

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: BRUCE REED, ELENA KAGAN, MICHAEL COHEN**

**CC: MARY SMITH, WILLIAM KINCAID**

**FROM: TOM FREEDMAN  
JULIE MIKUTA**

**RE: SCHOOL TAKEOVERS**

**DATE: JUNE 9, 1997**

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### **SUMMARY**

State takeovers of financially bankrupt schools have occurred for at least 15 years. In the last 8 years, this power has been expanded to include 'academically bankrupt' schools. Currently, 22 states empower state boards to intervene in districts that underperform academically for an extended period of time. Most state interventions occur in several stages, and some form of takeover is usually applicable after approximately two to three years of low performance. Takeover strategies vary but usually include the reconstitution of the school board, administration, school professional staff, or some combination of these bodies.

### **TAKEOVERS OF 'ACADEMICALLY BANKRUPT' SCHOOLS/ DISTRICTS**

Attached is a state-by-state list of the sanctions that states can take against failing schools, and a summary of actions that have been taken across the country. This list was compiled based on a survey of education journals and newspapers.

| <b>State/<br/>District</b> | <b>Sanctions outlined for failing schools</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Criteria</b>                                                                                      | <b>What they've done/<br/>effectiveness surveys</b>                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AL                         | State takeover of schools or districts possible;<br>parents help develop school improvement plan                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                      | State currently runs 2 districts<br>and Birmingham is on<br>probation                                                                                                                                                                    |
| AR                         | School improvement program administered by state<br>education dept; if insufficient progress, could lose<br>accreditation                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Chicago                    | Schools risk probation; if they fail to measure up<br>after 1 year, district officials have options ranging<br>from firing staff members to shutting down schools<br><br>Schools on probation receive assistance in<br>monitoring management and instruction | 85% of students must score below<br>reading norms on Iowa Tests for<br>school to be put on probation | 109 (out of 554) schools on<br>probation in Oct 96<br><br>of 71 elem schools on<br>probation, math scores<br>improved in 69; reading scores<br>in 54<br><br>37 of 38 high schools<br>improved math scores; 30<br>improved reading scores |
| Cleveland                  | Reconstitution after 3 years of no progress                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | standardized tests, others<br>unnamed                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| CT                         | State can replace local school board                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                      | 6/1/97: takeover of Hartford<br>schools by state; appointed<br>panel runs schools for 3 yrs                                                                                                                                              |

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                            |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Denver  |                                                                                                                                                                                  | Iowa Tests, other tests, parent involvement, number of suspensions, participation in gifted/talented program, building maintenance, allocation of resources | 2/97: School board approved reconstitution of elementary schools based on these criteria                                   |
| FL      | after 3 years of 'school failure', sanctions range from appointment of new principal to state withholding of district funds                                                      | 7 performance goals, including basic reading and math competencies                                                                                          | 1997: Ed Commissioner identified 158 failing schools based on low scores on standardized tests                             |
| GA      | Increased state aid to schools identified as low performers; reconstitution of school officials possible                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                            |
| Houston |                                                                                                                                                                                  | fewer than 20% of students meet test standards; other unnamed criteria                                                                                      | reconstitution of 2 elementary schools; one has done very well<br><br>resources available for schools that need to improve |
| IA      | State board removes accreditation; corrective stages implemented; if no progress, board could merge district, appoint interim administrator or place district under receivership |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                            |
| IL      | After four years on watch list; state may reconstitute staff or reassign students                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                            |

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indianapolis |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | staff and student attendance; assessment on tests; graduation and remediation rates; and amount of contact with parents | 1996: 90% of schools placed on probation or given warning based on these criteria [Ed Wk, 5/22/96]; 4 principals made to reapply for teaching positions; 12 others relocated [Ed Wk 6/12/96] |
| KY           | Schools that meet own achievement goals in 2 years qualify for bonuses; sanctions include state assistance and firing of staff, superintendent and local school board                                                                |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| LA           | 8/96; state panel recommended rewarding high performers and sanctioning low performers after state intervention                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| MA           | Local boards have authority to take over schools with support and technical assistance from state commissioner; districts may reconstitute school staff; current law gives schools 2 year warning, but likely to be made more severe |                                                                                                                         | State has taken over 1 district                                                                                                                                                              |
| MD           | State identifies 'failing schools'; state dept teams audit school; state may order school to be operated by a third party                                                                                                            | low and declining test scores                                                                                           | cash rewards to schools that achieve excellence<br><br>48 schools reconstituted since 1994 (40 of Baltimore's 80 are eligible; 6 schools in Prince George's county reconstituted)            |
| MI           | After 3 years on probation, school may be closed; district must cover incurred expenses                                                                                                                                              | over 80% failure on state proficiency test or if dropout rate exceeds 25%                                               | Debate currently on criteria, not on basic theme                                                                                                                                             |
| Milwaukee    | Reconstitution at discretion of superintendent                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MN | 2/94 Proposed legislation to reconstitute schools after 3 years of low performance                                                                                                                      | performance gap between minority and majority students in these areas: dropout, discipline rates, acad achievement, enrollment in remediation, special ed, and honors classess |                                                                                                                                                |
| MO | Reconstitution of board members possible; local board shall not issue or renew contracts to either superintendents or principals of academically deficient schools for one year                         |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                |
| MS | State can withdraw accreditation; additional funds may be provided to help restore accreditation; interim administrator may override any local board decisions                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                |
| MT | 1/27: Gov Racicot advocated adoption of statewide standards for schools and development of sanctions                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                |
| NC | Assistance teams identify schools as low-performing; reconstitution of school board, and replacement of superintendent and/or principal possible; local board powers suspended                          | student performace on writing and math tests, attendance, college preparation and dropout rate                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                |
| NJ | 1988 law allows for state takeover of schools/ district if they fail to meet state certification standards; reconstitution of local board and superintendent; state takes over for a minimum of 5 years |                                                                                                                                                                                | state takeover of schools in Jersey City and Paterson<br><br>Gov Whitman made 'improving failing schools' central point of social agenda, 1/95 |
| NM | State provides personel to operate any school or district failing to meet state performance standards; until improvements are seen, powers and duties of local board are suspended                      |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NY            | <p>State identifies low performing schools; requires district to develop corrective-action plan</p> <p>Subject to district takeover; principal may be removed</p>                     | <p>minimum competency requirements on math, writing and reading tests, dropout and attendance rates</p> <p>90% of students must pass competency test in 3 years or school is on probation</p> | <p>Schools on list receiving technical assistance and aid</p> <p>Chancellor of NYC schools has taken over 14 schools since 1996</p> |
| OH            | State appoints monitor to oversee educationally deficient districts at district's expense; monitor implements corrective-action plans; no mention of removing board or superintendent |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                     |
| OK            | School identified as 'low performing' after 1-2 years of poor performance; as 'high challenge' after 3 years; state intervention at either level                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                     |
| Philadelphia  | Reconstitution after 3 years of no progress                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                               | Teachers union leading the revamping of 6 schools                                                                                   |
| RI            | <p>working on performance standards</p> <p>plans for state takeover of schools</p>                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                     |
| San Francisco | <p>Reconstitution based on district superintendent decision</p> <p>have had radical closing strategies since 1984</p>                                                                 | attendance, chronic absenteeism, request for student transfers, test scores                                                                                                                   | <p>8 schools reconstituted since 1994</p> <p>flat test scores in reconstituted schools</p>                                          |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                            |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SC | <p>If minimum standards are not met, districts undergo audit; after 6 months of no improvement, state may recommend to governor that superintendent be removed, escrow funds, or provide technical assistance</p> <p>4/96: Proposed legislation to fire principals/ superintendents of low performing schools failed</p>      |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                            |
| TN | <p>since 1992, state can takeover schools on probation for two years; audit conducted internally by state department</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>promotion, dropout and attendance rates; value-added assessment; pass rate on high school exit exam</p> | <p>for each of past 2 years, fewer than 2% schools meet all 5 criteria; no actions taken yet</p> <p>reward high-performers (thousands of dollars each)</p> |
| TX | <p>State publishes list of low performing schools; grants of \$4-5,000 available to parents to transfer kids out of low performing school;</p> <p>if district doesn't improve after 1 year, state may appoint local residents to exercise powers of board; after two years, district can be annexed to adjoining district</p> | <p>Less than 20% pass rate on standardized tests and dropout rate of 25% or over</p>                       | <p>gives \$5,000 to principals of schools that exceed standards</p>                                                                                        |
| VA | <p>Governor's Commission (1996) suggested suspension of school and board leaders of failing schools and barring of students from drivers' ed who don't meet 9th grade standards</p>                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                            |
| WV | <p>If a school is denied accreditation, its district must develop improvement plan; sanctions increase in severity each year of no progress; final stage is potential removal of superintendent</p>                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                            |

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: TOM FREEDMAN**

**FROM: JULIE MIKUTA**

**RE: RESEARCH DONE ON SCHOOL TAKEOVERS**

**DATE: JUNE 9, 1997**

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### **SUMMARY**

Here is an overview of some of the research that's been done on school takeovers. Several sources note the 'dearth of research on the effectiveness' of takeovers.

## **STUDIES BY THE CONSORTIUM FOR POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION**

### ***Takeover and Deregulation: Working Models of New State and Local Regulatory Relationships***

Susan H. Fuhrman and Richard F Elmore

April 1992 (No. RR-024) 37 pp. \$10\*

Focuses on the efforts of states to differentiate regulatory treatment among districts and schools. The paper draws from case studies in four states (KY, NJ, SC, WA) that represent varied approaches to regulation of schooling. The paper focuses mainly on two extremes of differential treatment -- takeover and deregulation.

*Concludes:* "if takeover fails to improve teaching and learning, it is not worth the stigma suffered by school personnel and communities."

### ***Kentucky's Program for Educationally Deficient School Districts: A Case Study***

Patricia Fry, Susan Fuhrman and Richard Elmore

April 1992 (No. TC-005) 30pp. \$7\*

Discusses Kentucky's original educational deficiency program which set minimum performance and reporting criteria and provided for state intervention in non-compliant districts. The case focuses on the development, implementation, and political context of the now defunct program. It draws from state-level interviews and interviews in two districts which experienced takeover.

### ***State Takeover of a Local School District in New Jersey: A Case Study***

Margaret Dolan

April 1992 (No. TC-008) 34 pp., \$7\*

Chronicles the first year of the first implementation of New Jersey's takeover policy for failing school districts. The study describes the monitoring system that can lead to state takeover and the reasons Jersey City was a takeover target. The paper also discusses the work accomplished in the district during the first year of state control and the external forces that had an impact on the takeover operation.

\*The analytical paper and four case studies on state regulation of education are available as a package at a savings of 25 percent. To order the package of five titles listed above for \$28.50, please specify School Regulation Package (Order #PK-002). [Two studies not listed discuss deregulation.] Contact information: 215-573-7000.

The Consortium for Research in Education Policy also did a 50-state survey on accountability in late 1993 and found that 43 states say they're changing their accountability systems, and one of the main features is some type of sanction." [Ed Week, 12/7/94]

## OTHER STUDIES OR COMMENTARY

***Urban Schools: Academic Bankruptcy (4/97) by A. Anderson and A. Lewis of the Education Commission of the States [on the Internet: [www.ecs.org/ecs/252e.htm](http://www.ecs.org/ecs/252e.htm)]***

Provides an overview of academic bankruptcy including: a comparative summary of state takeover positions; the pros and cons of academic bankruptcy and emerging themes from the literature; how three states moved forward with the implementation of their statutes; conclusions and recommendations; and sources of information on academic bankruptcy.

### *Resources mentioned:*

1. "Agreement reached on Baltimore Schools funding and management" in Jan 97: *Commission Connection* by Education Commission of the States
2. "Anatomy of a takeover" in *Education Week*, 3/2/94
3. "Austin High School recovering after reform from hell" in Nov 95 issue of *Catalyst* (journal of Chicago's education reforms)
4. "State takeover of Logan County, West Virginia, has win-win ending" in Sept 96 issues of *Commission Connection* by Education Commission of the States
5. "Takeover: The Paterson story" in Dec 94 edition of *American School Board Journal*; written by man who was state-appointed superintendent of the Paterson, NJ, schools

### ***Education Week, 4/2/97:***

Discusses a study by the Atlanta-based Southern Regional Education Board, which found that only 3 of its 15 member-states do not have sanctions on the books while 6 of the 15 reward positive school performance. In most states, only about 5% of schools have received most severe consequences. The authors of the survey draw some common lessons from states' early experiences with creating accountability systems:

- Get the tests right;
- Ensure sufficient time for planning and make midcourse adjustments;
- Make sure the program is easy to understand; and
- Help educators change.

[Copies of the report are available for \$6 each plus postage and handling from the Southern Regional Education Board, 592 10th St. N.W., Atlanta, GA 30318-5790]

### ***Education Week, March 1997: "Do or Die"*** [about San Francisco's experience with district takeovers]

The article quotes R Elmore, Harvard University professor who has studied school restructuring and believes radical strategies like reconstitution are the wave of the future. "I'd be surprised if we didn't have a version of it everywhere within the next five years," he says. "It's inevitable now that we have standards-based data on student achievement school by school. This will drive people to come up with new systems of accountability."

Elmore admits he finds reconstitution somewhat appealing. "The threat of dismissal is one of the few ways to make principals and teachers truly accountable," he says. Still, he fears the process

will be undertaken far too haphazardly. "If a district is going to reconstitute," he insists, "then it had better make sure schools have ample resources and teachers have sufficient professional-development opportunities. Otherwise, it's just inviting failure."

***Education Week, 6/19/96:***

Gives an overview of problems encountered in state takeovers. These include: lawsuits; bitter media battles; and confused and angry teachers and parents. The article details the conflicts in four districts where takeovers have occurred. It recommends that states give their local managers broad and unequivocal authority, and notes the problems encountered when the takeover ends and displaced administrators or trustees are elected to the school board.

*Mentions study of 'how to prevent districts from backsliding when a takeover ends' being conducted by Peter Contini, an assistant education commissioner in New Jersey.*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** BRUCE REED, ELENA KAGAN, MICHAEL COHEN

**CC:** MARY SMITH, WILLIAM KINCAID

**FROM:** TOM FREEDMAN  
JULIE MIKUTA

**RE:** EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS INTO SCHOOLS

**DATE:** JUNE 12, 1997

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### SUMMARY

Schools or districts that have been taken over, put on probation or reconstituted get mixed reviews. Test scores rarely rise in the first few years of state control. The earliest observable results are seen in the form of reformed fiscal practices, reorganization of management, improvements to site maintenance, and correction of poor record keeping. Districts and states that have recently developed intervention schemes (i.e. Chicago, MD, KY) emphasize improving instructional strategies, whereas older approaches target organizational structure. Attached is an overview of schools/ districts that are seen as improving under state control. There is a lack of research into the effectiveness of these approaches.

### NUMBERS OF FAILING SCHOOLS

**Baltimore:** 50 of the city's 180 schools are eligible for takeover

**Chicago:** 109 of 554 schools on probation due to low test scores

**Michigan:** about 130 districts do not meet current standards

**Florida:** State Education Commissioner identified 158 failing schools based on low scores

**Tennessee:** for each of past 2 years, fewer than 2% of schools meet state criteria

**New York:** State Board of Regents identified 57 failing schools in 1995

**Indianapolis:** 51 of 86 schools placed on probation in 1996 and another 25 issued warnings because failed to meet criteria including attendance, test scores and contact with parents

### SUPPORT FOR TAKEOVERS/ RECONSTITUTION

"[Reconstitution] is a way to radically transform the schools", said *attorney Peter Graham Cohn of the NAACP* [San Francisco]. "The whole concept has placed San Francisco in the forefront of education innovation. It's a clear benefit." [San Fran Examiner, 8/14/96]. [NB: the NAACP opposed transferring control of Cleveland's schools to Mayor White.]

***Richard Elmore, Harvard University professor*** who has studied school restructuring:

- believes radical strategies like reconstitution are the wave of the future: "I'd be surprised if we didn't have a version of it everywhere within the next five years."
  - finds reconstitution somewhat appealing: "The threat of dismissal is one of the few ways to make principals and teachers truly accountable."
  - fears the process will be undertaken far too haphazardly: "If a district is going to reconstitute then it had better make sure schools have ample resources and teachers have sufficient professional-development opportunities. Otherwise, it's just inviting failure."
- [Ed Wk, 3/97]

***Susan Fuhrman, a professor of educational policy at Rutgers University and director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education:***

- the limited research indicates that the threat of sanctions motivates teachers and administrators
- the 'most promising' approaches provide substantial technical assistance and professional development to teachers (e.g. in Chicago, KY and MD)
- the research also says these approaches are costly and that underfunding is a significant obstacle to success

***Ronnie Davis***, spokesperson for NY's United Federation of Teachers, supported Chancellor Crew's plans to intervene in troubled schools, and said the union would support the intervention even if it means replacing the entire school's staff [NYT, 11/1/95]

***Dianne Ravitch (Senior Research Scholar in the School of Education at NYU; Asst Sec of Ed and Counselor to Sec of Ed, 91-93) and Joseph P. Viteritti (Research Prof in the Wagner School of Public Service in NYU)*** advocated putting failing schools in NYC on probation and closing them if they do not improve. [Reforming Education Today, 1995]

## **WORKING GROUP ON SCHOOL RECONSTITUTIONS**

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Pew Foundation for School Improvement co-sponsored a working group meeting this spring. Teachers and administrators involved in this process, state and federal representatives and academics. A follow-up meeting focusing on defining indicators is tentatively planned for this fall.

## **TITLE I FUNDS AND RECONSTITUTION**

Title I funds allow for reconstitution of chronically failing schools. So far, these resources have not been applied, according to the Department of Education which plans to investigate this issue.

## **LEGAL BATTLES**

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has created obstacles for school takeovers. Opponents charge that a state limits the voting rights of a city's racial minorities when it appoints a group to replace the elected school board or when it reduces the local board's powers. A few CA counties, along with

most Southern states, are required by the Act to get Justice Department approval before doing anything that would affect minority voting rights [Ed Week 3/26/97]. In the fall of 1996, Michael Cohen met with officials from TX, CA and NY to discuss this problem.

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** BRUCE REED, ELENA KAGAN, MICHAEL COHEN

**CC:** MARY SMITH, WILLIAM KINCAID

**FROM:** TOM FREEDMAN  
JULIE MIKUTA

**RE:** FURTHER INFORMATION ON INTERVENTIONS INTO SCHOOLS

**DATE:** JUNE 16, 1997

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### SUMMARY

This Administration has encouraged the fixing of failing schools by closing or reconstituting them, or by reopening them as charter schools. This memo discusses: relevant statutes; Administrative support; and supporters/ critics. Attached is an addendum to the previous table on school takeovers; it focuses on where sanctions have been implemented and what the results have been.

### I. RECENT STATUTES: IMPROVING SCHOOLS ACT, 1994 [ESEA]

#### *A. Title I funds [P.L. 103-382]*

Title I is the largest single federal investment in schooling, providing almost \$7 billion to schools systems across the country to improve education for children at risk of school failure who live in low-income communities. It reaches more than 6 million children annually, primarily in the early elementary grades. The reauthorization of Title I in 1994 redesigned the program such that its primary aim is now on helping the targeting children to meet high standards.

Title I funds can be applied to the reconstitution of chronically failing schools. So far, they have not been used in this way, according to the Department of Education which plans to investigate this issue.

Students in schools that receive Title I funds are required to meet challenging state standards. Schools or districts in which students fail to reach these goals for 2 years are required to make improvement plans and submit them to the local educational agency (in case of failing school) or the State (in the case of a district). The local education agency or the state must then provide technical assistance. If the school or district makes limited progress for 3 years, corrective actions may be taken. These include: reconstituting personnel, and (in the case of a failing school) creating a charter school. The State reports its overall strategy on how to aid failing schools to the Federal level; reports of individual schools do not pass from state to federal level.

### ***B. Distinguished Educator [Sec 1117]***

Requires each state to establish a corps of “distinguished educators” who will provide technical assistance to schools and districts farthest from meeting the State’s student performance standards. Kentucky’s program is the model; all of the 53 schools that were assigned a distinguished educator showed improvement by the end of the second year.

## **II. PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT**

### **State of the Union Address**

The Address does not explicitly mention failing schools. However, when the Department of Education expanded each of the 10 parts of education plan outlined in the speech, two components recommend reconstituting or closing failing schools. They both first propose that charter schools replace failing schools in some circumstances.

***President Clinton said: “Every state should adopt high national standards.”***

The Dept of Ed’s elaboration:

- urges holding schools and their states or districts accountable for results
- recommends overhauling or shutting failing schools and allowing charter schools to start over in their place
- encourages states or districts to use authority under reformed Title I program to hold schools accountable

***President Clinton said: “Every state should give parents the power to choose the right public school for their children.”***

- the Dept of Ed’s elaboration: advocates fixing failing schools, by reconstituting or shutting and then reopening them if necessary, or creating new charter schools

### **Secretary Riley’s State of American Education Address (2/18/97)**

Secretary Riley calls fixing failing schools the “first order of business”. Failing schools should be reconstituted or closed if it can’t be changed. He praises the efforts occurring in New York, Chicago, Memphis, Atlanta and San Francisco.

## **III. NON-PROFIT ACTIVITY**

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Pew Foundation for School Improvement co-sponsored a working group meeting this spring. Teachers and administrators involved in this process, state and federal representatives and academics attended. A follow-up meeting focusing on defining indicators is tentatively planned for this fall.

## **IV. LEGAL BATTLES**

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has created obstacles for school takeovers. Opponents charge that a state limits the voting rights of a city’s racial minorities when it appoints a group to replace the elected school board or when it reduces the local board’s powers. A few CA counties, along with most Southern states, are required by the Act to get Justice Department approval before doing anything that

would affect minority voting rights [Ed Week 3/26/97]. In the fall of 1996, Michael Cohen met with officials from TX, CA and NY to discuss this problem.

## V. THE DEBATE

### Proponents of reconstitution or of turning failing schools into charter schools

- **Alveda Celeste King, niece of Martin Luther King, Jr., and head of "Save the Kids, Now!" coalition**, supports empowering parents and teachers to operate their own schools [USA Today, 6/16/97]
- **attorney Peter Graham Cohn of the NAACP** [San Francisco]: "[Reconstitution] is a way to radically transform the schools", said. "The whole concept has placed San Francisco in the forefront of education innovation. It's a clear benefit." [San Fran Examiner, 8/14/96]
- **Ronnie Davis, spokesperson for NY's United Federation of Teachers**: supported Chancellor Crew's plans to intervene in troubled schools, and said the union would support the intervention even if it means replacing the entire school's staff [NYT, 11/1/95]
- **Dianne Ravitch (Asst Sec of Ed Sec of Ed, 91-93; now at the Brookings Institution and NYU) Joseph P. Viteritti (Research Prof in the Wagner School of Public Service in NYU)** advocated putting failing schools in NYC on probation and closing them if they do not improve. [Reforming Education Today, 1995]

### Proponents who qualify their support:

- **Richard Elmore, Harvard University professor**: believes radical strategies like reconstitution are the wave of the future *but* fears the process will be undertaken far too haphazardly: "If a district is going to reconstitute then it had better make sure schools have ample resources and teachers have sufficient professional-development opportunities. Otherwise, it's just inviting failure." [Ed Wk, 3/97]
- **Susan Fuhrman, a professor of educational policy at Rutgers University and director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education**: the limited research indicates that the threat of sanctions motivates teachers and administrators and the 'most promising' approaches provide substantial technical assistance and professional development to teachers (e.g. in Chicago, KY and MD) but the research also says these approaches are costly and that underfunding is a significant obstacle to success

### Opponents

- the **NAACP** opposed transferring control of Cleveland's schools to Mayor White in 1996
- teachers unions across country

### RECONSTITUTION/ PROBATION IN PRACTICE

| PLACE                          | WHAT'S BEEN DONE                                                                                         | TIME | RESULTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | DOWNSIDE                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chicago                        | 109 schools put on probation                                                                             | 1 yr | 1. 69 of 71 elementary schools on probation improved in reading; 54 in math<br>2. 22 schools removed from list of 'eligible for probation'<br>3. 37 of 38 high schools on probation improved in math; 30 in reading [Chic Trib 5/23/97]                                                                   | 1. Chicago schools' scores still lowest in state<br>2. improved test scores haven't always been enough to remove school from probation<br>3. improvements not uniform across grade level and subject |
| San Francisco                  | 8 schools reconstituted since 1994; approx 10% staff rehired at same school (others rehired in district) | 3 yr | 1. After 1 yr of reconstitution: 3 of 4 middle & high schools showed gains in test scores [SF Chronicle 5/10/95]<br>2. Superintendent agreed to stop reconstituting schools if teachers' union pledged to not interfere with forced transfer of teachers who 'impede school improvemt plans' [Ed Wk 5/97] | Hostility is high among teachers in district                                                                                                                                                         |
| Baltimore's Furman Elem School | Reorganized by state, 1995                                                                               | 2 yr | 1. In 1994, 9.2% students met state statndards; in 1996, 26.2%<br>2. Programs introduced: homework hot line, intensive staff development, new academic programs [W Post 6/6/97]                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## RECONSTITUTION/ PROBATION IN PRACTICE

|                  |                                                                                                                        |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jersey City, NJ  | state control since 1989; school board replaced, new superintendent hired                                              | 8 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Costly administrative mistakes cleared</li> <li>2. Schools and grounds cleaned and renovated</li> <li>3. All principals evaluated</li> <li>4. New textbooks purchased</li> <li>5. Teachers denied raises or dismissed</li> <li>6. # attending all day kindergarten rose from 375 to 1270</li> <li>7. After 7 yrs = moderate rise in scores</li> <li>8. Arthur Andersen audit ('93) found 'significant progress'</li> </ol> | Some teachers report seeing no changes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| KY               | State identifies schools 'in decline' and assigns a 'distinguished educator' (previous teacher or principal) to school | 2 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 53 schools identified showed improvement by end of second year.</li> <li>2. Financial bonuses to successful schools</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1. Costly: \$110,000/ yr per Distinguished Educator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Paterson, NJ     | State control since 1991                                                                                               | 6 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Slight rise in test scores</li> <li>2. Arther Andersen audit ('94) found 'improved learning environment'</li> <li>3. Parents praise changes</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Andersen audit cited improvements needed in scores and maintenance</li> <li>2. In first election, 3 of state's appointees ousted/ 2 replaced by pre-reconstitution individuals</li> <li>3. Criticized for lack of attention to learning program</li> </ol> |
| Logan County, WV | State appointed new superintendent/ reduced powers of board in 1992; relinquished control in 1996 [Ed Wk 9/18/96]      | 2 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Test scores rose from 50th to 69th percentile</li> <li>2. Attendance rose to over 90% in all schools (was below in 6 of 23 schools)</li> <li>3. Dropout rate fell from 19.6 to 13.2%</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: TOM FREEDMAN**

**FROM: JULIE MIKUTA**

**RE: CHICAGO AND RECONSTITUTION OF ITS SCHOOLS**

**DATE: JUNE 17, 1997**

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### SUMMARY

In 1988, Chicago had the reputation of having the country's worst schools. Systematic reforms started in 1989 have recently led to the reconstitution of 7 high schools for next year. The reform have addressed local school governance, setting challenging standards for students, and improving its teacher development program. This memo summarizes the plans for reconstitution.

