

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. memo	Political (6 pages)	11/18/1999	Personal Misfile
002. fax	Political (13 pages)	11/19/1999	Personal Misfile
003. briefing paper	Political (20 pages)	ca. 10/1999	Personal Misfile
004. fax	Political (2 pages)	09/21/1999	Personal Misfile

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Bethany Little
OA/Box Number: 18398

FOLDER TITLE:

Miscellaneous [8]

2013-0371-S

ms628

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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MEMORANDUM TO THE VICE PRESIDENT AND ELAINE KAMARCK

FROM: JON SCHNUR
DATE: APRIL 9, 1999
RE: CLASS SIZE INITIATIVE

Elaine asked for a cost estimate of an initiative to reduce average class size to 20 in grades K-12, and for a summary of some of the research on the impact of smaller classes. I have provided this information below, as well as some preliminary ideas for less expensive policy options to reduce class size K-12. I will continue to develop some of these options over the next few days.

BACKGROUND

You have fought hard for the Clinton-Gore Administration proposal to reduce class size in grades one to three to a national average of 18. Congress passed a \$1.2 billion down payment on this proposal last year, appropriating funding to hire approximately 30,000 teachers nationally. The Administration has requested \$1.4 billion this year to hire additional 8,000 teachers. Last month, the Senate rejected a measure by Senators Murray and Kennedy to authorize full funding -- an additional \$11.4 billion -- to hire 100,000 teachers over the next six years. Because you and the Administration have focused both on class size and teacher training/quality, funding levels assume that 15% of this allocation will be used for teacher training and other strategies to improve teacher quality.

Last month, you said that you wanted to reduce class size to 20 in grades K-12.

COST ESTIMATE OF K-12 PROPOSAL

A full-scale expansion of the Administration's class size initiative to all grades would at least \$11 billion annually, once fully phased in. While we could start with a smaller amount -- e.g. \$3-\$4 billion -- and scale up funding to reach an average of 20 over a number of years, it would eventually require at least \$11 billion annually to reach an average class size of 20 in all grades. This is almost 50% larger than the largest existing federal education program (Title I), more than four times as large as full funding for the Administration's current initiative, and about ten times current appropriation levels for class size. This estimate could be low, and I will try to develop a more precise estimate (perhaps as high as \$14 billion) over the next several days.

As I mention below, I do think there are some less expensive options -- structured differently from the Administration's current initiative and providing less robust or universal support for class size reductions. I will develop these options further, but I recommend -- until you have had the opportunity to review other options -- that you avoid saying or suggesting that your initiative would fund every school district's effort to reduce class size in every class in every grade. For the time being, I would recommend continuing to use vaguer language about reducing class size in grades K-12.

CLASS SIZE RESEARCH

A number of studies and evaluations of state or local class size reduction efforts (in Tennessee, Wisconsin, and North Carolina) suggest that students in smaller classes in the early grades have performed better academically than their peers in larger classes. The impact of smaller classes has been higher test scores, lower rates of in-grade retentions, earlier identification of special educational needs, and in some cases even fewer discipline problems. According to one major study, students in smaller classes continue to outperform their peers even after they return to larger classes in the 4th grade -- but the benefits do begin to diminish after several years and the gap between these and other students does begin to narrow. The smaller classes evaluated in most of these studies average from 14 to 18 students.

Because most class size reduction efforts have focused on the early grades, there isn't much research on the impact of state or local efforts to reduce class size in middle or high school. However, one major national study -- "When Money Counts" by the Policy Information Center" -- did use a national sample of 20,000 students 4th and 8th grade students in several hundred school districts across the nation to compare the performance of students in smaller classes with others. The study found those students in classes less than 20 students performed better than students in classes larger than 20 students in both 4th and 8th grades. Gains were larger for 4th graders than for 8th graders -- fourth graders in smaller classes one third of a grade level ahead of their peers in larger classes and 8th graders in smaller classes one eighth a grade level ahead of their peers in larger classes.

While the evidence of class size reductions in the early grades is far stronger than for later grades, I think we can develop a credible argument that two of the most significant class size studies ever conducted do suggest the benefits of smaller classes in later grades. (I do strongly recommend that we run these arguments past a number of educational researchers before using them). . I think we can argue that the "Money Counts" study shows that smaller classes make a difference in 8th grade, and that the Tennessee "STAR" study suggests the benefits of class size reduction in the early grades begin to diminish after students return to larger classes -- and that means we are not fully tapping the investment in class size reduction in the early grades unless we find a way to sustain those gains as students progress through school.

Together, these studies might suggest that we should begin with class size reductions in the early grades, where a strong foundation for reading and other basics is formed, but that academic gains in the early grades must be sustained with class size reductions in later grades. (Indeed, while the evidence of the impact of lower class size in higher grades is weaker than for lower grades, that's probably true for most school reforms and interventions -- probably because it's easier to affect student learning as children are developing a foundation and habits for learning than to reverse educational problems unaddressed early on)

LESS EXPENSIVE OPTIONS FOR REDUCING CLASS SIZE K-12

The above estimate of at least \$11 billion is based on a simple expansion of the Administration's class size reduction effort in the early grades -- i.e. providing financial support for every school district in the nation to pay wages and benefits for teachers to reduce class size. I can further develop a few less expensive options, including:

1) Fund class sizes reduction efforts in the early grades, and then in selected academic subjects and/or grades at higher levels. For example, we could examine research to determine which subject areas in which grade levels are the most vital transition points in shaping later academic success. If we find that middle school classes in reading/language arts and math are particularly important subject areas (or perhaps reading/English classes at all grades), for example, we could develop a proposal for you to support class size reductions in those subjects and grades.

