

difficulty passing a university-wide

English writing exam, Hostos replaced it with

its own writing test last year.

ddBut last week, after final exams were over and students were making plans to

graduate, City University trustees, saying standards were

being lowered, voted

to restore the university-wide test and make it a condition of graduation.

ddUniversity auditors found that 137 of the more than 400 Hostos students plann

ing to graduate had never passed that exam, and many

of them hurriedly took the

50-minute test on Friday and Saturday.

ddLate Friday evening a New York State Supreme Court Appellate Division judge r

uled that all of the students could participate in the

graduation ceremony, but

scheduled a hearing Tuesday on whether students who do not pass the test can g

et a diploma.

ddHostos officials estimated that 440 students participated in the ceremony in

a barricaded portion of the Grand Concourse in the Bronx

yesterday. The officia

ls said they did not know how many had passed the exam.

ddAt the commencement ceremony yesterday, the politicians told the students tha

t attacks on Hostos were nothing new.

ddCongressman Jose Serrano said that keeping the college alive was the first bi

g battle he fought when he was elected an assemblyman

in 1974. "And here I am,

still talking about it," he said.

ddBronx Assemblyman Roberto Ramirez, a Hostos graduate himself, said, "You tel

l them that you are not afraid of tests, that you are not

afraid of standards "

just double standards."

ddThen, in an apparent reference to Herman Badillo, the university trustee and

former Bronx borough president and Congressman who

has become a leading critic

of Hostos, Mr. Ramirez said: "And I'll tell him not to forget where he came fr

om. I'll tell him not to forget that

as we study English, we must honor our Spa

nish, too."

ddLong Island University dd

ddIn her address as the class valedictorian yesterday, Liesel Schumacher, 49, d

escribed her struggle to reach an educational goal she had

let pass her by in y

ounger years.

ddMiss Schumacher delayed her college education for 20 years, first marrying, g

etting a job, and raising five children before returning

to school full-time.

dd"You and I were not students of privilege, but we are privileged students,"

she said. "We come from working-class homes. Some have

come from faraway plac

es and began new lives here."

ddShe said many others like herself in school were also trying to reclaim a cha

nce "we let slip by at an earlier age."

ddA total of 1,546 graduate and undergraduate students received degrees at the

ceremony at the school's Brooklyn campus, while honorary

doctorates were given to a distinguished group, including the feminist Bella Abzug and the musician Wynton Marsalis.

The chief commencement speaker, Robert P. Moses, recounted his role in the civil rights movement in the 1960's and recalled its violence.

"They were my teachers and I was their disciple," he said. "They showed me how powerful it is to surrender your life to this freedom struggle."

Aloysius Barkley, 76, was the oldest graduate. "This is a journey that has lasted over 50 years," he said in an interview. "There have been some pitfalls but there's also been some joy. I was determined to get this. I wanted it so badly."

Those receiving honorary degrees, in addition to Mr. Moses, included the African American studies scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. and the former Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Ralph Branca.

Polytechnic University

It took Edward Coppola 56 years to finish the work for the diploma he received yesterday from Polytechnic University. Mr. Coppola completed more than three years when he left to join the Navy as a fighter pilot in 1941. After the war came a career as a supervising engineer, and finally he returned to Polytechnic, in Brooklyn, to get a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

He was among 1,019 graduates at Avery Fisher Hall receiving a degree in engineering and science.

Robert Catell, the chairman and chief executive of Brooklyn Union Gas, spoke to the graduates of the connection between Polytechnic and his company.

"Speaking for myself, I would paraphrase the popular philosopher Robert Fulghum," he said. "Most of what I need to know in life, I learned in engineering school. I set out as a young man to be the best engineer that I could be."

In addition to Mr. Catell, recipients of honorary degrees included Dr. Gian Carlo Rota, professor of mathematics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Dr. Sogo Okamura, the president of Tokyo Denki University. nyxddd

Publication#W\ PP# 45. Baltimore Sun"Publication" #:\ PP#June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Headline#u\ PP# Principal's pursuit of Powell pays off Headline #:\ PP# Subhead#[\ PP# General addresses Randallstown High graduates a year later Subhead#:\ PP#

By Jay Apperson
SUN STAFF

From the start, Randallstown High School Principal Barry F. Williams knew it was a long shot to nab one of the country's most sought after public speakers for his school's graduation. But yesterday he beat the odds and presented a man he called a "modern hero" — retired Gen. Colin L. Powell.

dd"The principal's been after me for two years in a row," said Powell, explaining why he accepted the invitation to speak at Randallstown High's commencement from among the hundreds he receives every year. "I like to speak to younger students in schools. More and more, I speak in elementary schools and high schools rather than colleges."

dd"They're young and impressionable, and they're still starting out," he said. "College kids are wonderful, but they know what they're doing. They don't need a lot of advice from some old codger like me."

ddDuring his 20-minute speech, Powell, the former military commander who turned decided not to run for president, touched on traditional graduation themes. He asked the graduates to "salute" their parents, and then gave the young people advice on meeting the challenges that lie ahead in a rapidly changing world. He told them to learn from their failures while striving for success.

ddAnd Powell, who was chairman of the recent national summit on voluntarism, made a pitch for community involvement. He called on the Class of 1997 "the first class required to perform community services as a requirement for graduation" to maintain the spirit of charity.

dd"As you try to make more money, as you try to rise to a position in life, remember always to give something in service back to the community and the nation that has given you so much," said Powell, speaking to an audience of 2,500 at the Towson Center.

ddBaltimore County school officials turned out yesterday to greet Powell, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff "and perhaps the biggest name to address a county school graduation.

dd"I cannot recall our attracting a national figure of his stature," said Superintendent Anthony G. Marchione, who has worked in the system for more than four decades.

ddPrincipal's pursuit
ddWilliams said he first wrote to Powell to invite him to speak at the 1996 graduation.

ddHe explained that Randallstown is a school with a middle-class, predominantly black population, where most students are headed for college. Powell said he had a scheduling conflict, so three students spoke "eloquently" at last year's ceremonies, Williams said.

ddBut Williams renewed his pursuit with another letter in August.

dd"My pitch was: I described my school, and the need for my students to see that someone can make it if they essentially follow the process, play the game," Williams said before yesterday's commencement exercise. "Since my [school] population is predominantly

African-American, I specifically wanted to have an African-American who epitomizes the fruits of hard work.

dd"Many of the middle-class students don't believe they can achieve. It's sad. It's one thing for students lower on the socio-economic ladder

to say, 'This can't happen for me,' " the principal said. "I just want them to hear from someone who has made it, and made it in a big way."

ddLast fall, he received word that Powell would speak.

ddProblem solving

ddWilliams took over as Randallstown's principal in 1995, after a school year marred by discipline problems, disgruntled teachers, arson and racial unrest.

ddHe imposed new rules, and declared the start of a "renaissance of excellence."

ddStudents who received their diplomas yesterday said Randallstown's problems were not unique, and added that conditions have improved.

ddJerrill Adams, a student government president who plans to continue his studies at Ithaca College in New York state, said some students who left the school now want to come back to take advantage of Randallstown's technological resources, such as ample access to the Internet.

dd"We are on the highway. We own the highway," Adams said.

ddShani Donnell, the senior class treasurer, said, "Randallstown is a good school. It has to be because we got Colin Powell."

ddTraditional ceremony

ddPowell sat center stage yesterday as the ceremony unfolded with all the trappings of a traditional high school graduation.

ddThe school chorus sang, the school band played. Parents dressed up, and brought their cameras. The quiet was occasionally broken by a baby's cry.

ddThe valedictorian, Boma Agboh, traced the students' growth, jokingly saying they started as "fresh meat " oops, I mean, freshmen" who grew more serious about their studies and their futures.

ddThen Powell addressed the students, saying, "My friends, at the end of the day, what truly counts is family."

ddWilliams said he's been asked what he will do to top his coup of landing Powell as a graduation speaker. He answered with a question: "Will the Popemobile find it in the Towson Center?"nyxddd

Publication#W\ PP# 46. Dallas Morning News"Publication" #:\ PP#June 1, 1997 Category: Local

Headline#u\ PP# Legislature OKs school-choice bill, sends it to Bush Headline #:\ PP#

By Terrence Stutz / The Dallas Morning News

ddAUSTIN - School-choice legislation that expands the state's charter school program and enhances the right of students to transfer out of low-performing campuses passed the Legislature on Saturday.

ddThe measure would authorize at least 100 new independent charter schools across Texas and allow nearly 800,000 students to transfer to better public schools

ddHouse members approved the bill 98-42, and senators followed after that, 22-7

ddThe proposal - the most significant education bill of the 1997 session - now goes to Gov. George W. Bush for his expected signature into law.

ddHe said the legislation "gives tremendous choice to parents and students who are unhappy with the status quo to try something different and better, whether

by moving to a different public school or starting their own charter school."

ddOpponents of the bill - mostly Democrats - asserted that the state was moving too fast in allowing more "open enrollment" charter schools.

ddState lawmakers limited the number of charter schools to 20 when they authorized them in a massive school reform law passed.

ddThe schools are publicly funded, exempt from most state regulations - such as class-size limits - and may enroll students regardless of where they reside.

ddBackers of charter school expansion say the Texas Education Agency has received nearly 370 applications even though the Legislature has yet to expand the pr

ogram. The original 20 charters already have been awarded.

ddBesides the 100 new charter schools, the bill would allow an unlimited number of charter schools for students who are considered at risk of dropping out.

ddThe measure's other major provision would allow more students to take part in the Public Education Grant program that allows students to transfer out of sch

ools where a majority have failed the state's basic skills test.

ddThe student transfer program was created two years ago by the Legislature but flopped, partly because of resistance by school districts in accepting the students.

ddTo boost participation, districts also would for the first time receive financial incentives to accept the students.

ddIn its final days, the Legislature acted on several bills Saturday.

ddGPA requirements

ddThe Senate voted to require universities that use grade-point averages in admissions to set the same standard for athletes and nonathletes.

ddBackers say the measure, which needs House approval before going to the governor, is designed to do away with a system in which some universities admit star athletes with lower GPAs and test scores than other freshmen.

ddThe Senate sponsor, Royce West, D-Dallas, said the bill would require colleges to set freshman admissions standards based on the minimum grade-point average

used to admit an athlete who receives a state-funded scholarship.

ddOthers questioned the bill's effectiveness since the University of Texas, Texas A&M University and others use multiple admissions criteria. "It does not

hing," said Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo.

ddMr. West disagreed, saying, "It sends the right message, that academics is Number 1, athletics is Number 2 in the state of Texas."

ddSex-offender bill

ddSeeking to crack down on sex offenders, lawmakers sent the governor a bill to provide up to 20 years of supervision for such criminals

if they aren't sent t

o prison.

ddThe measure targets community supervision related to a form of probation know
n as deferred adjudication, in which there is no finding

of guilt and people ca

n wipe their records clean if they stay out of trouble for a certain period of
time.

ddCurrently, the longest offenders can be put on deferred adjudication is 10 ye
ars. The bill by Sen. Florence Shapiro, R-Plano, would allow
that to be doubled

for sex offenders and would impose other restrictions on its use to punish sex
crimes.

ddDeferred adjudication has been used in child molestation cases because it can
be difficult to have a youngster testify, Ms. Shapiro said.

ddThe bill also would allow deferred adjudication only once for sex offenses an
d enhance penalties if someone gets deferred adjudication,
then commits another

crime.

ddSlacker students

ddTexans who keep taking classes without graduating could face higher tuition u
nder a bill backed by the Senate. The "slacker-student"

bill by Sen. Teel Bivin

s, R-Amarillo, still needs House approval.

ddTexas students who have racked up 170 credit hours or more but haven't gradua
ted would pay a price under the measure.

ddWith some exceptions, state funding would be cut off to universities for any
more courses the longtime students take. Universities then
could charge higher,

out-of-state tuition rates to residents taking more than the allowable number
of courses.

ddProfessor evaluations

ddTenured professors at Texas universities could be fired for poor performance
under a bill headed to Mr. Bush. Lawmakers have

complained that once tenured, p

rofessors face few performance reviews.

ddA bill establishing such evaluations would require the reviews at least once
every six years. Schools would determine the criteria for

the reviews and could

demote or fire professors.

ddProfessors disciplined for their performance could challenge those actions in
court.

ddThe Associated Press contributed to this report.nyxddd

Publication#W\ PP# 47. Dallas Morning News"Publication" #:\ PP#June 2, 1997 C
ategory: Local

Headline#u\ PP# House-backed bill would ban athletes' special college entry He
adline #:\ PP#

By Sylvia Moreno / The Dallas Morning News

ddAUSTIN - The Texas House, facing a midnight deadline on Sunday for passing bi
lls before the Legislature adjourns this session,

approved a measure to elimina

te special college admissions standards for student athletes.

ddThe admissions bill, which now goes to Gov. George W. Bush for his signature,

requires Texas' public college and universities to apply the same admissions standards to all entering freshmen.

dd"When you establish the floor GPA, then that applies to all students," said Rep. Ron Wilson, D-Houston, the bill's author.

ddThe bill, Mr. Wilson said, applies to any university that uses grade-point average as a factor in admissions policies. He said that if a university's policy

does not refer to GPA but to class rank instead, the bill would still probably apply to the school because class rank is generally determined by GPA.

dd"Class rank is synonymous with GPA," said Sen. Royce West, D-Dallas, the Senate sponsor of the bill.

ddThe bill - which originally required the schools to set higher admissions standards for athletes than those for other entering freshmen - had been strongly

opposed by University of Texas and Texas A&M officials.

ddThey said applying such a standard, for example, would effectively destroy UT-Austin's nationally ranked, multimillion-dollar football and basketball programs.

ddIn a speech on the House floor, Rep. Sylvester Turner, D-Houston, referred to the school's intense lobbying effort against the bill as "a downright shame."

dd"To make sure there are browns and blacks on their teams, they will weaken their standards," Mr. Turner said. "If the university can put forth the same effort

to make sure athletes are diverse, they ought to put forth the same effort to make sure the universities are diverse."

ddThe language of the bill was changed to say that all entering freshmen, including student athletes, would be required to meet the minimum GPA established by

the school. That change, contend UT and Texas A&M University officials, exempts them from the effects

of the bill because neither school sets a minimum GPA admissions criterion, relying on a variety of factors.

ddBut Mr. Wilson and Mr. West disagreed. Some minimum GPA, they argued, is implicitly set by the school every year when it makes its admissions offers. And

traditionally, some athletes have been admitted with lower GPAs and standardized test scores than their freshmen peers.

dd"If the question is if an athlete that comes in with a 2.5 GPA and a 900 SAT [Scholastic Assessment Test] score and you have another student with the identical

qualifications, should that regular student that doesn't play football or basketball be admitted?" Mr. Wilson said.

"The answer is yes."ddUT officials were

not immediately available for comment Sunday evening.

ddWith one more day before the Legislature adjourns, the Capitol was active Sunday on several fronts.

ddRules on alcohol

ddPeople younger than 21 caught trying to buy, in possession of or driving under the influence of alcohol would face criminal penalties

and the automatic suspension of their license under a bill sent to Mr. Bush. Lawmakers, including Senate sponsor Mr. West, said the measure sends a clear message to young Texans: "You drink, you drive, you lose," said Mr. West, D-Dallas.

Under the bill:

- * It would be illegal for people younger than 21 to drive with any amount of alcohol in their blood system.

- * Underage drinkers who drive would lose their driver's licenses for 60 days on the first offense, 120 days on the second offense and for six months on the third and subsequent offenses.

- * They also would face criminal charges punishable by up to 40 hours of community service and \$500 in fines for the first offense and up to six months in jail

- and a \$2,000 fine for third and subsequent offenses.

Under current law, drivers under 21 can have a blood-alcohol content up to .07 percent. Older drivers are considered intoxicated at .10 percent.

There also would be new punishments, including driver's license suspensions, for selling alcohol to someone who is under age and for purchasing alcohol for someone under 21.

Other measures cracking down on drinking and driving - lowering the legal blood-alcohol level from 0.10 to 0.08 percent and prohibiting open containers in a vehicle - failed to pass this session.

Property appraisals

The Legislature approved and sent to the governor a property-appraisal bill that falls short of Mr. Bush's effort to sharply limit the rise in property tax rates.

The measure would allow Texans to defer some of their property taxes when the value of their homes increased by more than 5 percent.

The House originally had sought to cap the rise in appraisal at 5 percent a year, but House and Senate negotiators agreed instead to a 10 percent cap. They also

agreed to allow homeowners to defer the portion of any taxes in excess of 5 percent.

Critics said it would only delay the effects of increased values.

Homeowners would pay 8 percent interest on the taxes they deferred and if subsequent appraised values went up by less than 5 percent, they would have to pay at least a portion of the deferred taxes.

Water conservation

One year after a drought that cracked Texas farmland, spurred local water-saving measures and dried up \$5 billion from the state's economy, the Legislature

voted to approve a sweeping water conservation plan.

"This is milestone legislation that will be at the very heart of our legacy," said Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock.

He called the bill protection of "the resource most vital to future generations of Texans," adding that it "signals the beginning of a new

era in which visi
on will prevail over long-standing differences and territorial feuding."
ddThe Senate voted 31-0 and the House voted 140-4 to adopt a compromise bill re
ached by a committee of members from both chambers.
The bill now goes to Mr. Bu
sh, who is expected to sign it into law.
ddOne of the bill's most important provisions is a data collection requirement
designed to pinpoint where and how much water the state
has in an effort to dev
elop ways to conserve and maximize future use.
ddA constitutional amendment that will go before voters in November would conso
lidate \$1.2 billion in existing bonding authority under
the Texas Water Develop
ment Board to help fund local water projects.
ddChild care
ddChild-care facilities that violate health and safety rules would face a range
of penalties under a bill sent to Mr. Bush.
ddThe bill includes new registration of so-called family homes, where up to 12
children, including those of the homeowner, can be cared
for after school. At o
ther times, only up to six children not related to the homeowner can be cared f
or at one time.
ddThe bill by Rep. Patricia Gray, D-Galveston, also would establish fines for c
hild-care facilities for rules violations based on the number
of children they
care for with the highest fine at \$100. The lowest fine would be \$20 a day for
each violation in centers that care for 20
or fewer children.
ddStaff writer Wayne Slater and The Associated Press contributed to this report
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Publication#W\ PP# 48. Baltimore Sun"Publication" #:\ PP#June 2, 1997 Categor
y: Local

Headline#u\ PP# Novice school board faces 'daunting' deadlinesHeadline #:\ PP
#Subhead#[\ PP# City's expectations are high for eclectic group of achieversSu
bhead#:\ PP#
By Jean Thompson and
Stephen Henderson
ddThey are top-notch achievers in their own fields, but virtual novices at urba
n school policy-making. Nonetheless, the nine new members
of the Baltimore City
school board took on pressure-cooker responsibilities yesterday.
ddAlthough they are practically strangers and have held their positions for les
s than a week, state law gives them 15 days to appoint an
interim school superi
ntendent; a month to prepare for the expiration of five union contracts; a summ
er to draft an initial budget and survival
plan for the district; and six month
s to find and hire a permanent chief executive officer.ddYesterday, the state l
aw granted the board control of the chronically low-performing school system, a
nd started the clock ticking on
its deadlines. Decision-making must begin right
away.

dd "It's a daunting time-table," says board member Carl Stokes, a business marketing manager and former city councilman who also serves on the board of the Child First tutoring project. "But schools are not like GM assembly lines that you can shut down while you retool and then reopen with better machinery.

dd "I'm cautiously optimistic, mostly because there's a lot of talented people of not only good intentions but people with management expertise who know that we can't Band-Aid the system or think about quick fixes."

dd Common themes emerge when the individual board members cite their priorities for fixing the schools: improving the quality of teachers, their training and paychecks; reducing class and school sizes wherever possible; auditing and then re-investing the district's budget of more than \$700 million; and winning the public's confidence in the reform effort.

dd Short-term solutions will not be good enough because legislators and officials have staked careers, taxpayers' dollars, and the future of thousands of students on the five-year school overhaul outlined in the law that took effect yesterday.

dd Whether the board's newness will be a handicap or an asset remains to be seen: Only one member was chosen from the previous school board, and his tenure there was only 6 months old. Three are former teachers and one a former school psychologist, but some board members have logged little or no time in public schools.

dd Despite the sudden crush of deadlines, many members cite as their most important priority getting acquainted with their colleagues and the school system to prepare for the hurdles that lie ahead.

dd "I think the first few months, we'll spend time getting to know each other and the system, and then we'll be ready to come up with plans and move forward on them," said Bonnie S. Copeland, who rose from the rank of suburban classroom teacher to deputy state schools superintendent before becoming executive vice president of the Greater Baltimore Committee.

dd Almost universally, the members seem inclined to resist any initial temptation to toss out the old and start fresh. That does not mean the status quo will prevail; it means many of the members want to approach the job studiously.

dd J. Tyson Tildon, the board's newly appointed chairman, said, "I'm a scientist, and I'm coming at this from that perspective." The biochemist, professor of pediatrics and associate dean of research and graduate studies at the University of Maryland medical school added, "We've got to be methodical about everything we do, and it all has to be working toward a specific end."

dd Differing approaches

dd Real estate developer C. William Struever, the only member who served on the previous school board, stressed the need to weed out

programs that are not successful and to expand those that are.

dd"Having been on the board before, I know that there are a lot of wonderful things going on in city schools, but a lot of them aren't known and aren't being duplicated," said Struever, whose children attend the School for the Arts and Roland Park Elementary-Middle.

"We need to learn to build on things that work."

ddStokes, who has called in the past for limiting class sizes, dismantling the school headquarters bureaucracy and shifting administrators to schools, is barr

eling into the new era of reform with his convictions still in place. His zeal is tempered, but only slightly, by his

understanding that for many throughout t

he city, the changes that may be needed will be difficult to swallow.

ddEdward J. Brody, a trucking company owner who admits he has never seen the inner workings of the district, may be Stokes' opposite.

He has ideas about schoo

l reform, but is unwilling to discuss them publicly before he gets a good idea of what's going on.

dd"I guess I just like to study things, before I talk about ideas," Brody said.

ddNot one of the board members is afraid to break hearts or take risks, judging from their resumes, comments during interviews and the impressions of the officials who hired them.

ddCommon threads in their backgrounds are belief in the value of a solid education, and the grit that it takes to climb from working-class beginnings to the u

pper rungs of their fields and society. They are competitive. Three have doctorates; three own their own businesses;

several have up-from-bootstraps backgrounds. All have records of community service.

ddFour have tackled some of the toughest problems facing children in society, from mental health issues to child abuse to learning disabilities. Their experi

se will be key in a district whose children have more needs than others.

ddColene Y. Daniel, vice president for corporate and community services at Johns Hopkins Hospital, is a certified special education teacher who has degrees in

speech pathology and audiology. She is concerned about the high number of children in Baltimore's schools

who are identified for special education " between

17 percent and 20 percent " and the process by which they are identified.

dd"I think we have a lot of kids who are designated as special education, but whose needs don't require that kind of designation," Daniel said. "Many of these

kids can get their needs met in a mainstream environment, and that's something we need to explore."

ddLast week, city and state officials said each new board member has been a "catalyst for change" in business, education or nonprofit management. That reflect

s a sharp shift in rhetoric and priority. In the words of Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke, Baltimore in the recent past

accepted partial progress toward school improvement as accomplishment of the goal.

Mayor talking tough

That's not good enough any more, Schmoke said, setting expectations sky-high for this board. He is talking tough about cleaning house in the school system.

"In order to be successful, this board has got to make some people unhappy," Schmoke told reporters last week. "If they are not, they are not doing their job."

b. I mean there are people that simply are going to be shaken from the traditional way of doing business, and so there's got to be some unhappiness out there in this process. The governor and I have to be willing to defend this action."

He and Gov. Parris N. Glendening began outlining their visions during a private briefing of the board last week. They have scheduled another closed meeting with the full board, including the nonvoting student member, tomorrow at City Hall.

Schmoke noted that the board can "accept or reject" the visions suggested to it, but it seems evident that some priorities will trickle down from the mayor and the governor, especially while the board members are the greenest players in school politics.

While the board begins to cobble together a collective plan and establish its identity, the nuts and bolts of holding the school system together and preparing for the next academic season will fall to the school administration.

Thus, the board's first decision will be relatively simple but meaningful: From among the managers in the school system or from outside " although that seems less likely " someone must be chosen to get schools ready to reopen in the fall.

The mayor's top prospect, Deputy Superintendent Patricia Newby, has accepted a superintendency in another city. Finding a capable caretaker will mark the beginning of a grand journey for the newly enlisted nine.

"Everything is spelled out for us in the legislation," Copeland said. "But we're the ones who have to make this happen. It's going to be hard, but fun."

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Publication#W\ PP# 49. Chicago Tribune"Publication" #:\ PP# 06/01/97; Edition : CHICAGOLAND FINAL; C; Section: NEWS; Page 1 Category: Commentary

Headline#u\ PP# REPUBLICANS SAW A GHOST IN EDGAR'S SCHOOL TAX PLANHeadline #:\

PP#By John Kass ; Bob Kemper, Tribune Staff Writers.

The description "Kustracized" is of recent vintage, from a bitter Republican primary campaign between moderate Lt. Gov. Robert Kustra and conservative upstart Al Salvi in 1996.

Salvi effectively tied a list of tax votes to Kustra, energizing suburban conservatives who have been largely ignored by Illinois Republicans.

ddAn upset was born, and so was a verb.

ddIt was the possibility of being Kustracized that best explains the Republican legislative antagonism toward Gov. Jim Edgar's efforts to help schools by incr

easing state income taxes a record 25 percent"and why the tax plan has failed.

dd"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out; you don't need a Phi Beta Kappa," state Senate President James "Pate" Philip (R-Wood Dale) said as he

arranged the death in committee of the Edgar tax bill sent to him by the Democratic-controlled House.

ddOn Saturday afternoon, the governor once again implored Philip to bring the bill to a vote of the full Senate. But Philip did not budge, and a House committ

ee likewise refused to advance a scaled-down alternative passed by the Senate"yielding a legislative stalemate that dashed Edgar's hopes for school-funding reform.

ddOnly seven of 58 Republican representatives had voted with Edgar on Thursday when his plan passed the House, a sign that GOP bosses feared a tax revolt in the suburbs as the 1998 election year approaches.

ddThe political maneuvering underscored the high anxiety and deep divisions plaguing Illinois Republicans as they try to retain control of the state Senate, r

ecapture the Illinois House and elect Republicans to statewide offices.

dd"Sometimes I wonder if the governor is in sync with the Republican Party in this state," said House GOP leader Lee Daniels of Elmhurst, who vigorously opposed the Edgar plan.

dd"We had almost a \$1 billion surplus this year and last year," Daniels said. "How do you ask people to support a tax increase when that kind of revenue is flowing?"

ddThe debate also provided the party's conservative wing"which has been largely shut out of Illinois Republican politics by Republican business and corporate interests"a chance to get back in the game.

ddJack Roeser, president of the conservative Taxpayers Family Network, labeled a yes vote on the tax increase "political death."

dd"They're being urged by their nominal leader to commit suicide," Roeser said of Republican lawmakers, who, in the main, opted for life.

ddIn Illinois, the U.S. Senate campaign will get ample publicity, but the important politics for both Democrats and Republicans is the question of who will control the General Assembly.

ddIn those critical battles, positioning is everything, and Republican Party leaders don't want bloody suburban and Downstate primary fights on taxes between conservatives and moderates.

ddThe image of Edgar making a deal with a longtime Democratic foe, House Speaker Michael Madigan of Chicago, worried Republican leaders.

dd"A Democrat gets elected, promises to be against taxes and then raises taxes,

well the people expect that," Philip said. "But a Republican supporting taxes" out here, they'll never forgive us. No way."

ddPhilip said the Edgar plan directly contradicted Republican philosophy. dd"We're about limited government and low taxes," said Philip, who noted that former President George Bush watched his political career sag when conservatives abandoned him after Bush broke his "no new taxes" pledge.

dd"George Bush is a perfect example," Philip said. "And what happened to Richard Ogilvie with the first income tax? Haven't we learned a lesson around here?"

ddFor pushing the first state income tax in 1969, Republican Ogilvie won high praise from opinion makers and the late Mayor Richard J. Daley. But the tax damaged his 1972 campaign, and he lost to Democrat Dan Walker.

ddThe parallels between Kustra's 1996 campaign and Edgar's efforts with his own party on the tax issue are inviting. Back then, Kustra was Edgar's candidate, with a promise that Edgar would put his political prestige behind Kustra's candidacy.

ddBut a week before the Kustra-Salvi primary election, word leaked from Springfield about Edgar's plan to increase income taxes for schools and offer limited local property-tax relief. The revelation helped kill the already wounded Kustra campaign.

ddLate last week, as the governor promised Republicans he would support them in the 1998 election year if they backed his tax-increase plan, the fear of being Kustracized returned.

ddJust hours before the Edgar bill went before the House last week, the governor tried one last time to calm his election-jittery troops. "Anyone who supports this," Edgar said last week, directing his comments to fellow Republicans in the House, "can count on my all-out support in the (1998) election."

ddBut Edgar's pledge to campaign on their behalf convinced only seven GOP legislators "all in relatively safe districts" to support the measure.

ddEdgar's popularity in Illinois remains high, even with the tax proposal, and most politicians believe that he could run for re-election and not be seriously hurt by the fallout from the tax plan.

ddBut in 1998, legislators will fight their re-election battles in districts that can be easily swayed by direct-mail campaigns. Advertising portraying a lawmaker as supportive of tax hikes could be devastating.

dd"We're not Teflon," said state Rep. Rosemary Mulligan of Park Ridge, a moderate Republican who, despite pressure, voted against Edgar's plan because of complaints from her district.

dd"Gov. Edgar could commit a crime on the floor of the rotunda, in full view of cameras and witnesses, and still get re-elected. That doesn't hold true for the rest of us," she said.

ddEdgar, though, said Friday that he was tired of legislators preoccupied with

parochial concerns about how they would be perceived by voters in their individual districts.

dd"I think there's too much of that cheap, 'What's the political thing to do here?' The right thing to do is the best political thing to do in the long run," he said.

ddThe governor is considering several options as to his own future, including a campaign for the U.S. Senate, a re-election run or retirement, presumably to a corporate-style post at one of the state universities.

dd"He'll help in 1998? What if he's not running for re-election?" asked one party leader. "Then what?"

ddEdgar's plan, to offer some property-tax relief in exchange for the income-tax increase to aid schools, seemed doomed almost from the start. While the governor

nor sought to build consensus with statewide referendums on the matter, Philip and Daniels balked, saying they understood the mood of the electorate and were ready to address the nagging school-funding debate.

ddThe plan threatened suburbanites with higher taxes and no guarantees that their property taxes would remain stable. And it did not have the backing of business

leaders who usually give cover to Republican moderates.

ddBusiness leaders wanted Edgar to sell the tax by offering strict classroom reforms on the Chicago model, giving principals and local school boards greater powers over teacher unions.

ddBut Edgar opted instead to align himself with the Illinois Education Association, the statewide teachers union that has supported him in every election except 1994.

ddThat was the campaign that will be remembered for how Edgar pounded on Democratic challenger Dawn Clark Netsch for authoring the same kind of income-tax increase with property-tax relief he supported this year.

ddAlso hurting Edgar's tax plan was his inability to manufacture the kind of deals that made former Gov. James Thompson a legend among Republicans and Democrats alike.

ddRiverboat casinos, deregulation of electric utilities, school reform and a domed stadium plan could have been packaged by the governor to sell his tax increase.

dd"You always wonder what if," said Edgar spokesman Thomas Hardy. "But the governor has worked very hard on behalf of this legislation since last year and certainly all spring. And he believes he's made a sincere and concerted effort to pass this long-overdue reform legislation."nyxddd

Headline#\ PP# A New Kind of School for ConnecticutHeadline #:\ PP#By FRANCE
S CHAMBERLAIN

ONE THOUSAND Connecticut schoolchildren are signing up to attend very different schools in September. They might join a farm in the city, a sports academy, a school mixing urban and rural students, or one focusing on outdoor education.

The 12 new schools are the result of state legislation passed in 1996 allowing the formation of charter schools " public schools with limited enrollments paid for by taxpayers but run by parents " already offered in nearly two dozen other states.

Although Connecticut has alternative schools and magnet schools, the 12 charter schools approved by the State Board of Education earlier this spring will be this state's first.

"The Connecticut legislation places a strong emphasis on academic performance," explained Yvette Melendez Thiesfield, charter schools program manager for the State Board of Education. "Education can be delivered in creative, innovative ways that may look like basic education, but the method of delivery might be unique."

When the board announced that it would begin reviewing proposals for charter schools, 29 applicants completed the arduous process.

"There are 13 points in the legislation that charter schools must address," Ms. Thiesfield explained. "This covers everything from how well articulated their mission is, to instructional programs and governing structures."

Of the 12 applications approved, two are for local charters, meaning that the local school boards retain authority and the other 10 are for state charters.

All are for five-year periods, with annual reviews set.

"Charter schools are responsible for all policies, implementation and hiring. The school acts like a local board of education and is overseen directly by the

State Board of Education," Ms. Thiesfield said. "Magnet schools are less heterogeneous, and may have five districts coming together with a lot of involvement by local boards. Magnet schools are designed to address racial isolation, while charter schools don't make this an objective."

One of the new charters, Explorations, will be based in Winsted and will incorporate 12 towns, including Region 1, Region 7 and Gilbert and Hartland Schools.

Mary Ann Buchanan, currently the director of Housatonic's Alternative School in Region 1, created the concept for Explorations.

According to a synopsis handed out to the communities, Explorations will involve students in a school-to-career program, adventure education, magazine production and an after-school program called "Life-long Leisure."

"The kid who wants to try hands-on education, and get out of the classroom, can benefit from this," Mrs. Buchanan said. "We have to

meet all the state-mandated requirements, academically," she said. "However, we will also have a partnership with the local cable company to learn video technology. English classes will include magazine production. The Winsted Retail Association will provide mentoring relationships. Winsted Senior Center volunteers will be giving time after school to teach kids new skills like Italian cooking, golf and computers."

The program is modeled on Housatonic's Alternative School, which has been in operation for the past 18 years. Mrs. Buchanan has been with them for the past eight.

She talks happily about the success of some of her graduates. "One student," she recalled, "was a high school dropout who was living independently since he was 14. He was a hard worker and self motivated, but we were the door that got him through school. After he graduated he did survival training with the Wilderness Education Association National Standard program. He was the youngest student ever to be accepted into the instructor program."

Sonja Blass, a lead photographer for a Connecticut daily newspaper, learned her skills at the Alternative School. "She's really loving her career," Mrs. B

uchanan said. "That's a success, if you teach a kid a career they love."

Explorations' motto is "achieve through self discipline," and the logo includes a thinker and rock climber. Students will spend four days each week on acad

emics, and alternate the fifth day between career studies and outdoor adventure courses.

Each school receives a \$6,000 per pupil allotment from the state. In addition, Connecticut received a \$1 million Federal grant for start-up funds. "Ninety

five percent of this money will go directly to the 12 charters," Mrs. Thiesfield said. Local boards won't be able to count the students at state charters in their enrollment.

"Each district is different in its response," Ms. Thiesfield said. "Some had more concern about enrollment than others. If charter schools in Connecticut

become as popular as they are in other states, local school districts might be concerned about finances. However, those who are involved in legislation see this as a real opportunity, something that can enhance local school districts."

In addition to start-up funds, and per pupil expenditures, many of the charter schools will do their own fund raising.

"Ultimately, this activity could determine whether or not they stay in business," Mrs. Thiesfield said.

Ms. Thiesfield also said the numbers were small enough that there shouldn't be much impact on enrollment at the local level.

"We've capped the number at 1,000 students statewide," she said. "In very

large districts the number of students leaving to attend a charter school will

be so small that it may not impact the total dollar amount at all."

ddEach group with a charter is busy recruiting students, most having no problem filling the slots. A lottery system may be instituted to make the selections

fairly.

dd"This provides another option for parents and students," Ms. Thiesfield noted. "We are particularly sensitive to the needs of urban school districts, but

there is also a lot of interest in the innovation that comes from the creation of charter schools. We want to look at the programs that come out of the development

opers.

dd"They could be models for other schools in the future." Learning by Experience

ddTHE 12 charter schools that have been authorized in Connecticut include a wide variety of academic and extracurricular programs. The schools range in size from

44 to 175 students, and cover different age groups. Organizers include groups of parents, teachers, business leaders and others.

ddThe mission of Jumoke Academy in Hartford, covering kindergarten through 6th grade, is to prepare children to compete in the global marketplace. All its children

study a foreign language, and parental involvement is important.

ddSports Sciences Academy in Hartford, grades 9 through 12, will focus on a school-to-career model in sports communication and fundraising, management, marketing,

manufacturing and merchandising, nutrition, pedagogy and law.

ddOdyssey Community School in Manchester, for bright underachievers in grades 6 through 8, will focus on media literacy to develop analytical thinking and communication skills.

ddIntegrated Day in Norwich, with a projected enrollment of 175 students, kindergarten through 6, plans an extended schedule. The school's areas of concern include

individual research, social curriculum, multi-age grouping, and goal setting and assessment.

ddInterdistrict School for the Arts and Communication in New London is a middle school that describes itself as taking a holistic approach to academics through

the arts and communication skills.

ddCoventry Science Center, Coventry, a local charter, is a high school program with a science-oriented curriculum.

ddVillage Academy in New Haven, kindergarten through 8th grade, is focused on an instructional program that follows the stages of children, with emphasis on language arts, mathematics, history and science.

ddCommon Ground High School in New Haven will create a farm in the city and utilize extended-day programs and interdisciplinary courses.

ddThe Bridge Academy in Bridgeport, a high school, will provide a college preparation

ratory curriculum. A mentor program, exposure to the world outside Bridgeport, small enrollment and parental involvement are key to the school.

ddSide by Side Community School in Norwalk, pre-kindergarten through 8th grade, is the only charter that includes the nursery school group. The mission is to create a multiracial environment for urban and suburban children.

ddAncestors Community Charter School in Waterbury is a high school for students who have been unable to succeed in a traditional school. Partnerships will provide computer training, cultural programs, health services and internships with businesses and historically black colleges.

ddExplorations in Winsted, a two-year high school program, will emphasize career exploration, adventure education, video technology, magazine production and culinary arts.

FRANCES CHAMBERLINnyxdddPublication#W\ PP# 51. The New York Times"Publication" #:\ PP# 06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13NJ; New Jersey Weekly Desk; Page 25, Column 1 Category: Commentary

#i2PP#SOAPBOX #:\ PP#

Headline#u\ PP# Our SchoolsHeadline #:\ PP#By JON SHURE

ddTHE State Supreme Court ruling that overturned her school finance law was a major policy defeat for Governor Whitman. But that doesn't mean it will be a political setback. This isn't so much about politics as the disconnect between politics and policy. We tend not to debate the great issues in election campaigns; that would be risky.

ddBesides, most voters probably agree with the Governor and not the court. Who doesn't like to hear that spending more money can't solve severe problems of educational quality, whether it's true or not? So the Governor is in the position of, in effect, saying to the people, "It's you and me against the court."

ddIt is hard to imagine where this ruling will cost Governor Whitman votes, or where it will gain a Democrat votes. First, residents of cities, where the impact of the court ruling is directed, are a declining force in statewide politics, especially as their voting turnout drops in even greater proportion than their population.

ddSecond, while urban voters can be energized as they were in President Clinton's 1996 campaign, it is doubtful that the Democratic candidate for Governor will attempt to do so by launching a campaign based on admitting the need, and proposing the method, for spending far more on schools. Did someone say tax increase?

ddWell, actually someone did. One Democratic candidate, Michael Murphy, advocates an increase of 25 cents per pack on cigarettes to pay for higher school spending. Give him credit for more boldness than we usually see in campaigns. Then again, a consultant for one of

Mr. Murphy's rivals, state Senator James McGreevey, calls Mr. Murphy's idea suicidal.

So, Governor Whitman might get a pass on this, especially if the vibrant state economy brings in enough previously unanticipated tax revenue to plug the new court-created school funding gap for the current year. She has only to get from May to November, promising the people that she will work with them to get this problem fixed in her second term, and challenging her Democratic opponent to stop carping about her court-rejected plan and tell the state what he would do instead " and how to pay for it.

There has never been a candidate for Governor of New Jersey who made school finance reform a campaign centerpiece, or even mentioned it unless pressured to.

People say things in campaigns designed to attract wide support. If there were a way to deal with school funding that had the sort of public appeal that makes a good campaign issue, the problem would have been solved a long time ago. The problem is that it's hard, it costs a lot of money, and what works for some people in some places doesn't work for others " or at least they don't perceive that it works because this is an issue that can really be solved only if people come around to the view that we all have to contribute to educate all of New Jersey's children.

This expansive way of looking at the issue " likely to alienate suburban voters who don't want to pay higher taxes to educate urban children " requires more leadership, and more expenditure of political capital, let alone actual money, than the candidates want to spend.

It threatens cherished notions (or fantasies) of home rule; it challenges racial attitudes; it forces people away from campaign slogans and easy answers.

While Governor Whitman would have preferred to be able to say she solved the school funding mess, she probably is still mindful of the fact that she had no mandate from the people to fix school funding. She broke no promise. No Governor in New Jersey has ever had a mandate from the public to deal with school finance, because no candidate has ever sought one in the context of an election campaign.

The driving force has always come from the courts.

Thank heaven we don't elect Supreme Court justices in New Jersey, so someone can forget about politics and just try to do what's right.

About the Author: Jon Shure, who was spokesman for Governor Florio, is now president of New Jersey Policy Perspectives, a state issues research organization.

. nyxddd

#i2PP#FREE FOR ALL#\ PP#

Headline#\ PP# The Kind of Teachers We NeedHeadline #:\ PP#ddTwo items in The Post [May 21], both dealing with teachers, caught my eye.

ddThe first ["A Math Teacher's Lessons in Division," Style] told of the difficulties Jaime Escalante " glorified in the 1988 film "Stand and Deliver" " encountered

when seeking to transfer the success he experienced at one high school in California to another. At the first school, which was predominantly Hispanic, Escalante induced 143 students to take the Advanced Placement calculus test in 1991, of

whom 61 percent passed. At the school where he is now teaching, which has a more racially diverse student population, only 37 took the test last year

, of whom only 19 percent passed. What do his superiors at the new school say about Escalante and his methods? Several examples, drawn from your article, are cited below:

ddWhen Escalante shouted at a boy to stop banging the head of an adversary against a locker, the principal of the new school scolded him:

"We don't yell at kids. It belittles them."

ddAccording to the assistant principal, "Many kids don't like [Escalante], and the reason they don't like him is that his expectations are so high."

ddThe other article ["Bogus Bonus Rattles Prince George's Teachers," Metro] told of the reaction many Prince George's County teachers voiced when told they must return \$400 bonus checks sent to them in error. Educators whose duties include, one would hope, instilling

in our children the notion that people should not keep something that does not belong to them, were quoted as follows:

dd"Whoever made the mistake should eat the loss."

dd(From a union leader) "Our members were incensed. They couldn't understand why they couldn't keep the money."

dd(From another union leader) "It is an absolute travesty. As desperately as our folks need to see some kind of increase, for them to receive that little pittance

was wonderful. Then, for the administration to turn around the same day and say, 'Oops, I made a mistake,' I think it's very disheartening."

ddThis collection of statements, made by educators who presume to be role models for our children, is extremely illuminating. It helps explain why so many of

today's students emerge from school as poorly educated, in both a moral and academic sense, as they do. Bottom

line: We need more teachers like Jaime Escalante and fewer of the other kind.

dd" Leonard Greenbergnyxddd

#i2PP# #: \ PP#

Headline#u\ PP# Professor Knowledge Is Not an OxymoronHeadline #: \ PP#

By JAMES STERNGOLD

THE creation of a professorship is usually not a subject of great intellectual debate, but when the trendy University of California at Berkeley recently announced the endowment of a new chair, many academics paused to ponder what post-industrial society was coming to. With a \$1 million grant from the Xerox Corporation and its Japanese affiliate, Berkeley created a Distinguished Professor of Knowledge at its business school.

Never mind that some professors, particularly professors of philosophy, could not understand what a professor of knowledge knows, or teaches.

"The idea is certainly a little bizarre, ambiguous," said Murat Aydede, an expert in the theory of knowledge at the University of Chicago's philosophy department. "What does this mean? Does it mean inquiry into the question of what is knowledge for these businessmen, or does he have some knowledge?"

Fred Dretske, chairman of Stanford University's philosophy department and author of "Knowledge and the Flow of Information" (M.I.T. Press, 1981), said: "

I couldn't understand what he could be a professor of. I was sort of baffled by what kind of truth it involves."

Many people at Berkeley were quick to call the first occupant of the new chair, Ikujiro Nonaka, a Japanese management expert, Dr. Know.

But others pressed on to ask what would such a chair be doing at the business school, an institution dedicated to profits, after all, not wisdom or understanding.