### RECONSTITUTION

#### *What it is in Chicago*

- all employees at the 7 high schools must reapply for their jobs
- district administration will remove principals of some schools

#### *Who it affects*

- so far, estimates of the numbers of teachers that will not be rehired range from 5 - 20%
- employees not rehired will remain on payroll while looking elsewhere; they have 2 years before they will be laid off, although the Superintendent might shorten this time
- there are approximately 700 teachers and 300-400 other employees at the 7 schools
- so far, the teachers' union has been fairly supportive of Mayor Daley's reforms; there has been some dissatisfaction over this issue

#### *Where it will happen*

- these are the schools: DuSable, Englewood, Harper, Martin Luther King, Phillips, Orr, Robeson

#### *When it will occur*

- the plan requires approval of district's appointed board of trustees
- no date has been set for the rehiring process

## **STUDIES BY THE CONSORTIUM FOR POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION**

### ***Takeover and Deregulation: Working Models of New State and Local Regulatory Relationships***

Susan H. Fuhrman and Richard F Elmore

April 1992 (No. RR-024) 37 pp. \$10\*

Focuses on the efforts of states to differentiate regulatory treatment among districts and schools. The paper draws from case studies in four states (KY, NJ, SC, WA) that represent varied approaches to regulation of schooling. The paper focuses mainly on two extremes of differential treatment -- takeover and deregulation.

*Concludes:* "if takeover fails to improve teaching and learning, it is not worth the stigma suffered by school personnel and communities."

### ***Kentucky's Program for Educationally Deficient School Districts: A Case Study***

Patricia Fry, Susan Fuhrman and Richard Elmore

April 1992 (No. TC-005) 30pp. \$7\*

Discusses Kentucky's original educational deficiency program which set minimum performance and reporting criteria and provided for state intervention in non-compliant districts. The case focuses on the development, implementation, and political context of the now defunct program. It draws from state-level interviews and interviews in two districts which experienced takeover.

### ***State Takeover of a Local School District in New Jersey: A Case Study***

Margaret Dolan

April 1992 (No. TC-008) 34 pp., \$7\*

Chronicles the first year of the first implementation of New Jersey's takeover policy for failing school districts. The study describes the monitoring system that can lead to state takeover and the reasons Jersey City was a takeover target. The paper also discusses the work accomplished in the district during the first year of state control and the external forces that had an impact on the takeover operation.

\*The analytical paper and four case studies on state regulation of education are available as a package at a savings of 25 percent. To order the package of five titles listed above for \$28.50, please specify School Regulation Package (Order #PK-002). [Two studies not listed discuss deregulation.] Contact information: 215-573-7000.

The Consortium for Research in Education Policy also did a 50-state survey on accountability in late 1993 and found that 43 states say they're changing their accountability systems, and one of the main features is some type of sanction." [Ed Week, 12/7/94]

## OTHER STUDIES OR COMMENTARY

***Urban Schools: Academic Bankruptcy (4/97) by A. Anderson and A. Lewis of the Education Commission of the States*** [on the Internet: [www.ecs.org/ecs/252e.htm](http://www.ecs.org/ecs/252e.htm)]

Provides an overview of academic bankruptcy including: a comparative summary of state takeover positions; the pros and cons of academic bankruptcy and emerging themes from the literature; how three states moved forward with the implementation of their statutes; conclusions and recommendations; and sources of information on academic bankruptcy.

### *Resources mentioned:*

1. "Agreement reached on Baltimore Schools funding and management" in Jan 97: *Commission Connection* by Education Commission of the States
2. "Anatomy of a takeover" in *Education Week*, 3/2/94 → ✓ *this*
3. "Austin High School recovering after reform from hell" in Nov 95 issue of *Catalyst* (journal of Chicago's education reforms)
4. "State takeover of Logan County, West Virginia, has win-win ending" in Sept 96 issues of *Commission Connection* by Education Commission of the States ✓ *this out.*
5. "Takeover: The Paterson story" in Dec 94 edition of *American School Board Journal*; written by man who was state-appointed superintendent of the Paterson, NJ, schools

### ***Education Week, 4/2/97:***

Discusses a study by the Atlanta-based Southern Regional Education Board, which found that only 3 of its 15 member-states do not have sanctions on the books while 6 of the 15 reward positive school performance. In most states, only about 5% of schools have received most severe consequences. The authors of the survey draw some common lessons from states' early experiences with creating accountability systems:

- Get the tests right;
- Ensure sufficient time for planning and make midcourse adjustments;
- Make sure the program is easy to understand; and
- Help educators change.

[Copies of the report are available for \$6 each plus postage and handling from the Southern Regional Education Board, 592 10th St. N.W., Atlanta, GA 30318-5790]

### ***Education Week, March 1997: "Do or Die"*** [about San Francisco's experience with district takeovers]

The article quotes R Elmore, Harvard University professor who has studied school restructuring and believes radical strategies like reconstitution are the wave of the future. "I'd be surprised if we didn't have a version of it everywhere within the next five years," he says. "It's inevitable now that we have standards-based data on student achievement school by school. This will drive people to come up with new systems of accountability."

Elmore admits he finds reconstitution somewhat appealing. "The threat of dismissal is one of the few ways to make principals and teachers truly accountable," he says. Still, he fears the process

will be undertaken far too haphazardly. "If a district is going to reconstitute," he insists, "then it had better make sure schools have ample resources and teachers have sufficient professional-development opportunities. Otherwise, it's just inviting failure."

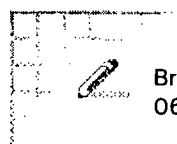
***Education Week, 6/19/96:***

Gives an overview of problems encountered in state takeovers. These include: lawsuits; bitter media battles; and confused and angry teachers and parents. The article details the conflicts in four districts where takeovers have occurred. It recommends that states give their local managers broad and unequivocal authority, and notes the problems encountered when the takeover ends and displaced administrators or trustees are elected to the school board.

*Mentions study of 'how to prevent districts from backsliding when a takeover ends' being conducted by Peter Contini, an assistant education commissioner in New Jersey.*

②

*attached*



Bruce N. Reed  
06/09/97 11:53:48 AM

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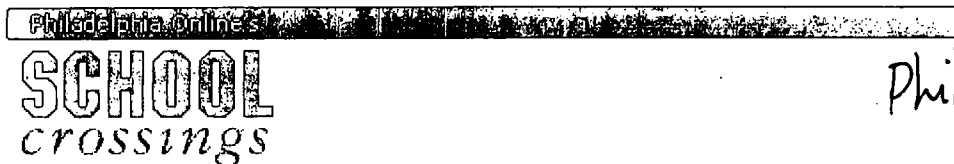
To: Thomas L. Freedman/OPD/EOP, Mary L. Smith/OPD/EOP

cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP, William R. Kincaid/OPD/EOP

Subject: School Takeovers

Your survey of school takeovers was very interesting. Is it possible for DoEd to do a more complete review? There must be SOMETHING we can do to encourage this trend. If we can't agree on a legislative proposal, perhaps we should handle it like school uniforms: release a survey of what's going on, and issue guidelines on how to shut down failing schools.

Do we have any authority under Title I performance to require states to tell us how they're going to close / reconstitute failing schools? Are there any legal or federal barriers that keep states from doing this kind of thing?



Philly reconstitution

## HORNBECK'S FIX FOR TWO AILING SCHOOLS: NEW FACULTIES

*The Phila. schools chief wants to transfer three-fourths of the faculties at Olney and Audenreid. The plan drew immediate flak.*

By Darrell Dawsey and Dale Mezzacappa  
INQUIRER STAFF WRITERS

In a bold move to make teachers accountable for student performance, School Superintendent David Hornbeck said yesterday he would clean house at two of Philadelphia's lowest-performing high schools, transferring three-fourths of the faculty.

At least 150 of the 200 faculty members at Olney and Audenreid High Schools will be sent to new assignments next school year as part of Hornbeck's effort to boost academic performance at the schools, he said.

In an unprecedented action that drew sharp criticism from the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, Hornbeck invoked the so-called "Keystone schools" provision in the current teachers' contract, which allows the district to replace 75 percent of a school's faculty if student achievement falls below a standard set by the district.

Hornbeck said that chronic underachievement at Olney and Audenreid, along with a lack of teamwork among teachers and administrators, were forcing him to take action.

PFT president Ted Kirsch immediately threatened legal action, saying that Hornbeck had designated the two schools without consulting the union - a violation of the contract.

"We are considering legal action because we believe the superintendent has violated the contract by not meeting with us to set up criteria," Kirsch said yesterday afternoon. "Why Olney? Why Audenreid? That's the question everybody's asking. How did you pick these schools?"

Hornbeck has spent most of his tenure waging a mostly solitary battle to reinvent the nation's fourth largest public school system, based on principles of decentralization, teacher accountability, and thrift. His action yesterday caught many school officials by surprise.

Kirsch denounced Hornbeck's action as "unfair." He said he wasn't informed of the decision until yesterday morning, only hours before Hornbeck's announcement, although rumors had been flying for weeks that Hornbeck was intending to invoke the Keystone clause and "reconstitute" two high schools.

"We were not consulted. That is a problem for us," Kirsch said.

Kirsch would not say whether the union would encourage teachers to apply to teach in the new faculties.

Hornbeck's critics on the school board also said they weren't properly consulted before he

made such a dramatic step. "The board was informed of the superintendent's decision in a 20-minute meeting" yesterday, said board member Jacques Lurie.

He said his key question was, "Where does this address the parental piece, the student piece? It's not only a staff that makes a school fail; there are community responsibilities as well."

Board president Floyd Alston said he supported Hornbeck. "We are moving ahead with the Keystone schools, an aggressive move to begin to attack some of the serious problems in our schools," he said. "We're moving ahead with plans to bring the academic achievement of our children to the level it should be."

The teachers who leave the two schools will be treated as "forced transfers," able to fill vacancies at other schools according to their seniority. They cannot bump less senior teachers at other schools out of their jobs.

#### THEY COULD SWAP PLACES

If no vacancies exist in the transferred teacher's field, he or she can be put on "special assignment," which could mean temporarily filling in for another teacher until a permanent vacancy opens up. It is possible that teachers from Olney, at Front and Duncannon Streets, will be assigned to Audenried, in the Grays Ferry section, and vice versa.

Mayor Rendell endorsed Hornbeck's plan.

"The mayor believes that, although this is certainly a difficult step, and one that is likely to cause some controversy, if you believe in accountability, particularly in the accountability of the individual school, then this is absolutely a necessary step," said spokesman Kevin Feeley.

Speaking at a news conference at the school administration building at 21st Street and Ben Franklin Parkway, Hornbeck insisted that the "Keystone schools" designation was not an attempt to punish Olney and Audenried teachers. He said no teacher would be fired and those transferred would be moved into vacancies elsewhere in the district's 257 schools.

"To declare a school to be a Keystone school is not to declare that all of the staff is incompetent," said Hornbeck, who met yesterday with teachers, students and activists at the schools before making his announcement. "The Keystone process is not for determining competence."

#### FAILING REPORT CARD

But, he added, something has to be done to turn around performance at the schools. The individual school "report cards" issued by Hornbeck last month showed that at Audenried, not a single student could read or compute at a level the district considered proficient or advanced, and that only 2.2 percent performed at even a basic level in the Stanford Achievement Test administered to 11th graders. In math, no student scored at even the "basic" level, according to the report card.

Furthermore, 62.2 percent of 11th graders at Audenried did not even take the reading exam and 71.1 percent failed to take the math portion of the test, the report said.

At Olney, only 4.6 percent of 11th graders could read at the basic level and another 0.2 percent - probably just one or two students - attained a "proficient" score. In math, no students were proficient or advanced, and 1.5 percent scored in the basic range. All the rest were "below basic." Again, most students weren't even tested: 51.9 percent in reading and 68.7 percent in math.

Attendance also was poor. Only 12 percent of the 2,750 students at Olney attend more than 85 percent of the time. Olney suffers in the area of staff attendance, with one in 10 teachers

Stats  
on  
schools

missing 15 percent of the school year and only half attending at least 95 percent of the time.

At Audenried, more than half the school's 650 students miss at least one day out of four. Thirteen percent of the faculty is described as "low attenders," missing school more than 15 percent of the time. In his meeting with Audenried teachers, Hornbeck cited low attendance as one reason for targeting the school.

At the news conference, he also pointed out that only 21.9 percent of the freshmen at Audenried earn diplomas within four years. At Olney, 31.6 percent of the freshman graduate after four years.

But teachers at the schools said factors more significant than their performance - including poverty and family breakdown - contribute to students' classroom woes.

"There are lots of problems: students disrupting class, students arriving in high school with low skill levels," said a veteran Olney teacher who spoke on condition of anonymity. "Olney is a comprehensive school that must take anyone who lives in the neighborhood. Plus it's a high school. That's the last leg for these kids. Why not start this [reform effort] earlier in their education?"

Under the teachers' contract, any school designated a Keystone school must develop a Comprehensive Educational Renewal Plan by a committee. The committee includes the principal, eight teachers appointed by the PFT, and some of the teachers who will remain in the school.

Another committee, on which the district and the PFT have equal representation - helped along by a facilitator agreed to by both sides - will "define the level and nature of resources" the reconstituted school requires to improve. The district will then be expected to provide the resources.

Hornbeck said he didn't have any projections on the cost of the overhaul, but said the process would be inexpensive.

"It won't be much because we don't have much," he said.

But the Olney instructor warned that, at his school at least, a wholesale faculty shakeup would be expensive and time-consuming.

"The new people have to be developed," said the teacher. "They have to be told what's there. When are [school board members] going to do it? Are they going to put up hundreds of thousands of dollars to do that?"

A major battle is likely to develop over how new teachers will be selected to replace those forced out. Hornbeck said yesterday he wants the principal to have more say in choosing new faculty, and would support an advisory hiring committee with parental and community input.

But the PFT, Kirsch said, will fight to retain the current process for filling vacancies - by seniority alone.

The Keystone schools provision was first inserted into the teachers' contract in 1994, hailed at the time as a breakthrough that would permit the administration to take direct action over schools that consistently failed. Under the clause, the superintendent can replace up to 75 percent of the faculty.

The union reluctantly agreed to the concept, but several months later - after teachers complained that forcing them to transfer would interfere with their seniority rights - Hornbeck compromised.

A program called Quality Education Standards in Teaching was established, in which the PFT agreed to take responsibility for improving educational outcomes in six schools mutually designated as failing by the district and the union. But none of those schools is a high school.

Hornbeck agreed to hold off on Keystone, to give QUEST a chance to work.

Yesterday, Hornbeck said that the district would review the effectiveness of the QUEST program based on test results this spring.

"The QUEST schools represent a partnership between the district and the Federation," said Hornbeck. "That is what we are doing in the elementary and middle school arena. Keystone is what we are doing for the high schools."

*Philadelphia Online -- Philadelphia Inquirer -- More school news*

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Call Jodi M. Leese, our community consultant, at (215) 854-5141 or (609) 779-3926 or write [jodi@phillynews.com](mailto:jodi@phillynews.com) to make your school a part of School Crossings.

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## Schools

Total: 557

- 483 elementary schools including:
  - 11 middle schools
  - 36 magnet schools
  - 11 year-round schools
  - 25 small schools

*(elementary and secondary)*
- 74 secondary schools including:
  - 7 vocational schools
  - 9 magnet schools
  - 8 community academies

## Alternative Programs

- 54 sites:
  - 36 for dropouts
  - 18 for disruptive students

## Student Enrollment

Total: 424,454 (1996-97)

- 16,125 PreK
- 35,289 kindergarten
- 253,026 elementary
- 95,691 secondary
- 20,056 special education (PreK-12)
- 1,798 alternative schools
- 2,469 tuitioned out

*Racial Breakdown: (1995-96)*

54.5% African-American  
 31.3% Latino  
 10.8% White  
 3.2% Asian/Pacific Islander  
 .2% Native American

## Additional Information

- 79% of students come from low-income families
- 22% of Illinois' public school children attend CPS
- 14.9% are limited-English-proficient
- 89.2% attendance rate for elementary schools
- 73.3% attendance rate for high schools
- 11.4% are children with special needs

## Pupil/Teacher Information

20.5 pupils per teacher in elementary schools.  
 21.0 pupils per teacher in high school  
 \$41,427 average teacher salary  
 \$65,518 average administrator salary

## Employees

Total budgeted positions: 45,118 for 1997

- 42,404 (schools)
- 1,534 (citywide services)
- 1,180 (central service center)

*Racial Breakdown (1995-96)*

- 50.3% African-American
- 34.7% White
- 13.1% Latino
- 1.6% Asian
- .2% Native American

- 557 principals (1996-97)

*Racial Breakdown (1995-96)*

- 51.3% African-American
- 37.1% White
- 11.2% Latino
- .2% Asian
- .2% Native American

- 27,190 teachers (1996-97)

*Racial Breakdown (1995-96)*

- 43% African-American
- 45% White
- 8.7% Latino
- 1.8% Asian
- .3% Native American

## Budget Information

- Operating budget -FY97: \$2.8 billion (estimated)
- Local sources: \$1.504 billion (estimated)
- Federal sources: \$386 million (estimated)
- Per pupil operating expenditures for 1993-94:
- \$6,525 supplemental education programs
- \$4, 378 basic education

## Local School Councils

- Each Local School Council consists of:
  - 6 parent representatives
  - 2 community representatives
  - 2 teachers
  - 1 principal
  - 1 student representative in each high school

*revised May 1997*

# City math, reading scores soar

## Elementary schools post best test results in decade

BY ROSALIND ROSSI  
EDUCATION REPORTER

For the second year in a row, math and reading scores in Chicago's public elementary schools hit their highest marks in a decade, with math scores posting "tremendous" gains.

The upbeat news comes two weeks after the School Board reported even stronger gains in high school scores and reflects two consecutive years of overall improvement on the nationally normed Iowa Tests of Basic Skills after a decade of seesawing or flat scores, board officials said.

President Gery Chico has scheduled a news conference today to tout the results, which could bolster efforts to win state school funding reform.

"We've got two men on and nobody out," Chicago public schools Chief Executive Officer Paul Vallas said of the back-to-back gains. "We've had two years of gains in reading and math in the elementary schools, but we still have a long way to go. We want to see improvement every year."

The announcement coincides with the end of two years of legislatively mandated school reform that put Mayor Daley in control of the school system.

Results showed third- through eighth-grade math scores jumped an overall 4.6 percentage points, with strong gains in every grade. Reading scores rose only a single point, with three grades posting gains and three showing drops.

But overall math and reading scores still were the highest this decade. Accountability Chief Patricia Harvey called the math jumps "tremendous."

In math, 35.6 percent of all students hit or beat the national average.

In reading, 30.1 percent of third- through eighth-graders at least met the national norm. Though grade-by-grade results were mixed, a huge seventh-grade jump—6 percentage points—pulled overall scores into the plus column.

Chico said reading remains a concern but that giving schools expert help under probation has "produced dividends."

In reading, 76 percent of probation schools showed gains, vs. 57 percent of all elementary schools. In math, 97 percent of probation schools showed gains, vs. 83 percent of all elementary schools.

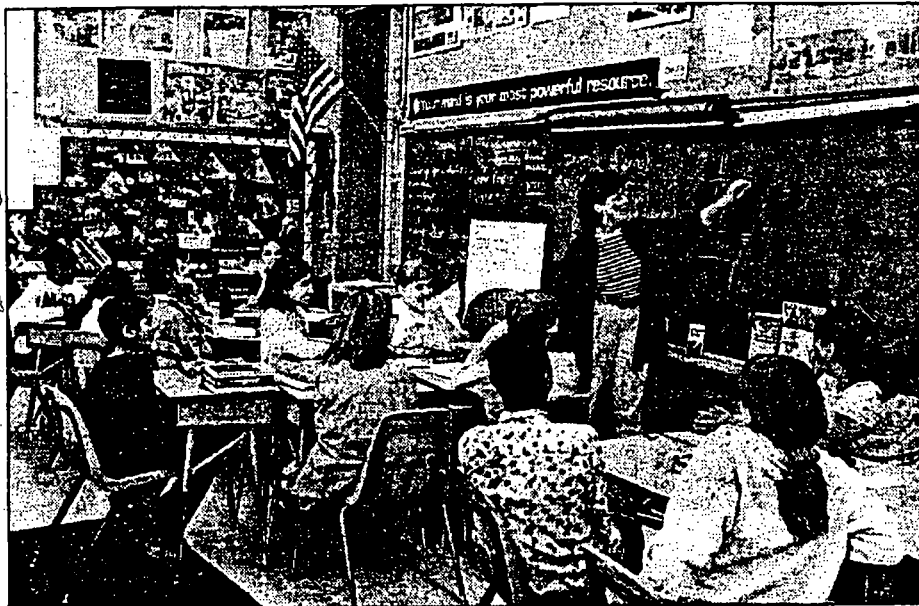
This year's scores also marked the first time stakes were attached to the tests for third-, sixth- and ninth-graders, who now, with eighth-graders, face summer school

### BIG GAINERS

Schools with biggest increases in Iowa tests over last year:

- 1. Burley
- 2. Beldier
- 3. Galileo
- 4. Oriole Park
- 5. Alcott
- 6. Morse
- 7. Pershing
- 8. Ravenswood
- 9. Black
- 10. Leland

SOURCE: Chicago Public Schools



JOHN H. WHITE/SUN-TIMES

Marianne Noonan teaches a sixth-grade class at Burley School, 1630 N. Barry. The school posted a gain of more than 36 percentage points in combined math and reading scores on the tests.

and the possibility of being held back if their scores are too low.

"The stress is out there," said Teresa Moy, assistant principal at Pershing Magnet School. "Students were very concerned about not being able to be promoted."

In addition, schools know they can be placed on probation if 85 percent of their students do not hit national norms on the tests. After nine years of reform, Harvey said, "maybe one of the missing pieces of reform was accountability."

Some schools did falter: 187 showed reading drops and 76 dipped in math.

Those schools could face the next level of sanctions—reconstitution,

### ■ Test scores; Pages 14, 15.

tution, the restaffing of their entire building. Vallas said two or three elementary schools and three or four high schools will face reconstitution by summer.

The largest combined reading and math elementary gains—not counting Beaubien, which absorbed Burbank's gifted students this year—came at Burley, a Lake View school with 86 percent low-income kids. Burley math and reading scores together jumped more than 36 percentage points.

Principal Nancy Laho attributed the gains to a determined effort to

raise expectations after staff realized they had been inflating grades. Although only a quarter of students were meeting national reading norms last year, 70 percent of all grades were A's or B's, Laho said.

Burley revised its grading system and wrote grade-by-grade and schoolwide standards. Students were required to memorize math facts, take timed tests and flash cards. Teachers read aloud and required independent reading of "quality literature" daily.

"The payoff will be when these scores go home," Laho said. "Children can say, 'Wow, it's a hard year, but we did it.'"