2) Fund class size reduction efforts in the early grades, and then at key subject areas and grade levels identified by states, school districts, or schools. This is similar to option 1, but providing more flexibility for states and local schools. You could tie this proposal to academic standards and accountability by requiring states, school districts, or schools to identify assessments and tests of critical subject areas and use the class size funding to create smaller classes to prepare students for those tests. This would target efforts like Gray Davis' plan to encourage California school districts (using the class size waiver you announced last week) to use federal class size funding to reduce the size of 10th grade reading and math classes to prepare for the high school exit exam he proposed and recently signed into law.

3) Support class size reduction efforts through priorities for new federal funding for school construction and scholarships or bonuses to attract talented people into teaching. While the Administration's current initiative provides funding to actually hire teachers, you could propose that school districts reducing class size to 20 in all or some grades would get a priority for funding in these other areas. This makes some sense, particularly because lack of adequate space and well-prepared teachers are primary barriers to class size reduction -- simply put, you can't reduce class size if you don't have the space for new classrooms or if you can't find a decent teacher to teach the class. This could be tied to an entirely new teacher recruitment initiative and a modified version of the Administration's initiative to build and modernize schools.

4) Target federal funding to communities with the highest percentage of poor students. There are a number of ways to target funding, including a sliding scale of subsidies to districts based on poverty or limiting federal funding to poor school districts or schools.

Clearly, you could combine a number of these options to scale down the cost still further. For example, an initiative could provide funding over time to reduce class size in all grades for high-poverty school districts while funding only selected subject areas and grades in less disadvantaged school districts.

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California School Boards Association

November 23, 1999

Vice President Albert Gore, Jr.
Old Executive Office Building, Room 276
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vice President Gore:

On behalf of the California School Boards Association (CSBA), I would like to request a meeting with you and California education leaders during our annual advocacy visit to Washington. Our visit is scheduled from January 26-28, 2000. **This year our newly appointed federal delegation will have the great pleasure and distinct honor to be joined by California's Secretary for Education Gary Hart and the leadership of the California State Legislature including Assembly Member Kerry Mazzone, Chair of the Assembly Education Committee.** If your schedule permits, we would be honored to meet with you to discuss some of the critical education issues that are a priority to our school districts and will be addressed by Congress in the coming year.

As you may know, CSBA represents the largest public school system in the nation -- serving more than 5 million schoolchildren -- and is the only statewide organization advocating on behalf of California students at the federal level. Last year, our delegation had the honor of meeting with Secretary Riley, Secretary Shalala, General McCaffrey and several top White House aides during our meeting in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. These meetings proved to be mutually beneficial and established a positive foundation between CSBA and key Administration officials.

In the coming year, we anticipate extensive debate on important education programs such as Title I and the e-rate. As you may know, both of these programs are very important to California schools and communities. Title I for instance, provides California's disadvantaged students with almost \$1 billion in funding support. As locally elected officials representing every community in the state, our board members are at the heart of the educational system in local communities; they know better than any other elected official the impact programs like Title I can have on advancing the academic achievement of students.

Title I, coupled with other state and federal programs such as the e-rate, helps school districts ensure all their students make progress in achieving local and state standards. As an organization, CSBA fully recognizes the importance of utilizing innovative and forward thinking approaches to solving many of the complex educational challenges our schools must endure.

3100 Beacon Boulevard
P.O. Box 1660
West Sacramento, CA 95691
(916) 371-4691
FAX (916) 371-2407



Vice President Albert Gore, Jr.
November 23, 1999
Page Two

That is why CSBA has been an ardent supporter of programs such as the e-rate which we believe will not only improve the education of our students, but has the potential to increase their opportunities after their K-12 education is complete. Unfortunately, several programs such as the e-rate have been subject to undue scrutiny and relentless efforts to eliminate or dismantle them.

In the coming year, we expect there will be continued efforts by some in Congress to eliminate or scale back the e-rate program. In California, school districts have spent millions of dollars preparing for the implementation of this program. We recognize your support of this program and applaud your efforts to ensure the implementation the e-rate program and to advance the use of technology in the classroom.

By engaging in a meaningful dialogue with our association's leadership, we hope to provide you with in-depth analysis about critical education issues that will be of tremendous concern to Californians as they move into the next millennium. As you look to the future, CSBA stands ready to assist you in your efforts to ensure that our nation's system of public education is once again the envy of the world.

Thank you for considering our request. If you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment, please have your staff contact Scarlett Vanyi at (916) 371-4691, ext. 3058.

Sincerely,



KEVIN R. GORDON
Assistant Executive Director,
Governmental Relations

KRG:sdv



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
CORRESPONDENCE OFFICE

Phone: (202) 224-2424

To: Bethany Little

From: Rich R

Pages: 3 w/cover

Date: _____

Time: _____

Message:

B:

More fall-out. I sent to Jackie too. Need we respond. We can't get much more complex in noting the Administration's policy than we did. Rich

224-4397



House of Representatives
Lansing, Michigan

BOSE BOGARDUS
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
17TH DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48917
PHONE: (517) 878-5944
FAX: (517) 378-5922
400-781-0097

December 2, 1999

The Honorable Albert Gore
Vice President
United States of America
Old Executive Office Building
17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

I am writing in regards to your letter addressed to State Representative Keith Stallworth (D-Detroit) dated November 29, 1999. It appears that your position on charter schools is being misrepresented by Representative Stallworth.