"On one level certainly you can say a professor of knowledge is sort of a non sequitur because all professors are supposed to be professors of knowledge of

one kind or another," said Neil Smelser, a sociologist who is a director at the Center for Advanced Study in

Palo Alto. "And this chair looks like it should be in the school of Arts and Sciences. But it does say something interesting that that is thought of as a business subject."

Many academics saw the chair as a statement on how business schools are groping to enhance their role in an economy thriving less and less on the production of things and more on the production of ideas. Academic literature is filled with buzzwords like

knowledge-based workers and intellectual capital. There are centers for the study of innovation and entrepreneurship, though many experts say it is almost impossible to teach it.

"Behind this is the recognition that the wealth of nations comes from utilization of technical know-how, not capital," said David Teece, a business profes

sor at Berkeley and a pioneer in analyzing what he has called "the market for know-how."

ddMr. Nonaka, a graduate of the Berkeley school of business, is famous for a book he co-wrote, "The Knowledge-Creating Company:

How Japanese Companies Create

the Dynamics of Innovation" (Oxford University Press, 1995). He is expected to teach how corporations

can best create and then use innovative ideas.

ddIn short, the traditional language of dollars and cents has been replaced with a more abstract language that struggles to explain a real

brain teaser: What

does gainful employment amount to in an economy that places such puzzling values on abstractions, and less value on

workers, who have become so casually expendable.

dd"The idea of a knowledge-based society, I don't really understand what that can mean," said Bruce Vermazen, chairman of Berkeley's philosophy department.

"It makes me a little frightened about the future. I liked it better when we made steel. Knowledge seems like kind of a shaky industry." nyxddd

Publication#W\ P P# 54. Charleston (WV) Gazette"Publication" #: \ P P#May 30, 1997 Category: Commentary

Headline#u\ PP# Julie Pratt: Headline #: \ P P#Subhead#[\ P

P# Excellence with

him reach

Positive childhood experiences are keys to success later in lifeSubhead#:\ PP#

ddSARAH AND Bessie Delaney argued that a good life is largely determined by a good upbringing. They should know. Both lived to be over 100 years old, with Sarah still alive at 107.

ddBut their upbringing didn't come easy. Their father was born a slave and emancipated as a young child. He worked hard, went to college and eventually became

a minister and educator. He and his wife didn't have much, but their children grew up with the security of being loved and cared for.

ddThe early investment paid off. All 10 of their children attended college and had successful professions. Sarah taught in the New York

City public schools her

entire career and Bessie was a dentist. I listened to the sisters' memoirs, "

Having Our Say: The Delaney Sisters'

First Hundred Years," on tape as I drove to

o a recent conference in Pittsburgh.

ddOver 300 health and education muckety-mucks were gathering there to talk about the latest research on brain development in young

children. In magazines, on

television and at the White House, scientists are announcing what the Delaney sisters have known all along:

A good life hinges not only on the genes you're born with, but also on positive childhood experiences.

ddWhat's interesting about the new research is that it tells us how our upbringing

ing affects our brains. The process is a lot like pruning. A young child has twice as many brain synapses - the connections between brain cells - as he or she will eventually need. The synapses that are used become permanent and the others fall away.

These brain pathways set the stages of our lives. They have a lasting impact on our ability to think and learn, to feel emotions and form relationships. A father's hug or a mother's nursery rhyme help wire a baby's brain for security.

And parents aren't the only electricians. Any consistent, nurturing caregivers, be they grandmothers or day-care providers, can offer young children these same positive experiences that will last a lifetime. But the plasticity of a baby's brain cuts both ways.

Being hungry, ignored or abused also has serious and sustained effects. "Risk is not destiny," the researchers warn, however. Early negative experiences can often be overcome, but at great human and financial cost.

Three decades of early childhood research back up the scientists' claims. Long-term studies show that children who attend quality early childhood programs do better in school, are more likely to graduate, and earn more money as adults. They are less likely to need remedial services later on. This saves society \$7 for each dollar spent through savings on special education, criminal justice, and welfare programs.

Although parents are a child's first and most important teachers, families don't live in a bubble. The Delaney sisters credit their good upbringing not only to their parents, but also to their community.

They remembered the public school teachers who believed in them, the church people who donated clothes, the family doctor who treated their various childhood ailments.

What can the Delaney sisters and the new brain research teach us? First, we should support public policies that help parents fulfill their most important role.

We need jobs that pay a livable income for families and that provide health insurance. We need family leave policies that allow parents to be with their children at school conferences and doctor appointments.

At the same time, parents can't do the job alone. They never have! Families have always counted on supportive relatives, friendly neighbors, good schools, knowledgeable family doctors, and a host of community and religious organizations.

No matter how well parents do their job, no family is immune from hard times. Corporate downsizing or a serious car accident can leave any family vulnerable.

Finally, we need to rethink our system of public education.

If we believe that it is in the public good to educate our citizens, then we

are remiss to not begin earlier. Most European countries provide voluntary public preschool for all 3- and 4-year olds. They offer paid and job-protected maternity or parental leave following childbirth, up to two years in Germany.

ddThey subsidize child care so that it's available and affordable to all parents.

ddHere in the United States, parents are guaranteed only six weeks of unpaid maternity leave, then face long waiting lists for affordable child care. Most families have to wait until their children are 5 years old before they can count on help from the public school system.

ddThe Delaney sisters spent their adult lives being a part of the community of people who nurture children. Sadie often got the toughest students because she liked them and was good with them. Bessie never turned anyone away from her dental office because they couldn't pay.

dd"Your job is to help someone," was the Delaney family motto. Sadie and Bessie lived by that creed, to the benefit of the hundreds of children whose lives they touched.

ddPratt, former director of the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families, is a new member of the Gazette's contributing columnist group.

nyxddd
 Publication#W\ PP# 55. The Boston Globe"Publication" #:\ PP#June 2, 1997 Category: Commentary

Headline#u\ PP# UMass policy makes educational sense Headline #:\ PP#

ddBy David K. Scott Chancellor University of Massachusetts Amherst.dddThe misstatements in professor Paul Hollander's May 26 letter, "UMass-Amherst policies defy common sense," should not go uncorrected. UMass officials did not "cave in" to student protesters. Most of the points of agreement between student protesters and administrators had already been attained, or were in process, before the sit-in.

ddI have never argued that white staffers are incapable of evaluating nonwhite applicants. What I do believe is that people of color in the Admissions Office may have better insight into the history of difficulties and inequities that applicants of color have faced.

ddOur approach is to look closely at all of our applicants to discover students whom we believe can succeed at UMass with appropriate support, even if SAT scores, grade averages and class rank might not predict this success. Evidence of having overcome hardships and barriers in life can serve to identify students who may - and often do - succeed at UMass.

ddThis policy makes educational and economic sense. In large part it is the responsibility of the Commonwealth's public land-grant institution to prepare an increasingly diverse population for the social and economic demands our society will face in the future. We take

all reasonable steps to achieve this goal, including a thorough, multilevel review of applications.nyxddd

Publication#W\ PP# 56. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ PP# 06/02/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B01 Category: Commentary

Headline#u\ PP# Sex Ed: It's Not Child's PlayHeadline #:\ PP#By Steve Twomey

My best friend in eighth grade had older siblings. I didn't. One day we had a heated argument about sex. Using knowledge evidently passed down from his elder

s, he claimed babies were the result of an act called intercourse, and he described it. I said no way. Nobody would do anything so weird and disgusting. No way.

Of course, that was 1969, long before anything-goes TV, movies and music. Now eighth-graders not only know how babies are made, they make them. So, in a sense,

providing sex education to children today is like providing Paris with another cafe. I'd love to bump into

a 14-year-old who has as much ignorance as I had

at that age, because I'd market him to Ringling Bros. as an oddity.

It is, therefore, something of an adventure to figure out what Virginia Gov. George Allen (R) finds so awful about telling kids the facts of life.

That it'll give them lewd ideas? Too late.

Lead them to perdition? The whole culture does.

That it's too weird and disgusting, to quote myself?

Anyway, on Friday, Allen proposed to the state Board of Education that it abolish mandatory sex education in Virginia's public schools.

Local school systems

could offer the birds and the bees if they want, Allen said, but the state should not compel them.

The proposal was a terrific sop to the governor's conservative pals, many of whom seem to think sex education teachers are handing out Hustler and telling kids to do it in the road.

To be fair, Allen didn't mention his right-wing buddies as he urged making sex ed optional. His stated reason was to give local systems

leeway to free up room

in their curricula for more important subjects. It's as if he thinks sex education is nothing more than baking tips

or shop. Who, in this day and age, can

seriously argue that sex education ought to be any less mandatory than English and math?

"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that there are some things happening in the world of adolescence, vis-a-vis pregnancy, vis-a-vis sexually

transmitted diseases, vis-a-vis HIV," said Jerry Newberry, the former head of the sex education program in the Fairfax

County public schools. "We don't have the luxury of ignoring those issues."

Precisely because students now are much more conscious of sex than I was three decades ago, precisely because the culture drowns

them in lyrics and scenes that leave no blanks to fill in, they need to know the truth, the whole truth, about sex from trained educators.

ddNewberry, who now works for the National Education Association, said Friday that too many kids today merely have "street language and street knowledge, which has nothing to do with education."

ddThey watch half-hour comedies that drip with sex, yet virtually no character gets pregnant and none contracts AIDS or gonorrhea, Newberry said. As much as they need to master multiplication or verb tenses, they need to know that sex has risks, both physical and emotional. They need to know about abstinence and how to say no. They need to know the financial, emotional and spiritual consequences of becoming pregnant or making someone so.

ddNearly all of them get that information now, because it's required. End that requirement, Newberry said, and "you set that youth group up for entering a world with a tremendous amount of ignorance and the health implications that follow that."

ddUnder Allen's proposal, sex ed would become a crap shoot. If you're a student who lives in a school system that opts to provide it, you'll learn what you ought to learn. If you're not, tough luck.

ddThankfully, most systems would provide it. In fact, a huge majority would. The craziest thing about Allen's proposal is that it tinkers with a subject almost no parent finds objectionable. Under the current mandatory system, parents can demand that their children be excused from all sex education courses. They merely have to sign a form.

ddStatewide, 2 percent do.

ddTwo percent.

ddWhat Newberry fears is that as time goes on, school systems will start to drop sex education, not because parents object to it, but because the systems will see cancellation as a way to save money on personnel, training and curriculum development during financial squeezes.

ddAnd that will leave the job of instruction up to parents.

ddThere's a lot of genuflecting to the wisdom of parents, particularly by those opposed to sex education. But every day brings headlines about parents who beat or neglect their kids and about the hectic, pressured-filled lives of families whose members no longer have time to talk with each other.

ddAnd, Newberry said, "How many average parents know the details of which sexually transmitted diseases are affecting youth and how they're prevented?" How many know how to teach "refusal skills," the art of saying no? And aren't there many who remain uncomfortable talking about sex at all?

ddSo if the school doesn't provide sex instruction, and Mom and Dad either don't have the skills or the will, kids are left with what they

pick up on the street,
et, over the airwaves and on the big screen.
ddAnd that's no way to get an education.nyxddd

Publication#W\ PP# 57. USA Today"Publication" #:\ PP#June 2, 1997 Category: C
ommentary

Headline#u\ PP# Texas' 10% solution valiant but flawedHeadline #:\ PP#dd
By Gwen Daye Richardson

ddThe University of Texas Law School has offered just 14 blacks admission next
fall, compared with 75 students last year, a drop of 80%.

The same percentage d

rop has occurred at the University of California law schools at Berkeley and Lo
s Angeles. The number of Hispanics

admitted in both states also has dropped sub

stantially, although not as much. In the wake of the demise of affirmative acti
on in Texas and

California, these staggering numbers are causing more than a li
ttle anxiety.

ddAnd states are taking action. Last week, Texas Gov. George W. Bush signed a l
aw requiring the state's 35 public universities to accept

all Texas high school

graduates in the top 10% of their class; it takes effect in 90 days. Since a s
ignificant proportion of the estimated

170,000 students who will graduate from

Texas high schools this year come from schools that are either majority-black o
r

majority-Hispanic, this measure virtually guarantees admission slots to many
minority students.

ddThis represents a valiant effort, but will its impact be any different from t
hat of the policies previously in place? The most obvious pitfall

is that becau

se high schools vary so much in terms of their standards and curricula, the edu
cation received by the top 10% at one school

may be substantially different fro

m that at another.

ddIn fact, Bruce Walker, UT's director of admissions, said the state discontinu
ed a top-10% rule about five years ago because it guaranteed

admission to stude

nts who weren't prepared academically. "It wasn't working," Walker said. "There
's unevenness in K-12 education across

the state."

ddAnother pitfall is that some students may be among the top 10% of their gradu
ating class even though they may have eschewed

academically rigorous courses, s

uch as chemistry, calculus and advanced English, for "easy" courses like health
, life-management skills

and physical education.

ddBut if we don't deal with the issue of minorities' education, children will n
ot be the only losers - states may pay, too. Because Texas and

California are t

he first states to be affected by the elimination of race-based admissions, bla

cks and Hispanics who are high achievers

educationally may decide to attend sch

ools in other states, leading to a minority "brain drain."
ddWorst of all, as a result of the debate on affirmative action rollbacks, many
minorities have a perception that if they don't meet the
standards of elite un
iversities, higher education isn't open to them. But it's not true. The U.S. ha
s a multitiered system which admits
virtually anyone who wants to go to college

ddThe larger question is: Why are so many of our public schools failing to adeq
uately educate black students? Unless we can address that
issue, we're spinning
our wheels.

ddGwen Daye Richardson is editor of Headway magazine, based in Houston, Texas.n
yxddd

Publication#W\ PP# 58. San Diego UnionTribune"Publication" #:\ PP#June 2, 199
7 Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ PP# Emphasize proficiencyHeadline #:\ PP#Subhead#[\ PP# Educatio
n standards are difficult to raiseSubhead#:\ P P#

ddGov. Bill Clinton's political resurrection during the 1980s was achieved in l
arge part by his aggressive campaign to upgrade Arkansas'
dismal public school
system. During his second term as president, Clinton seems no less determined t
o lead the charge for national
education standards.

ddThe standards issue surfaces whenever politicians sense a national unease abo
ut how poorly U.S. students are faring when compared
with their counterparts ar
ound the globe. That unease has been fairly constant since a presidential commi
ssion concluded 14 years agothat the nation was at risk because of its mediocre
schools.

ddClinton's call for voluntary national testing to gauge how students are perfo
rming comes as no surprise. After all, he was promoting
the same idea as head o
f the National Governors' Association when George Bush was in the White House.
Like many good intentions,
however, this one never materialized. But Clinton ai
ms to change that by combining several existing programs and then gift-wrapping
the
package with some rhetorical flourishes.

ddWhat makes this standards gambit intriguing is its sheer audacity. Most of wh
at Clinton is proposing already exists in one form or
another.

ddHe wants to use the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth
-grade reading test and eighth-grade math test and
adapt them for use by the st
ates. The testing process would be far less extensive than that proposed by Bus
h during the early 1990s. States
that wished to participate could do so, while
those opposed to the concept could decline.

ddThe biggest drawback to Clinton's plan is the lowest-common-denominator facto
r.

ddBecause NAEP tests are basic in nature, we would prefer an exam that places g

reater emphasis on proficiency. The downside in raising the academic bar, of course, is that some students will not be able to meet the loftier standards. This would rile educational psychologists as well as many parents.

Consider, for instance, the fate of state Sen. Dede Alpert's bill to strengthen California's high school math, science and English requirements. The Coronado Democrat's common-sense measure was waylaid in the Senate Education Committee and cannot be revived until next year.

Critics worried that more-rigid classroom requirements might discourage low achievers and thus increase the dropout rate. As a result, the measure was shelved, despite widespread calls on both sides of the aisle for tougher standards.

Most Americans support the concept of testing students to see how they stack up against national standards. The challenge is to devise a test that is both academically sound and politically palatable. In light of the competing special-interest groups that have a stake in this process, that will be no small achievement " even for a master pitchman such as Bill Clinton.nyxddd

Publication#W\ P!P# 59. Dallas Morning News"Publication" #:\ P"P#June 1, 1997
Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ P#P# Hopwood aftermath Headline #:\ P\$P#Subhead#[\ P%P# Texas must find ways to boost minority enrollment Subhead#:\ P&P#

Everyone in Texas should be concerned about the alarming impact of the Hopwood court decision on minority enrollment at the University of Texas Law School.

Unless a concerted effort is made to counteract the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling, the state may get stuck with a national reputation as being hostile to minority students.

As of last week, only one black college student had accepted admission to the fall term of the UT Law School, the state's largest and highest-ranked law school. Only 12 Hispanic college students had sent in tuition deposits to secure their spots.

The drop stems directly from the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals' 1996 decision in Hopwood vs. Texas, which barred consideration of race in the law school's admission process. The year before the Hopwood decision, as many as 30 to 40 black students and between 50 and 65 Hispanic students comprised the 500-member entering law school class.

To make matters worse, the lone black student has since declined the UT Law School offer and is now headed to Cornell Law School. The reason: the pressure of being the class' only black student and the certain media attention of that rarefied status.

Law school officials say there's a glimmer of hope since the admission slots are not completely filled. The remaining 6 percent will be

filled from a waiting

g list. Law school officials hope that some black students in the pool will agree to come.

ddBut the officials probably shouldn't hold their breaths. Regrettably, the Hopwood decision has made UT Law School seem like hostile territory to qualified m

inority students. They are already exercising their options to go to more hospitable climates.

ddThat could prove a stunning setback not only for the Austin law school but for other Texas institutions that are struggling to deal with the ramifications o

f the Hopwood decision. A de facto quarantine of Texas colleges can only hurt the state.

ddThat's one reason Texas must find ways to offset Hopwood's tragic impact.

ddA bill recently signed into law by Gov. George W. Bush will help some. It requires uniform admission policies to apply to applicants who graduate in the top

10 percent of their high school class. Colleges and universities could expand the pool to include students in the

top 25 percent of a class. After that, race

-neutral criteria could be the only factors considered.

ddThis approach has several problems, though. Some Texas schools already have used this approach with no appreciable improvement in minority enrollment. The b

roader admission range also does not apply to Texas graduate schools.

ddAnother option is to challenge the Fifth Circuit's ruling. Two Texas organizations are now considering a suit. They are waiting to see if the U.S. Supreme C

ourt clarifies its position on affirmative action this month.

ddThe high court might address the issue in a case involving a high school which had to reduce its faculty. In choosing between two equally qualified teachers

, the district kept a black teacher and dropped a white teacher, who alleged discrimination. The case has some peculiarities, but it could prove a vehicle for

establishing clearer ground rules on affirmative action.

ddThree Texas universities (South Texas, Texas Wesleyan and St. Mary's) already are protesting Texas Atty. Gen. Dan Morales'

interpretation that the Hopwood r

uling means that universities cannot even include race in a "basket" of criteria. They are to be commended

for trying to find a process that is fair to all students.

ddEventually, what's needed is the legal latitude to allow race to be used as part of a basket, or assortment of criteria. The basket might also include famil

y income level, gender, special abilities or disabilities, alumni ties, special interests, geographic distribution and honors- as well as traditional academic measures such as the LSAT scores and academic rankings.

ddRecent studies have shown that the increasing emphasis on test scores alone perpetuates discrepancies in minority admissions. Racial and ethnic minorities f

rom low-income families tend to score lower than Anglo students. Such tests help indicate whether a student can

handle course work. But they are not a sure indicator either of ability or success. The tests must be part of the process, but should not be the only ranking mechanism.

Until the legal tangle can be sorted out, Texas must do more to boost minority enrollment at its campuses by making more scholarship money available to low-income students both at the undergraduate and graduate level. The state plans to kick in \$10 million for undergraduate students. That may not be adequate. Private foundations and philanthropists also should be searching for ways to provide more scholarships for qualified minority students.

Demographic projections show Texas will soon become a "majority-minority" state. That's another reason higher education must be made more accessible to minorities. If Hopwood's effects go unabated, the best and brightest minority students will leave Texas. Minority students outside Texas will not want to attend the state's institutions, either. Neither result is desirable.

Publication#W\ P# 60. Dallas Morning News"Publication" #:\ P(P#June 2, 1997
Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ P)P# Unitary status Headline #:\ P*P#Subhead#[\ P+P# It is time
for Dallas schools to get out of court Subhead#:\ P,P#

Summer is vacation time for Dallas schoolchildren. But it certainly won't be a time of rest and relaxation for school officials and their lawyers.

They have made a strong plea for the Dallas school district to be released from a federal desegregation suit that has dominated education decisions since the early 1970s.

The choice should not be that difficult for U.S. District Judge Barefoot Sanders. He granted the district unitary status in 1994, which basically declares that the Dallas schools are fully integrated.

But Judge Sanders extended federal supervision of the public school system for three more years to see if Dallas school officials could live up to their agreements.

The judge has ample information to justify closing the desegregation case. The Dallas school district is providing equal education for students throughout the system. Millions of dollars have been invested in new school facilities in predominantly minority neighborhoods in recent years.

The final stumbling block is the court's order that faculties reflect the district's racial makeup. With Anglos comprising less than 14 percent of the student population, Judge Sanders should accept the district's plan to provide mixed-race faculties without a wholesale transfer of teachers.

A quarter-century after the desegregation suit was filed, the Dallas school d

istrict still does not have the student population it did in the early 1970s. T

here are about 155,000 Dallas students today compared to more than 180,000 in 1970.

ddIt's time for Dallas Superintendent Yvonne Gonzalez and school trustees to work on programs that improve the school system and restore parents' confidence.

And it's time to let school officials make these needed educational improvements without always having to

look to the federal courts for guidance and approval

ddThe Dallas school district spends more than \$500,000 a year on court costs and legal fees to operate under federal jurisdiction. That money could be better

invested in enrichment programs for the students.

ddJudge Sanders should release the district. It's the right thing to do for the children.nyxddd

Publication#W\ P-P# 61. Baltimore Sun"Publication" #:\ P.P#June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ P/P# Getting serious with school needsHeadline #:\ P0P#Subhead#[\ P1P# Carroll County: Commissioners were wise to build long-term financing for

education.Subhead#:\ P2P#

ddCOMMITTING CARROLL to long-term local financing of school construction, the county commissioners have recognized that state funding will be more problematic and fickle in the future. But it is the only realistic step after years of Carroll's delay in construction, and increased competition from other counties for state money.

ddTrimming the local piggyback income tax rate by 5 percent lets the commissioners claim they cut taxes. Using bonds to finance school building allows them to spread the cost over 20 years. Holding the property tax rate firm at \$2.62 per \$100 of assessed property value, they modestly increased the operating budget by less than 4 percent.

ddIn all, a rather conservative \$168 million budget was approved by the three commissioners last week. And well it should be, after significant increases in the piggyback income tax and property tax rates the past two years.

ddTwo new high schools are to be built over the next seven years, in South Carroll and Westminster, paid for by bonds, local revenues and state dollars. Five points of the 55 percent piggyback tax rate will be earmarked for school construction and servicing the bonds.ddBoth schools, at \$25 million each, need to be built now, but the commissioners balked at that huge upfront cost. Westminster is delayed

until a 2003 opening, honoring the school board's wishes. That is probably the biggest mistake in this fiscal plan.

ddThe state has agreed to finance a new Westminster high, per the county's request, but will not easily transfer that approval to a South

Carroll facility. The result could be a loss of state funding for a year or more, because of the Carroll school board's indecision and changing priorities. That is a troubling prospect for Carroll County, regardless of whether South Carroll's school building needs are marginally greater than those of the Westminster area. Detractors of the budget are angry with the continuation of the piggyback tax. Commissioners raised the rate from 50 percent to 58 percent of the state tax in 1995, promising it would only last six years. Now, by issuing bonds with fixed payments, they make it more difficult for their successors to tinker with the tax rates. But this is a more realistic plan if Carroll hopes to meet its school needs.

Publication#W\ P3P# 62. The Washington Post"Publication" #:\ P4P# 06/02/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: Editorial; Page A18 Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ P5P# School Shake-upHeadline #:\ P6P#ddTHERE'S A reason Prince George's School Superintendent Jerome Clark's shock treatment of six county schools is being received so well. The schools in question consistently were failing to meet state academic standards, to the consternation of the superintendent, county leaders and most important, Prince George's County parents. The decision to require all employees at the two middle schools and four elementary schools "from principals to janitors" to reapply for their jobs and undergo an individual screening process is regarded as an essential step toward weeding out poorly performing instructional and support staff in the six underachieving schools. Other lessons can be drawn from this dramatic action as well. When it comes to public education, Maryland means business. State officials already have intervened in 50 Baltimore City schools and in two schools in Anne Arundel and Somerset counties. In those instances, state officials had concluded that the schools were performing so far below acceptable standards and with such a consistency that the state could no longer rely on local officials to get the job done. Superintendent Clark recognized that his schools in Prince George's faced a similar fate, absent action on the county's part to improve the teaching and learning taking place in those classrooms. So he acted before Annapolis stepped in. But there's more significance to the announcement than the possibility or even likelihood of a staff purge. Unlike the District, for instance, Maryland has a set of clear standards against which to measure school performance. TD The Maryland School Performance Assessment Program test in reading, writing, language usage, mathematics, science and social

studies is given to student
s in the third, fifth and eighth grades. At not one of the six schools did more
than 20 percent of the students meet
the state standard. At one school, only 1
1.1 percent of the students performed up to standard. The schools had other fea
tures in common,
including high percentages of poor children, uncertified teach
ers and low percentages of teachers with advanced degrees.
ddWhat sets these six schools apart from their counterparts across the line in
the District, however, is that Maryland and county school
officials are taking
direct action against the problem. The six schools will be bolstered with a new
team of administrators and educators
who will devise special programs to get t
he students up to speed academically. Parents " essential to the program's succ
ess " will be
brought into the picture as well. Prince George's has gone beyond
the talking and hand-wringing stages. That, perhaps, is the best sign of
all.n
yxddd

Publication#W\ P7P# 63. Richmond TimesDispatch"Publication" #:\ P8P#June 2, 1
997 Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ P9P# Teaching UpHeadline #:\ P:P#
ddThere may be good news on the education front, according to Arthur Levine, pr
esident of Teachers College at Columbia University.
He believes a resurgence of
idealism among the young is producing a better crop of teachers, as education
becomes more a career of choice
and less of last resort.
ddAdmittedly, Levine's opinion must be taken with a grain of salt. Teachers Col
lege's graduate program is ranked No. 1 by U.S. News
and World Report. Conseque
ntly, its students and applicants are among the nation's most promising. (Bill
Cosby's son Ennis was enrolled
at Teachers when he was murdered earlier this ye
ar.)
ddYet Levine doesn't rely on his own observation; he researches student attitud
es. For more than two decades he has been gathering data
and assessing their im
plications. Today's college students, according to Levine, are less concerned a
bout international unrest. They probably
won't react to conflict in Tajikistan
the way their parents did to Vietnam. Yet they seem more convinced than earlier
generations of the
value of individual contributions. More than two-thirds of
the students Levine interviewed recently said they participate in service activ
ities.
Teaching is a field where many believe (rightly) one person can make a d
ifference. And more and better students, seemingly, are willing
to commit.
ddThe women's movement was a tremendous blow to American education. Until they
were liberated, most working women were clerks,

nurses, and teachers. So teachers were as likely to be bright and capable as anyone in the general population. But when careers beckoned in medicine, business, and law, women had other options. So while there are wonderful, dedicated teachers still, they are rarer than they used to be. Lamentably, today's education majors generally are among the lowest-ranked students in college classes. Until that changes, there can be little hope for improvement in education. How can students grasp coherent ideas that are over the heads of some of their teachers? Yet if Levine is right, the future is promising; things may be looking up at last. Few things matter more than education. They who can, should teach.

Publication#W\ P;P# 64. San Diego UnionTribune"Publication" #:\ P<P#June 1, 1997 Category: Editorial

Headline#\ P=P# Plug this dangerous gapHeadline #:\ P>P#Subhead#[\ P?P# Temporary school employees need screening Subhead#:\ P@P#

The recent brutal murder of a high school senior is all the more incomprehensible because it could have been prevented if the government had simply done its job.

Last month, the body of 18-year-old Michelle Montoya was found with a severe head wound and a slit throat in Rio Linda High School's wood shop. The prime suspect in this senseless slaying is Alex Del Thomas, a substitute school janitor who had been employed just a month by the rural Grant Joint Union High School District near Sacramento.

Although not required to do so by state law, the district had requested a criminal background check on Thomas. Had the check been conducted in a timely manner, it would have shown him to be a member of the notorious 107th Street Hoover Crips, a Los Angeles gang, who also had done time in Folsom Prison on a manslaughter conviction. It would have documented that Thomas was involved in the stick-up of a Los Angeles store that resulted in the killing of a customer; that he copped a plea to avoid the murder rap; and that he did nine months for beating his wife and violating terms of his parole.

It's a sad enough commentary on our porous criminal justice system that this dangerous character was roaming the streets instead of being behind bars where he surely belonged. It's downright disgraceful that someone like this was allowed to work around kids.

Incredible as it may seem, current law does not require criminal background checks on noninstructional, temporary employees. Two Sacramento-area assemblywomen have proposed measures to close this gaping hole in California's public safety network.

Republican Barbara Alby and Democrat Deborah Ortiz would prohibit schools from hiring anyone convicted of a serious or violent

felony. Nor could districts put someone on the job before the state Department of Justice conducts an electronic fingerprint check to determine if the subject has a criminal record. The measure also would require that checks be completed within a couple of days, rather than the current system, which can take a month or longer.

The bungled Thomas background check vividly illustrates the problem. On April 15, the school district fingerprinted him, but the attorney general's office did not receive the prints until May 14, two days prior to Michelle's murder.

Even so, one would expect alarm bells to have sounded, perhaps saving the young woman's life. Instead, we are left to ponder how the state could permit a dangerous criminal to work in close proximity to students.

Publication#W\ PAP# 65. Detroit Free Press"Publication" #:\ PBP#June 2, 1997
Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ PCP# TEST SCORES II: What matters most is to learn from the testing process
Headline #:\ PDP#

Brace yourself for another test-score brouhaha.

Tomorrow is the release date of Michigan High School Proficiency Test results for the Class of 1998's first testing attempt. They apparently will show, at least on a statewide basis, a decline in writing success but improvements in science, math and reading, compared to the Class of 1997's first round of testing.

All of which will prove . . . nothing yet.

This is only the second round of testing; scores can be expected to bounce around simply because it is a different version of the test. Educators will need time to sort out whether some questions yield markedly different results from others. It is impossible at first glance to say whether the changes in scores - up or down - reflect student performance or variations in the test.

Second, an unusually large number of students opted out of these tests; in some districts, such as Birmingham, many of the smartest students stayed home. Parents worried that a "novice" designation (the middle of the three scoring categories) on their children's transcripts might hurt college prospects.

Parents in some of those districts also suggest that the scores on the 11-hour tests only provide fodder for politicians who want to lambaste public schools and maybe even destroy public education. Unfortunately, if the smart kids stay out of the testing process, the averages are more, not less, likely to provide the kind of ammunition they're seeking.

Gov. John Engler denies emphatically that he wants to trash public schools. But his proposal for state takeovers of school districts, based

solely on test scores, has increased fears that testing helps politicians more than kids. In its most recent version, proposed school accountability legislation leaves out the High School Proficiency Tests as a benchmark. That's probably the ultimate indication that this process needs a much longer track record and improvements before it can serve as an accountability tool. Test scores never should be the single criterion for judging a district. The new high school tests have had a messy launch. Schools and students have gotten little or no feedback. An appeals process is just now being put into place. The state Department of Education can't seem to track how the Class of 1997 did overall on its second and third attempts on the test; eventually, statistics may emerge on what percentage of this year's seniors ended up with endorsements. Some districts are uncertain they have the last word on what endorsements stickers to put on graduates' diplomas. Every member of the Class of 1997 who took the High School Proficiency Tests deserves a pat on the back at commencement. They were test subjects in more than one sense. They handled a lot of stress - as a group and as individuals - to provide a benchmark for a complicated new process. The same will be true of the next few classes, until the system is refined. That remains worth the effort, as long as parents and politicians can remember that test results are a tool to benefit all students long-term, and that one set of test scores, in isolation, means almost nothing.

nyxddd

Publication#W\ PEP# 66. St. Louis PostDispatch"Publication" #:\ PFP#June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ PGP# All Kids Can LearnHeadline #:\ PHP#
 Missouri's efforts to improve the performance of its students are being undermined by a group of school superintendents in the southeast part of the state. They want the state to lower the bar of achievement for districts with a high percentage of students from poor families, claiming that such students don't have the opportunity or the ability to learn as well as those from wealthier areas. Their argument is not only wrong, it is pernicious. Prompting the debate is a new system for accrediting school districts, under the Missouri School Improvement Plan (MSIP). Previously, schools were evaluated primarily on effort made to teach their children. Now, more emphasis is put on how a district's resources actually are being used, with increased attention to students' scores on tests. As the improvement program progresses, student performance will

take on added importance.

ddThat prospect apparently was alarming to superintendents in Southeast Missouri, who formed the Committee for Equitable MSIP

Performance Standards. They met

in April with officials of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to try to make a

dubious point: School districts that have a high concentratio

n of poverty are at a disadvantage when it comes to meeting the proposed

perform

mance standards for students in the state.

ddMost disturbingly, they drew a doubtful and hurtful link between poverty and

ability, contending that many districts with "high

concentrations of disadvanta

ged students are doing a more effective job of enabling their students to perfo

rm at a level that approaches

their maximum abilities than are some other publi

c school districts with low concentrations of disadvantaged students (emphasis added).

ddIn other words, these superintendents are pushing for a cycle of self-fulfill

ing, self-perpetuating inadequacy. They claim that because

their students are p

oor, their capacity to learn is hampered; because their capacity to learn is ha

mpered, their schools should be held to a

lower standard; because their schools

would be held to a lower standard, neither the schools nor the students would

ever be pressed or

expected to show much improvement.

ddThe superintendents wouldn't put it like that, of course. They just want the

state to take into account the fact that their students start

out behind studen

ts in more affluent districts. Their students may not have had the preparation

for school that wealthier children did, and

they may not benefit from the same

support at home or the same respect for learning. Therefore, the superintendent

s say, they should not

be judged by the same standards.

ddOne suggested alternative is to judge students not by where they end up but b

y how far they travel, relative to where they start.

Accreditation decisions wo

uld be made not on absolute test scores but on the improvement made from the be

ginning of one school year

to the end. That gauge could be acceptable for a whi

le. But eventually, if the students from poorer families show gains year after

year, they

should be able to score as well as students everywhere in the state.

Why not set high goals from the start? There should be no need to water

down t

he standards or to lower the expectations.

ddRobert Bartman, the state's commissioner for elementary and secondary educati

on, feels strongly about keeping the standards high.

He expresses his belief in

four simple but powerful words: "All kids can learn." He should stick with tha

t position.

ddA poor socioeconomic level may handicap students when they begin. But factor

s in the state school funding formula, plus programs such as Parents as Teachers, help compensate for that start. Every effort must be made to make each student achieve as much as possible; even more important, all boys and girls in Missouri classrooms should feel they have the potential to reach the stars. Superintendents who argue for lower expectations are cheating themselves and their students. They should be models for achievement, not for mediocrity. All children can learn. So should their elders.nyxdddy

Publication#W\ PIP# 67. The New York Times"Publication" #: \ PJP# 06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 4; Editorial Desk; Page 16, Column 1 Category: Editorial

Headline#u\ PKP# Segregation AnewHeadline #: \ PLP# After dismantling affirmative-action programs, the public universities of Texas and California have witnessed ominous declines in black and Latino enrollment, raising fears that universities in these ethnically diverse states could one day become overwhelmingly white. Fearing rejection, many black and Latino students have decided not to apply at all. In addition, educators foresee a new minority "brain drain," as

outstanding students who do win acceptance opt for rival states, driven away by fears of racial isolation. The new segregation endangers the social coherence of

both Texas and California. Educators and political leaders will need to work vigorously to reopen educational access and avoid long-term division.

Most of the United States is governed by the Supreme Court's Bakke decision, which forbids quotas but permits schools to consider race in admissions decisions.

However, Texas and California have eliminated any consideration of race, each for its own reasons. In Texas,

the change results from a Federal court decision

that threw out an admissions system with separate procedures and panels for applicants of different races. In California, the rollback results from a 1996 ballot initiative that altered admissions policies. Because they nearly always came from worse schools than whites, black and Latino applicants were frequently admitted with lower test scores. Scores are only one predictor among many, and

black students often excel despite them. But under the Texas and California plans, race has been eliminated and test scores have been fetishized.

The drop-off in applications has been astounding. In California medical schools, applications from black students have dropped by a quarter and from Latino

students by a third over the last two years. The University of Texas Law School, which has produced a large share of minority law graduates, accepted about 65 black students in 1996, but only 11 this year. Every one of those 11 opted to go elsewhere,

some because of stories about declining minority enrollment.
 ddMichael Sharlot, dean of the University of Texas Law School, says that trend could continue. He warns that a dearth of minority lawyers in a state that is half minority will undermine confidence in the law and add to racial friction. Mr. Sharlot says outstanding minority students are deciding to bypass Texas, robbing it of a skilled and upwardly mobile minority community.
 ddIn Texas, angry legislators have passed a bill requiring universities to accept the top 10 percent of graduates from all state high schools. California has proposed a program to link universities with poor inner-city schools, in an attempt to improve public school instruction. In both states, it is coming home that minority students are being systematically disadvantaged by abysmal and segregated public schools. The states inflict the damage and have a moral obligation to find a remedy.
 ddMeanwhile, college enrollment figures show there is no such thing as a "race neutral" admissions policy. If universities do not take disadvantage into account, many minority students will face the prospect of resegregation in higher education. nyxddd

Publication#W\ PMP# 68. The Hartford Courant"Publication" #:\ PNP#June 1, 1997

Headline#u\ POP# Make Sheff legislation count Headline #:\ PPP#
 ddImportant decisions about the future of education for the state's children shouldn't be cobbled together on the fly. Yet the legislature adjourns Wednesday, and negotiations regarding remedies to the Sheff vs. O'Neill school desegregation lawsuit resemble what one observer called "a tug of war with more than one rope."
 ddNo one said it would be easy to establish a comprehensive, muscular policy to ensure that each child gets an equal and diverse education. But the posturing should end at this late stage.
 ddIt was beginning to look as if there would be no progress at all on the Sheff mandate. Even the governor's modest response to recommendations by his Education Improvement Panel was gutted when the Appropriations Committee declined to fund key parts, most notably school choice. Thankfully, the caucus of African American and Puerto Rican legislators threatened to hold up the budget unless strong strides were made toward improving education and ending racial isolation. Attempts to accommodate the caucus triggered the last-minute scramble.
 ddThe result is a well-meaning but token smorgasbord of steps for improving readiness of preschoolers, expanding Head Start, setting up charter schools and in tradistrict magnets and specialty schools, increasing the education cost- shari

ng grants and setting aside money
for improvement of educational technology.
ddMajor sticking points - and the meat of the legislation - include interdistri
ct choice in the form of an expanded Project Concern, an
annual review of schoo
l districts to ensure that resources are spent equitably and the obligation of
districts to meet racial diversity standards.
ddCity students should be permitted to attend public schools of their choice. N
aysayers fear an emptying out of classrooms, leaving behind
the worst students
and a shortage of state grant money to educate them.
ddThis is naive. Without adequate incentives to accept outsiders, suburban scho
ols near capacity can and will say no. The state should
make districts that ope
n their arms to outsiders part of a regional solution by making it financially
attractive to participate.
ddThe goal of school choice isn't to strip cities and overload the suburbs. It
is to provide a quality education for all, and that means a
racially mixed one.
Fear of losing state money because of declining enrollment in a city school sh
ouldn't be a reason to discourage choice;
it should be an incentive to improve
the school to keep students there.
ddStrong statutory language should be adopted that would obligate towns to meet
reasonable state Board of Education standards for
providing a diverse educatio
n. As proposed, this requirement would have the same teeth as, say, the Minimum
Expenditure Requirement.
Towns that failed to make a good-faith effort to dive
rsify would be penalized.
ddComplying with change of the magnitude suggested by the Supreme Court in its
support of Sheff takes courage and money. Legislators
must be leaders in chari
ng the course that will make Connecticut schools a model for the nation.
ddThe first steps are the hardest, but they should be straight, sure and headed
in the right direction.nyxddd

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ATTACHMENT 3

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Daily Education News



Monday, June 2, 1997

U.S. Department of Education
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Norman Greenberg, Editor

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NATIONAL

1. Associated Press

05-31 2:52p

Education secretary urges equal opportunities for all

with AP Photo

TURLOCK, Calif. (AP) - U.S. Education Secretary Richard W. Riley challenged graduates at California State University-Stanislaus on Saturday to help insure equal opportunities for future students.

Riley said he fears what he termed "affirmative inaction" will replace affirmative action in providing education opportunities for minorities.

Then, Riley gave this charge to nearly 1,700 bachelors' and masters' degree candidates at the Cal State-Stanislaus commencement:

"You should work to ensure that those who come after you will have the same or better opportunities for an education and all that goes with it."

He urged the new graduates to help

provide "the same kind of chance you had, and took advantage of, often through sacrifices of your own."

Riley encouraged the graduates to volunteer as tutors, either in schools or for youngsters in their own family.

"Nothing prevents you from helping students learn how to prepare for college preparatory tests or from starting a class to develop good study habits or write college application essays," he said. "These are actions that make a difference."

Graduates can "serve your own heritage by helping others," Riley said. "You see, that is what really matters; that is what a real education means."

Riley deplored the trend toward banning affirmative action and cited an 80 percent decline in the number of

blacks admitted to University of California law schools.

"These are just the first signs of what happens when you don't encourage educational opportunity," Riley said. "Unfortunately, they will not be the last. Policies that perpetuate an unfair disadvantage on those who have not had educational opportunities in the past are unacceptable, and we must strive to correct them."

However, Riley said affirmative action alone is not enough to guarantee equal educational opportunity.

Besides volunteer help, he encouraged recruitment and outreach programs for minorities such as UC is trying in lower grades in hopes more minorities will meet entrance standards when they graduate from high school. ■

2. The Wall Street Journal

06/02/97 Page A1

Category: Local

Free for All: Georgia's Scholarships Are Open to Everyone, And That's a Problem — The State Picks Up Tuition, Regardless of Income; Is That Fair to the Poor? — Even 'Bill Gates Can Qualify'

By Greg Jaffe

Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

ATLANTA — Maria Weddige and Kijua Sanders will both graduate in June from state colleges in Georgia. Ms. Weddige, 22 years old, comes from a family whose earnings exceed \$50,000. She never had to interrupt her studies to take a job. Ms. Sanders, 26, regularly worked two jobs to help pay for school, and her family income is less than \$25,000.

The two women have good academic records. So which one receives more financial aid from government programs?

They both get about the same amount, because of the generosity of Georgia's Legislature and a gradual change in

government thinking. After years in which only the poor were considered needy, that term — especially when applied to higher education — increasingly embraces the middle class.

Ms. Weddige and Ms. Sanders are beneficiaries, to very different degrees, of a Georgia scholarship program called HOPE, or Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally. Funded with money from the state's lottery, HOPE pays 100% of tuition at state schools for all Georgia students — regardless of income — who maintain a B average and aren't already receiving federal financial aid. It also provides free tuition to all state students who attend vocational or technical schools in Georgia.

By many measures, HOPE has been a success. Nearly 118,000 students are

enrolled, receiving scholarships totaling \$125 million. More than 97% of all in-state freshmen at the University of Georgia have been HOPE recipients this year. At least a dozen states are weighing similar programs. And President Clinton is pushing a national program to give tax breaks to parents whose children maintain a B average in college.

Critics, though, say HOPE isn't shining brightly enough on those who need help the most. Ms. Weddige gets about \$3,000 from HOPE, while the lower-income Ms. Sanders receives almost no assistance from the program. That is because Georgia officials subtract the value of her federal grants from her HOPE scholarship. In the current school year, Ms. Sanders's only benefit from HOPE has been a book allowance of

about \$100 a quarter.

Ms. Sanders also is affected by cuts the state made in a program that provides low-income students with money for living expenses. In 1997, Georgia will put \$2.2 million into its Student Incentive Grants, down from \$5.2 million in 1995. For Ms. Sanders, that means she received a \$300 grant this year, down from \$1,500 last year. Georgia's contribution is the lowest, per student, in the nation. Asked why the state gives relatively little, Gov. Zell Miller says, "Other states don't have HOPE."

But the cuts have made college less affordable for many low-income Georgians. Ms. Sanders's total aid package dropped from about \$4,000 in 1995 to \$3,000 in 1996. To compensate, she switched apartments, moving farther from campus and into a less safe neighborhood.

That seems wrong to some educators who believe that the primary goal of financial aid should be to make college available to the poor. "If you're Bill Gates, you can qualify for HOPE and get free tuition," says Thomas G. Mortenson, a senior scholar at the National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations, a federally funded think tank based in Washington. "In an area of deteriorating investment in public schools . . . it's more important than ever to target aid to those who need it the most."

