P}P#
By Paula Sullivan

Many people rightly perceive that not enough public-school teachers know their subject well. Nationwide, 36% of teachers didn't major, or even minor, in the subject they teach. In my state of California, half the math teachers and more than half the physical science teachers did not even minor in their subject in college. Someone with a teaching credential in physical education can teach math and science " but not someone with a graduate degree in math or science.

The rule in most states is that only people certified by teachers colleges are allowed to teach in elementary and secondary schools. A teaching credential is considered more important than knowledge of an academic subject, with a predictable result: The academic quality of teaching is poor. So now, in order to raise academic standards, and to meet a projected shortage of teachers in the next decade, President Clinton and some congressmen propose to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on grants and scholarships for teachers colleges. TD But academic standards for teacher credentialing are not being raised. On the contrary.

A few years ago, California, which often sets trends for the rest of the nation, removed algebra and geometry from the math section of its written CBEST exam, the final step for a multiple-subject teaching credential, after a lawsuit was filed on behalf of minorities, who disproportionately failed the math section. Even before the state scrapped algebra and geometry, would-be teachers were already allowed to retake the exam an unlimited number of times and to spend the whole three hours of the exam on sections they had previously failed.

Rather than continue to pour money into the teachers colleges, the government ought to recruit from the large surplus of people with graduate degrees in academic fields. There are so many unemployed and underemployed holders of master's degrees or doctorates, whose dream was to teach. Colleges now exploit them as cheap labor, hiring them as "adjunct" instructors "low-paid part-timers with no job security or health benefits. They now make up 42% of all college faculty, up from 25% two decades ago. Many highly educated people reluctantly leave teaching in order to earn a decent living.

Adjunct instructors often end up teaching remedial courses. I have a Harvard doctorate in English and teach remedial reading to unprepared community-college students "some of whom plan to transfer to a nearby school of education and become teachers. Adjunct instructors get experience teaching high-school-level and even elementary-school-level courses in reading, writing and math to college students. Yet they are not allowed to teach the same subjects in a public school.

Why not allow people with master's degrees or doctorates to teach courses in their fields in the public schools? Such people have the advantage of being academic achievers who know their material. And teaching itself is not the dauntingly complex job that professional educators would have us believe. Indeed, I suspect that the heavy use of jargon and acronyms by professional educators serves

no other purpose than to snow the general public. One touted pedagogical technique is "sustained silent reading," which, in plain English, simply means having the students read quietly to themselves for a while. "Computer-aided instruction" and the "whole language" approach to reading have conveniently made it unnecessary for English teachers to know grammar.

I inquired of the three schools of education in my area and learned that to get a teaching credential I would need to take a year of education courses followed by a year of practice teaching, at a cost of about \$10,000. Although I have done five years of graduate work in English and three years of full-time teaching at a college, the education bureaucracy considers me no more qualified than someone with a freshly minted bachelor's degree.

Mine is a view you don't often hear, for journalists and policy makers usually rely on education "experts" who represent the schools of education and teachers unions and thus have a vested interest in the current system. Teachers unions understand supply and demand and are all too happy to keep in place the teaching profession's rigid barriers to entry. Schools of education want to keep the profitable business of churning out new teachers to fill a shortage created in part by their monopoly on teacher certification.

Many budget-conscious school superintendents, too, prefer inexperienced new recruits from teachers colleges because they are malleable and start out at the bottom of the pay scale. But often the taxpayers have spent a lot of money on scholarships to train them.

The interests of the public, however, diverge from those of the education bureaucracy. Students taught where the teaching credential is not required "in private schools, parochial schools and homes" score higher on standardized tests. The impetus behind the school-voucher movement is largely a desire for better teachers. Meanwhile, there is a wealth of academic talent waiting to be tapped by

y our public schools.

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Ms. Sullivan is an adjunct instructor of English at Kings River Community College in Reedley, Calif.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 109. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/26/98Section: New Jersey Weekly Desk; Section 14NJ; Page 1, Column 3

Headline#\ P}P# Be Careful What You Wish ForHeadline #:\ P}P#
By IVER PETERSON

"IT'S in Spanish," the mother of the brilliant daughter decided at last. She held the letter up to the light in the kid's bathroom, which has the brightest lights in the house, teen-agers being pretty unafraid of what the mirror shows. The letter was unopened, of course, and addressed to the daughter, and its return address mentioned an important college and the words Office of Admissions. Reading a folded letter inside an envelope is hard, but the mother is good at it, except when the typing seems to spell "Ysidro esta noche." Of course, the letter turned out to be in English, and to say something else.

This is supposed to be a time of high tension for high school seniors as they await final word from the colleges. Each day they scan the mail on the kitchen counter with dread; they create telephone trees to spread the news of who got in where, and who did not, and, as good news and bad arrives, they must continually adjust their dreams and their priorities: if not this one, then that one? No wonder they become testy.

But who worries about the parents? They know from personal experience that even the most disappointed Harvard applicant ends up loving her days at Duke or Pittzer or Penn State. They know that however bad the disappointment, the worst thing facing seniors is the prospect of moving to a place where they can hang with their friends 24 hours a day, not just the 16 hours or so allotted in high school. At 18, being rejected by your first choice hardly qualifies as a life-cha

ging experience.

But for parents, like those peering at someone else's mail in the bathroom, the early-April wait is much more fraught. The most competitive colleges are also the most expensive, as a rule, so the letters in the creamiest envelopes with the most subtly embossed seals always come as a two-edged sword: acceptance and pride with penury, or rejection and a chance to retire by 75.

The parents believe a good college may at least buy her a good life, or at least good choices, and happiness. And they labor under the yoke of pride. A lifetime spent extolling first words, first walks, first violin in school orchestra, first in her class, or almost, naturally accustoms a parent to expect the right some day to drop one of those heavy, conversation-stopping names at parties. Something like "Oh, she's just fine. She's a freshman at" And here we do not mention names because that particular envelope has not yet arrived.

Worst of all, parents lose a child after high school, and so they pull against her yearning for freedom with the hope that she will choose a school within a reasonable distance " something, say, no farther than she can go in a single day on Amtrak.

So the parents, too, scan the mail. They quickly learn that admissions letters come in two sizes, the good size and the bad size. The good size is as big as a sales folder for a retirement community, and it removes any suspense by carrying little stickers that say "You're invited!" or "California, here you come, " or, at the classier places, just the word "Yes!" Acceptance packages have to be fat because they contain not only a letter of acceptance but also several pamphlets that emphasize the campus's quality as a resort hotel, and a second letter telling the parents they don't qualify for financial aid.

Bad-news letters come in machine-stuffed envelopes and are no thicker than an overdraft

notice. They begin, "We are sorry to inform you," or "After much consideration." They could be gibberish after those words, for no one has the heart to read further.

But wait. Not all thin letters are all bad, and this is the reason conscientious parents sometimes casually hold their children's mail up to the light. A small New England school got everyone's hearts in their throats three times with skinny envelopes from the admissions office that contained requests for more information "Uncle Hjalmar's Norwegian W-2 from 1893, for example. Two more thin letters acknowledged receipt of the requested documents, and a third assured the brilliant daughter that her application was complete and that she would be hearing soon.