As the Minority Vice-Chair of the Housing Standing Committee on Education, I am requesting your assistance in clarifying your position. I understand that you support the concept of charter schools, however, our Republican Governor, John Engler, has created a perversion of the concept.

Under the Republican version of charter schools, there has been very little oversight in the management of the schools, resulting in many instances of improper use of public funds. These instances have been documented in two independent studies conducted by Western Michigan University and Public Sector Consultants with MAXIMUS, Inc. According to these studies, the charter schools in Michigan are overwhelmingly being run by private management companies which have found a way to make a profit by only accepting students who are less costly to educate. The charters accept students to obtain the state aid and send them back to traditional public schools after receiving the state funding. The money remains with the charter schools rather than following the student back to the public school. For example, one school district in Huntington Woods, Michigan, was forced to accept 44 students who were previously in charter schools without receiving state aid for those students. These are just a few of the problems faced by our charter school system.

Now our governor is trying to expand the number of charter schools and remove any control of them by our constitutionally elected state Board of Education. His proposal is opposed by every Democrat in the House of Representatives, except for Representative Stallworth. In fact,

several Republicans are also opposing the Governor's plan.

I encourage you to clarify your position on charter schools as soon as possible, as this proposal is likely to be debated before the Michigan House of Representatives within the next week.

I greatly appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rose Bogardus

ROSE BOGARDUS
State Representative
47th District

RB/jh

cc: Rep. Michael Hanley, Democratic House Leader
Rep. Jack Minore

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REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
Saturday, July 10, 1999

I want to thank Sandy Feldman for those kind words. Sandy, I want to thank you for mentioning New York's newest resident, my grandson, Wyatt Gore Schiff – 6 pounds, 3 ounces. He was born on the Fourth of July. That was Wyatt's choice. Clearly, he has a natural gift for timing.

One of the reasons I'm so optimistic about the world my grandson will inherit is that we have people like Sandy leading America into the future. As a young teacher back in the 1960's, Sandy put her life on the line as one of the Freedom Riders – and she's been one of America's leading voices for dignity and justice ever since. I know I speak for everyone here today when I say: thank you, Sandy, for the work you do for America's children.

[Incidentally, it is my understanding that before she was elected president, Sandy faithfully served in the number two-position for two terms...]

[pause]

For more than 80 years now, the AFT has fought for equality and opportunity. Nearly a century ago, when other organizations excluded minorities, the AFT was one of the first to extend full membership to African-Americans. When others fought to uphold segregation in our schools, the AFT helped lead the crusade that led to Brown versus Board of Education. When others said that you simply couldn't organize professionals, the AFT's organizing helped bring dignity to all public sector employees. Along the way, you have helped educate and train more than six generations of American children.

But as we gather here today, we face an important choice: will we take the tough steps that are necessary to renew American education for a new century? Will we lift up our teachers, and make our schools the best in the world?

Together with President Clinton, we have made important progress in the past seven years: higher standards; tougher curricula; greater accountability; and local officials and teachers, like many of you, taking tough action to turn around their schools. From Boston to Chicago to Miami, your work with mayors and administrators to raise standards and improve test scores is proving that the theme of this conference is right: building better schools is union work.

But this much we know: America will not remain first economically if we do not become first educationally. We cannot help every child to learn and dream in overcrowded classrooms, with teachers that are overburdened, and textbooks that are out of date.

It's just this simple: to keep the best GDP, we need the best SAT's.

And at a time when families are under more stress than ever before – with the average two-parent family working almost 500 more hours a year than they did a generation ago – we need schools that welcome parental involvement, and make it easier, not harder, to be a strong

family.

At a time when our culture offers too many of the wrong lessons – a virtual crash course in violence and degradation – we need schools that help parents pass on the right values: good character. Strong discipline. Family and decency.

At a time when our economy is changing, with the information revolution transforming the nature of work, we need schools that prepare our children for the jobs of the future.

And at a time when the generation of young people moving through our schools has just passed the Baby Boom as the largest in American history, we must seize this opportunity to shape a stronger future. Together, as a nation, we must do all we can to make the largest generation in history the best-prepared and best-educated in our history.

This is more than a policy priority for me. Like so many of you, I was raised in a loving family that taught me the value of education.

My father grew up in a place called Possum Hollow, Tennessee. When he was 18, he went to work as a teacher, in a one-room schoolhouse.

He had just three months of college – from Murfreesboro State Teachers College – but that was enough for his students to call him “Professor Gore.” He went on to graduate from teachers college and work his way through night law school. Education was so important to him that he drove two hours each night just to go to class.

I learned the power of education from my mother, too. She was born in a poor, rural part of West Tennessee – a poor girl when poor girls were not supposed to dream. She was determined to work her way through college. She took her blind sister Thelma with her, and took notes and read lessons for both of them. Then she got a loan from the Rotary Club and traveled to Nashville – where she enrolled in law school. She became one of the very first women ever to graduate from Vanderbilt Law School. She still remembers every single teacher she had in elementary and secondary school that had an impact on her. I have no doubt: in 80 years, some of your students will be talking about you exactly the same way.

Tipper and I have tried to pass on those values to our four children. We have one child in law school, one in college, one in high school – and one daughter who graduated from college less than a month ago. Since the day our first child was born, we have seldom missed parent-teacher meetings. I’m not sure if they have grandparent-teacher conferences – but I’m sure we’ll find out soon enough.

Now, together, we must make our schools places of excellence, for all our children. We need truly revolutionary improvement in our public schools. And today, I want to outline the steps that I believe are needed to make our schools second to none.

