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Education Agenda Talking Points
September 10, 1999

The Administration has proposed a comprehensive education agenda to improve the performance of public schools. Through his proposal for reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and his current budget proposal, the President has proposed a comprehensive agenda that to improve all public schools:

- **Holding schools accountable for results.** The Education Accountability Act holds states accountable for focusing on student progress and ending social promotion. It would help ensure that students are meeting challenging state standards on a timely basis and that schools and districts provide parents with report cards.
- **Helping states and districts to take steps to turn around failing schools.** The Education Accountability Act would help states and districts turn around low-performing schools by providing funds to states and school districts to restructure failing schools.
- **Enhancing teacher quality and supporting new teachers.** Just this week the President released \$33 million in grants to help improve teacher quality through innovative partnerships at the local level. In addition, he has proposed substantially overhauling and increasing federal support for teacher professional development.
- **Expanding public school choice.** When the President was elected there was 1 charter school; today there are more than 1700. Charter school leaders around the country credit him for this and his strong support for charters schools, accountability and flexibility.
- **Helping build and modernize 6,000 new schools.** The President has proposed a school modernization plan to help state and local districts to build and modernize 6,000 public schools across the country.
- **Creating new extended learning opportunities through after-school and summer school programs.** The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program currently provides safe, enriching, extended learning opportunities to 400,000 students that are important to improving achievement and supporting the needs of working families. The President's budget proposes to expand quadruple the number of children served to 1.5 million.
- **Reducing class size in the earliest grades.** The first 30,000 teachers hired under the President's plan will be teaching in classrooms across the country this fall. Unfortunately some in Congress seek to undermine the President's bipartisan deal, but the President is committed to seeing classes reduced in the earliest grades.

- **The President has offered a balanced budget that invests in education. The Republican tax cut plan could devastate education funding.** For example, under the Republican plan, Pell Grants could be slashed to their lowest levels since 1987, denying low and middle-income students critical financial aid; deny 520,000 children the assistance they need to read; and deny 430,000 kids the chance to participate in Head Start.