Such criticism speaks to fundamental questions about entitlement programs: What resources should governments make available for citizens? Who should benefit? Increasingly, legislators are drawing the line well above the poverty level.

"Who says every aid and scholarship program should be limited to poor people?" says David Longanecker, an assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Education. "The middle class deserves some relief."

In a sense, the HOPE program calls to mind an earlier era when many state schools were tuition-free for residents, and many poorer students also received grants to pay for room, board and books. The idea was to make college widely available, and to encourage a student body representative of society as a whole.

That changed in the 1970s, when states from California to New York started charging for tuition. At first the amounts were minimal, but between 1980 and 1995, the cost of an education at a four-year public university soared 235%, while the median household income rose 82%, according to a General Accounting

Office report.

As tuition at private schools also soared, the middle class demanded help, and the government responded. In 1993, Congress removed home equity from the needs-analysis calculation for federally subsidized student loans. That opened the program to thousands more middle-class families.

But there was less support for boosting aid to the poorest students. Today, the largest Pell grant covers about 33% of the average cost of tuition, books and board at a public university, down from 80% in 1981.

"The saying at the Department of Education was that the war on poverty was over," recalls Tom Wolanin, a deputy secretary for legislative and congressional affairs at the department from 1993 to 1996. "We all realized that any program that serves poor people [alone] was not politically feasible."

About the same time, Gov. Miller was trying to build support for an ambitious scholarship program in Georgia. "I always wanted to do something big in education," the former college history professor says. His plans would eventually become the HOPE program.

Lawmakers opened the program in 1993 to students from families making less than \$66,000 a year — with an exception. Worried that lottery money would run out if too many families took part, they turned their attention toward poorer students, whose federal Pell grants can be used for any education-related expenses, not just tuition. The state decided that those students would get HOPE scholarships worth only that portion of their tuition that the federal aid didn't cover.

Ms. Sanders, for example, got a \$2,400 Pell grant this year. That amount was subtracted from the value of her HOPE scholarship, leaving her a \$100-a-quarter book allowance from HOPE.

Despite officials' early worries, the lottery well didn't run dry. Just the opposite: It has generated far more sales — about \$5 billion in four years — than the state expected. So the legislature, flush with the windfall, soon faced another decision. Should it give poor students the full HOPE tuition award so they could use the Pell grants for living expenses, or should it expand HOPE to include wealthier students?

Legislators chose the latter course and raised the income cap to \$100,000. Then, last year, Georgia opened the program to

everyone, regardless of wealth.

Since HOPE has no income cap, the students don't have to disclose what they or their parents earn. Thus, the state doesn't have data on how much of its largess goes to wealthy families.

Most Georgia lawmakers say they are satisfied with their decision to include students with higher incomes. If the state had instead given full scholarships to those already getting Pell grants, about 19,000 higher-income students would have been knocked off the rolls, Gov. Miller says. HOPE's goal, he says, is to help "as many kids as we can."

In the process, HOPE may also help the state keep its best students at home. Between 1992 and 1996, the average combined SAT score for new freshmen at the University of Georgia rose 20 points. Nationally, the average rose 12 points.

"Before the HOPE program, our honors students would have laughed at the idea of going to the University of Georgia," says Steve Pearson, a counselor at Decatur High School in Atlanta's suburbs. "Today, it is a serious choice."

It isn't just the public universities that benefit. HOPE also provides \$3,000 annual tuition rebates to state students who maintain a B average at private colleges in Georgia. That has produced an unusual response from Furman University, a private college in Greenville, S.C., that depends on the Atlanta suburbs for students. Furman recently began offering \$3,000 rebates to students from Georgia to bolster enrollment.

HOPE's generosity was the deciding factor for Ms. Weddige. As a high-school senior, she says, she was "in love" with Carleton College, an exclusive liberal-arts school in Minnesota. Her parents, however, helped persuade her to attend Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

Six years earlier, when Ms. Weddige's sister attended Berry College, a private school in Rome, Ga., the family was turned down for financial aid. "We basically had to struggle through," says Peter Weddige, Maria's father. HOPE, by contrast, has allowed the Weddiges to put money in their retirement savings.

And it has enabled Ms. Weddige to graduate debt-free. "Without HOPE I would have graduated with between \$10,000 and \$20,000 in loans," she says.

Still, as HOPE's popularity has surged, the program has come under fire. Some critics say it could prompt professors to

inflate grades or cause students to shun tough courses for fear that their grades will plummet and they will lose their financial aid.

"If that's the case, you end up shooting HOPE tips the balance of aid too much in favor of the privileged," says Larry Gladieux, executive director of the College Board, a Washington-based association that administers college-entrance exams. He sees the same problems in Mr. Clinton's proposal, which would offer a \$1,500 tax credit or a \$10,000 tax deduction to lower- and middle-income families with students in

yourself in the foot, especially if your goal is to encourage academic excellence," says Tom Kane, a professor at Harvard University.

But HOPE's most persistent critics are college. The deduction would be worth about \$2,700 to families making \$70,000 to \$80,000 a year.

Ms. Sanders echoes those concerns. When she graduates, she will have accumulated about \$8,000 in debt. Eventually, she says, she would like to get a doctoral degree in education. But her immediate goal will be to find a job that will pay off her loans.

from financial-aid groups who say it doesn't do enough to open the doors of college to poorer students.

Gwyn Francis, director of financial aid at Georgia State, says she worries that the needs of students like Ms. Sanders are being lost in the clamor over HOPE.

"My concern is that in our push to help a very vocal middle class and encourage academic excellence, we're going to forget about the students who simply can't attend college without help," she says. "That would be a big loss." ■

3. The New York Times

05/31/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 1; Metropolitan Desk; Page 1, Column 1

Special Education Practices In New York Faulted by U.S.

By JACQUES STEINBERG

The Federal Government last night warned New York City school officials that they must reduce the disproportionately high numbers of black and Hispanic students in special-education programs or face a lawsuit and ultimately the revocation of tens of millions of dollars in Federal aid.

The admonition by the United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, in a memorandum of agreement with the Board of Education, marked the first time that Federal officials have waded into the problem, which has long troubled high-level school officials but has been difficult to correct in a vast system of 1,100 schools.

TD After a two-year study of special-education referrals in New York City, Federal officials concluded that the long-held perception of such programs as warehouses for minority children — some with behavior and learning problems, and some not — was rooted in fact.

Indeed, officials examining schools throughout the city found that the higher the percentage of white students schoolwide, the greater the likelihood of a black or Hispanic child being referred to special education.

"The hope is that over time, as schools and districts are held accountable, whether through gentle prodding or stern enforcement, a different mentality will take hold," said a lawyer familiar with the agreement, who insisted on anonymity.

"The hope is that they will become more sensitive to the intersection of race and special education, in terms of educational decision-making."

A Board of Education lawyer, Robin Greenfield, said last night that city school officials had cooperated in the drafting of the agreement and would comply with its terms, in instances where referrals of children to special education are deemed inappropriate and unwarranted.

She added, however: "There is no finding of wrongdoing. And there never was one."

But others familiar with the agreement said the board had had little choice but to participate in order to avoid a more formal investigation and potential sanctions.

Under the terms of the agreement, Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew will implement a series of corrective measures. An intensive training program will be established to give parents a better understanding of their rights and of the instructional options available to their children.

Principals will be instructed to include more special-education students in citywide standardized testing to determine whether the programs are doing such students any good, and perhaps to return those who are improving to general classrooms. In the past, administrators were loath to test such students, fearing that their performance would bring down the average scores of their schools. Parents and politicians often view the tests as a

barometer of a school's effectiveness.

The Chancellor, underscoring an overhaul of special education that he started last fall, also agreed to intervene earlier in the educational lives of students who have fallen behind, so that their problems can be corrected without their ever entering a special-education classroom. And the board said it would do a better job of gathering statistics illustrating referral patterns in individual schools, so that problem schools can be flagged more easily.

Phil Coltoff, who, as executive director of the Children's Aid Society, has been tracking the system's shortcomings for years, said he was hopeful that the Federal intervention would spur improvement.

"Everyone knew this wasn't right," Mr. Coltoff said. "But they almost needed an outside force, an authority, to say, 'You've got to do it differently.'"

The city's special-education system has grown unchecked in the two decades since Congress passed a law in 1975 guaranteeing educational equality for the handicapped. The enrollment was 30,000 students in 1974, but has quadrupled since and now represents about 13 percent of the city's 1.1 million students.

Nearly three-quarters of the students in the city's special education system are labeled either "learning disabled" or "emotionally handicapped," broad classifications that critics say have been used to include some students who present little more than a disciplinary nuisance.

Of the students in special-education programs in New York City's elementary schools, about 60 percent are segregated in separate classrooms or separate schools, and few return to regular classrooms or receive diplomas.

In New York City, Federal officials made clear, too many of those referrals are students who are black and Hispanic,

If the board is still found to be out of compliance with the law, it could lose its Federal aid — about 10 percent of its \$8 billion budget.

The effort to rein in special-education referrals in New York is the latest in a series of similar steps that Federal education officials have taken in districts

and of limited English proficiency, although the documents released last evening provide no supporting statistics. A spokesman for the Education Department, Rodger D. Murphey, did not immediately return a call seeking clarification.

Invoking the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Federal education officials said they across the country over the last two years. Many of those districts have been smaller, suburban districts where the proportion of minority students is smaller — and easier to track. In New York City, more than 80 percent of students system wide are members of minority groups.

"The reason this case is important," the

would closely monitor New York's efforts over the next three years. If, after that time, Federal officials find the board has not made sufficient progress, the Education Department has the option to join the Justice Department in suing the board to force it to act.

lawyer familiar with the agreement said, "is that it sends a message out to school districts throughout the United States that the issue of minority students in special education is not one the Federal government is ignoring." ■

4. Los Angeles Times

* 06/01/97; Edition: Home Edition; Section: National Desk; Page A-16

Powell Wades Into Nation's Racial Divide Ceremony: Retired general's speech at Civil War monument hints at desire to become healing influence. But some blacks decry ties to establishment.

By ROBERT SHOGAN
TIMES POLITICAL WRITER

BOSTON — Colin L. Powell, who has been seeking a new public identity since he left the military a hero, sought to take a major step toward that goal here Saturday by confronting America's touchiest issue—race.

Speaking at ceremonies marking the centennial of a monument to the black Civil War regiment whose bravery was celebrated by the Oscar-winning motion picture "Glory," Powell declared: "This memorial speaks to us of our past, speaks to us of our present and reminds us of the continuing challenge that we face in the future."

In a reference to his own achievements that stirred applause from the crowd of about 2,000, Powell said: "To my dying day I will never forget that I became chairman" of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because other black Americans "were willing to serve and shed their blood for their country knowing full well that their country would not serve them."

As he worked on the speech earlier in the week, Powell told an aide, "I want this to be a speech about how far African Americans have come—and how far they have to go."

*

That's a towering task, but admirers

and critics agree that it's a challenge Powell must face if he is to fulfill his unique potential for influencing the country he has devoted his life to serving. Powell's opportunity, as many see it, is broader than politics, where his ambitions have been sidetracked at least for the moment, and broader than his current chores as an advocate for volunteerism.

"I think he can be one of the most powerful cultural figures in the country if he wants to be," said Republican political consultant Mike Murphy. A presidential campaign veteran, Murphy said he believes that cultural heroes such as Powell, who can inspire by their rhetoric and example, have more power to change national life for the better than "the people we elect, who ultimately pander to us anyway."

But Murphy argues that for Powell to be effective, he needs to be willing to pick a fight. "He has operated in a generally positive but somewhat timid way," Murphy said. "He could scold blacks about junk rap culture and whites about racism and have an impact on both communities."

In some ways though, Powell's role is easier among whites, who polls show hold him in higher esteem than any other African American because of his

achievements in the military. In introducing him Saturday, Massachusetts Gov. William F. Weld said Powell had assumed "iconic significance in our nation's understanding of itself as a free society."

Among blacks, however, the perspective on Powell is far more complex and is complicated by his renown. "Some people see his celebrity as a sign that things are going to change in a good way and take comfort," said Randall Kennedy, a Harvard University law professor and black social critic. "On the other hand, some people will call Powell an exception who is being used as a way of putting a nice coating over a society that is tremendously flawed."

For his part, Powell left little doubt Saturday that he feels more must be done to erase the impact of racism.

*

He acknowledged that opportunities for African Americans have increased dramatically since the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry went into battle in 1863 and also since the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. launched the civil rights revolution a century later.

"But we dare not believe that our work is done and that there are not still barriers to the dreams that these men . . . marched for and died for," he warned. "Let us not

pretend otherwise. Let us keep faith with them."

Powell boosters are not hard to find here, as elsewhere in the country, including many youngsters in the crowd gathered in the midday sun in front of the Massachusetts Statehouse.

"He represents a tremendous role model," said Sylvia McKinney, executive

But for some African Americans, the prestige Powell has gained in white society presents a problem. "In this polarized era, if you get somebody who is black and whom whites overwhelmingly support, it draws suspicion from blacks," said University of Maryland political scientist Ron Walters.

To his critics, Powell seems too eager to gain the favor of the white establishment. And that impression is not

director of the Boston Museum of Afro-American History, which hosted a reception for Powell before his speech.

She conceded that Powell "is not standing on picket lines" championing controversial causes. But she said his influence greatly benefits African American children, particularly in the inner city, where some of them—as likely to be altered by Powell's leadership of "America's Promise: Alliance for Youth," the follow-up organization to the recent summit on volunteerism. In that capacity, Powell needs the goodwill of big corporations in order to get pledges of money and services to bolster the efforts of volunteers.

To win over his doubters in the black community, Powell "has to identify

Powell remarked at an earlier event—"come to school on Monday weighing less than they did on Friday."

"So if they have somebody they can look up to and it gives them spirit and hope, you can't kick that away," McKinney said.

himself with black concerns and has to take positions that are strongly felt in the black community," Walters said.

As an example, he cited Powell's forceful talk to the 1996 Republican National Convention, in which the retired general spoke out for affirmative action. It was a stand distinctly not popular at that convention, yet it won the cheers of the delegates.■

5. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13WC; Westchester Weekly Desk; Page 6, Column 5

From School to Church, Volunteers Help Out

By DARICE BAILER

AT the President's Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia in April, Gen. Colin L. Powell urged Americans at the volunteer conference to look into their hearts and communities and "find someone who is in need."

Beth Sinatro of Harrison looked and found quite a few. She is one of thousands of Westchester volunteers heeding the call.

TD When the 1997-98 Harrison Central School District's \$42 million budget was defeated by 139 votes on May 7, Mrs. Sinatro decided some of the neediest people in her community were the children. If a reduced \$37 million school district budget is not approved on Thursday, students may find programs eliminated and class sizes increased.

"You see these little faces looking up at you, and you know what they should have," Mrs. Sinatro said. "Children just want to learn. So let them have the best that they can."

For months before the budget vote in May, as chairwoman of the Harrison Elementary School budget committee, Mrs. Sinatro often made phone calls from morning into the night. She left for meetings after reading a bedtime story to her children, Darren, 8, and Alec, 4. She installed three more phone lines in her house so that she and other volunteers could work in shifts, calling Harrison residents and encouraging them to vote.

She and her husband, Tim, drove around two nights before the vote with a Board of Education candidate, Debbie Imperia, and her husband, Joe, putting up campaign signs for Mrs. Imperia and Natalie Fulwider.

And Mrs. Sinatro continued to raise money for school programs for the Harrison Educational Foundation beyond the \$250,000 already raised in the last two years for enrichment programs and the Harrison High School library as well as computers and software in all the schools. She also sought community support as a member of the Friends of Harrison Schools.

She worked longer hours than she had in her former career as an interior designer, and she has not stopped. Mrs. Sinatro is preparing fliers and calling lists for the vote on Thursday.

"I would wish one Beth Sinatro on every school district in Westchester," said Dr. Ronald D. Valenti, the Superintendent of Schools.

A few things have fallen by the wayside. Mrs. Sinatro's Jeep is a mess.

"It looks like a cross between a grocery store, a garbage Dumpster and a preschool classroom," Mrs. Sinatro said. "You can't put your feet on the floor."

Yet Mrs. Sinatro's help, like that of other volunteers, is invaluable. Dr. Valenti described his district's volunteers as "bright, articulate and savvy." If they are stay-at-home mothers, they bring

skills learned during their former careers as lawyers, accountants, business women and teachers.

Mrs. Imperia is a former elementary school teacher. Despite being a busy mother of five (Joey, 16; Dana, 14; Megan, 11; Lindsay, 9, and Kevin, 3), Mrs. Imperia, along with Mrs. Fulwider, ran for the Harrison school board and both won. "I feel like I know the school district very, very well and I know what they have to offer," Mrs. Imperia said. "The more you know, the more you want to fix what isn't right."

She said she wanted to restore school board credibility in Harrison. "I want to build up trust," she said.

For four weeks before the May 7 election, Mrs. Imperia fit school district committee meetings in between driving her children to lacrosse practice and piano lessons. She continued working as co-president of the Harrison High School Parent-Teacher Association and co-president of the Special Education P.T.A. (Her daughter Megan is a special education student.)

Like Mrs. Sinatro and Mrs. Imperia, Alexis Weiss, 44, of Hartsdale, is committed to public education. "People give a tremendous amount of time to what they believe in," she said. "I see people's trust in public education eroding, and their commitment to finance public education." She is an officer on two P.T.A. boards and delivers food from

her Sacred Heart Parish in Hartsdale to a local food pantry. She also volunteers at Woodlands Community Temple in White Plains, where her husband is a member.

Jackie Hilly, 45, of Mamaroneck, is president of the board of directors of Westchester Children's Association, a children's advocacy organization. Three years ago, she helped start an early childhood center at Westchester County Family Court in Yonkers where litigants could leave their children while they

Camille Lane of Ossining tries to give children in her small Briarcliff school district the same kinds of activities that larger school districts provide. Mrs. Lane, 51, has two children, Alex, 15, and

were in court. Ms. Hilly, a former Manhattan assistant district attorney, is also proposing a childhood center for the Westchester County Family Court in White Plains.

Amy R. Paulin, 41, of Scarsdale, is vice president of the Westchester Children's Association. She estimated that she spends 60 hours a week volunteering for the Scarsdale Middle School P.T.A., the League of Women Voters of New York State, the Roxanne, 13. She combines part-time insurance work with two P.T.A. board positions and her work on special education school committees.

Mrs. Lane says her former full-time

Westchester Women's Agenda and Camp Viva, a camp in Pawling for children with AIDS.

In 1995 Ms. Paulin received the Westchester County Woman of the Year award. She is proudest of the supervised visitation program she helped start a year ago at the Y.W.C.A. in White Plains and Yonkers. The program prevents formerly abused divorced women from having to supervise their children's visits with their former mates.

career as a product planner at International Business Machines was a breeze compared with the hours she puts in now. "That was leisure time compared to now," she said, laughing. ■

6. The Washington Post

05/31/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: Financial; Page D01

Child Tax Credit Plan Creates Unusual Alliances

By Clay Chandler

Washington Post Staff Writer

A proposal to grant a \$500 per child tax credit to middle-income families is pitting the Clinton administration and pro-business Republicans against an unusual coalition of organized labor and Christian conservatives.

President Clinton and Republican congressional leaders have endorsed the idea of a \$500 a year tax credit for children as part of the five-year balanced budget deal they worked out earlier this month.

But Clinton and the GOP's pro-business wing, in another unusual alliance, are seeking to hold down the cost of the child credit to make room for other tax cuts they regard as more important.

Clinton wants to leave room for education tax breaks that mostly would benefit middle- and upper-income college students. The pro-business Republicans, including the chairmen of the House and Senate tax-writing panels, want substantial tax reductions for heirs of large estates, households saving through individual retirement accounts and investors selling stock, property or other assets.

But organizations such as the Christian Coalition and the Family Research Council, which have championed the child credit as a "pro-family" measure since it first appeared as part of House Republicans' "Contract With America" in 1994, want to make the credit more generous.

"We feel it's important to keep up the pressure" for an expansive child tax credit, said Marty Dannenfelser, director of government affairs at the Family Research Council. "We've tried to make the case that [Clinton and Congress] can do the whole thing in a way that accommodates the child credit and other interests at the same time."

Union groups, similarly, see the child tax credit as just about the only tax-cut proposal in the budget agreement that would benefit the working class.

Labor leaders oppose the budget plan overall, but support the child credit because it is hugely popular with their members.

"Our position is that there's no excuse for a budget deal that widens income inequality," AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said in a recent interview.

"Between the child tax credit and [the debate over extending trade privileges to] China, we have more in common with [Family Research Council president] Gary Bauer than Bill Clinton," said another AFL-CIO official, who requested anonymity.

The fight over the child credit highlights difficulties faced by congressional tax writers as they begin to translate the budget deal's vague language on tax policy into detailed legislation.

The bipartisan agreement calls for as much as \$135 billion in tax cuts over the next five years, to be partially offset by tax increases of up to \$50 billion — for a total net tax reduction of \$85 billion. The

GOP leadership has pledged that total will include "roughly" \$35 billion in tax credits and deductions for higher education similar to the proposals favored by the White House.

Providing a full \$500 tax credit for all of the 81 million children classified as dependents for tax purposes would gobble up more than \$120 billion over the next five years — and leave little for the other tax breaks.

For that reason, some liberal Democrats are lobbying for a generous child tax credit to crowd out other tax breaks tilted more in favor of upper-income taxpayers.

Others in the Democratic Party's left wing, however, argue that a budget loaded with tax breaks for the well-to-do would prove easier to campaign against in 1998.

Economists generally take a dim view of the child credit, arguing that it would do nothing to boost U.S. productivity and would only stimulate consumption at a time when the Federal Reserve — concerned that the already robust economy could spur inflation — stands ready to raise interest rates to slow growth.

Under orders from House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer (R-Tex.) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman William V. Roth Jr. (R-Del.) experts at Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation are examining a range of options to shrink the child credit, including:

Limiting the credit to younger

children.

Offering it temporarily.

Delaying or phasing it in.

Excluding families with higher incomes.

Denying the credit to working poor families that already claim an earned-income credit.

Excluding families that claim deductions for day care or some other tax benefits for children.

Clinton's latest budget proposal relies on several of those cost-cutting strategies to shave the five-year revenue loss from the child credit to \$47 billion. The

It's unclear how many Republicans would back that level. House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) insist that this year's budget must include a substantial child credit if the overall package is to win support from voters.

But the child credit has limited

Clinton plan would limit the full credit to families with children up to 12 years old and annual incomes below \$60,000. It also would grant just a \$300 credit per child to eligible families in the first three years.

At a White House news conference yesterday, Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin speculated that Clinton and Congress would settle on a child credit that cost more than the White House plan but "substantially less" than a Senate Republican proposal that would lose an estimated \$109 billion in federal revenue. "Pick 60, just to use a number," he support among Republicans on tax committees in the House and Senate.

"This started as a sop to the religious right, now the party can't get beyond it," said Stephen Moore, a fiscal policy analyst at the conservative Cato Institute. "It has become part of Republican dogma even though no one really believes that

suggested.

A House Republican aide involved in tax discussions at Ways and Means predicted that Archer will propose a tax package that includes "a child credit that is more generous than the president's proposal" and offers more tax relief to families with teens than preteens.

Dannenfelter said the Family Research Council expects Clinton and Congress to approve a child tax cut that returns a minimum of \$90 billion to families with children.

it's good tax policy.

Chairmen of both panels say they hope to finish their work on the tax legislation by June 13.

Staff writer Frank Swoboda contributed to this report. ■

7. The Tampa Tribune

June 2, 1997

U.S. government may revise its system of racial

By DOUG STANLEY of The Tampa Tribune

TAMPA - Darryl and Denise Simpson got a glimpse of what life would be like for their mixed-race newborn son before ever leaving the hospital.

"What do you want to call it?" asked a nurse with a birth certificate. "Is it black? Is it white? Or is it Spanish?"

So it goes for millions of multiracial Americans in a society that often forces them to choose one identity - or have one imposed on them.

That could be about to change.

Spurred by critics who say existing federal race and ethnic labels are obsolete, the government has spent four years studying whether to revise them.

Congress has been holding hearings on the issue. A proposal is to be published in July, with a decision expected in October.

With the process winding down, supporters of adding a multiracial category to census and other government forms got some high-profile help recently.

Golf sensation Tiger Woods, hailed as the first black to win the Masters, defiantly rejects the label. He prefers "cablinasian," a term he coined to represent his mixed heritage: Caucasian, black, American Indian and Asian.

"There are a number of people who

feel very deeply and very personally that they don't want to be denied part of their heritage," says Sally Katzen of the Office of Management and Budget, which is overseeing the process.

But old perceptions die hard. Most Americans look at Tiger Woods and see a man who does not look white, or American Indian or Asian. Therefore, they conclude, he is black.

No one knows for sure how many Americans consider themselves multiracial. Census data show there were 2 million children in interracial families in 1990, quadruple the number 20 years earlier.

Many multiracial Americans don't recognize themselves in the government's narrow race and ethnic categories.

For instance, when the Census Bureau takes a statistical snapshot of the nation, it lists only four race categories: white, black, American Indian or Alaskan native, and Asian or Pacific Islander. Only one box can be checked.

Ethnicity is measured only as Hispanic or not Hispanic.

Denise Simpson counts herself among those who find the labels too limiting.

"I'd really like to see a 'real' white person, a 'real' black person, a 'real' whatever," says the 31-year-old Seffner

woman, who describes herself as "part Spanish, part American Indian and part white."

"If the government questionnaires want us to specify what we are, then let us. If we want to express three different races - because that's what we are - let us."

When filling out forms that ask the race of son Dohnovan, 10, and daughter Dayna, 2, Simpson says she checks both the black and white boxes. Almost always, the children are later classified only as black because of their skin.

Not all mixed-race Americans - or their parents - favor broadening the categories.

Some see the desire of part-black, part-white Americans to be considered multiracial as rejecting their black ancestors.

"They don't want to have the stigma of being black," says Darryl Simpson, himself black. "They come off looking like - I wouldn't want to say 'traitor' - but a lot of people get the impression they're turning their back on their heritage."

For that reason, and because society still regards people who are half-black simply as black, Darryl Simpson's message to his children is clear.

"They're black," he says. "That's what

I tell them. It's on their birth certificates. I don't ever tell them they're not mixed. I tell them they're deemed black. That's something they have to be dealing with."

Rather than revise the government's categories, Simpson is among those who favor abolishing them. He refuses to mark his race on forms that ask for it.

"If we are looking toward equality, then why do those types of statistics matter?" says the 35-year-old financial

consultant. "They help cause the problem. They don't help solve it."

While acknowledging that many Americans share that opinion, Katzen says the information helps protect people of color.

"If it were a perfect world, one need not have categories," she says. "But so long as there remains discrimination, it is important that the laws prohibiting discrimination be enforced. To do that,

one has to have categories."

A question dealing with race has appeared on every census since 1790.

Since the 1960s, the data has been used extensively in civil rights monitoring and enforcement. Affected areas include employment, voting rights, housing, health care services and educational opportunities. ■

8. Business Week

06/02/97 Section: Up Front: B-SCHOOL BUCKS; Page 8

GRADUATING MAGNA CUM MONEY

BY PAT WECHSLER Lisa Sanders

THE CLASS OF 1997 MBAS WILL vouch that more is better. Corporate recruiters

snapped up graduates at a record pace this year and paid them record salaries.

That's according to an informal survey of 8 of the top 10 graduate programs in BUSINESS WEEK's 1996 ranking.

In pay, consulting jobs led the pack: Wharton reported starting salaries

of \$90,000. But finance came on strong. Wharton salary offers for finance jobs jumped from \$65,000 to \$75,000 in the past year alone. Because the competition was so fierce, manufacturers used enticements more common to big Wall Street

spenders, such as signing bonuses and college tuition reimbursement.

TD

Telecom, software, and new media companies were particularly active on

campus. But several West Coast companies arrived too late. At Dartmouth's Amos

Tuck School, high-tech companies found many grads were already hooked during the first semester. Seeking entrepreneurial experience, 60 Michigan students

hit Silicon Valley this spring. The result: Only three took jobs.

9. The New York Times

06/02/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section A; National Desk; Page 12, Column 4

For-Profit Education Venture to Expand

By PETER APPLEBOME

All but given up for dead three years ago, the Edison Project, the ambitious national venture into for-profit schools, will announce this week that it will double in size next year, to 25 schools in eight states with about \$70 million in revenue.

The growth of Edison, a company begun with great fanfare in 1991 by the media entrepreneur Christopher Whittle, is a dramatic sign of the fundamental changes beginning to shape American education as the traditional model — public schools operated by a monolithic school district — slowly gives way to a far more varied landscape of autonomous charter schools and schools operated by for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

"I think there is every reason to believe we are witnessing a fundamental transformation of American education in which Edison is playing a big part, at least symbolically," said Denis Doyle, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

"They're certainly a significant entering wedge in a new way of thinking about schools."

Of the 500 charter schools — public schools operated autonomously — that have been created in the last few years, 10 percent are run by private companies like Edison, Advantage Schools Inc., Sabis Educational Systems, Education Alternatives Inc. and Alternative Public Schools, according to a survey in the coming issue of the Education Industry Report, a newsletter that rates the performance of 25 publicly traded education companies.

Edison will announce new sites in Chula Vista, Calif.; Detroit; Duluth, Minn.; Flint, Mich., and San Antonio, as well as expansions in some of the cities where it already does business. The company will also announce test scores indicating that it has had some striking success in improving educational performance.

Yet the signals remain mixed and

murky on the company's ability to operate profitably over time.

Mr. Whittle, who originally promised a grandiose network of for-profit private schools, said all 12 of Edison's schools were operating profitably at the site level — that is, factoring out corporate and start-up costs. And some analysts say the company's growth and performance provide considerable evidence that a private company can operate schools better and more cheaply than school districts do.

"What's impressive is that Edison at this point is doing exactly what they said they'd do," said Michael Moe, who specializes in following education-related companies for Montgomery Securities. "It's too early to say this is a slam dunk, but there's a lot of evidence this is going to be a big, significant company that will be significant not just in terms of what it does, but in terms of the impact it has on American education. This could be a billion-dollar company in 10 years."

But some school officials and even some people within the company are far more cautious in assessing the company's chances to be profitable in the long run.

Bob Finzi, a general partner of the Sprout Group, a venture capital company that is a major Edison investor, said that although he was pleased with Edison's progress, particularly in terms of test scores, he would not agree with the characterization that all schools operate profitably now.

"What's the saying: Liars figure and

The company, headed by Mr. Whittle and Benno C. Schmidt Jr., the former Yale University president, will announce this week that by next fall it will have grown in three years from 4 schools to 12 to 25, which will enroll 13,000 students. Officials say Edison is likely to add even more schools in the 1998-99 school year than it will in 1997-98.

"We could have done a lot more if we wanted to," Mr. Whittle said. "The growth is more a function of logistics than demand."

The company has yet to lose a client. All but one of its eight current cities have expanded their Edison schools since beginning the relationship. And Edison this week will announce test scores showing significant gains at many of its schools.

At Dodge-Edison Elementary School in Wichita, Kan., for example, fifth graders went to the 59th national percentile from the 46th in reading and to 64th from 35th in math on a standardized test taken by all public school students in Wichita. On tests conducted by the Educational Testing Service, gains by Edison kindergartners and first graders

figures lie?" said Mr. Finzi, a member of Edison's board. "You can cut things a lot of ways, but I wouldn't characterize it that way. Right now, we're falsely characterized as a for-profit. We're as much of a not-for-profit as anyone."

Similarly, Phillip Garrett, assistant superintendent for instruction at the Sherman Independent School District in Texas, where Edison opened one of its first four schools in the 1995-96 school year, said that test results thus far had been disappointing and that Edison had substantially exceeded students in a control group at the two sites where matched control groups exist, Edison the company said.

Increasingly, many skeptical educators are deciding that Edison has put together an educational plan — including a longer school day and year, computers for all families and state-of-the-art reading and math curriculums — that educates children better than conventional schools do.

"We had 40 inquiries nationwide for our charter school, which we pared down to a half dozen, and the parents, teachers, principals and school board members who evaluated them unanimously decided Edison was the best," said Mark Myles, superintendent of the Duluth School District in Minnesota, where Edison will operate a new charter school this fall. "They've really done their homework."

But Edison's educational program has come at a cost of \$105 million raised thus far, with more needed to finance future expansion. Mr. Whittle and Mr. Schmidt said that financial results were encouraging and that Edison as a system

struggled to operate its schools with the same per-pupil allocation that is available to school districts.

"I'd be very surprised if they were making a profit in Sherman," Mr. Garrett said.

Still, for a company that seemed in jeopardy of being dragged down as Mr. Whittle's media ventures collapsed or were sold off a few years back, Edison's resurgence is remarkable and revealing about the hunger for new approaches to running schools.

could be profitable with 50 to 70 schools, a size it could reach in two years.

Mr. Finzi, however, described financial results thus far as "significantly less" than had been hoped for, as a result of factors including contracting costs that had not been anticipated and the enormous technology costs associated with Edison's much-touted guarantee of a computer for every family in the school.

Perhaps Edison's biggest setback came in its Renaissance School in Boston, which shocked parents in January by saying that, because of financial reasons, it would not offer a ninth-grade class next year as promised, forcing parents to make new high school plans for their eighth graders.

Mr. Finzi said the technology program was so expensive, and its payoff, particularly at the lower levels, so uncertain, that it was likely that Edison would need to rethink it, either offering computers to fewer students or offering less expensive and ambitious technology.

04:38 EDT June 2, 1997■

10. USA Today

June 2, 1997

More take GED to finish high school

More high school dropouts are earning their general equivalency diploma (GED) than ever before, and most of them are doing it to qualify for additional education, says a report released Monday.

But the 524,482 such diplomas awarded last year to U.S. or Canadian adults — while a 16% increase over 10 years ago and 1,019 more than in 1995 — represents only 1% of out-of-school adults without a high school diploma. That's "a drop in the bucket," says Janet Baldwin, editor of *Who Took the GED?*

Diploma-less adults comprise 44 million people in the USA, 1 million in the U.S. territories and 5 million in Canada.

The report was prepared by the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C. It operates the GED Testing Service, which gives adults who did not graduate from high school the opportunity to earn a diploma. To do so, they must pass five tests, meeting certain standards in their state or jurisdiction.

Baldwin says the GED, developed in 1942 for World War II veterans, "increasingly is being used as a

steppingstone to further advancement." Nearly 65% (547,096) of those who took at least one test in 1996 said they wanted the GED so they could further their education, compared with 30%-40% in the early years, the report shows.

Today, "you almost have to get more training and education in order to get jobs that in the past you could get with a high school diploma," she says, adding, "there is a lot of work to be done" to reach those who could benefit from the GED.

The report also says the mean income

of men 25 and older who had not completed high school was \$19,150 in 1995, compared with \$27,952 for those with diplomas or GED credentials.

The report did not break down test-takers by gender.

Other findings:

States with the largest increases of

people completing the GED tests were Mississippi, 31%; District of Columbia, 27%; Vermont, 25%; Illinois, 24%; and Idaho, 23%. Even higher were the Virgin Islands, 48%; and Micronesia, 34%. Two states reported decreases of 15% or more: Alaska, 16%; and Virginia, 20%. 78% of credentials were earned by people

under 29. 67% of test takers had completed grade 10 or higher before leaving school. Most of those in the USA completing the battery of tests in the past two years lived in the South.

By Mary Beth Marklein, USA TODAY■

11. Christian Science Monitor

June 2, 1997

Howard University Becomes 'Hot Pick'

Jonathan P. Decker, Special to The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON — If you walk across the campus of Howard University, there's a sense among students that something special is happening. Some call it a rejuvenation. Others see it as proof-positive that black colleges and universities are again a "hot" choice among African-American students.

At Howard, north of downtown Washington, much of the renewed interest can be traced to H. Patrick Swygert, a graduate of the college and the law school, who was named president of the university two years ago.

Dr. Swygert immediately set out on a mission to attract top students to the campus. He continued streamlining Howard's budget, cutting the number of employees by about one-third. He persuaded Congress to reinstate its annual \$200 million subsidy - 40 percent of the operating budget - which the House Budget Committee had voted to cut.

Swygert also drew up a strategic plan to improve buildings and services, install campus computer links, and bring in additional private money to help attract nationally known academics. His plan also calls for consolidating Howard's 16 schools into 11 by the fall, as well as substantially increasing donations from the university's 70,000 alumni.

Strong leadership

"Pat's leadership was invaluable in creating this new sense of optimism at Howard," says William H. Gray III, president of the United Negro College Fund. "The alumni feel good about the university and so do the students."

Trista Carter, a freshman from Minnesota, is the kind of student that Howard even recently failed to enroll. As the Ivy League and other prestigious colleges opened their doors wider, Howard and other historically black colleges saw many potential recruits

enroll elsewhere. But with this major push by Swygert, Howard is once again attracting the nation's best black students.

"I think that a lot of students that had considered the Ivy Leagues visited those schools and didn't feel real comfortable, and then you come to Howard and everything feels so right," says Ms. Carter. "People want the black college experience and they know that Howard is comparable to Ivy League schools."

Howard, the only comprehensive black research university in the United States, enrolls about 11,000 students.

Professional degrees are conferred in dentistry, divinity, law, medicine, and pharmacy. It was founded in 1867, primarily to educate freed slaves. Along with Gallaudet University in Washington, it is one of only two federally chartered universities.

Perception is everything when it comes to creating a top pick and Swygert - the former president of the State University of New York at Albany - was well aware of this. His effort to improve recruiting appears to have paid off. Earlier this year he announced that Howard had attracted 79 National Achievement Scholars, more than any other college in the country. The National Merit Scholarship Corp. runs the program for outstanding black students parallel to its regular merit programs.

This year it named 850 scholars. Harvard University, which does not offer automatic scholarships to these students as Howard does, was second with 69.

"We really went after these students with the same intensity that some schools would appear to go after top athletes," says Swygert. "The National Achievement Scholars are going to be leaders and we want to make sure that a fair number of them continue to come here."

What's happening at Howard is not an

aberration. Florida A&M in Tallahassee, and Spelman College and Morehouse College in Atlanta, all report an increase in applications. Overall, enrollment at black colleges and universities is at its highest point ever. A recent study produced by the College Fund/UNCF found that black enrollment at such schools increased by 21 percent between 1976 and 1994. The schools now award 28 percent of all bachelor's degrees to African-Americans.

This revitalization can be traced not only to efforts by educators like Swygert, but also to pragmatism. With costs soaring at many elite colleges, black colleges have kept their costs relatively low. Howard was ranked by Money Magazine this year as among the top 25 schools in the nation its annual "Best College Buy" issue.

Tuition at Howard runs about \$8,700 per year compared with more than \$21,000 at an Ivy League school like Columbia University in New York.

"Black students are now saying, 'I can get an excellent education at an extremely low-cost,'" Mr. Gray explains. "What's more, I can learn in an environment where I'm nurtured, where I'm supported, where it's not hostile, and where faculty look like me and believe in my abilities."

Perhaps that's why the large "Welcome Home" sign on campus has taken on a deep meaning for so many students.

"From the minute that you walk on campus during freshman orientation, you feel like you finally got to the right place," says graduate student John Cash, who also attended Howard as an undergraduate.

Intense competition

Indeed, many students say that a major selling point is the promise that once on campus, they will be judged on merit rather than their skin color.

Black colleges have become so sought after that in many cases the competition for students is not between Howard and Harvard, but Howard and Morehouse.

"As a result, we're all recruiting with greater intensity," says Swygert. "A

number of students who really do have lots of options are opting for some of the historically black schools."

"The success of Howard and other historically black schools is impressive, and considerable progress has been made

in educating African-Americans," says Gray.

"But many hurdles remain. There are lots of people who want to go to these colleges but can't." ■

12. U.S. News & World Report

June 9, 1997

In debt all the way up to their nose rings

Between credit cards and student loans, gen X-ers find debt a major life force Learn all about financing a college education

BY JOSHUA WOLF SHENK

It's not just a figure of speech to say credit cards these days are being passed out on college campuses like candy. Monet Martin discovered this her freshman year at the University of Texas—Austin when someone offered her a pack of Twizzlers and a Discover card application. Soon, she was \$2,800 in the hole.

Martin hasn't yet tried the debt-management technique of her friend Yashika Gomes, another student at UT. After charging her way through Europe last summer—and doubling her credit card balances to \$4,500—Gomes immersed her three cards in a mug of water and put it in the freezer, a trick learned from Oprah. It actually worked, until a fire ripped through her room and she had to thaw the cards to buy new clothes and furniture. Now she owes \$7,000. Both Martin and Gomes are also borrowing their way through college—they owe about \$17,000 and \$22,000, respectively.

Generation X may be best known for political disaffection and a tiny attention span, but its most defining characteristic may be debt. Two trends—the growth in student loan volume and the proliferation of credit cards—have combined to profoundly alter the behavior of young adults. Required to borrow in order to finance their education, members of this generation have no qualms about using credit to pay for comfort or even luxury. The moral imperative of living within one's means seems as distant as the Great Depression.

Consider that between 1990 and 1995, the average outstanding credit card balance of households headed by someone under 25 grew from \$885 to \$1,721. Carrying plastic is the norm for young people—65 percent of college

students have cards, for example—and they are more prone than those in other age groups to get in over their heads. Of the debtors seeking professional help at the National Consumer Counseling Service, more than half are between 18 and 32.

The bucks start here. Meanwhile, the past two decades have seen not only explosive growth in the cost of college but a dramatic change in who pays. From 1974 to 1994, the average cost of four years of tuition, room, board, and fees at public universities rose from \$11,032 to \$25,785. Private school costs went from \$25,514 to \$64,410.

Reacting to growing costs, Congress through the '80s and '90s expanded the student loan program, while scrimping on no-strings-attached grants. Undergraduates can now borrow up to \$46,000 and graduate students, \$138,500, in federally guaranteed loans—and many approach these high limits. So far this decade, students have borrowed at least \$140 billion—more than total student borrowing over the past three decades combined. Since 1977, median student loan debt has leapt from \$2,000 to about \$15,000.

At the same time, parents have been bearing less of the burden. In interviews with U.S. News, financial aid administrators at a dozen different schools agreed that parents' contributions haven't nearly kept up with college costs. "Rather than pay out of their pocket," many parents expect their children to borrow, says Lawrence Burt, director of UT-Austin's financial aid office—"even if they can afford to pay tuition." In the only national survey on this question, taken in 1991, just 26 percent of student borrowers said their parents paid for more than one fifth of college costs.

Studies have shown that typical parents pick up about 10 percent of their kids' student loans.

Consider Jenn Sanchez and Leslie Garza, roommates and sophomores at Texas's Austin campus. According to the federal financial aid guidelines, Sanchez's parents are supposed to contribute \$5,000 a year. "I'm lucky if they give me \$5 to go to McDonald's," she says. Garza receives \$3,800 in loans and grants per semester, about half of which she sends to her mother who, Garza says, "is in extreme debt herself." Despite working between 25 and 30 hours a week, both Sanchez and Garza expect to owe more than \$20,000 in student loans by graduation.

But if college costs put Sanchez and Garza in a bind, so does their own behavior. Though they could eat more cheaply at home, they often dine out. They could resist the lure of Austin's many clubs and bars, but they don't. "I guess I use cards to get stuff I want but don't need—or can't afford," Sanchez says. She has 18 credit cards and a balance of \$12,000.

For many students, it starts in their freshman year. "You've got all this freedom," says Tara Copp, editor of the school newspaper, the Daily Texan. "And then you have all these credit card companies saying, 'Look, we're going to extend you a thousand dollars in credit.'" Her freshman year, Copp charged about \$2,000 on six credit cards even though her father gave her tuition money plus \$600 a month for expenses. Spending the \$2,000 was easy, Copp says: two trips to New Orleans, new outfits for sorority parties, and a good many pitchers of beer. Lawrence Burt, UT's financial aid chief, remembers an even more vivid example of lifestyle debt: He once saw a student in the financial aid line talking on a cellular

phone.

Keeping up with the Coxes. One explanation for such debt, argues economist Juliet Schor, is the widening gap between the wealthy—who dominate popular culture—and the rest of the country. More image conscious than other age groups, young people are especially prone to thinking they need to emulate the "normal" lifestyle of, say,

Debt is shaping the career aspirations of a generation. Desiree Saylor, a senior at the University of Texas, says she had hoped to work in academia as a physical anthropologist. "If I didn't have this debt, I'd go for it," she says. But she has \$16,000 in debt and has decided on the higher-paying career of occupational therapy. Even the children of the wealthy find career options affected by their debt. The two sons of Joseph Biden, who makes six figures as a U.S. senator, have amassed \$196,000 in student debt

Courtney Cox's character on TV's *Friends*. But this fictional world is pretty cushy. For many, the only way to afford to live so well is through the magic of plastic.