To prolong the agony, intermediate letters inform the daughter that she is not in or out but on a waiting list, kept in line but at the back of it, and given a chance at a space someone else doesn't want. By this time, colleges that have said yes are trying to force an answer, calling up and leaving an 800 number for the daughter to call. One sent a T-shirt; another is offering a summer research job paying \$1,000. For the brilliant daughter, this only complicates the calculus of potential: "If not this one, that one, unless the one with a waiting list comes through."

Maybe it is easier for the parents after all. They just watch and wish, "Not too far away!"

Publication#W\ P}P# 110. Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 27, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Back to basics in the schools? Then start with children's health
th Headline #:\ P}P#
By Eva Marx and Daphne Northrop

Last month's wake-up call about our public schools was the finding that math and science scores of US students were significantly lower than the scores of students in 14 other

industrialized countries. President Clinton's response: "We need smaller classes, better teaching, higher standards, more discipline, greater accountability." Agreed. But what's missing?

Unless schools address students' health - their physical, mental, social well-being - as directly as they do math, reading, and science, even the most brilliant curriculum or discipline plan will fail. If we expect students to succeed, schools must help them surmount the problems that interfere with learning - such as unsafe schools, distractions caused by family problems, and chronic, untreated health problems. When schools do not deal with children's health by design, they deal with it by default.

One child in four - 10 million - is at risk of failure in school because of social, emotional, or health handicaps, according to a leading researcher, Joy Dryfoos. Education reform has fallen far short of our expectations and the needs of children. It is likely to continue to do so unless educators directly address the causes of underachievement, and poor health is clearly one. Continued inattention to this most basic of basics will render highly publicized reforms largely ineffective.

In some schools, dropout, depression, chronic infections, alcohol and drug abuse, violence, and adolescent pregnancy are rampant. In others they simmer beneath the surface. Wherever they emerge, they can disrupt individual lives, classrooms, and the overall school environment.

Clearly schools did not create these problems, and ultimately they alone will not be able to solve them. But many schools are working with their communities to consolidate and maximize their resources in ways that place students' overall well-being at the heart of education decisions. For example, an elementary school in Louisiana houses a family resource center where a pediatrician holds office hours, parents attend literacy classes, and a counselor offers group sessions.

ns for student-aged mothers.

In Rhode Island, a team of teachers, administrators, parents, and counselors meets regularly in an elementary school to devise solutions to problems that are interfering with students' school success. In districts around the country, classroom instruction on health is reinforced by activities in gym class, the cafeteria, or by school policies on smoking and violence.

These initiatives, sometimes called "school health programs," are much more than "AIDS Day" or essay contests on the perils of drug abuse. They feature classroom activities, psychological and health services, and an improved school climate that boost children's health so that they can succeed in school. What is novel about these programs is not their individual components - many schools already have much of this in place - but their quality, continuity, and coordinated approach.

Schools that directly address health reap great financial and health rewards: improved attendance, fewer disciplinary problems, decreased use of drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes, reduced suspension and dropout rates, improved test scores, and reduced teacher absence and frustration.

Public support is strong for schools to take this approach. A Gallup poll reported in 1994 that most parents, students, and school administrators believe that health education is at least as important as other subjects taught in school. In a Harris survey, 80 percent favored providing health services in school.

Report after report, from the World Health Organization, the federal government, foundations, local organizations, emphasize that an underpinning of school performance is emotional, social and physical health. This premise is reflected in numerous national initiatives such as Healthy People 2000 and Education Goals 2000. In fact, the first

education goal is that children "start school ready to learn." Sadly, the admonition of the National Commission on the Role of the School and the Community in Improving Adolescent Health in 1990 still needs to be repeated today: "Efforts to improve school performance that ignore health are ill-conceived, as are health improvement efforts that ignore education."

Eva Marx and Daphne Northrop are co-editors of "Health is Academic: A Guide to

Coordinated School Health Programs."

Publication#W\ P}P#111. San Francisco Chronicle"Publication"#: \ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P#Clinton Takes Stand Against Prop. 227Headline#\ P}P#NO ONE CAN accuse President Clinton of jumping on the bandwagon with his decision on this week to campaign against California's Proposition 227.

The initiative, which would severely curtail bilingual education programs, is supported by about 60 percent of the state's voters " including about half of Latino voters, according to most polls.

Silicon Valley businessman Ron Unz, who sponsored the initiative, argues that students who know little or no English would be better served by putting them in a one-year intensive English program. Unz comes to the debate well armed with anecdotes about the failures of bilingual education, including cases in which native-language classes became a long-term remedial track for too many immigrant children.

Frankly, the opposition to Proposition 227 has not done a good job of countering the articulate Unz. The No on 227 campaign has not offered a clear alternative to the simplistic Unz initiative, and the status quo is difficult to defend.

So the Clinton administration's entry in the debate should help voters focus on potential consequences of the "one-size-fits-all" initiative. Administration officials not only came

out with a scathing analysis of what's wrong with the Unz initiative, they presented a more flexible alternative.

In coming out strongly against the measure yesterday, Clinton's Education Department provided the following for Californians to consider:

"The ``best research" available suggests that a one-year immersion program would be ``a major mistake," said acting Deputy Education Secretary Marshall Smith.

"The initiative may run afoul of federal civil rights laws, because U.S. court rulings have required schools to make accommodations for national-origin minority students with limited English proficiency.

"A more reasonable national goal -- not requirement -- would be a three-year limit on bilingual education.

"The Unz initiative is a direct attack on local control of education," Education Secretary Richard Riley said. Clinton, who was criticized for not campaigning actively against the anti-affirmative action Prop. 209 two years ago, should be prepared to personally engage in the 227 debate. The three main Democratic contenders for governor oppose 227, but Republican Dan Lungren has remained neutral. He needs to take a stand.

The president's participation should help raise the public's attention level on this critical education-policy issue.

Publication#W\ P}P# 112. Los Angeles Daily News"Publication" #: \ P}P# 04/24/98; Edition: VALLEY; Section: Editorial; Page N23

Headline#\ P}P# ROBBING FROM THE POORHeadline #: \ P}P#Subhead#\ P}P# NO ON PROPOSITION 223: A SCHOOL REDISTRIBUTION-OF-WEALTH MEASURESubhead#:\ P}P# Widespread public anger that bloated education bureaucracies are eating up too many dollars intended for classrooms propelled Proposition 223, which would impose rigid

spending limits on school administration.

Nicknamed 95/5, Proposition 223 would require every district to spend no more than 5 percent of its operating budget on administration. Districts would face severe penalties for failing to meet the 95 percent spending minimum for classrooms.

In principle, it sounds great. Bureaucracies shouldn't be bingeing on tax dollars meant for the students.

But this initiative would bludgeon the life out of local control while creating more bureaucracy in Sacramento to oversee it. It's a path we're not willing to take.