Contributing: Jon Schmid

"1997" lists the percentage of Chicago Public Schools students in grades 3 through 8 scoring at or above national norms for their grade level on this year's Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. The national norm is 50. "Chg" means the increase or decrease at each school over the previous year. Results are preliminary and are subject to change. (An asterisk denotes a school on academic probation.)

Story on Page 8.

| School         | Reading<br>1997 | Reading<br>chg | Math<br>1997 | Math<br>chg |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Systemwide     | 30.1            | +1.0           | 35.6         | +4.6        |
| Addams         | 44.7            | -1.2           | 49.1         | +5.9        |
| Agassiz        | 40.2            | -0.7           | 44.2         | +6.6        |
| Albany Park    | 38.1            | +5.5           | 61.3         | +6.7        |
| Alcott         | 43.1            | +10.6          | 50.5         | +16.7       |
| Aldridge       | 23.6            | +8.1           | 22.6         | +1.3        |
| Allgeld        | 24.1            | 0.0            | 29.1         | +8.0        |
| Andersen       | 20.6            | +4.2           | 28.1         | +6.6        |
| Anderson       | 15.9            | -0.9           | 18.7         | +4.7        |
| Arai Middle    | 25.9            | +1.3           | 25.7         | +9.1        |
| Armour         | 22.9            | -2.6           | 28.1         | -1.9        |
| Armstrong, G   | 39.7            | -1.8           | 51.8         | +9.3        |
| Armstrong, L   | 17.7            | -2.3           | 26.9         | +12.0       |
| Ashe           | 22.3            | +0.6           | 26.4         | +5.3        |
| Attucks*       | 13.3            | -0.5           | 16.2         | +1.5        |
| Audubon        | 39.7            | +8.6           | 44.3         | +5.1        |
| Avalon Park    | 15.7            | -10.8          | 18.7         | -8.0        |
| Avondale       | 23.6            | -2.0           | 26.8         | -7.2        |
| Banneker       | 25.2            | +4.0           | 33.0         | +6.2        |
| Barnard        | 43.8            | +0.4           | 44.9         | +7.8        |
| Berry          | 40.9            | +1.4           | 51.0         | +3.3        |
| Barton         | 17.5            | -3.7           | 16.2         | +1.6        |
| Bass*          | 13.3            | -1.3           | 13.8         | +0.4        |
| Bateman        | 26.9            | -2.5           | 39.7         | +3.6        |
| Beasley Mag    | 69.2            | -0.1           | 79.9         | +3.2        |
| Beethoven      | 18.2            | -3.1           | 31.2         | +8.2        |
| Beidler*       | 33.3            | +23.1          | 36.3         | +11.6       |
| Belding        | 57.3            | +2.9           | 63.7         | +8.3        |
| Bell           | 82.0            | +1.2           | 80.9         | -0.2        |
| Bennett        | 32.6            | -5.2           | 37.4         | +0.4        |
| Bethune*       | 8.8             | +0.8           | 9.3          | -0.3        |
| Bethune Magnet | 64.8            | +11.9          | 67.6         | +11.9       |
| Blane          | 35.6            | +0.3           | 37.5         | +4.8        |
| Bond           | 19.8            | +1.4           | 21.1         | +1.6        |
| Bontemps       | 17.8            | -0.5           | 18.4         | +2.0        |
| Boone          | 47.2            | +1.1           | 54.6         | +3.6        |
| Bradwell       | 24.4            | +5.0           | 27.3         | +6.9        |
| Brenan         | 20.3            | +2.1           | 24.1         | +7.5        |
| Brennemann     | 29.4            | -0.6           | 34.6         | -2.9        |
| Brentano       | 22.8            | -1.3           | 34.2         | +8.1        |
| Bridge         | 46.5            | -3.1           | 66.6         | +6.2        |
| Bright         | 19.7            | -3.8           | 29.5         | +10.2       |
| Brighton Park  | 28.0            | +9.0           | 35.9         | +4.9        |
| Brown*         | 12.9            | +3.8           | 26.2         | +10.1       |
| Brownell       | 26.3            | +0.8           | 25.0         | +3.0        |

| School           | Reading<br>1997 | Reading<br>chg | Math<br>1997 | Math<br>chg |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Clay             | 45.1            | +3.2           | 54.6         | +7.4        |
| Cleveland        | 53.7            | +1.2           | 41.8         | +11.2       |
| Clifton          | 45.6            | +2.9           | 54.3         | +2.3        |
| Cleaves          | 71.3            | +6.5           | 72.6         | +8.2        |
| Colles           | 26.9            | +7.2           | 28.9         | +8.8        |
| Colman*          | 14.7            | +7.1           | 23.8         | +11.8       |
| Columbus         | 30.4            | -3.2           | 42.0         | -2.3        |
| Cook             | 14.9            | -0.5           | 19.6         | +5.9        |
| Coonley          | 30.4            | +3.1           | 28.9         | +1.4        |
| Cooper           | 15.1            | -3.7           | 38.8         | +8.2        |
| Copernicus       | 21.0            | -3.6           | 17.7         | +8.7        |
| Corkery          | 20.7            | -1.6           | 26.8         | +0.2        |
| Corkery/Whitney  | 17.0            | NA             | 26.3         | NA          |
| Crane High       | 21.1            | +3.1           | 14.5         | -5.2        |
| Crown            | 22.8            | -1.2           | 26.4         | +6.3        |
| Cuffe            | 30.6            | -3.9           | 37.8         | -3.2        |
| Cullen           | 27.2            | -6.8           | 28.0         | -1.0        |
| Curtis           | 18.4            | +2.7           | 24.1         | +7.9        |
| Deley            | 15.6            | 0.0            | 13.8         | -1.0        |
| Darwin           | 22.5            | +7.6           | 21.3         | +6.2        |
| Davis, M         | 18.8            | -2.0           | 33.3         | -18.0       |
| Davis, N         | 21.2            | -1.8           | 31.0         | +7.8        |
| DeWes            | 39.7            | -2.0           | 49.1         | -0.8        |
| De Diego         | 37.4            | +4.3           | 39.0         | +1.8        |
| De la Cruz       | 24.0            | +4.1           | 30.0         | +8.3        |
| Decatur          | 97.6            | +0.2           | 100.0        | +2.2        |
| Delano           | 22.6            | +7.3           | 21.9         | +2.7        |
| Deneen           | 24.2            | +2.7           | 20.5         | +2.5        |
| DePriest         | 22.2            | +6.7           | 24.8         | +7.6        |
| Dett             | 20.7            | +4.9           | 30.7         | +3.0        |
| Dewey            | 50.8            | +3.1           | 64.0         | +8.0        |
| Dewey            | 17.7            | +0.7           | 24.8         | +2.4        |
| Dickson          | 57.4            | +1.9           | 70.0         | 13.7        |
| Disney Magnet    | 45.9            | +0.8           | 47.2         | +6.4        |
| Dixon            | 43.8            | +4.2           | 38.2         | +8.1        |
| Dodge*           | 12.2            | +2.3           | 15.5         | +1.6        |
| Donoghue*        | 6.2             | +0.5           | 13.6         | +6.1        |
| Doolittle Int Up | 14.2            | -2.9           | 15.0         | +1.4        |
| Doolittle West   | 17.8            | +3.4           | 26.4         | -1.4        |
| Dore             | 70.3            | +0.6           | 88.1         | +0.9        |
| Douglas          | 24.0            | -1.4           | 23.4         | -1.4        |
| Douglas Mid*     | 17.4            | +2.8           | 20.3         | +6.0        |
| Drake            | 21.1            | +2.0           | 33.0         | +3.4        |
| Drummond         | 33.3            | +10.4          | 27.8         | -4.3        |
| DuBois           | 29.1            | +4.8           | 33.6         | +8.8        |
| Dulles           | 16.9            | -3.5           | 27.4         | -0.3        |

| School        | Reading<br>1997 | Reading<br>chg | Math<br>1997 | Math<br>chg |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Dumas         | 19.3            | -1.3           | 17.6         | +0.5        |
| Dunne         | 28.8            | -1.1           | 29.7         | +2.9        |
| Dvorak        | 25.1            | -0.6           | 32.5         | +3.8        |
| Dyett Middle  | 19.6            | -3.6           | 23.1         | +6.8        |
| Earhart       | 73.7            | -5.6           | 86.2         | +11.2       |
| Earle         | 19.0            | +0.1           | 23.1         | +2.0        |
| Eberhart      | 40.4            | +8.3           | 58.0         | +12.1       |
| Ebinger       | 59.7            | -0.8           | 59.1         | +2.0        |
| Edgebrook     | 77.2            | +3.7           | 86.2         | +2.8        |
| Edison        | 98.9            | 0.0            | 99.4         | 0.0         |
| Edwards       | 41.0            | +0.4           | 46.6         | +2.2        |
| Einstein*     | 13.6            | +5.6           | 11.8         | +4.9        |
| Ellington     | 18.2            | -3.3           | 13.3         | -4.5        |
| Ermet         | 22.1            | +2.5           | 26.8         | +11.5       |
| Ericson       | 21.4            | -0.1           | 25.5         | +5.4        |
| Esmond        | 27.2            | -1.9           | 29.6         | +1.3        |
| Everett       | 30.6            | +0.6           | 39.3         | -3.8        |
| Evergreen     | 29.7            | -3.5           | 31.6         | +6.4        |
| Evers         | 38.6            | +6.4           | 48.6         | +13.7       |
| Falconer      | 32.4            | 0.0            | 42.2         | -4.1        |
| Faraday*      | 7.7             | -0.7           | 12.6         | +1.0        |
| Farnsworth    | 57.8            | -0.8           | 66.3         | +0.2        |
| Farren*       | 7.9             | +0.6           | 14.0         | +0.7        |
| Fermi         | 18.5            | -0.7           | 15.0         | -1.7        |
| Fernwood      | 24.6            | +3.6           | 22.9         | +5.0        |
| Field         | 25.9            | +3.3           | 26.2         | +2.0        |
| Fink          | 10.7            | +1.2           | 16.8         | +6.3        |
| Fiske*        | 22.8            | +10.8          | 23.9         | +7.8        |
| Fort Dearborn | 25.4            | -1.3           | 30.9         | +1.0        |
| Foster Park   | 23.9            | +4.5           | 23.7         | +3.1        |
| Foundations   | 24.7            | +7.9           | 18.6         | +9.0        |
| Francis Mag   | 70.6            | +1.4           | 89.6         | +12.8       |
| Frazier       | 18.1            | +3.8           | 19.6         | +4.9        |
| Fuller*       | 6.5             | -1.8           | 12.3         | +0.6        |
| Fulton*       | 14.6            | +3.9           | 22.0         | +11.6       |
| Funston       | 19.8            | +2.3           | 22.9         | +3.4        |
| Gale          | 21.8            | +1.4           | 21.4         | +0.9        |
| Gallieo       | 52.9            | +10.6          | 68.2         | +17.6       |
| Gallistel     | 39.9            | +1.4           | 48.6         | +13.1       |
| Garvey        | 26.4            | -2.0           | 25.9         | +0.3        |
| Garry*        | 62.8            | -1.2           | 69.6         | +7.6        |
| Gary          | 22.2            | +0.1           | 33.8         | +8.8        |
| Gershwin      | 19.1            | +1.1           | 22.4         | +7.3        |
| Gillespie     | 25.0            | +1.2           | 24.1         | -0.1        |
| Gladstone     | 13.6            | -3.1           | 18.4         | -3.5        |
| Goethe        | 25.6            | -2.4           | 44.2         | +12.9       |

| School      | Reading<br>1997 | Reading<br>chg | Math<br>1997 | Math<br>chg |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Goldblatt   | 25.1            | +2.4           | 28.7         | -0.4        |
| Gompers     | 32.1            | +0.2           | 34.1         | +4.9        |
| Goodlow Mag | 18.1            | +1.4           | 25.7         | +3.1        |
| Goudy       | 32.4            | +2.6           | 50.0         | +12.4       |
| Graham, A   | 31.1            | -3.6           | 41.0         | +2.4        |
| Grant*      | 11.8            | +0.5           | 14.7         | +3.6        |
| Gray        | 47.2            | +0.7           | 52.2         | +6.1        |
| Greeley     | 29.3            | -0.7           | 35.0         | +1.5        |
| Green, W    | 20.8            | -7.1           | 28.7         | -3.9        |
| Greene, N   | 24.3            | +1.0           | 34.5         | +4.4        |
| Gregory     | 18.6            | -0.1           | 28.0         | +1.9        |
| Gresham     | 25.1            | -0.7           | 38.0         | +4.6        |
| Grimes      | 45.7            | +3.0           | 86.0         | +2.8        |
| Grisson     | 53.5            | -1.8           | 85.2         | +5.5        |
| Guggenheim  | 20.0            | +3.8           | 25.0         | +4.9        |
| Gunsaulus   | 66.9            | -4.1           | 69.9         | +0.8        |
| Haines      | 33.0            | +8.7           | 47.1         | +5.6        |
| Hale        | 54.6            | +1.9           | 54.0         | +3.0        |
| Hamilton    | 45.9            | -2.4           | 57.4         | +5.4        |
| Hamline     | 11.6            | -5.1           | 14.5         | +2.7        |
| Hammond*    | 16.1            | +5.1           | 33.3         | +14.7       |
| Hancock     | 31.9            | +4.3           | 36.9         | -0.1        |
| Hanson Park | 29.4            | -0.2           | 38.6         | +6.4        |
| Harte       | 28.1            | -7.5           | 28.0         | +6.8        |
| Hartigan*   | 13.1            | +0.1           | 14.2         | +1.4        |
| Hartvard    | 20.1            | -1.8           | 18.3         | +3.2        |
| Haugan      | 40.4            | +8.3           | 42.7         | +8.5        |
| Hawthorne   | 80.1            | +0.8           | 87.4         | +6.3        |
| Hay         | 18.0            | -3.1           | 33.8         | +1.4        |
| Hayt        | 38.2            | +2.3           | 39.7         | +8.8        |
| Healy       | 54.7            | +0.8           | 68.9         | +4.9        |
| Hearst      | 21.5            | +1.7           | 26.9         | +2.8        |
| Hedges      | 19.7            | +0.6           | 27.3         | +8.5        |
| Hefferan    | 18.6            | +1.6           | 25.3         | +8.1        |
| Henderson*  | 20.9            | +8.1           | 25.5         | +8.3        |
| Hendricks   | 23.8            | -14.1          | 38.5         | -3.5        |
| Henry       | 29.8            | -5.0           | 42.5         | +11.0       |
| Henson*     | 14.8            | +1.2           | 13.2         | +1.1        |
| Herbert     | 14.9            | -1.8           | 21.3         | -12.0       |
| Heroes      | 29.6            | -2.2           | 41.5         | -2.6        |
| Herz        | 20.8            | -2.8           | 26.0         | +5.8        |
| Hibbard     | 34.9            | +4.5           | 55.7         | +6.3        |
| Higgins     | 29.0            | +0.5           | 31.7         | +1.6        |
| Hinton      | 22.4            | +3.4           | 24.5         | +0.5        |
| Hitch       | 49.2            | +2.6           | 48.1         | +0.2        |
| Holden      | 37.3            | +6.7           | 54.6         | +12.5       |

| Reading         |      |      |       | Math  |               |      |       | Reading |       |                 |      | Math  |      |       |                | Reading |      |      |       | Math          |      |       |      |       |
|-----------------|------|------|-------|-------|---------------|------|-------|---------|-------|-----------------|------|-------|------|-------|----------------|---------|------|------|-------|---------------|------|-------|------|-------|
| School          | 1997 | chg  | 1997  | chg   | School        | 1997 | chg   | 1997    | chg   | School          | 1997 | chg   | 1997 | chg   | School         | 1997    | chg  | 1997 | chg   | School        | 1997 | chg   | 1997 | chg   |
| Holmes          | 25.6 | +1.5 | 30.1  | +0.4  | LaSalle       | 67.0 | +1.7  | 68.9    | -1.7  | McCash          | 23.8 | -0.8  | 28.3 | +1.3  | Ogden          | 70.7    | 0.0  | 74.4 | +3.6  | Sexton        | 15.1 | -14.1 | 21.5 | -2.7  |
| Hope            | 26.9 | +5.2 | 29.1  | +10.4 | Lathrop*      | 11.8 | +3.2  | 13.3    | +3.0  | McCutcheon      | 25.9 | +0.8  | 37.8 | +1.6  | Oglesby        | 23.1    | +5.1 | 33.2 | +8.3  | Sheridan, Mag | 80.6 | -3.1  | 87.7 | -2.9  |
| Howe            | 17.5 | +1.4 | 19.8  | +1.8  | Lawrence      | 20.6 | -1.6  | 29.9    | +8.7  | McDade          | 90.2 | -1.8  | 91.1 | +0.1  | O'Keefe        | 22.2    | -0.9 | 27.0 | +4.3  | Sheridan, P   | 20.1 | -2.2  | 26.6 | +1.9  |
| Howland*        | 5.9  | -0.4 | 8.4   | +2.9  | Lawndale      | 26.7 | +4.2  | 30.5    | +8.3  | McDowell        | 36.0 | -6.3  | 38.0 | -9.4  | Orshan         | 55.0    | -7.0 | 68.9 | +3.9  | Sherman       | 13.7 | +2.1  | 22.0 | +11.4 |
| Hoyle           | 43.9 | -0.2 | 43.4  | +8.1  | Lee           | 59.6 | +2.1  | 65.3    | +10.0 | McKay           | 23.8 | +2.3  | 25.8 | +2.0  | Orlando Park   | 60.0    | +4.7 | 87.7 | +21.7 | Sherwood*     | 19.2 | +2.9  | 26.5 | +8.6  |
| Hughes, C       | 19.9 | -1.4 | 25.6  | -4.0  | Leland        | 31.9 | +15.6 | 51.1    | +8.2  | McNair*         | 11.8 | +7.4  | 12.0 | +2.6  | Orozco         | 35.7    | +1.6 | 40.2 | +3.0  | Shields       | 26.1 | -0.3  | 37.5 | +8.4  |
| Hughes, L       | 28.4 | -0.5 | 33.7  | +11.8 | Lemoyne       | 28.9 | +4.9  | 34.0    | +4.3  | McPherson       | 35.7 | +3.8  | 42.7 | +12.0 | Otis           | 27.4    | -0.5 | 33.1 | +5.1  | Shoemaker     | 32.4 | -4.7  | 31.7 | -2.4  |
| Hurley          | 45.6 | -0.4 | 61.2  | +0.2  | Lenart        | 98.3 | -0.5  | 98.9    | +1.8  | Medill Int Up*  | 7.4  | -3.9  | 12.8 | +7.3  | O'Toole        | 17.9    | +2.3 | 29.0 | -1.4  | Shoop         | 22.1 | +1.9  | 24.4 | +6.7  |
| Inter American  | 56.9 | +3.8 | 58.6  | +18.6 | Lewis*        | 10.4 | -4.5  | 18.2    | +3.5  | Medill Primary* | 17.6 | +12.2 | 18.5 | +10.8 | Overton*       | 13.3    | +3.5 | 20.2 | +7.7  | Skinner       | 91.8 | -1.5  | 97.9 | +2.7  |
| Irving          | 30.6 | -0.1 | 23.3  | +1.4  | Libby*        | 14.8 | +2.8  | 18.5    | +8.4  | Melody          | 25.5 | +4.5  | 25.9 | -1.7  | Owen           | 68.9    | +6.8 | 69.7 | +10.9 | Smith         | 28.0 | +4.0  | 32.1 | +11.0 |
| Irving Park Mid | 32.4 | -3.6 | 32.8  | +2.7  | Lincoln Elem  | 84.0 | +1.5  | 79.7    | -1.8  | Meicaffe        | 32.6 | +0.5  | 37.0 | -3.1  | Owens          | 23.0    | -7.7 | 41.8 | -9.1  | Smyser        | 61.7 | +7.1  | 87.8 | +13.0 |
| Jackson, A      | 73.5 | +1.3 | 82.0  | +8.4  | Lindblom High | 29.0 | +0.4  | 34.8    | +24.3 | Mitchell        | 17.7 | -3.6  | 27.4 | +3.6  | Paderewski*    | 8.6     | -4.8 | 11.4 | +1.8  | Smyth*        | 12.9 | +3.9  | 10.2 | +1.6  |
| Jackson, M      | 23.4 | +6.7 | 28.8  | +8.8  | Linne         | 33.1 | +1.3  | 40.3    | +11.8 | Mollison        | 25.0 | -0.2  | 41.2 | +7.5  | Palmer         | 67.4    | +7.9 | 74.1 | +10.4 | Solomon       | 55.6 | -4.3  | 64.7 | -2.1  |
| Jahn            | 31.8 | +5.3 | 31.0  | +6.0  | Lloyd         | 23.8 | +7.6  | 24.1    | -0.8  | Monroe          | 27.6 | -1.0  | 29.7 | +2.3  | Park Manor     | 16.8    | +0.3 | 17.7 | +3.5  | Songhai       | 17.7 | +1.0  | 20.8 | +3.3  |
| Jamieson        | 52.2 | -3.8 | 68.5  | +4.0  | Locke         | 35.1 | -3.2  | 37.0    | +0.1  | Moos            | 21.1 | +3.9  | 23.4 | +5.6  | Parker         | 18.8    | -1.7 | 25.2 | +2.3  | South Loop    | 22.8 | -1.7  | 27.8 | +13.8 |
| Jefferson, T    | 22.5 | +6.2 | 18.2  | +3.9  | Logandale Mid | 22.8 | +3.6  | 25.8    | +7.3  | Morgan          | 22.6 | -0.9  | 27.6 | +2.7  | Parkman*       | 21.7    | +7.9 | 22.5 | +9.3  | Spencer       | 17.3 | +1.9  | 25.5 | +4.9  |
| Jenner          | 13.8 | -0.2 | 16.4  | +1.5  | Lovett        | 27.6 | +3.1  | 31.8    | +3.9  | Morgan Park Hi  | 95.4 | -0.2  | 98.0 | +3.0  | Parkside       | 27.9    | +0.1 | 24.8 | 0.0   | Spry          | 25.2 | +5.7  | 25.6 | +5.8  |
| Jensen          | 26.8 | +2.3 | 31.0  | +3.0  | Lowell        | 17.2 | +1.6  | 28.7    | +6.3  | Morrill         | 14.0 | -3.3  | 16.9 | +1.1  | Pasteur        | 56.1    | +4.4 | 62.1 | +11.5 | Stagg         | 22.0 | -1.2  | 26.3 | -0.6  |
| Johns           | 14.9 | +5.5 | 17.0  | +7.7  | Lozano Bil    | 18.0 | +3.1  | 30.1    | +7.6  | Morse*          | 23.7 | +14.8 | 28.6 | +11.3 | Peabody        | 17.6    | -2.4 | 29.6 | +3.0  | Stevenson     | 49.8 | -2.5  | 63.4 | +6.2  |
| Johnson*        | 19.2 | +3.1 | 20.0  | +3.7  | Lyon          | 33.3 | -5.2  | 42.8    | -3.1  | Morton Ca*      | 9.4  | +2.3  | 9.6  | +2.1  | Peck           | 39.7    | -5.2 | 47.7 | +5.1  | Stewart       | 22.0 | -1.6  | 35.7 | -7.1  |
| Joplin          | 34.5 | +4.6 | 34.4  | +4.0  | Madero Middle | 22.8 | 0.0   | 30.8    | +10.4 | Mozart          | 20.7 | -0.9  | 28.9 | +3.3  | Palma          | 31.2    | -2.7 | 41.1 | +3.8  | Stockton      | 20.3 | -8.0  | 40.8 | +8.7  |
| Jordan          | 22.2 | +0.2 | 30.2  | +8.8  | Madison       | 17.3 | -14.2 | 13.4    | -8.9  | Mt Greenwood    | 66.5 | -4.1  | 62.1 | -0.9  | Penn*          | 14.5    | +1.7 | 15.4 | +0.2  | Stone         | 65.1 | +3.8  | 60.9 | +8.3  |
| Jungman*        | 16.0 | +3.9 | 35.0  | +9.4  | Manierre      | 17.1 | -0.2  | 26.0    | +7.0  | Mt Vernon       | 25.6 | +0.7  | 22.8 | +8.0  | Perez          | 19.6    | +3.6 | 27.1 | +5.1  | Stowe         | 18.8 | 0.0   | 25.7 | +3.8  |
| Kannon Magnet   | 23.6 | +1.1 | 46.3  | +14.3 | Mann          | 26.6 | +0.5  | 24.9    | +6.1  | Munoz Mrs Pr    | 12.0 | NA    | 4.0  | NA    | Pershing Mag   | 52.8    | +6.2 | 60.7 | +19.8 | Suder*        | 11.9 | -1.2  | 16.9 | +8.8  |
| Keller Magnet   | 98.2 | -0.9 | 97.3  | -2.7  | Marconi       | 19.3 | -4.9  | 20.0    | -2.6  | Murphy          | 36.3 | +1.6  | 38.2 | +7.1  | Peterson       | 63.3    | +2.4 | 68.7 | +4.7  | Sullivan Elem | 17.0 | -0.8  | 28.1 | +8.6  |
| Kellman Corp    | 38.0 | +4.7 | 46.0  | +2.4  | Marquette     | 25.5 | +2.4  | 27.3    | -2.9  | Murray          | 79.0 | +3.9  | 78.6 | +4.4  | Piccolo Elem*  | 13.4    | -0.8 | 15.4 | +0.8  | Sullivan High | 47.2 | +5.9  | 30.6 | -4.8  |
| Kellogg         | 81.5 | +3.2 | 84.8  | +8.1  | Marsh         | 38.7 | +6.3  | 52.1    | +10.3 | Nansen          | 25.2 | +3.6  | 26.8 | +4.8  | Piccolo Middle | 19.1    | +3.8 | 12.4 | +5.4  | Sumner*       | 18.8 | +5.4  | 25.0 | +11.6 |
| Kenwood High    | 99.4 | +0.1 | 100.0 | +2.1  | Marshall Mid  | 35.2 | +5.8  | 28.7    | +7.3  | Nash*           | 14.5 | +3.6  | 16.2 | +2.1  | Pickard        | 12.9    | -1.7 | 25.3 | +7.7  | Sutherland    | 74.1 | +4.1  | 76.4 | +9.2  |
| Kershaw         | 13.5 | -2.2 | 20.9  | -5.1  | Mason         | 15.9 | -0.6  | 19.8    | -0.5  | Neil            | 45.4 | +0.9  | 55.1 | +14.2 | Pilsen         | 26.1    | -2.9 | 42.4 | +2.5  | Swift         | 34.2 | +6.5  | 42.1 | +6.0  |
| Key             | 23.6 | +6.3 | 28.3  | +8.9  | May           | 17.1 | -5.1  | 23.2    | -2.8  | Nelthorast      | 34.3 | -0.8  | 36.5 | +1.2  | Pirie          | 43.2    | +8.7 | 48.7 | +12.6 | Talcott       | 20.2 | +1.4  | 41.8 | +12.0 |
| Kilmer          | 37.8 | +8.5 | 37.7  | +7.1  | Mayer         | 41.8 | -1.7  | 40.4    | -1.9  | Newberry Mag    | 63.3 | +0.6  | 78.6 | +8.6  | Piersondon     | 22.8    | 0.0  | 29.4 | +7.2  | Tanner        | 19.3 | +0.7  | 22.8 | +3.3  |
| King Elem       | 17.9 | -0.1 | 20.8  | +2.7  | Mayo          | 15.7 | -6.3  | 28.1    | +11.1 | Nia             | 22.6 | -1.6  | 22.6 | +6.3  | Poe            | 95.1    | +2.1 | 93.1 | -3.9  | Taylor        | 64.7 | -9.7  | 65.2 | -2.1  |
| Kinzle          | 53.2 | -6.0 | 59.5  | +0.5  | Mays          | 18.8 | -3.9  | 33.3    | +3.8  | Nicholson       | 22.8 | +4.0  | 28.1 | +6.0  | Pope*          | 12.7    | -0.1 | 19.8 | +3.1  | Telpochalli   | 9.1  | NA    | 15.8 | NA    |
| Kipling         | 33.5 | -0.6 | 51.2  | +3.1  | McAuliffe*    | 20.6 | +6.6  | 26.5    | +8.0  | Nightingale     | 27.4 | +1.1  | 26.5 | +2.6  | Portage Park   | 60.6    | +4.0 | 70.0 | +8.6  | Terrell*      | 4.8  | 0.0   | +9.5 | +3.4  |
| Kohn*           | 14.6 | +2.8 | 19.3  | +3.7  | McClellan     | 41.6 | +0.2  | 69.8    | +7.1  | Nixon           | 22.4 | +0.1  | 34.3 | +7.8  | Powell         | 20.7    | -1.1 | 20.1 | +2.7  | Thorp, J N    | 17.8 | +2.8  | 28.2 | +6.8  |
| Kozminski       | 30.6 | -3.2 | 31.2  | +3.8  | McCorkle*     | 6.6  | 0.0   | 12.1    | +4.0  | Nobel           | 22.6 | +1.3  | 32.1 | +2.1  | Prescott       | 20.9    | -2.2 | 30.5 | +5.5  | Thorp, O A    | 71.0 | -0.5  | 83.9 | +3.1  |
| Lafayette*      | 13.9 | 0.0  | 17.2  | +2.2  | McCormick     | 22.3 | -5.7  | 25.1    | -4.2  | Norwood Park    | 48.4 | +1.3  | 54.3 | +19.0 | Price          | 16.1    | 0.0  | 21.3 | +2.9  | Tilton*       | 13.7 | +2.6  | 15.6 | +2.0  |
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FOR ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS

# Chicago Tribune

Friday, May 23, 1997

Chicagoland  
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## ★ Test scores soar at city schools on probation

**Numbers up, but still  
below national norm**

**By Janita Poe**

TRIBUNE EDUCATION WRITER

Last fall when Chicago Public Schools chief Paul Vallas placed more than 100 schools on academic probation, many students and officials expressed embarrassment—even anger—that their schools were being singled

out for the bureaucratic equivalent of a trip to the principal's office.

Now, with the release Thursday of scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for Grades 3 through 8 showing marked improvement in many schools on probation, officials at some of those schools say it was that very attention and pressure that seems to have gotten results.

Whether the slew of probation managers, external partners and

other visits by the central administration produced tangible changes in instruction remains debatable. But one thing seems indisputable: Probation delivered a psychological punch.

"What these scores tell me is that probation is working," Vallas said.

Of the 71 elementary schools on probation, 54 improved in reading and 69 in math, according to preliminary reports on

the test scores. On Thursday, officials said 22 of those schools are now eligible to be removed from the designation.

Overall, 393 of the city's 478 elementary schools tested improved in math and 271 had higher scores in reading than the previous year. Schools doubling their test scores in at least one of the subjects included Beidler, McNair, Carver Middle and Morse.

School administrators plan a

news conference to discuss the scores at 10:30 a.m. Friday at the Parkman School.

Pat Harvey, the schools' accountability chief, said she was encouraged by the scores because of gains made by the poorest performing students.

"The lowest performing students are getting better, and so are the two groups next to them," said Harvey. "... I think the message is that all kids,

SEE SCORES, PAGE 20

# Scores

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

regardless of where they are born, regardless of their station in life or their race, can achieve."

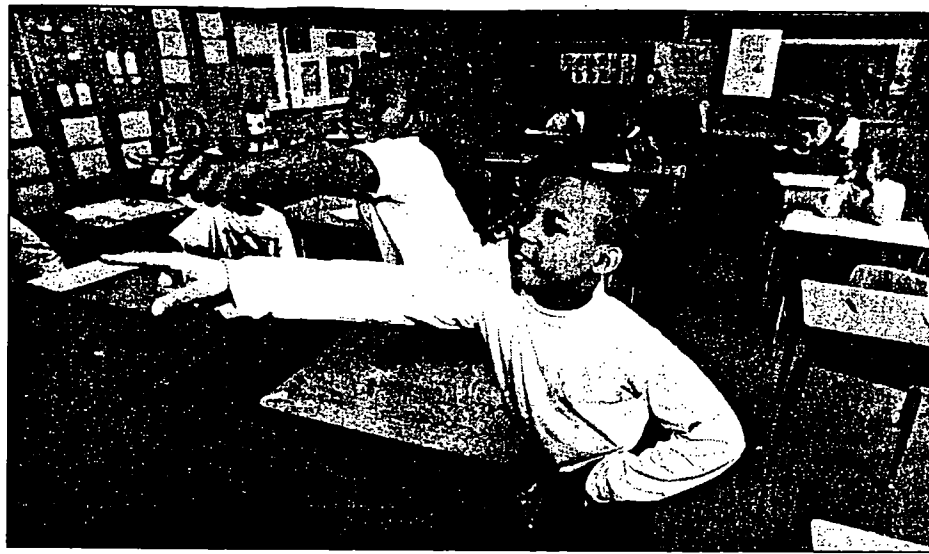
The release of the preliminary data—a small percentage of makeup tests were not included—was being pointed to by Vallas' allies as proof that the new management team for schools is succeeding. Earlier this month, school leaders announced even greater gains in high school students' scores on the Test of Achievement and Proficiency.

But some school-reform leaders say the scores are indicative of improvements implemented over the last decade, not any recent revamping.

"There's been a trend of improvement over the last seven years, and we're pleased to see that trend is continuing," said Donald Moore, executive director of Designs for Change, an educational research and reform group.

"I think principal leadership, the involvement of the local school councils and the commitment of teachers to working together have paid off."

Though the overall scores



Two Beldier Elementary School 3rd graders enthusiastically compete to answer math questions in class.

Improved, that improvement was not seen uniformly. For instance, pupils at or above national norms in reading comprehension

declined slightly for the system's 3rd, 6th and 8th grades.

And scores of 30.1 percent in reading and 35.6 percent in math mean that the vast majority of students were below national norms.

For schools on probation, the improved scores were a reason to rejoice.

Geraldine Moore, principal of Beldier in the Garfield Park neighborhood on the West Side, said her staff initially was "devastated" about being placed on probation. But the status also was a "wake-up call" to improve standards at the school, she said.

"We wanted to know 'Why, what had we done wrong?'" said Moore, a former parent aide who has been principal of the school since 1994. "But what we did was to turn it into a reaffirmation. We looked at our weaknesses and set out to improve them."

The work apparently paid off: Reading scores at Beldier more than tripled—from 10.2 in 1996 to 33.3 in 1997—and those in math rose from 24.8 to 36.3 during that same period.

Moore said the renewed commitment spilled over to the five-member probation management team, set up in October and headed by West Side education legend Marva Collins. The team implemented many of Collins' methods—including a focus on phonics and repetition—and also began following her on stu-



Beldier Elementary School Principal Geraldine Moore gets a hug from 3rd grader Lawrence Barron.

dent encouragement and regimented daily schedules.

Beldier also was one of 132 schools to set up extended school days this year; the school added two hours of optional math and reading study for four days a week after school. By early winter, Beldier had developed a motto, prominently displayed on the school marquee: "Probation brings opportunity."

Principals at other schools posting improvements said the

## Citywide test scores improving

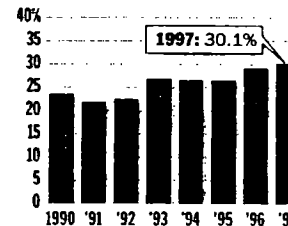
The scores of Chicago Public School students in Grades 3 through 8 on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills show improvement following a move in which low-achieving schools were placed on probation.

### ➤ Scoring at or above the national norm

About a third of reading and math scores in 1997 for Grades 3 through 8 are at or above the national norm, which is the average test score of a representative sample of students in the United States. Nationally, the average student scores in about the 50th percentile.

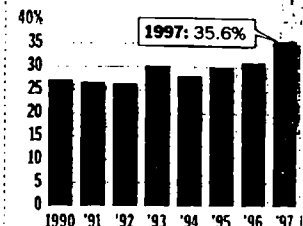
#### Reading comprehension test scores

Percent of reading test scores that are at or above national norm



#### Math test scores

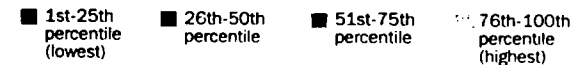
Percentage of math test scores that are at or above national norm



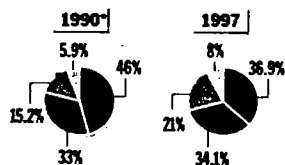
### ➤ How test scores breakdown

In 1997, 36.9 percent of the reading test scores fall in the same range as the lowest 25 percent of student reading scores nationally. This is an improvement over 1990, when more than 45 percent of reading scores fell into this category.

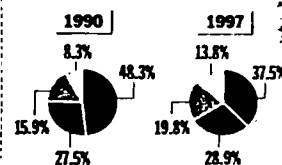
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#### Reading comprehension test scores



#### Math test scores



\*Because of rounding, the percentages do not equal 100 percent.

Note: Scores are based on preliminary data, and a small percentage of test scores have not been included. Source: Chicago Public Schools

Chicago Tribune

probation status forced them to focus on specific problems at their schools.

Albert Gaston, principal at the Fulton School in the Back of the Yards neighborhood, said his school was "already on its course" and did not modify any curriculum, programs or instruction methods. But he said teacher and student motivation increased after the school went on probation.

Though the overall scores improved, that improvement was

not seen uniformly. For instance, pupils at or above national norms in reading comprehension declined slightly for the system's 3rd, 6th and 8th grades.

Vallas and other officials said they hope to make even more significant improvements on testing in the next few years. The increases made by the probation schools, they said, prove any school can succeed if goals and priorities are set for them.

## Editorials

# High schools start the long climb up

The remarkably encouraging scores posted by Chicago high schools on the latest round of standardized tests reflect more than individual school achievement. They are a fair measure of the success of schools chief Paul Vallas and his administration.

It's a relative success, to be sure, because Chicago high school students are still barely on the charts compared to kids across the country in reading and math skills. But their year-over-year improvement on the nationally normed Tests of Achievement and Proficiency is nonetheless a wonder to behold.

Of the city's 74 high schools, 61 scored higher than last year in math, and 52 schools had more students scoring at or above the national norm in reading.

Reading and math are the only subjects of the tests, which are taken in the 9th and 11th grades. But those two basic skills are pretty good indicators of student abilities in other subjects as well.

Chicago Public Schools administrators cracked down on the high schools last fall, putting more than half of them on academic probation. That unprecedented step meant those schools had to revamp their programs and raise test scores, or teachers and principals could lose their jobs. What's more, 9th graders who did not meet minimum proficiency levels on this

year's test faced mandatory summer school for the first time.

Call it accountability, call it the fear of God; whatever you call it, it worked.

Another innovation that may have helped raise scores was the creation of 54 freshman academies that offered 9th graders a core curriculum and helped the kids adjust to a high school setting.

There were the usual naysayers who claimed the improved test scores were the result of "teaching to the test" or that scores were higher because a new, tougher promotion policy kept kids out of high school who didn't belong there.

And to that we say, "So what?" Schools and students alike are better off when kids are at the grade level that matches their abilities. It's the way other school districts operate, and this puts Chicago schools on a par with them on nationally normed tests.

As for "teaching to the test," if exams are designed to test what students are supposed to know, then there's nothing wrong with teaching that to them.

In the final analysis, kudos are in order for Vallas and his crew, but the real credit goes to the most important actors in this pleasant turnabout: the teachers and students of the Chicago Public Schools.

# Chicago Sun-Times

An Independent Newspaper

Thursday, May 1, 1997

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## Power of learning

Power teaching + power learning = powerful results.

That equation sums up the colossal effort it took for some Chicago Public Schools to turn around abysmal test scores after being placed on probation last year. Instead of hand-wringing, teachers and administrators put their heads together and came up with strategies to tackle the problem.

The good news that high school students posted gains in this year's Tests of Achievement and Proficiency comes at a critical juncture. Time is running out for the General Assembly to come up with a school funding plan that will ensure the state provides an equal level of funding for all public school students.

As part of school funding reform, some legislators have linked accountability with funding. The dramatic gains posted by students, under the guidance of motivated teachers, demonstrate that kind of accountability.

Students who had difficulty comprehending what they read, a skill necessary to excel in all other classes, were given techniques that brought the words to life. At Amundsen High School on the North Side, where students nearly doubled their test scores, teachers did not settle for a cookie-cutter approach. They tried several different strategies, including the use of such basic skills as highlighting and making notes of important passages.

Last year, scores were embarrassingly low. This year there is plenty to celebrate. Thank you administrators, teachers, parents and students for a job well done.

# Newsweek®

May 26, 1997 : \$2.95



Standard-bearers: Brown and students

## EDUCATION

# A Small Step for Chicago

Are the nation's worst schools finally on the mend?

BY JOHN McCORMICK AND STEVE RHODES

**B**ARELY A YEAR AGO, ENGLEWOOD Academy was one of the worst public high schools in Chicago. Street gangs ruled the hallways. Security guards extorted bribes from students. Teachers didn't assign homework; only 5 percent of the students could read at grade level. Then the city's new school czar installed a tough principal, Tommye Brown, who spent the year taming the place. Early this month, Brown announced the results of all his improvements at Englewood. Brown reported that the ninth and 11th graders had improved their reading scores by 20 percent: now 6 percent of Englewood's students were reading at grade level. Some teachers burst into tears of joy.

Not many cities would take pride in such a statistic, but a school system often derided as the nation's worst appears to have turned a corner. Citywide, the percentage of Chicago high schoolers who meet national norms rose this year from 21 percent to 25 percent in reading; in math the percentage leaped from 22 to 30. Elementary-school test scores jumped last year, and officials expect still more gains when this year's scores are tabulated.

It would be heartwarming to trace the gains solely to inspirational efforts in the classroom. But the Chicago reversal, still in its early stages, is as much about sticks as carrots. District officials threatened to close schools, remove educators and hold back students if performance didn't improve. The state legislature, tired of Chicago's failures, had given these extraordinary powers to Mayor Richard M. Daley. In turn, Daley appointed his former budget director, Paul Vallas, to head the sinking system, and told him to fix the schools—or else. “We set high standards,” Vallas says. “Then we let everyone know the consequences of not meeting them.” Last fall Vallas put 109 of the city's 557 schools on academic probation.

Those schools have been deluged with extra help from the central district. “It wasn't ‘Let's look for who's to blame,’” says Thomas Reece, head of the Chicago Teachers Union. “It was ‘Let's look for how to im-

prove,’ which was pretty well received.” Each probationary school has been given the services of outside experts, often from university education departments. The outsiders began by posting on classroom walls simple lists of what each student is supposed to learn in each subject. “We can make major gains just by getting the basics under control,” says Melissa Roderick, a University of Chicago professor who is tracking the system's turnaround.

Schools have been ordered to stop the practice of “social promotion” of students who can't do the work. And teachers are trying new approaches. One experiment is to drill students in the vocabulary they'll need to comprehend a subject before the teacher launches into the material itself. Another involves diagramming, in chart form, every lesson imaginable. That reduces abstractions to visuals: time lines in history class, plot development in English, how to spike a volleyball in phys ed.

Many teachers say there's another factor at work, too. For the first time, many kids think someone cares whether they succeed or fail, and they are responding. Now there's a reason to burst into tears of joy. ■



Tribune photo by Phil Greer

First-grader Courtney Ward, 7, gives a winning smile during a press conference at Francis Parkman Elementary School, where officials announced the city's improved Iowa test scores.

**'The concept of intervention works. Everyone can take heart, but no one should think this is good enough.'**

Gery Chico, president of the Chicago School Reform Board

## City's schools take pride in decade's best scores

By Annie Sweeney  
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Chicago elementary school scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills are as high as they have been in a decade, officials reported Friday.

Based on the test results, school officials were also able to calculate how many youngsters will have to go to academic summer school this year—82,000 of the 426,000 Chicago public school students.

Chicago schools deputy education officer Blondean Davis said she was not alarmed. "To me, that says we are intervening on behalf of these children," she said.

The number includes 48,000 3rd, 6th, 8th and 9th graders who scored too low on the Iowa and other recent skills tests and will attend the board's 2-year-old summer school program.

In addition, 16,000 high school students will have to make up course work, and 18,000 are being sent to special programs at their particular

schools.

Chicago officials celebrated the test results as proof that summer school and other efforts—extended day programs, changes in local school personnel and academic probation—have been successful.

"The concept of intervention works," said Gery Chico, president of the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees, adding that there is more to be done. "Everyone can take heart, but no one should think this is good enough."

According to the overall Iowa test results for pupils in 3rd through 8th grades, 30.1 percent scored at or above the national average in reading, up from 29.1 percent a year ago, and 35.6 percent scored at or above average in math, up from 31 percent.

Of the 71 elementary schools put on academic probation by the school board, 54 improved in reading and 69 in math, according to the report. Twenty-two of those schools could be eligible for removal from probation.

A8 Friday, May 23, 1997

# Chicago test scores improve

## Greatest gain in math; reading up slightly

**By Steve Metsch**

Staff Writer

Math and reading scores of Chicago's third- through eighth-grade students improved in the past year, according to Iowa Tests of Basic Skills results that the Chicago School Reform Board will release today.

The greatest improvement was in math, where 393 elementary schools improved, 76 declined and four remained the same.

### CHICAGO

Reading scores citywide improved for the second straight year, albeit by a smaller margin.

Last year, only 31 percent of the students citywide had math scores at or above the national norm. This year, 35.6 percent of the 147,952 students scored at or above the norm.

Math scores improved in every grade except third. The citywide increase was the biggest gain in eight years and marked the third straight year of improvement.

"I was particularly elated by the huge gains in math," said Chief Education Officer Lynn St. James. Math scores are a better gauge of ability because, unlike reading, they are "culture-free," she said.

This year, 30 percent of the

148,388 students read at or above the national norm, a 1 percent increase over last year.

Reading improved in the fourth, fifth and seventh grades and dropped in third, sixth and eighth. Citywide, reading improved at 271 schools, declined at 187 and remained the same at 15.

"The secret is to let people know there are stakes attached to the work they do. Before, there were no stakes attached to the tests. Now we have mandatory summer school, transitional schools and no more social promotions. So the students take the test more seriously," St. James said.

She blamed smaller gains in reading on the fact that for many English is a second language.

One of the top gaining schools on the Southwest Side was Eberhart Elementary, 3400 W. 65th Place, in the Chicago Lawn neighborhood. Math scores leaped from 43.9 percent last year to 56 percent, while reading jumped from 32.1 to 40.4 percent.

"We were disappointed in our scores last year and were trying to push reading. We've worked very hard this year. We doubled the time, from 40 minutes to 80, that we spend on reading each day. This shows it works," Principal Joyce Jager said.

Another impressive gain was

found at Johns Elementary, 6936 S. Hermitage Ave., where reading scores rose from 8.4 to 14.9 percent and math from 9.3 to 17 percent.

Results were mixed at Sheridan Elementary, 9000 S. Exchange Ave., on the Southeast Side, and Peck Elementary, 3826 W. 58th St., on the Southwest Side. At both, reading fell while math improved.

Both tumbled at Byrne Elementary, 5329 S. Oak Park Ave., in the Garfield Ridge neighborhood. Reading dropped from 58.3 last year to 51.5 percent this year, while math went from 52 to 50 percent.

The drop in reading at Mount Greenwood Elementary, 10841 S. Homan Ave., was from 60.6 percent to 56.5 percent. Math inched down from 53 to 52.1 percent.

Mount Greenwood principal Rita Pedone blamed the third grade, which has only 36.7 percent of its students scoring at or above the norm. But there is hope.

"When in the first grade, those kids had three different teachers. One on maternity leave was replaced by two others. That's hard, especially in the first grade," Pedone said.

Eighteen of those students will attend mandatory summer school because they did not meet requirements for promotion. Pedone looks for summer school to help their scores next year.

# Test scores add up to improvement

## Officials all smiles at math, reading results

**By Steve Metsch**  
Staff Writer

When Iowa Test of Basic Skills results showed reading and math scores in the city's elementary schools were the best in a decade, Chicago Public Schools officials were quick to take note.

"These numbers demonstrate that our elementary schools continue to improve," Chicago School Reform Board President Gerry Chico said in a prepared statement.

Lynn St. James, chief education officer, said scores demonstrate "a renewed commitment by principals, teachers and parents to provide students with a quality education to help prepare them for college or the work force."

But some school reform groups were just as quick to note that the scores released Friday were another extension of the school reform started in 1990 rather than the new leadership team installed in 1995.

"It's just another year of upward trends. It's nice to see school reform con-

tinue to work. There's nothing to make this different from the trend that's been going on," said Julie Woestehoff, executive director of Parents United for Responsible Education.

Nonetheless, Chicago's public elementary school students did score 4.6 percentage points better overall in math. Nearly 36 percent scored at or above the national norm.

A total of 30.1 percent of students were at or above the norm in reading, an improvement of 1 percent over last year and a two-year gain of 3.6 points.

Some of the best improvements came at schools on academic probation, where the central office has been monitoring and assisting those schools because of low scores in the past.

Woestehoff questioned if intervention or reform made the difference.

"You hate to say it's proof that intervention makes a difference, but the ones where we intervened saw better scores," accountability director Phil Hansen said Friday.

Twenty-two of the probation schools improved by 15 percent or more and 37

of those schools had their best scores in more than seven years, Hansen said.

"So, we are really pleased with that kind of increase in probation schools. We've given them a lot of support and I think that it had an effect," Hansen said.

Schools where reading and math improved: Barnard, Black Magnet, Bryn Mawr, Caldwell, Cassell, Clay, Clissold, Coles, Dore, Eberhart, Edwards, Gallistel, Goodlow Magnet, Grimes, Hale, Hearst, Johns, Kellogg, Lee, Mann, McKay, Nightingale, Owen, Pasteur, Sawyer, Shoop, Sutherland, Thorp, Tonti and Vanderpoel Magnet.

Seven schools saw drops in reading and math: Byrne, Dawes, Ninos Heroes, Keller Magnet, Mount Greenwood, Taylor and Warren.