Basic ignorance exacerbates the problem. In a recent survey by the Consumer Federation of America, 78 percent of college juniors and seniors didn't know that the best way to figure between them. The younger worked at a homeless shelter between college and graduate school, Sen. Biden says, but "with his debt, there's no possibility he could take a job there." With a third of all medical school graduates owing more than \$75,000, few can work in low-paying health clinics.

Of course, given the long-term benefits, the vast majority of college students are investing very wisely. And young Austinites know well the inspiring story of Richard Linklater, who filmed

out the cost of a loan was to look at the interest rate. Card companies take advantage of the confusion. "Congratulations!" one company informed a debtor. "You have qualified to skip this month's [minimum] payment." But skipped payments benefit only the lenders, who are charging sky-high interest.

the acclaimed movie *Slacker* there by charging \$23,000 on credit cards.

On the other hand, many incur college debt and never get a degree. Among the quarter of students with the least money, only about 1 in 5 will get a bachelor's degree within six years of entering. And Linklater's success is hardly the norm. Linklater says aspiring filmmakers regularly approach him, stacks of credit cards in hand, with "nothing now, or probably ever, to show for it." ■

TRADE

13. CongressDaily/A.M.

06/02/97Section: APPROPRIATIONS; Category: Trade

Livingston: No Approps Wars In '97

Even though the still-pending disaster relief supplemental appropriations bill quickly bogged down over extraneous issues, House Appropriations Chairman Livingston is predicting the upcoming appropriations season will be much easier to manage than in 1995 and 1996. "The pressure is off us," Livingston said in an interview late last week. "We just have to pass the bills. We don't have to jockey for position." Livingston said the balanced budget deal with the Clinton administration, which set the broad parameters for discretionary spending over the next five years, has created an expectation among appropriators that they can avoid long, messy battles over the 13 FY98 spending bills. "The process should work more smoothly unless the whole budget process breaks down," he said, adding: "I don't expect that to happen."

During the 104th Congress, the appropriations process did not work, forcing Congress to fund programs through a series of continuing resolutions and resulting in politically damaging government shutdowns. While Livingston does not expect those problems to be repeated, the ranking

Democrat on the Appropriations Committee is not as optimistic. "I would think we would have an easier time than last year if we don't see a lot of legislative riders attached to appropriations bills," Appropriations ranking member David Obey, D-Wis., told CongressDaily. Obey acknowledged that some Republicans this year have promised to produce clean appropriations bills free of legislative riders. However, Obey said that since the supplemental spending bill bogged down over side issues, "I'm more discouraged than I would have been earlier."

Livingston said, however, that Republicans have learned lessons from the appropriations fights of the 104th Congress.

"We are more cognizant of what we can get through the system and get the president to sign," he said.

Livingston said he hopes to finish work on the supplemental this week or next week, and that Appropriations subcommittees will begin marking up FY98 spending bills soon after that.

But because the budget process is still unfinished, appropriators have not yet received their overall allocation, which would allow Livingston to divide up

funds among the 13 subcommittees.

The chairman said he would like the first appropriations bill on the floor the last week in June, but acknowledged House Speaker Gingrich has said he wants the House to pass budget reconciliation bills before the funding measures.

Livingston admitted that could make the schedule tight.

Obey was even more skeptical, saying he expects a battle over the tax cut measure.

The ranking member asserted that if Gingrich is determined to pass that bill before taking up funding measures, Congress is heading toward a "miserable or potentially disastrous September. It's the appropriations bills that have to be passed."

But Livingston said he expects to finish the 13 bills this year, although he conceded that one or two bills could be vetoed by the president.

A House Democratic aide said Livingston would be able to finish the bills on time if he were "able to proceed as a normal" chairman would, passing spending bills without legislative riders attached.

"I'm not sure that's going to happen," the aide said.

Livingston and Obey agreed that the budget resolution contains sufficient funds for discretionary spending in FY98, but Obey warned that the funding levels drop in future years, foretelling future battles over appropriations.

"We will have haggling, but I don't expect to see major crises develop over funding levels," Livingston said. "We're going to have our differences over

The aide said, for example, that if the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee tries to cut the Women, Infants and Children program, the panel will face opposition from Republicans as well as Democrats.

The aide said that a key to an easy year at the Appropriations Committee may be the Labor-HHS bill, which contains many of the administration's spending priorities.

Obey said it is still unclear how the budget resolution will handle transportation issues or firewalls between defense and non-defense discretionary spending.

After that, the battles will depend on the subcommittee allocations.

"There will still be some tough fights" on specific bills, Obey predicted, adding that he could not yet identify where they

programs."

He specifically mentioned education priorities, the Clinton administration national service initiative, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ounce of Prevention Council as potential battlegrounds.

Livingston said that if the budget deal calls for level funding for defense, "we're going to do that."

However, he added that he expects appropriators will warn that the low level will be. "I can't answer that until they allocate the money," he said.

Livingston said he expects the committee to continue to try to eliminate federal programs, although he warned that "the further you go down the road, the more difficult it becomes."

Some conservatives have become frustrated that the committee cannot eliminate programs faster, according to Livingston.

"They have to realize you dismantle by the same process you mantled," he said, contending that Democrats had 60 years to build up the federal government.

Indeed, some House GOP sophomores are planning once again to form an appropriations watchdog group that will warn members of possible problems with funding bills, as well as provide factual information about the bills.

of defense spending would hurt the Pentagon.

Discussing discretionary funding levels, Obey said the budget deal "punts for the first year or so to get past the next election."

Obey and the House Democratic aide said the ease in passing the spending bills will depend on how the subcommittee allocations are made and whether subcommittee chairmen target specific programs for big cuts.

Asked about the watchdogs, many of whom tried to cut appropriations bills last year, Livingston said, "Tell them to spend their time on entitlements." He later added, "These guys can sit around and play with the appropriations process until the cows come home and they're not going to solve the problem."

A new wrinkle in the appropriations process is the replacement of mild-mannered former Senate Appropriations Chairman Hatfield with the more intense Senate Appropriations Chairman Stevens as head of the panel.

Livingston said that while Stevens has been known to express anger during committee meetings in the Senate, "he hasn't directed any of that at me. I have every reason to expect that we're going to get along fine. We look at the world with a similar vision." ■

14. Chronicle of Higher Education

June 2, 1997 Category: Trade

System for Delivering Student Aid Is Flawed, Many Agree

Critics searching for solution say any overhaul must tackle such problems as outdated computers and vulnerability to fraud

By Stephen Burd

Washington — Education Department officials and student-aid experts agree that the system by which the government delivers federal financial-aid funds to colleges is outdated, inefficient, and vulnerable to fraud.

They also agree that efforts must be made to modernize the system, by combining all data on student grants and loans into one computer network that is readily accessible to students, parents, and colleges. Students would be able to apply for financial aid on the World-Wide Web and would, after receiving it, be able to monitor their

accounts in real time, on the Internet. Federal officials would be better able to keep track of student-aid funds and therefore improve their ability to protect financial-aid programs from abuse.

So with all this agreement, why are student-aid experts and department officials at each other's throats?

Fundamentally, they disagree on just how bad the current problems are — and whether the department is up to the task of fixing them.

"It is not that we believe that the Department of Education is incapable of managing the programs, but that the Office of Postsecondary Education, in its

current structure, cannot do so," says Brian K. Fitzgerald, staff director of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, a group of college leaders and loan-industry officials that was assigned by Congress to monitor the student-aid system. "Indeed, there is a strong feeling among our members that senior managers in that office have largely ignored the need to make changes and appear unlikely to make changes anytime soon."

Mr. Fitzgerald's group has proposed that someone with business experience be brought into the department to run the large computer systems that process

financial-aid information. But several groups that lobby for colleges favor putting the delivery system in the hands of an outside group.

Such revolutionary changes are unnecessary, says David A. Longanecker, Assistant Secretary for postsecondary education. "We've got the right 'people stuff,'" he says. "What we need is a stronger computer system." He notes that the department is already taking steps toward modernizing: It will soon unveil a version of the student financial-aid

Last year, computer glitches and problems with data-processing contractors led to serious delays for students in receiving financial-aid offers from colleges. This year, problems with the transition to a new contractor in the department's direct-lending program may hamper colleges in providing loan funds to students on time when the academic year starts in the fall.

The government is obligated to insure that federal financial aid gets into the hands of students, Mr. Jeffords said, but "warning signs are on the horizon" that the current process isn't completely reliable. Department officials' response to the recent problems, he added, "has yet to convince the community that they can manage student-aid delivery in a manner that will eliminate the instability and burden caused by recurring system and contract problems."

Education Department officials and student-aid experts have not always been so far apart on this issue. In fact, many of today's critics of the department began as advocates of its efforts to update its computer systems.

In 1995, Leo Kornfeld, then special assistant to the Education Secretary for direct loans, introduced a program known as Easy Access for Students and Institutions, or Project EASI, that aimed to integrate all federal grant and loan programs into one system. As it is, 13 computer contractors are needed to run all of the student-aid programs, at a cost of about \$320-million a year, according to the General Accounting Office.

Project EASI held out the promise that the government could save tens of millions of dollars a year, make it easier for students to apply for student aid and determine how to repay their loans, and improve the department's ability to prevent fraud in the student-aid system.

The project was designed to involve The advisory committee has proposed that Congress require the Education Department to hire a chief executive officer, with professional management

application on the Web, allowing students to apply for aid electronically. College leaders approve, saying this will make it easier for students to apply for admission and financial aid at the same time.

Just who will be in charge of modernizing the Education Department, however, is quickly becoming one of the most contentious issues facing Congress as it begins to consider reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, which is set to expire in September.

student-aid experts in helping the department figure out what colleges and students needed, and lenders in recommending the sorts of technology that could be used to meet those needs.

"The idea behind Project EASI was that once you give an institution repeated chances to improve itself and it fails, then you must bring in experts from the outside to help you," says Barmak Nassirian, director of policy analysis at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

In July 1996, Education Secretary Richard W. Riley removed Mr. Kornfeld as head of Project EASI and moved it into the department's student-aid office as part of a broader attempt to better integrate the department's programs.

Since then, student-aid experts say, they have largely been shut out of the department's deliberations on the project. Progress on the initiative has been so slow, they say, that they question whether the department is paying it more than lip service.

"The chances of success, of real innovation being implemented, have substantially diminished," Mr. Nassirian says.

At the same time, the Education Department's problems with computers and contractors have led to major snafus, which have increased the skepticism of student-aid experts that the department is capable of managing massive aid programs.

Concerns grew greater last year, when the contractors allowed a backlog of about 900,000 financial-aid applications to develop. The resulting delay forced some students to make decisions about college without access to all of the financial-aid data they needed.

Institutions in the direct-lending program, too, are experiencing disruptions, which began when the expertise to run the department's delivery systems. The manager would be a non-political appointee who could not be removed by the President, as Education

Already, a key Republican Senator has signaled to Education Department officials that he is taking the ideas of the outside student-aid experts seriously. At a hearing of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources last month, Senator James M. Jeffords of Vermont, the panel's chairman, said the department's mishandling of recent problems with its data systems has caused him to doubt its ability to run the systems effectively.

department brought a new contractor on board this year. Since March, Electronic Data Systems Inc. has been responsible for insuring that applicants are eligible for direct loans, and for passing the information along to the Treasury Department, which issues the loans.

According to Education Department documents obtained by The Chronicle, some colleges have not received any direct-lending funds; some received the funds but were not told to whom they were to go; and others received more or less money than they were supposed to receive.

The department says the problems are mostly resolved now, but college leaders disagree. They say that if the problems persist through the summer, students in colleges in the direct-loan program might face long delays before receiving their loans for the next term. In addition, the government might be hamstrung in its ability to keep track of student borrowers.

At the Senate hearing last month, Judith N. Flink, director of student financial services at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said the problems in the process of originating loans could "jeopardize the significant benefits the program has provided students."

Mr. Fitzgerald, of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, agreed. At the hearing, he said the direct-lending program's problems could occur in all federal student-aid programs unless major changes are made soon. "The problems we now face in student-aid delivery have escalated to the point where dramatic action is required to prevent complete system breakdown," he said. "And rosy assessments and empty promises aside, there is broad consensus that action is needed very soon."

Department leaders can be. The officer would be able to hire staff members to run the programs and would be able to fire them if they did not do a good job.

A chief advantage of this proposal, Mr. Fitzgerald said, is that the C.E.O. would provide stability to the leadership of the programs, because he or she would remain in his or her position no matter who is President.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities is promoting another proposal, which would turn the department's system for delivering aid over to an independent, non-profit company. It would be run largely by a

board of directors that would include college leaders, student-aid experts, banking officials, and Education Department administrators.

"An appropriate model is the efficient, cost-effective, consumer-oriented system available through Visa and MasterCard, where a single financial-servicing business works with thousands of lenders, hundreds of thousands of vendors, and millions of customers. Tens of millions of transactions a day are

monitored and approved within seconds," the association said in its plan for reauthorizing the Higher Education Act.

Education Department officials say such changes are not needed, arguing that putting the financial-aid application on the Web, among other steps, shows that the department is serious about improving its programs. "The student-aid system must be modernized," Mr. Longanecker says, "and the department is committed to doing so."■

15. Chronicle of Higher Education

June 2, 1997 Category: Trade

Education Dept. Cries Foul Over Key Congressman's Criticism

By Stephen Burd

No one in Congress has been tougher on the Education Department than Representative Peter Hoekstra.

As head of the House of Representatives subcommittee that oversees the Education Department, the Michigan Republican has, over the past six months, written department officials week after week to accuse them of mismanagement.

But one letter that he sent last month to David A. Longanecker, Assistant Secretary for postsecondary education, has the department crying foul.

In the letter, Mr. Hoekstra questioned whether Dr. Longanecker had "hindered the Department in its gate-keeping function to the detriment of the taxpayer supported student aid programs" in 1994, when he allowed Jordan College to continue receiving student-aid funds despite evidence that it had misused the money. Jordan, a Michigan institution, closed its doors in 1995.

Mr. Hoekstra's charges echo a May 1995 report by the Education Department's Inspector General, which concluded that Dr. Longanecker had allowed Jordan to remain in the student-aid programs under political pressure from Democratic Senator Carl Levin of Michigan (The Chronicle, May 9).

Department officials deny those charges and say Mr. Hoekstra should have looked in a mirror before he sent that letter. He was one of several lawmakers who, in two letters in 1994,

But, that same month, the Education Department fined the college \$3-million for repeatedly requesting more Pell Grant

urged the department to relax its oversight of Jordan when the college appeared near collapse, they say.

"It is difficult to understand how, in light of your strong recommendations at the time that we not take these enforcement actions against Jordan College, you can now, after the fact, criticize us for not doing enough in this regard," wrote Marshall S. Smith, the department's Acting Deputy Secretary, in a letter responding to Mr. Hoekstra.

Mr. Hoekstra does not deny that he and other Michigan lawmakers had urged the department to keep Jordan alive. But, he says, the department is focusing on him to deflect attention from what was the central point of his letter — that Dr. Longanecker may have violated the Whistleblower Protection Act when he demoted a 22-year civil employee of the department.

The Office of Special Counsel, a government agency charged with protecting federal employees from reprisal for whistle blowing, is investigating whether Dr. Longanecker removed Arthur L. Hardwick from his position because Mr. Hardwick had complained to the department's Inspector General about the Assistant Secretary's failure to punish Jordan College.

"I am sure you would agree that the Subcommittee would not be fulfilling its necessary oversight role if it failed to review the possible retaliation by Dr. Longanecker against a whistle blower," the Congressman wrote last week in funds than its students needed and for not returning the extra funds to the government. Jordan officials said such a

response to Mr. Smith's letter.

Mr. Hoekstra added that the letters sent by Michigan lawmakers on behalf of Jordan in 1994 asked the department to do what it could "within the bounds of appropriate management" to aid the college.

Education Department officials disagree. They say that they are being criticized for taking actions less extreme than those proposed in the letters that Mr. Hoekstra signed.

In summer 1994, Jordan was in dire straits. A year earlier, Education Department officials had determined that continuing to give Jordan federal student-aid funds was a major risk because the college was in danger of bankruptcy, which would jeopardize taxpayer dollars and leave needy students in the lurch.

As a result, the department said, before it would provide federal student-aid funds to Jordan, college officials would have to submit documents showing exactly which students were to receive the funds.

In a letter dated June 9, 1994, eight Michigan Representatives, including Mr. Hoekstra, thanked the department for "releasing over \$170,000" to the college. They urged, however, that the department return Jordan to "advance-pay status," allowing it, along with most other colleges, to receive the funds it believed it would need for the coming term.

fine would shut down the college, and in a letter dated August 12, 1994, Senator Levin, Mr. Hoekstra, and four other

lawmakers urged the department to prevent its closing.

They once again urged the department to remove the restrictions it had placed on the supply of student-aid funds to the college.

The Inspector General's report says that Dr. Longanecker compromised. He agreed to give Jordan 25 per cent of its student-aid funds in advance, as long as

the college agreed to a plan to pay its \$3-million liability. In September, the department released \$118,000 to the college.

But Jordan never made the required payments to the department, and in March 1995, the government cut off all funds to the college. Days later, Jordan said it would close.

Department officials say that despite

the pressure they faced from Representative Hoekstra and others, they exercised their oversight powers responsibly. In his letter to Mr. Hoekstra, Mr. Smith said the department "ultimately did not follow your recommendations" but instead "attempted to protect the interests of students, the Department and the taxpayer." ■

16. Education Daily

June 2, 1997 Category: Trade

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Awaiting the President's Signature ...

* IDEA Reauthorization H.R. 5: Would allot state special education grants exceeding \$4.92 billion according to a new census-and-poverty formula; cap the state setaside at fiscal 1997 levels, plus an adjustment for inflation or an increase in the state grant; and allow schools to place disabled students in alternative settings for 45 days for weapon and drug offenses. The bill also would allow hearing officers to order changes in placements of dangerous students, but would specifically bar stopping services to disabled students (ED, April 25).

Last action: The House passed H.R. 5 May 13, 420-3, and the Senate passed it May 14, 98-1.

Next action: The president plans to sign the bill Wednesday.

* Volunteer Protection H.R. 911, S. 543: Would grant immunity from personal injury lawsuits for volunteers, such as school chaperones, working for nonprofit organizations and government entities.

Last action: The House passed H.R. 911, 390-35, and substituted it into S. 543 on May 21, and the Senate passed S. 543 by voice vote the same day.

Next action: The president has not indicated whether he will sign the bill, which Congress has not officially sent to him yet.

Recent or Upcoming Action ...

* Budget Resolution H.Con.Res. 84: The negotiators' nonbinding plan to balance the federal budget by 2002 leaves room for most of President Clinton's education initiatives, but not his \$5 billion school construction proposal. The maximum Pell Grant could increase from \$2,700 to \$3,000, and the Education Department could get a \$3.2 billion overall increase in discretionary spending for fiscal 1998, including \$260 million

for Clinton's childhood literacy initiative. Republican leaders pledged to include roughly \$35 billion over five years in higher education tax credits and deductions the president wants (ED, May 6).

Last action: The House passed H.Con. Res. 84 May 20, 333-99. The Senate passed its version of the resolution May 23, 78-22.

Next action: A quick House-Senate conference to negotiate a final resolution may allow a House vote as early as tomorrow. The measure, which does not require the president's signature, will be used as a blueprint for congressional tax-writers and appropriators this summer.

The House Ways and Means Committee must pass a tax bill by June 14.

* Fiscal 1998 Emergency Funding, Title I Supplement H.R. 1469: Both House and Senate disaster relief bills would keep federal agencies operating at 100 percent of their fiscal 1997 level until appropriations are complete.

A pending House-Senate agreement on the bills also would provide an extra \$101 million for Title I this year, encompass several technical education amendments and would establish a commission to report within four months on the rise in college tuition (ED, May 23).

Last action: A House-Senate conference committee could not work out differences between the bills before leaving for the congressional break.

Next action: Conferees will continue to meet this week, probably beginning Wednesday. President Clinton vowed to veto any bill to extend funding because it would block his spending priorities.

* Fiscal 1998 Appropriations President Clinton's proposal would raise

Education Department discretionary spending 11 percent above the fiscal 1997 level, with Title I, special education and vocational education getting only moderate increases and Title VI block grants slated for elimination. But Goals 2000 funding would rise 26 percent, to \$620 million; charter school funding would almost double, to \$100 million; and the maximum Pell Grant would rise from \$2,700 to \$3,000.

Clinton also wants mandatory funding of \$5 billion to help pay interest on school construction and \$260 million to help children read independently by fourth grade (ED, Feb. 7).

Last action: House appropriators heard testimony from other members of Congress May 21 and May 22.

Next action: House appropriators plan to hear from the National Education Goals Panel June 11 and could start writing their education bill this month. Their Senate colleagues will follow later.

* Omnibus Education S. 1: The GOP bill would allow states to use existing Title VI block grant funds for public and private school choice, raise special education funding starting with a \$1 billion hike next year, and authorize a school choice demonstration program for low-income families. The bill's student aid provisions include a tax exemption for \$1,000 per child annually in savings for postsecondary education (ED, Jan 23). S. 12: The Democrats' bill would require the federal government to pay up to half of the interest on school construction bonds and authorize \$1.75 billion for reading programs and \$1.8 billion for school technology over the next five years. The bill also would provide families earning less than \$100,000 a year a \$10,000 tax deduction for college tuition.

Last action: The House Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee held hearings last week in Cincinnati.

Louisville, Ky.; and Little Rock, Ark., on allegedly wasteful Education Department programs.

Next action: The Senate Children and Families Subcommittee plans a hearing Thursday on policy implications of child brain development (ED, April 18).

* Vocational Education A draft House plan to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act would trim the state setaside from federal grants, driving more money to school-level programs. It also would aim to toughen academic standards for students in vocational programs.

Last action: House staffers circulated the draft bill among lobbyists late last week.

Next action: The House Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee plans a hearing Thursday on its as-yet unIntroduced bill. The Senate education panel plans to introduce a bill this month that would merge vocational, adult and job training programs into state block grants (ED, May 28).

* HEA Reauthorization H. R. 6: The bill would reauthorize funds for all existing Higher Education Act (HEA) programs, which expire Sept. 30.

After the House writes new legislation for student aid and other programs under HEA, it will be substituted into H.R. 6.

Last action: The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee held a hearing in Mahwah, N.J., May 19. The House Postsecondary Education, Training and Life-Long Learning Subcommittee held a hearing May 22.

Next action: The House subcommittee plans a hearing Thursday on Pell Grants and campus-based student aid programs. The Senate plans a hearing June 12 on the growing cost of higher education.

* Juvenile Justice H.R. 3, S. 10, S. 718: Would allow school officials access to FBI juvenile felony records as part of an omnibus GOP juvenile justice bill. H.R. 3 also would require states to come up with plans for schools to notify parents if juvenile sex offenders are enrolled in their children's school or lose 20 percent of their federal crime control

funding.

Last action: The House passed H.R. 3 May 8. The House Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee held a hearing May 20 on a plan by Chairman Frank Riggs, R-Calif., to reward coordination of education and other anti-delinquency services and leverage scholarship funds for low-income youths.

Next action: The Senate Judiciary Committee could take up S. 10 as early as Thursday.

* Miscellaneous Education Amendments H.R. 914: The version the House passed in March would require postsecondary institutions to calculate graduation rates for student athletes and the general student body at the same time, overriding a provision in P.L. 104-134. The Senate added impact aid technical amendments that would extend the application deadline for Kansas and New Mexico and extend guaranteed minimum payments for federal property until fiscal 2000. Also included in that Senate amendment was an extension to January 1999 for a study on Title I's effectiveness (ED, Feb. 21, 1996). The House then added provisions from H.R. 1511 to establish a commission to report within four months on the rise in college tuition (ED, May 23).

Last action: Parts of H.R. 914 are likely to be included in a compromise disaster-relief bill, H.R. 1469, that House and Senate conferees began working on before the Memorial Day break.

Next action: Conferees on the disaster relief bill may resume their negotiations Wednesday. Because the House changed H.R. 914 after the Senate passed it, the Senate has to approve it again if the legislation is to move forward.

* Workplace Flexibility H.R. 1, S. 4: Both would allow employers to give workers the choice of taking time-and-a-half compensatory time as payment for overtime, but neither would specifically allow time for school involvement.

Last action: During Senate floor debate on S. 4 May 13, Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., introduced an amendment that would allow parents 24 hours of unpaid leave each year to attend their children's school activities and

family literacy training; the Senate did not vote on the amendment.

The House passed H.R. 1, 222-210, on March 19.

Next action: The Senate plans to continue debate on S. 4 today. No date for a vote has been set.

* School Meals Commodities Lawmakers are investigating why strawberries distributed to schools in six states in March caused 187 cases of Hepatitis A (ED, April 3).

Last action: An Agriculture Department official told the House Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee in April that the agency is stepping up its oversight of school commodities (ED, April 21).

Next action: The Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee plans to hold a hearing Thursday on the contaminated strawberries. There is no action planned in the House.

Just Introduced...

* Immigrant Education H.R. 1723: Would give school districts the option of waiving the new one-year limit on K-12 and adult education school attendance for foreign students in the United States when the law took effect last year. H.R. 1724: Would entirely repeal the school attendance restrictions on foreign K-12 students under P.L. 104-208, which requires foreign students to reimburse local education agencies for the cost of their attendance.

Last action: Both bills were introduced by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass.; referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

Next action: No action is scheduled.

* Technology Worker Shortage S. 798: Would set up a 21-member commission, including Education and Labor department representatives, educators and technology business officials, to study the shortage of technology workers and issue a report by July 1998.

Last action: Introduced May 22 by Sen. John Warner, R-Va., referred to the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.

Next action: No action is scheduled.
—Laureen Lazarovici■

17. Education Daily

June 2, 1997 Category: Trade

TECHNOLOGY SNAGS BIGGER ROLE UNDER

**Clinton Presidential Records
Tape Restoration Project [Email]**

HOUSE DRAFT

Technology and upgrading teachers' skills would share the spotlight under a draft House bill to rework federal vocational education programs.

The bill crafted by staffers on the House Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee would create a new state-level setaside for technology enhancement and professional development.

It would allow states to spend up to 5 percent of their federal funds for the new grants, and the funds would be competitively distributed to local consortia.

Those consortia would include at least

one representative from the local education agency, and also include members of higher education institutions, businesses, software designers, libraries and other groups deemed appropriate to carry out the grants.

In awarding the grants, each state would award five grants to rural areas and five to urban areas.

School would use the grants to.

- * Develop, adapt or expand new technologies in voc ed.

- * Buy new computer hardware and software to improve student learning and teacher instruction; and

- * Network education programs with

postsecondary schools and libraries.

"You'll have a lot of people buying computers with that, as they did with Goals 2000 dollars," said Michael Brustein, a lawyer in Washington, D.C., who specializes in vocational training issues.

Voc ed advocates at a House subcommittee hearing this month called on lawmakers to improve professional development programs, toughen academics in voc ed and create stronger links with technology (ED, May 23). — Matthew Dembicki ■

18. Education Daily

June 2, 1997 Category: Trade

HOUSE VOC ED DRAFT BILL WOULD BOOST LOCAL SHARE

A draft House bill aims to drive more federal vocational education money directly to local school districts at the expense of state-level initiatives, and would strip numerous stand-alone programs such as tech prep.

The 54-page "rough staff discussion draft," floated Thursday by the House Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee to lobbyists, pitches for a higher ratio of federal funds to localities: They would get 90 percent of the federal voc ed pie, up from 75 percent under current law.

The draft, however, doesn't outline how funds under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act would be distributed within the states, noting that will be determined later.

But it would let more local education agencies get voc ed funds by lowering the minimum grant amount from \$15,000 to \$2,500. That provision directly contrasts with 1990 amendments that raised the minimum grant to eliminate small grants that federal officials said were almost meaningless.

While Senate education policymakers

The 1990 amendments authorized \$1.6 billion a year, but funding has never surpassed \$1.2 billion.

The draft tries to appease a conservative group's concerns that the federal government aims to prepare

plan to merge voc ed and job training programs into state block grants, the House draft would perform a more straightforward reauthorization of the voc ed law, which expired last year.

Stripping Setasides

The House draft calls for repealing all state setasides under Perkins, including those for programs that target single parents, displaced homemakers and gender equity efforts.

It also would repeal the popular tech prep program that integrates secondary and postsecondary voc ed curricula.

States could use their state leadership money for tech prep, and localities still could tap their basic voc ed grant for the initiative.

But the draft also would create new programs to better integrate technology into voc ed learning, and to update teachers' skills.

State Director Losing Battle

Still, one of the biggest changes would likely be the House effort to push more money to local-level efforts, and cut from the state pot.

The plan suggests cutting state leadership funds from 8.5 percent to 3.5 percent for specific jobs (ED, May 20).

The Eagle Forum unsuccessfully tried to kill H.R. 1385, a House job training bill, and will likely turn up the heat to derail the Senate education committee's effort to again try to merge voc ed and

percent, and snipping state administration funds from 5 percent to 1.5 percent of the federal grant.

State voc ed directors, who are lobbying to boost state leadership funds to 10 percent while freezing state administration at 5 percent, say the cuts would result in states reducing their efforts to assess and improve programs (ED, May 28).

"There doesn't seem to be an appreciation [in the House] that the funds have been used well," Jay Cummings, Texas's voc ed director, who is president of the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Technical Education, said Friday.

The funds are critical in Texas, where the state serves as a "mass resource" for its 1,045 school districts to develop and disseminate information on curriculum and staff development and program assessment, said Cummings.

The draft would authorize \$1.3 billion for voc ed for the period starting July 1, 1998—when the bill would kick in—and "such sums as necessary" for the following fiscal years.

job training.

The House draft says federal voc ed funds couldn't be used to require or compel youths to pursue a specific career or to attain a skill certificate. And students participating in voc ed also

could change their course of study and training.

The House panel plans to hold a vocal hearing Thursday.

The Senate hasn't scheduled further hearings on vocational education, but education policy leaders likely will introduce their drastically different vocational

reauthorization plan this month. — Matthew Dembicki ■

LOCAL

19. Chicago Tribune

06/01/97; Edition: NORTHWEST FINAL; NW; Section: METRO NORTHWEST; Page 2 Category: Local

COLLEGE TO SHOW WORKING WOMEN'S SUMMIT

Harper College will show a satellite broadcast of the National Working Women's Summit from Washington.

Participants in the panel discussions will include First Lady Hillary Rodham

Clinton; Alexis Herman, secretary of labor; Ida Castro, director of the Labor Department's Women's Bureau; Donna Shalala, secretary of health and human services, and Carole Simpson of ABC

News.

Noon to 2 p.m. Thursday, Building A, Room 315, Harper College, 1200 W. Algonquin Rd. Free. ■

20. Los Angeles Times

* 06/01/97; Edition: Orange County Edition; Section: Metro Desk; Page A-28 Category: Local

Schools Score Better Grades in the South Than the North

By NICK ANDERSON
TIMES STAFF WRITER

In Orange County, the line separating people who are happy with their public schools and those who are merely satisfied might be the Costa Mesa Freeway.

The Times Orange County Poll found that more than three of five residents who live in mostly middle-class areas from Irvine and Newport Beach to the southern county line gave A's and B's to their public schools.

By contrast, about half of those polled who live north and west of the freeway—which includes some of the county's poorest areas—gave their schools the two top grades.

The poll also found the regions split

on the problems perceived in schools. People in the north tended to worry more about crowded classes, school safety and, especially, run-down school buildings. Northerners also are slightly more inclined to push for more emphasis on basic skills.

There are plenty of practical reasons why people in the south might be happier with their schools. On the whole, northern schools are older and have less room for an expanding student population. Southern schools are newer and often equipped with better technology.

More schools in the north have been forced into year-round schedules because of crowding. Schools in the south have, with some exceptions, done more to cut

class size this year in primary grades.

Joyce Gage of Buena Park said she worries about safety and discipline at her daughters' school, John F. Kennedy High in La Palma. "I feel like I'm throwing them into a den of wolves when I drop them off. By the time they get out of high school, they're hardened," said Gage, who gave her public schools a C-minus. In San Clemente, JoAnn Work gives her children's school, Las Palmas Elementary, a B-plus. She sees little crowding, gangs or violence and plenty of strengths with high-quality teachers, computer labs and an unusual bilingual program that immerses English-speaking students in Spanish. "When they grow up and go into the work force, that will come in handy," Work said. ■

21. Chicago Tribune

06/01/97; Edition: CHICAGOLAND FINAL; C; Section: METRO CHICAGO; Page 3 Category: Local

TEACHER MASTERS READING HER PUPILS

By Janita Poe, Tribune Staff Writer.
Leah Radinsky, a kindergarten teacher at

the Inter-American Magnet School on the North Side, doesn't always meet the

school's goal of getting every child to speak Spanish. But she is so skilled in

early childhood instruction that she usually finds other lessons to share.

Recently, while orchestrating a maskmaking project, Radinsky approached 5-year-old Neil Batten, who was shouting for classmate Armani Joyner, 6, to hand him a spool of string. Kneeling down to his level, Radinsky encouraged Neil to use Spanish and ask, politely, for the spool.

"Come here and ask Armani if he has finished using the string," said Radinsky, one of five winners this year of the Kohl/McCormick Early Childhood Teaching Awards, said in Spanish. "Ask him, 'Have you finished?'"

Actually, Radinsky—who teaches 80 percent of her class in Spanish and has a class that is about two-thirds bilingual—wasn't able to get Neil to use the language that day, but she did accomplish some rather important early-childhood education goals. By having Neil walk over to his friend's table and ask if he could share the string, Radinsky was able to help the boy with his social skills and resolve a tiny conflict, without any tears or fighting.

"Several things were going on," said

Radinsky, 31, an accomplished flutist who attended 10 different schools as a child in the Hyde Park and Austin neighborhoods of Chicago, as well as in Virginia and North Carolina. "Even though I was speaking to him in Spanish, I really just wanted to encourage Neil to slow down and ask Armani for the string."

The people who know Radinsky's work in her classroom at Inter-American, 919 W. Barry Ave., say the Chicago native is a master at focusing on the individual development needs of her pupils. She also is among a growing number of talented bilingual teachers who are finding creative ways to use both Spanish and English in the classroom, education leaders say.

"She has a unique ability to reach each individual at exactly the right level," said Lana Weiner, executive director of the Kohl/McCormick awards. "Her reference letters repeatedly said that she was excellent at unlocking the interest of each child."

The Kohl/McCormick awards were established last year to recognize outstanding teachers working with

children between birth and 8 years old. A collaboration between the Robert R. McCormick Foundation's Focus on Quality Initiative and the Dolores Kohl Education Foundation, the awards were open to full-time teachers from public, private and parochial schools and early-childhood programs. This year, 1,000 nominations were submitted.

The other honorees are Cathy Maria Foote, a pre-kindergarten teacher at Ariel Community Academy in the Kenwood-Oakland community on the South Side; Marilyn Lindeman, a pre-kindergarten teacher at St. Andrew's Lutheran School in Park Ridge; Katherine McLellan, a pre-kindergarten teacher at Baker Demonstration School in Evanston; and Bonnie Rodin-Kling, a teacher of deaf and hearing-impaired pupils at Park School in Evanston.

The winners receive a \$5,000 cash award, one year of interactive programming by educational experts at the Kohl Children's Museum and induction into the Kohl Academy of Outstanding Educators. ■

22. Los Angeles Times

* 06/01/97; Edition: Bulldog Edition; Section: Advance Desk; Page A-4 Category: Local

Mississippi Student Challenges Black-White Divide Education: A desegregated school's practice of separate class presidents for each race is questioned. The effort has gained little support, however.

By GINA HOLLAND
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HERNANDO, Miss. — Hernando High has two principals—one white, one black. There are two homecoming queens and two class presidents, one of each race. The yearbook features a black Mr. and Miss Hernando High School next to their white counterparts. The students even choose class clowns and biggest flirts of each race.

Now, one and only one student—the new president of the Student Council—is

"I thought that was the whole reason we integrated so everybody would be treated equal," said Beverly Williams, a homemaker who also has two sons. "They've moved everybody into one building, but we still have black and white."

challenging the practice, instituted when the school was desegregated in 1970.

Alison Williams, 17, said living around the country and overseas with her Air Force family has given her a different perspective from that of her classmates.

"I know that's not how it is anywhere else and that's not how it should be," said the honor roll student who is Latin Club president and plays on the tennis team. "It's time to grow up."

A junior, Alison first questioned the policy last year when she wasn't allowed to run for a student office because she is

black. Alison and her mother have few vocal supporters among her classmates or the 3,000 residents of this Memphis, Tenn., suburb.

"This is just a big hype. There's nothing wrong with the system," said 18-year-old senior Keith Dockery, who is

white and the rotating post was designated for a black that year.

"They said that's the way it's always been, that's the way it's always going to be," said Alison, who was chosen this month by the entire 750-student body to the council presidency, which isn't selected by race.

Her mother, Beverly Williams, has protested the policy in letters to local leaders and wants school board members to reverse the practice.

black.

Scott St. Aubin, 15, who is white, said: "They don't have anything else to complain about. It's not outdated. It's what's best here."

Theron E. Long, Hernando's white principal, contends the practice teaches

tolerance, and "students learn a great lesson by working together." Long helped develop the plan to pacify blacks and whites when the all-white school was integrated in 1970—the same year court-ordered desegregation was implemented around the state.

Long noted that other public schools in Mississippi have lost students to private schools. After integration, Hernando High became mostly black; it is now about 70% white.

"You can see in some schools where people felt left out. You can see some of

the results," he said.

Long also said the practice ensures fair representation because people have a tendency to vote according to race.

Harold Kinchelow, Hernando's black principal, said the policy worked so smoothly in the early days that "we just never thought about it" again.

"I guess it's time to do away with it because all these kids know each other and have no problem with each other," he said.

Hernando High is not the only Mississippi school with dual offices, but

how many isn't known because the state doesn't keep track.

In Hernando, the topic has come up at school board meetings in recent months, but no decisions have been made. Alison and her mother are not contemplating legal action.

"Any challenge would probably face a difficult time in the courts simply because the courts have allowed schools a great deal of leeway in promoting the proper atmosphere," said David Ingebretsen, executive director of the state American Civil Liberties Union. ■

23. Los Angeles Times

* 06/01/97; Edition: Home Edition; Section: Metro; Metro Desk; Page B-3 Category: Local

40 Attend Schools Breakup Hearing Education: Emotions run high on both sides of debate as state board holds last meeting in L.A. on proposed regulations for splitting district

By PETER Y. HONG
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Turnout was low but emotions ran high Saturday at a State Board of Education hearing on proposed regulations for breaking up the Los Angeles Unified School District.

The proposed regulations would require those trying to secede to analyze issues of race and class segregation as well as labor agreements in their breakup petitions.

About 40 people attended the session at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College,

the last of two hearings held by the board in Los Angeles. A Friday hearing at Valley College drew about 100, some of whom also attended the Trade-Tech hearing.

Most of those testifying ignored the panel's instructions to stick to discussing the proposed regulations and spoke passionately for and against breaking up the school district.

Some, however, said the proposed rules are meant to thwart secession efforts.

Ruth Perez, a member of a group

trying to split Gardena schools from the district, called the proposed regulations "a delaying tactic to slow it down until we all go away."

Sylvester T. Hinton Jr. of the Inner City School District Assn. said the board "is trying to ensure they can do what they can to get in our way."

Gabriel Madel of Parents for Unity said turnout was low partly because the board did not publicize the hearing well among Spanish-speaking parents and did not provide a Spanish translation of the proposed rules. ■

24. Chicago Tribune

06/01/97; Edition: CHICAGOLAND; C; Section: NEWS; Page 18 Category: Local

SENATE GOP BACKS OWN SCHOOL FUNDING PLAN

By Rick Pearson ; Courtney Challos, Tribune Staff Writers. Tribune political writer John Kass contributed to this article.

Senate Republicans delivered a political rebuke Friday night to GOP Gov. Jim

The \$455 million Senate GOP alternative, approved on a 30-28 party-line vote, was viewed as unsatisfying by even some Republicans because it lacked strong

Edgar's attempt to reform school funding, scuttling his 25 percent income-tax hike proposal and approving their own scaled-down alternative that would boost taxes on telephone calls and cigarettes.

The decision by Senate Republicans to muscle through to the House their own teacher-accountability reforms and property-tax relief.

But Republicans nevertheless supported the bill, largely to try and prod Edgar and Democratic House Speaker

bill came in spite of repeated pleas by Edgar and Democrats to let the full Senate vote on the governor's \$1.6 billion tax-swapping plan. Edgar believes it can pass there if it gets the chance.

Michael Madigan of Chicago into negotiations toward a compromise school-funding plan.

"I have talked to the speaker and he said, 'I'm always open to negotiate.' So

we're going to try to negotiate," Senate President James "Pate" Philip of Wood Dale said after the vote.

But Madigan spokesman Steve Brown called the measure "Pate's pathetic charade" and said nobody was interested in more school-funding talks.

And with lawmakers being pushed toward a midnight Saturday adjournment deadline and the tougher rules to pass a bill that take place when they exceed that time, aides indicated Edgar was in no mood to reopen talks on a subject that has dominated the legislature all session long.

"The time for posturing is over. The hour for real reform has arrived. The governor believes the Senate should be given the opportunity to vote for real reform," Edgar spokesman Mike Lawrence said of the governor's plan.

Before the Senate's vote, Edgar said that if lawmakers don't fundamentally change the state's property-tax-dependent system of school funding by their adjournment deadline, it probably wouldn't happen in "this millennium."

And he lambasted the Senate GOP alternative, which would boost the tax on a pack of cigarettes from 44 to 54 cents and increase the existing 5 percent telephone messages tax to 6 percent. Those taxes would raise \$150 million.

It also would count on revenue growth and changes in the governor's proposed budget totaling another \$305 million to be earmarked for schools, with money directed especially at poorer school

districts.

"It falls far short of providing the necessary dollars for the poor schools in this state," Edgar said. "And there's absolutely no property-tax relief in this bill. So, again, this is not the meaningful reforms of how we fund our schools that I think people have talked about."

The Republican governor was clearly unhappy with the sharp turn of events from the day before, when House Democrats led the narrow approval of his plan to raise personal income taxes by 25 percent to provide \$900 million in property-tax relief and give schools an extra \$614 million.

Edgar just as clearly pinned the blame on Philip for refusing to allow his bill to escape from a GOP-dominated committee and advance to the full Senate for a vote.

"I'm not asking Sen. Philip to even vote for the bill," Edgar said. "I'm not even talking about twisting arms or anything. The votes are there (in the Senate). Just give the Senate an opportunity. One person should not just stand in the way of that."

Philip instead sent Edgar's plan to the Senate Revenue Committee, where it lost on a 6-4 party-line vote. Hours later, the committee advanced the Senate GOP alternative to the full Senate by the same margin.

"I don't know why anybody ought to have their nose out of joint," Philip said of sending Edgar's bill to the committee for its demise. "We did the exact same thing the House did, with different

results."

As the tension over school reform heated up, so has talk among proponents of expanded casino gambling in the state who see it as a potential education revenue source. In Chicago, Mayor Richard Daley said a gambling package involving at least three riverboats for the city and another for Rosemont Mayor Don Stephens could raise funds for education without requiring a major increase in state taxes.

"It's something we're discussing with people, right now," Daley said during a taping of "At Issue," to air at 9:30 a.m. Sunday on WBBM-AM 780.

Other efforts in Springfield among legislators and their gaming-lobby allies also would include allowing existing riverboats to move, operate dockside, create a new gaming license and add slots to horse-racing tracks.

Besides the casino issue, Daley and Republicans were engaged in another battle.

Philip, saying he remained dissatisfied with a lack of progress in planned improvements at Meigs Field, said he would not push a total repeal of a state law turning the tiny lakefront landing strip over to the state.

Philip, however, said he has offered a compromise to Madigan that would put off a state takeover of the airport for a year. Madigan aides said they would wait to see if Senate Republicans move such a plan. ■

25. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13WC; Westchester Weekly Desk; Page 19, Column 1 Category: Local

School Districts Try to Attract Tuition-Paying Students

By MERRI ROSENBERG

TARRYTOWN — WHILE location may be everything, as real estate agents say, there are those who contend that in many Westchester communities "school district" can be substituted for "location."

Some districts capitalize on their reputations for excellence to attract tuition-paying, nonresident students. Hastings-on-Hudson, for example, has appealed to students from Yonkers and the Bronx, and Edgemont has developed a packet of information to sell itself.

"We really believe that recruiting has no place in the public school system," Dr.

TD In some cases, students are drawn to special education programs not offered in their home district or offered at a lower cost than a comparable Board of Cooperative Educational Services program. In other cases, parents believe that a certain district can offer better training than their own district.

With most districts confronting increased certioraris and decreased state support, tuition-paying students are a way for districts to balance their budgets.