Written by the Los Angeles Unified School District's teacher's union, the initiative is meant to reduce administrative costs throughout the state by up to \$700 million.

The measure attacks a problem without offering real reforms. Supporters estimate roughly 40 school districts of the nearly 1,000 meet the 5 percent test.

Generally, it would hit small districts, which have far less flexibility, particularly hard.

And since it could force a shift from relatively efficient, centralized operations - in managing supplies and evaluating textbooks - to redundant school-site administration, it could actually produce more inefficiency.

But it would also take away the voice of parents and taxpayers at the local level. If voters want to reward superintendents who show leadership by paying more, or if parents feel greater administrative costs are justified to oversee a district, that's their right.

However, this bill would remove their voice and choice at the local level.

The measure also stipulates that "direct services to pupils" means immediate and

"unbrokered" services to school-site employees, such as training or professional development sessions or classes.

Critics argue that inserting "unbrokered" into the measure means districts no longer can contract outside for services. Supporters could offer no compelling reason to include the word in the measure.

Districts that fail to cut administrative costs are penalized up to \$175 per student. That could prove disastrous for smaller districts.

In addition, the measure offers no clear process of redistributing those fines back to the classroom. That means lawmakers in Sacramento could redirect funds to their districts that were out of compliance in the first place.

The bottom line is that Proposition 223 is a reverse Robin Hood measure, designed to rob from the poor, smaller districts to give to the rich, like LAUSD that can have far too many administrators and still come close to meeting the 95/5 ratio because they are so immense.

That's not reform. That's a travesty of justice.

PROP. 223 AT A GLANCE

Here is a summary of Proposition 223 on the June 2 state primary election ballot:

School administration spending limits: Proposition 223 would prohibit districts from spending more than 5 percent of funds from all sources for costs of general administration, instructional resources supervision and supervision of instruction, beginning fiscal year 1999-2000.

It requires the State Board of Education to fine districts failing to comply.

The Daily News recommends: Non

Publication#W\ P}P# 113. The (Jacksonville) Florida Times-Union"Publication" #
:\ P}P# 04/25/98; Edition: CITY; Section: NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL; Page A-12

Headline#\ P}P# Dogless in D.C.Headline #:\ P}P#
Talking heads on television breathlessly inform us that because the Democrati
c president
and Republican congressional leaders disagree on education they may
not "do anything" in
this session.

They say that like it is a bad thing.

Actually, such a standoff could be a major benefit to the nation's schoolchildr
en.

Education is a local problem. In Jacksonville and communities all across the na
tion,
parents, teachers and administrators are working hard to improve the publ
ic schools.

Washington, as they say in the South, doesn't have a dog in this fight.

If Congress does "do something," the U.S. Senate's approval of tax-free savings
accounts
for school expenses is a good start.

Before approving the bill by Sen. Paul Coverdell, R-Ga., the Senate voted to re
ject
President Clinton's proposal to federally subsidize local school construct
ion, despite a a non
sequitor appeal by Clinton for Congress to be "as generous
with schools as it is with favorite
highway projects."

Republicans correctly noted that school construction is a local issue.

Supporters had promoted the savings bill as a modest way to help working and po
or families meet school expenses and, if necessary, find alternatives to dangero
us or
substandard public schools.

The bill, which must be reconciled with a House-passed version, carries amendme

nts
opposing new federal math and reading tests and curbing the Education Department's
control of some school spending programs.

"What we have here is a choice between the status quo and people who want to empower
parents to have more of a role in the education of their children," said
Sen. Judd Gregg,
R-N.H.

The usual liberal hyperbole followed. "What this means is the death of public education,"
said Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota. Clinton said the
bill "weakens our
commitment to making America's schools the best they can be
in the 21st century."

To the contrary, forcing the public school monopoly to compete and improve probably
is the best thing that has happened to it in decades. And Clinton's comment merely reflects
his view that for every problem in society, there is a solution in Washington.

The bill would allow tax-free savings accounts to be created for children, starting at birth.
Up to \$2,000 a year could be contributed, with money coming from
relatives, employers,
foundations or other sources.

The interest and withdrawals would be tax-free, and the money could be used for
various
expenses from kindergarten through college, including tuition at private or religious schools.
The bill will save taxpayers an estimated \$1.6 billion
over 10 years.

In addition to creating the accounts, the bill would expand popular exemptions
for
employer-provided educational assistance, make savings for state prepaid tuition plans
tax-free and offer some aid for school construction.

Some Democrats said the accounts were worth trying, to give some life to a tired system

providing weak academic performance and limited choices.

"There is a sufficient amount of good in this bill," said Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla., who supported the bill.

Perhaps the most enlightened view was voiced by veteran Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W. Va.

"I think it is a new approach, and it's entitled to be tried, to be tested," Byrd said. "Public education is going to have to shape up, or else public support for it is going to completely erode."

Precisely.

By returning power to states, school boards and parents, and denying power to a centralized bureaucracy that has failed to use it wisely, the Senate acted responsibly and in timely fashion. Let's hope the House follows suit.

Publication#W\ P}P# 114. The Raleigh News & Observer"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04 /26/98; Edition: Final; Section: Editorial/Opinion; Page A28

Headline#\ P}P# Campus cast-offs?Headline #:\ P}P#

A new report from a well-regarded think-tank minces no words in taking research universities to task for the shabby way they tend to treat undergraduates. According to the Carnegie Foundation, most such institutions entice prospective students with promises of studying with an all-star faculty and tapping into a wealth of academic resources. But when they arrive on campus, students may be left to flounder, taught by ill-prepared teaching assistants and left out of research activities. Many earn their degrees haphazardly and without gaining the skills or experiences they need for work or further academic pursuits.

That blunt message wasn't a complete shock in the Triangle, whose three major research institutions may be ahead of the curve in revamping how they serve undergraduate students.

For example:

- Since 1995 students entering N.C. State University have had the option of attending First Year College, a program that prepares them to take advantage of all the university has to offer. Faculty also encourage students' independent research, the results of which are presented at symposia such as one held just a few days ago.

- Each year Duke admits 450 freshmen to its first-semester FOCUS program, consisting of courses arranged around themes that vary from year to year. The program stresses learning in small groups and interdisciplinary study. In addition, Duke's "Writing Across the University" curriculum responds to one of the major problems identified in the Carnegie report: the need for students in all subject areas to be proficient in written and oral communication.

- As part of an effort to improve its intellectual climate, UNC-Chapel Hill is beefing up academic advising so that undergraduates build close relationships with faculty mentors from their first days on campus. A new series of small seminars for freshmen is also in the works.

The Carnegie scholars would no doubt applaud these efforts. But they also might be skeptical. Having seen too many trendy experiments come and go, they argue for research universities to make long-term commitments to basic change. Exactly how that happens at each institution depends on circumstances, resources and focus. But the report's principal recommendation of better integrating research and teaching seems universally applicable.