Schools where reading declined and math improved or stayed the same: Addams, Bright, Burnham, Carroll, Davis, Esmond, Grissom, Gunsaulus, Hoyne, Hurley, Kinzie, Lenart, Morrill, Peck, Randolph Magnet, Sheridan, Stevenson, Sullivan, Twain, Washington and Whistler.

Only two schools, Hancock and Marquette, saw reading improve and math drop.

# School's scores shoot up

BY ROSALIND ROSSI  
EDUCATION REPORTER

Fueled by a drive to get off academic probation, Amundsen High School teachers and students this year did what would normally be considered amazing: They nearly doubled their test scores.

And that's just a preview of some of the good news to be unveiled today, when Mayor Daley will take the unprecedented step of hosting a news conference on Chicago public high school test scores.

Labeled "in crisis" only a year ago, the high schools are expected to show systemwide gains in reading and even stronger jumps in math on the nationally normed Tests of Achievement and Proficiency taken

Turn to next page

## Scores

Continued from previous page

in April. Only one of the system's more than 60 regular high schools posted a drop in math, sources said, and more than 80 percent of them showed gains in reading.

At Amundsen, 5110 N. Damen, Assistant Principal Kenneth Hunter said a reading push raised reading scores and had a spillover effect on math. Said Hunter: "Kids will get better at word problems if they read more closely."

Last week, word of Amundsen's gains spread because it supposedly showed some of the biggest jumps among high schools on probation. About half of all city high schools are on probation. This year, Amundsen's percent of ninth- and 11th-graders meeting national TAP norms rose in reading from 11.6 to 22.1 and in math from 15 to 28.6.

For starters, the school prepared for this year's tests almost as if it were going to battle. A month before Amundsen was placed on probation, said Principal Edward Klunk, teachers decided to focus on reading—the gateway skill to knowledge and the first indicator of whether a school should be on probation.

Meeting weekly, the task force developed a list of reading strategies and monthly calendars for teaching them and testing students. Teachers

shared reading passages—such as newspaper articles on interest rates that formed the basis for math word problems—and keyed them to the length of TAP passages.

"Every day a different department did nothing but reading strategies," said task force member Mary Ross. "On Monday it was English. On Tuesday it was social studies and business, on Wednesday it was math and science, on Thursday it was fine arts and physical education, and on Friday it was English again."



Mary  
Cappetelli  
*Reading stressed*

Each strategy was used by all teachers for two to three weeks at a time, then replaced by a new one, so at least one technique was bound to hit home.

The reading techniques included "KWL," or having students outline what they KNOW about a subject, what they WANT to know, and what they had LEARNED. It also included "mapping" the main idea and its subsets, and "sustained silent reading" for 10 to 15 minutes, followed by journal writing about the reading passages.

One technique, called "Sketch to Stretch," required students to sketch what a reading passage conjured in their minds, and then to defend it.

The strategy meant English teacher Mary Cappetelli merely had to walk up and down the aisles to see if students understood the word "diverge" in Robert Frost's famous poem, "The Road Less Traveled." She knew some didn't because they were drawing one road instead of two.



Alex  
Paniagua  
*Mixed opinions*

"The best readers start to visualize and make like a film in their head as they're reading," said Cappetelli. "Poor readers don't know how to do that."

Even students' inability to underline or highlight in their textbooks was addressed. Students created margin notes by using Post-It notes instead.

Amundsen also started new after-school speed-reading classes for honor students. Many of them had high grades but low reading scores because they were not native readers of English.

But by the end, said Hunter, students could read John Steinbeck's novella *The Pearl* in 18 minutes and pass a test on it.

Teachers wrote up schoolwide reading tests and started giving them in November—five months before April's TAPs. In February, students took a reading test almost every day, plus a reading test every Friday in English class.

In one junior English class, almost all students thought the new reading push improved their reading skills. Some said the extra tests will help them prepare for college; others found them repetitious.

"You need as much practice as possible," said Alex Paniagua, 17. "But there's too much English, where they give you the same tests in every class."

Some teachers said the push helped teachers teach better; others were not sure. But Ross was certain about one thing: "We were so driven toward doing better on TAP and getting rid of that label of probation none of us liked."



Office of the Mayor  
Richard M. Daley  
Mayor

Contact:

June 5, 1997

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*Give free  
Schools*

## CHICAGO MAYOR RICHARD M. DALEY SAYS CITIES MAKE TOO MANY EXCUSES FOR FAILING SCHOOLS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Chicago Mayor and U.S. Conference of Mayors President Richard M. Daley today urged local governments around the nation to stop making excuses for the failure of public schools -- and said that the only way to truly change American society is to improve public education.

In a speech before the National Press Club in Washington, Mayor Daley called on mayors to make a personal commitment to improving public schools. Mayor Daley also recounted Chicago's experience in overhauling its public schools, a process that began in the spring of 1995.

"Not too long ago, everyone believed that Chicago's schools would continue to get worse," Mayor Daley said. "Secretary of Education William Bennett once called our schools the worst in the nation, and the description stuck. But today, the Chicago Public Schools are finally moving in the right direction."

Mayor Daley recounted the steps taken over the past two years to turn the Chicago Public Schools around -- including the appointment of a new management team for the schools, closing the Chicago Public School's budget deficit and beginning the nation's most ambitious capital building program, raising school performance standards and placing the weakest performing schools on academic probation.

As a result of these changes, Chicago Public Schools have seen their highest test score increases in a decade and soaring enrollment across the city. But Mayor Daley added that he is not content with this progress -- and that he is personally committed to turning the Chicago Public Schools around.

"Improving schools is the only way to make a lasting change in this country," Mayor Daley said. "It is the only way to lift people out of poverty -- to cut down on crime -- and to create a stronger economy."

"The only way for our city -- or any city -- to have a bright future is for public officials to devote their full energies to improving our public schools."

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REMARKS FOR MAYOR RICHARD M. DALEY  
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB ADDRESS  
THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1997

I'm happy to have been invited by the National Press Club to speak to you today.

As you probably know, for the past year, I have served as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

And one of my top priorities in this capacity has been to sound the alarm around the nation about our public schools -- and call upon Mayors to take an active role in turning schools around.

If you hear one message this morning, it is that we have a state of emergency in our nation's public schools and chief executives have to take on that challenge.

The future of our cities is at stake: All across the nation -- families of from all racial groups and financial backgrounds are leaving cities because they have lost faith in urban public education.

It is true in many American cities, including our nation's capital.

Families are leaving cities like Washington to find a better quality of life, including safer neighborhoods -- and most importantly better schools.

It is a very difficult situation for people trying to make a difference -- and a nightmare scenario for public schools.

But it doesn't have to be this way -- and I want to offer the mayors, school board officials, businesses and parents around the country a more hopeful vision for the future of our children.

I can picture a day when families choose to stay in cities because of the quality public school systems.

I can see urban schools that have enough classroom space, modern equipment and safe hallways.

And I can imagine schools that are true training grounds for the workforce -- where local businesses take responsibility for the success of local schools.

All of this -- and more -- can happen. As Mayor of our nation's third largest city, I have to believe in the future of our public schools.

Improving schools is the only way to make a lasting change in this country. It is the only way to lift people out of poverty -- to cut down on crime -- and to create a stronger economy.

The only way for our city -- or any city -- to have a bright future is if public officials devote their full energies to improving our public schools.

In Chicago today -- we are finally moving in the right direction. Not too long ago, everyone believed that Chicago's schools would continue to get worse.

Secretary of Education William Bennett once called our schools the worst in the nation. He didn't provide any data to prove why our schools were worse than those of Washington, New York or Los Angeles and other cities.

And the Department of Education did nothing to make the situation better -- no new funds were allocated or management teams dispatched.

And, although no one denies that the Chicago Public Schools were in trouble, the description stuck.

Our system had constant money problems. In June of 1995, the projected four-year budget deficit was \$1.5 billion.

The system was plagued by failing schools and nine strikes between 1972 and 1995.

The situation was made worse by an unaccountable school administration. Neither the mayor nor the school board had real authority over the school administration, its personnel or its budget.

Authority was divided between the local school councils, the School Board, and the central bureaucracy.

Because as mayor I had to name my appointments from a list submitted to me by a 16 member school board nominating commission, I had no real authority over selections to the school board.

In short, no one was directly responsible for the state of our schools. Despite extensive media coverage of crumbling buildings, overcrowding and poor academic performance, the system remained unresponsive.

School maintenance lagged. And schools became unsafe -- with hallways that were too dark -- fences that were torn -- and doors bolted shut so students wouldn't use the dangerous and decaying steps outside.

The school bureaucracy did a poor job of managing its purchasing. Financial disorder was rampant. In the spring of 1995, the situation was so dire that the Chicago Public Schools were predicting a shutdown in the fall unless new funds were provided.

Instead of bailing out the schools, the Republican State Government decided to turn over responsibility to the City of Chicago. Many people said they weren't doing this as a favor to Chicago.

But I wanted this new responsibility -- because I knew it was the only way to change society and move our city forward.

It was only with authority over the schools that I could take action and demand results, to improve performance and make our schools accountable.

We created a new management team, for the first time -- with a Chief Executive Officer, a Chief Operations Officer and a Chief Education Officer -- and a new, smaller board of trustees.

With this new team, the Chicago Public Schools could be well managed -- while keeping education decisions in the hands of educators.

I appointed some of the most talented members of my administration to assume operation of the schools. Gery Chico, my former Chief of Staff was appointed President of the School Board.

Paul Vallas, my former Budget Director, was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the schools.

Lynn St. James, a successful former high school principal, was appointed Chief Education Officer.

Most recently, I appointed Tim Martin, the Deputy Commissioner of Transportation, as Chief Operating Officer.

To help get control over the school's budget, we asked for -- and won -- the authority to cut many of the state mandated strings attached to the school budget.

The state's education budget regulations -- which still apply to every other public school system in Illinois-- are a bureaucrat's dream.

Until 1995, the Chicago Public Schools' funding stream came from 7 different local rate levies -- and state funding was provided thru 27 different grants. The school system had little flexibility in spending this money.

The new school funding process for the Chicago Public Schools consolidated the 7 local levies into one -- and the 27 state grants into 2 block grants.

Freed from these funding restraints, my new management team immediately made the money go farther.

The new management team found nearly \$1 million worth of spoiled food stored in a Chicago Public School warehouse, more than \$250,000 in furniture and other school supplies, and another \$4 million in wood, tools and supplies.

And over the summer of 1995, they worked out a 4 year budget that included a long-term labor agreement with teachers and that will make certain that our schools open on time every year.

With this new financial plan in place, the bond rating agencies -- Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch -- took notice.

The Chicago Public School's received their first investment grade bond rating since 1979, and the ratings have been raised twice in the last 18 months. Moody's even gave the school system an A-minus rating.

That allowed the schools to begin the most ambitious school capital improvements plan in the nation -- entirely funded with locally-raised money. Already, \$850 million worth of bonds have been issued.

New schools are being built across our city -- a total of 29 new schools, additions and annexes.

So far, 258 new classrooms have been added to the system, serving nearly 8000 children.

Major renovation projects, including new roofs, masonry repair and window replacements have been completed at 241 schools.

Virtually every school in the city will see improvements.

And when Phase 2 of the project is complete -- 45,000 students will be learning in new classrooms, easing overcrowding.

Also in the first year, the Board adopted an education plan that emphasizes a back-to-basics approach.

Everybody talks about making schools get back to basics -- but in Chicago, we took strong, concrete action.

It started with making sure children perform at their grade level. In the past, year after year, children were promoted to the next grade after they reached a certain age -- regardless of whether they were academically capable.

We ended the policy of social promotions.

Now, third, sixth, eighth and ninth grade children -- who perform poorly and whose reading or computing skills are not at minimum levels -- are now required to go to summer school before being promoted. And if they do not perform at summer school, they will be held back.

This week, the Chicago Public Schools announced that 42,000 students must attend summer school this year.

For many parents, this seems like a tough policy. It is tough -- but it is necessary.

We're not doing Chicago's children any favors by letting them have the summer off and looking the other way -- pretending that they can catch up in a higher grade level.

Ending social promotions is one of the most important steps the Chicago Public Schools has taken.

And next year, it will be expanded to include tenth grade students as well.

The school board also took other important steps to improve student performance.

Early childhood programs, which previously were available for only 6000 children, were expanded to serve more than 22,000 children. In addition, curricula at all city high schools was streamlined and upgraded and national standardized tests were emphasized.

This school year, the board took bolder and even more important steps to improve classroom performance.

A mandatory homework rule was passed. Now every student in the Chicago Public Schools has homework every day.

The Chicago Public Schools started a citywide campaign to ensure that all parents know about this policy. Parents have been asked to sign pledges that they will work with their children on their daily homework.

And the Chicago Public Schools also took a bold and needed step by putting schools on academic probation.

Probation is the most important step we have taken so far -- and it shows our commitment to improving every school, starting with the weakest and offering them the needed assistance.

We will leave no school and no child behind.

A total of 109 schools out of 557 were put on probation for their low achievement on reading test scores. These include 38 high schools and 71 elementary schools.

In these schools, fewer than 15 percent of the students read at the national average.

In one school, less than 3 percent of the students read at the national average. Among probation high schools, drop out rates were as high as 71 percent.

For years, these schools promoted children who couldn't read, couldn't do math and couldn't perform well enough to succeed in life.

Children did not fail. We failed the children -- governments, schools and everyone who stood by and did nothing. To make sure it doesn't happen again, we have to raise expectations, help schools do better and hold people accountable.

That's what academic probation is all about. In Chicago, we're sending a clear signal to schools that results matter.

To each school on probation, we've sent a probation management team that includes high quality principals, teachers and business managers -- people who know how to make schools work.

In addition, schools have been matched up with an outside education partner -- in many cases these are universities.

The extra attention we are paying to probation schools is starting to make a real difference.

When probation was announced, some principals and teachers thought that they would be made scapegoats for poor performance.

But now that it has been done, a number of principals and teachers call it a blessing.

Probation has made schools accountable for results.

It has also given important guidance to principals, teachers and students -- letting them know exactly what they need to do to make their schools better. And probation has provided assistance to schools that they need.

Now -- because we've set higher standards and are working to uphold those standards -- signs of progress are beginning to appear.

Last month, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills results were released for Chicago's Public elementary and high schools.

Of the 71 elementary schools on academic probation, 54 showed improvement in reading and 69 in math.

On top of major gains in test scores made in 1996, the Chicago Sun-Times called the latest elementary scores the best in a decade.

The news was more encouraging this year in our high schools. This year, reading test scores went up in 52 of our 62 public high schools. And math scores went up in 61 of 62 high schools.

While there was improvement, I am not pleased with these results. Our schools have shown that they can make progress -- but we all know that we still have a long way to go. We must keep raising the bar.

For years, standards were systematically lowered -- now I want to see standards systematically raised.

We may not be able to have a majority of school children reading at national average overnight, but that doesn't mean we should be pleased with anything less.

Improving test scores aren't the only sign of progress.

Since 1989, the Chicago Public Schools have had Local School Councils, which were designed to provide neighborhood, grass-roots input for all of our schools. For a number of years, unfortunately, voter turnout at these elections was poor.

But at last year's election, we had the highest voter turnout ever. More people are participating -- more candidates are running for Council seats.

And this new involvement and faith in our schools is evident with higher enrollment numbers. Enrollment in our schools is surging -- up from just under 410,000 in 1993 to about 425,000 today.

We still have a long way to go. Even with these recent signs of improvement, many of Chicago's schools continue to perform below national norms.

The progress will continue slowly at some schools, quicker at others. It will come school by school, child by child.

But the atmosphere of gloom has been replaced with hope. And in the process, Chicago is disproving many of the cliches about urban public schools.

For too long, public schools -- especially in cities -- have given excuses for their failure. One of our former board members says that society has spent too long celebrating the problems.

I accept no excuses. No child is too poor to learn. No parent is too detached to participate. No school system is too poor to demand high standards from students.

Based on Chicago's experiences, I can say with confidence that every excuse -- and there are many of them -- hides a real solution, and that these solutions provide valuable lessons.

Excuse number one is the most dangerous one. Unfortunately, It is one given by many cities. This excuse is: There are too many problems -- and everything's hopeless.

In Chicago, I refused to accept this -- because too much was at stake.

Everything I do as mayor would fail if we gave up on the schools.

There's no point in attracting new jobs -- because without a qualified workforce, businesses will sooner or later move away.

There's no reason to improve housing -- because without an education, more and more people will be dependent on public assistance.

And there's no reason to rebuild our neighborhoods -- because families of all races and incomes will leave the city if the schools can't serve their children.

In cities across the country, the working poor is leaving the cities to find better public schools.

Hopelessness comes from a lack of leadership. Sure, there are many steps that must be taken to turn a school around, and they can't all be done at once.

With the right leadership, families will begin to have faith in the future. And once you get everyone in the city working towards the goal of improving schools, progress is inevitable.

The second excuse blames the children. The students are too poor -- they aren't well motivated -- they can't learn.

In Chicago, some used this excuse to criticize our probation plan. They say that by singling out these schools for more help, we are saying these children aren't smart enough.

It is wrong to believe that any child cannot learn -- to do this is to condemn these children to a dismal future.

The answer isn't to lower standards, but to raise them. Children need discipline and standards.

That's why we're sending more children than ever to summer school -- so that they can earn promotions to the next grade.

That's why we're requiring homework everyday.

And that's why we've brought in dedicated professionals -- who have proven track records at public and private schools -- to help turn our lowest performing schools around.

The lesson of our success -- even the modest improvements made so far -- is that excuses do children no favors. Instead of blaming a child's background, we should use it as a reason to do more and to work harder.

The third excuse is a practical one -- school management can't improve until schools receive more money.

In some places, there are serious practical concerns about school funding. In Illinois, our state is third from the bottom in public school funding.

We did not let this excuse stand in our way. In fact, there were some in Illinois who argued that the City of Chicago would never be able to manage the Chicago Public Schools without more resources.

But I believed that we had to prove our critics wrong.

And today -- you no longer hear the excuse in our state that school reform is just throwing away money on the Chicago Public Schools.

Because of these management reforms, the Illinois House passed a bill last week to fundamentally change the way we fund education in Illinois by shifting the burdens away from property taxes.

Sadly, the leadership in the State Senate kept this bill from coming to the floor for a vote -- but the momentum for school funding reform has grown in our state.

I'm still hopeful that the state government can take action this year to remedy the funding problems.

The fourth excuse given for our failing public schools is that big city schools systems are too big to manage.

If the Chicago Public Schools can be managed -- any school system can. The Chicago Public School system has 427,000 students and more than 550 schools.

We have more students than the public school systems of Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, Denver, Minneapolis/St. Paul and Pittsburgh combined.

The lesson for all school systems is that no problem is unmanageable. And the managing of schools themselves should be left to experienced educators.

Schools need to be managed by professionals who understand their area of expertise.

The finance and administrative side of managing a large school should be left to qualified business and management experts, while the business of managing the academic problems should be left to education experts.

The fifth excuse is that unions and teachers are in control and demand too much.

In Chicago, we have made teachers and unions partners in solving the problems. And we did it as one of our very first acts, by reaching a four year labor agreement.

Teachers want their schools to get better. You won't find many teachers who chose that profession because they thought it would be easy money. They do it because they love to teach children.

Other than parents, teachers are the most important persons in a child's life. If we are going to change our schools, they must be partners in that effort.

Teachers have a stake in improving their schools.

When we give teachers confidence in the future -- and let them know what their pay will be over a number of years -- teachers can then concentrate on what they do best.

The sixth and final excuse is that failing schools are someone else's problem -- or something for the Internet to solve.

Every year, there is another plan, another gimmick, another set of goals that promise to make all students learn better.

In truth, no grand plan is going to come along that makes everything better. It is just going to take hard work and leadership. Day by day, school by school, year by year.

In Chicago, part of getting the job done is reminding everyone of the roles they must play in making our schools better.

Everyone must take responsibility for our school's success and carry out the work that must be done. Every person in this city has a stake in our success.

Not just those on the front line, like principals and teachers and local school councils -- but all of us.

Parents have a responsibility to become more involved in their children's lives.

Principals have to show responsibility with their authority and must come up with new ideas for making their schools better.

Teachers have to demand more of students, and guide their progress toward improved performance.

The people of Chicago have to get involved by mentoring students and businesses must adopt schools.

And children and students have the greatest responsibility -- to stay in school, to work hard and to graduate.

While local governments have the primary responsibility to improve public schools, the federal government has a role to play in as well.

Illinois Senator Carol Moseley Braun has proposed that the federal government invest \$5 billion a year to help rebuild our public school infrastructure.

I know times are tight these days -- but I'm sure that Congress can find the money if they look hard enough. Helping to invest in school infrastructure is the right and appropriate responsibility for the federal government in education.

One of the most important duties of a mayor is to remind people of these responsibilities. Mayors need to set the standards for the community and have the leadership to speak out on education issues.

Mayors must accept that education is the key to the future -- and that it is the only way to bring about long-term, meaningful change.

No situation is hopeless. All of our problems are manageable -- none of our excuses are credible.

Chicago used to be called the worst school system in the nation. Chicago may not yet be the best big city school system -- and we have much more work to do -- but we have restored a sense of hope

-- even to the point where President Clinton said recently that the Chicago Public Schools can now serve as a model for the nation.

It is not only a citywide commitment to education, it is a personal commitment. I am not going to walk away from this task. The future of Chicago depends on our success.

Again, I want to thank the National Press Club for the opportunity to address this important issue. And I look forward to answering some of your questions.

Thank you.



## **Chicago Public Schools Progress Highlights July 1, 1995 - Present**

The Illinois General Assembly made school reform an agenda priority for the 1995 Spring session. The Assembly enacted sweeping legislation that changed the governance structure of the Chicago Public Schools. The Amendatory Act of 1995 replaced the 15-member Board of Education with a 5-member Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. It also altered the Board's authority over budget and management decisions by consolidating funding sources into block grants.

On **July 1, 1995** Mayor Richard M. Daley appointed the new Board of Trustees and management team to run the Chicago Public Schools. Mayor Daley took action based on new state law granting him greater authority over the school system for the next four years.

Since then, the new CPS administration team has eliminated a \$1.3 billion four-year budget deficit, negotiated a four-year contract with the Chicago Teachers Union, developed an \$850 million five-year Capital Improvement Plan and developed a set of "Children First" educational initiatives to raise academic achievement. Following is a recap of the first two years.:

### **July 1995**

- New management discovered warehouse filled with furniture, classroom supplies and toilet paper that should have been issued to schools.

### **August 1995**

- Budget balanced by eliminating \$150-million deficit first year and \$1.3 billion shortfall over four years, without increasing class size or compromising education services.
- Four-year contract with Chicago Teachers Union signed, avoiding strike threat and promoting long-term stability.
- \$850 million plan to repair, refurbish and build new schools.

### **September 1995**

- New policy adopted to create far-reaching code of ethics, prohibit nepotism.
- After-school programs of academic and recreational activities developed for students, community residents.

**October 1995**

- CPS began establishing new small schools or schools-within-schools.
- Uniform Discipline Code strengthened to include mandatory expulsion of students carrying firearms.
- New code supports “zero tolerance” policy for disruptive, inappropriate or violent behavior.

**November 1995**

- General contractors and property advisors retained for repair, maintenance, engineering, construction projects.

**December 1995**

- CPS sold \$45 million general obligation certificates, system’s first direct securities offering in nearly 20 years for capital repairs.
- New spending guidelines approved for State Chapter 1 funds earmarked for schools with high concentrations of low-income families.
- Six-month leadership training and support programs started for new principals.

**January 1996**

- Local school councils required to consider implementing uniform or dress code policy to improve educational environment.

**February 1996**

- CPS unveiled comprehensive education plan to improve student achievement, strengthen accountability.
- Alternative schools opened for dropouts and disruptive youth, providing specialized curriculum to meet at-risk students needs.

**March 1996**

- Three major bond rating agencies raised CPS credit rating to investment grade for the first time since 1979, improving efforts to finance the system’s aggressive capital improvement plan.
- Long-standing social promotions eliminated.
- Spring deadlines on student enrollments and transfers approved to minimize fall staffing changes, cut student mobility.

**April 1996**

- CPS received bond insurance covering the system’s capital improvement plan. Saves \$150 million in interest charges.
- Some 8,000 candidates attracted to local school council elections, more than in previous election three years earlier. Voter participation higher than in both prior elections.

**May 1996**

- Health care, insurance contracts changed for greater cost-effectiveness. Four year savings: \$115 million.
- Unscrupulous vendors banned from doing business with school system.
- New practices introduced to prevent overcharges.
- Ties with bus companies severed for not complying with tougher safety standards.

**June 1996**

- Reading and math scores increased at most elementary grade levels in Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.
- Policy passed to require daily homework assignments.
- Summer school programs underway for 100,000 students.
- Freshman academies authorized in 61 high schools to reverse declining test scores.

**July 1996**

- \$2.8 billion balanced budget plan approved. Includes expanding kindergarten services, programs to stimulate high schools' academic performance.
- Plans finalized to serve 5,000 additional children in pre-kindergarten programs.
- School lunches privatized to improve quality, variety of food for students.