"One of the things a superintendent has to do is look for ways to increase revenues without increasing taxes," said Dr. Donald Kusel, Superintendent of the Kusel said. "Communicating is one thing, but we would never say Tarrytown is

public schools in the Tarrytowns. Tarrytown, along with Pleasantville and Briarcliff, is one of three districts that students from Pocantico Hills, which has no high school of its own, can select. The Pocantico district pays Tarrytown \$11,500 a year for each student who goes to Tarrytown High School. The rate at Pleasantville High is \$11,450, and at Briarcliff High it is \$13,800. Tarrytown, Briarcliff and Pleasantville schedule meetings to help Pocantico eighth graders and their parents decide which high school to attend.

better than Briarcliff or Pleasantville. It can be very positive in terms of our

budget, but we don't put pressure on our budget."

Nevertheless, marketing the strengths and resources of a district is a shrewd response to current financial pressures.

"We're facing diminishing resources and increased certioraris," said Dr. Donald Antonecchia, Superintendent of the Pleasantville School District. "This is a way to offset those losses of revenues and a way to generate revenues. We like to spread the good news about our school district."

In Pleasantville's current graduating class of 120 seniors, 20 are tuition-paying from Pocantico. Pleasantville, which has an \$18 million budget, has been able to use the \$1.4 million in revenues from tuition-paying students to enhance course offerings and improve the physical plant.

The educational benefits for small school districts that can add other students to their mix is another advantage, said Dr. Fran Wills, Superintendent of the Briarcliff School District.

"We're interested in enhancing the student body and its diversity," said Dr.

Wills, whose district receives about \$450,000 in tuition revenues. "This is also providing an opportunity for diversity for our students."

Those districts that have developed special education programs with countywide reputations also cite the financial and educational benefits for the district and its students. In Ardsley, which has been running enhanced special education classes for the last five years, students from Bronxville, Hastings-on-Hudson, Edgemont, Blind Brook, Irvington, Greenburgh Central Seven, Dobbs Ferry, Scarsdale, Elmsford and Bedford are among those that take part in special education classes.

"We don't advertise," said Dr. Stanley Toll, Superintendent of the Ardsley school district. The 30 to 40 additional students each year generate about \$1 million in additional revenue.

Dr. Toll continued: "It's all word of mouth. We determined a few years ago to educate our own kids, because it's better for the youngsters and better for the district. It's the least restrictive environment, with kids they know. When we find we can form a group of students

with comparable needs and can do so at a comparable cost, we have formed our own classes. Our costs are lower than Boces, because Boces has to rent space and has an extra layer of administration. I'm not underselling anybody."

Ardsley charges about \$25,000 for out-of-district students in special education programs, while the tuition rate at comparable Boces programs ranges from about \$27,000 to about \$42,000, depending on the program.

"When Boces develops the costs for a program, we include all the costs — not only the teachers, aides, supplies, but all overhead and expenses — which a school district usually doesn't," said Dr. Gilbert Jacobson, assistant superintendent for business and administrative services at the Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

Similarly, Dr. Kusel in Tarrytown said: "We also have a sizable number of special education students from out of the district. We can charge significantly less than Boces, so we can fill our classes and defray the costs." ■

26. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13CN; Connecticut Weekly Desk; Page 1, Column 5 Category: Local

Hartford Schools: A New Beginning

By RICHARD WEIZEL

THE state takeover today of Hartford's public schools, which dissolved the city's elected Board of Education and replaces it with a seven-member state-appointed Board of Trustees, is a first for Connecticut — the first time that a public school system is not under local control.

Control was taken away by the General Assembly because of a litany of problems in the Hartford system, including poor management, crumbling buildings and dismal test scores. The low point may have been in April when a committee recommended taking away Hartford High School's accreditation, which would make it only the second unaccredited high school in New England.

The takeover, which was overwhelmingly approved in April, dissolved the Hartford school board, and created a new board appointed by Gov. John G. Rowland and legislative leaders.

The seven new trustees face the task of turning around a \$240 million school system, with nearly 25,000 students in 38 schools. The system has a drop-out rate of 43 percent and for years has had the lowest test scores in the state.

"We're not going to look back to focus on how things got this way — we're going to look ahead to focus on how we can make the system better . . . much better," said the new board chairman, Robert M. Furek, 54, of West Hartford, a retired chief executive of Heublein Inc., a Hartford-based spirits company.

"Clearly the system is broken and we've got to fix it, there just isn't room any longer for failure," Mr. Furek said. "This is a group of people who have all been in leadership roles in their respective fields of endeavor and who all have a strong sense of what it takes to get the job done," he said of the new trustees. "But they are also people who understand how to work together, and who recognize the need for compromise."

Compromise is something that previous Hartford school boards did not

always do. Partisan political battles, and at times even among members of the same parties, often overshadowed education issues.

Some people in the education community said that the local board's last major decision — particularly the way the decision was made — characterized the panel's tenure.

That decision involved the 11th-hour hiring in February of Patricia A. Daniel, the East Providence, R.I., School Superintendent, as the new Hartford school chief during an unruly public meeting just hours after the board announced the hiring of Edwin Duroy, the Hoboken School Superintendent. At the meeting there were outbursts from city residents angered by the apparent selection of Mr. Duroy, with one person even pouring a pitcher of water over a board member's head.

The new trustees say they are intent on establishing a sense of order and control. The trustees say that without political motivation, they will be able to focus entirely on education.

"For too long now the adults have been playing politics while the children have been losing valuable time in a system that has been failing them," said Diane Alverio of New Britain, a trustee as well as vice president and general manager of WLAT-AM in Hartford and a former television reporter.

"We weren't elected, so we don't owe anybody anything," Ms. Alverio said, "other than the children of Hartford, who we are obligated to provide the best possible education. Every special interest group has a political mandate, and I have already been approached by those who think the old political rules still apply."

But some parents and teachers say they have heard it all before, and wonder if a board so heavily weighted with members of the business community and without much experience in public education will be up to the task.

"No, I don't believe anything is really going to change, I don't see this board as having the skills or sensitivity needed to truly understand the problems these urban children are facing," said the Rev. Michael C. Williams, a parent who says he is planning to take his three children out of the Hartford school system in September.

"We're either moving out of the city or putting them in private school, I don't want them subjected to any more educational experiments," Mr. Williams. He was alluding to the failed privatization effort undertaken by the board several years ago when it hired Educational Alternatives Inc. to run the system. Mr. Williams added that he has watched the system rapidly decline over the past decade as politics, patronage and incompetence have overshadowed education. "We've suffered enough in this school system, it's time to get out," he said.

Even so, some Hartford residents said they were encouraged by the new board's stated determination to make drastic changes to improve the quality of education for the city's students, 95 percent of whom are black and Hispanic.

"They are a good group of people, and they certainly don't seem to carry with them the kind of political baggage as the previous board, so that makes us very hopeful," said David MacDonald, president of the Hartford Parents Network, a citywide organization of

parents' groups. "But if they don't act boldly and quickly, they're going to lose some of the positive feeling the community now feels towards them."

Shirley West, president of another citywide parents' group, Educate Our Children Now, said, "I've been fighting for a long time and every time someone new comes in they say they're motivated only by what is best for the children. We just want to see results, we want to see real action, real reform that will mean quality education for our children. We don't need any more studies, focus groups or talking about what needs to be done."

Cheryl Daniels, president of the Hartford teachers' union, said that after meeting and talking with the new trustees she was "cautiously optimistic" that the new panel will find a way to succeed.

"These are all quality people who seem to have their hearts in the right place," Ms. Daniels said. "But they have to understand that what we need in Hartford is real educational reform, not just cosmetic changes to make things look like they're better."

Mr. Furek says he understands why some people are skeptical. But he said that the new panel is "tough and savvy enough to get the job done," despite all the failures. He noted that the trustees include a priest who has spent his life working in education, a former State Education Department employee now working in higher education, and members of the business, real estate, health care, community relations and social-services fields.

Mr. Furek says his panel will meet this week to begin to decide which problems to tackle first although planning a new budget, addressing the issues of Hartford High School's accreditation and Bulkeley High School's pending probation are likely to be of immediate concern.

"The only goal we have is to make the Hartford schools better for the children of the city, that's it, that's why we're here," said Mr. Furek. "I know it's one of the biggest challenges I've ever faced."

Another trustee, Lorraine M. Aronson of Manchester, assistant to the chancellor at the University of Connecticut at Storrs and a former State Deputy Education Commissioner, said, "Sure it's a big challenge, maybe the biggest any of us have ever faced, but if we don't believe we can do this . . . we might as well all go home right now."

Those sentiments were also echoed by another trustee, Ana-Maria Garcia of Hartford, chief executive officer of the Greater Hartford Y.W.C.A., who perhaps has even more at stake than other board members because she is the only one with a child in the Hartford school system. Her daughter is a sophomore honor student at Hartford High School.

Ms. Garcia, who formerly held various city posts, including assistant to the City Manager and director of Hartford's Social Services Department, views work as affecting not only Hartford but also other urban areas.

"While our focus is, of course, going to be on the education of the system in Hartford," Ms. Garcia said, if we come up with something that is successful . . . it might be an approach that can be replicated in other cities."

Another trustee, Marie Spivey, vice president of community relations at Hartford Hospital, says a key to transforming the failing system is to focus on "the richness of Hartford's diversity."

The new board, Ms. Spivey said, is made up of people with diverse backgrounds and different areas of expertise. "I think when you put all of our collective experience together," she said, "it's going to lead to real change, to an improved school system and real change."

The new trustees also said that real educational reform in Hartford is going to take time because much of the problem is rooted in poverty, for which there are no easy solutions.

"It's a tangled web and it has to be undone very carefully," said the Rev. Henry C. Frascadore, another trustee. Father Frascadore, a former principal of South Catholic School in Hartford, was assistant superintendent of schools for the Hartford Archdiocese from 1974 through 1985 and was president of Northwest Catholic School in Hartford until last year. "Sometimes quick decisions without proper thought and planning only make things worse," he said. "I think that's how Hartford's schools deteriorated in the first place."

The seventh trustee is Richard Weaver-Bey, a Hartford real estate investor, apartment manager and radio station owner.

09:24 EDT June 1, 1997■

27. The Washington Post

05/31/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: A Section; Page A01 Category: Local

Six P.G. Schools Face Purge; Staffs Must Resign, Reapply as Superintendent Seeks Improvement

By Lisa Frazier
Washington Post Staff Writer

Prince George's County School Superintendent Jerome Clark will strip six schools of their principals, teachers and staffs and reorganize the instructional programs this summer in an effort to improve their poor academic performance.

Clark's action is the most extensive measure he has taken in two years as superintendent to boost achievement in the 125,000-student Prince George's school system, the largest in Maryland. All staff members — from principals to janitors — at two middle schools and four elementary schools must reapply for their positions by June 20 and go through an interview process if they want to return to those schools in September.

The schools, all inside the Capital Beltway, have consistently performed so poorly on the state's annual assessment tests that school officials feared the state might intervene and order its own changes. The state has ordered such "reconstitution" at 50 Baltimore schools and two schools, in Anne Arundel and Somerset counties.

"This is in hope of improving test scores at those schools," Prince George's Deputy Superintendent Robert E. Slade said yesterday. "[Clark] believes we should not wait for the state to come in and tell us to do something."

Only Baltimore schools had lower scores last year than Prince George's on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program, the annual series of tests given to third-, fifth-, and eighth-graders.

Parents and county leaders have complained about the performance of the school system, which they say influences the county's ability to attract middle-class residents and business investment.

Then-Superintendent John A. Murphy used a similar strategy 12 years ago when magnet programs were developed to promote desegregation. Schools with magnet programs, most of which are inside the Capital Beltway, now are the top-performing schools in the county. Many of them have long waiting lists.

Charles Herndon, spokesman for the Maryland Department of Education, said Clark's initiative is in line with state programs that emphasize "making the

changes necessary to bring about effective learning and teaching."

When the state orders a reconstitution, school officials must submit short-term and long-term plans to reorganize and boost performance. Before the state steps in, the schools must be performing "far from standard," Herndon said. The schools also must be showing little or no sign of improvement.

Prince George's school officials will call their reorganized schools "21st Century Schools" for what they hope will be a movement that generates excitement and attracts dedicated staff and creative academic programming designed to prepare students for the next century. An "instructional content team" of administrators and other educators will be assigned to devise special programs for the schools.

The schools that will be reorganized are Benjamin Stoddert Middle School in Temple Hills, Drew Freeman Middle School in Suitland, Glassmanor Elementary in Oxon Hill, Riverdale Elementary in Riverdale, Thomas Stone Elementary in Mount Rainier and Ridgecrest Elementary in Hyattsville.

All of the schools have high percentages of poor children and uncertified teachers and low percentages of teachers with advanced degrees.

Recent studies conducted by researchers in the school system showed that schools with high poverty rates tend to score lower on the state assessment tests. The study also showed that schools with higher percentages of teachers with advanced degrees tend to perform better on the tests.

"I think it's very clear the schools are not performing at the level the community, the board and the superintendent want them to," said school board member Alvin Thornton (District 7), whose district includes one of the schools. "I'm wholeheartedly supportive of the concept. I'm happy the superintendent is taking action before the state steps in and takes action."

Staff members at the six schools will be notified by June 30 whether they will be allowed to stay, Slade said. Clark will ask all of the employees to make a commitment of at least a three years to the schools.

"Individuals not selected for

placement will not be professionally disadvantaged in any way," Slade said. "They are guaranteed positions" in the school system.

Janette Bell, president of the Prince George's County Educators' Association, said the union has not taken a position on the change because the organization's leaders are waiting for more information. But she said the union will ensure that the transitions occur smoothly.

"As far as who will stay and who will go at the schools, that is not a forgone conclusion," she said.

School board member Doyle Niemann (District 3), whose district includes two of the schools, said the entire school system will benefit. The schools in his area have large numbers of immigrants who speak English as a second language and special education students.

"I think it's great," Niemann said. "It's a very positive, proactive step to address the challenges we're facing in those schools. . . . What we're trying to do is take the lowest-performing schools and find out what it takes to improve performance."

The key to making the changes work is a collaborative effort between the administration, staffs and parents, Thornton said. Administrators say they plan to meet with the staffs and parents at the six affected schools to explain the changes and elicit support.

"In the process, there needs to be a timely advisory to the community, a clear understanding as to what's being done and sufficient opportunity for the community to be involved," Thornton said. "If you don't have the community's backing, it's not going to be successful."

POOR PERFORMERS

These six schools will be reorganized because of low test scores on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. The principal and entire staff of each school will have to reapply if they want to continue working in the schools, which next year will be called "21st Century Schools."

Pct. meeting Pct. of

School state standard poor students**

Benjamin Stoddert Middle 18.9% 60.9%

Drew Freeman Middle 15.8 57.2

Glassmanor Elementary 11.1 72.9

Ridgecrest Elementary 12.2 70.5

Riverdale Elementary 13.8 67.2

Thomas Stone Elementary 12.3 63.2

*The average of the percentage of students who met the state standard on the Maryland School Performance

Assessment Program in reading, writing, language usage, mathematics, science and social studies. The test is given to third-, fifth- and eight-graders.

**The percentage of poor children is

defined by the number of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches based on their families' incomes.

Source: Maryland Department of Education ■

28. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13WC; Westchester Weekly Desk; Page 1, Column 5 Category: Local

Private School Plans New High School

By KATE STONE LOMBARDI

BEDFORD — ON a recent spring afternoon, several ninth graders stood in the dappled sunshine at Rippowam Cisca School here discussing their plans for next year. Tristan Perich, 14, will be leaving his family in Katonah to attend the Andover School in Massachusetts. Justine Landegger, 14, of Ridgefield, will attend the Taft School in Waterbury. Elyssa Rosenberg, 15, will commute from Somers to Tarrytown to attend the Hackley School.

If administrators and parents at Rippowam Cisca have their way, by 1999 ninth graders like these will have another option for continuing their private school education: they could remain at the school to complete their high school years.

TD Rippowam Cisca, a private day school for prekindergartners through ninth graders, has proposed building a new high school on a 113-acre site here, an ambitious project, which it estimates will cost \$25 million for site development and construction and one in which the school aspires to have 400 children enrolled by 2001.

School officials hope to begin construction by this fall, but the proposal is going through a lengthy review process and requires the approval of Bedford's Zoning Board, Planning Commission and Wetlands Commission. To build a school in an area zoned for residential housing, the school needs a special permit. Additionally, it must comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Among the main concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed building are the increased traffic it would bring here and the construction's effects on wetlands. The site, along Route 22 in the village, borders the Mianus River, which provides drinking water for 160,000 residents of Port Chester and Connecticut.

Mr. Blanchard said that while there

"We are at the beginning of a long process," Donald J. Coe, chairman of Bedford's Planning Commission, said. "Our board is very thorough, and we take our S.E.Q.R.A. responsibilities very, very seriously. It isn't fast, but it gives the town a chance to make good decisions with good information."

Rippowam Cisca officials say they are eager to comply with the requests of the various boards so they can realize their ambition to build as soon as possible. The school, which has 600 students, currently has two campuses. The lower school, known as the Cisca Campus for prekindergarten through fourth grade, is in Mount Kisco. The upper school, called the Rippowam Campus, is here.

The proposed site for the new school, which is primarily a wooded area dotted with man-made ponds, was originally a quarry. It had most recently been zoned for 59 houses. Last July, before construction began, the president of the board of trustees of Rippowam Cisca, Dort A. Cameron, bought the land from the developer with the intention of donating the property to the school.

Building a high school, which Rippowam Cisca officials call a college preparatory school because all their students continue their education, has been discussed for 20 years, said Nancy Joyce, vice president of the board of trustees. But she added that several factors converged recently, convincing parents and administrators that the time was right to embark on the project.

First, Mrs. Joyce said, the demographic studies reveal that there is a need for a new high school. "The schools are all very busy and full, both public schools and independent ones," Mrs. Joyce said. "We have waiting lists in all grades through seven, and Bedford, just as an example, had a recent bond issue for facilities, because of their expanding student population."

Currently, about half the children who were similarities in the job he undertook

graduate from Rippowam Cisca go on to boarding school. The other half are split between those who attend public schools in their hometowns and those who continue at other private day schools in the area, including the Brunswick School in Greenwich, Greenwich Academy, Rye Country Day and Hackley.

Mrs. Joyce also said that many parents, including herself, were uncomfortable with the idea of sending their children to a boarding school at 14.

"Many of our students go on to wonderful places and get great educations, but personally, I wasn't ready to let go," she said. "I have a child ready to graduate from ninth grade. He said to me, 'You don't want me to go to boarding school, do you?' And I said to him: 'Jimmy, you've got a 5-year-old brother. If you go now, he's not going to know you. You're gone.' So I think the answer is to have an option in the community."

Mrs. Joyce said there was a core group of parents that had the interest and resources to raise the kind of money needed for such a major expansion. Optimally, she said the school hopes to raise \$15 million for the project and borrow the rest.

Tuition for the upper school at Rippowam for this academic year was \$12,400, with roughly \$1,700 in additional fees for supplies and activities. This revenue covers only 82 percent of the cost of education, school officials say, and has no bearing on the capital needed for the new project.

Rippowam Cisca recently hired a new headmaster, David Blanchard, to oversee the expansion. In Mr. Blanchard's previous job, as headmaster of the Wellington School in Ohio, he completed a similar project, extending a kindergarten-through-ninth-grade program to the 12th grade. As is planned at Rippowam, one grade level was added each year.

in Ohio and the one he hopes to oversee

here, there are also differences. The Wellington School was established in 1982, whereas Rippowam, he said, "has 75 years of very powerful history behind it and very strong traditions of excellence."

He said his challenge would be to extend the successful approaches and the philosophy of the existing school into the high school. "One of the advantages of prekindergarten through 12th-grade schools, in general, is that there is a common philosophy," Mr. Blanchard said. "You treat upper schoolers very differently from lower schoolers, but there is a common approach to kids. We encourage them to develop their potential, to be independent learners, to collaborate. Those kinds of concepts start in kindergarten. It's like a farm team, and it keeps feeding up so you can build all that into the high school."

One concern that parents have about establishing a high school is that the institution will not have any experience in obtaining college admission for its graduating seniors. Mr. Blanchard said he planned to recruit an experienced college counselor as soon as the 10th grade

opened, a person who would not only get to know the children but would also familiarize the colleges with Rippowam's new program. He said the first few graduating classes would have the distinction of being pioneers, which would make them stand out in the college-admissions process.

The ambitious design for the new school includes not only an academic building but also a field house, a double hockey rink, a performing arts center and 12 athletic fields. The original plan called for 14 fields, but 2 were dropped because of their proximity to wetlands. In contrast, at the shared campus of Fox Lane High School and Fox Lane Middle School—the public schools here, which have about 1,500 students between them—there are three athletic fields, though students also use fields at the elementary schools and town recreation fields.

The new school would be nonprofit, so it would not produce any tax revenue for the town, as the housing development would have. Mr. Coe said each house would have been assessed at somewhere between \$500,000 to \$750,000. At the same time, the housing proposal would

have brought more children into Bedford, most of whom would have been educated at public expense. Rippowam currently draws children from 30 school districts in Westchester and Fairfield. Dr. Bruce Dennis, Superintendent of Bedford Schools, said that he believed a new high school would have little effect on the public schools here.

Currently, the proposal for the new school is before the Zoning Board, where negotiations are under way to define the scope of the subjects to be addressed in the environmental impact statement. Still at issue, among other things, is whether the school ultimately plans to move the lower and middle schools to the new site and concerns about underground water quality. By law this phase must be followed by a draft environmental impact statement, which precedes the final environmental impact statement, at which time public hearings will be held.

"We hope the issues can be settled, and we wish them well," Mr. Coe said. "This is very typical of the way Bedford goes at things, thoroughly but hopefully, with good grace." ■

29. Los Angeles Times

* 05/31/97; Edition: Valley Edition; Section: Zones Desk; Page A-1 Category: Local

*State School Board's Breakup Rules Assailed * Education: Speakers tell hearing that proposed guidelines would destroy efforts to dismantle L.A. system.*

By DUKE HELFAND
TIMES STAFF WRITER

VAN NUYS — Politicians, parents and civic leaders lambasted the State Board of Education on Friday over proposed regulations for breaking up the Los Angeles Unified School District, contending that the rules would destroy efforts to dismantle the sprawling school system.

The board opened two days of public hearings over new guidelines that would require breakup petitions to include an analysis of the effects on school desegregation, equitable distribution of district resources, the federal Voting Rights Act and other protections against discrimination.

Critics complained that the complex—and potentially costly—undertaking would unfairly fall on the shoulders of

parents seeking more responsive schools.

"The residents of the San Fernando Valley know what they want for their children," parent and PTA activist Lisa Keating told the state panel. "Putting up roadblocks of red tape in our way is not reasonable, nor practical."

The hearing is to continue today at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College in downtown Los Angeles, although the board is not expected to make a decision on the proposed rules until at least the fall. Breakup proponents from the various secession drives across the district are expected to show up at today's hearing.

About 100 people attended Friday's hearing at Valley College—some angry about a process they say could further disenfranchise parents, prompting more to move out of the district or send their children to private schools.

Speaker after speaker also sought to broaden the hearing beyond the proposed regulations, in an effort to persuade the board that locally controlled schools would be more accountable than the district's giant bureaucracy. The state board is crucial to the breakup process because it must agree to place the issue before voters.

"These districts would be much smaller than the Los Angeles Unified School District and allow greater parental involvement, which I find throughout the country is the key to a successful educational environment," Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Santa Clarita) told the panel.

McKeon also criticized the board, saying it "appears ready to subvert the will of the people by adopting regulations that will make it impossible for San Fernando Valley parents to pursue their

hopes."

But a board spokesman said the proposed regulations—which have been sought by school district officials—are designed to help interpret the 1995 legislation sponsored by state Sen. Tom Hayden (D-Los Angeles).

Hayden's bill requires that any petition to break up the Los Angeles school system evaluate 10 conditions intended to protect the labor rights of district employees and preserve socioeconomic and racial diversity among students.

Hayden said through a spokeswoman that he deliberately crafted his legislation with general guidelines rather than "regulatory detail," so it would not interfere with breakup proposals.

"The law simply seeks to create reasonable parameters for a fair process leading to citizen initiatives on [school district] reorganizations," Hayden staffer Connie Brown told the panel.

But district officials, arguing that Hayden's legislation is too vague to accurately evaluate breakup proposals, have been lobbying the state board to adopt a strict set of regulations. Under the proposed regulations, breakup proponents—most of them parents

volunteering their time—would have to either hire professional consultants to prepare acceptable studies and maps of their proposed new school systems, or perform the time-consuming job themselves.

"The definitions of the terms should not be like a mystery novel," school district attorney Michael Johnson told the panel Friday. "It is only fair to define these terms now."

The district's teachers union, meanwhile, has said the state regulations are a sound attempt to ensure that any breakup plan treats students across the district fairly.

Rep. Tom McClintock (R-Northridge), who is closely allied with Valley breakup advocates, has sought to bridge the two sides in the debate with a compromise set of regulations that would require far less analysis and place the burden of the work on the state rather than on secession leaders. A McClintock spokesman said the proposal more closely follows the spirit of the Hayden legislation.

The San Fernando Valley school secession group—known as Finally Restoring Excellence in Education—is

one of five organizations seeking to carve up the school district. Groups from South-Central Los Angeles and the South Bay city of Lomita are among others who want to run their own schools.

Representatives from those two secession movements also addressed the panel.

Robert Hargrave, Lomita's mayor pro tem, said his city of 20,000 opposes any regulations that would slow the process. The Lomita group is the first to have filed its breakup petition with the state, and Hargrave said the breakup forces are frustrated with the delays.

"We are in opposition to any further rules or regulations so that we can have a hearing before" the board, he told the panel.

Former Assemblywoman Paula Boland, whose 1995 legislation made an LAUSD breakup politically feasible, echoed Hargrave's frustrations.

"If the process isn't simple, then it's no process at all," she told the panel. "I believe the purpose of these regulations is to . . . kill the entire [school breakup] movement." ■

30. The New York Times

05/31/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 1; Metropolitan Desk; Page 23, Column 1 Category: Local

Question of an English Test for a Diploma Bounces From Campus to the Courts

By KAREN W. ARENSON

The battle over whether more than 125 Hostos Community College students can graduate went from the campus to the courts yesterday as first the students and then the school administrators won court victories.

When the day started, it appeared that students would have to pass an English writing exam if they wanted to graduate on Sunday. By late afternoon, it appeared that they had won a reprieve when a Bronx Supreme Court judge blocked that requirement temporarily.

By late evening, however, an appeal by the City University of New York had succeeded and that requirement had been reinstated, Jay Hershenson, a CUNY vice chancellor, said.

In the later ruling, Judge Israel Rubin of the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court scheduled a hearing on Tuesday on whether the students can be given their diplomas

without having passed the tests, Mr. Hershenson said. Judge Rubin could not be reached for comment.

In tomorrow's ceremony, students who have not passed their tests will be allowed to participate but will not receive their diplomas.

The confusion started on Tuesday, after most students had already finished their finals, when the university's trustees ordered Hostos, a bilingual college in the South Bronx, to require all students to pass the writing test before they could graduate. Hostos, which is part of the university, had stopped using the exam last year.

Students were scrambling yesterday to take the 50-minute test.

The students' reprieve had been granted by Judge Kenneth L. Thompson Jr. late in the afternoon. "I felt there would be irreparable harm if they were not allowed to graduate," he said in a telephone interview. "To pull the rug out

now might cause them to maybe give up faith entirely on higher education."

But CUNY officials said they felt greater damage would occur if the students were allowed to graduate without passing the exam.

Students had said earlier that they would fight any appeal. "These students must be allowed to graduate," said Yamile Mendez, president of the Hostos student government, which originated the students' lawsuit.

The trustees' last-minute requirement was partly a response to criticism by Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and Gov. George E. Pataki that the university lacks high enough standards.

Led by the Giuliani- and Pataki-appointed majority, the university trustees voted on Tuesday evening to require that all community college students — specifically including those set to graduate next week — first pass the writing test.

On Thursday, the university identified 137 of the 400 prospective graduates at

The test, which asks students to write a persuasive essay, is actually part of the placement exam that all university students must take after they are admitted. Students who fail some portion of that test, which also covers reading comprehension and mathematics, must take remedial classes and retake the part they fail.

Although it is board policy that all students graduating from the university's four-year programs pass the placement exams, there appears to have been no comparable formal policy for the community colleges. But CUNY officials and college professors say students must pass the writing test to get into core English classes they need for graduation.

Last year, Hostos, which offers about

Hostos as ineligible for diplomas because of the new requirement. Hostos officials 20 percent of its courses in Spanish, developed its own writing test, a descriptive essay that it said would be a better measure of students' writing aptitude.

Some English teachers said that the Hostos version was easier than the university version, but that passing rates for students of English as a second language were less than 20 percent.

Earlier this month, Hostos students protested the difficulty of the test, and the college decided that it would not be the sole determinant of whether they could move beyond remedial courses and that course work would also be considered.

It was those changes that caught the attention of university trustees, who said Tuesday night that the college should have sought permission from CUNY

called them all and told them they could take the exam yesterday or today, before changing the testing process.

The student lawsuit, filed by Ronald B. McGuire on behalf of Yamile Mendez, the president of the student government, and Miguel Castillo, a graduating student who has not yet been told whether he passed the test, argues that the students have met the requirements set by the Hostos faculty and should be allowed to graduate.

"When I started, there was no requirement to pass the CUNY writing test," said Mr. Castillo, 25.

Mr. Castillo, who hopes to join the Army after graduation, said he was not sure whether he would pass. "You can write a lot and not pass," said Mr. Castillo. "That does not mean you don't know how to write or talk English." ■

31. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 1; Metropolitan Desk; Page 31, Column 1 Category: Local

Top Student Has to Share Top Honors

By EVELYN NIEVES

NEWBURGH, N.Y. — FROM the beginning, Debra Polera has fought the Newburgh school district. When her daughter Santana, who is legally blind, was 5, the district was going to put her in a program for retarded children. "I said how could this be? She's a brilliant little girl," Ms. Polera recalls. "That started it all."

Ms. Polera hired a certified teacher and had a classroom built for Santana in the basement of her modified ranch. The room is a high-tech wonder, with a 33-inch computer screen and lights angled at different degrees so that Santana can make the most of the tunnel vision she has in her left eye.

TD By law, school districts are supposed to provide students with disabilities an education equal to that of other students. But the Newburgh district never paid for Santana's materials and did not begin paying for Santana's teacher until four years ago, when, Ms. Polera says, she screamed and yelled bloody murder.

In January, the Poleras sued the district for what they say is a pattern of hindering and discrediting Santana's education. They say Santana was denied membership in the local chapter of the National Honor Society, even though she

had an A average. Ms. Polera was also upset that Santana was not named valedictorian at the Junior High School level, even though she had the highest grade point average in the district.

NOW Santana is finishing the 12th grade with a 100 average. Since she has never attended classes at the big brick building where she was ranked first among 550 seniors, when she was named valedictorian, people said this could not be.

The other day, the Board of Education scheduled a discussion on the valedictorian issue. And, as a result, Santana is now co-valedictorian with the student at Newburgh Free Academy who is ranked No. 2.

Ms. Polera says she didn't even know about the board meeting until a reporter called to tell her about it. But people who wanted the change knew. Students and parents showed up wearing stickers that said, "We support co-valedictorians." They said it wasn't right that someone who had never attended Newburgh Free Academy, whom no one knew, who didn't compete with the other students and who wasn't getting a Regents diploma, should get the valedictorian honors all by herself.

Many see their point. How could someone who never attended a school

become its valedictorian? But to Santana and her mother, this is a cruel Catch-22. First the school district refuses to do anything to accommodate Santana. Then it penalizes her for not attending the schools that would not permit her to reach her potential.

AT home, Santana has used textbooks with pages magnified over 150 times. She has mastered French and Italian and the piano. She paints.

She took the Scholastic Assessment Test by giving oral answers to tape-recorded questions, a laborious process that prevented her from finishing the exam in time. Still, she scored over 1,400. In the fall, she heads to Vassar, her first choice.

Ralph Pizzo, the acting superintendent, said school officials couldn't comment on Santana because of the suit. "That puts us at a disadvantage," he said. "But I can say that the change in the board's policy had nothing to do with any student. It was a generic change they decided to implement."

He said Newburgh has decided that if one student is ranked first who has a non-Regents diploma and another is ranked second with a Regents diploma, which demonstrates that that student has taken academically rigorous courses, the Regents diploma should be given weight

in deciding class rank.

This is not the first time this issue has been raised, in Newburgh and in districts

Ms. Polera says the district has questioned the rigorousness of Santina's home study, even though it approved all her exams. And Santina says she is not

all over the country. But in Santina's case, she and her mother are convinced she is being penalized because she is getting a Regents diploma because her disability prevented her from taking Regents biology. "You see," she said, her pale baby face glum, her voice tiny, "you

blind.

have to be able to look through a microscope." ■

32. Seattle Times

June 1, 1997 Category: Local

A lesson in inequality: Districts in wealthy areas have better schools

by Barbara A. Serrano Seattle Times staff reporter

GRANGER, Yakima County - In a town where paychecks are rooted in cherries and asparagus, the people at Roosevelt Elementary School worry most about paper and magic markers.

So, you might forgive math teacher Claudia Rohlf for cornering the superintendent in the hallway, waving a new workbook she wants to buy: "Can we afford these math books? They're really the best ones for the children."

Across the Cascade Mountains, in the suburbs of Issaquah, it would seem a silly question. High-school students equipped with a new fleet of Power Macintosh computers are creating Web pages on Croatia. The auto-body teacher nearly blushes at the \$30,000 machine his students use to detect problems in a car engine.

Not so long ago, the biggest problem for school people in Issaquah was how to spend a big pot of new money for computers.

Today, with a new state-of-the-art high school going up on the Sammamish Plateau and local voters agreeing to chip in an extra \$34 million, students and teachers are looking forward to next fall with a sense of opportunity.

Other schools haven't fared so well financially. They're handing out pink slips or nudging teachers to leave voluntarily.

In 1977, a Thurston County Superior Court judge struck down the state's public-school funding system as unconstitutional because it allowed huge funding gaps between districts that could tap extra money from local taxpayers and those that couldn't. The Legislature took steps to end the inequity, as the judge had ordered.

But two decades later, disparity is re-emerging among Washington's 296 districts.

Urban and suburban districts are becoming more dependent upon local school levies to help pay bills and invest in new programs. Rural communities that can't raise more money fear they are falling farther behind.

Of the 88 school districts receiving the maximum levy money legally permitted, the vast majority are in the cities and suburbs of Puget Sound and the I-5 corridor. Most of the 55 districts collecting little or no extra money serve rural areas and some of the most impoverished communities of the state.

Washington doesn't display differences as stark as those in states like New Jersey and Ohio, where governors are under judicial pressure to overhaul school funding. Washington, in fact, gives more general support for schools than many other states, providing 80 percent of the cost of "basic education."

Still, educators here warn of a growing funding gap.

It is as subtle as paint chipping off a sun-washed building: gradual, persistent and more apparent with the passage of time.

It also holds profound ramifications for students.

With school levies come money for better books, better equipment and, in some parts of the state, better teachers.

The differences can be measured in hundreds of ways: from the rain that was dripping onto computers from a leaky ceiling in Oak Harbor, which gets no levy support; to the sixth-period classes for high school students (the state requires only five) in the levy-rich Eastside suburbs of King County.

Most strikingly, the breadth and sophistication of computers in the classroom are increasingly tied to the willingness - or ability - of local voters to provide extra money.

"Rural people are paying more than their fair share of taxes and yet they're not receiving equity in service," says Neal Kirby, a Centralia school principal. "It's not jealousy. It's not charity. We're just asking for a little fairness in the system."

Students in Port Orchard, Kitsap County, are tired of asking.

The South Kitsap School District just lost its bid to get \$16.3 million for maintenance and operations, the fourth levy loss in the past six elections. It means not buying new science textbooks, raising the price of after-school sports, reducing services for gifted students and asking 70 teachers and support staff to leave.

South Kitsap High School, with 2,300 students, is the largest in the state, a distinction resulting from voters' recent rejection of a bond proposal to build a new high school.

Angered by overcrowded classrooms and the loss of five teachers, a student group there has vowed to sue the state for failing to provide an adequate "basic education."

The Seattle School District also is organizing support for a similar lawsuit. As rich as Seattle is in levy dollars, school board members say, there isn't enough to adequately serve thousands of poor, non-English-speaking students.

Situated on the geographical flatbed of Eastern Washington, on the edge of the Yakama Indian Reservation, Granger is the smallest in a string of farm towns that dot Interstate 82. Acres of cherries and apples and asparagus spread out like patchwork between low-rolling hills the color of hay. Laced in between is the Yakima River.

Many of the 2,100 residents here, three-quarters of them Mexican Americans and recent immigrants from

Mexico, make their living off the land. The Yakima Valley produces an agricultural bounty but not much in the way of property-tax revenue for schools - or wages for people.

Jerry House, superintendent of the

With 90 percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches, teachers are leading rows of children into the gym for meals in shifts. Colorful banners offer messages of hope across walls that are otherwise as stark as hospital corridors: "We can all learn from each other; Nosotros podemos aprender algo de todos."

"Sometimes we're retooling the kids with simple, basic skills and then getting them ready to learn," House says. "A lot of kids are dropped by their parents on the way to the fields, so this becomes sort of their home base."

Granger students turn in some of the lowest reading scores in the state. For teachers, the push to succeed often means helping families overcome basic challenges. Getting a meal on the table. Finding a job. Or just finding a place to sleep.

State and federal agencies give extra money to help. But Granger runs out of the money long before it runs out of students who need it.

Granger uses its levy money - \$172,000 a year - to help pay for bilingual aides, books and supplies. Under state rules, House could request much more from local voters.

But, he says, "I have to ask myself: 'What can I ask for and what can the community afford?'"

Taxpayers in school districts containing valuable properties - office buildings, retail stores or factories, for example - pay relatively low property-tax rates for schools.

On paper, the cherry orchards and mom-and-pop businesses of the Yakima Valley aren't nearly as valuable, requiring higher property-tax rates to produce sufficient money for schools. Granger's property base consists of little more than a mini mart/gas station, a grocery store, a few hundred clapboard homes and two companies that make stained-glass lamps and fishing lures.

To compound the problem, 87 percent of the land in the district is nontaxable Indian land.

In 1987, the Legislature began giving "Local Equalization Assistance," money to help poorer districts offset the disparity by reducing property-tax rates.

But such help is limited.

To get any extra state money, the

Granger School District, sees the financial shortcomings every day in the hallways of Roosevelt Elementary.

The 1959 concrete-block building is brimming with students, many of them Spanish-speaking and poor. Portable A, a district first must pass a levy. And for any levy money above 10 percent of most of what they receive from state and federal governments, the district must persuade local residents to pay regular tax rates. In places like Granger, such propositions do not go over well.

This year, the state Legislature and Gov. Gary Locke boosted the amount of levy-equalization money.

Critics, though, say the state is still fostering an uneven playing field. Districts such as Issaquah and Seattle are already tapping local taxpayers for millions of dollars, enough money to comprise 24 percent and 33 percent above most of their state and federal funds.

"Parents in rural areas support their school as much as anyone else," said Kirby, the Centralia principal, "But if you're having a tough time getting clothes for your kid or getting a job, you're less likely to vote for a levy."

Granger officials don't view the state levy-equalization funds as an equalizer so much as a safety net.

One elementary math teacher is seeing 194 different students a day. Nearly all the teachers are buying classroom materials from dime stores with their own money. The library has no librarian, and classrooms are filled with plastic-laminate desks and tape recorders dating back to the 1970s.

One room holds 27 outdated Apple computers. But with 700 students on campus, keyboard time is limited to 20 minutes every two weeks for each student, plus any sign-ups squeezed in. Three years ago, the computer lab was shut down for a year when a grant expired.

Roosevelt teacher Virginia Thompson, 58, is taking a break between classes in what passes for the teachers' lounge - the girl's locker room. Strewn in front of her are a globe with the countries peeling off and boxes of old workbooks. Off in the corner, teaching manuals and state guidelines fill up a bookcase that's tucked in a shower stall.

Thompson entered teaching late in life. After eight years on the job, she's angry. Angry because she just wrote a check for \$32 to buy her students two reference books on endangered species. Angry because the governor and

hand-me-down structure from the Hanford nuclear reservation, sits on the basketball court. It has been carved up so many times to make classrooms that one wall collapsed when a boy ran into it.

Legislature were squabbling in Olympia over an issue that she figures should have been a no-brainer: spending more money on schools.

"The governor needs to come and take a look at the situation here," she said, her voice rising. "We work our tails off everyday to provide the best education to our kids, and it's getting harder every year." Under the funding formula for "basic education," the state pays districts what it would cost to provide at least one teacher for every 20 students. The state also pays for transportation, bilingual education, disabled students and those who need learning assistance as well as the cost of administrators, aides and utilities.

Lawmakers haven't substantially altered the definition of "basic education" in years.

But you don't have to look any farther than Issaquah to see that wealthier districts are changing that definition for themselves.

Albert Einstein, his gray hair frayed, looks out wistfully from a black-and-white poster at Issaquah High School's computer lab that reads, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Classes ended more than two hours ago, but a half dozen seniors from a World Cultures seminar are cruising the World Wide Web and downloading information about countries all over the world. Their teacher has requested multimedia presentations, rather than written reports.

In 1989, Issaquah School District was one of the first in the state to ask voters for extra money to invest in technology. Voters have since approved \$9.4 million.

The district now boasts 2,900 computers in its classrooms and a staff of high school students that can build and maintain computer networks. Teachers are using programs on CD-ROMs to teach human anatomy or how to replace spark plugs.

Guided by an Issaquah parent who was a computer guru for companies like US West, Issaquah became the state's first district to connect campuses and administrative services on a computer network. With Internet connections now available in every classroom, parents and students often communicate with teachers and school offices by e-mail.

Under state rules such technical advancements are considered frills or extras, not part of basic education. But with a district located in the back yard of Microsoft and Nintendo, Issaquah leaders say they're using levy money to teach basic skills students will need in the job market.

"The kids are just taking it and

Like many suburban communities, Issaquah has relied on school levies for a long time. Today the district counts on local property owners to kick in nearly a quarter of its \$50 million annual budget. It would, if it legally could, raise more.

Grandfather clauses permit extra levy money

Article IX of the state constitution says Washington is obligated to "make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex." From what Thurston County Judge Robert Doran could see 20 years ago, the state wasn't doing it.

He ordered the state to come up with a new school-funding plan.

Issaquah, Bellevue and Seattle were piling up levies that accounted for well over 50 percent of all their money. But several other districts couldn't get voter approval.

The Legislature complied with Doran's order at first, giving schools more money and promising to pay 100 percent of education costs.

It also limited the amount of money a district could raise from local levies to 10 percent of most of what it receives in state and federal funds. The idea was to let districts buy some "frills" but minimize sizable gaps between rich and poor communities.

But as the new rules were being phased in, property-rich districts went to Olympia to change them. They resisted giving up money that they had grown accustomed to. Bellevue, for example, would have had to forgo \$15 million a year.

With Bellevue's assistant superintendent rewriting the rules and Seattle and other districts adding political pressure, the state's 10 percent cap on special levies was loosened to let districts raise more.

Today 91 of the state's 296 school districts, including Seattle and Bellevue, have grandfather clauses that allow them to collect even more than the current state cap of 24 percent.

The higher cap had been set to expire in 1998. But school officials, warning

running with it," said Issaquah High School technology teacher Dave Edfeldt. "This isn't some little frou-frou thing we do here; it's become an integral part of who we are."

Dressed in khakis and open-collared shirt, he rushes from the computer lab to classrooms all day, answering requests for service and overseeing efforts to make they would have to impose deep cuts if forced to roll back their levies, successfully lobbied the Legislature and Locke to make the 24 percent limit permanent.

Faced with growing class sizes and expenses, Issaquah says it needs every cent.

Situated on the hem of the Cascade Mountains, it's a community where many paychecks are rooted in laser discs, CD-ROMs and management-information networks. New homes on the Sammamish Plateau are being wired for fiber optics and high-powered computers. It's not uncommon to see students toting PowerBooks in their backpacks.

When it comes to standards for quality education, Issaquah views nearby communities like Bellevue, Mercer Island and Lake Washington as competitors. A rural town like Granger is hardly in the race.

"We've got people who say, 'Bellevue's got this program. Why don't you?' " said school board member Mike Bernard.

The question, he says, is often a veiled reference to the fact that some Issaquah families will switch school districts or place their children in private schools to get the highest-quality classes and teachers.

Many parents and teachers see valuable benefits from their investments. This year, they lured away a nationally-recognized superintendent from a Kitsap County school district that has had trouble raising levies.

And Edfeldt ticks off the names of graduates who have gone on to work at Microsoft and local software companies, without even needing to stop in college along the way. One student enrolled in junior college but found he knew more than his instructors. So the school district hired him as a network technician. Later, they lost him to a private company where he's earning \$45,000 a year.