Research institutions make up just 3 percent of U.S. institutions of higher learning, and they have something special to offer. Instead of replicating other colleges' programs, they should build on those strengths - and enrich their own efforts - by doing more to teach students in a well-coordinated manner the art and science of inquiry.

Headline#\ P}P# More valuable diplomas?Headline #:\ P}P#

Last week, Nevada high-schoolers breezed their way (best case scenario!) through a supposedly tough new graduation exam whose passing score has yet to be determined.

It's up to the the members of the State Board of Education to establish the passing standard, and they won't do that until, at the earliest, mid-May.

According to board member Bill Hanlon, the passing mark can't be set until the State Department of Education and its "focus groups" determine whether the tests in math, reading and writing contain errors of fact or show a racial or gender bias. Should such politically incorrect (or simply incorrect) questions crop up, they will be thrown out and not counted toward any student's score.

We cannot wait to see the questions the state discards because they are "racially or gender biased."

The test thousands of Nevada high school students took last week was mandated by the 1997 Nevada Education Reform Act. It replaces the previous exam that was so easy, says Mr. Hanlon, that less than 1 percent of students failed. In a toughened-up pilot test given last fall, 47 percent of students flunked when the passing mark was set at 60 percent.

The new test is a three-partner which includes an hour-long writing exam, a math test that goes beyond the basic stuff, and a reading section.

Students who fail the test - after five tries - get no diploma.

If the pilot tests given last year are any indication, hundreds of kids who managed to take all the required courses to graduate high school won't - because they simply didn't absorb

enough basic knowledge to be deemed minimally educated

Mr. Hanlon says he speaks only for himself when he says that, "I'm not a believer that everyone should be passed in high school. If they don't have the knowledge and skills, they shouldn't have the diplomas." Agreed.

One still has to wonder how difficult the new test really is. The State Board of Education won't release copies of the test - security concerns, you know. But we do have a few indicators of how nasty these proficiency exams can be. In California, prospective teachers - college graduates, mind you - take a basic skills test, which is so easy that any self-respecting eighth grader could pass it. But, routinely, more than one-quarter of prospective California teachers fail

Perhaps the new test is tougher than the amazingly easy proficiency exam for high schoolers administered to Nevada students in 1986 - sample questions from which the state board did supply us.

According to Thomas Klein, evaluations consultant with the State Department of Education, the questions on the new test will change each time it is given. That - we assume - would obviate the need for secrecy, and we hope to be able to obtain and publish sample questions from those tests so that parents and taxpayers can judge the new exams for themselves.

Publication#W\ P}P# 116. The (Jacksonville) Florida Times-Union"Publication" #
:\ P}P# 04/26/98; Edition: CITY; Section: INSIGHT; Page G-2

Headline#\ P}P# Pay the best moreHeadline #:\ P}P#

Both the House and Senate have good ideas concerning merit pay for outstanding teachers. They should be able to merge them into a single piece of legislation.

State Sen. Jim Horne, D-Jacksonville, has done an excellent job of crafting "a bill holding together" a bill that seeks to designate the best teachers by an ac

ademic process
involving tests and certification. It has the support of teacher
union leaders.

Horne would reward the best teachers with a salary increase of up to 20 percent

His version requires a process that would take approximately two years to complete, and
it includes passing a test used nationwide.

In the House, another version would rely on the assessments of parents, peers and
principals to select the best 10 percent of teachers and give them a \$2,000
bonus.

The House version has some merit. Principals are the direct supervisors of teachers,
managers of the schools, and are in the best position to know which teachers are most
effective. They should have input into the process.

Union leaders fear that allowing the principal total control would make the process
subject to political considerations and that letting parents rule would turn it into a popularity
contest.

Horne's bill, which is not strictly "merit pay," is an open-ended process. Theoretically at
least, every teacher in the state could pass it and the state would have to come up with the
money to pay them, for a period of 10 years. However
, it is expected that about 15 percent
would qualify, at the most.

Another issue is whether the bill adequately relates the pay to student achievement. Horne
said there is a provision to do so, and legislators must judge whether it is sufficient. The
point is that sheer mastery of material does not always translate into classroom performance.

In the 1980s, the state had merit pay briefly, until teacher unions managed to
get it
repealed. At that time, union leaders basically took the position that n

o teachers were more
proficient than any others and all should be paid at the same rate, substantially higher, rate.

Now that the unions are working with the process instead of fighting all change, there is
a chance to treat teachers more like professionals rather than assembly-line workers.

The final product probably should require an effort by teachers to prove mastery of their
craft through tests and training, but also include outcome measures,
input from principals
and perhaps a role for parents.

Publication#W\ P}P# 117. Allentown Morning Call"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/26/98; Edition: THIRD; Section: COMMENT; Page A30

Headline#\ P}P# NO MORE MONEY FOR
PHILADELPHIAHeadline #:\ P}P#

Gov. Tom Ridge has made a telling comment regarding the controversy between the state
and the Philadelphia School District. Philadelphia School Superintendent David Hornbeck,
said the Governor, is "the only superintendent in Pennsylvania who's decided to budget
based on what he thinks he should have, rather than what he's going to get."

Two months ago, Mr. Hornbeck unveiled his proposed \$1.5 billion budget for the 1998-99 school year. The plan anticipated a \$95 million deficit which, if the state didn't

cough up the cash, would mean Philadelphia's public schools would close in March 1999.

Backed by his school board, Mayor Ed Rendell and the Philadelphia City Council, Mr. Hornbeck maintained the district deserved more state support because it educated more
needy children than other districts in the state

Last week, as it passed the state budget for the 1998-99 fiscal year, the General Assembly
answered. It amended the state School Code to give Education Secretary Eugene Hickok the
authority to take over the Philadelphia School District if Mr. Hornbeck carries out his threat.

"I don't think there's any desire on our part to step in," said Secretary Hickok, who urged the school district to adopt a responsible budget. No one wants to see the state takeover the Philadelphia school district. And it shouldn't have to.

By week's end, it appeared Mr. Hornbeck had flinched. No longer was he talking about \$95 million deficits but shortfalls of \$85 million or less. He even was willing to give the state audit authority over district finances "if there is more money. Mr. Hornbeck and Mayor Rendell must accept that the pot is fixed "and it's a big pot. The 215,000 children in the Philadelphia School District represent 12 percent of the state's public school children. Yet, the district gets 18 percent, or \$626 million of state funds.

Philadelphia officials must stop looking with envy at how much suburban districts spend on their students. They keep pointing out that Lower Merion School district spends \$12,000 per pupil while Philadelphia only spends \$7,000 per pupil (the statewide average is \$6,800). Most other districts envy the wealth of the Lower Merions and Fox Chapels. Philadelphia officials must keep in mind that the district is subsidized to a higher degree "52 percent compared to an average of 36 percent "than other school districts.

Without question, there's a shared state-local responsibility for public education. Just as indisputable is the fact that Philadelphia's educational needs are dramatically different from those of most other school districts.