**August 1996**

- Scores up in several areas of Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP). Scores rose for American College Test (ACT) first time in five years.
- Math, science scores gain over 1995, out pacing statewide increases at almost every grade level. Third grade reading, math scores up.
- Schools on academic watch list drop from 148 in 1995 to 127. Expect further decline to 108 this fall.
- Trustees approve the creation of eight new small schools to downsize school population.
- The school promotion policy is revised requiring summer school for underachieving students in the third, sixth, eighth and ninth grades.

**September 1996**

- A systemwide truancy initiative is launched that includes teams of parents and staff to work directly with truant students and includes an automated calling system and a 24-hour Truancy Hotline.
- 109 schools placed on academic probation (38 high schools and 71 elementary schools) after fewer than 15 percent of their students performed at grade level on ITBS or TAP reading tests. Another 31 schools were placed on remediation.

**October 1996**

- CPS reached out to a citywide contingency of interfaith clergy to help strengthen community ties and student achievement.
- Assessment teams began working with probation schools on reviewing student improvement programs and school budgets.

**November 1996**

- Trustees adopted resolution in support of National Education Day.
- Trustees strengthened 16-year-old residency policy requiring new employees to be residents of the City of Chicago.

**December 1996**

- Successful educators dispatched to probation schools to serve as probation managers.

**January 1997**

- Schools launched extended-day program in 40 schools to provide elementary school students with an additional hour of instruction, recreational activities and a nutritious meal.
- Trustees authorized the CPS to negotiate contracts with 10 organizations seeking to establish charter schools.

**February 1997**

- CPS developed character education curriculum for students.
- Trustees approved new standards for the retention and selection of new principals requiring at least five years of teaching experience, three years of administrative experience, a master's degree and a Type 75 State of Illinois Certificate.
- CPS expanded Phase II of the Capital Improvement Program to include 615 new projects at 432 schools and the issuance of \$500 million in new bonds to finance the project. Capital Improvement Program totals \$850 million.
- CPS lowered the mandatory school attendance age from seven to five.
- CPS began implementing high school restructuring plan by requiring two additional years of science, another of math and requirements of two years of foreign language study and career education.

**March 1997**

- CPS cracked down on tuition fraud from non-Chicago residents who enroll their children in the system while concealing their residency; CPS stands to recover nearly \$800,000 in loss tuition.
- New entrance and academic requirements instituted for high schools.

**April 1997**

- Reading and math scores among ninth and eleventh graders increased in most high schools in the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency; reading scores in both grades increased to its highest level since 1993.
- CPS earned an increase in its investment grade credit rating for the second time in the past two years; Standard & Poors A-, Moody's Baa3, Fitch Investors Service, Inc. BBB+.

**May 1997**

- Reading and math scores increased at most elementary grade levels in the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills; percentage of students scoring at or above national norm levels highest since 1990.
- Trustees adopted academic standards in core subject areas for all grades.

LEVEL 2 - 97 OF 209 STORIES

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January 13, 1997, Monday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 977 words

HEADLINE: AID PLAN FOR **SCHOOLS** PROPOSES TRANSFERS

BYLINE: JON R. SORENSEN; News Albany Bureau

DATELINE: ALBANY

BODY:

Students in weak **schools** should be allowed to transfer to another **school** in the same district, Gov. Pataki proposed Sunday.

"It is essential that children do not languish in **schools that fail** to measure up to state standards," Pataki said as he unveiled his **school-aid** and education program for the 1997-98 **school** year.

Pataki would allow students to transfer from **schools** that have been on the state's probation list for two years. There are 100 **schools** in the state "under registration review," including **School 57** and **Grover Cleveland High School** in Buffalo, that have three years to **improve** their test scores or risk being **closed** by the state.

Schools on the state's watch list are targeted by Pataki's proposal. But the same idea was rejected last month by the state Board of Regents, and it stands little chance of passing the State Legislature.

"Buffalo already has a school choice. We're going to go even further," Buffalo School Board President Marlies A. Wesolowski said. "Buffalo is not opposed to a choice among public schools."

She said test scores have improved dramatically at School 57, due in part to the involvement of parents, administration and teachers, and she is looking forward to the same type of improvement at Grover Cleveland.

"Instead of throwing up our hands, I prefer rolling up our sleeves and improving them," she said.

Niagara Falls Superintendent Carmen A. Grant said he has no problem with a school-choice program.

"I don't blame people for not sending their children to poor-performing schools," he said.

The transfer proposal was one of several proposals -- some old, some new -- in Pataki's program for the upcoming legislative session, released to the media



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*vouchers from  
failing schools  
100 schools →  
"under reg'n review"*

*Albany: transfer to  
better schools.*

Sunday, two days before the governor releases details of his entire budget for the fiscal year starting April 1.

In his budget proposal, Pataki is recommending a \$ 302 million increase in state aid to education for the 1997-98 school year, a 3 percent increase, guaranteeing every school district will receive at least as much aid as they received this year.

It's also guaranteed that the governor's plan will be changed by the Legislature, which traditionally adds even more money to state aid.

Under the governor's plan, Buffalo would see an \$ 8.58 million increase, although it would get \$ 2 million less than the \$ 47 million in special-aid programs approved along with the general school-aid plan. That \$ 2 million comes from Pataki's proposal to eliminate a program giving salary bonuses to teachers. That aid was eliminated two years ago for most districts except Buffalo and the state's other big-city school systems.

The Sweet Home School District would get no increase in aid under the Pataki proposal.

"This would be the third straight year without an increase for us," said Superintendent Gary R. Cooper, adding that even a modest spending increase probably would mean an increase in property taxes.

Mrs. Wesolowski and Granto said any increases proposed for their districts are welcome. Mrs. Wesolowski said without seeing how the aid is to be distributed, it is difficult to know if it will be enough.

"If we see a gap, it will be \$ 8.5 million less that we'll have to bridge," she said of Buffalo's proposed increase in aid.

But the governor also announced that the strong investment performance for the state's teacher retirement system means school districts won't have to contribute as much money this year. Erie County school districts will save \$ 17.9 million, including \$ 6.2 million in Buffalo, \$ 1.4 million in Williamsville, \$ 1.12 million in Orchard Park and \$ 1 million in Kenmore.

There is nothing in the governor's plan that addresses the crisis now facing the Buffalo school district following last month's Court of Appeals ruling reinstating \$ 150 million to \$ 200 million in pay raises for Buffalo teachers.

Pataki said his overall school-aid plan underscores his commitment to education.

Assembly Democrats in recent weeks have been promoting the idea that only they are concerned with New York's schools, while Pataki and other Republicans are looking to cut taxes first.

Referring to the \$ 302 million aid increase, Pataki said in a statement that his school-aid plan is a "historic investment in our schools -- the highest in state history (and) will make our schools stronger and more competitive as we roar into the 21st century."

Pataki said the aid increase will mean for the first time that education



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spending will comprise 30 percent of the state's general fund. The general fund is that part of the state budget supported by general tax revenues.

"As a father of four children, I know the importance of giving our students the best education we can to ensure that they are prepared to compete successfully as they become teachers, business leaders and parents themselves," Pataki said.

"Let me be clear: We are increasing funding by more than \$ 302 million for our children and their education and not for bureaucracy," he said.

The \$ 302 million increase is **close** to the \$ 306 million recommended by the state Board of Regents late last year.

And, like the Regents and state Education Department, Pataki is calling for changes in special education to encourage schools to be more selective in placing children into the costly program.

Although the idea has been ignored by the Legislature in previous years, Pataki is calling for the establishment of so-called "charter schools." These schools would be allowed to try new programs and have more autonomy from state regulations.

State Education Commissioner Richard Mills said he was "very pleased" with the governor's state aid proposal, as well as his support for special education reforms and other proposals offered by the Regents.

Overall, the state spends \$ 10.57 billion in aid to public schools.

GRAPHIC: listed- Aid to area Schools-School aid proposal by Gov. Pataki in his 1997-98 executive budget: erie county -Niagara County

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 15, 1997



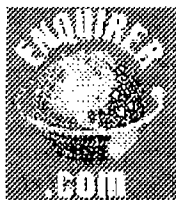
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## LOCAL NEWS

The easiest way...

Sunday, June 8, 1997

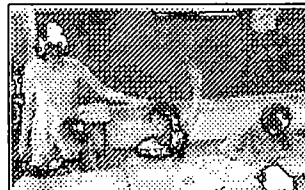
# Schools fall short of new goals

## Lagging districts could face takeover

BY MARK SKERTIC  
The Cincinnati Enquirer

State educators want their tough new school standards to be backed up with harsh consequences: Fail to meet the goals and schools risk a state takeover.

An Enquirer analysis of student test scores shows the state could end up running a lot of schools.



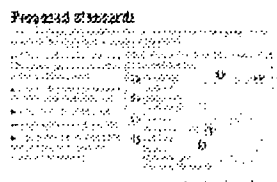
Nancy Myers leads a fourth-grade math class at Hilltop Elementary School in Wyoming - one of only seven Ohio districts that meet proposed higher standards.  
(Glenn Hartong photo)  
[ [ZOOM](#) ]

Only seven of the state's 611 school districts now meet all the proposed performance standards. Most districts fall woefully short, failing to have the mandatory 75 percent of students passing their math, science, reading, writing and citizenship proficiency exams.

Worse, some record that no students are able to pass some of the tests. Those schools and others whose performance is low will have to make constant strides in student performance or face state intervention under new rules proposed by the State Board of Education and now being considered by lawmakers.

"The accountability piece strikes fear into the hearts of many people," said Dr. John Goff, state superintendent of public instruction.

State involvement could range from requiring an improvement plan to - in extreme cases - usurping control from the local board. The takeover option won't necessarily solve problems a board has struggled to reverse, said Lynn Marmer, Cincinnati Board of Education president. Taking away the school board's authority "is a political solution, not a classroom, school-level solution," she said. A memo circulated to State Board of Education members and Dr. Goff in April 1996 reported that 82 school districts met the proposed minimum performance accountability standards. But that tally was based on 1995 data, a year before the state began administering a science exam to fourth-, sixth- and 12th-graders.



The Standards  
[ [ZOOM](#) ]

The Enquirer's analysis of test scores for each public district and 4,245 school buildings and offices showed that the majority of students in rich suburbs, tough urban areas and poor rural communities all fail to meet the new performance goals.

The analysis found:

- Sixty percent of schools fail to meet the minimum attendance rate (93 percent) and maximum dropout rate (3 percent). Among them is Cincinnati Public Schools, with an attendance rate of 87.3 percent and a dropout rate of 14.2 percent, among the state's worst.



- ❑ Locally, the Lockland and Hamilton districts also have dropout rates far exceeding the state's proposed maximum, with 11.3 and 11.1 percent respectively dropping out annually.
- ❑ Of the 22 schools recording no students passing the sixth-grade science exam, 12 are in Cincinnati Public Schools. Two of the 12 also recorded no fourth-graders passing their science test.
- ❑ In 77 percent of the districts, average scores on the fourth-, sixth- and 12th-grade science exams all failed to meet the 75 percent passing threshold.
- ❑ Although the new standards would give added importance to test scores, the accuracy of the data remains questionable. Twelve districts didn't report the results of their 12th-grade proficiency tests to the state. Locally, Princeton schools didn't report scores for fourth-, sixth- or 12th-graders.

All the news wasn't bad. Of the seven districts that now meet all standards, four of them - Indian Hill, Madeira, Mariemont and Wyoming - are in Hamilton County.

## **Few have success**

Those districts that have had success spend more than the state average on students. They also have high percentages of middle- and upper-income families, intangibles that affect student success. "This district has put a lot of attention on results in what we're teaching," said Wyoming Superintendent Ted Knapke. "But it's not just a function of the quality of instructions. It's parental support, the community."

Parents who support the school are essential for a successful school, said Joanna Perry, principal at McKinley Elementary. Hers was the only CPS elementary where more than 75 percent of the fourth-graders passed all sections of their proficiency exam last year. Sixth-grade scores were not as impressive - 20 percent passed their math test and 50 percent the science exam - but the school has identified problems that led to the poor performance and tried to correct it, Mrs. Perry said.

Although McKinley is a neighborhood school that draws primarily from the Columbia Tusculum area, performance there outpaced the results at magnet schools that get more money and often more attention from the district.

Mrs. Perry's school benefits from a relatively small enrollment, about 250 students, that results in manageable class sizes, she said. "The teachers feel like I do - that these kids are smart," she said. "Their parents want to send them to us and they expect them to learn."

State Board of Education member Melanie Bates has sat through hours of debate and presentation on the standards. She has also seen the decrepit science labs in some schools, talked to principals struggling with a burgeoning dropout problem and knows how far some districts must move to even be close to the new performance measures.

"I really don't think the goals are too high for the kids," said Ms. Bates, the mother of two CPS students. "But they've got to get the support at school. And we've got to get these kids what they need without gouging the taxpayers."

Cincinnati is among those districts that must improve in all areas. Only two high schools, Walnut Hills and the School for Creative and Performing Arts, meet the performance levels for both ninth- and 12th-graders. Both schools also have control over their enrollment; Walnut has an academic entrance exam and SCPA is a magnet school for which students must audition to enter.

Cincinnati teachers must improve their own abilities to teach the subjects if they want to help students make the dramatic improvements the state demands, said Kathleen Ware, CPS director of quality improvement.

"We know we've got to improve," she said. "Science has been frequently overlooked as far as being taught to elementary kids. Teacher training is a significant issue for science."

Low achievement in math and science is a problem nationally, and even the highest performing U.S. schools don't measure up internationally, said Dr. William Schmidt, national research coordinator for the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS).

The 50-nation study is measuring the performance of students in fourth, eighth and 12th grades. A comparison of eighth-graders' scores released last year found the U.S. ranked below the international average in mathematics and slightly above average in science. "Ohio is not unique," said Dr. Schmidt, a professor at Michigan State University. "The whole country does not do particularly well."

To compete internationally, states must find a way to improve teaching and student performance, said Ted Britton, associate director of the National Center for Improvement of Science Education, based in Washington, D.C.

"Maybe 20 years ago you could do a catchup game - in middle school and high school you could hunker down and give students what they needed," he said. "Now, science has exploded and its impact on our lives has exploded and our dependence on it has exploded."

## Support for change

Ohio educators' work on new school standards began four years ago. In addition to higher performance levels, the proposed standards include tougher graduation requirements, with an emphasis on mathematics, science, English and social studies and the addition of a foreign language requirement.

Lawmakers appear ready to support the changes. Last week, the Senate Education Committee voted 5-4 to recommend a bill that would increase the minimum requirements necessary to earn a high school diploma. It could be taken up by the Senate this week.

The movement to higher standards and more accountability comes at the same time state officials are considering how to pump millions of additional dollars into public schools. In March, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled the state's present school funding system is unconstitutional and that it shortchanges some districts.

If the state Department of Education doesn't lead the way on demanding better performance, lawmakers will, Dr. Golf warned. "People are not going to put up with non-performance in our schools and requests for new money," he said. "They're just not going to do it."

New performance demands will also increase the importance of accurate reporting by schools to the state. Accuracy and completeness is still spotty. CPS had reported a dropout rate of 0.9, though it was actually 14.2. Other districts fail to report some information. Cleveland Public Schools, which is now being run by the state, was among those that reported no 12th-grade proficiency scores.

Ohio law already allows the State Board of Education to identify "educationally deficient districts and buildings" and to oversee corrective action plans. But the 8-year-old law has never been used by the state to take over a district.

"We've intervened, in the sense of offering help," said Roger Trent, state director of testing and evaluation. "Not in the sense of going in without an invitation."

The new standards law proposal details what constitutes unacceptable performance and expands the state's authority to demand changes, including development of an improvement plan.

In extreme cases, the state would dictate changes. Dr. Golf said: "You can't

remove the (local) board, all you can do is set aside their power."

In most cases the department would work with the local district to find solutions. "Coming in and taking over is a last-ditch effort," said Gene Harris, the assistant state superintendent who oversaw development of the standards.

"We hope it would be a partnership, where we would come in and work with them," she said. "That may mean bringing in national experts, offering a fresh vision."

Financial problems have already forced the state to oversee financial operations in four districts: Cleveland, Youngstown, Osnaburg and Ledgesmont. Those responsibilities have already taxed the staff of the Department of Education, and the state doesn't want to usurp decision-making power in dozens of other places, Dr. Goff said.

But, he added, ultimately the state needs the power to compel change.

Twenty states, including Ohio, have academic bankruptcy laws that allow varying levels of intervention when student achievement in a district or school is below tolerable levels.

The most effective laws give states power to make changes at a school when necessary, said Christopher Cross, president of the Council for Basic Education. The council, based in Washington, D.C., is a non-profit organization that has fought for education reform through higher standards.

Mr. Cross is also president of the Maryland School Board, which has identified 52 schools in that state where students don't perform at acceptable levels.

"You've got to look at schools, not district averages," he suggested. "Averages mask the extremes. Kids attend schools, they don't attend districts."

Once a school in Maryland is singled out for poor achievement, a state team comes in to assess problems. That fact-finding step has helped many principals identify problems, Mr. Cross said. The Kentucky Education Reform Act also has provisions for identifying schools in crisis. A decline of 5 percent in the proportion of successful students in a two-year period is all that is necessary to earn the dubious distinction.

Nine schools now have the designation, said Jim Parks, spokesman for the Kentucky Department of Education. Once a school there is named educationally deficient, the certified staff is placed on probation and is subject to dismissal or transfer, a state-appointed educator is assigned to work with the school and parents are given the chance to transfer their students to another school.

Some of the Kentucky schools designated deficient are not among the state's lowest scoring. "Some of those schools that declined were schools with high schools that apparently rested on their laurels, and their scores went down," Mr. Parks said.

To balance the harsh penalties in their laws, Kentucky and Maryland are among the states that have a reward system that benefits schools where student achievement improves. The Ohio proposal includes a reward proposal, which would require state funding.

"You need consequences and rewards," Mr. Cross said. "Otherwise you're only punishing negative behavior, you're not rewarding positive behavior."

Comments? Questions? Criticisms? For Website issues, tell Greg Noble, online editor.  
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empting the elected school board and replacing the superintendent.

Many education experts warn that the mayors' do-it-yourself efforts are likely to backfire. "I'm really quite pessimistic that the mayor will be able to address the underlying fundamental problem, which is how to improve the test scores and the educational capacities of low-income minority children," said Paul E. Peterson, a Harvard University professor currently studying school voucher experiments in Cleveland and Milwaukee.

"I think the question is not whether you should have centralization or decentralization, but whatever is appropriate" for a particular city, Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, said. What is essential, he went on, are high academic standards and a reliable assessment system that shows whether students are meeting them. "Then you can look at what sort of organization at the local level delivers."

What the voters want is better student test scores. In the past, that's been the hardest promise for mayors to deliver.

In the 1970s, the mayors of Detroit and New York tried to rescue their schools and failed, said Michael W. Kirst, a Stanford University professor who studies the politics of education. "It didn't last, because they began to be accused of not being able to raise achievement scores and improve the schools, so the mayors backed out on the basis that this was a no-win ball game." Kirst foresees history repeating itself now.

Menino dismisses such negativism. "The scores will increase," he insisted. "You can't have a defeatist attitude. You have to have a focus, a plan. That's what we have in Boston for the first time in many years."

"And I'll tell you one thing: Kids in the Boston public schools today are getting a better education than they did two years ago or even one year ago."

#### UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Today's mayors are wading into the swamp of urban education, for the most part, to deal with fiscal or managerial messes in their local school systems. So far, their administrative changes seem to be working.

Chronic deficits triggered the moves in Boston and Chicago. A more complex accountability problem stimulated change—although not the remedy sought by the mayor—in New York City. "In all of these cases, money was never far below

the surface," explained John F. Jennings, director of the Center for National Education Policy, a small education think tank in Washington.

Since 1969, control over New York City's elementary, middle and junior high schools had been lodged in 32 elected community boards, many of them rife with scandal. The schools' chancellor administered the high schools, but nobody ran the system as a whole. When Republican Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani tried to take over, a politically divided state Legislature refused to give him the power. In a compromise late last year, the Legislature gave consolidated authority to schools chancellor Rudy F. Crew, with whom Giuliani appears willing to work amicably.

Boston's management quagmire resulted from a different kind of split control. The school committee (the city's name for its school board) was independently elected, but the mayor and city council set its budget. "Every year, the committee went and spent whatever it darned well felt like spending," Howard Leibowitz, Menino's director of intergovernmental relations, said. "It chronically ran deficits, but the kids weren't getting an education [equal to] the money being spent."

So Menino's predecessor, Mayor Raymond Flynn, pressed for a referendum to switch from a 13-member elected committee to a seven-member body appointed

by the mayor. It squeaked through in 1989, but the changeover, which wasn't fully implemented until after Menino took over in 1993, was subjected to another referendum last November. To the surprise of many observers, the appointed board, backed by Menino, was retained by a sweeping margin of 70-30 per cent.

"The big thing is [that] somebody is now accountable for the system," Menino said. "In the past, we had chaos. Now we're working together, solving the problems, not blaming each other."

Menino has eliminated the school system's deficit, invested heavily in technology and poured millions of dollars into capital improvements. Before he became

mayor, Menino visited a school on the first day of classes. "Graffiti was all over the building. Tables were turned over, and it was dirty," he said. "I made a commitment to myself right then that school would never again open in Boston with those conditions. And we've done that."

A 1988 reform initiative made Chicago's public school system the most decentralized in the nation. Community groups—through a complex procedure—nominated a candidate slate from which the mayor appointed the board of education. But neighborhood council for each of the city's 557 public schools hired principals and dictated the spending of a healthy chunk of the school budget. By spring 1995, the system was running a huge deficit and applied to the state legislature for a bailout.

Instead, the Republican-dominated legislature turned the problem over to Democrat Daley, authorizing him to directly appoint a five-member corporate-style board with a chief executive officer rather than a school superintendent.

"That's an awesome responsibility for one person: Daley," said Arthur L. Berman, the ranking Democrat on the Illinois Senate's Education Committee. "The Republicans wanted to drown him in this. It's [up to him] to float or drown, and so far, he's been [swimming] beautifully."

Daley appointed his chief of staff as president of the board and his budget director, Paul G. Vallas, as the effective superintendent of the school system. They have wiped out the deficit, negotiated a four-year contract with the teachers' union, constrained the discretion of the local school councils and imposed a comprehensive education plan on the schools.

"Education is now a citywide priority."

More...

part

2/8/97

Nat'l Journal

by Rochelle Stenfield

334-701

MEMORANDUM

TO: TOM FREEDMAN

FROM: JULIE MIKUTA

RE: TITLE I SUMMARY

DATE: JUNE 20, 1997

fix next year

SUMMARY

This memo describes how money allocated to states under Title I can be applied to the reconstitution of schools. ~~The source of this money are funds that the state reserves specifically for school improvement.~~ There is a program, under the reauthorized Title I, designed as a federal distribution to states specifically for school improvement; however, it has never been funded. Local educational agencies are responsible for monitoring the progress of schools, and applying sanctions, including reconstitution, if necessary. The State assesses the progress of the LEAs, and implements corrective actions if necessary. The State does not deal directly with individual schools.

OVERVIEW OF TITLE I

Title I money is allocated to schools, not individual students. Students in schools receiving Title I money get the district average per pupil plus 25% more; this means the money runs out before it reaches all poor students. To decide which schools receive the money, districts rank them by poverty level.

These are the 7 programs that make up Title I:

| Name                                  | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | FY '95        |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Basic Grants and Concentration Grants | <i>Basic grants</i> make up the bulk of the overall program; they are allocated to states by the federal government based on the number of low-income children that attend schools.<br><i>Concentration Grants</i> are targeted at counties with poverty rates that exceed 15%. | \$7.4 billion |
| Even Start                            | for early childhood education                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | \$118 million |
| Migrant Program                       | for the education of children of migratory farm workers and fishers who have moved within past 36 months                                                                                                                                                                        | \$310 million |

|                                                     |                                                                                                                    |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Neglected or Delinquent Program                     | for youth under age 21 in State neglected, delinquent, or adult correction facilities                              | \$40 million               |
| Capital Expenses                                    | for providing educational services to eligible children attending non-public schools                               | \$41,434,000               |
| <i>Additional Assistance for School Improvement</i> | <i>for technical assistance, incentives and other strategies to assist schools to help students meet standards</i> | <i>FY'95, 96, 97 = \$0</i> |
| Evaluation                                          | for assessment of Title I programs                                                                                 | \$9 million                |

## TITLE I AND SCHOOL RECONSTITUTION

### *Sources of Money*

There are 3 sources of money for school improvement under Title I:

1. the program, "Additional Assistance for School Improvement", described on the chart;
2. money reserved from the State's Title I allocation for these programs: Basic Grants, Concentration Grants, Migrant Program, Neglected or Delinquent Program, under Section 1003, "Reservation and Allocation for School Improvement"; and
3. money reserved as state administrative funds from the same programs listed in #2, under Sec 1603 (c), "State Administration".

According to Sec 1003, a minimum of \$200,000 must be reserved by the State for school improvement from a combination of these 2 sources. The program, "Additional Assistance for School Improvement", has never been allocated any funds. The entire \$200,000 must therefore come from the State's Title I allocation. A state is able to reserve up to 0.5% of its total allocation for school improvement from the programs listed above.