Alison Crum, a graduating senior, is convinced her training in Issaquah's Technology Information Program helped her get accepted at Stanford University. She's one of the student staffers who troubleshoot computer glitches and

teachers more comfortable with scanners and the Internet.

Edfeldt and an advisory committee are planning to ask for another technology levy next year. It will likely be used for more staff training on how to integrate technology and curriculum.

install software at an elementary school.

She's become so savvy on computers that her father, a research scientist at the University of Washington, "comes home and says, 'Oh, what did you learn today?' And then I show him."

In other states, disparity prompts lawsuits

Twenty-five states have been sued since 1989 over inadequate or inequitable school funding. In most cases, plaintiffs win court rulings or force legislative action.

Alaska was hit with a lawsuit 12 days ago from rural communities that say they aren't getting their fair share of construction money.

In Ohio, 500 out of 600 districts successfully sued, forcing the state to provide more money for poorer schools. The judge there cited the inability of rural schools to attract the same level of quality teachers, buy computers, upgrade buildings and develop curriculum comparable to that of their urban counterparts.

"Nobody expects everyone to spend the same thing. Some of it is local choice. Some of it is dependent on the needs of students, and that's all fairly accepted by the courts," said Mary Fulton, a policy analyst for the Education Commission of the States, a nonprofit research organization in Denver.

"If there's a wide variation in the wealth of the districts, then there's a problem," she said.

The majority of Washington's 296 districts spend a dollar amount close to the \$6,200-per-student average allocated by the state every year. And since most state funding is based on student/teacher ratios and teacher-salary formulas, objectivity is built into the system, state officials say.

Senate Majority Leader Dan McDonald, R-Bellevue, says the current school-funding system works well because taxpayers prefer to approve money for schools they can see down the street, rather than have taxes raised by legislators they don't know in Olympia.

"Having people decide whether they're going to tax themselves is as fundamental as you get with Republican philosophy,"

he said. "You want to put decisions down to the people as close as possible."

But Democrats say the 1997 legislation giving school districts the green light to raise as much as one-quarter of their money from levies is proof that the state is shortchanging them on funds for basic education. Permission to raise more school levies also won't mean much for poorer districts that have higher-than-average tax rates.

Seattle is, on paper, one of the richest districts in the state, raising more than a third of its funds from levies, enough to generate \$7,300 a year per student. But, Harris said, numbers are deceiving. The district deals with many of the same poverty issues faced by Granger. She favors a funding system based less on teacher/student ratios and more on the learning needs of students.

"We need to work for children and not

Still, school advocates say winning approval to raise more levy money is the best compromise they can get.

With Initiative 601 in place - a voter-approved law that limits state spending - they aren't optimistic about winning more state money for schools. Even before those limits went into effect two years ago, state support had barely kept up with inflation during the past two decades. It is now falling behind it.

pit urban vs. suburban vs. rural, and that's where we've been for the last 20 years," Harris said.

Back in Granger, principals and teachers say they hold no grudge against Issaquah or other well-heeled districts.

They are celebrating voter approval of a \$2.7 million school-bond election. With the new millennium, the community will get a rebuilt elementary school and the town's first middle school.

Frustrated by legislative inaction, Linda Harris, president of the Seattle School Board, said her district is researching the possibility of a lawsuit that would demand the state spend more on schools. The district is talking with the Washington Education Association, which represents teachers, and the state PTA, and will probably make a decision by the end of the year, Harris said.

"We're looking forward to having some elbow room," said teacher Virginia Thompson. "We're hoping this will improve our student morale and we're real sure it's going to improve staff morale. We can kind of buckle ourselves up and say, 'Well, all right we'll get by, we'll survive.' But you know it grinds away at your self-image." ■

33. San Diego Union-Tribune

May 31, 1997 Category: Local

Math game proves real plus for student from National City

By Mindy Stack

Teacher Patricia Hamaguchi feared that Lupe Arrendondo would end up in a gang if she didn't change her ways.

Lupe's brother, a gang member, was killed in a drive-by shooting in 1992, and Hamaguchi said the fifth-grader had been getting into trouble at school. Lupe said she thought about joining a gang but something stopped her: a math game called "24."

The premise was easy and Lupe got hooked.

"The first time I played it was cool," said Lupe, 10, who along with 80 other students began an after-school math club at El Toyon Elementary School in National City. It was led by Hamaguchi, who introduced her to the game.

"I didn't know nothing then," said Lupe. "Now I'm getting better and math is getting easier for me. It kept me from being in a gang." Lupe began practicing every afternoon, and Hamaguchi said the game helped keep her busy and out of trouble.

"She still has problems, but I have hope for her now," she said. "She needed to be turned on to something other than boys or she was going to be in big trouble."

Yesterday, Lupe joined 200

fourth-through eighth-graders from around the county at the Balboa Park Club to compete in the fourth annual Greater San Diego-Area Advanta 24 Challenge Championship Finals.

The game is simple. A "proctor" at each table of four students throws down a card with four numbers on each corner. The students must add, subtract, multiply or divide the numbers only once to get an answer of 24. The student who taps on the table first must spit out the answer within 15 seconds.

For example, one card at the event had the numbers 1, 2, 10 and 12 in the corners. The answer the student gave was: $2+10=12$, $12+12=24$, $24 \times 1=24$.

As the rounds proceed, the numbers get higher and the game gets tougher.

Daniel Gutierrez from Encanto Elementary School in San Diego, who has been playing for two years, practiced a half-hour a day to get ready for yesterday's competition.

"It is fun to play and to compete," said Daniel, who didn't make it to the semifinals. "I like to find out who is better."

The game was introduced in 1988 by inventor Robert Sun, who says it has grown to reach more than 5 million

children worldwide. There are now nine editions of the game including a platinum edition which includes fractions and algebra.

"San Diego has demonstrated that they have a high level of support for kids and mathematics. The kids are very sharp," said Sun, who is president and CEO of Suntex International Inc. and was at the championships encouraging the students.

The Greater San Diego-Area Advanta 24 Challenge Math Program can be found in more than 3,500 classrooms throughout the county. Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, who helped bring the program here four years ago, and San Diego Charger Isaac Davis encouraged the students and helped pass out awards yesterday.

Only 48 students made it to the semifinal round. The cards were harder but the kids seemed even quicker. Lupe made it to the semifinals, and she couldn't believe she had made it that far.

Louise Vandling, the math specialist for Casitas Center for Technology, Science & Math in Vista, is a real fan of "24."

"The challenge is a fun game that makes students enjoy doing math," said Vandling. "It enforces the basic math

skills, helps the children learn problem-solving skills and to look at patterns — something that we've been investigating lately."

At the final round only four students in each of the three categories were left. Everyone gathered around cheering the players on. Lupe watched from the sidelines with a sad look in her eyes, having been cut from the final round.

The round finished and the crowd applauded as the winners were announced; Brett Moodie from Carmel Del Mar Elementary School in San Diego in the fourth- and fifth-grade category, Barry Leung from Mesa Verde Middle School in San Diego for sixth grade, and Miller Tran from Mesa Verde won for seventh and eighth grade.

Lupe cheered the students as they

received their trophies. Touching the medal around her neck for reaching the semifinals, she said she was going to practice and get ready for next year's championships. Lupe said she was sure she would win.

Mindy Stack is a Union-Tribune student intern. ■

34. San Diego Union-Tribune

June 1, 1997 Category: Local

Detective's inquiry into school district's finances causes stir

By Emmet Pierce STAFF WRITER

Grossmont Union High School District Superintendent Thomas Godley is using a detective agency to help conduct an extended audit of district finances, officials confirmed yesterday.

News of the agency's involvement, apparently initiated without the knowledge of some of the district's trustees, sent a wave of surprise and uneasiness through many at East County's largest school district.

In a memo to educational services managers Friday, Assistant Superintendent Carl Wong said he had no knowledge of the Maydeck Detective Agency's presence at district headquarters before Dan Kitchen, the director of curriculum, was questioned about the purchase of TVs and VCRs. Wong's memo reportedly received wide circulation in district offices.

In his memo, Wong apologized for not being able to inform his staff about the investigators in a more timely and professional manner. He urged staffers to fully cooperate with the investigation.

Kitchen yesterday said he was working at district headquarters Friday morning when he received a telephone call from investigator Marshall Maydeck.

"He was at the time working down in the business services office and he asked if he could spend a few minutes with me and ask me some questions," Kitchen recalled. "He came upstairs and we talked."

Although it was well known that a detailed audit was under way, Kitchen was surprised to be contacted by a private detective.

"I can't remember ever being asked questions by a detective," the veteran administrator said. "Normally those

conversations are held with auditors."

School board member June Mott yesterday said she should have been told about the decision to bring in private investigators.

"I wonder why (Godley) didn't tell the board about it," Mott said. "He should have gotten permission from the board. I am a little concerned about the direction he is taking. He is doing a lot of things on his own. I'm disturbed."

School board member Michael Harrelson was equally surprised.

"This is the first I have heard of it," he said. "I was completely unaware. I haven't been informed by anyone that this was even a possibility. I'm at a loss for words. I'll reserve any comment until I can speak to the superintendent. I hope there will be an explanation."

Trustee Kevin LaChapelle, however, said he was aware of the detective's participation in the detailed audit. The consultants who are conducting the audit brought in Maydeck because they were receiving evasive answers to questions about district finances, LaChapelle said.

"I knew auditors were utilizing an investigator," he said. "From what I understood it was someone assisting the auditing team because some people they were talking to weren't being up front with them . . . When they talk to people their impression is something is not quite right."

School board members Nadia Q. Davies and Maynard Olsen couldn't be reached for comment.

Godley yesterday acknowledged authorizing the use of private investigators by the district's auditing consultants.

Godley characterized the decision as a

routine matter that required no approval from the school board. No one should have been surprised or disturbed by an investigator's presence, he added.

"When you are doing an extended investigative audit it is quite common," Godley said. "I am doing exactly what I said I would do. It is a staff function."

Godley said he agreed with Wong's assessment that the district staff should have been told about Maydeck's presence, however. Although Wong's memo was written at his request, the tone that Wong took may have unnecessarily alarmed the district staff, Godley said.

Private investigators "are just part of the team," Godley said. "It doesn't necessarily mean something is wrong. We're just trying to make sure."

Loretta Purdy, a classified employee and president of the local chapter of the California School Employees Association, said the matter left her feeling uneasy.

"The problem I have with this is why didn't the full board know, not just one or two of the board members?" she asked. "I'm sure no one in our district has anything to hide, but they should have been informed. Communication is always good."

Linda Pierce, a high school librarian and president of the Grossmont Education Association, noted that LaChapelle has been raising questions about the district's financial practices for more than a year. So far, she said, there has been no proof of wrongdoing.

"I wonder how far they will go and how much money it's going to cost the district?" she asked. "This takes money from the classroom." ■

35. San Diego Union-Tribune

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Boarding school graduation to be bittersweet conclusion

By Susan Gembrowski STAFF WRITER

Rcgina Stewart lounges in a light-gray sweat shirt on the single bed in her dormitory room at San Pasqual Adventist Academy.

Sunlight shines through the windows, allowing spectacular glimpses of the mountains, home to coyotes and bobcats, but few people.

Books and class notes surround her, and the 18-year-old high school senior from Upland interrupts studying for final exams to talk.

"Everything we do this year is the last — the last graduation, the last alumni, the last everything," she says of her remaining days at the private co-educational boarding school.

For the past two years, Stewart has attended the rural San Pasqual Valley campus four miles east of the San Diego Wild Animal Park, past the roadside stands selling fresh produce and dairy farms with cows grazing in the open fields.

But as she looks to her graduation Sunday, Stewart laments the academy's closing after nearly a half-century of educating students.

In January, the superintendent and 20-member executive board decided to close the academy's doors, citing dwindling enrollment.

For Principal Frank Jones, it's like being the mayor of a town that's closing down. Faculty and staff also live on the property in houses, duplexes, apartments and trailers, and the school has its own water and sewer systems. Three businesses thrive on campus.

On June 30, Jones will shut the doors on the family oriented and cloistered lifestyle he has enjoyed since high school. He's been hired as principal of Assembly Adventist Day School in Fresno, a K-8 school where students go home at the end of each class day.

The closing signals the end of an era for the oldest Seventh-day Adventist Church school in continuous operation in the state. Alumni are trying to raise enough money to reopen the school, but the soonest that could happen would be September 1998.

Carolyn Trace, a 1966 graduate and Northern California resident, is hopeful. But she knows raising the money, at least

\$1.2 million, won't be easy. Nearly 2,000 graduates of the academy turned out for an alumni weekend in April, and Trace said they all want to help rescue the school.

The board recently turned down a buyer who offered to pay more than \$10 million for the property. School officials estimate the value is between \$12 million and \$17 million, and maybe more.

San Pasqual Adventist Academy opened in 1949 as a boarding school for high school students, although elementary students began attending a one-room schoolhouse on the property in 1898.

San Diego County has one other boarding school, the Army and Navy Academy in Carlsbad. There are more than 300 boarding schools nationwide, although many also have begun accepting day students.

Peter Pelham, associate director of the national Association of Boarding Schools, said that far from losing their popularity, only about one or two boarding schools close each year.

"What the boarding schools have been doing is that there are fewer and fewer pure boarding schools and the trend we're seeing more is that the boarding school will begin to grow its day school population," Pelham said.

"You now have dual community within a school, where part of the school goes home at the end of day or on weekends." That's exactly what happened at San Pasqual.

In the halcyon days of the 1970s and early 1980s, 300 to 350 students annually attended the academy. Students were packed two and three to a room in the 72-room girls' dorm.

But by 1987, the school was losing nearly 30 students each year, said Charles McKinstry, schools superintendent for the Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. About 75 boarders are enrolled now. The other 25 are students who go home at the end of classes each day.

The Southeastern California Conference has been subsidizing the school's \$2 million annual operating budget by about \$400,000 each year. The tuition for boarders, at \$9,985 each year,

doesn't cover the costs. Day students pay \$5,700 in annual fees.

Many of the day students are children of faculty or staff members at the academy. Seventh-day Adventists, who were early settlers in the San Pasqual Valley, also have the option of sending their youngsters to Escondido Adventist Academy, a day school in Escondido.

Tuition there was \$4,700 annually this school year.

"We tried and tried and tried to get things turned around here," McKinstry said. "You could make a list of the things we should have done differently or sooner or better."

One of the mistakes, in hindsight, was granting a 30-year lease on 60 acres in the school's front yard, McKinstry said. The acreage has been transformed into an orange grove, and the grower gives the school one-third of the profits, about \$50,000 this year.

But the long lease could make the sale of the property more difficult, the superintendent said.

A \$750,000 renovation of the boys' dorm about seven or eight years ago didn't help the school's money problems, he said.

For now, "we're going to mothball the dorm rooms and the classrooms," McKinstry said. "The alumni have until Sept. 1 to submit a viable plan to operate the school the following year in '98-99. There's a good chance we'll probably sell the property, but not before (September)."

Jones and McKinstry have the dual task of closing the school.

One decision involves safeguarding items of historic interest now housed on academy grounds, including the 1898 one-room schoolhouse. Three organizations want the old building, including an Adventist historical village in Battle Creek, Mich.

Private owners will buy the academy's poultry and packaging businesses for undisclosed amounts, McKinstry said. But the church conference organization will continue to operate a third business on the campus, the Golden Rule Bindery. The operation rebinds as many as 18,000 textbooks for California schools during the summer months.

For Jones and the San Pasqual students, the last few weeks on campus have been bittersweet.

The principal laments the loss of the family atmosphere at the academy that he says is different from the Seventh-day Adventist boarding schools he attended in high school and college in Florida and Michigan.

"When students come here, they don't have to fight to be accepted," Jones said. "This campus doesn't break down according to economics or race. I was worried about some kids. Some had problems physically. Others were just odd. But they all were embraced."

The entrance to the academy, designated by a plain brown wooden sign, leads visitors through the citrus groves up an asphalt road.

Buildings are tan with blue trim and mostly single story. They are set neatly on manicured lawns and surrounded by colorful flower beds and well-tended roses.

Jones, also the basketball coach, wandered the campus one recent day, as students sat in classes or clustered in groups on the hilly lawns signing yearbooks.

He spoke with 17-year-old Carmen Nydegger, a school boarder for three years. The junior only gets home to Maine once or twice a year, and in the summertime. She spends weekends with her grandmother in Solana Beach.

"My family wanted me to get a private, Christian education," Carmen said. "I'm way more appreciative of my mom, and I get along with my family even better."

She credits her academy education with teaching her discipline, better study habits and getting along with others.

"You have access to the teachers at all times," Carmen said. "We all live here together."

Every student is required to work, and most use the money to help defray tuition and room-and-board costs, Jones said.

Students work three to five hours weekly at jobs in the three on-campus businesses and in housekeeping, landscaping, cafeteria food service and school office work. Some students also serve as tutors or teachers' assistants.

A short walk from the girls' dorm is the bindery operation that began in 1957. Jerry Kiley is the manager. He'll stay on to operate the business after the school closes.

"The main reason for the industries is to have work experience for the students," Jones said. "They learn to be on time and work with difficult peers."

Students also get school credit for their work.

Sophomore Andrea Thrash from Escondido talked about the sadness she felt as she punched her timecard after working at binding books that morning.

"I wish I could graduate from here," the 17-year-old said. "This is just such a friendly atmosphere."

As she headed for classes, Andrea said she probably will go to an independent study program in Escondido next year.

Sophomores and seniors work in the mornings and go to classes in the afternoons. Freshmen and juniors have the opposite schedule.

They take English, mathematics, history, science and religion. Some study Spanish.

Students can take part in varsity basketball and volleyball. They don't have regular weekly competition with other schools, but do test their skills in tournament competitions against teams statewide. Extracurricular activities include choir, gymnastics and yearbook.

The school colors are red and white. The mascot is the coyote.

"We teach them first how to do the best you can; then we give them skills to be successful in life," Jones said. "The first thing is to be a Christian."

Students are drawn to the school for its academic excellence, he said, but also for its spiritual guidance.

Most of the students are Seventh-day Adventists, but many are not.

"I came here not knowing what a Seventh-day Adventist was," Carmen Nydegger said. "But it changed me. I'm more open to new stuff now. I'm not at all nervous about going to a new school next year."

Church rules dictate no drinking, smoking or drugs, and practitioners have a vegetarian diet. Students also attend worship services daily and on the church Sabbath, sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

It's an oasis in an otherwise unruly world, said Gloria Selby, head women's dean.

"I feel safe at night going for walks around campus," she said.

Not all the students are perfect, by any means, and some have been disciplined for smoking or leaving the campus

without permission.

Most, though, say the strict rules are what is expected of teen-agers living in a family. And a family is what San Pasqual provides.

It's like having tons of parents and a built-in group of brothers and sisters, students said.

During a co-ed physical education class one Friday morning, a group of screaming students cheered on a classmate who was trying to reach home plate before an outfielder retrieved the ball.

"Teachers here give you individual help that at public schools you don't always get," said Silvia Castro, a 15-year-old freshman from Chula Vista, who sat in the stands with friends signing yearbooks.

"It makes me sad that this school is closing. My cousin graduated from here in 1986. I wanted to graduate here, too."

Around 11:45, students began filing into the cafeteria for lunch. Many said that the imminent closing has been a depressing experience.

"It ruined the end of this year," said sophomore Joe Stacy from Lake Elsinore.

For 17-year-old Jimmy Dorcheck, whose parents work on the campus, it's the end of a family tradition. His father graduated from San Pasqual Academy in 1965, and all his uncles and aunts went there, as did his older brother.

His grandfather was the principal for a time.

Recently, parents came for the final parents' weekend at the school. Activities included a gymnastics team demonstration, a potluck lunch in the cafeteria and a student art show.

"It was tough on me to come up with the money, but I do not regret one penny that I paid," said Lydia Grozdich of Palm Springs, whose daughter, Michelle, graduates Sunday.

"If you are not well-structured, you struggle through life. By experiencing being on her own, her real learning was starting then."

After a Saturday church service, the parents gathered in clusters with their children, with some reflecting on the academy experience.

"My wife graduated from this academy. We're really going to miss it," said Gabriel Riojas of Murrieta, whose daughter, Ruth, is a sophomore. "For us it's a sad situation." ■

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Student lives also were bound up in academy businesses

By Susan Gembrowski STAFF WRITER

Within home-run distance from the softball field on the San Pasqual Adventist Academy campus, student Ricky Ramos works in a warehouse packing fishing rods and reels.

He labors in Spackers Packaging and Assembly Industries, one of three businesses on the pastoral campus where students earn school credits and wages that help defray tuition and expenses.

When the boarding school closes June 30, new owners will take over two of the businesses, the packaging plant and San Pasqual Academy Egg Ranch, said Charles McKinstry, schools superintendent for the Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which oversees the academy.

The businesses were sold for an undisclosed amount.

The third, the Golden Rule Bindery, will continue to be operated by the Seventh-day Adventists.

Jerry Kiley manages the book bindery, where 15 adults and seven students work. It began in 1957, and is one of only three or four small operations like it in Southern California.

Golden Rule, with \$60,000 in annual sales, is known as a "library binder," where used materials are rebound.

Hardback books are resewn individually on the bindery's sewing machines. It can take from 1-1/2 to 2 hours to rebind a single copy.

Much of the work is for the medical industry, including most San Diego County hospitals. They also rebind used books for the Poway, Grossmont, Sweetwater, Escondido and Vista school districts as well as other public schools statewide.

"We can do 18,000 textbooks in the

summertime," Kiley said.

Some of the work for legal firms and other companies and individuals is to bind trade journals into hardbound books. Bibles or family heirlooms also find their way into the plant, Kiley said.

"Our newest product is for teachers in third to sixth grade to save students' homework," the manager said. "At the end of the school year, the homework is bound into a book. Then we give students a tour and show them how the book will look."

At Spackers packaging plant, about 80 percent of the business comes from Irvine-based Shimano American, the U.S. subsidiary of Shimano Inc., the Japanese manufacturer of fishing and tackle gear, and bicycle components.

Fred Wegand, Spackers plant manager for the past 13 years, said workers package about 120,000 pieces of equipment monthly. The plant does between \$30,000 and \$40,000 in sales each month.

Students earn \$5 an hour, but can make extra money if they are fast. They are expected to box 120 fishing reels an hour, or seal 50 reels in plastic, using a packaging machine.

If they exceed that output, they can earn an extra 4 cents a package, for example, depending on the packaging operation. Some students have been paid as much as \$11 an hour, Wegand said.

"The piece rate is to encourage them to work harder," the manager said. "But we do have hourly wage jobs where students pick up trash and boxes, if they're not good with their hands."

Spackers also does business with other companies besides Shimano. Workers package candles for Misty Mountain in

Escondido, a seasonal business that operates during the Christmas holidays.

They also have worked for Coast Research in Leucadia, a flower nursery, where they put plastic sleeves on Styrofoam poles used for growing vines.

Spackers, most likely, will hire additional workers now that the student labor won't be available, McKinstry said.

The poultry operation, with 40,000 laying hens, is across from the academy's main campus on San Pasqual Valley Road.

Eight adults and three students operate the egg ranch from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Saturday. The first truck loaded with fresh eggs leaves the grounds at 6:30 each morning.

Deliveries are made throughout San Diego County, and as far away as Banning.

Henry's, formerly known as Boney's Marketplace, is the largest buyer. But the ranch also sells to Sun Valley Market in Ramona, and Daniel's Market and Albertson's in Del Mar. Individual buyers can buy fresh eggs at the ranch.

"The uniqueness to our product is that we give vegetarian feed for the chickens," said schools superintendent McKinstry.

Some 13,500-dozen eggs are produced weekly, said egg ranch manager Paul Nygaard.

The operation began shortly after San Pasqual Adventist Academy opened in 1949. The school also operated a dairy farm with about 300 cows until 1989.

Work experience is an integral part of the educational training at the academy.

"It makes students feel good about themselves," Wegand said. "It gives them self-worth, initiative, self-direction." ■

37. Richmond Times-Dispatch

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Mentoring a hit with kids, adults

Total Vision's male role models help boys become successful men

BY STACY HAWKINS ADAMS
Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

FYI: For more information about
So when he was 6, Turner enrolled

Total Vision, call 648-1769

As a single mother working three jobs and attending college two decades ago, him in the Big Brothers program.

Juliana Turner knew giving her son a bright future would mean surrounding him with positive male role models.

She involved him in church and

**Clinton Presidential Records
Tape Restoration Project [Email]**

community organizations led by males.

Then she stepped back and let the mentors do what only they could: teach her son how to be a man.

Now that her son, Bobby Scott Jr., 25, is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta and a bank employee there, Turner's goal is to help other young boys at risk of becoming teen-age fathers, school dropouts or juvenile delinquents.

Through a mentoring program called Total Vision, Turner has paired 19 fifth-grade boys from the Whitcomb Court and Blackwell areas of Richmond with African-American men.

"Most of (the boys) come from single-parent homes," said Turner, director of Total Vision. "In their communities, there's a lot of violence, drugs and premature parenting. If they see successful African-American males, hopefully they will realize there are other choices."

Once a month, usually between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., the boys leave school, with their parents' permission, for a Total Vision session.

The boys, ages 9 to 14, have toured The L. Douglas Wilder Library and Learning Resource Center at Virginia Union University and visited their mentors' workplaces.

Mentors include police officers, ministers and college students.

They, Turner and other volunteers have led the boys in discussions on peer pressure, self-esteem and values, goal-setting, and black culture.

The youngsters sometimes learn simply from male presence.

The Rev. John Kinney, dean of VUU's School of Theology, joined boys from Whitcomb Court Model Elementary School for lunch at Dabney's Restaurant

in April after their visit to VUU.

Several of them questioned why Kinney would spend time with a group of boys he didn't know.

"He came all the way back from (visiting) North Carolina to meet us," said Jamaal Blue, 11.

"It made me feel good, like we were his children," said Yahsunn Brown, 13.

Such responses prove why mentors are vital, said Turner, who also has a 26-year-old daughter, Shonelle Scott.

Marvin Taylor, a Richmonder who owns a financial consulting firm and mentors several boys in the program, also is convinced.

"A lot of times we get caught up in our own situations," said Taylor, 32. "But if we look outside (ourselves), we can see there is someone needier than we are."

"These kids are dealing with drugs and worry about getting caught in crossfire. Some of them . . . are having to fend for themselves for food and clothing."

Dominic Spurlock, 11, appreciates having someone older to turn to for support.

"I'm the oldest in my family," said Dominic, a pupil at Blackwell Elementary School. "I think of (Taylor) as my big brother. He told me to stop fighting and show respect to others."

School officials helped Turner select boys for the program and sought consent from their parents.

"It's a wonderful program (that) builds character and gives them a chance to see things outside their neighborhood and to have a strong person interested in what they're doing," said Mary Brown, a counselor at Blackwell Elementary.

The schools have asked to include more boys, Turner said, but she needs more mentors.

Men who agree to participate must attend a three-hour orientation session led by Richmond One to One, a mentor training program.

They must be at least 18 and commit one year to the program. They also must undergo criminal background checks, Turner said.

VUU seminary students who become mentors soon will be able to receive credit toward their theology degrees, Kinney said.

Turner is one of his students.

As part of her seminary training, she is serving an internship at the Gilpin-Jackson Ward Family Life Skills Center at Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church. Many Total Vision sessions are held there.

Total Vision is operated through donations of transportation, supplies and meals, Turner said.

She initially worked with many of the boys through Special Friends, a similar program operated by The Virginia League For Planned Parenthood and the Richmond Police Department.

She left that position in early April and founded Total Vision in the hope of working not only with boys, but also with at-risk girls and eventually with the mothers of the children.

"I would like to get to the point where we mentor a family," she said.

For now, she is focused on encouraging more men to serve as role models for Richmond's young boys.

"It takes all kinds of people to have an impression on a (child)," said Taylor, one of the mentors. "It takes the blue-collar workers and the white-collar workers."

■

38. The Washington Post

06/02/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B03 Category: Local

Becton Advances Plan for Disruptive Students; D.C. Schools Chief Taps Top Aide to Design and Implement an Alternative Program

By Debbi Wilgoren
Washington Post Staff Writer

D.C. schools Chief Executive Julius W. Becton Jr. has tapped a top aide and former Army colleague to create a highly structured alternative program for disruptive students that could begin as

soon as September.

Bill Parnell, a retired colonel whom Becton hired in April as his director of policy, planning and management accountability, has been charged with designing and implementing the program, which teachers and principals say is sorely needed but so far has been

outlined only in vague terms.

"We've got a concept. We're looking at all possible avenues," Becton said yesterday, adding that he does not know where an alternative school would be located, how it would be staffed or structured, which grades it would serve or how students would be placed in it.

"I recognize that there are some youngsters who just flat disrupt the class," said Becton, a retired Army lieutenant general. "If the kid is disruptive, we've got to get him or her out of the classroom and afford them a chance to get educated themselves."

Unlike existing D.C. programs that serve students who have been incarcerated or have dropped out, Becton said the alternative school would be designed for children who are enrolled in school but causing serious problems — from talking all the time, to throwing

chairs, to cursing at their teachers.

Becton said staff members have talked to people who run similar schools or programs in other cities.

Three weeks after joining Becton's team, Parnell wrote a harshly worded critique of a proposed academic plan for the 78,000-student system, which is six months into a 3 1/2-year emergency overhaul ordered by the D.C. financial control board.

In an interview about that memo, Parnell acknowledged that he is not well versed in academic issues or research

about how young people learn.

"I'm not an educator. I was a professional soldier all of my adult life," Parnell said. "But I dealt with thousands of young people, and I know how to motivate them."

Becton has talked about setting up an alternative school ever since he was hired by the control board in November. He has said he is open to the idea of a residential school for chronic misbehavers if a daytime program does not prove effective. ■

39. Los Angeles Times

* 06/02/97; Edition: Ventura County Edition; Section: Metro; Zones Desk; Page B-1 Category: Local

Moorpark and School Officials Still at Odds Over Real Estate Deals Finances: Longtime adversaries try to work together. District needs city's cooperation to sell property, build homes and fund a new campus.

By DAVID R. BAKER
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

MOORPARK — Short on cash, the school district has choreographed a creative series of steps to raise money—everything from building homes downtown to selling the district headquarters.

But this fancy financial footwork requires a partner—namely, City Hall. And the two bodies have never had what you would call an amicable relationship.

They've squabbled over land, fought each other in court and more often than not, maintained a frosty silence between them.

Now trying to work together, the two entities still find themselves at odds over details of some of the Moorpark Unified School District's key projects. District officials worry that numerous city fees could squeeze the profitability out of a proposal to build homes on land next to the former high school. City officials say the district should pay the same fees and follow the same rules as any developer.

District Supt. Tom Duffy recently stopped payment on a \$3,200 check to the city, which would have paid for development-related services he considers unnecessary. After discussing the issue with City Manager Steve Kueny, Duffy later paid the fee.

Some district trustees say such disagreements and miscommunications

are inevitable when two governmental bodies first attempt to work together.

"We just haven't had a working relationship, and I guess that's a criticism of both sides," said school Trustee Greg Barker. "We're in the baby steps."

And yet, any strain in the relationship can be a cause for worry. The district will finish the current fiscal year \$409,429 in the red on its \$32.6-million budget, and needs income from several proposed projects that will require the city's help.

"Right now, if you only look at finances, the cooperation of the city is very important," Trustee Clint Harper said. "Why pick a fight?"

To get an idea of how much hinges on that cooperation, consider a brief outline of the 6,875-student district's money-making proposals.

District officials hope to sell and develop about 15 acres of land next to the former high school on Casey Road. Under the proposal, 97 homes would be built, if the city approves. Profit to the district: probably about \$2 million.

* The school district headquarters property, at Los Angeles and Flory avenues, may also be sold, possibly after being rezoned by the city to allow residences. Profit to the district has not yet been determined and could vary substantially, depending on the zoning.

District officials have asked for \$750,000 from the city's Redevelopment Agency, money the agency has agreed to

pay once the district sells a portion of the Casey Road property. The district wants the money sooner.

These steps won't simply add money to the district's general fund. They are needed to help pay for other, expensive projects already underway.

For example, money from the proposed housing development would help fund construction of a \$6-million Walnut Canyon elementary school, which will soon be built on the grounds of the old high school. The district is paying for the project with a loan taken out last year, and will also receive about \$3 million from the state.

Similarly, district officials wanted to use the Redevelopment Agency's \$750,000 for a down payment on a larger building that will one day serve as the district's administrative headquarters. School board members voted in April to buy the building on Maureen Lane for \$3.4 million and will now probably spend part of the elementary school loan on the down payment.

In each of these financial maneuvers, the city plays a role.

Perhaps nowhere is that more evident than in the housing project. The plan, drafted with the Braemar development company, would create a new neighborhood downtown at the western end of High Street and close to City Hall.

The homes would be built on the same piece of land that, years ago, prompted the most bruising fight yet between the school district and the city. Moorpark city officials sued the district for the right to buy the property at a discount and use it for a park. The case eventually went before the state Supreme Court in 1991, with justices ruling in the district's favor.

To develop that land, however, the district must now seek the city's approval. And approval of any housing project comes only after a rigorous, long and frequently expensive process.

District officials had hoped to trim some of the time and cost by sidestepping certain requirements and fees. But so far, Kueny, the city manager, has stood firm on most issues, saying that the district should face the same requirements as any developer.

Each fee, however, eats away at the district's profits from the project. Harper said that if that profit margin falls too low, say, to \$1 million or less, the district may have to postpone or abandon the effort.

"If it's just \$1 million [profit], then we'd have to look really hard at holding on to the property, realizing that in the

future, it'll probably be worth a lot more," he said.

Although several City Council members have expressed interest in the district's plan—saying it could help revitalize the city's struggling downtown—Councilman Chris Evans said the city cannot set aside its requirements.

"Our job as a city is to make sure the school district maximizes its profit potential from this project, but the city can't absorb all the costs and waive all the fees," he said.

The district and city have also clashed over parts of the Walnut Canyon School construction project. School construction generally falls outside a city's jurisdiction, with building plans approved by the state, not a local city council. But Kueny insists that state law requires city review and approval of grading plans at a school construction site.

In April, the city asked the district for \$3,200 to pay an independent consultant to review the geological studies already performed on the project. Duffy sent the check, then stopped payment on it, arguing that the review was unnecessary

and redundant.

That struck Trustee Harper as a needless provocation. Worse, he felt it would antagonize someone whose cooperation the district badly needed.

"Tom Duffy is an extremely competent superintendent—one of the best in the state, particularly on school-site construction—but he doesn't know which fights to pick," Harper said.

"I wasn't attempting to antagonize," Duffy said. "We had already had a [state] review done. . . . Why do we have to have two agencies review the same thing on a project?"

After a series of memos and conversations with Kueny, Duffy agreed to pay the fee.

In spite of such occasional skirmishes, both district and city officials say the relationship between the two entities is improving. They note that recent talks over the housing project have led to some progress, with each side finally getting a clear indication of what the other wants.

"We may not like the parameters they put on it, but as long as we know what those are, we will work within those parameters," said Barker. ■

40. Asbury Park Press

6-1-97 Category: Local

Manchester students put their books on 'stand by'

By ALISON CLARK
CORRESPONDENT

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP Middle School students left their books at home Friday, but still learned a few things.

Instead of sitting in class all day, the students went to workshops, danced and attended a concert.

It was called Stand By Me Day and it was designed to show the students that they are supported each day by their teachers, parents, school and the community.

It's the first time the school has done this but we hope to make it an annual event, said Lee Bruzaitis, school public information officer.

She said all the topics coordinate with

the health curriculum.

Students attended programs about drug and alcohol abuse, peer pressure, and the importance of education.

They also met Marvin Frazier, a former professional football player, and Rufus Thorne, who was a member of the singing group Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes. Both stressed the importance of education.

Opportunity knocks every single day but you have to be qualified, Frazier said. Education is the key to unlock the door to all your success.

Thorne advised the youths not to take education for granted. He said teachers are there to help provide them with the knowledge they need to succeed and to

squeeze them for all the knowledge you can get from them.

Frazier invited students to come up to the front and tell the class what they thought they'd be doing at the age of 21. Responses ranged from professional athlete to meteorologist.

If you don't start dreaming, you'll never get anywhere and a good education can make your dreams come true, Frazier said.

After their talk, Frazier and Thorne joined band director David Nunez and his band on stage for a concert, which concluded with all joining in on Stand By Me. ■

41. The Washington Post

06/02/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: A Section; Page A01 Category: Local

Pr. George's Parents Face Tough Academic Choice;

Clinton Presidential Records
Tape Restoration Project [Email]

Lacking Confidence in Public Schools, Some Middle-Class Blacks Are Looking Elsewhere

By Lisa Frazier

Otho and Candis Milbourne moved to Prince George's County seven years ago for a practical reason: They could buy a three-bedroom house with a two-car garage on a quiet cul-de-sac in Fort Washington for the price of their cramped condominium in Alexandria.

That was what mattered most then. But that was before they had children.

Now the parents of two boys, ages 4 and 11 months, the Milbournes are worried about the quality of Prince George's schools, so worried that they are planning another move. This time, to Howard County. This time, for the children.

"The difference is like night and day," said Otho Milbourne, 37, comparing the school districts in Prince George's and Howard counties. "You can go to any school in Howard County and know that it's going to be better than the schools around here."

The decision has been difficult for many middle-class families who have so little confidence in the school system that they have chosen either to move out of the county or to stay and finance a private school education. But for many African American parents, such as the Milbournes, the choice has been especially tough.

They say they are proud of the cultural and social changes shaping the "new Prince George's," the country's wealthiest and best-educated majority-black county. And they want the county to succeed as an interracial democracy, where African Americans share in the power and wealth.

The county made strides in that direction three years ago when voters elected Wayne K. Curry (D) as the first African American county executive in the Washington area and a wave of new African American leaders rose to top posts in county government and the school system, the parents say. But change on other fronts has been slower.

The county's schools continue to perform below expectations. Without a school system considered to be

The Milbournes said their decision to move to Howard, the top-ranked school district in Maryland based on state test scores, was sealed when Otho Milbourne conducted an impromptu experiment.

top-notch, county leaders say, they have had trouble luring the kinds of businesses and upper-middle-class families more abundant in Fairfax, Montgomery and Howard counties. The county's fate, they say, is intertwined with the quality of schools.

Underscoring that concern, School Superintendent Jerome Clark took a dramatic step last week to improve academic performance at six underachieving schools. Clark announced Friday that he would strip the six schools of their principals, teachers and staffs and reorganize their instructional programs. Staff members can reapply for their jobs.

Many educators and residents agree that the Prince George's school system, the largest in Maryland, needs the black middle class if it is to rebound. White middle-class parents pulled their children out of Prince George's public schools by the hundreds in the 1970s and early 1980s after a federal court mandated busing to promote desegregation. Before 1973, when the order was implemented, the school system was about 80 percent white. Now, it is about 73 percent black.

But many middle-class African American parents say they have no time to wait for the schools to improve.

"When we had one child, we probably were willing to stay in the county and let him stay in private school," said Otho Milbourne, who works as the benefits administrator for a pension plan. "But having two in private school is just not affordable. The only other option is to put them in a public school system that's top rate. And this is not the one."

Candis Milbourne, 35, a contract administrator, said the money they save now will come in handy later. "If we get them in a really good public school, we can save for their college education," she said.

Prince George's school officials say the perception of the school system is worse than the reality. Although the school system as a whole is ranked second to last of all 24 Maryland school districts, test scores are not the only measure of success, school officials say. Prince George's students win millions in Using test scores from the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program, the state's annual series of reading, writing, language usage, math, science and social studies tests, he

college scholarships each year, and many of them go on to prestigious colleges and universities.

"The biggest part of what people are concerned about is there's a false perception about the quality of the education our school system offers," said school board Chairman Kenneth E. Johnson (District 6). "But I challenge those parents to match the education we are providing with the education they are paying for in those private schools."

Johnson said the school system recently began a "full-disclosure" campaign to release statistical data showing the challenges the system faces but also presenting its successes.

"We're reaching out to every segment of the community we can to change that perception," Johnson said.

Last school year, 1,035 students withdrew from Prince George's schools to enroll in private schools, according to school officials. That was 2 1/2 times as many as withdrew from the school system for private schools the year before. A total of 2,188 students also transferred last year from Prince George's schools to other public schools in Maryland, an increase of about 5 percent from the 1994-95 school year.

Still, student enrollment in Prince George's public schools increased by 3 percent during the same time. Enrollment has grown steadily each year since the mid-1980s, to about 125,000 students. But it is difficult to determine how many parents bypassed the Prince George's school system by choosing private schools or moving out of the county before their children reached school age.

Prince George's, with a population of about 767,000, according to U.S. Census estimates, is among those inner suburbs of Washington that have lost more U.S. citizens than they gained since 1990. The county's population is growing because of births and foreign immigrants. The primary destinations for Prince Georgians moving out are Anne Arundel, Howard, Charles and Montgomery counties, according to migration data assembled by the Internal Revenue Service.

compared two schools — a Prince George's school with a good reputation and a low-performing school in Howard County. The scores of the Howard County school were higher.

"I can't risk putting my children's education in jeopardy," he said.

In February 1995, seven months before their daughter was to begin kindergarten, Kelvin and Rosalynn Lawson, both African Americans and federal government employees, sold their house in Temple Hills, near Fort Washington in southern Prince George's, and moved to Howard County. The low performance of Prince George's schools on the state test was their main concern.

"I just knew I didn't want my daughter there," said Rosalynn Lawson, a personnel management specialist. She and her husband, an engineer, now live in Ellicott City, and their daughter, now 6, is in the first grade at a Howard County public school.

School officials in Howard, Montgomery and Fairfax counties said they have no idea how many students they are attracting from Prince George's.

Kay Armstrong Baker, president-elect of the Howard County Association of Realtors, said the good reputation of the county's school system attracts families from throughout the region. Families with school-age children usually ask about the schools when they call seeking information about housing, she said.

"It's probably their top priority, along with price," she said.

Clark said Prince George's schools can't afford to lose more middle-class families.

"I think the quality of education is in the proportion of the middle-class people who stay to support public education," Clark said. "Any time you siphon off your talent, the school system is going to suffer."

One of the biggest challenges facing Prince George's schools is educating a large — and growing — number of economically disadvantaged children, who often require greater resources to achieve at the same level as their wealthier peers. Providing those resources, such as early reading programs, often requires more staff and money.

Although the number of poor children is growing in school districts throughout Maryland, the problem is more acute in Prince George's, where about 41.2 percent, or 50,421 students, qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program

based on their families' low incomes. Only Baltimore has more children from low-income families than Prince George's; only Baltimore scored lower last year on the Maryland test.

In Howard County, 9.1 percent of the students, about 3,405, qualified for the free or reduced-price lunch program last year.

The IRS migration study shows that families moving out of Washington choose Prince George's more frequently than other suburbs. From 1994 to 1995, 16,169 people moved to Prince George's from Washington. During the same time, 18,291 people moved from Prince George's to Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery and Charles counties. The families moving to Prince George's tend to have lower incomes than those who are leaving.

Alison LaVigne, 35, a physician, and her husband, Rene, 35, vice president of a high-technology company in Lanham, moved to their two-acre plot in Upper Marlboro five years ago. The African American couple say they believe strongly that their decision to enroll their 4-year-old son in a private school in Bowie next year is the right one. Still, Alison LaVigne feels a bit uneasy.

"I do feel a little guilty somewhat, in principle," she said. "I felt more guilty when I left Washington, being a native Washingtonian. There are some parallels there."

But Rene LaVigne had this to say: "I won't say there's guilt. We've thought about it a lot. It's just a rational decision."

Three things attracted the LaVignes to Prince George's: its real estate value, its diversity and its proximity to Washington. They say they likely would send their children to private schools, regardless of where they live.

But the couple, who both attended Catholic schools, said they heard so often about the low test scores, safety issues and crowding in Prince George's public schools that they didn't even consider them.

"I think public education everywhere has its challenges," Rene LaVigne said. "We're just not willing to sacrifice our kids as participants in a social experiment, with respect to education."

Many parents complain that education does not seem to be a priority among

county leaders and that it does not receive adequate financing. But Rene LaVigne said he does not blame county and school leaders. Voters had a chance in November to approve a tax measure that would have funneled millions into the school system, and they rejected it overwhelmingly.

"I don't think the education system is any more than the people have made it to be," he said.

Another black couple, Bernadette Martin, 33, a business development specialist, and her husband, Zachary Fowler, 35, have three children, ages 6, 3 and 3 months. The oldest one attends kindergarten at a public school in Fort Washington. Martin said she is mostly pleased with the school but worries about the class size: 29 students.

"I'm doing everything I can to keep my child in public school because I feel if the middle class abandons public schools, there's no hope for them," Martin said. "But I'm wavering on whether to keep her there."

Even before they had children, Franklin Jackson, 36, a lawyer, and his wife, Shelia, 35, a school system employee, decided they would enroll their children in public schools and work to make them better.