However, other districts live within their means "and with considerably less state help. If needs outstrip revenue, taxes are raised. Mayor Rendell doesn't want that, but neither does the chief executive of any other municipality. The answer is for Mr. Hornbeck and his board to adopt a balanced budget before the end of May. If that means tax hikes or other economies, that is the tough political reality they must face. And the trick is to do it while still providing qua

lity education. No doubt, that's a big challenge in Philadelphia, but
looking f
or more state money isn't part of the answer.n

Publication#W\ P}P# 118. The Northern New Jersey Record"Publication" #:\ P}P#
04/26/98; Edition: All Editions.=.Sunday; Section: REVIEW & OUTLOOK; Page o02

Headline#\ P}P# THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BAN
SOME CONSERVATIVES
RECONSIDER THEI
R POSITIONHeadline #:\ P}P#

ONLY one black student will be among the 268 students entering the University o
f
California at Berkeley's law school this fall.

The number of minority students entering UC Berkeley as freshmen will drop from
23
percent to 10 percent.

At UCLA, the number of first-year minorities will drop from 20 to 13 percent.

This can't be what supporters of Proposition 209 and other affirmative action o
pponents
wanted _ a higher education system where the best colleges start resem
bling the all but
segregated public schools of the 1950s.

Two years after California voters approved Proposition 209, which prohibits the
use of
race as a factor in state hiring and college admissions, we're finally
getting answers to the
question: What would happen if affirmative action progra
ms were outlawed?

In the case of admissions to California's best public universities, the discour
aging results
have persuaded some staunch opponents of affirmative action to re
consider their position.

Fearing a similar resegregation because of a court decision, Texas ordered its
public
university system to accept any student, black or white, who finished i
n the top 10 percent
of a public high school.

In a recent New Republic article (see article on previous page), conservative Harvard sociologist Nathan Glazer wrote that "affirmative action is bad. {But} banning it is worse."

Mr. Glazer, whose 1975 book "Affirmative Discrimination" is practically required reading

for opponents of affirmative action, now says principles must be weighed against reality.

Mr. Glazer has joined conservatives Glen Loury, James Wilson, and John Bunzel in abandoning the hard-line position that all affirmative action programs are inherently bad.

Why? Mr. Glazer now believes that the country has a special unfulfilled obligation to blacks, and that ending these programs would send a message of despair and indifference to many blacks.

Moderate thinkers have said the same thing for decades. Affirmative action, even with its faults, is still needed to counter the traditional exclusion of minorities from hiring, public contracting, and college admissions.

Berkeley had no shortage of qualified minority applicants. Some 800 black and Hispanic applicants who were rejected had scored at least 1,200 on their SATs and had 4.0 grade point averages.

But they were rejected primarily because of Proposition 209, which, like similar measures, requires college admissions officers to ignore race and make decisions primarily on academic ratings and SAT scores. Such a policy overlooks some important realities.

In many cases, students from rich suburban districts have a big competitive advantage over students from urban districts because their schools are so much better. Their districts often have more money and better facilities. They do a better job of preparing students for standardized tests. If we acknowledge that public school systems are not equal, should we then further penalize promising students in urban districts by keeping them out of colleges and universities because

use of where they live?

The danger of not having enough minorities in top colleges is that they then have little way of rising to positions of influence and leadership in such professions as law, medicine, academia, media, advertising, and the arts. Those professions will become even less diverse since the number of minority college graduates will drop. Minorities will be relegated to a permanent underclass. That's bad for the minorities, but it's also bad for whites and for the nation as a whole.

It's good that Mr. Glazer and other conservatives are rethinking their position. Others who still doubt affirmative action's value and necessity should take a close look at the California experiment and its ultimate ramifications.

Publication#W\ P}P# 119. Buffalo News"Publication" #: \ P}P# 04/26/98; Edition : FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL PAGE; Page H2

Headline#\ P}P# STATE IS CUTTING SCHOOL TAXES, BUT LOCAL INCREASES CAN SKEW THE RESULTSHeadline #: \ P}P#

The big reform from last year's session of the State Legislature is intended eventually to cut the school taxes of every homeowner in New York State. The politicians call the program STAR (School Tax Relief), and it shifts a significant proportion of school funding from the local property tax to broader-based state taxes.

STAR came tied with the attractively arranged ribbons of a carefully planned gift. But two things could reduce the value of what's inside.

First, the state might run into a financial wall and change the law to go back on its promise. That hasn't happened. Indeed, Gov. Pataki and the Legislature, enjoying flush times, have accelerated STAR's benefit for most seniors. Party on.

The second catch, however, could work its harm. It involves the ability or inability of local school districts to hold the line on tax rates. If they can't keep tax rises at or near the level of inflation in the economy, the value of the STAR tax breaks will decrease.

Some districts have been able to keep rates from increasing much, but Western New York is also seeing some districts with percentage tax-rate increases in the double digits.

The STAR benefit comes through a formula that works to reduce the taxable assessed valuation of owner-occupied homes. But the state cannot set the tax rates that are applied to the reduced assessments to determine the tax bills. Tax rates are the work of local boards of education.

Apologists for big tax-rate increases might want to say that STAR makes the tax bills lower than they would have been without STAR. That's true. But most people will want to compare a current tax bill with the prior year's. In such a comparison, STAR's full effect is undercut by a tax-rate hike, the degree of damage depending on the size of the increase.

Fortunately for those whose homes' taxable assessed value will be reduced by STAR to zero, a tax-rate hike of whatever size cannot hurt. Every number multiplied by zero is zero. But a big tax increase can hurt others. Under some circumstances, homeowners could even wind up paying larger bills than they did a year earlier, STAR notwithstanding.

Here come the Lancaster schools proposing a 12 percent tax increase. It's less than some early projections suggested it might be, but still enough to put a good dent in STAR benefits. Lancaster has particular problems that are pushing the tax rate higher. It is the scene of a home-building boom that's adding many children to the school system.

And here comes the Cheektowaga-Sloan school district with a 10 percent tax increase.

ease.

This district is experiencing higher enrollment as families move inside the village line from Buffalo.

And Cheektowaga Central schools are chiming in with a tax-rate increase of 8.5 percent.

All three districts found themselves short of surplus funds from the past to throw into their new budgets. Some other districts are using surplus funds this year to keep taxes under control, but they are rightly worried about future years when the extra money may not be there. STAR's benefits may be undermined eventually in these districts,

Local school boards need to consider STAR a challenge. To bring homeowners the relief intended by Gov. Pataki and the Legislature, they must find ways to control costs and keep taxes from going up so quickly. It can be a delicate balancing act because the quality of education must be maintained, too. But, presumably, school board members ran for office to take on challenges.

Publication#W\ P}P# 120. The Atlanta Journal"Publication" #: \ P}P# 04/27/98Section: EDITORIAL; Page A;08

Headline#\ P}P# Savings accounts a win for educationHeadline #: \ P}P#
IN A STUNNING victory for Republicans and U.S. Sen. Paul Coverdell (R-Ga.), the Senate passed legislation late last week to allow parents to set up education savings accounts without paying tax on the interest. Coverdell's bill now goes to a House-Senate conference committee, where we hope language to provide block-grant education programs to the states will be removed. It's the only way the bill might have a chance of becoming veto-proof in Congress.