We should start by rebuilding and modernizing our schools. We can’t lift children up in schools that are practically falling down.

This week, the House Ways and Means Committee is scheduled to vote on our proposal to give local communities \$25 billion in interest-free bonding authority to build more classrooms and more schools. Today, I call on Congress once again: pass our plan to rebuild and modernize America's schools, and give our children the 21st Century classrooms they deserve.

It's also time for Congress to pass our plan to hire 100,000 new teachers, to reduce class size from 22 to 18 in the early grades. Last fall, Congress came together across party lines to reduce class size. But now, some are backing away from that commitment, and trying to gut funding for smaller classes. And that's wrong. All of you know that the more attention you can give a to class, the better they will do. I urge Congress to do the right thing and pass our plan to reduce class sizes in the early grades. Then, we should work to reduce class sizes not just in the early grades, but in all grades.

That is just the beginning. To meet our needs in the 21st Century, we need to go much further – all the way from pre-K to post-B.A.

We must renew education from the earliest days of life. New research confirms what teachers have always known: the right kind of start – through quality pre-school – can lead to higher IQ's, higher reading and achievement levels, higher graduation rates, and greater success in the workplace. So I believe we must make high quality pre-school available to every child, in every family, throughout the entire United States.

Then we must improve teacher quality, and elevate the teaching profession. This whole process must begin with more respect, honor, and appreciation for America's teachers. Teachers have some of the hardest jobs in America. When I see politicians bash our teachers, I have to wonder: how long would they last in a classroom with twenty-five 14-year-olds?

We must give all teachers the smaller classes, modern school buildings, good working conditions, and real role in decision-making they need to succeed.

And we need to raise standards for teachers. Every new teacher should have the mentors and professional support he or she needs to make the transition into teaching. And every new teacher should also have to pass a test before they start teaching, to measure their knowledge of the subject they will teach. Every five years, I believe those skills should be re-evaluated in a fair and honest way.

All teachers should have access to regular training and professional development and visits to the classrooms of master teachers. And while we know that the vast majority of teachers are doing a good job, we also know that some teachers aren't. I agree with many of you: we need faster but fair ways to identify, improve – and when necessary – remove low-performing teachers.

We must do more to reward good teaching. We should treat teachers like professionals – and we should pay them like professionals. I believe we should provide bonuses to master teachers, and those who have become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. We should provide bonuses to all teachers in schools where students have made significant gains consistently measured over time. And we should help teachers, administrators,

and others test new ways of rewarding individual teachers, and groups of teachers, whose students make significant gains, based on valid measures and objective criteria.

We need to attract a new generation of teachers. Earlier this year, I proposed the creation of a new 21st Century Teachers Corps – open to talented young people across the country. Under this plan, if you agree to spend four years teaching in a school that needs your help – and if you pass a rigorous exam before you set foot in the classroom – we'll give you up to \$10,000 to pay for college. And for those willing to switch careers for teaching, we'll give you a \$10,000 bonus and pay for the training you need to get into the classroom. Let's work together to bring even more of the best and brightest in America into our classrooms and into our children's lives.

Consider this: the new student boom means that we will hire 2.2 million new teachers in the next decade. If we set a national goal that every one of those teachers will be tested, trained, skilled in the newest technology, and willing to make teaching a career, we could dramatically improve our schools right away.

Next, I believe we need a renewed focus on discipline, character, the right values, and safety -- and we need more parental involvement in our schools. Columbine served as a wake-up call for all of America -- but school violence has been a problem in too many of our communities for too long. I believe we should double our nation's commitment to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act over the next five years. To keep children out of harm's way in the afternoon hours when most juvenile crime takes place, we need to increase fivefold our commitment to quality after school care.

We should insist on a policy of zero tolerance toward guns and drugs in our schools. And while some are trying to pass new protections for gun manufacturers, to shield them from lawsuits, I believe we must pass new protections for families -- to get the guns off our streets, out of our schools, and away from children and criminals.

Of course, none of our efforts will work if parents do not take more responsibility. We need to teach children right from wrong -- and why the right values transcend a moment's cheap sensation. This is a battle that must be fought one family at a time -- and we must all change our lives to protect our children.

We need an aggressive plan to turn around every failing school in America. There are too many school districts in America where less than half the students graduate, and where those who do graduate aren't ready for college or good jobs. And that should be recognized for what it is: a national emergency. I believe every state and every school district should be required to identify failing schools, and work to turn them around -- with strict accountability for results, and strong incentives for success.

We should be proud that the gap in high school completion between blacks and whites has now been virtually eliminated. But the drop-out rate among Hispanic Americans is far higher -- with barely half finishing high school, and far fewer going on to college. We need to continue our aggressive plan to reduce the Hispanic drop-out rate. And we should challenge every state and school district to cut in half the achievement gap between rich and poor, and between racial and ethnic groups in the next decade.

Finally, we must do more to help parents save for their children's college education, and continue their own education throughout their lifetimes. We must make it easier for parents to save for college tuition tax-free and inflation-free. And we must expand lifelong learning, so that every adult who needs training or retraining can get it.

Many of you have been leading the way to renew education in your own communities. I applaud your efforts -- and I want to work with you, to share the best approaches nationwide.

But we know that in the months ahead, there will be a pitched battle over the future of our schools.

Some will say we should just give up on our public schools -- and drain away the dollars with vouchers. I say: we can't pass the buck when it comes to our public schools; we must fight to make them the best in the world.

Some will exploit the issue of bilingual education for political gain. I believe we must support bilingual education -- for educational gain.