According to Sec 1117, "State Assistance for School Support and Improvement", a State educational agency may use the State administrative funds to support schools as described in the state education plan (see below for description of plan). A state is able to reserve up to 1% of its total allocation for administration from the programs listed above. The Education Department says that states rarely use administrative funds for school improvement.

### *"School Improvement" under Title I*

#### State Plan

In order to obtain Title I funding, a State educational agency (SEA) must get the approval of the Secretary of Education for its plan to implement and run Title I programs. In this plan (outlined in Sec 1117) will be a description of a statewide system of support for schools, and school improvement processes. This system includes: school support teams that provide information and

assistance to schoolwide programs; distinguished schools that serve as models and provide support to other schools; and distinguished educators, who assist schools needing improvement and those involved with schoolwide programs. The process of implementing this system is funded by the \$200,000 reserved by the State (described above), and the money reserved under "State Administration".

### Local Agency Plans

In order for a local educational agency (LEA) to receive Title I money, it must get the State's approval of its plan to implement and run Title I programs. Included in this plan are assurances that the LEA will fulfill its responsibilities regarding school improvement, including the taking of corrective actions.

Section 1116, "Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement" describes how a LEA monitors individual schools and applies sanctions, including school reconstitution. These are the responsibilities of an LEA that pertain to school improvement:

1. annually review schools
2. identify for school improvement any school that has not made adequate progress (as defined in State's plan) for 2 consecutive years and work with them to develop and implement an improvement plan
3. provide technical or other assistance to the schools during improvement process
4. if a school does not meet the State standards after 3 years (in some cases 4 years), take corrective actions against the school (N.B. the LEA can take corrective action against a school identified for improvement at any time)<sup>1</sup>.

These are the responsibilities of the SEA regarding school improvement:

1. make technical assistance available to schools farthest from meeting the State's standards
2. take corrective actions against an LEA that does not carry out the above responsibilities
3. review the progress of the LEA to determine if schools receiving funds are progressing towards the State standards
4. reward LEAs that have made outstanding progress
5. identify LEAs that are not making adequate progress, and work with them in the same way that LEAs work with improving schools, as described in #1-4 above<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>These are the corrective actions listed in the text of Sec 1116: withholding funds; interagency collaborative agreements between the school and other public agencies to provide social services needed to remove barriers from learning; revoking authority for a school to operate a Title I program; decreasing decision-making at the school level; making alternative arrangements such as the creation of a public charter school; reconstituting the school staff; authorizing students to transfer to other public schools, served by the LEA; and implementing opportunity-to-learn standards or strategies developed by such State under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

<sup>2</sup>These are the corrective sanctions listed in Sec 1116 that a State may apply to an LEA: withholding of funds; reconstitution of school district personnel; removal of particular schools from the jurisdiction of the LEA; implementation of the opportunity-to-learn standards or strategies developed by the State under Goals 2000; placing of the LEA into receivership; abolition or restructuring of the LEA; authorization of students to transfer from a school operated by LEA into a school operated by a different LEA; development of a new LEA plan.

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: BRUCE REED, ELENA KAGAN, MICHAEL COHEN**

**CC: MARY SMITH, WILLIAM KINCAID**

**FROM: TOM FREEDMAN  
JULIE MIKUTA**

**RE: FURTHER INFORMATION ON INTERVENTIONS INTO SCHOOLS**

**DATE: JUNE 16, 1997**

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### **SUMMARY**

This Administration has encouraged the fixing of failing schools by closing or reconstituting them, or by reopening them as charter schools. This memo discusses: relevant statutes; Administrative support; and supporters/ critics. Attached is an addendum to the previous table on school takeovers; it focuses on where sanctions have been implemented and what the results have been.

### **I. RECENT STATUTES: IMPROVING SCHOOLS ACT, 1994 [ESEA]**

#### ***A. Title I funds [P.L. 103-382]***

Title I is the largest single federal investment in schooling, providing almost \$7 billion to schools systems across the country to improve education for children at risk of school failure who live in low-income communities. It reaches more than 6 million children annually, primarily in the early elementary grades. The reauthorization of Title I in 1994 redesigned the program such that its primary aim is now on helping the targeting children to meet high standards.

Title I funds can be applied to the reconstitution of chronically failing schools. So far, they have not been used in this way, according to the Department of Education which plans to investigate this issue.

Students in schools that receive Title I funds are required to meet challenging state standards. Schools or districts in which students fail to reach these goals for 2 years are required to make improvement plans and submit them to the local educational agency (in case of failing school) or the State (in the case of a district). The local education agency or the state must then provide technical assistance. If the school or district makes limited progress for 3 years, corrective actions may be taken. These include: reconstituting personnel, and (in the case of a failing school) creating a charter school. The State reports its overall strategy on how to aid failing schools to the Federal level; reports of individual schools do not pass from state to federal level.

### ***B. Distinguished Educator [Sec 1117]***

Requires each state to establish a corps of “distinguished educators” who will provide technical assistance to schools and districts farthest from meeting the State’s student performance standards. Kentucky’s program is the model; all of the 53 schools that were assigned a distinguished educator showed improvement by the end of the second year.

## **II. PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT**

### **State of the Union Address**

The Address does not explicitly mention failing schools. However, when the Department of Education expanded each of the 10 parts of education plan outlined in the speech, two components recommend reconstituting or closing failing schools. They both propose that charter schools replace failing schools in some circumstances.

***President Clinton said: “Every state should adopt high national standards.”***

The Dept of Ed’s elaboration:

- urges holding schools and their states or districts accountable for results
- recommends overhauling or shutting failing schools and allowing charter schools to start over in their place
- encourages states or districts to use authority under reformed Title I program to hold schools accountable

***President Clinton said: “Every state should give parents the power to choose the right public school for their children.”***

- the Dept of Ed’s elaboration: advocates fixing failing schools, by reconstituting or shutting and then reopening them if necessary, or creating new charter schools

### **Secretary Riley’s State of American Education Address (2/18/97)**

Secretary Riley calls fixing failing schools the “first order of business”. Failing schools should be reconstituted or closed if it can’t be changed. He praises the efforts occurring in New York, Chicago, Memphis, Atlanta and San Francisco.

## **III. NON-PROFIT ACTIVITY**

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Pew Foundation for School Improvement co-sponsored a working group meeting this spring. Teachers and administrators involved in this process, state and federal representatives and academics attended. A follow-up meeting focusing on defining indicators is tentatively planned for this fall.

## **IV. LEGAL BATTLES**

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has created obstacles for school takeovers. Opponents charge that a state limits the voting rights of a city’s racial minorities when it appoints a group to replace the elected school board or when it reduces the local board’s powers. A few CA counties, along with most Southern states, are required by the Act to get Justice Department approval before doing anything that

would affect minority voting rights [Ed Week 3/26/97]. In the fall of 1996, Michael Cohen met with officials from TX, CA and NY to discuss this problem.

## V. THE DEBATE

### Proponents of reconstitution or of turning failing schools into charter schools

- **Alveda Celeste King, niece of Martin Luther King, Jr., and head of "Save the Kids, Now!" coalition**, supports empowering parents and teachers to operate their own schools [USA Today, 6/16/97]
- **attorney Peter Graham Cohn of the NAACP** [San Francisco]: "[Reconstitution] is a way to radically transform the schools", said. "The whole concept has placed San Francisco in the forefront of education innovation. It's a clear benefit." [San Fran Examiner, 8/14/96]
- **Ronnie Davis, spokesperson for NY's United Federation of Teachers**: supported Chancellor Crew's plans to intervene in troubled schools, and said the union would support the intervention even if it means replacing the entire school's staff [NYT, 11/1/95]
- **Dianne Ravitch (Asst Sec of Ed Sec of Ed, 91-93; now at the Brookings Institution and NYU) Joseph P. Viteritti (Research Prof in the Wagner School of Public Service in NYU)** advocated putting failing schools in NYC on probation and closing them if they do not improve. [Reforming Education Today, 1995]

### Proponents who qualify their support:

- **Richard Elmore, Harvard University professor**: believes radical strategies like reconstitution are the wave of the future *but* fears the process will be undertaken far too haphazardly: "If a district is going to reconstitute then it had better make sure schools have ample resources and teachers have sufficient professional-development opportunities. Otherwise, it's just inviting failure." [Ed Wk, 3/97]
- **Susan Fuhrman, a professor of educational policy at Rutgers University and director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education**: the limited research indicates that the threat of sanctions motivates teachers and administrators and the 'most promising' approaches provide substantial technical assistance and professional development to teachers (e.g. in Chicago, KY and MD) but the research also says these approaches are costly and that underfunding is a significant obstacle to success

### Opponents

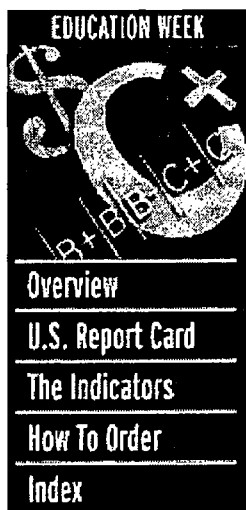
- the **NAACP** opposed transferring control of Cleveland's schools to Mayor White in 1996
- teachers unions across country

## RECONSTITUTION/ PROBATION IN PRACTICE

| PLACE                          | WHAT'S BEEN DONE                                                                                         | TIME | RESULTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | DOWNSIDE                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chicago                        | 109 schools put on probation                                                                             | 1 yr | 1. 69 of 71 elementary schools on probation improved in reading; 54 in math<br>2. 22 schools removed from list of 'eligible for probation'<br>3. 37 of 38 high schools on probation improved in math; 30 in reading [Chic Trib 5/23/97]                                                                     | 1. Chicago schools' scores still lowest in state<br>2. improved test scores haven't always been enough to remove school from probation<br>3. improvements not uniform across grade level and subject |
| San Francisco                  | 8 schools reconstituted since 1994; approx 10% staff rehired at same school (others rehired in district) | 3 yr | 1. After 1 yr of reconstitution: 3 of 4 middle & high schools showed gains in test scores [SF Chronicle 5/10/95]<br>2. Superintendent agreed to stop reconstituting schools if teachers' union pledged to not interfere with forced transfer of teachers who 'impede school improvement plans' [Ed Wk 5/97] | Hostility is high among teachers in district                                                                                                                                                         |
| Baltimore's Furman Elem School | Reorganized by state, 1995                                                                               | 2 yr | 1. In 1994, 9.2% students met state standards; in 1996, 26.2%<br>2. Programs introduced: homework hot line, intensive staff development, new academic programs [W Post 6/6/97]                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## RECONSTITUTION/ PROBATION IN PRACTICE

|                  |                                                                                                                        |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jersey City, NJ  | state control since 1989; school board replaced, new superintendent hired                                              | 8 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Costly administrative mistakes cleared</li> <li>2. Schools and grounds cleaned and renovated</li> <li>3. All principals evaluated</li> <li>4. New textbooks purchased</li> <li>5. Teachers denied raises or dismissed</li> <li>6. # attending all day kindergarten rose from 375 to 1270</li> <li>7. After 7 yrs = moderate rise in scores</li> <li>8. Arthur Andersen audit ('93) found 'significant progress'</li> </ol> | Some teachers report seeing no changes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| KY               | State identifies schools 'in decline' and assigns a 'distinguished educator' (previous teacher or principal) to school | 2 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 53 schools identified showed improvement by end of second year.</li> <li>2. Financial bonuses to successful schools</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Costly: \$110,000/ yr per Distinguished Educator</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Paterson, NJ     | State control since 1991                                                                                               | 6 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Slight rise in test scores</li> <li>2. Arthur Andersen audit ('94) found 'improved learning environment'</li> <li>3. Parents praise changes</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Andersen audit cited improvements needed in scores and maintenance</li> <li>2. In first election, 3 of state's appointees ousted/ 2 replaced by pre-reconstitution individuals</li> <li>3. Criticized for lack of attention to learning program</li> </ol> |
| Logan County, WV | State appointed new superintendent/ reduced powers of board in 1992; relinquished control in 1996 [Ed Wk 9/18/96]      | 2 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Test scores rose from 50th to 69th percentile</li> <li>2. Attendance rose to over 90% in all schools (was below in 6 of 23 schools)</li> <li>3. Dropout rate fell from 19.6 to 13.2%</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



## New Mexico Data

This table shows New Mexico's scores, along with those of some of its neighboring states, in our five major areas.

- ☐ [Student Achievement](#)   ☐ [Standards & Assessments](#)
- ☐ [School Climate](#)   ☐ [Quality of Teaching](#)
- ☐ [Resources](#)

## New Mexico Student Achievement Data

For more information about these measures, see our [Student Achievement](#) page. N/A = State did not participate in NAEP testing. ? = Information not available.

|                                                          | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| 4th graders proficient or advanced in reading, 1994      | 24    | 28    | N/A  | 21   | 30   |
| 8th graders proficient or advanced in math, 1992         | 15    | 22    | N/A  | 11   | 22   |
| 4th graders reading at basic, NAEP 1994                  | 28    | 31    | N/A  | 28   | 34   |
| 4th graders reading below basic, NAEP 1994               | 48    | 41    | N/A  | 51   | 36   |
| 8th graders in math at basic, NAEP 1992                  | 40    | 42    | N/A  | 37   | 45   |
| 8th graders in math below basic, NAEP 1992               | 45    | 36    | N/A  | 52   | 33   |
|                                                          | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
| 4th graders in math at proficient or advanced, NAEP 1992 | 13    | 18    | N/A  | 11   | 19   |
| 4th graders in math at basic, NAEP 1992                  | 41    | 43    | N/A  | 39   | 47   |
| 4th graders in math below basic, NAEP 1992               | 47    | 39    | N/A  | 50   | 34   |
| State-funded preschool for disadvantaged, 1995           | yes   | yes   | no   | yes  | no   |
| Public high schools with AP courses, 1996                | 68    | 55    | 58   | 47   | 75   |
| 8th graders taking algebra, 1992                         | 20    | 21    | ?    | 13   | 32   |
|                                                          | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |

|                                                 |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Students taking upper-level math, 1994          | ?  | ?  | 32 | 36 | 59 |
| Students taking upper-level science, 1994       | ?  | ?  | 22 | 18 | 33 |
| 16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993 | 11 | 10 | 12 | 10 | 7  |
| 1994 grads enrolling in college                 | 50 | 52 | 38 | 54 | 56 |

## New Mexico School Climate Data

This table shows New Mexico's scores, along with those of some of its neighboring states, in our School Climate category. For more information about these measures, see our [School Climate](#) page.

|                                                                             | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev.    | N.M. | Utah  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|---------|------|-------|
| Score                                                                       | 64    | 73    | 64      | 68   | 61    |
| Grade                                                                       | D     | C     | D       | D+   | D-    |
| % elem. teachers w/fewer than 25 students                                   | 43    | 48    | 48      | 76   | 24    |
| % secondary English teachers w/ fewer than 80 students per day              | 35    | 46    | 36      | 45   | 24    |
| State permits site-based management                                         | yes   | yes   | yes     | yes  | local |
| % schools w/ decision-making body that includes teachers                    | 57    | 76    | 45      | 58   | 54    |
|                                                                             | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev.    | N.M. | Utah  |
| State grants waivers of education regulations                               | yes   | yes   | yes     | yes  | yes   |
| State open-enrollment program                                               | yes   | yes   | limited | no   | yes   |
| % secondary teachers who think physical conflicts among students is problem | 46    | 36    | 45      | 54   | 37    |
| % secondary teachers who think student possession of weapons is a problem   | 30    | 18    | 28      | 35   | 17    |
| % principals who have great influence on hiring                             | 91    | 95    | 95      | 91   | 95    |

|                                                                           |       |       |      |      |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| % teachers in schools where teachers share beliefs about school's mission | 83    | 83    | 79   | 79   | 85   |
|                                                                           | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
| % teachers in schools with great deal of cooperation among teachers       | 76    | 78    | 73   | 72   | 79   |
| % teachers in schools with clear goals, priorities                        | 81    | 85    | 81   | 78   | 83   |
| % teachers who report that student absenteeism is not serious problem     | 74    | 86    | 78   | 75   | 84   |
| % teachers who report that student apathy is not serious problem          | 74    | 80    | 74   | 73   | 77   |
|                                                                           | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
| % teachers who report that lack of parent support is not serious problem  | 65    | 75    | 69   | 68   | 81   |
| % students in elem. schools with 350 students or fewer                    | 7     | 21    | 6    | 19   | 6    |
| % students in high schools with 900 students or fewer                     | 17    | 26    | 17   | 28   | 14   |
| State allows for charter schools                                          | yes   | yes   | no   | yes  | no   |

## New Mexico Resources Data

This table shows New Mexico's scores, along with those of some of its neighboring states, in our Resources categories. For more information about these measures, see our [Resources](#) page.

### ADEQUACY

|                                                      |         |         |         |         |         |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|                                                      | Ariz.   | Colo.   | Nev.    | N.M.    | Utah    |
| Score                                                | 69      | 66      | 76      | 84      | 73      |
| Grade                                                | D+      | D       | C       | B       | C       |
| Spending per pupil adjusted for regional costs, 1995 | \$4,346 | \$5,139 | \$4,842 | \$5,681 | \$3,537 |
| % change in inflation-adjusted spending, 1985-95     | 10      | 5       | 24      | 27      | 15      |

|                                                                                        |          |          |          |                 |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| <b>State's relative (%) fiscal effort in 1993</b>                                      | 77       | 74       | 64       | 77              | 83       |
| <b>ALLOCATION</b>                                                                      |          |          |          |                 |          |
|                                                                                        | Ariz.    | Colo.    | Nev.     | N.M.            | Utah     |
| <b>Score</b>                                                                           | 75       | 70       | 67       | <b>80</b>       | 78       |
| <b>Grade</b>                                                                           | C        | C-       | D+       | <b>B-</b>       | C+       |
| <b>% of 1994 expenditures spent on instruction</b>                                     | 58       | 61       | 60       | <b>59</b>       | 67       |
| <b>QED measure of investment in technology</b>                                         | High     | Medium   | Low      | <b>High</b>     | High     |
| <b>% schools with at least 1 building in major disrepair</b>                           | 41       | 32       | 23       | <b>30</b>       | 34       |
| <b>EQUITY</b>                                                                          |          |          |          |                 |          |
|                                                                                        | Ariz.    | Colo.    | Nev.     | N.M.            | Utah     |
| <b>Score</b>                                                                           | 74       | 82       | 86       | <b>71</b>       | 89       |
| <b>Grade</b>                                                                           | C        | B-       | B        | <b>C-</b>       | B+       |
| <b>Relative equity in per-pupil spending among all state districts</b>                 | 74       | 82       | 86       | <b>71</b>       | 89       |
| <b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>                                                          |          |          |          |                 |          |
|                                                                                        | Ariz.    | Colo.    | Nev.     | N.M.            | Utah     |
| <b>Unadjusted education spending per pupil, 1995</b>                                   | \$4,222  | \$5,101  | \$4,607  | <b>\$5,181</b>  | \$3,420  |
| <b>Education spending per \$1,000 in per capita income, 1995</b>                       | \$36     | \$37     | \$30     | <b>\$56</b>     | \$46     |
| <b>Gap between districts at 5th &amp; 95th percentiles in spending per pupil, 1992</b> | \$4,827  | \$5,517  | \$5,612  | <b>\$3,761</b>  | \$2,498  |
| <b>Average 1995 teacher salary, adjusted for cost of living</b>                        | \$31,908 | \$33,556 | \$36,419 | <b>\$29,597</b> | \$29,842 |
| <b>Teachers as % of total staff, 1995</b>                                              | 51       | 54       | 58       | <b>49</b>       | 54       |
| <b>Pupils per multimedia computer, 1996</b>                                            | 24       | 16       | 25       | <b>23</b>       | 21       |

## New Mexico Standards & Assessments Data

This table shows New Mexico's scores, along with those of some of its neighboring states, in our Standards & Assessments category. For more information about these measures, see our [Standards & Assessments](#) page.

? = Information not available. I = Incomplete.

|                                                                                                         | Ariz.          | Colo.                       | Nev.                            | N.M.                                                                                      | Utah                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Score</b>                                                                                            | 76             | N/A                         | 75                              | <b>98</b>                                                                                 | 97                                                                            |
| <b>Grade</b>                                                                                            | C              | I                           | C                               | <b>A</b>                                                                                  | A                                                                             |
| <b>State has adopted standards in core subjects</b>                                                     | 2 subjects     | yes                         | 1 subject                       | <b>yes</b>                                                                                | yes                                                                           |
| <b>Standards set high expectations</b>                                                                  | ?              | ?                           | ?                               | ?                                                                                         | ?                                                                             |
| <b>How state measures performance, 1995</b>                                                             | Norm-Ref. Test | No grade--system incomplete | Norm-Ref. Test; Writing Assess. | <b>Norm- Ref. Test; Criterion-Ref. Test; Performance, Portfolio, and Writing Assess.s</b> | Norm- Ref. Test; Aligned Criterion-Ref. Test; Performance and Writing Assess. |
| <b>If all four core subjects are assessed, 1995</b>                                                     | 2 of Core      | none                        | 2 of Core                       | <b>All of Core</b>                                                                        | More than Core                                                                |
|                                                                                                         | Ariz.          | Colo.                       | Nev.                            | N.M.                                                                                      | Utah                                                                          |
| <b>Mastery of standards will be linked to graduation/promotion</b>                                      | yes            | no                          | yes                             | <b>no</b>                                                                                 | no                                                                            |
| <b>Schools and/or districts held accountable for student performance through public reporting, 1996</b> | yes            | yes                         | yes                             | <b>yes</b>                                                                                | yes                                                                           |
| <b>Schools and/or districts held accountable for student performance through consequences, 1996</b>     | no             | yes                         | no                              | <b>yes</b>                                                                                | no                                                                            |
| <b>Schools and/or districts held accountable for student performance through rewards, 1996</b>          | no             | yes                         | no                              | <b>yes</b>                                                                                | no                                                                            |
| <b>Participated in 1996 NAEP testing</b>                                                                | yes            | yes                         | yes                             | <b>yes</b>                                                                                | yes                                                                           |

## New Mexico Quality of Teaching Data

This table shows New Mexico's scores, along with those of some of its neighboring states, in our Quality of Teaching category. For more information about these measures, see our [Quality of Teaching](#) page.

\* = State requires some teachers to have a noneducation degree.

|                                                                                             | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| <b>Score</b>                                                                                | 65    | 81    | 70   | 71   | 74   |
| <b>Grade</b>                                                                                | D     | B-    | C-   | C-   | C    |
| <b>% of teacher graduates from NCATE-accredited institutions</b>                            | 0     | 91    | 78   | 100  | 100  |
| <b>Incentives for teachers to seek national board certification through flexible hiring</b> | yes   | no    | no   | yes  | no   |
| <b>Incentives for teachers to seek national board certification through license renewal</b> | no    | yes   | no   | no   | no   |
| <b>Incentives for teachers to seek national board certification through fee supports</b>    | no    | no    | no   | no   | no   |
|                                                                                             | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
| <b>Incentives for teachers to seek national board certification through pay supplements</b> | no    | no    | no   | no   | no   |
| <b>State belongs to INTASC</b>                                                              | no    | no    | no   | no   | no   |
| <b>State contributes to INTASC's assessment development</b>                                 | no    | no    | no   | no   | no   |
| <b>% secondary teachers who hold degree in subject they teach</b>                           | 58    | 66    | 66   | 52   | 62   |
| <b>% teachers inadequately licensed</b>                                                     | 9     | 6     | 4    | 5    | 4    |
| <b>Requires a major other than ed. for teaching license</b>                                 | no    | yes   | no*  | no*  | no*  |
|                                                                                             | Ariz. | Colo. | Nev. | N.M. | Utah |
| <b>Independent professional standards board has been established in the state</b>           | no    | no    | yes  | no   | no   |

|                                                                         |       |         |      |             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|------|-------------|------|
| <b>Requires K-12 standards in teacher ed.</b>                           | yes   | yes     | no   | <b>no</b>   | yes  |
| <b>Courses in technology required for certification</b>                 | yes   | yes     | no   | <b>yes</b>  | yes  |
| <b>Number of weeks state requires for student teaching</b>              | 10    | N/A     | 8    | <b>6</b>    | 8    |
| <b>Requires and funds new-teacher induction</b>                         | no    | pending | no   | <b>no</b>   | no   |
| <b>% prof. dev. participants receiving support</b>                      | 76    | 81      | 74   | <b>72</b>   | 74   |
|                                                                         | Ariz. | Colo.   | Nev. | <b>N.M.</b> | Utah |
| <b>State requires assessment for teaching license</b>                   | yes   | yes     | yes  | <b>yes</b>  | no   |
| <b>At least 9 hours of training (1994 data) in education technology</b> | 13    | 20      | 15   | <b>10</b>   | 20   |
| <b>At least 9 hours of training (1994 data) in teaching methods</b>     | 24    | 30      | 33   | <b>17</b>   | 32   |
| <b>At least 9 hours of training (1994 data) in student assessments</b>  | 12    | 19      | 11   | <b>9</b>    | 10   |

**Go to New Mexico Report Card**

**For a complete list of sources of data, see "Data Sources and Notes"**

|                  |                        |                 |                        |             |             |
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|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|

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## Arizona School Report Card 1995 - 1996

# Gold Dust Elementary

Paradise Valley Unified District  
3602 E. Cholla, Phoenix, Arizona 85028

|                                      |                       |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Principal: Dr. Marian Hermie         | Grades: K to 6        |
| Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. | Enrollment: 676       |
|                                      | Phone: (602) 493-6130 |
|                                      | FAX: (602) 493-6136   |

### School Statement

The professional staff at Gold Dust is dedicated to providing a quality education that meets the needs of each child at our school. Our mission is to teach students to become lifelong learners by becoming gatherers of information who can interpret and apply this information to their daily lives. Our goals include creating a caring and understanding community which celebrates the diversity of the unique people within it.