The bill is a strong Republican statement about education. It wants to give parents more school choice while returning education funding "- and the rules and regulations that go with it "- to local school districts. But as passed it tries to bite off more than a two-thirds majority in the Senate will chew.

We have always supported block-granting many education programs (and dismantling the entire U.S. Department of Education), but in practical terms we don't believe this is the place to pick that fight. Coverdell's education savings accounts idea is too important and it needs more Democratic support to stand up strong against the White House. It would be the first venture into national school choice. And it should not be loaded with other ideas, despite their merits.

We hope the conferees will meet quickly to clean up this legislation to make it a sure bet for strong support in both the House and Senate. Then President Clinton will be forced to face the issue at hand: giving parents an opportunity to save for primary and secondary education expenses, including private schools, with tax breaks now only offered at the collegiate level. Remember, that's a choice the president had with his own daughter, while so many others don't.

Publication#W\ P}P# 121. The Newark Star-Ledger "Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/27/98; Edition: FINAL; Section: EDITORIAL; Page 098

Headline#\ P}P# No school breakHeadline #:\ P}P#

There are several good reasons for President Clinton to veto the education tax break bill. Congress seems bent on passing.

The easiest to understand is the most important: We should not be subsidizing private school education with public money instead of using those dollars to improve public schools.

A largely Republican congressional majority (plus our very own Democratic junior senator) is pushing the idea of publicly funded school vouchers or the stealth version found in the just-passed Senate bill, tax breaks for private school tuition.

Backers claim this diversion of public money would be good for poor urban parents who want their children to escape bad city schools and good for middle-class parents who choose to use parochial or private schools.

A tax break you don't get unless you can stash away money in a tax-exempt account is not a goodie the poor or those living on every-dollar-counts budgets get to enjoy.

And how many urban parents struggling to pay school fees might see a free public school system that they could use with confidence as the best gift?

Often overlooked in the debate about education are the benefits that come when the majority of children in a neighborhood attend the same schools and the schools not only educate the children but unite the parents and the community.

Good public schools would be the better way to rebuild communities where schools are not the only thing gone wrong. And the better route for good neighborhoods that want to stay that way.

It is just such communities that Congress is trying to woo with the education tax break. Still, most middle-class families use public schools, and many are happy with them and willing to work to enrich and improve them.

Those parents should fear opening the door to federal tax policies that could drain more kids from public schools. In many communities, there is a tenuous balance between fixed operating costs, enrollment and funding based on enrollment. A federal tax break could translate into local tax hikes or school budget cuts.

You'll hear this campaign slogan: We tried to give you a tax break and do something for education but the President vetoed it. But the public should know that this private tuition tax break would ultimately benefit very few.

If Congress wants to do something for most folks, its time and our tax money would be better spent improving public schools.

Headline#\ P}P# SCHOOL REPORT CARDS Headline #:\ P}P#Subhead#[\ P}P# LET'S
NOT WAIT UNTIL 1999 TO DISTRIBUTE
DATASubhead#:\ P}P#

Only four of 17 school districts in Franklin County have agreed to distribute
"report cards"
comparing the performance of Ohio's schools and districts this
June. That disappointing
number can be improved upon. Central Ohio boards of ed
ucation and other boards statewide
should reconsider decisions not to participa
te.

Given the importance of improving performance in primary and secondary schools,
few
issues are of greater priority than accurately measuring how Ohio schools
are doing, how
they stack up against each other and whether and how they improv
e from year to year.

The goal is accountability and getting to parents and other citizens accurate i
nformation
on such matters as student attendance, dropout rates and proficiency
test scores. As part of the accountability statute passed to help build support
for the proposed state sales tax
increase, school report cards are mandated by
July 1, 1999.

Understandably, there is considerable start-up time for so large an undertaking
. In early
June, the Department of Education plans to test various methods of d
istribution. It asked for
and received 109 volunteers out of 611 districts stat
ewide to distribute report cards based
on 1996-97 data.

The department encountered many delays in getting the first test ready and its
projected
release date of March was unrealistic. It's doubtful all the district
s could have been handled
that quickly.

Still, it's important for Ohio school districts to embrace accountability. Dist
ricts such as
Columbus, Upper Arlington and Dublin that chose not to participat
e in the test still will

receive copies, including some that could be duplicated and distributed to parents yet this year.

The department is trying to get the information out, but it needs reminding that the report

cards are eagerly awaited by parents. When contacted by The Dispatch, department officials

said that it was too late to involve more districts in

the test program before 2000. Eventually,

officials agreed to consider ways to

help districts distribute the report cards this year. A full

distribution, reflecting

1997-98 data, is expected in February 1999.

Report cards are useful in gauging the performance of schools. But now that report cards

are on their way to the printer, it would be a shame if school districts

couldn't find a way to

get them to parents. The report cards are not required

until 1999, but distributing them is the

right thing to do.

Publication#W\ P}P# 123. Minneapolis Star Tribune"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Poverty antidote " Provide more chance for educationHeadline

#:\ P}P#

At North Hennepin Community College, young women with mathematical aptitude are

invited to consider the applied accounting program. Its graduates often get jobs

with starting

salaries exceeding \$25,000 a year, North Hennepin President Ann

Wynia says.

But if the prospective student is a single mother on welfare, she is cautioned to try

something else, Wynia says. The applied accounting program takes two years to complete.

Under the new welfare law, the student won't be able to afford to stay in school that long.

Never mind how able she is in mathematics. Or how promising her family's future might

be if she could land an accounting job. Or how likely it would be that she

would never again

need a handout from taxpayers if she could complete the two-

year program.

Twelve months in a vocational education program is all she's allowed under the new welfare law. That's more than adequate for some, but for too many would-be students on welfare, 12 months isn't enough.

Minnesota Sen. Paul Wellstone believes that flaw in the 1996 welfare law has become so apparent that even some backers of the new law are ready to change the higher education limit. He's itching to bring to the Senate floor an amendment allowing states to increase from 12 to 24 months the time a welfare recipient can spend enrolled in a post-secondary school before triggering a work requirement. He thinks his amendment will pass.

The Senate's Republican leaders must think so too. They've been wearing out the Senate rule book finding ploys to keep the Wellstone amendment off the floor.

Their latest trick last week was to advance an amendment to the education bill that Wellstone abhorred, giving schools more latitude to expel students with disabilities. Republican leaders then promised to set their amendment aside if Wellstone would do the same with his. Under pressure from colleagues and friends of the disabled, Wellstone backed off, vowing to try again when the higher education bill is debated later this spring.

His determination is well placed. Not only is allowing welfare recipients a chance at more education the compassionate thing to do, it's also the fiscally conservative thing to do. The more education a welfare recipient can get, the better her chances of leaving the public dole permanently.

Wynia, a former state human services commissioner and a former legislator whose specialty was welfare, says she knows what happens when welfare recipients are denied a chance at education and pushed into \$6-an-hour jobs instead.