Some will say there should be no national role in improving our schools. I say: education is our number-one national priority. Educational decisions must always be made at the local level, by all of you. But America needs leadership that will keep education at the top of our national agenda.

Some will try to attack our teachers, and tear them down. But I know that teachers are not part of the problem; you are part of the solution. We must do more to honor you, and treat you like the professionals you are.

The quality of our schools, the quality of our teachers, and the quality of the opportunities we provide send a powerful, unspoken message. If we send our children to classrooms that are overcrowded and in disrepair, with low standards and little chance of going to college, then we are saying to our children: you shouldn't care about your education. Because it's obvious that we don't.

But if we make our public schools the finest in the world, and make it possible for everyone to go to college, it sends a very different message. It reaffirms that in America, as John Dewey once said, "education is not just preparation for life -- education is life itself."

For me, there is no higher priority in the years ahead. Let us work together to make our schools the best in the world. Let us create an America where all our children can reach for their dreams. And starting with revolutionary improvements in our public schools, we will build a future that is truly worthy of our children and grandchildren.

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*draft
Don't have
copy of the
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MEMORANDUM:

TO : Judith Heumann
Assistant Secretary, OSERS

DATE: October 4, 1995

FROM : Thomas Hehir
Director, OSEP

SUBJECT: Medicaid

The purpose of this memorandum is to delineate my concerns with the proposed changes Congress is considering concerning the medicaid program. My concerns are informed by my experience prior to my coming to the Department as Associate Superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools where I was responsible for both special education and school health services and by my current role as Director of the Office of Special Education programs. I believe that plans to eliminate the entitlement for medicaid services for poor and disabled students will have a very negative impact on the health status of poor children in general and could be potentially devastating for disabled children and their families both poor and middle class.

I believe the President and the administration should take strong vigorous action to oppose the gutting of the medicaid program. The following is a summary of my analysis of the impact.

(1) Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers

This program (Part H) of IDEA is a voluntary program with the states which provides ~~criticade~~ early intervention services for children who have disabilities or are at risk of disability and their families. Though the program is voluntary, all the states participate. Part H of IDEA pays a small percentage of the cost of the program with services being provided from a variety of sources. One of the main funding sources for the program is Medicaid particularly in poorer states. For instance, Arkansas funds 62% of its early intervention program from Medicaid. Even more affluent states like Mass. rely heavily on Medicaid with 25% of the cost of the program being borne by this funding source. Staff within OSEP believe that without the medicaid entitlement, some states may not choose to fund this program. The result would be that deaf infants would not get a head start on language development, physically disabled infants would not receive therapies which might enable them to walk, and parents would not receive assistance in understanding how to maximize the development of their children with mental retardation. These children will start

school without being ready to learn and they will have missed critical developmental opportunities. Though, some states may indeed opt to fund this program out of the block, others may not. Will we go back to the days when parents of children with significant disabilities or who have chronic medical problems be forced to change residence to receive programs for their children?

(2) Ongoing Support for Families who Have children with significant disabilities or serious medical conditions.

Many children with disabilities, children with chronic health impairments, and children with serious acute illness and their families need in-home services in order to prevent hospital, residential, or institutional care. Poor families as well as many working and middle class families are entitled to these services under medicaid (States can waive income requirements to provide medicaid services for families with very sick or significantly disabled children under what is referred to as Katie Becket waivers instituted by President Reagan in response to a plea by a parent of child with significant health support needs.) The support provided to these children allow families to stay together, parents to work, and children to live in their communities. Absent the entitlement will some states opt for institutional care over in-home care? Would managed care driven plans seek to have school districts pay for expensive residential care options under the IDEA? Will we resurrect the institutions of the past where large numbers of disabled children were kept in deplorable conditions in the name of efficiency? The entitlement to education under IDEA coupled with the entitlement for health services under Medicaid has enabled hundreds of thousands of children to live a life of dignity with the hope of a real future. America can be proud of the fact that we have gone from over 100 thousand children with mental retardation in state institutions in the late sixties to under 6000 today. Federal entitlements created this change.

(3) Providing funding to schools to provide special education related services

Many school districts bill medicaid for special education related services which are also entitlements under EPSDT, (Occupational therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy etc.) These funds help defray the costs of special education. This practice is becoming increasingly widespread particularly in urban and poor districts. Last year Chicago netted 28 million in reimbursement for these services. Without the entitlement for medicaid, there will be little incentive to continue to fund these services because they are largely habilitative not preventive in nature. Further, school districts will continue to be required to fund these services under IDEA so there will be

pressure on school districts to pick up this cost again. I am concerned that resentment over the cost of special education fueled by the low level of federal support (approximately 7% of cost) will become even greater if this happens. Further, The Republican Congress has already denied the President's request for a 3% increase in special education funding and is projecting level funding for the program. The actions of the Republican Congress are making a bad situation for disabled kids much worse. As you know, I have recommended that in the FY 97 budget request that we seek to double the Federal contribution to special education over four years. We should take the lead in improving this situation by fighting the medicaid cuts and seeking to increase IDEA funding. If we do not reverse these actions I believe that the IDEA entitlement might be the next entitlement to go particularly given the likely political pressure caused by the decreased funding support from the Federal government.