The Jacksons, African Americans whose children range in age from 9 to 14, are active in the parent teacher associations at their children's schools. They volunteer in the schools as mentors, and they serve on various community boards and associations. All of their children have been identified as "talented and gifted."

Shelia Jackson's school volunteerism landed her a job as a facilitator of the Comer school reform model, named after Yale University child psychiatrist James Comer, who stresses education as a partnership among parents, teachers, students and administrators.

"We really believe that public education is a good education, as good as we make it," Shelia Jackson said. "We believe parents make the difference. If all of the educated, highly motivated parents leave the public school system, there will not be any advocacy for the kids who remain. We believe that to our core." ■

42. San Francisco Chronicle

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Parish, School Make Pact

Concord neighbors agree to get along

Suzanne Espinosa Solis, Chronicle East Bay Bureau, page A11

When one of Concord's oldest private institutions decided to take on the toughest of social problems, it turned to a neighboring school reflecting some of the region's most dramatic racial changes.

The Queen of All Saints Church joined forces with Mount Diablo High, once a nearly all-white school that fell out of harmony with its neighborhood as its percentage of poor and minority students increased.

"There was a lot of concern about Mount Diablo High School and its reputation," said the Rev. Michael Cunningham, pastor of the 3,500-member Roman Catholic parish. "It had a poor public image."

By urban standards the problems were tame — loitering on the church grounds, blaring music and burning rubber, and an occasional fistfight. But many in Concord, already rattled by an increase in Latino gang violence in recent years, feared worse things might follow — even though the school had few incidents of gang problems.

"Thirty years ago public schools weren't like this," said Cunningham, whose parish runs a private elementary school next door to the high school.

Conditions were ripe for tension. The church is almost all-white and serves the surrounding working-class community, while the high school is increasingly minority and serves a large population of students bused in from Bay Point, a low-income unincorporated area northeast of Concord.

Instead, after a year and a half of community meetings, the parish and the school united last month in signing a "community covenant" — a document amounting to a peace agreement that listed goals to ward off further discord.

"We did not want to be the grumpy little church that said, 'Get off my lawn and leave me alone,'" pastoral associate Ellen Midgley said. "We want to be a good neighbor to the high school next door."

The church pledged to help the high school improve its image by promoting academic programs and by soliciting parental involvement, largely by encouraging parents via religious institutions of all faiths.

In return, the school agreed to take steps to reduce student speeding, smoking and loitering on church property, and to seek increased police patrols before and after school.

But for all its good intentions, the covenant — and the spotlight it's put on Mount Diablo High — has raised some eyebrows.

While Mount Diablo students and administrators say they welcome improvements for their school, some suggest that the school's problems are being overblown by a parish and community still adjusting to the cultural and economic changes reflected in their school.

"Our school is a typical California high school," said Lou Suarez, principal at Mount Diablo for the past eight years. Yet he adds that the ethnic and racial changes taking place throughout the state have been slower to come to central Contra Costa County, noting, "We are the only minority majority high school in the district."

Alonzo Talton, a junior at Mount Diablo, said increasing parental involvement was a good idea. But he said the public may have a misconception that Mount Diablo parents are "lazy and just watching TV at home."

"Maybe mom or dad is working or mom and dad has to stay home to watch the little ones," he said.

Phil Johnson, a Concord police officer who is assigned to the school four days a week, said the students are often wrongly perceived as causing trouble around the neighborhood when, in fact, much of the trouble is caused by nonstudents.

Even Mary McGinn, principal of Queen of All Saints Catholic Elementary School and a former high school teacher, said neighbors' wariness might not be warranted.

"Most people get nervous when they see a group of teens," she said. "But they're just typical teenagers."

Still, others say the school needs stricter guidelines.

"I have seen kids hanging around the corners during school hours and I'm wondering why they're there," said Frank Ascagnio, a 40-year Concord resident and parishioner at Queen of All Saints.

"I wonder why there isn't more discipline."

Queen of All Saints and Mount Diablo High have been neighbors for 44 years, but the only recent involvement between the two was a continuing program in which honor students from the high school would work on science projects with the schoolchildren.

The agreement was the result of more than 150 meetings over the past 1 1/2 years with parishioners such as Ascagnio, neighborhood residents, and parents of students from both Mount Diablo and Queen of All Saints Elementary.

"There are no crises here," Cunningham said. "It's not like we have shootings out on the corner. We just don't ever want to have them."

The most dramatic cultural changes at the school began in 1978, when the closure of Pacifica High School in West Pittsburg, later renamed Bay Point, forced students from that community to be bused to Concord.

Today, the school is 60 percent minority and serves students from the poorest areas of the Mount Diablo Unified School District. The district includes Concord, Pleasant Hill and Clayton plus portions of Walnut Creek, Martinez, Pittsburg, Lafayette, Pacheco and Bay Point.

Cunningham, who has been pastor at Queen of All Saints for three years, describes Mount Diablo as a "United Nations."

"Their diversity could be a real asset if you capitalize on it," he said.

Cunningham says he reached out to the school with the help of the Contra Costa Interfaith Sponsoring Committee, a group of religious leaders who in 1994 began helping poor and working-class families organize against crime, violence, poor education, unemployment and other problems.

"There were many laborious meetings," Cunningham said. "But by bringing all these good people and all this good will together, we will start solving problems and it will eventually pay off." ■

43. Los Angeles Times

* 06/02/97; Edition: Home Edition; Section: Life & Style; View Desk; Page E-1 Category: Local

A Great Graduate : At 14, Mary Fasano had to leave school—but she vowed to go back one day. Now a great-grandmother at 89, she's done that and much more: She's earned a diploma from Harvard.

By ELIZABETH MEHREN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

BRAINTREE, Mass. — As sure as there is college graduation, there is the annual raft of tales of heroic graduates. These seasonal sagas of plucky undergraduates who have triumphed over adversity are all well and good, Mary Fasano believes. It simply never would occur to her to include herself among them.

Never mind that this 4-foot-10-inch great-grandmother of 18 is claiming her bachelor's degree at 89 years of age. Or that the institution granting Fasano her diploma happens to be Harvard University. Or that the sheepskin bearing her name as well as Harvard's legendary "Veritas" logo was 17 years in the making.

This is no poster person for geriatric accomplishment, Mary Fasano wanted to make perfectly clear. This is a woman who promised herself she would get an education when her parents pulled her out of eighth grade and sent her to work in a Rhode Island cotton mill. And this is a woman who made good on that vow.

"I did this for me," said Fasano, who still lives behind the diner here that she managed with her late husband, Arcangelo, for the better part of five decades. "You see, I had a terrible inferiority complex. I didn't think I was equal to other people because I didn't have an education. Then I went to high school"—at 69—"and I felt much better."

High school was so rewarding that Fasano decided to try college. She chose Harvard because it was right up the road, an easy commute aboard the "T," this area's rapid transit system. She enrolled in Harvard's extension school, starting with a class in Italian culture—a way to learn about her heritage—and taking all her classes at night.

Very often, her 33-year-old advisor, Suzanne Spreadbury, said, Fasano rode

the train home at 11 o'clock at night, "in January, in subfreezing weather. I was scared to death." Fasano, however, was unfazed. She had endured worse indignities. When her parents made her leave school at 14, her favorite teacher came to her house and begged her mother and father to rethink their decision. They refused.

"I come from the Italian culture, and girls weren't supposed to go to school at that time," Fasano explained. Nevertheless, "I was very bitter about what happened."

Mill work had its own humiliations. "I hated it," she recalled. As if the physical demands of the job were not enough, Fasano and the other young female employees had to put up with male mill workers "who grabbed at us every time we walked by."

But not for long. Fasano went after one groping male with a shuttle, and no one ever touched her again.

She married at 21 and spent most of her married life working the grill at Fasano's, the family diner. Four of her five children have college degrees, "not a bad average." To pay for their tuitions, she worked the 4:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift at the diner, then worked nights in a dress factory. After her husband died 20 years ago, the family sold the diner and opened a catering business. Fasano still works part time, making and wrapping sandwiches.

College offered its own challenges. She concentrated in liberal arts and will graduate with a B average, her advisor said. Fasano aced math and foreign languages, Spreadbury added. But writing taxed her.

"In a diner, you speak. You don't write," Fasano said. Besides, "at the diner I was humble-like. I knew I didn't have an education, and I never felt like I was the equal even of my own customers." As a result, "It really was hard for me to learn about writing." Still, she insisted, "I

loved every minute of college, even the hard parts."

She especially loved the satisfaction of traveling to Italy and realizing that because of her art history courses, she could identify the works of famous painters simply by looking at them. She turned the cathedrals into extensions of her college classrooms, applying what she had learned in architectural history to each basilica tour.

"You have no idea how satisfying that was," Fasano said.

Fasano said she never stopped to notice the fact that she was so much older than her classmates. "In high school, some girls would look at me like, 'Who is that old hag and why is she in school with us?' I just ignored it. I was there to learn," she said. "I have a mind of my own, and I have to do what I have to do. In this case, what I had to do was go to school."

As for Harvard, where Spreadbury said the average extension student is about 32 years old, "We never spoke about age. I was there to learn. And boy, did I learn."

Spreadbury said Fasano was more interested in improving her mind than in offering her tenacity as an inspiration to others. "Something was taken away from her when she was very young, and she was determined to get it back," Spreadbury said. "She did want to overcome those feelings that she wasn't smart enough. Going to college was her way of liberating herself. It had nothing to do with anybody else."

Wearing her cap and gown, Fasano will address the Harvard Extension School's June 5 graduation ceremony. The theme of her talk could also be the title of her life's story: "Knowledge is power."

Then it will be back to school. Fasano is planning a trip to Spain. "I think I'd better learn Spanish before I go, don't you?" ■

44. The New York Times

06/02/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section B; Metropolitan Desk; Page 6, Column 3 Category: Local

Hostos Students Hear an Unusual Sound: Praise

By KAREN W. ARENSON

After a week of being criticized by politicians and university trustees, students at Hostos Community College of the City University of New York were praised yesterday at a commencement ceremony that at times resembled a political rally.

Three Bronx politicians — a Congressman, an Assemblyman and the Borough President — all hailed the students for overcoming poverty and language barriers to pursue their education.

Referring to the dispute over academic standards that threatened to keep some students from graduating, the Bronx Borough President, Fernando Ferrer, said, "There are those who want to politicize this argument about standards," and he told the students that their class had become "a political Ping Pong ball."

"I believe in high standards," he said, adding that there was no higher standard than when a mother on welfare or a young immigrant enrolls in college.

Hostos, a bilingual college in the South Bronx where more than three-fourths of the students are Hispanic, draws many single mothers on welfare and many immigrants who speak little or no English. Because so many of its students had difficulty passing a university-wide English writing exam, Hostos replaced it with its own writing test last year.

But last week, after final exams were over and students were making plans to graduate, City University trustees, saying standards were being lowered, voted to restore the university-wide test and make it a condition of graduation.

University auditors found that 137 of the more than 400 Hostos students planning to graduate had never passed that exam, and many of them hurriedly took the 50-minute test on Friday and Saturday.

Late Friday evening a New York State Supreme Court Appellate Division judge ruled that all of the students could participate in the graduation ceremony, but scheduled a hearing Tuesday on

whether students who do not pass the test can get a diploma.

Hostos officials estimated that 440 students participated in the ceremony in a barricaded portion of the Grand Concourse in the Bronx yesterday. The officials said they did not know how many had passed the exam.

At the commencement ceremony yesterday, the politicians told the students that attacks on Hostos were nothing new.

Congressman Jose Serrano said that keeping the college alive was the first big battle he fought when he was elected an assemblyman in 1974. "And here I am, still talking about it," he said.

Bronx Assemblyman Roberto Ramirez, a Hostos graduate himself, said, "You tell them that you are not afraid of tests, that you are not afraid of standards — just double standards."

Then, in an apparent reference to Herman Badillo, the university trustee and former Bronx borough president and Congressman who has become a leading critic of Hostos, Mr. Ramirez said: "And I'll tell him not to forget where he came from. I'll tell him not to forget that as we study English, we must honor our Spanish, too."

Long Island University

In her address as the class valedictorian yesterday, Liesel Schumacher, 49, described her struggle to reach an educational goal she had let pass her by in younger years.

Miss Schumacher delayed her college education for 20 years, first marrying, getting a job, and raising five children before returning to school full-time.

"You and I were not students of privilege, but we are privileged students," she said. "We come from working-class homes. Some have come from faraway places and began new lives here."

She said many others like herself in school were also trying to reclaim a chance "we let slip by at an earlier age."

A total of 1,546 graduate and undergraduate students received degrees at the ceremony at the school's Brooklyn campus, while honorary doctorates were

given to a distinguished group, including the feminist Bella Abzug and the musician Wynton Marsalis.

The chief commencement speaker, Robert P. Moses, recounted his role in the civil rights movement in the 1960's and recalled its violence.

"They were my teachers and I was their disciple," he said. "They showed me how powerful it is to surrender your life to this freedom struggle."

Aloysius Barkley, 76, was the oldest graduate. "This is a journey that has lasted over 50 years," he said in an interview. "There have been some pitfalls but there's also been some joy. I was determined to get this. I wanted it so badly."

Those receiving honorary degrees, in addition to Mr. Moses, included the African American studies scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. and the former Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Ralph Branca.

Polytechnic University

It took Edward Coppola 56 years to finish the work for the diploma he received yesterday from Polytechnic University. Mr. Coppola completed more than three years when he left to join the Navy as a fighter pilot in 1941. After the war came a career as a supervising engineer, and finally he returned to Polytechnic, in Brooklyn, to get a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

He was among 1,019 graduates at Avery Fisher Hall receiving a degree in engineering and science.

Robert Catell, the chairman and chief executive of Brooklyn Union Gas, spoke to the graduates of the connection between Polytechnic and his company.

"Speaking for myself, I would paraphrase the popular philosopher Robert Fulghum," he said. "Most of what I need to know in life, I learned in engineering school. I set out as a young man to be the best engineer that I could be."

In addition to Mr. Catell, recipients of honorary degrees included Dr. Gian Carlo Rota, professor of mathematics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Dr. Sogo Okamura, the president of Tokyo Denki University. ■

45. Baltimore Sun

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Principal's pursuit of Powell pays off

General addresses Randallstown High graduates a year later

By Jay Apperson
SUN STAFF

From the start, Randallstown High School Principal Barry F. Williams knew it was a long shot to nab one of the country's most sought after public speakers for his school's graduation. But yesterday he beat the odds and presented a man he called a "modern hero" — retired Gen. Colin L. Powell.

"The principal's been after me for two years in a row," said Powell, explaining why he accepted the invitation to speak at Randallstown High's commencement from among the hundreds he receives every year. "I like to speak to younger students in schools. More and more, I speak in elementary schools and high schools rather than colleges."

"They're young and impressionable, and they're still starting out," he said. "College kids are wonderful, but they know what they're doing. They don't need a lot of advice from some old codger like me."

During his 20-minute speech, Powell, the former military commander who turned decided not to run for president, touched on traditional graduation themes. He asked the graduates to "salute" their parents, and then gave the young people advice on meeting the challenges that lie ahead in a rapidly changing world. He told them to learn from their failures while striving for success.

And Powell, who was chairman of the recent national summit on voluntarism, made a pitch for community involvement. He called on the Class of 1997 — the first class required to perform community services as a requirement for graduation — to maintain the spirit of charity.

"As you try to make more money, as you try to rise to a position in life, remember always to give something in service back to the community and the nation that has given you so much," said

Powell, speaking to an audience of 2,500 at the Towson Center.

Baltimore County school officials turned out yesterday to greet Powell, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — and perhaps the biggest name to address a county school graduation.

"I cannot recall our attracting a national figure of his stature," said Superintendent Anthony G. Marchione, who has worked in the system for more than four decades.

Principal's pursuit

Williams said he first wrote to Powell to invite him to speak at the 1996 graduation.

He explained that Randallstown is a school with a middle-class, predominantly black population, where most students are headed for college. Powell said he had a scheduling conflict, so three students spoke "eloquently" at last year's ceremonies, Williams said.

But Williams renewed his pursuit with another letter in August.

"My pitch was: I described my school, and the need for my students to see that someone can make it if they essentially follow the process, play the game," Williams said before yesterday's commencement exercise. "Since my [school] population is predominantly African-American, I specifically wanted to have an African-American who epitomizes the fruits of hard work."

"Many of the middle-class students don't believe they can achieve. It's sad. It's one thing for students lower on the socio-economic ladder to say, 'This can't happen for me,' " the principal said. "I just want them to hear from someone who has made it, and made it in a big way."

Last fall, he received word that Powell would speak.

Problem solving

Williams took over as Randallstown's

principal in 1995, after a school year marred by discipline problems, disgruntled teachers, arsons and racial unrest.

He imposed new rules, and declared the start of a "renaissance of excellence."

Students who received their diplomas yesterday said Randallstown's problems were not unique, and added that conditions have improved.

Jerrill Adams, a student government president who plans to continue his studies at Ithaca College in New York state, said some students who left the school now want to come back to take advantage of Randallstown's technological resources, such as ample access to the Internet.

"We are on the highway. We own the highway," Adams said.

Shani Donnell, the senior class treasurer, said, "Randallstown is a good school. It has to be because we got Colin Powell."

Traditional ceremony

Powell sat center stage yesterday as the ceremony unfolded with all the trappings of a traditional high school graduation.

The school chorus sang, the school band played. Parents dressed up, and brought their cameras. The quiet was occasionally broken by a baby's cry.

The valedictorian, Boma Agboh, traced the students' growth, jokingly saying they started as "fresh meat — oops, I mean, freshmen" who grew more serious about their studies and their futures.

Then Powell addressed the students, saying, "My friends, at the end of the day, what truly counts is family."

Williams said he's been asked what he will do to top his coup of landing Powell as a graduation speaker. He answered with a question: "Will the Popemobile fit in the Towson Center?" ■

46. Dallas Morning News

June 1, 1997 Category: Local

Legislature OKs school-choice bill, sends it to Bush

By Terrence Stutz / The Dallas Morning News

**Clinton Presidential Records
Tape Restoration Project [Email]**

AUSTIN - School-choice legislation that expands the state's charter school program and enhances the right of students to transfer out of low-performing campuses passed the Legislature on Saturday.

The measure would authorize at least 100 new independent charter schools across Texas and allow nearly 800,000 students to transfer to better public schools.

House members approved the bill 98-42, and senators followed after that, 22-7.

The proposal - the most significant education bill of the 1997 session - now goes to Gov. George W. Bush for his expected signature into law.

He said the legislation "gives tremendous choice to parents and students who are unhappy with the status quo to try something different and better, whether by moving to a different public school or starting their own charter school."

Opponents of the bill - mostly Democrats - asserted that the state was moving too fast in allowing more "open enrollment" charter schools.

State lawmakers limited the number of charter schools to 20 when they authorized them in a massive school reform law passed.

The schools are publicly funded, exempt from most state regulations - such as class-size limits - and may enroll students regardless of where they reside.

Backers of charter school expansion say the Texas Education Agency has received nearly 370 applications even though the Legislature has yet to expand the program. The original 20 charters already have been awarded.

Besides the 100 new charter schools, the bill would allow an unlimited number of charter schools for students who are considered at risk of dropping out.

The measure's other major provision would allow more students to take part in the Public Education Grant program that allows students to transfer out of schools where a majority have failed the state's

basic skills test.

The student transfer program was created two years ago by the Legislature but flopped, partly because of resistance by school districts in accepting the students.

To boost participation, districts also would for the first time receive financial incentives to accept the students.

In its final days, the Legislature acted on several bills Saturday.

GPA requirements

The Senate voted to require universities that use grade-point averages in admissions to set the same standard for athletes and nonathletes.

Backers say the measure, which needs House approval before going to the governor, is designed to do away with a system in which some universities admit star athletes with lower GPAs and test scores than other freshmen.

The Senate sponsor, Royce West, D-Dallas, said the bill would require colleges to set freshman admissions standards based on the minimum grade-point average used to admit an athlete who receives a state-funded scholarship.

Others questioned the bill's effectiveness since the University of Texas, Texas A&M University and others use multiple admissions criteria. "It does nothing," said Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo.

Mr. West disagreed, saying, "It sends the right message, that academics is Number 1, athletics is Number 2 in the state of Texas."

Sex-offender bill

Seeking to crack down on sex offenders, lawmakers sent the governor a bill to provide up to 20 years of supervision for such criminals if they aren't sent to prison.

The measure targets community supervision related to a form of probation known as deferred adjudication, in which there is no finding of guilt and people can wipe their records clean if they stay out of trouble for a certain period of time.

Currently, the longest offenders can be

put on deferred adjudication is 10 years. The bill by Sen. Florence Shapiro, R-Plano, would allow that to be doubled for sex offenders and would impose other restrictions on its use to punish sex crimes.

Deferred adjudication has been used in child molestation cases because it can be difficult to have a youngster testify, Ms. Shapiro said.

The bill also would allow deferred adjudication only once for sex offenses and enhance penalties if someone gets deferred adjudication, then commits another crime.

Slacker students

Texans who keep taking classes without graduating could face higher tuition under a bill backed by the Senate. The "slacker-student" bill by Sen. Teel Bivins, R-Amarillo, still needs House approval.

Texas students who have racked up 170 credit hours or more but haven't graduated would pay a price under the measure.

With some exceptions, state funding would be cut off to universities for any more courses the longtime students take. Universities then could charge higher, out-of-state tuition rates to residents taking more than the allowable number of courses.

Professor evaluations

Tenured professors at Texas universities could be fired for poor performance under a bill headed to Mr. Bush. Lawmakers have complained that once tenured, professors face few performance reviews.

A bill establishing such evaluations would require the reviews at least once every six years. Schools would determine the criteria for the reviews and could demote or fire professors.

Professors disciplined for their performance could challenge those actions in court.

The Associated Press contributed to this report. ■

47. Dallas Morning News

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

House-backed bill would ban athletes' special college entry

By Sylvia Moreno / The Dallas Morning News

AUSTIN - The Texas House, facing a

midnight deadline on Sunday for passing

bills before the Legislature adjourns this

session, approved a measure to eliminate special college admissions standards for student athletes.

The admissions bill, which now goes to Gov. George W. Bush for his signature, requires Texas' public college and universities to apply the same admissions standards to all entering freshmen.

"When you establish the floor GPA, then that applies to all students," said Rep. Ron Wilson, D-Houston, the bill's author.

The bill, Mr. Wilson said, applies to any university that uses grade-point average as a factor in admissions policies. He said that if a university's policy does not refer to GPA but to class rank instead, the bill would still probably apply to the school because class rank is generally determined by GPA.

"Class rank is synonymous with GPA," said Sen. Royce West, D-Dallas, the Senate sponsor of the bill.

The bill - which originally required the schools to set higher admissions standards for athletes than those for other entering freshmen - had been strongly opposed by University of Texas and Texas A&M officials.

They said applying such a standard, for example, would effectively destroy UT-Austin's nationally ranked, multimillion-dollar football and basketball programs.

In a speech on the House floor, Rep. Sylvester Turner, D-Houston, referred to the school's intense lobbying effort against the bill as "a downright shame."

"To make sure there are browns and blacks on their teams, they will weaken their standards," Mr. Turner said. "If the university can put forth the same effort to make sure athletes are diverse, they ought to put forth the same effort to make sure the universities are diverse."

The language of the bill was changed to say that all entering freshmen, including student athletes, would be required to meet the minimum GPA established by the school. That change, contend UT and Texas A&M University officials, exempts them from the effects of the bill because neither school sets a minimum GPA admissions criterion.

One of the bill's most important provisions is a data collection requirement designed to pinpoint where and how much water the state has in an effort to develop ways to conserve and maximize future use.

A constitutional amendment that will go before voters in November would consolidate \$1.2 billion in existing

relying on a variety of factors.

But Mr. Wilson and Mr. West disagreed. Some minimum GPA, they argued, is implicitly set by the school every year when it makes its admissions offers. And traditionally, some athletes have been admitted with lower GPAs and standardized test scores than their freshmen peers.

"If the question is if an athlete that comes in with a 2.5 GPA and a 900 SAT [Scholastic Assessment Test] score and you have another student with the identical qualifications, should that regular student that doesn't play football or basketball be admitted?" Mr. Wilson said. "The answer is yes."

UT officials were not immediately available for comment Sunday evening.

With one more day before the Legislature adjourns, the Capitol was active Sunday on several fronts.

Rules on alcohol

People younger than 21 caught trying to buy, in possession of or driving under the influence of alcohol would face criminal penalties and the automatic suspension of their license under a bill sent to Mr. Bush.

Lawmakers, including Senate sponsor Mr. West, said the measure sends a clear message to young Texans: "You drink, you drive, you lose," said Mr. West, D-Dallas.

Under the bill:

- * It would be illegal for people younger than 21 to drive with any amount of alcohol in their blood system.

- * Underage drinkers who drive would lose their driver's licenses for 60 days on the first offense, 120 days on the second offense and for six months on the third and subsequent offenses.

- * They also would face criminal charges punishable by up to 40 hours of community service and \$500 in fines for the first offense and up to six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine for third and subsequent offenses.

Under current law, drivers under 21 can have a blood-alcohol content up to .07 percent. Older drivers are considered intoxicated at .10 percent.

There also would be new punishments, including driver's license bonding authority under the Texas Water Development Board to help fund local water projects.

Child care

Child-care facilities that violate health and safety rules would face a range of penalties under a bill sent to Mr. Bush.

The bill includes new registration of so-called family homes, where up to 12

suspensions, for selling alcohol to someone who is under age and for purchasing alcohol for someone under 21.

Other measures cracking down on drinking and driving - lowering the legal blood-alcohol level from 0.10 to 0.08 percent and prohibiting open containers in a vehicle - failed to pass this session.

Property appraisals

The Legislature approved and sent to the governor a property-appraisal bill that falls short of Mr. Bush's effort to sharply limit the rise in property tax rates.

The measure would allow Texans to defer some of their property taxes when the value of their homes increased by more than 5 percent.

The House originally had sought to cap the rise in appraisal at 5 percent a year, House and Senate negotiators agreed instead to a 10 percent cap. They also agreed to allow homeowners to defer the portion of any taxes in excess of 5 percent.

Critics said it would only delay the effects of increased values.

Homeowners would pay 8 percent interest on the taxes they deferred and if subsequent appraised values went up by less than 5 percent, they would have to pay at least a portion of the deferred taxes.

Water conservation

One year after a drought that cracked Texas farmland, spurred local water-saving measures and dried up \$5 billion from the state's economy, the Legislature voted to approve a sweeping water conservation plan.

"This is milestone legislation that will be at the very heart of our legacy," said Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock.

He called the bill protection of "the resource most vital to future generations of Texans," adding that it "signals the beginning of a new era in which vision will prevail over long-standing differences and territorial feuding."

The Senate voted 31-0 and the House voted 140-4 to adopt a compromise bill reached by a committee of members from both chambers. The bill now goes to Mr. Bush, who is expected to sign it into law.

children, including those of the homeowner, can be cared for after school. At other times, only up to six children not related to the homeowner can be cared for at one time.

The bill by Rep. Patricia Gray, D-Galveston, also would establish fines for child-care facilities for rules violations based on the number of

children they care for with the highest fine at \$100. The lowest fine would be \$20 a day for each violation in centers

that care for 20 or fewer children.

Staff writer Wayne Slater and The Associated Press contributed to this

report. ■

48. Baltimore Sun

June 2, 1997 Category: Local

Novice school board faces 'daunting' deadlines

City's expectations are high for eclectic group of achievers

By Jean Thompson and
Stephen Henderson

They are top-notch achievers in their own fields, but virtual novices at urban school policy-making. Nonetheless, the nine new members of the Baltimore City school board took on pressure-cooker responsibilities yesterday.

Although they are practically strangers and have held their positions for less than a week, state law gives them 15 days to appoint an interim school superintendent; a month to prepare for the expiration of five union contracts; a summer to draft an initial budget and survival plan for the district; and six months to find and hire a permanent chief executive officer.

Yesterday, the state law granted the board control of the chronically low-performing school system, and started the clock ticking on its deadlines. Decision-making must begin right away.

"It's a daunting time-table," says board member Carl Stokes, a business marketing manager and former city councilman who also serves on the board of the Child First tutoring project. "But schools are not like GM assembly lines that you can shut down while you retool and then reopen with better machinery.

"I'm cautiously optimistic, mostly because there's a lot of talent — people of not only good intentions but people with management expertise who know that we can't Band-Aid the system or think about quick fixes."

Common themes emerge when the individual board members cite their priorities for fixing the schools: improving the quality of teachers, their training and paychecks; reducing class and school sizes wherever possible; auditing and then re-investing the district's budget of more than \$700

Common threads in their backgrounds are belief in the value of a solid education, and the grit that it takes to climb from working-class beginnings to the upper rungs of their fields and society. They are competitive. Three have

million; and winning the public's confidence in the reform effort.

Short-term solutions will not be good enough because legislators and officials have staked careers, taxpayers' dollars, and the future of thousands of students on the five-year school overhaul outlined in the law that took effect yesterday.

Whether the board's newness will be a handicap or an asset remains to be seen: Only one member was chosen from the previous school board, and his tenure there was only 6 months old. Three are former teachers and one a former school psychologist, but some board members have logged little or no time in public schools.

Despite the sudden crush of deadlines, many members cite as their most important priority getting acquainted with their colleagues and the school system to prepare for the hurdles that lie ahead.

"I think the first few months, we'll spend time getting to know each other and the system, and then we'll be ready to come up with plans and move forward on them," said Bonnie S. Copeland, who rose from the rank of suburban classroom teacher to deputy state schools superintendent before becoming executive vice president of the Greater Baltimore Committee.

Almost universally, the members seem inclined to resist any initial temptation to toss out the old and start fresh. That does not mean the status quo will prevail; it means many of the members want to approach the job studiously.

J. Tyson Tildon, the board's newly appointed chairman, said, "I'm a scientist, and I'm coming at this from that perspective." The biochemist, professor of pediatrics and associate dean of doctorates; three own their own businesses; several have up-from-bootstraps backgrounds. All have records of community service.

Four have tackled some of the toughest problems facing children in

research and graduate studies at the University of Maryland medical school added, "We've got to be methodical about everything we do, and it all has to be working toward a specific end."

Differing approaches

Real estate developer C. William Struever, the only member who served on the previous school board, stressed the need to weed out programs that are not successful and to expand those that are.

"Having been on the board before, I know that there are a lot of wonderful things going on in city schools, but a lot of them aren't known and aren't being duplicated," said Struever, whose children attend the School for the Arts and Roland Park Elementary-Middle. "We need to learn to build on things that work."

Stokes, who has called in the past for limiting class sizes, dismantling the school headquarters bureaucracy and shifting administrators to schools, is barreling into the new era of reform with his convictions still in place. His zeal is tempered, but only slightly, by his understanding that for many throughout the city, the changes that may be needed will be difficult to swallow.

Edward J. Brody, a trucking company owner who admits he has never seen the inner workings of the district, may be Stokes' opposite. He has ideas about school reform, but is unwilling to discuss them publicly before he gets a good idea of what's going on.

"I guess I just like to study things, before I talk about ideas," Brody said.

Not one of the board members is afraid to break hearts or take risks, judging from their resumes, comments during interviews and the impressions of the officials who hired them.

society, from mental health issues to child abuse to learning disabilities. Their expertise will be key in a district whose children have more needs than others.

Colene Y. Daniel, vice president for corporate and community services at

Johns Hopkins Hospital, is a certified special education teacher who has degrees in speech pathology and audiology. She is concerned about the high number of children in Baltimore's schools who are identified for special education — between 17 percent and 20 percent — and the process by which they are identified.

"I think we have a lot of kids who are designated as special education, but whose needs don't require that kind of designation," Daniel said. "Many of these kids can get their needs met in a mainstream environment, and that's something we need to explore."

Last week, city and state officials said each new board member has been a "catalyst for change" in business, education or nonprofit management. That reflects a sharp shift in rhetoric and priority. In the words of Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke, Baltimore in the recent past accepted partial progress toward school improvement as accomplishment of the goal.

Mayor talking tough

That's not good enough any more, Schmoke said, setting expectations sky-high for this board. He is talking tough about cleaning house in the school system.

"In order to be successful, this board has got to make some people unhappy," Schmoke told reporters last week. "If they are not, they are not doing their job. I mean there are people that simply are going to be shaken from the traditional way of doing business, and so there's got to be some unhappiness out there in this process. The governor and I have to be willing to defend this action."

He and Gov. Parris N. Glendening began outlining their visions during a private briefing of the board last week. They have scheduled another closed meeting with the full board, including the nonvoting student member, tomorrow at City Hall.

Schmoke noted that the board can "accept or reject" the visions suggested to it, but it seems evident that some

priorities will trickle down from the mayor and the governor, especially while the board members are the greenest players in school politics.

While the board begins to cobble together a collective plan and establish its identity, the nuts and bolts of holding the school system together and preparing for the next academic season will fall to the school administration.

Thus, the board's first decision will be relatively simple but meaningful: From among the managers in the school system or from outside — although that seems less likely — someone must be chosen to get schools ready to reopen in the fall.

The mayor's top prospect, Deputy Superintendent Patricia Newby, has accepted a superintendency in another city. Finding a capable caretaker will mark the beginning of a grand journey for the newly enlisted nine.

"Everything is spelled out for us in the legislation," Copeland said. "But we're the ones who have to make this happen. It's going to be hard, but fun." ■

COMMENTARY

49. Chicago Tribune

06/01/97; Edition: CHICAGOLAND FINAL; C; Section: NEWS; Page 1 Category: Commentary

REPUBLICANS SAW A GHOST IN EDGAR'S SCHOOL TAX PLAN

By John Kass ; Bob Kemper, Tribune Staff Writers.

The description "Kustracized" is of recent vintage, from a bitter Republican primary campaign between moderate Lt. Gov. Robert Kustra and conservative upstart Al Salvi in 1996.

Salvi effectively tied a list of tax votes to Kustra, energizing suburban conservatives who have been largely ignored by Illinois Republicans.

An upset was born, and so was a verb.

It was the possibility of being Kustracized that best explains the Republican legislative antagonism toward Gov. Jim Edgar's efforts to help schools by increasing state income taxes a record 25 percent—and why the tax plan has failed.

The debate also provided the party's conservative wing—which has been largely shut out of Illinois Republican politics by Republican business and

"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out; you don't need a Phi Beta Kappa," state Senate President James "Pate" Philip (R-Wood Dale) said as he arranged the death in committee of the Edgar tax bill sent to him by the Democratic-controlled House.

On Saturday afternoon, the governor once again implored Philip to bring the bill to a vote of the full Senate. But Philip did not budge, and a House committee likewise refused to advance a scaled-down alternative passed by the Senate—yielding a legislative stalemate that dashed Edgar's hopes for school-funding reform.

Only seven of 58 Republican representatives had voted with Edgar on Thursday when his plan passed the House, a sign that GOP bosses feared a corporate interests—a chance to get back in the game.

Jack Roeser, president of the conservative Taxpayers Family Network,

tax revolt in the suburbs as the 1998 election year approaches.

The political maneuvering underscored the high anxiety and deep divisions plaguing Illinois Republicans as they try to retain control of the state Senate, recapture the Illinois House and elect Republicans to statewide offices.

"Sometimes I wonder if the governor is in sync with the Republican Party in this state," said House GOP leader Lee Daniels of Elmhurst, who vigorously opposed the Edgar plan.

"We had almost a \$1 billion surplus this year and last year," Daniels said. "How do you ask people to support a tax increase when that kind of revenue is flowing?"

labeled a yes vote on the tax increase "political death."

"They're being urged by their nominal leader to commit suicide," Roeser said of

Republican lawmakers, who, in the main, opted for life.

In Illinois, the U.S. Senate campaign will get ample publicity, but the important politics for both Democrats and Republicans is the question of who will control the General Assembly.

In those critical battles, positioning is everything, and Republican Party leaders don't want bloody suburban and Downstate primary fights on taxes between conservatives and moderates.

The image of Edgar making a deal with a longtime Democratic foe, House Speaker Michael Madigan of Chicago, worried Republican leaders.

"A Democrat gets elected, promises to be against taxes and then raises taxes, well the people expect that," Philip said. "But a Republican supporting taxes—out here, they'll never forgive us. No way."

Philip said the Edgar plan directly contradicted Republican philosophy.

"We're about limited government and low taxes," said Philip, who noted that former President George Bush watched his political career sag when conservatives abandoned him after Bush broke his "no new taxes" pledge.

"George Bush is a perfect example," Philip said. "And what happened to Richard Ogilvie with the first income tax? Haven't we learned a lesson around here?"

For pushing the first state income tax in 1969, Republican Ogilvie won high praise from opinion makers and the late Mayor Richard J. Daley. But the tax damaged his 1972 campaign, and he lost to Democrat Dan Walker.

The parallels between Kustra's 1996 campaign and Edgar's efforts with his own party on the tax issue are inviting. Back then, Kustra was Edgar's candidate, with a promise that Edgar would put his political prestige behind Kustra's candidacy.

But a week before the Kustra-Salvi primary election, word leaked from Springfield about Edgar's plan to increase income taxes for schools and offer limited local property-tax relief. The revelation helped kill the already wounded Kustra campaign.

Late last week, as the governor promised Republicans he would support them in the 1998 election year if they backed his tax-increase plan, the fear of being Kustracized returned.

Just hours before the Edgar bill went before the House last week, the governor tried one last time to calm his election-jittery troops. "Anyone who supports this," Edgar said last week, directing his comments to fellow Republicans in the House, "can count on my all-out support in the (1998) election."

But Edgar's pledge to campaign on their behalf convinced only seven GOP legislators—all in relatively safe districts—to support the measure.

Edgar's popularity in Illinois remains high, even with the tax proposal, and most politicians believe that he could run for re-election and not be seriously hurt by the fallout from the tax plan.

But in 1998, legislators will fight their re-election battles in districts that can be easily swayed by direct-mail campaigns. Advertising portraying a lawmaker as supportive of tax hikes could be devastating.

"We're not Teflon," said state Rep. Rosemary Mulligan of Park Ridge, a moderate Republican who, despite pressure, voted against Edgar's plan because of complaints from her district.

"Gov. Edgar could commit a crime on the floor of the rotunda, in full view of cameras and witnesses, and still get re-elected. That doesn't hold true for the rest of us," she said.

Edgar, though, said Friday that he was tired of legislators preoccupied with parochial concerns about how they would be perceived by voters in their individual districts.

"I think there's too much of that cheap, 'What's the political thing to do here?' The right thing to do is the best political thing to do in the long run," he said.

The governor is considering several options as to his own future, including a campaign for the U.S. Senate, a re-election run or retirement, presumably to a corporate-style post at one of the state universities.

"He'll help in 1998? What if he's not running for re-election?" asked one party leader. "Then what?"

Edgar's plan, to offer some property-tax relief in exchange for the income-tax increase to aid schools, seemed doomed almost from the start. While the governor sought to build consensus with statewide referendums on the matter, Philip and Daniels balked, saying they understood the mood of the electorate and were ready to address the nagging school-funding debate.

The plan threatened suburbanites with higher taxes and no guarantees that their property taxes would remain stable. And it did not have the backing of business leaders who usually give cover to Republican moderates.

Business leaders wanted Edgar to sell the tax by offering strict classroom reforms on the Chicago model, giving principals and local school boards greater powers over teacher unions.

But Edgar opted instead to align himself with the Illinois Education Association, the statewide teachers union that has supported him in every election except 1994.

That was the campaign that will be remembered for how Edgar pounded on Democratic challenger Dawn Clark Netsch for authoring the same kind of income-tax increase with property-tax relief he supported this year.

Also hurting Edgar's tax plan was his inability to manufacture the kind of deals that made former Gov. James Thompson a legend among Republicans and Democrats alike.

Riverboat casinos, deregulation of electric utilities, school reform and a domed stadium plan could have been packaged by the governor to sell his tax increase.

"You always wonder what if," said Edgar spokesman Thomas Hardy. "But the governor has worked very hard on behalf of this legislation since last year and certainly all spring. And he believes he's made a sincere and concerted effort to pass this long-overdue reform legislation." ■

50. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13CN; Connecticut Weekly Desk; Page 17, Column 1 Category: Commentary

A New Kind of School for Connecticut

By FRANCES CHAMBERLAIN

ONE THOUSAND Connecticut schoolchildren are signing up to attend

very different schools in September. They might join a farm in the city, a sports academy, a school mixing urban and rural students, or one focusing on outdoor education.

The 12 new schools are the result of state legislation passed in 1996 allowing the formation of charter schools — public schools with limited enrollments paid for by taxpayers but run by parents — already offered in nearly two dozen other states.

Although Connecticut has alternative schools and magnet schools, the 12 charter schools approved by the State Board of Education earlier this spring will be this state's first.

"The Connecticut legislation places a strong emphasis on academic performance," explained Yvette Melendez Thiesfield, charter schools program manager for the State Board of Education. "Education can be delivered in creative, innovative ways that may look like basic education, but the method of delivery might be unique."

When the board announced that it would begin reviewing proposals for charter schools, 29 applicants completed the arduous process.

"There are 13 points in the legislation that charter schools must address," Ms. Thiesfield explained. "This covers everything from how well articulated their mission is, to instructional programs and governing structures."

Of the 12 applications approved, two are for local charters, meaning that the local school boards retain authority and the other 10 are for state charters. All are for five-year periods, with annual reviews set.

"Charter schools are responsible for all policies, implementation and hiring. The school acts like a local board of education and is overseen directly by the State Board of Education," Ms. Thiesfield said. "Magnet schools are less heterogenous, and may have five districts coming together with a lot of involvement by local boards. Magnet schools are designed to address racial isolation, while charter schools don't make this an objective."

One of the new charters, Explorations, will be based in Winsted and will incorporate 12 towns, including Region 1, Region 7 and Gilbert and Hartland.

The mission of Jumoke Academy in Hartford, covering kindergarten through 6th grade, is to prepare children to compete in the global marketplace. All its children study a foreign language, and parental involvement is important.

Schools. Mary Ann Buchanan, currently the director of Housatonic's Alternative School in Region 1, created the concept for Explorations.

According to a synopsis handed out to the communities, Explorations will involve students in a school-to-career program, adventure education, magazine production and an after-school program called "Life-long Leisure."

"The kid who wants to try hands-on education, and get out of the classroom, can benefit from this," Mrs. Buchanan said. "We have to meet all the state-mandated requirements, academically," she said. "However, we will also have a partnership with the local cable company to learn video technology. English class will include magazine production. The Winsted Retail Association will provide mentoring relationships. Winsted Senior Center volunteers will be giving time after school to teach kids new skills like Italian cooking, golf and computers."

The program is modeled on Housatonic's Alternative School, which has been in operation for the past 18 years. Mrs. Buchanan has been with them for the past eight.

She talks happily about the success of some of her graduates. "One student," she recalled, "was a high school dropout who was living independently since he was 14. He was a hard worker and self motivated, but we were the door that got him through school. After he graduated he did survival training with the Wilderness Education Association National Standard program. He was the youngest student ever to be accepted into the instructor program."

Sonja Blass, a lead photographer for a Connecticut daily newspaper, learned her skills at the Alternative School. "She's really loving her career," Mrs. Buchanan said. "That's a success, if you teach a kid a career they love."

Explorations' motto is "achieve through self discipline," and the logo includes a thinker and rock climber. Students will spend four days each week on academics, and alternate the fifth day between career studies and outdoor adventure courses.

Each school receives a \$6,000 per pupil allotment from the state. In addition, Connecticut received a \$1

Sports Sciences Academy in Hartford, grades 9 through 12, will focus on a school-to-career model in sports communication and fund raising, management, marketing, manufacturing and merchandising, nutrition, pedagogy

million Federal grant for start-up funds. "Ninety five percent of this money will go directly to the 12 charters," Mrs. Thiesfield said. Local boards won't be able to count the students at state charters in their enrollment.

"Each district is different in its response," Ms. Thiesfield said. "Some had more concern about enrollment than others. If charter schools in Connecticut become as popular as they are in other states, local school districts might be concerned about finances. However, those who are involved in legislation see this as a real opportunity, something that can enhance local school districts."

In addition to start-up funds, and per pupil expenditures, many of the charter schools will do their own fund raising.

"Ultimately, this activity could determine whether or not they stay in business," Mrs. Thiesfield said.

Ms. Thiesfield also said the numbers were small enough that there shouldn't be much impact on enrollment at the local level.

"We've capped the number at 1,000 students statewide," she said. "In very large districts the number of students leaving to attend a charter school will be so small that it may not impact the total dollar amount at all."

Each group with a charter is busy recruiting students, most having no problem filling the slots. A lottery system may be instituted to make the selections fairly.

"This provides another option for parents and students," Ms. Thiesfield noted. "We are particularly sensitive to the needs of urban school districts, but there is also a lot of interest in the innovation that comes from the creation of charter schools. We want to look at the programs that come out of the developers."