A single mother in a job at that wage isn't self-sufficient. She still needs su

substantial
subsidies from the taxpayer " food stamps, sliding-fee child care, health care for her children. Neither is she secure. Low-wage jobs are often the first to go in an economic downturn. And they are often the least flexible when the inevitable family emergencies arise.

"The new welfare law is going to look good at first. We're going to generate some statistics that say people are getting off welfare," Wynia says. "But those numbers will give a false picture. Unless we can give welfare recipients some level of skill and training beyond high school, we won't really be moving them on a road to self-sufficiency."

Generations of Americans have proven that education is the best antidote to poverty. Congress should give today's welfare moms a chance to prove it again.

Publication#W\ P}P# 124. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Tax-break bill puts public schools in peril Headline #:\ P}P#
Public education in America was tossed into the smelly swamp of partisan politics last week when the Senate endorsed a costly, unfair and destructive measure that would make the nation's public schools suffer the consequences of congressional zeal for needless tax breaks.

Passed along mostly partisan lines, the bill would give parents a tax break for the school expenses of their children; endow states with new authority to determine how to spend federal education money, and kill President Clinton's plan for national math and science tests.

The bill's chief flaw is its tax-break provision. It would allow families and others to contribute up to \$2,000 a year into special savings accounts, interest from which would be tax-free, so long as the money was used for education expenses, including tuition for private and parochial elementary and secondary schools.

The bill's Republican defenders argue that the measure would relieve the tax burden on middle-class Americans. They ignore that this break would cost the government \$1.6 billion over 10 years. Paying for this tax break might require cuts in programs that middle-class and other Americans need and want.

Giving this tax break to those who can afford to send their kids to private schools amounts to special treatment for higher-income families and is unfair to many struggling families less apt to benefit.

And by promoting parochial school education, the measure also would be unfair to Americans of many different religious faiths, or of none, by requiring them in effect to subsidize schools of particular religious faiths. This provision also may run afoul of the Constitution's required separation of church and state.

Worst of all is the damage this measure would inflict on public education. At a time when Republicans, Democrats and others should be doing their best to strengthen public education, this bill would encourage the movement of students and funds away from public schools and fatten the coffers of private schools.

Our editorials have consistently supported school choice " but only on an experimental basis and in a form that would help poor families that do not now have a choice. The Senate-passed bill is a far cry from that concept.

The president has vowed to veto this measure if it ever hits his desk, and if the Senate vote is any indication, he has enough support to sustain a veto. That may be the only encouraging aspect of last week's vote.
Publication#W\ P}P# 125. Detroit News"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# A Tale of Two School Systems Headline #:\ P}P#

Last week brought news of two education experiments - one in Seattle and one in

San Antonio - that travel a step beyond Michigan's approach to school choice. Both hold lessons for policy makers in Detroit and Lansing.

The state of Michigan's largest program to strengthen parental choice in primary and secondary schooling is interdistrict enrollment, which allows state money to follow a student to a nearby district if he is accepted in a public school there.

This is a good approach, but it's limited. One purpose of having money follow the child is to discipline bad schools and reward good schools. Since the money in Michigan's system is sent to school districts, not the schools themselves, a poor school that loses a student won't really feel the money crunch unless the district decides to pass the loss directly into the school's budget.

This brings us to Seattle. This year, the Seattle school district has taken choice directly to the school level by allowing students throughout the district to apply for admission at any of the city's public schools. Schools then receive money primarily on a per-student basis. Schools that attract students receive a direct and proportionate budget hike; schools that lose students are directly penalized.

The resulting competition for school money has been remarkable. Schools are aggressively wooing parents with tours, enrollment fairs, advertisements, brochures and specialized new curricula.

We can imagine little that would make a more immediate difference to Detroit's public education than creating such a system locally. Detroit parents would be ecstatic to be courted by their public schools, instead of feeling they have to go shout at the Detroit Board of Education in order to provoke change. Best of all, the Detroit board can jumpstart this reform without help from Lansing.

And Lansing has a natural way of generating more market-driven education, too: increasing the number of charter schools. Charter schools, which are public schools, are paid by the state solely on the basis of the number of students they attract, much like the schools in Seattle. The state's cap on the number of the schools should be lifted.

Opponents of such measures in Detroit and Lansing should contemplate San Antonio.

Last week, a private consortium of businesses and foundations announced it will provide \$50 million in scholarships during the next 10 years to 14,000 "at-risk" students in the San Antonio school district. The scholarships will pay for kids' schooling at both public and private schools in the San Antonio area.

This is the largest private "voucher" program of its kind. But Michigan has a similar foundation, CEO Michigan, which provides private scholarships. It's not hard to imagine Michigan's generous philanthropic community making a similar, large-scale tuition program available here.

In short, as the San Antonio program suggests, school choice will not be denied in Detroit and Lansing should look around and open up the schools if they don't want to get left behind.

Publication#W\ P}P# 126. Detroit News"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# Detroit Schools: Cut the Fat Headline #:\ P}P#

A new analysis of the Detroit school district by the consulting firm KPMG Peat Marwick has unsurprisingly found a top-heavy bureaucracy that is unproductive and poorly managed. School officials should use this critique to bring the district's ratio of administrators to students into line with that of other districts.

Commissioned by New Detroit Inc., the KPMG analysis cited a host of management deficiencies. Too many administrators, for example, had limited skills and poorly defined roles. Routine clerical activities were performed by too many people. Discipline was

ineffective. And, according to the report, the administration seemed more concerned with position and titles than performance.

Highlighted among the findings are the 1,143 administrators who give the district the highest bureaucratic overhead in the state. Last year, The News reported that Detroit's administrator-to-student ratio was one for every 135 pupils. The statewide average was one for every 361 pupils.

Major staff reductions were not ruled out as an option. But the crux of the KPMG recommendations is that 300 Detroit schools employees be redeployed from central administration jobs to individual schools.

The report breaks no new ground. If anything, the KPMG findings dovetail with a recent internal examination by the Operational Review Panel of New Detroit Inc. It too cited employees in critical positions who were never given the necessary training and professional development needed to carry out their responsibilities.

What is noteworthy about the KPMG analysis is that the second largest school budget expenditure, after management and administrative costs of \$14 million, is the \$13 million spent on clerical staff. These numbers suggest that the district has a long history of adding people at the top without improving student outcomes. Despite this glut of noninstructional staff, teachers continue to complain about shortages of books, paper, pencils - in the classrooms. The supply of soap, towels and toilet paper in schools is a perennial problem. It's difficult to fathom how relocating administrative support staff from the central office will increase either the accountability or the performance of these high-priced personnel.

School officials should use the KPMG report as a guideline for a major management restructuring. The district's mission would be enhanced by asking employees in all

decision-making positions to submit their resignations and reapply for the jobs they hold.
Performance evaluations would help weed out nonessential and under-trained staffers. Jobs that do not serve basic education goals could be eliminated.