(4) School Health Services

When I was Associate Superintendent for the Chicago Public School, I was responsible for school health services in addition to special education. In that role I joined with the Commissioner of Health in implementing an EPSDT program in our schools. The program which started as a pilot has been expanding since I left Chicago. The program has demonstrated that (1) the health status of poor children in the city is very poor, (2) many of the conditions identified in the children had direct impact on their ability to perform in school (untreated ear conditions, untreated asthma etc.) (3) a school based health program can effectively and efficiently address these needs. As you know the Department has been supporting school linked services through our ESEA, goal 2000 and IDEA legislative proposals. Medicaid is envisioned as a major source of support for these programs. I am concerned that absent, the entitlement, many of these efforts will lack the support they need. Given the politics at the state level surrounding the allocation of a block, some inner city school districts, that lack sufficient political clout at the state level, will not have funds to continue these initiatives.

I believe that the Department should inform the White House of the implications that the medicaid loss of the entitlement will have for disabled children, poor children and the school districts that serve them. Personally, I have seen nothing coming out of the 104th Congress which compares to this action in its potential negative impact on children. I believe we as Democrats should aggressively oppose this action. We have made great progress in this country in serving disabled students particularly through the use of strong Federal entitlements. I believe the President, and Secretaries Shalala and Riley should

be speaking out loudly against these actions. By taking such a stand, we will be providing a strong contrast between our values and those of our opponents. I sincerely believe most Americans do not support withdrawing support for disabled children and their families. I also believe that, though we failed in our health reform legislation, that Americans do not want any children to go without necessary health services and would oppose actions that have the potential to do just that.

I will be glad to assist in any way you deem necessary.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

[Handwritten signature]

MEMORANDUM:

TO : Judy Neumann
Assistant Secretary, OSERS

DATE: August 24, 1995

FROM : Tom Nahir *[Handwritten mark]*
Director, OSEP

SUBJECT: Part B Budget Request

The purpose of this memorandum is to make a strong argument for doubling the Part B request in the upcoming FY 97 budget request. I believe that such an action would (1) improve educational opportunities for students with disabilities, (2) improve educational opportunities for non-disabled students, (3) provide an opportunity for the President to make a strong commitment to his goal of investing in education that would be highly likely to be approved by Congress, (4) provide an opportunity for the President to make a highly visible popular action that would impact positively on every school system in the country and thus strengthen his re-election potential. Arguments in support of each of these points follow:

Background

When Congress passed the IDEA 20 years ago it promised to fund up to 40 percent of the excess cost for educating disabled students. The highest amount funded during this 20 year period was approximately 12 percent during the late 70's. Currently, we fund approximately 7 percent of the cost. The predicted FY 96 funding level is approximately 2.3 billion. Though the Federal Government has not lived up to its fiscal promises, we have required that States provide all eligible students with disabilities a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). This has created significant financial burdens for States and local school districts. As you know, the administration has proposed significant changes to the IDEA in our reauthorization bill that will lessen various paperwork and assessment burdens for local school districts and States which will allow resources to be focused on teaching and learning. Our reauthorization proposal has received favorable reviews by both Democrats and Republicans, and these burden reductions are likely to be approved. Therefore, an increase in funding for Part B in combination with our reauthorization proposal has the potential for a powerful positive impact on school districts throughout the country.

(1) Increasing Part B funding will improve educational opportunity for disabled students.

Though money alone will not improve educational options for disabled students, the severe budget constraints under which special education operates often prevent districts from adopting new and innovative practices. Some practices, such as innovative strategies for the inclusion of disabled students in regular classrooms and increased utilization of technology require initial start-up costs which ultimately can prove cost beneficial to school districts. Increasing Part B funds would give districts opportunities to innovate.

Further, I am deeply concerned with the amount of backlash that is occurring throughout the country around the costs of educating children with disabilities. Because school districts are required by Federal law to provide "FAPE" for disabled students, districts have had to forego improvements to the overall education system to pay for the cost of special education. As budgets become tighter in many districts and as Congress cuts back on other federal programs, the potential for increased backlash is increasing. Unless we provide some relief, educational opportunities for disabled students could be diminished. Conversely, an increase in Part B, coupled with our reauthorization proposal, will go a long way to lessening this resentment toward disabled kids, and, thus, increase the likelihood that educational opportunities for disabled students will increase.

(2) Increasing Part B funding can improve educational opportunity for non-disabled students.

Our reauthorization proposal seeks to encourage the use of special education staff within general education classrooms emphasizing the concept that special education should not be viewed as a place but rather as services. We have found that when special education staff work within regular education classrooms disabled children are more appropriately integrated and all children benefit by the extra support and individualization which special education can provide. The increase in Part B funds will increase the likelihood that this innovation will occur.

Beyond the potential for increasing the likelihood of innovation, increasing Part B funding will lessen the resource pressures within school districts and thus benefit all students. As a former Associate Superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools, I am deeply concerned about the proposed cut in the House of the ESEA program. It has been my experience that in resource-starved urban districts that there is one rather inflexible bottom line budget for the school district and the reductions in either state or Federal funding usually cannot be made up from local resources. This proposed cut in ESEA will have a negative impact in urban districts for all students. I believe the

Administration needs to continue its commitment expressed in our reauthorized ESEA, to districts with high poverty. Increasing IDEA funding would be one way to compensate for lost ESEA funds.

(3) An increase in IDEA funding is likely to be approved by Congress.

Unfortunately, due to the control of Congress by the Republicans, many of the Administration's requests for increased investment in education have not been supported in Congress. However, an increase in Part B is highly likely to be supported by the Republicans due to the fact that such an increase will have widespread support within the education community and among governors and State legislators as well as parents. Also, the Republicans, through their reauthorization proposals, have reaffirmed a Federal role in the education of disabled students. They would therefore be in a difficult position opposing this request. Further the Republicans may very well propose increasing funds for IDEA (as some have suggested including Senator Dole) independent of the President's request and at the expense of other Federal education programs. We should take the lead in IDEA action while fighting to preserve the other investments the President wants to make in education.

