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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. memo	Reforming the American High School (6 pages)	11/18/1999	Personal Misfile
002. email	21st Century National Teacher Corps (10 pages)	11/18/1999	Personal Misfile

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Eric Liu
OA/Box Number: 16240

FOLDER TITLE:

Education - 2000 Ideas

2013-0717-S
sb13

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]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
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P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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AL GORE'S PLAN TO SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

Reforming our schools is an urgent national priority that requires a national strategy. Al Gore knows that no issue is more important to insuring that all Americans can succeed in the global economy. While Al Gore firmly believes that education is a state and local responsibility, he understands that in the new economy education is a national priority that requires national leadership. While some would turn their backs on public schools and others judge reforming schools as an issue not big enough to require national action, Al Gore knows that if America is to succeed in the 21st century, all our children need a world class education.

Al Gore believes if we are going to truly reform our schools, we need to invest more, not less. Vice President Gore is proposing to devote $115 billion of the budget surplus for new education initiatives. But more money is only part of the solution, we also need to demand more from our students, our teachers, and our schools. That is why Al Gore's education plan includes a set of new challenges to increase education performance.

As President, Al Gore would:

Do More for Our Students, Teachers, and Schools

- **Smaller schools and classes:** Research shows that small schools can offer a strong core curriculum and a level of academically advanced courses comparable to large schools. Small schools also have better attendance records, lower dropout rates and fewer discipline problems. Al Gore envisions a new American school - with smaller classes, smaller schools, and more individual attention for each student. He is already fighting to reduce class size to a national average of eighteen students in the early grades, and has set a national goal to reduce the average class size to twenty students in all grades, and providing incentives to create smaller high schools. As President, Al Gore would offer competitive grants to school districts to help them create smaller learning communities using charter schools, schools within schools, career academies, and other innovations that help ensure that every student receives personal attention and support.

  Under the Gore plan, the U.S. Department of Education would make grants to schools or districts that have a strategy to build new, small high schools (less than 600 students), or break up existing schools in innovative ways including autonomous schools-within-schools, career academies or smaller classes. Grant funds could be used for facility renovation, professional development, team building, additional planning days, legal and accounting consulting, supplies or other start-up costs.

- **10,000 More Charter Schools:** Al Gore believes we should triple the number of charter schools available to students. To complement his smaller school and classes initiatives, Al Gore would amend and increase funds for the Charter Schools program by creating additional priorities and investments for small schools, opportunity academies and alternative schools. This would help create schools that are not only smaller, but have other positive characteristics such as a common mission; teacher, parent and student buy-in; and increased autonomy.

- **School Construction:** For students to learn, schools must be well-equipped and able to accommodate smaller class sizes. In 1998, the American Society of civil Engineers said that school buildings represent the nation's most pressing infrastructure need. To address this critical need, Al Gore will fight to pass the Administration's school construction initiative. This proposal would provide federal tax credits as incentives to help states and local school districts to build and renovate public schools. Half of the bond authority will be allocated to the 100 school districts with the largest number of low-income children, and the other half will be allocated to the states.

- **After School:** Al Gore is committed to dramatically increasing funding for the 21st Century Learning Program, which supports the creation and expansion of after school and summer school programs throughout the country. Experts agree that school age children who are unsupervised during the hours after school are far more likely to use alcohol, drugs, and tobacco, commit crimes, receive poor grades, and drop out of school than those who are involved in supervised, constructive activities. The proposal increases the supply of after school care by primarily funding programs that use public school facilities and existing resources. In awarding these new funds, the Department of Education will give priority to school districts that are ending social promotion by requiring that students meet academic standards in order to move to the next grade. This proposal will eventually help roughly up to an additional 2 million children each year participate in after school programs.

- **Teachers Corps/Principals: (Reed and Schnur providing Revised Proposal)**

- **Performance Bonuses For Good Teachers:** In order to close the education gap, the Gore Plan would reward good teachers, with bonuses to master teachers, to teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and to teachers in schools that have shown improved student performance (do we still want in light of teacher corps?)

Demand More from Our Students, Teachers, and Schools

- **High School Exit Exams:** Require all states that participate in the smaller schools and classes initiative to institute a high school exit exam. These exams would be developed by the state, and tied to state standards and accountability systems. Twenty six states now have high school exit exams.

- **Keeping Kids in School:** As President, Al Gore will challenge every state to raise their compulsory school age to 18, and would provide matching grants to help those states that meet this challenge and adopt aggressive, proven strategies to prevent students from dropping out of school.

- **Rigorous tests of knowledge and teaching skills for all new teachers before they enter the classroom and tough standards for licensing or tenure, with evaluations by teams of accomplished teachers and administrators:** According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, one of the most important factors in improving student achievement is the knowledge and skills teachers bring to the classroom. Yet every year, approximately 50,000 individuals teach on "emergency" certificates, which means they do not meet the standards the state has set for certification. In addition, numerous teachers teach subjects for which they lack adequate preparation, with fully one quarter of secondary school teachers lacking even a minor in their main teaching field. Students in schools with the highest levels of poverty – those who often need the most help from the best teachers – are most likely to be in classrooms with teachers who are not fully qualified: for example, in schools with the highest minority enrollment, students have a less than 50 percent chance of having a math or science teacher with a license and degree in the field.