Another round of decentralization is likely to produce another round of questionable results. Taxpayers and students would best benefit from a lean and mean, top-to-bottom management overhaul that slashes excess fat from a bloated bureaucracy.

Publication#W\ P}P# 127. Investors Business Daily"Publication" #:\ P}P#April 28, 1998

Headline#\ P}P# America's Most Costly Educational Failure
Headline #:\ P}P#T
The education establishment thinks the cure for what ails America's public schools is more money. But spending a fortune is no guarantee of better schools. It certainly didn't help a poorly performing school district in the heart of Kansas City, Mo.

School reformers rejoiced when Federal District Judge Russell Clark took control of the district in '85. He ruled it was unconstitutionally segregated, with dilapidated facilities and students who performed poorly.

To bring the district into compliance, the judge ordered it and the state over the next 12 years to spend nearly \$2 billion to build more schools, renovate old ones, integrate classrooms and bring student test scores up to national norms.

But when the judge finally took himself off the case last year, there was little to show academically for all that money. Although the district's 37,000 mostly minority students enjoyed some of the best-funded school facilities in the country, student performance hadn't improved.

It was a major embarrassment -and an ideological setback - for backers of vastly

increased funding for public schools. From the start, proponents of Kansas City's desegregation and education plan had touted it as a controlled experiment that would resolve once and for all two radically different philosophies of education.

For decades, critics of excess spending for public schools had said, "You can't solve educational problems by throwing money at them." To which educators and public school advocates replied, "No one's ever tried."

Kansas City settles the argument. Judge Clark invited the district to "dream." Forget about cost, he said. He urged administrators to let their imaginations soar and assemble a list of everything they might possibly need to boost the achievement of inner-city blacks. Using the extraordinary powers granted judges in desegregation cases, Clark said he would find a way to pay for it.

The judge may have been misinformed about the solutions. But no one can accuse him of being timid or indecisive. To pay for all the changes, improvements, programs and new schools, he unilaterally increased property taxes 150%, imposed a 1.5% income tax surcharge and, when that wasn't enough, ordered the state of Missouri to make up for the shortfall.

Suddenly a poor district that had horrible credit and never paid its bills on time was getting hundreds of millions of dollars more every year.

For more than a decade, the Kansas City district got more money per pupil than any other of the 280 major school districts in the country. Yet in spite of having perhaps the finest facilities of any school district its size in the country, nothing changed. Test scores stayed put, the three-grade-level achievement gap between blacks and whites did not change, and the dropout rate went up, not down.

Why? One reason was that Judge Clark was unwilling to challenge the educational

status
quo in Kansas City. After many decades of slow decline, the district was
burdened with
many incompetent teachers. The quickest way to raise achievement
would have been simply
to fire the bad teachers and replace them with good ones.

But for many, the school district was as much a jobs program as an educational
institution. Firing teachers was too traumatic. Instead, the district increased
teacher pay 40%
across the board, which guaranteed that poor teachers would stay
forever.

Eventually, the ineffective or burned-out teachers ended up at the district's
office
downtown. In time, the central administration grew so large - three to five
times the size of
the bureaucracy of comparable school districts - that it consumed
over half the district's
entire education budget.

Of course, the district's biggest problems weren't just administrative. The
ideological
biases of local educators, politicians and Judge Clark against
accountability made them
reject solutions that might have worked - merit pay for teachers,
penalties for failure or
vouchers for private schools.

There's a lesson in all this for lawmakers in Congress. It's not that money
never helps.
Sure, money can help - especially where teachers and administrators
have overcome their
professional bias against competition and accountability. But
unless that happens, even
massive funding increases aren't likely to help very
much.

Paul Ciotti is an education writer in Los Angeles. He is the author of the
policy brief
"Money and School Performance: Lessons from the Kansas City Desegregation
Experiment," published by the Cato Institute.

Publication#W\ P}P# 128. Albuquerque Journal"Publication" #: \ P}P# 04/24/98Se
ction: EDITORIAL PAGE; Page A14

Headline#\ P}P# Open Dialogue Might Reduce Dropout

Mayor Jim Baca is making good on a campaign promise to work with Albuquerque Public Schools on programs to keep middle school students on campus from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. or later " the hours they're most likely to get into trouble.

He proposes expanding the city's Middle School Cluster Initiative, which provides 19 middle schools with tutoring and a variety of extracurricular activities after school. There is no question these programs are worthwhile; they just don't run long or often enough. Teachers and others recognize that after-school options can help improve kids' grades (and, in turn, their self-confidence), and provide diversions like computer time or drama classes which, for students on the edge of dropping out, may be the tenuous thread holding their interest in school.

But cluster programs operate only three or four days a week and usually extend the school day by an hour to 90 minutes. (Bernalillo County operates a similar program at the five APS middle schools in the county, also limited in terms of time. It lacks funds to operate the entire school year.)

Unfortunately, Baca is proposing the middle school expansion at the expense of the city's High School Dropout Prevention Program. He's proposed boosting the former by taking \$100,000 from the general fund and \$200,000 from the high school program. Phil Baca, the mayor's assistant in charge of youth and education issues, says it's more effective and less expensive to work with middle school children than those in high school.

There's no question that after-school programs constitute money well spent. Nearly 5 million children in the United States are unsupervised by an adult after school each week, the U.S. Census Bureau says. Consequences show up in U.S. crime statistics: juvenile crime peaks between 3 and 7 p.m., according to the U.S. Justice Department.

What isn't reflected in these numbers are the other things kids get into after school. A study published in the September 1989 issue of Pediatrics found eighth-graders home alone after school reported greater use of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana. Lacking supervision, kids also experiment with sex.

Mayor Baca is to be lauded for advocating a five-part plan for decreasing the city's rising dropout rate. In addition to expanding after-school programs, he wants to expand and improve weekend and summer youth activities; recruit 2,000 mentors for young people; develop and promote literacy programs; improve community center services; better coordinate youth services; and develop a public-private partnership to help teens get summer jobs.

Getting all of these initiatives going will take hard work and tough decisions on spending priorities. An important aspect of the mayor's initial proposal, however, is that the city and APS are in open dialogue about after-school programs and high school dropout intervention issues of critical concern to the children and the future of the city. By working together, perhaps they can find some way to expand the middle school program without leaving students in the classes of '99, 2000, 2001 and 2002 more vulnerable to dropping out, lost in the funding transition.

Publication#W\ P}P# 129. PR Newswire"Publication" #:\ P}P# 04/27/98 Category: Press release

Headline#\ P}P# U.S. Secretary of Education Honors Pontiac Central H.S. And Delphi

Automotive Systems for 'FIRST'

AchievementsHeadline #:\ P}P#

TROY, Mich., April 27 /PRNewswire/ " In his visit to Pontiac Central High School today, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley applauded the school's participation and achievement in the "FIRST" program.

"I'm excited about what's going on here," Riley said to an auditorium full of students, teachers, administrators, city officials and Delphi Automotive Systems engineers. "I was so happy and shocked when I went into the FIRST team area and saw all those robotics and all the learning taking place."

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