(4) An increase in Part B would provide a highly visible, non-controversial opportunity for the President to impact positively on every community in the country and thus improve re-election potential.

The increase in funding for IDEA would improve the financial well-being of every school district in the country. As such, it would be highly visible to those who work in schools as well as the general public. There are few opportunities that require such a modest investment that would have such a widespread impact. The increase of 2.4 billion, which doubling IDEA would require, is a relatively small portion of the Federal budget. This investment would provide the President with a concrete opportunity to demonstrate his values. Contrast this with the 6 billion the House wants to increase defense over the President's request during peacetime. The President could use this contrast to his advantage politically. (The IDEA increase benefits kids and local taxpayers and is an investment in the future.)

I request that we meet on this issue and consider appropriate next steps. I believe we should meet directly with the Secretary on this issue so that we can give this request the type of deliberation it will need. Given that we are finalizing our FY 97 request, I believe we need to move quickly.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

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Politics Headlines

Monday October 4 4:24 PM ET

Gore Pledges Special Ed Increase

By HOLLY RAMER Associated Press Writer

PEMBROKE, N.H. (AP) - Vice President Al Gore promised Monday to provide the largest increase ever in federal funding for special education and to veto any budget that does not provide enough education money for all students.

After a quick visit to a rowdy middle school cafeteria, Gore met with about 40 teachers, school board members and parents to announce his six-point plan to improve special education.

School districts across the country have struggled with the cost of educating disabled students as mandated by federal law. The law allows the federal government to contribute up to 40 percent of the states' costs, but it actually pays only 7 percent to 12 percent.

Gore said he "fully embraces" the goal of paying the full 40 percent eventually. For now, funding should be significantly increased, he said, although he did not say by how much.

"As president, in my first budget I will announce the largest increase in special education ever," he said. "It's wrong for parents of children who need special education to be put at odds with parents of children who do not."

At the same time, other students should not be overlooked, Gore said.

"I will veto any budget that does not have adequate funding for all students," he said.

Gore said he wants to create a special fund to help school districts pay for students who need expensive care. He also said more money should go to programs to identify learning disabilities in very young children and to train all teachers to work with special education students.

Gore's plan also involves cutting down on the paperwork that goes along with special education programs.

Ron Clouser, a member of the Pembroke School Board, told Gore his town spends \$2 million of its \$12 million school budget on special education.

"Are you going to fully fund special education before you create new programs? That's where the rubber meets the road down here," he said. "We create and create new programs and we don't fund special education."

Peggy McAllister, president of the New Hampshire School Principals Association, noted that state law prohibits the Legislature from creating unfunded mandates and suggested the federal government do the

same.

Gore paused, then turned the comment back to her.

"You're against discrimination based on race, right?" he said. "Don't you think there ought to be a law against that? There is. But if that could not be enforced without every expense associated with its enforcement being paid for by the federal government, that would be taking it too far, wouldn't it?"

While Gore campaigned in New Hampshire, members of his staff spent Monday preparing to move from Washington to Nashville, where Gore hopes to rejuvenate his campaign by getting "closer to the people."

He emphasized the new strategy at the education meeting.

"This set of proposals comes out of the dialogue I've had with the people of New Hampshire," he said. "This is my response. It is an example of how our democracy is supposed to work: Listen, learn and come up with proposals to form a more perfect union."

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For Immediate Release:
Monday, October 4, 1999

Contact:
(202) 263-6141

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE ANNOUNCES PLAN TO HELP STATES AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Pembroke, NH – During a visit with parents, students and teachers at Three Rivers Middle School today, Vice President Al Gore outlined new steps to help states and school districts provide high quality education for all students, including students with disabilities.

“We must maintain and honor our commitment to providing all our children -- including those with disabilities – a high- quality education,” said Vice President Al Gore. “This nation should be proud that we have opened the doors of public schools to millions of disabled children, and we must continue to remain committed to providing quality education to all of our children. As President, I will remain unalterably supportive of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in order to maintain this fundamental commitment.”

Al Gore emphasized the importance of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which ensures that children with disabilities have access to a free appropriate education and has opened the doors of public schools to children with special needs. Gore announced that he will take the following steps as President to ensure that schools get the support they need to provide quality special education services while also investing in the needs of all children:

Ensure that the federal government helps local school districts by paying its fair share of special education costs.

Gore embraced IDEA, while maintaining his commitment to a balanced budget and making needed investments to strengthen public schools for all children. Gore pledged that his first budget would include an important down payment toward that goal -- the largest-ever federal funding increase in this program, and that he would veto any spending plan that does not include funding to help communities provide a quality public education to all children, including those with disabilities. Al Gore emphasized that we must do this while being fiscally responsible and investing in – rather than shortchanging – other education investments like class size and after school programs.

Defray local school district expenses to educate students with very high-cost special needs. Gore pledged to work with states to establish or expand funding pools to which school districts could apply to help cover the costs of educating the relatively few children with disabilities requiring extraordinarily expensive services
(more)

to attend local public schools. These funding pools would be funded under the IDEA and would be managed by states. These funding pools would help school districts – especially smaller ones – whose regular education budgets or local resources could be imperiled by the exorbitant cost of educating one or a few children with very high-cost special needs.