The Gore plan will require states to adopt performance examinations for all new teachers, requiring them to demonstrate both subject matter-knowledge and teaching expertise. The proposal also will require states and school districts to phase-out, over five years, the use of teachers with emergency certificates and the practice of assigning teachers to subjects for which they lack adequate preparation. Finally, to deal with low performing teachers, schools receiving federal aid would be required to contract with teachers for five-years, with continuation based on rigorous peer evaluations.

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Making Preschool Available to Every Child

- Preschool experience is a key investment in school performance, especially for disadvantaged children. Recent studies show better achievement in later school experience, less crime, fewer grade repeats, and less need for special education.

- The most effective programs can save future government expenditures of up to $19,000 per child - after the cost of the preschool experience.

- The best results are achieved with services that start at a young age, target children from disadvantaged homes, and are maintained over time.

- Preschool includes all services to kids under age 5. It can mean a traditional pre-k class in the school system (for 3 or 4 year olds), Head Start, Early Head Start, or an education-oriented child care setting.

- There are 42 states with state funded preschool programs. Only a handful target pre-kindergarten for 4 year olds - and of those only one (Georgia) offers universal access. A dozen or so offer an expanded Head Start program and the rest offer various (and sometimes flexible) programs to children younger than 5.

- State spending on preschool has increased from less than $25 million before 1970, to nearly $2 billion in 1998. These programs served 725,000 children in 1998-1999.

- The per child cost of Head Start is about $5400. This pays for a 9 month, half day program. Some experts have estimated the cost per child of a quality, education-oriented program to be $8000. The cost for younger children is higher.

- In 1975, 37 % of mothers with preschool aged children were in the workforce; today 62 % are. The world has changed - but we haven't changed our child caring infrastructure to meet the needs of families.

- Full day year round options for preschool children are ideal, and after-school (and vacation) care options are needed for older children.

- Long-term multi year programs are preferred to one-year programs for sustained impact.

OPTIONS

1) **Create a universal access, pre-kindergarten program for 4 year olds.**

Assumptions:

Public funds cover 100 % of the cost for all 4 year olds in families below 200 % FPL.

State/Fed 50/50 split.

Cost per slot is the same as Head Start: $5400.

There are slightly less than 1.8 million 4 years olds below 200 % FPL.

About 600,000 of those 4 year olds are in Head Start (after the FY 2000 increase and the increase proposed herein.)

Leaving 1.2 m to cover at a total cost of almost $6.5 b, $3.25 for feds assuming states pay half the cost.

For the remaining 2.1 billion 4 year olds, public funds pays average 50 % of the cost. Thus the federal cost would be $2.9 b.

Total federal cost = 6.15 billion.

Critics will say:

Head Start is inadequately funded for the kind of educationally oriented program we need.

Head Start is only half-day, part year and thus does not meet the needs of working families in the 21st century.

Other issues

State costs: Only a few states have moved to create universal access programs targeted by age; most have designed programs that reach broader age groups. It will be hard to get support for a state match for a narrowly drawn program because most states will either have to shift funds now serving other age groups or find new funding. States will have a long way to go to reach a 50 % match level.

Only five states are serving more than 35,000 children 3 and/or 4 years old: New York (12 - 15 %), California (10-12 %), Illinois (15 - 18 %), Georgia (75 - 80 %), and Texas (20 - 25 %).

However, New York is moving toward universal access and a California task force recommended universal preschool for 3's and 4's.

A maintenance of effort requirement for states like Georgia should be considered.

Setting: A decision will have to be made about whether to require preschool to be inside the school system, or in more diverse (locally identified) settings.

Only 8 (DC, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, New York, Penn., West Virginia, and WI.) states limit a preschool program to school based only and most of these were created before 1985. Today there are more options for location than there were 15 years ago.

Parents are accustomed to choice between school based, community based, and in-home arrangements.

Not all schools will want to provide preschool. A competitive RFP approach was chosen in many places, including Georgia.

Setting Recommendation: Permit flexible settings. A school-based requirement would not be as flexible as most states and parents want. It moves in the wrong direction; we should design the early education program more like charter schools - local decisions, accountability, outcomes based, competitive proposals, etc. There is too much skepticism about the public schools to build on the system at this point. Use the Georgia model - competitive RFP.

Standards: State based or federal standards? Federal standards - with flexibility: States could give programs the choice of meeting one of several sets of standards: Head Start, NAEYC, or state standards (if they exist). All funded programs should meet federal benchmarks/goals.

Cost: $40 billion over 10 years (2001 - 1 b, 2002 - 1.5 b, 2003 - 2.5 b, 2004 - 3.5 b, 2005 4.0 b, 2006 4.5 b, 2007 - 5.0 b, 2008 - 5.5 b, 2009 - 6.0 b, 2010 - 6.5 b.)