"They could be models for other schools in the future." Learning by Experience

THE 12 charter schools that have been authorized in Connecticut include a wide variety of academic and extracurricular programs. The schools range in size from 44 to 175 students, and cover different age groups. Organizers include groups of parents, teachers, business leaders and others.

Odyssey Community School in Manchester, for bright underachievers in grades 6 through 8, will focus on media literacy to develop analytical thinking and communication skills.

Integrated Day in Norwich, with a projected enrollment of 175 students, kindergarten through 6, plans an extended schedule. The school's areas of concern include individual research, social curriculum, multi-age grouping, and goal setting and assessment.

Interdistrict School for the Arts and Communication in New London is a middle school that describes itself as taking a holistic approach to academics through the arts and communication skills.

Coventry Science Center, Coventry, a local charter, is a high school program with a science-oriented curriculum.

Village Academy in New Haven, kindergarten through 8th grade, is

focused on an instructional program that follows the stages of children, with emphasis on language arts, mathematics, history and science.

Common Ground High School in New Haven will create a farm in the city and utilize extended-day programs and interdisciplinary courses.

The Bridge Academy in Bridgeport, a high school, will provide a college preparatory curriculum. A mentor program, exposure to the world outside Bridgeport, small enrollment and parental involvement are key to the school.

Side by Side Community School in Norwalk, pre-kindergarten through 8th grade, is the only charter that includes the nursery school group. The mission is to

create a multiracial environment for urban and suburban children.

Ancestors Community Charter School in Waterbury is a high school for students who have been unable to succeed in a traditional school. Partnerships will provide computer training, cultural programs, health services and internships with businesses and historically black colleges.

Explorations in Winsted, a two-year high school program, will emphasize career exploration, adventure education, video technology, magazine production and culinary arts. **FRANCES CHAMBERLIN** ■

51. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 13NJ; New Jersey Weekly Desk; Page 25, Column 1 Category: Commentary

SOAPBOX

Our Schools

By JON SHURE

THE State Supreme Court ruling that overturned her school finance law was a major policy defeat for Governor Whitman. But that doesn't mean it will be a political setback. This isn't so much about politics as the disconnect between politics and policy. We tend not to debate the great issues in election campaigns; that would be risky.

Besides, most voters probably agree with the Governor and not the court. Who doesn't like to hear that spending more money can't solve severe problems of educational quality, whether it's true or not? So the Governor is in the position of, in effect, saying to the people, "It's you and me against the court."

It is hard to imagine where this ruling will cost Governor Whitman votes, or where it will gain a Democrat votes. First, residents of cities, where the impact of the court ruling is directed, are a declining force in statewide politics, especially as their voting turnout drops in even greater proportion than their population.

Second, while urban voters can be energized as they were in President Clinton's 1996 campaign, it is doubtful that the Democratic candidate for Governor will attempt to do so by launching a campaign based on admitting the need, and proposing the method, for

Thank heaven we don't elect Supreme Court justices in New Jersey, so someone can forget about politics and just try to do

spending far more on schools. Did someone say tax increase?

Well, actually someone did. One Democratic candidate, Michael Murphy, advocates an increase of 25 cents per pack on cigarettes to pay for higher school spending. Give him credit for more boldness than we usually see in campaigns. Then again, a consultant for one of Mr. Murphy's rivals, state Senator James McGreevey, calls Mr. Murphy's idea suicidal.

So, Governor Whitman might get a pass on this, especially if the vibrant state economy brings in enough previously unanticipated tax revenue to plug the new court-created school funding gap for the current year. She has only to get from May to November, promising the people that she will work with them to get this problem fixed in her second term, and challenging her Democratic opponent to stop carping about her court-rejected plan and tell the state what he would do instead — and how to pay for it.

There has never been a candidate for Governor of New Jersey who made school finance reform a campaign centerpiece, or even mentioned it unless pressured to. People say things in campaigns designed to attract wide support. If there were a way to deal with school funding that had the sort of public appeal that makes a good campaign issue, what's right.

About the Author: Jon Shure, who was spokesman for Governor Florio, is

the problem would have been solved a long time ago. The problem is that it's hard, it costs a lot of money, and what works for some people in some places doesn't work for others — or at least they don't perceive that it works because this is an issue that can really be solved only if people come around to the view that we all have to contribute to educate all of New Jersey's children.

This expansive way of looking at the issue — likely to alienate suburban voters who don't want to pay higher taxes to educate urban children — requires more leadership, and more expenditure of political capital, let alone actual money, than the candidates want to spend. It threatens cherished notions (or fantasies) of home rule; it challenges racial attitudes; it forces people away from campaign slogans and easy answers.

While Governor Whitman would have preferred to be able to say she solved the school funding mess, she probably is still mindful of the fact that she had no mandate from the people to fix school funding. She broke no promise. No Governor in New Jersey has ever had a mandate from the public to deal with school finance, because no candidate has ever sought one in the context of an election campaign. The driving force has always come from the courts.

now president of New Jersey Policy Perspectives, a state issues research organization. ■

52. The Washington Post

05/31/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: OP-ED; Page A17 Category: Commentary

FREE FOR ALL

The Kind of Teachers We Need

Two items in The Post [May 21], both dealing with teachers, caught my eye.

The first ["A Math Teacher's Lessons in Division," Style] told of the difficulties Jaime Escalante — glorified in the 1988 film "Stand and Deliver" — encountered when seeking to transfer the success he experienced at one high school in California to another. At the first school, which was predominantly Hispanic, Escalante induced 143 students to take the Advanced Placement calculus test in 1991, of whom 61 percent passed. At the school where he is now teaching, which has a more racially diverse student population, only 37 took the test last year, of whom only 19 percent passed. What do his superiors at the new school say about Escalante and his methods? Several examples, drawn from your article, are cited below:

When Escalante shouted at a boy to

stop banging the head of an adversary against a locker, the principal of the new school scolded him: "We don't yell at kids. It belittles them."

According to the assistant principal, "Many kids don't like [Escalante], and the reason they don't like him is that his expectations are so high."

The other article ["Bogus Bonus Rattles Pr. George's Teachers," Metro] told of the reaction many Prince George's County teachers voiced when told they must return \$400 bonus checks sent to them in error. Educators whose duties include, one would hope, instilling in our children the notion that people should not keep something that does not belong to them, were quoted as follows:

"Whoever made the mistake should eat the loss."

(From a union leader) "Our members were incensed. They couldn't understand

why they couldn't keep the money."

(From another union leader) "It is an absolute travesty. As desperately as our folks need to see some kind of increase, for them to receive that little pittance was wonderful. Then, for the administration to turn around the same day and say, 'Oops, I made a mistake,' I think it's very disheartening."

This collection of statements, made by educators who presume to be role models for our children, is extremely illuminating. It helps explain why so many of today's students emerge from school as poorly educated, in both a moral and academic sense, as they do. Bottom line: We need more teachers like Jaime Escalante and fewer of the other kind.

— Leonard Greenberg ■

53. The New York Times

06/01/97; Edition: Late Edition - Final; Section: Section 4; Week in Review Desk; Page 5, Column 4 Category: Commentary

Professor Knowledge Is Not an Oxymoron

By JAMES STERNGOLD

THE creation of a professorship is usually not a subject of great intellectual debate, but when the trendy University of California at Berkeley recently announced the endowment of a new chair, many academics paused to ponder what post-industrial society was coming to. With a \$1 million grant from the Xerox Corporation and its Japanese affiliate, Berkeley created a Distinguished Professor of Knowledge — at its business school.

Never mind that some professors, particularly professors of philosophy, could not understand what a professor of knowledge knows, or teaches.

"The idea is certainly a little bizarre, ambiguous," said Murat Aydede, an expert in the theory of knowledge at the University of Chicago's philosophy

"Behind this is the recognition that the wealth of nations comes from utilization

department. "What does this mean? Does it mean inquiry into the question of what is knowledge for these businessmen, or does he have some knowledge?"

Fred Dretske, chairman of Stanford University's philosophy department and author of "Knowledge and the Flow of Information" (M.I.T. Press, 1981), said: "I couldn't understand what he could be a professor of. I was sort of baffled by what kind of truth it involves."

Many people at Berkeley were quick to call the first occupant of the new chair, Ikujiro Nonaka, a Japanese management expert, Dr. Know.

But others pressed on to ask what would such a chair be doing at the business school, an institution dedicated to profits, after all, not wisdom or understanding.

"On one level certainly you can say a professor of knowledge is sort of a non of technical know-how, not capital," said David Teece, a business professor at

sequitur because all professors are supposed to be professors of knowledge of one kind or another," said Neil Smelser, a sociologist who is a director at the Center for Advanced Study in Palo Alto. "And this chair looks like it should be in the school of Arts and Sciences. But it does say something interesting that that is thought of as a business subject."

Many academics saw the chair as a statement on how business schools are groping to enhance their role in an economy thriving less and less on the production of things and more on the production of ideas. Academic literature is filled with buzzwords like knowledge-based workers and intellectual capital. There are centers for the study of innovation and entrepreneurship, though many experts say it is almost impossible to teach it.

Berkeley and a pioneer in analyzing what he has called "the market for know-how."

Mr. Nonaka, a graduate of the Berkeley school of business, is famous for a book he co-wrote, "The Knowledge-Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation" (Oxford University Press, 1995). He is expected to teach how corporations can best create

and then use innovative ideas.

In short, the traditional language of dollars and cents has been replaced with a more abstract language that struggles to explain a real brain teaser: What does gainful employment amount to in an economy that places such puzzling values on abstractions, and less value on workers, who have become so casually

expendable.

"The idea of a knowledge-based society, I don't really understand what that can mean," said Bruce Vermazen, chairman of Berkeley's philosophy department. "It makes me a little frightened about the future. I liked it better when we made steel. Knowledge seems like kind of a shaky industry." ■

54. Charleston (WV) Gazette

May 30, 1997 Category: Commentary

Julie Pratt:

Excellence within reach

Positive childhood experiences are keys to success later in life

SARAH AND Bessie Delaney argued that a good life is largely determined by a good upbringing. They should know. Both lived to be over 100 years old, with Sarah still alive at 107.

But their upbringing didn't come easy. Their father was born a slave and emancipated as a young child. He worked hard, went to college and eventually became a minister and educator. He and his wife didn't have much, but their children grew up with the security of being loved and cared for.

The early investment paid off. All 10 of their children attended college and had successful professions. Sarah taught in the New York City public schools her entire career and Bessie was a dentist. I listened to the sisters' memoirs, "Having Our Say: The Delaney Sisters' First Hundred Years," on tape as I drove to a recent conference in Pittsburgh.

Over 300 health and education muckety-mucks were gathering there to talk about the latest research on brain development in young children. In magazines, on television and at the White House, scientists are announcing what the Delaney sisters have known all along: A good life hinges not only on the genes you're born with, but also on positive childhood experiences.

What's interesting about the new research is that it tells us how our upbringing affects our brains. The process is a lot like pruning. A young child has twice as many brain synapses - the connections between brain cells - as he or she will eventually need. The synapses that are used become permanent and the others fall away.

These brain pathways set the stages of The Delaney sisters spent their adult

our lives.

They have a lasting impact on our ability to think and learn, to feel emotions and form relationships. A father's hug or a mother's nursery rhyme help wire a baby's brain for security.

And parents aren't the only electricians. Any consistent, nurturing caregivers, be they grandmothers or day-care providers, can offer young children these same positive experiences that will last a lifetime. But the plasticity of a baby's brain cuts both ways.

Being hungry, ignored or abused also has serious and sustained effects. "Risk is not destiny," the researchers warn, however. Early negative experiences can often be overcome, but at great human and financial cost.

Three decades of early childhood research back up the scientists' claims. Long-term studies show that children who attend quality early childhood programs do better in school, are more likely to graduate, and earn more money as adults. They are less likely to need remedial services later on. This saves society \$7 for each dollar spent through savings on special education, criminal justice, and welfare programs.

Although parents are a child's first and most important teachers, families don't live in a bubble. The Delaney sisters credit their good upbringing not only to their parents, but also to their community.

They remembered the public school teachers who believed in them, the church people who donated clothes, the family doctor who treated their various childhood ailments.

What can the Delaney sisters and the lives being a part of the community of

new brain research teach us? First, we should support public policies that help parents fulfill their most important role.

We need jobs that pay a livable income for families and that provide health insurance. We need family leave policies that allow parents to be with their children at school conferences and doctor appointments.

At the same time, parents can't do the job alone.

They never have! Families have always counted on supportive relatives, friendly neighbors, good schools, knowledgeable family doctors, and a host of community and religious organizations.

No matter how well parents do their job, no family is immune from hard times. Corporate downsizing or a serious car accident can leave any family vulnerable. Finally, we need to rethink our system of public education.

If we believe that it is in the public good to educate our citizens, then we are remiss to not begin earlier. Most European countries provide voluntary public preschool for all 3- and 4-year olds. They offer paid and job-protected maternity or parental leave following childbirth, up to two years in Germany.

They subsidize child care so that it's available and affordable to all parents.

Here in the United States, parents are guaranteed only six weeks of unpaid maternity leave, then face long waiting lists for affordable child care. Most families have to wait until their children are 5 years old before they can count on help from the public school system.

people who nurture children. Sadie often

got the toughest students because she liked them and was good with them. Bessie never turned anyone away from her dental office because they couldn't pay.

"Your job is to help someone," was the Delaney family motto. Sadie and Bessie lived by that creed, to the benefit of the hundreds of children whose lives they touched.

Pratt, former director of the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families, is a new member of the Gazette's contributing columnist group. ■

55. The Boston Globe

June 2, 1997 Category: Commentary

Umass policy makes educational sense

By David K. Scott Chancellor University of Massachusetts Amherst.

The misstatements in professor Paul Hollander's May 26 letter, "UMass-Amherst policies defy common sense," should not go uncorrected. UMass officials did not "cave in" to student protesters. Most of the points of agreement between student protesters and administrators had already been attained, or were in process, before the sit-in.

I have never argued that white staffers are incapable of evaluating nonwhite

applicants. What I do believe is that people of color in the Admissions Office may have better insight into the history of difficulties and inequities that applicants of color have faced.

Our approach is to look closely at all of our applicants to discover students whom we believe can succeed at UMass with appropriate support, even if SAT scores, grade averages and class rank might not predict this success. Evidence of having overcome hardships and barriers in life can serve to identify

students who may - and often do - succeed at UMass.

This policy makes educational and economic sense. In large part it is the responsibility of the Commonwealth's public land-grant institution to prepare an increasingly diverse population for the social and economic demands our society will face in the future. We take all reasonable steps to achieve this goal, including a thorough, multilevel review of applications. ■

56. The Washington Post

06/02/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: Metro; Page B01 Category: Commentary

Sex Ed: It's Not Child's Play

By Steve Twomey

My best friend in eighth grade had older siblings. I didn't. One day we had a heated argument about sex. Using knowledge evidently passed down from his elders, he claimed babies were the result of an act called intercourse, and he described it. I said no way. Nobody would do anything so weird and disgusting. No way.

Of course, that was 1969, long before anything-goes TV, movies and music. Now eighth-graders not only know how babies are made, they make them. So, in a sense, providing sex education to children today is like providing Paris with another cafe. I'd love to bump into a 14-year-old who has as much ignorance as I had at that age, because I'd market him to Ringling Bros. as an oddity.

It is, therefore, something of an adventure to figure out what Virginia Gov. George Allen (R) finds so awful about telling kids the facts of life.

That it'll give them lewd ideas? Too They watch half-hour comedies that drip with sex, yet virtually no character gets pregnant and none contracts AIDS or gonorrhea, Newberry said. As much as

late.

Lead them to perdition? The whole culture does.

That it's too weird and disgusting, to quote myself?

Anyway, on Friday, Allen proposed to the state Board of Education that it abolish mandatory sex education in Virginia's public schools. Local school systems could offer the birds and the bees if they want, Allen said, but the state should not compel them.

The proposal was a terrific sop to the governor's conservative pals, many of whom seem to think sex education teachers are handing out Hustler and telling kids to do it in the road.

To be fair, Allen didn't mention his right-wing buddies as he urged making sex ed optional. His stated reason was to give local systems leeway to free up room in their curricula for more important subjects. It's as if he thinks sex education is nothing more than baking tips or shop. Who, in this day and age, can seriously they need to master multiplication or verb tenses, they need to know that sex has risks, both physical and emotional. They need to know about abstinence and how

argue that sex education ought to be any less mandatory than English and math?

"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that there are some things happening in the world of adolescence, vis-a-vis pregnancy, vis-a-vis sexually transmitted diseases, vis-a-vis HIV," said Jerry Newberry, the former head of the sex education program in the Fairfax County public schools. "We don't have the luxury of ignoring those issues."

Precisely because students now are much more conscious of sex than I was three decades ago, precisely because the culture drowns them in lyrics and scenes that leave no blanks to fill in, they need to know the truth, the whole truth, about sex from trained educators.

Newberry, who now works for the National Education Association, said Friday that too many kids today merely have "street language and street knowledge, which has nothing to do with education."

to say no. They need to know the financial, emotional and spiritual consequences of becoming pregnant or making someone so.

Nearly all of them get that information now, because it's required. End that requirement, Newberry said, and "you set that youth group up for entering a world with a tremendous amount of ignorance and the health implications that follow that."

Under Allen's proposal, sex ed would become a crap shoot. If you're a student who lives in a school system that opts to provide it, you'll learn what you ought to learn. If you're not, tough luck.

Thankfully, most systems would provide it. In fact, a huge majority would. The craziest thing about Allen's proposal is that it tinkers with a subject almost no parent finds objectionable. Under the current mandatory system, parents can demand that their children be excused

from all sex education courses. They merely have to sign a form.

Statewide, 2 percent do.

Two percent.

What Newberry fears is that as time goes on, school systems will start to drop sex education, not because parents object to it, but because the systems will see cancellation as a way to save money on personnel, training and curriculum development during financial squeezes.

And that will leave the job of instruction up to parents.

There's a lot of genuflecting to the wisdom of parents, particularly by those opposed to sex education. But every day brings headlines about parents who beat or neglect their kids and about the hectic, pressured-filled lives of families whose

members no longer have time to talk with each other.

And, Newberry said, "How many average parents know the details of which sexually transmitted diseases are affecting youth and how they're prevented?" How many know how to teach "refusal skills," the art of saying no? And aren't there many who remain uncomfortable talking about sex at all?

So if the school doesn't provide sex instruction, and Mom and Dad either don't have the skills or the will, kids are left with what they pick up on the street, over the airwaves and on the big screen.

And that's no way to get an education. ■

57. USA Today

June 2, 1997 Category: Commentary

Texas' 10% solution valiant but flawed

By Gwen Daye Richardson

The University of Texas Law School has offered just 14 blacks admission next fall, compared with 75 students last year, a drop of 80%. The same percentage drop has occurred at the University of California law schools at Berkeley and Los Angeles. The number of Hispanics admitted in both states also has dropped substantially, although not as much. In the wake of the demise of affirmative action in Texas and California, these staggering numbers are causing more than a little anxiety.

And states are taking action. Last week, Texas Gov. George W. Bush signed a law requiring the state's 35 public universities to accept all Texas high school graduates in the top 10% of their class; it takes effect in 90 days. Since a significant proportion of the estimated 170,000 students who will graduate from Texas high schools this year come from schools that are either majority-black or majority-Hispanic, this measure virtually guarantees admission slots to many minority students.

This represents a valiant effort, but will its impact be any different from that of the policies previously in place? The most obvious pitfall is that because high schools vary so much in terms of their standards and curricula, the education received by the top 10% at one school may be substantially different from that at another.

In fact, Bruce Walker, UT's director of admissions, said the state discontinued a top-10% rule about five years ago because it guaranteed admission to students who weren't prepared academically. "It wasn't working," Walker said. "There's unevenness in K-12 education across the state."

Another pitfall is that some students may be among the top 10% of their graduating class even though they may have eschewed academically rigorous courses, such as chemistry, calculus and advanced English, for "easy" courses like health, life-management skills and physical education.

But if we don't deal with the issue of

minorities' education, children will not be the only losers - states may pay, too. Because Texas and California are the first states to be affected by the elimination of race-based admissions, blacks and Hispanics who are high achievers educationally may decide to attend schools in other states, leading to a minority "brain drain."

Worst of all, as a result of the debate on affirmative action rollbacks, many minorities have a perception that if they don't meet the standards of elite universities, higher education isn't open to them. But it's not true. The U.S. has a multitiered system which admits virtually anyone who wants to go to college.

The larger question is: Why are so many of our public schools failing to adequately educate black students? Unless we can address that issue, we're spinning our wheels.

Gwen Daye Richardson is editor of *Headway* magazine, based in Houston, Texas. ■

EDITORIAL

58. San Diego Union-Tribune

June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

Emphasize proficiency

Education standards are difficult to raise

Gov. Bill Clinton's political resurrection during the 1980s was achieved in large part by his aggressive campaign to upgrade Arkansas' dismal public school system. During his second term as president, Clinton seems no less determined to lead the charge for national education standards.

The standards issue surfaces whenever politicians sense a national unease about how poorly U.S. students are faring when compared with their counterparts around the globe. That unease has been fairly constant since a presidential commission concluded 14 years ago that the nation was at risk because of its mediocre schools.

Clinton's call for voluntary national testing to gauge how students are performing comes as no surprise. After all, he was promoting the same idea as head of the National Governors' Association when George Bush was in the White House. Like many good intentions, however, this one never materialized. But Clinton aims to change

that by combining several existing programs and then gift-wrapping the package with some rhetorical flourishes.

What makes this standards gambit intriguing is its sheer audacity. Most of what Clinton is proposing already exists in one form or another.

He wants to use the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth-grade reading test and eighth-grade math test and adapt them for use by the states. The testing process would be far less extensive than that proposed by Bush during the early 1990s. States that wished to participate could do so, while those opposed to the concept could decline.

The biggest drawback to Clinton's plan is the lowest-common-denominator factor.

Because NAEP tests are basic in nature, we would prefer an exam that places greater emphasis on proficiency. The downside in raising the academic bar, of course, is that some students will not be able to meet the loftier standards.

This would rile educational psychologists as well as many parents.

Consider, for instance, the fate of state Sen. Dede Alpert's bill to strengthen California's high school math, science and English requirements. The Coronado Democrat's common-sense measure was waylaid in the Senate Education Committee and cannot be revived until next year.

Critics worried that more-rigid classroom requirements might discourage low achievers and thus increase the dropout rate. As a result, the measure was shelved, despite widespread calls on both sides of the aisle for tougher standards.

Most Americans support the concept of testing students to see how they stack up against national standards. The challenge is to devise a test that is both academically sound and politically palatable. In light of the competing special-interest groups that have a stake in this process, that will be no small achievement — even for a master pitchman such as Bill Clinton. ■

59. Dallas Morning News

June 1, 1997 Category: Editorial

Hopwood aftermath

Texas must find ways to boost minority enrollment

Everyone in Texas should be concerned about the alarming impact of the Hopwood court decision on minority enrollment at the University of Texas Law School.

Unless a concerted effort is made to counteract the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling, the state may get stuck with a national reputation as being hostile to minority students.

As of last week, only one black college student had accepted admission to the fall term of the UT Law School, the state's largest and highest-ranked law school. Only 12 Hispanic college students had sent in tuition deposits to secure their spots.

The drop stems directly from the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals' 1996

A bill recently signed into law by Gov. George W. Bush will help some. It

decision in Hopwood vs. Texas, which barred consideration of race in the law school's admission process. The year before the Hopwood decision, as many as 30 to 40 black students and between 50 and 65 Hispanic students comprised the 500-member entering law school class.

To make matters worse, the lone black student has since declined the UT Law School offer and is now headed to Cornell Law School. The reason: the pressure of being the class' only black student and the certain media attention of that rarefied status.

Law school officials say there's a glimmer of hope since the admission slots are not completely filled. The remaining 6 percent will be filled from a waiting list. Law school officials hope requires uniform admission policies to apply to applicants who graduate in the

that some black students in the pool will agree to come.

But the officials probably shouldn't hold their breaths. Regrettably, the Hopwood decision has made UT Law School seem like hostile territory to qualified minority students. They are already exercising their options to go to more hospitable climates.

That could prove a stunning setback not only for the Austin law school but for other Texas institutions that are struggling to deal with the ramifications of the Hopwood decision. A de facto quarantine of Texas colleges can only hurt the state.

That's one reason Texas must find ways to offset Hopwood's tragic impact.

top 10 percent of their high school class. Colleges and universities could expand

the pool to include students in the top 25 percent of a class. After that, race-neutral criteria could be the only factors considered.

This approach has several problems, though. Some Texas schools already have used this approach with no appreciable improvement in minority enrollment. The broader admission range also does not apply to Texas graduate schools.

Another option is to challenge the Fifth Circuit's ruling. Two Texas organizations are now considering a suit. They are waiting to see if the U.S. Supreme Court clarifies its position on affirmative action this month.

The high court might address the issue in a case involving a high school which had to reduce its faculty. In choosing between two equally qualified teachers, the district kept a black teacher and dropped a white teacher, who alleged discrimination. The case has some peculiarities, but it could prove a vehicle for establishing clearer ground rules on affirmative action.

Three Texas universities (South

Texas, Texas Wesleyan and St. Mary's) already are protesting Texas Atty. Gen. Dan Morales' interpretation that the Hopwood ruling means that universities cannot even include race in a "basket" of criteria. They are to be commended for trying to find a process that is fair to all students.

Eventually, what's needed is the legal latitude to allow race to be used as part of a basket, or assortment of criteria. The basket might also include family income level, gender, special abilities or disabilities, alumni ties, special interests, geographic distribution and honors - as well as traditional academic measures such as the LSAT scores and academic rankings.

Recent studies have shown that the increasing emphasis on test scores alone perpetuates discrepancies in minority admissions. Racial and ethnic minorities from low-income families tend to score lower than Anglo students. Such tests help indicate whether a student can handle course work. But they are not a sure indicator either of ability or success.

The tests must be part of the process, but should not be the only ranking mechanism.

Until the legal tangle can be sorted out, Texas must do more to boost minority enrollment at its campuses by making more scholarship money available to low-income students both at the undergraduate and graduate level. The state plans to kick in \$10 million for undergraduate students. That may not be adequate. Private foundations and philanthropists also should be searching for ways to provide more scholarships for qualified minority students.

Demographic projections show Texas will soon become a "majority-minority" state. That's another reason higher education must be made more accessible to minorities. If Hopwood's effects go unabated, the best and brightest minority students will leave Texas. Minority students outside Texas will not want to attend the state's institutions, either. Neither result is desirable. ■

60. Dallas Morning News

June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

Unitary status

It is time for Dallas schools to get out of court

Summer is vacation time for Dallas schoolchildren. But it certainly won't be a time of rest and relaxation for school officials and their lawyers.

They have made a strong plea for the Dallas school district to be released from a federal desegregation suit that has dominated education decisions since the early 1970s.

The choice should not be that difficult for U.S. District Judge Barefoot Sanders. He granted the district unitary status in 1994, which basically declares that the Dallas schools are fully integrated.

But Judge Sanders extended federal supervision of the public school system for three more years to see if Dallas school officials could live up to their agreements.

The judge has ample information to

justify closing the desegregation case. The Dallas school district is providing equal education for students throughout the system. Millions of dollars have been invested in new school facilities in predominantly minority neighborhoods in recent years.

The final stumbling block is the court's order that faculties reflect the district's racial makeup. With Anglos comprising less than 14 percent of the student population, Judge Sanders should accept the district's plan to provide mixed-race faculties without a wholesale transfer of teachers.

A quarter-century after the desegregation suit was filed, the Dallas school district still does not have the student population it did in the early 1970s. There are about 155,000 Dallas

students today compared to more than 180,000 in 1970.

It's time for Dallas Superintendent Yvonne Gonzalez and school trustees to work on programs that improve the school system and restore parents' confidence. And it's time to let school officials make these needed educational improvements without always having to look to the federal courts for guidance and approval.

The Dallas school district spends more than \$500,000 a year on court costs and legal fees to operate under federal jurisdiction. That money could be better invested in enrichment programs for the students.

Judge Sanders should release the district. It's the right thing to do for the children. ■

61. Baltimore Sun

June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

Getting serious with school needs

Carroll County: Commissioners were wise to build long-term financing for education.

COMMITTING CARROLL to long-term local financing of school construction, the county commissioners have recognized that state funding will be more problematic and fickle in the future. But it is the only realistic step after years of Carroll's delay in construction, and increased competition from other counties for state money.

Trimming the local piggyback income tax rate by 5 percent lets the commissioners claim they cut taxes. Using bonds to finance school building allows them to spread the cost over 20 years. Holding the property tax rate firm at \$2.62 per \$100 of assessed property value, they modestly increased the operating budget by less than 4 percent.

In all, a rather conservative \$168 million budget was approved by the three

commissioners last week. And well it should be, after significant increases in the piggyback income tax and property tax rates the past two years.

Two new high schools are to be built over the next seven years, in South Carroll and Westminster, paid for by bonds, local revenues and state dollars. Five points of the 55 percent piggyback tax rate will be earmarked for school construction and servicing the bonds.

Both schools, at \$25 million each, need to be built now, but the commissioners balked at that huge upfront cost. Westminster is delayed until a 2003 opening, honoring the school board's wishes. That is probably the biggest mistake in this fiscal plan.

The state has agreed to finance a new Westminster high, per the county's

request, but will not easily transfer that approval to a South Carroll facility. The result could be a loss of state funding for a year or more, because of the Carroll school board's indecision and changing priorities. That is a troubling prospect for Carroll County, regardless of whether South Carroll's school building needs are marginally greater than those of the Westminster area.

Detractors of the budget are angry with the continuation of the piggyback tax. Commissioners raised the rate from 50 percent to 58 percent of the state tax in 1995, promising it would only last six years. Now, by issuing bonds with fixed payments, they make it more difficult for their successors to tinker with the tax rates. But this is a more realistic plan if Carroll hopes to meet its school needs. ■

62. The Washington Post

06/02/97; Edition: FINAL; Section: Editorial; Page A18 Category: Editorial

School Shake-up

THERE'S A reason Prince George's School Superintendent Jerome Clark's shock treatment of six county schools is being received so well. The schools in question consistently were failing to meet state academic standards, to the consternation of the superintendent, county leaders and most important, Prince George's County parents. The decision to require all employees at the two middle schools and four elementary schools — from principals to janitors — to reapply for their jobs and undergo an individual screening process is regarded as an essential step toward weeding out poorly performing instructional and support staff in the six underachieving schools. Other lessons can be drawn from this dramatic action as well.

When it comes to public education, Maryland means business. State officials already have intervened in 50 Baltimore City schools and in two schools in Anne Arundel and Somerset counties. In those

instances, state officials had concluded that the schools were performing so far below acceptable standards and with such a consistency that the state could no longer rely on local officials to get the job done. Superintendent Clark recognized that his schools in Prince George's faced a similar fate, absent action on the county's part to improve the teaching and learning taking place in those classrooms. So he acted before Annapolis stepped in. But there's more significance to the announcement than the possibility or even likelihood of a staff purge. Unlike the District, for instance, Maryland has a set of clear standards against which to measure school performance.

TD The Maryland School Performance Assessment Program test in reading, writing, language usage, mathematics, science and social studies is given to students in the third, fifth and eighth grades. At not one of the six schools did

more than 20 percent of the students meet the state standard. At one school, only 11.1 percent of the students performed up to standard. The schools had other features in common, including high percentages of poor children, uncertified teachers and low percentages of teachers with advanced degrees.

What sets these six schools apart from their counterparts across the line in the District, however, is that Maryland and county school officials are taking direct action against the problem. The six schools will be bolstered with a new team of administrators and educators who will devise special programs to get the students up to speed academically. Parents — essential to the program's success — will be brought into the picture as well. Prince George's has gone beyond the talking and hand-wringing stages. That, perhaps, is the best sign of all. ■

63. Richmond Times-Dispatch

June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

Teaching Up

There may be good news on the education front, according to Arthur Levine, president of Teachers College at Columbia University. He believes a resurgence of idealism among the young is producing a better crop of teachers, as education becomes more a career of choice and less of last resort.

Admittedly, Levine's opinion must be taken with a grain of salt. Teachers College's graduate program is ranked No. 1 by U.S. News and World Report. Consequently, its students and applicants are among the nation's most promising. (Bill Cosby's son Ennis was enrolled at Teachers when he was murdered earlier this year.)

Yet Levine doesn't rely on his own observation; he researches student attitudes. For more than two decades he

has been gathering data and assessing their implications. Today's college students, according to Levine, are less concerned about international unrest. They probably won't react to conflict in Tajikistan the way their parents did to Vietnam. Yet they seem more convinced than earlier generations of the value of individual contributions. More than two-thirds of the students Levine interviewed recently said they participate in service activities. Teaching is a field where many believe (rightly) one person can make a difference. And more and better students, seemingly, are willing to commit.

The women's movement was a tremendous blow to American education. Until they were liberated, most working women were clerks, nurses, and teachers.

So teachers were as likely to be bright and capable as anyone in the general population. But when careers beckoned in medicine, business, and law, women had other options. So while there are wonderful, dedicated teachers still, they are rarer than they used to be. Lamentably, today's education majors generally are among the lowest-ranked students in college classes.

Until that changes, there can be little hope for improvement in education. How can students grasp coherent ideas that are over the heads of some of their teachers? Yet if Levine is right, the future is promising; things may be looking up at last. Few things matter more than education. They who can, should teach. ■

64. San Diego Union-Tribune

June 1, 1997 Category: Editorial

Plug this dangerous gap

Temporary school employees need screening

The recent brutal murder of a high school senior is all the more incomprehensible because it could have been prevented if the government had simply done its job.

Last month, the body of 18-year-old Michelle Montoya was found with a severe head wound and a slit throat in Rio Linda High School's wood shop. The prime suspect in this senseless slaying is Alex Del Thomas, a substitute school janitor who had been employed just a month by the rural Grant Joint Union High School District near Sacramento.

Although not required to do so by state law, the district had requested a criminal background check on Thomas. Had the check been conducted in a timely manner, it would have shown him to be a member of the notorious 107th Street Hoover Crips, a Los Angeles gang, who also had done time in Folsom Prison on a manslaughter conviction. It would have

documented that Thomas was involved in the stick-up of a Los Angeles store that resulted in the killing of a customer; that he copped a plea to avoid the murder rap; and that he did nine months for beating his wife and violating terms of his parole.

It's a sad enough commentary on our porous criminal justice system that this dangerous character was roaming the streets instead of being behind bars where he surely belonged. It's downright disgraceful that someone like this was allowed to work around kids.

Incredible as it may seem, current law does not require criminal background checks on noninstructional, temporary employees. Two Sacramento-area assemblywomen have proposed measures to close this gaping hole in California's public safety network.

Republican Barbara Alby and Democrat Deborah Ortiz would prohibit schools from hiring anyone convicted of

a serious or violent felony. Nor could districts put someone on the job before the state Department of Justice conducts an electronic fingerprint check to determine if the subject has a criminal record. The measure also would require that checks be completed within a couple of days, rather than the current system, which can take a month or longer.

The bungled Thomas background check vividly illustrates the problem. On April 15, the school district fingerprinted him, but the attorney general's office did not receive the prints until May 14, two days prior to Michelle's murder.

Even so, one would expect alarm bells to have sounded, perhaps saving the young woman's life. Instead, we are left to ponder how the state could permit a dangerous criminal to work in close proximity to students. ■

65. Detroit Free Press

June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

TEST SCORES II: What matters most is to learn from

the testing process

Brace yourself for another test-score brouhaha.

Tomorrow is the release date of Michigan High School Proficiency Test results for the Class of 1998's first testing attempt. They apparently will show, at least on a statewide basis, a decline in writing success but improvements in science, math and reading, compared to the Class of 1997's first round of testing.

All of which will prove . . . nothing yet.

This is only the second round of testing; scores can be expected to bounce around simply because it is a different version of the test. Educators will need time to sort out whether some questions yield markedly different results from others. It is impossible at first glance to say whether the changes in scores - up or down - reflect student performance or variations in the test.

Second, an unusually large number of students opted out of these tests; in some districts, such as Birmingham, many of the smartest students stayed home. Parents worried that a "novice" designation (the middle of the three scoring categories) on their children's

transcripts might hurt college prospects.

Parents in some of those districts also suggest that the scores on the 11-hour tests only provide fodder for politicians who want to lambaste public schools and maybe even destroy public education. Unfortunately, if the smart kids stay out of the testing process, the averages are more, not less, likely to provide the kind of ammunition they're seeking.

Gov. John Engler denies emphatically that he wants to trash public schools. But his proposal for state takeovers of school districts, based solely on test scores, has increased fears that testing helps politicians more than kids.

In its most recent version, proposed school accountability legislation leaves out the High School Proficiency Tests as a benchmark. That's probably the ultimate indication that this process needs a much longer track record and improvements before it can serve as an accountability tool. Test scores never should be the single criterion for judging a district.

The new high school tests have had a messy launch. Schools and students have gotten little or no feedback. An appeals

process is just now being put into place.

The state Department of Education can't seem to track how the Class of 1997 did overall on its second and third attempts on the test; eventually, statistics may emerge on what percentage of this year's seniors ended up with endorsements. Some districts are uncertain they have the last word on what endorsement stickers to put on graduates' diplomas.

Every member of the Class of 1997 who took the High School Proficiency Tests deserves a pat on the back at commencement. They were test subjects in more than one sense. They handled a lot of stress - as a group and as individuals - to provide a benchmark for a complicated new process.

The same will be true of the next few classes, until the system is refined. That remains worth the effort, as long as parents and politicians can remember that test results are a tool to benefit all students long-term, and that one set of test scores, in isolation, means almost nothing. ■

66. St. Louis Post-Dispatch

June 2, 1997 Category: Editorial

All Kids Can Learn

Missouri's efforts to improve the performance of its students are being undermined by a group of school superintendents in the southeast part of the state. They want the state to lower the bar of achievement for districts with a high percentage of students from poor families, claiming that such students don't have the opportunity or the ability to learn as well as those from wealthier areas. Their argument is not only wrong, it is pernicious.

Prompting the debate is a new system for accrediting school districts, under the Missouri School Improvement Plan (MSIP). Previously, schools were

In other words, these superintendents are pushing for a cycle of self-fulfilling, self-perpetuating inadequacy. They claim that because their students are poor, their capacity to learn is hampered; because their capacity to learn is hampered, their schools should be held to a lower

evaluated primarily on effort made to teach their children. Now, more emphasis is put on how a district's resources actually are being used, with increased attention to students' scores on tests. As the improvement program progresses, student performance will take on added importance.

That prospect apparently was alarming to superintendents in Southeast Missouri, who formed the Committee for Equitable MSIP Performance Standards. They met in April with officials of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to try to make a dubious point: School districts that have a high concentration of standard; because their schools would be held to a lower standard, neither the schools nor the students would ever be pressed or expected to show much improvement.

The superintendents wouldn't put it like that, of course. They just want the

poverty are at a disadvantage when it comes to meeting the proposed performance standards for students in the state.

Most disturbingly, they drew a doubtful and hurtful link between poverty and ability, contending that many districts with "high concentrations of disadvantaged students are doing a more effective job of enabling their students to perform at a level that approaches their maximum abilities than are some other public school districts with low concentrations of disadvantaged students (emphasis added).

state to take into account the fact that their students start out behind students in more affluent districts. Their students may not have had the preparation for school that wealthier children did, and they may not benefit from the same support at home or the same respect for

learning. Therefore, the superintendents say, they should not be judged by the same standards.

One suggested alternative is to judge students not by where they end up but by how far they travel, relative to where they start. Accreditation decisions would be made not on absolute test scores but on the improvement made from the beginning of one school year to the end. That gauge could be acceptable for a while. But eventually, if the students from poorer families show gains year after year, they should be able to score as

well as students everywhere in the state. Why not set high goals from the start? There should be no need to water down the standards or to lower the expectations.

Robert Bartman, the state's commissioner for elementary and secondary education, feels strongly about keeping the standards high. He expresses his belief in four simple but powerful words: "All kids can learn." He should stick with that position.

A poor socioeconomic level may handicap students when they begin. But

factors in the state school funding formula, plus programs such as Parents as Teachers, help compensate for that start. Every effort must be made to make each student achieve as much as possible; even more important, all boys and girls in Missouri classrooms should feel they have the potential to reach the stars. Superintendents who argue for lower expectations are cheating themselves and their students. They should be models for achievement, not for mediocrity. All children can learn. So should their elders. ■

67. The New York Times

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Segregation Anew

After dismantling affirmative-action programs, the public universities of Texas and California have witnessed ominous declines in black and Latino enrollment, raising fears that universities in these ethnically diverse states could one day become overwhelmingly white. Fearing rejection, many black and Latino students have decided not to apply at all. In addition, educators foresee a new minority "brain drain," as outstanding students who do win acceptance opt for rival states, driven away by fears of racial isolation. The new segregation endangers the social coherence of both Texas and California. Educators and political leaders will need to work vigorously to reopen educational access and avoid long-term division.

Most of the United States is governed by the Supreme Court's Bakke decision, which forbids quotas but permits schools to consider race in admissions decisions. However, Texas and California have eliminated any consideration of race, each for its own reasons. In Texas, the change results from a Federal court decision that threw out an admissions

system with separate procedures and panels for applicants of different races. In California, the rollback results from a 1996 ballot initiative that altered admissions policies. Because they nearly always came from worse schools than whites, black and Latino applicants were frequently admitted with lower test scores. Scores are only one predictor among many, and students often excel despite them. But under the Texas and California plans, race has been eliminated and test scores have been fetishized.

The drop-off in applications has been astounding. In California medical schools, applications from black students have dropped by a quarter and from Latino students by a third over the last two years. The University of Texas Law School, which has produced a large share of minority law graduates, accepted about 65 blacks students in 1996, but only 11 this year. Every one of those 11 opted to go elsewhere, some because of stories about declining minority enrollment.

Michael Sharlot, dean of the University of Texas Law School, says that trend could continue. He warns that a

dearth of minority lawyers in a state that is half minority will undermine confidence in the law and add to racial friction. Mr. Sharlot says outstanding minority students are deciding to bypass Texas, robbing it of a skilled and upwardly mobile minority community.

In Texas, angry legislators have passed a bill requiring universities to accept the top 10 percent of graduates from all state high schools. California has proposed a program to link universities with poor inner-city schools, in an attempt to improve public school instruction. In both states, it is coming home that minority students are being systematically disadvantaged by abysmal and segregated public schools. The states inflict the damage and have a moral obligation to find a remedy.

Meanwhile, college enrollment figures show there is no such thing as a "race neutral" admissions policy. If universities do not take disadvantage into account, many minority students will face the prospect of resegregation in higher education. ■

68. The Hartford Courant

June 1, 1997

Make Sheff legislation count

Important decisions about the future of education for the state's children shouldn't be cobbled together on the fly. Yet the legislature adjourns Wednesday, and negotiations regarding remedies to the Sheff vs. O'Neill school

desegregation lawsuit resemble what one observer called "a tug of war with more than one rope."

No one said it would be easy to establish a comprehensive, muscular policy to ensure that each child gets an

equal and diverse education. But the posturing should end at this late stage.

It was beginning to look as if there would be no progress at all on the Sheff mandate. Even the governor's modest response to recommendations by his

Education Improvement Panel was gutted when the Appropriations Committee declined to fund key parts, most notably school choice. Thankfully, the caucus of African American and Puerto Rican legislators threatened to hold up the budget unless strong strides were made toward improving education and ending racial isolation. Attempts to accommodate the caucus triggered the last-minute scramble.

The result is a well-meaning but token smorgasbord of steps for improving readiness of preschoolers, expanding Head Start, setting up charter schools and intradistrict magnets and specialty schools, increasing the education cost-sharing grants and setting aside money for improvement of educational technology.

Major sticking points - and the meat of the legislation - include interdistrict choice in the form of an expanded Project

Concern, an annual review of school districts to ensure that resources are spent equitably and the obligation of districts to meet racial diversity standards.

City students should be permitted to attend public schools of their choice. Naysayers fear an emptying out of classrooms, leaving behind the worst students and a shortage of state grant money to educate them.

This is naive. Without adequate incentives to accept outsiders, suburban schools near capacity can and will say no. The state should make districts that open their arms to outsiders part of a regional solution by making it financially attractive to participate.

The goal of school choice isn't to strip cities and overload the suburbs. It is to provide a quality education for all, and that means a racially mixed one. Fear of losing state money because of declining enrollment in a city school shouldn't be a

reason to discourage choice; it should be an incentive to improve the school to keep students there.

Strong statutory language should be adopted that would obligate towns to meet reasonable state Board of Education standards for providing a diverse education. As proposed, this requirement would have the same teeth as, say, the Minimum Expenditure Requirement. Towns that failed to make a good-faith effort to diversify would be penalized.

Complying with change of the magnitude suggested by the Supreme Court in its support of Sheff takes courage and money. Legislators must be leaders in charting the course that will make Connecticut schools a model for the nation.

The first steps are the hardest, but they should be straight, sure and headed in the right direction. ■