Fund early identification and intervention efforts. Gore proposed an early identification and intervention fund that would reduce the long term costs of special education by helping school districts adopt proven methods of identifying and assisting children with reading or behavioral problems in kindergarten or 1st grade. Coupled with the universally available preschool and smaller class sizes the Vice President has proposed, this plan will help teachers give students the help they need to succeed early on, and avoid referring them for unnecessary special education services later.

Support teacher training to help all teachers learn how to effectively meet the needs of children with disabilities.

A very high percentage of students with disabilities spend much of their day in regular classrooms, and training both special education and regular teachers to address the needs of these students will ensure a better education for all our children.

Vice President Al Gore also remains committed to helping communities make full use of the 1997 IDEA reauthorization to reduce unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy, while fully addressing the educational needs of children with disabilities.

“I want to bring about change that works for teachers, parents, and all our nation’s children – rich or poor, of any race or ethnicity, with or without a disability,” said Vice President Al Gore, “and I will fight to make sure each and every child receives the quality education they deserve.”

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REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ISSUES FORUM
Monday, October 4, 1999

It's great to be here today at Three Rivers *Middle* School. I just had a chance to meet with Cara Haley and her mother – to tour her classroom, and see some of the wonderful things she's doing.

I'm here today for a simple reason: I want to give every ~~American~~ child -- **rich or poor, of any race or ethnicity, with or without a disability** -- *in America* the best education in the world. I want to swing open the doors of opportunity for every child – and that includes children with special needs.

Let's understand why education is more important than ever before.

EDUCATION: THREE REASONS...

That's why, several months ago, I unveiled a plan to bring truly revolutionary improvements to public education – to make the kinds of changes in education that work for working families.

PRE-SCHOOL (to prepare kids to read well and succeed in school)...REDUCE CLASS SIZES... STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY... DISCIPLINE AND ORDER... **SMALLER SCHOOLS...AFTER SCHOOL...TREAT TEACHERS LIKE PROFESSIONALS... SAVE FOR COLLEGE AND JOB TRAINING TAX-FREE AND INFLATION-FREE**

But you and I know: we need to make special strides to make our education system work for all our children, so no one is left behind.

That is what I want to talk about today – because I believe it's high time for America to **fully** live up to the promise of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act -- to **help communities** meet the needs of children with special needs in a way that works for all our children.

So let me be clear: I am strongly committed to **providing a the idea of** quality education for all. I am proud that this nation has opened the doors of our public schools to millions of disabled children – and honored our commitment to providing education and opportunity for all. **Like all Americans, people with disabilities want a good job to support themselves and their families and contribute to society, and we must make sure they have the education they need to make this possible.**

And let's understand: we don't need to pit **the needs of some students against the needs of other students**, and parents against parents *and teachers against teachers* in a battle of limited resources. As President, **I will work relentlessly to unite all of us behind our common goal of ensuring every child gets the quality education needed to succeed. Achieving this**

goal will require a President who will do more than just talk about education, but who will back that talk up with the specific commitments and investments it takes to make that happen. *I'll make sure we don't.*

First, I believe the federal government should pay its fair share – and do more to help states and school districts provide that education. Our nation has never come close to *paying reaching* the 40 percent goal that Congress set nearly 25 years ago. **I embrace that goal, and believe that we should work more aggressively to meet *it that goal, while increasing -- not skimping on -- our other investments to strengthen our public schools and help all our children learn and succeed.* and as** As President, I'll start by making **a substantial down payment in my first budget** -- the largest-ever increase in funding to help states and communities address the educational needs of children with disabilities.

Second, **this nation has a moral and legal responsibility to educate all our children with disabilities, including the relatively few children who require particularly costly services. These services can stretch the resources of rural and other small school districts. no school should be forced to cut general education because of the cost of educating one or more children with special needs. There are children in our schools whose special needs can cost a lot – and that can stretch the resources of smaller, under-funded school districts.** As President, I will work with **interested** states to establish pools of funding **that school districts could apply to when faced with extraordinarily high costs to help children attend a public school. to help subsidize the costs of educating children with special needs.**

Third, I believe we can do more to **help our children early on** and reduce the costs of special education by reducing the number of children unnecessarily referred to special education **services** in the first place. Our goal is to help children get on the right path and learn to read early, that means more early intervention *in the early years* – and that includes the quality pre-school, high-quality professional development and smaller class sizes I have been fighting for. **As President, I would help school districts invest in proven strategies to identify and address reading and behavioral problems to get kids on the right track and decrease the number of children needlessly referred to special education services. Investing in effective early intervention and teacher training can make enormous differences in the lives of children, while cutting the costs of dealing with these unaddressed needs later.**

Fourth, **I'll help communities make full use of the 1997 IDEA reauthorization to reduce *get rid of* unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy in special education, while fully addressing the educational needs of children with disabilities. This will help more taxpayer dollars go toward teaching children with special needs, and give teachers more time to focus on teaching rather than paperwork.**

Finally, I cannot say this more clearly: if you elect me as your President, I will veto any budget **or tax plan** that shortchanges education for any of our children -- including children with disabilities. *That's why I will lead the fight against vouchers that would take money away from public education and send it to private schools.* **Because of our fiscal responsibility and the hard work of the American people, we have not only balanced the budget while making historic investments in education, but created a surplus as well. This surplus gives us an**

historic opportunity to invest more in all our children while making the federal government a better partner to states and school districts in educating children with disabilities.

Together, we can make real the promise of opportunity for all. **And all means all – we cannot leave any child behind.** Together, we can make our public schools the best in the world. That's the kind of change that works for working families – and it is the kind of change I want to provide.

I know that many of you have been *working on* **close to** this issue for years, and now I'd like to hear from you...