OR

2) Early Education Act

A new federal, flexible incentive block grant to build on what states are already doing.

Incentive grants from HHS to states to invest directly into a wide range of programs. These funds would be used as determined by local, community-level decision-makers (including parents), and invested in programs for 0 - 5 year olds. The dollars can also be used to provide training and support to stay-at-home parents. (Like the Clinton-Gore proposal for an Early Learning Fund.)

Three primary purposes:

Expand preschool programs
Expand parent education and consumer awareness
Improve quality (accreditation, training, etc.)

States must provide 50 % match.

Cost: $40 billion over 10 years (2001 - 1 b, 2002 - 1.5 b, 2003 - 2.5 b, 2004 - 3.5 b, 2005 4.0 b, 2006 4.5 b, 2007 - 5.0 b, 2008 - 5.5 b, 2009 - 6.0 b, 2010 - 6.5 b.)

Number of children covered: Hard to determine since cost depends on choices made at the state/local level about where to invest and which kids to cover.

The advantage of the Early Education Act is that it permits states to choose between serving all four year olds or designing other approaches as a down payment on universal preschool for a broader age group while providing services to the most disadvantaged, especially those children 0 - 3. It allows states to build on their existing decisions and investments. It permits the creation of full-day, year-round, multi-year programs that both meet the needs of working parents and are believed to have more long-term success.

3) **Young Children's Teachers Corps**

To reduce the shortage of qualified early education teachers which is a barrier to improving quality and expanding access. The goals of the new corps will be to recruit and retain qualified staff, reduce class size, improve quality of services, promote literacy in young children.

The corps would be built with grants to states (20 % match required) that they would use as stipends to those meeting certain criteria who are trained in literacy and agree to stay in the field for 2 years.

This proposal recognizes the need invest in teachers, training and compensation.

Alternative: Could be a part of the proposed 21st Century Teachers Corps instead.

Cost: 5 billion over 10 years. 2001 - 150 m, 2002 - 200 m, 2003 - 200 m, 2004 - 250 m, 2005 - 250 m, 2006 - 250 m, 2007 - 250 m, 2008 - 250 m, 2009 - 250 m b, 2010 - 450 m.

4) Expand Head Start.

This option presents many of the same issues as a universal school based program. In addition, some critics assert that Head Start needs a stronger educational component.

Head Start reaches mostly children below the poverty level, while higher income children may fill 10 % of the slots.

Recommendation: Head Start expansion as a stand alone, one-note way to create pre-school options for all is not a political winner. There are too many critics of the program and states have been moving in other directions. Mandating Head Start expansion as a way to create universal pre-school will alienate states and parents who have made other choices.

However, some Head Start expansion - especially with a set-aside targeted to the Early Head Start program with its competitive funding model - would guarantee an expansion of services to the youngest age group. In 1998, Early Head Start served only 22,000 children between the ages of 0 and 3. (The FY 2000 budget provides funding for an additional 7,000 children.)

Cost: 5 billion. About 70,000 children for each 500 million. If we expand the program gradually, it could be serving about close to 100,000 in the final year. (Includes the 29,000 already served.)

2001 - 150 m, 2002 - 200 m, 2003 - 200 m, 2004 - 250 m, 2005 - 250 m, 2006 - 250 m, 2007 - 250 m, 2008 - 250 m, 2009 - 250 m b, 2010 - 450 m.

5) CCDBG expansion

To help more poor working families access child care.

This expansion could build on the Administration's last two budget proposals to increase the block grant. Currently the block grant is serving only a little more than 10 % of those eligible under federal guidelines. The expansion should come with a requirement that states make progress toward seamless systems of child care: systems that do not make artificial distinctions between poor working families recently on welfare (who often receive temporary transitional benefits) and other poor working families (who often receive no benefits). Also, seamless systems should not require families leaving welfare for work to reapply, to find a new provider, etc. A seamless system follows the children for as long as the family is poor.

Reaction: With so much TANF funding available to be transferred to the CCDF for working families (since the regs clarified that such support is NOT assistance), there may be resistance to adding funds to the CCDBG. Also, unless the new funding was targeted to 0 - 5, it would not be add exclusively preschool slots since CCDBG can be used for children up to age 13. Unless new standards are created, it might not provide quality slots in an education oriented setting.

It could also be argued that there is such a huge need for additional funds to low-income working families, including care for older kids during out-of school time, that this funding stream should be part of the proposal.

Creating a set-aside in CCDBG for 4 year olds reduces the flexibility the grant was intended to provide.

Recommendation: Deal with child care budget separately. Don't use CCDBG as a way to meet preschool needs.

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Numbers

3 and 4 year olds:

7.9 million

3 and 4 year olds below 150 % of FPL:

2.75 million

3 and 4 year olds below 100 % of FPL:

1.8 million

0-5 below 200 % of FPL:

11.2 million (1996)

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