### School Organization and Philosophy

|             |
|-------------|
| Traditional |
|-------------|

### Academic Goals

|                                                |                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Further develop integrated instructional units | Develop and implement a multicultural curriculum                           |
| Continue integration of math manipulatives     | Develop and implement a global theme of research and information gathering |

### Instructional Programs

|                  |                             |                  |                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Honors Classes   | 'Cover to Cover' Publishing | Computer Classes | Performing Arts Program |
| Band and Strings |                             |                  |                         |

### School Honors

|                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| A+ School                      | 1987 |
| A+ School                      | 1983 |
| Teacher Venture Grant Winners  | 1989 |
| Student Poetry Contest Winners | 1994 |

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Promotion Rate        | 99%                |
| Attendance Rate       | 96%                |
| Number of School Days | 175                |
| Hours of Instruction  | 5 hrs. and 20 min. |

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This Arizona School Report Card was prepared by the Arizona Department of Education using a standardized format to combine information provided by the local school with data compiled from state records. Information is provided for the 1995-96 school year unless otherwise noted. Enrollment is the number of students enrolled as of Oct. 1, 1994. Be aware that each school has special strengths and needs and that all schools benefit from the active involvement of parents in their children's education. If you have questions about the report card or need more information, contact the school office. Look for Arizona School Report Cards at <http://ade.state.az.us/reportcards/> on the Internet.

**School Site Council**

| <b>Council Composition</b> | <b>Council Duties</b>            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 School Administrators    | Develop School Mission and Goals |
| 1 Non-Certified Employees  | Development of Three-year Plan   |
| 3 Teachers                 | Budget                           |
| 3 Parents                  | Curriculum Development           |
| 0 Community Members        | Parent/Educator Relations        |
| 0 Students                 |                                  |

| <b>School Responsibilities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Parent Responsibilities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gold Dust aims to provide our students with a safe, healthy environment, conducive to learning, which will enable all students to develop their potential academically, physically, and socially so they become sound decision makers and productive members of our society. We strive to meet the needs of all students. | We believe parents play a vital role in their children's academic success; therefore, we strongly endorse parent participation in school visits, conferences, site council, PTSA, and school events. We believe parents are key to reinforcing student responsibility for attendance, adherence to school rules and assignments and projects related to the academic program. |

**Report Card Release Dates**

11/03/95      01/26/96      04/04/96      05/30/96

**School Safety** (The school does not have a police officer assigned to the school.)

|                                                                                                         |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Incidents occurring on school grounds requiring law enforcement intervention resulting in charges filed | 0 |
| Number of students against whom charges were filed                                                      | 0 |
| Number of individuals other than students against whom charges were filed                               | 0 |

**Transportation Policy**

Bus transportation services are provided for Kindergarten students who reside farther than half a mile from school and students in grades 1 through 6 who reside farther than one mile from school.

For more information regarding the transportation policy, contact Skip Brown at (602) 493-6320

**Resources Available at School Site**

| <b>Special Facilities</b>       | <b>Extracurricular Activities</b> |                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Media Center                    | Comets/DARE Grade 6               | CHAMPS Grade 5    |
| Two Computer Labs               | BABES Grade K-3                   | Chorus Grade 4-6  |
| 'Cover to Cover' Publishing Lab | Band Grade 4-6                    | Strings Grade 4-6 |

**Social Services**

|                     |                     |                 |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Afterschool Program | Breakfast Program   | Lunch Program   |
| Counseling Services | Crisis Intervention | Health Services |
| Community Classes   |                     |                 |

For more information regarding social services, contact Dee Zenk at (602) 493-6130

**Academic Achievement Indicators**

Students were tested in grades 4, 7 and 10 using standardized, nationally norm-referenced achievement tests. Results for 1992, 1993 and 1994 are reported in terms of the national percentile rank achieved on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for grades 4 and 7 in the subject areas of Reading, Language and Mathematics; and the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency for grade 10 in the subject areas of Reading and Mathematics. Corresponding national and state scores are provided for comparison.

Students were tested in grades 3, 8 and 12 on their achievement of the Arizona Essentials Skills using district-selected assessments. An Essential Skills Completion Report (ESCR) was compiled by each school to indicate the percentage of students meeting achievement levels (standards) determined by the district for competency in reading, mathematics and writing skills. Each subject area for each grade has several clusters of skills which are tested separately throughout the school year until mastery is achieved. For each cluster the standard to be met is given as a percentage of the possible points on the test. The percentage of students tested is reported and the percentage of students determined to be proficient is given.

**Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and Tests of Achievement and Proficiency  
Percentile Rank Scores**

|                 | <b>School</b> |      |      | <b>Arizona</b> | <b>National</b> |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Grade 4</b>  | 1992          | 1993 | 1994 | 1994           | 1994            |
| Reading         | 54            | 64   | 60   | 48             | 48              |
| Language        | 51            | 55   | 57   | 48             | 49              |
| Mathematics     | 49            | 53   | 56   | 49             | 46              |
| <b>Grade 7</b>  | 1992          | 1993 | 1994 |                |                 |
| Reading         | --            | --   | --   | 53             | 48              |
| Language        | --            | --   | --   | 53             | 48              |
| Mathematics     | --            | --   | --   | 51             | 46              |
| <b>Grade 10</b> | 1992          | 1993 | 1994 |                |                 |
| Reading         | --            | --   | --   | 51             | 47              |
| Mathematics     | --            | --   | --   | 47             | 48              |

## Student Achievement of Essential Skills 1994-95

This summary lists the Essential Skills clusters, with the district standard, the percentage of students tested, and the percentage of students achieving mastery.

**Note:** Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, no individually identifiable references to students may be made. Therefore, items of data containing information about three or fewer students have been replaced with asterisks (\*\*) to protect student privacy. Some columns contain dashes (--) to indicate "not applicable or no data available" because schools may not test all subject areas or grade levels in the same year.

| Grade 3                       | District Standard | Percent Tested | Percent Mastery |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Mathematics</b>            |                   |                |                 |
| Sorting and Classifying       | 75%               | 76%            | 80%             |
| Conjecturing                  | 75%               | 100%           | 50%             |
| Fractions                     | 75%               | 91%            | 60%             |
| Using Money                   | 75%               | 74%            | 70%             |
| Measurement                   | 75%               | 24%            | 70%             |
| Patterns                      | 75%               | 24%            | 90%             |
| Identifying Shapes            | 75%               | --             | --              |
| Interpreting Word Problems    | 75%               | 100%           | 60%             |
| <b>Reading</b>                |                   |                |                 |
| Personal Experience Narrative | 75%               | 97%            | 50%             |
| Story                         | 75%               | 70%            | 80%             |
| Informative Report            | 75%               | 71%            | 80%             |
| Communication                 | 75%               | 97%            | 80%             |
| Poem                          | 75%               | 73%            | 90%             |
| <b>Writing</b>                |                   |                |                 |
| Personal Experience Narrative | 75%               | 98%            | 80%             |
| Imaginative Story             | 75%               | 73%            | 80%             |
| Report                        | 75%               | 71%            | 80%             |
| Communication                 | 75%               | 100%           | 80%             |
| Poem                          | 75%               | 71%            | 80%             |

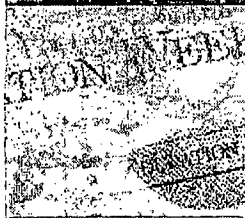
| <b>Grade 8</b>                | <b>District Standard</b> | <b>Percent Tested</b> | <b>Percent Mastery</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Mathematics</b>            |                          |                       |                        |
| Statistics                    | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Probability                   | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Analyzing Data                | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Measurement                   | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Geometry                      | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Geometric Principles          | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Expressions and Equations     | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Patterns                      | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Mathematical Reasoning        | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| <b>Reading</b>                |                          |                       |                        |
| Personal Experience Narrative | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Story                         | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Informative Report            | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Communication                 | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Poem                          | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Summary                       | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Essay                         | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| <b>Writing</b>                |                          |                       |                        |
| Personal Experience Narrative | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Story                         | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Report                        | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Communication                 | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Poem                          | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Summary                       | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Specialized Expository Paper  | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |

| <b>Grade 12</b>               | <b>District Standard</b> | <b>Percent Tested</b> | <b>Percent Mastery</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Mathematics</b>            |                          |                       |                        |
| Analyzing Data                | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Progressions                  | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Misuses of Statistics         | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Geometry                      | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Measurement                   | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Reasoning                     | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Graphing                      | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Statistics                    | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| <b>Reading</b>                |                          |                       |                        |
| Personal Experience Narrative | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Short Story                   | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Informative Report            | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Communication                 | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Poem                          | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Summary                       | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Essay                         | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Persuasive Passage            | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Review/Evaluation/Critique    | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| <b>Writing</b>                |                          |                       |                        |
| Personal Experience Narrative | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Short Story                   | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Report                        | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Communication                 | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Poem                          | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Summary                       | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Specialized Expository Paper  | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Persuasive Paper              | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |
| Evaluation                    | 75%                      | --                    | --                     |

MARCH 19 1997

EDUCATION WEEK on the WEB

EDUCATIONWEEK INCONTENT THE TOPICS TEACHERMAGAZINE THE DAILY NEWS SPECIAL REPORT



## Hartford Seeks State Help In Running Schools

By Jeff Archer

Officials in Hartford, Conn., last week invited the state to assume a greater role in running their city's troubled school district. But they also urged the state to reject a legislative proposal to disband the local school board.

The pitch came as the state legislature's joint education committee considered several bills aimed at reducing racial isolation and improving educational quality in city school systems around the state.

In outlining Hartford's proposal, Mayor Michael P. Peters asked lawmakers to appoint a panel to oversee the district's financial management for up to five years. The panel, he said, would approve the district's budget and labor contracts, and could reopen existing contracts.

"It's a starting point," state Rep. Cameron C. Staples, the education committee's co-chairman, said of the proposal. "I don't think they provided a lot of details."

The proposal, which was endorsed by the Hartford City Council and the school board as well as the mayor, represents a "moderate course" toward state intervention in the school system, said board President Donald V. Romanik. Student test scores in Hartford are among the lowest in the state despite the district's relatively high spending levels.

Under the plan, the school board and superintendent would still set the schools' academic course while surrendering financial management to the review board.

In the area of academic improvement, Mr. Romanik said lawmakers should give the district's new superintendent, Patricia Daniel, a chance to work with the state to implement recommendations offered last fall by state Commissioner of Education Theodore S. Sergi. ("Conn. Officials Call for Team Effort To Revamp Hartford's Ailing Schools," Nov. 13, 1996.)

"One thing residents of Hartford are saying is that they will have no input," Mr. Romanik said. "This at least maintains that local accountability."

But some lawmakers said they were skeptical that the proposed division of authority could work.

"I see in that the potential for a stalemate," Mr. Staples said.

### **Takeover Bill Pending**

The Hartford proposal came after lawmakers introduced a bill this month to allow the state to dissolve local school boards in districts

Read our story,  
"Veterans of State  
**Takeover** Battles  
Tell a Cautionary  
Tale," Feb. 12,  
1997.

Read "Under State  
Control," June 12,  
1996, for a look at  
a few school  
districts from  
across the country  
and how they are  
governed.

judged to be in crisis. To replace the school board in such cases, the governor and legislature would appoint an oversight panel of state and local officials with the authority to appoint its own superintendent.

Rep. Staples, who supports the measure, said he hoped that by including local officials on the oversight panels, Hartford could avoid the acrimony that state intervention has spawned elsewhere. ("Ill Will Comes With Territory in *Takeovers*," June 12, 1996.) In New Jersey, for example, where the state has taken over its three largest districts, local officials have no say in naming the superintendents.

"We don't think the state should be taking over completely," said Mr. Staples, a Democrat from New Haven. "We're saying the state should set up another local/state board to make decisions for a while."

### **The 'Ultimate Authority'**

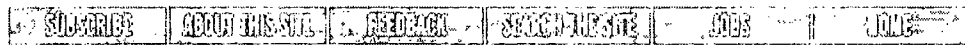
After hearing the Hartford officials' plan, the lawmaker said he would consider the idea of keeping the local school board intact while the state intervenes. But, he added, "if the board of education remains, then it's got to be clear that the review board is the ultimate authority during that period."

Nonetheless, Mr. Staples added that he was pleased that Hartford officials had acknowledged that the state needs to play a larger role in their district.

"They did all say, 'We do think it's time for some state intervention,' " he said last week. "Now it's a question of how to do it right, not whether to do it."

The state-intervention bill is one of several measures intended to address last summer's *Sheff v. O'Neill* decision, in which the state supreme court ordered lawmakers to reduce the racial and ethnic isolation affecting the 24,500-student Hartford district. ("Conn. Supreme Court Orders Desegregation for Hartford," Aug. 7, 1996.)

To that aim, other bills introduced this month would tie state school construction aid to whether projects reduce racial isolation; allow students from Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport to attend schools in neighboring districts; and require districts to offer intensive reading programs in the summer for students who can't read by the end of 1st grade.



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## MEMORANDUM

TO: TOM FREEDMAN

FROM: JULIE MIKUTA

RE: CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING FAILING SCHOOLS

DATE: JUNE 5, 1997

---

① Need more on data  
Sec. V.

### I. SUMMARY

Over the last 5 years many states have developed systems of accountability for their schools. In most cases, these follow the format of a 'report card' on the schools (see attached copy of a school report card). Most states evaluate the schools on these criteria: performance on standardized tests; dropout rates; attendance rates; and promotion rates. In several states, the governor or state or local education leader can apply sanctions to failing schools.

### II. YOUR PROPOSAL IDEA

The idea that states are able to identify failing schools and take measures against their lack of success is a hot topic across the country. On the national level, it could be difficult because there is no national testing package used by every state; the closest to 100% take-up is used in 40 states. Since most states have their own criteria, these could be used. I remember you mentioning high school, but most of the schools that are classified as failing are elementary schools. This may simply reflect the ratio of the number of elementary schools to high schools. A 1996 poll found that 72% of persons interviewed believe that state legislators should assist children in failing schools to opt out of that school and attend a school -- public, private or parochial -- of the parents' choosing.

### III. FEDERAL LEVEL ACTIVITY

Not a lot has happened here.

*Campaign Speech, 10/96:* proposal for 'report cards' for every public school, to be posted on the Internet

*Rep. Rangel:* champions 'empowerment zones' for failing schools, where all rules/ regulations would be suspended and where business would be asked to provide the resource needed to assure that graduates would be equipped for available jobs [Was Post 9/16/96]

*Dept of Ed:* T. Payzant said that this administration's position on private management of schools 'is to give this approach a chance' [Was Post 1/26/94]

School  
Takeover



## CRITERIA

The criteria listed above are common to nearly all states and districts. I've only been able to find specific numbers for standardized test results. Attached is a list of other ideas for criteria, as defined by Education Week.

### *Standardized tests:*

- usually, the tests considered are in areas of reading and math, sometimes science
- based either on state or national standardized tests
- the only hard number I could find as reference, was Chicago, where if 15% or less of students read below norm level on national test, school is put on probation; in a school mentioned in NY Times, only 12% of students read at or above grade level



## WHAT STATES/ DISTRICTS ARE DOING

### New York:

- State Board of Regents has identified 'failing schools' every year since 1989. (Since this began, only 12 have gotten off the list; 89 have been on it.)
- The Chancellor of New York City's schools took over 16 schools in 1995, and removed principals from 6 of these.

### Texas:

- Grant Program enables parents to transfer their children from failing schools (\$4- 5,000 per pupil)
- schools are ranked at one of four levels, exemplary to low performing, and low performing schools are subject to sanctions or state take-over

Chicago: 85% of students must score below reading norms on Iowa Tests for school to be put on probation; 109 (out of 554) schools on probation in Oct 96

Indianapolis: placed 90% of schools on probation based on: staff and student attendance; assessment on tests; graduation and remediation rates; and amount of contact with parents.

### Florida:

- in 1997, Commissioner of Education identified 158 'failing' schools
- if schools stay on failing list for 3 years, they are subject to replacement of the principal, or withholding of funds by state

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** BRUCE REED, ELENA KAGAN, MICHAEL COHEN

**CC:** MARY SMITH, WILLIAM KINCAID

**FROM:** TOM FREEDMAN  
JULIE MIKUTA

**RE:** FURTHER INFORMATION ON INTERVENTIONS INTO SCHOOLS

**DATE:** JUNE 16, 1997

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### SUMMARY

This Administration has encouraged the fixing of failing schools by closing or reconstituting them, or by reopening them as charter schools. This memo discusses: relevant statutes; Administrative support; and supporters/ critics. Attached is an addendum to the previous table on school takeovers; it focuses on where sanctions have been implemented and what the results have been.

### I. RECENT STATUTES: IMPROVING SCHOOLS ACT, 1994 [ESEA]

#### *A. Title I funds [P.L. 103-382]*

Title I is the largest single federal investment in schooling, providing almost \$7 billion to schools systems across the country to improve education for children at risk of school failure who live in low-income communities. It reaches more than 6 million children annually, primarily in the early elementary grades. The reauthorization of Title I in 1994 redesigned the program such that its primary aim is now on helping the targetting children to meet high standards.

Title I funds can be applied to the reconstitution of chronically failing schools. So far, they have not been used in this way, according to the Department of Education which plans to investigate this issue.

Students in schools that receive Title I funds are required to meet challenging state standards. Schools or districts in which students fail to reach these goals for 2 years are required to make improvement plans and submit them to the local educational agency (in case of failing school) or the State (in the case of a district). The local education agency or the state must then provide technical assistance. If the school or district makes limited progress for 3 years, corrective actions may be taken. These include: reconstituting personnel, and (in the case of a failing school) creating a charter school. The State reports its overall strategy on how to aid failing schools to the Federal level; reports of individual schools do not pass from state to federal level.

### ***B. Distinguished Educator [Sec 1117]***

Requires each state to establish a corps of “distinguished educators” who will provide technical assistance to schools and districts farthest from meeting the State’s student performance standards. Kentucky’s program is the model; all of the 53 schools that were assigned a distinguished educator showed improvement by the end of the second year.

## **II. PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT**

### **State of the Union Address**

The Address does not explicitly mention failing schools. However, when the Department of Education expanded each of the 10 parts of education plan outlined in the speech, two components recommend reconstituting or closing failing schools. They both propose that charter schools replace failing schools in some circumstances.

***President Clinton said: “Every state should adopt high national standards.”***

The Dept of Ed’s elaboration:

- urges holding schools and their states or districts accountable for results
- recommends overhauling or shutting failing schools and allowing charter schools to start over in their place
- encourages states or districts to use authority under reformed Title I program to hold schools accountable

***President Clinton said: “Every state should give parents the power to choose the right public school for their children.”***

- the Dept of Ed’s elaboration: advocates fixing failing schools, by reconstituting or shutting and then reopening them if necessary, or creating new charter schools

### **Secretary Riley’s State of American Education Address (2/18/97)**

Secretary Riley calls fixing failing schools the “first order of business”. Failing schools should be reconstituted or closed if it can’t be changed. He praises the efforts occurring in New York, Chicago, Memphis, Atlanta and San Francisco.

## **III. NON-PROFIT ACTIVITY**

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Pew Foundation for School Improvement co-sponsored a working group meeting this spring. Teachers and administrators involved in this process, state and federal representatives and academics attended. A follow-up meeting focusing on defining indicators is tentatively planned for this fall.

## **IV. LEGAL BATTLES**

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has created obstacles for school takeovers. Opponents charge that a state limits the voting rights of a city’s racial minorities when it appoints a group to replace the elected school board or when it reduces the local board’s powers. A few CA counties, along with most Southern states, are required by the Act to get Justice Department approval before doing anything that

would affect minority voting rights [Ed Week 3/26/97]. In the fall of 1996, Michael Cohen met with officials from TX, CA and NY to discuss this problem.

## V. THE DEBATE

### Proponents of reconstitution or of turning failing schools into charter schools

- **Alveda Celeste King, niece of Martin Luther King, Jr., and head of "Save the Kids, Now!" coalition**, supports empowering parents and teachers to operate their own schools [USA Today, 6/16/97]
- **attorney Peter Graham Cohn of the NAACP** [San Francisco]: "[Reconstitution] is a way to radically transform the schools", said. "The whole concept has placed San Francisco in the forefront of education innovation. It's a clear benefit." [San Fran Examiner, 8/14/96]
- **Ronnie Davis, spokesperson for NY's United Federation of Teachers**: supported Chancellor Crew's plans to intervene in troubled schools, and said the union would support the intervention even if it means replacing the entire school's staff [NYT, 11/1/95]
- **Dianne Ravitch (Asst Sec of Ed Sec of Ed, 91-93; now at the Brookings Institution and NYU) Joseph P. Viteritti (Research Prof in the Wagner School of Public Service in NYU)** advocated putting failing schools in NYC on probation and closing them if they do not improve. [Reforming Education Today, 1995]

### Proponents who qualify their support:

- **Richard Elmore, Harvard University professor**: believes radical strategies like reconstitution are the wave of the future *but* fears the process will be undertaken far too haphazardly: "If a district is going to reconstitute then it had better make sure schools have ample resources and teachers have sufficient professional-development opportunities. Otherwise, it's just inviting failure." [Ed Wk, 3/97]
- **Susan Fuhrman, a professor of educational policy at Rutgers University and director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education**: the limited research indicates that the threat of sanctions motivates teachers and administrators and the 'most promising' approaches provide substantial technical assistance and professional development to teachers (e.g. in Chicago, KY and MD) but the research also says these approaches are costly and that underfunding is a significant obstacle to success

### Opponents

- the **NAACP** opposed transferring control of Cleveland's schools to Mayor White in 1996
- teachers unions across country

# RECONSTITUTION/ PROBATION IN PRACTICE

| PLACE                          | WHAT'S BEEN DONE                                                                                         | TIME | RESULTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | DOWNSIDE                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chicago                        | 109 schools put on probation                                                                             | 1 yr | 1. 69 of 71 elementary schools on probation improved in reading; 54 in math<br>2. 22 schools removed from list of 'eligible for probation'<br>3. 37 of 38 high schools on probation improved in math; 30 in reading [Chic Trib 5/23/97]                                                                  | 1. Chicago schools' scores still lowest in state<br>2. improved test scores haven't always been enough to remove school from probation<br>3. improvements not uniform across grade level and subject |
| San Francisco                  | 8 schools reconstituted since 1994; approx 10% staff rehired at same school (others rehired in district) | 3 yr | 1. After 1 yr of reconsitution: 3 of 4 middle & high schools showed gains in test scores [SF Chronicle 5/10/95]<br>2. Superintendent agreed to stop reconstituting schools if teachers' union pledged to not interfere with forced transfer of teachers who 'impede school improvemt plans' [Ed Wk 5/97] | Hostility is high among teachers in district                                                                                                                                                         |
| Baltimore's Furman Elem School | Reorganized by state, 1995                                                                               | 2 yr | 1. In 1994, 9.2% students met state statndards; in 1996, 26.2%<br>2. Programs introduced: homework hot line, intensive staff development, new academic programs [W Post 6/6/97]                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## RECONSTITUTION/ PROBATION IN PRACTICE

|                  |                                                                                                                        |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jersey City, NJ  | state control since 1989; school board replaced, new superintendent hired                                              | 8 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Costly administrative mistakes cleared</li> <li>2. Schools and grounds cleaned and renovated</li> <li>3. All principals evaluated</li> <li>4. New textbooks purchased</li> <li>5. Teachers denied raises or dismissed</li> <li>6. # attending all day kindergarten rose from 375 to 1270</li> <li>7. After 7 yrs = moderate rise in scores</li> <li>8. Arthur Andersen audit ('93) found 'significant progress'</li> </ol> | Some teachers report seeing no changes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| KY               | State identifies schools 'in decline' and assigns a 'distinguished educator' (previous teacher or principal) to school | 2 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 53 schools identified showed improvement by end of second year.</li> <li>2. Financial bonuses to successful schools</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1. Costly: \$110,000/ yr per Distinguished Educator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Paterson, NJ     | State control since 1991                                                                                               | 6 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Slight rise in test scores</li> <li>2. Arthur Andersen audit ('94) found 'improved learning environment'</li> <li>3. Parents praise changes</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Andersen audit cited improvements needed in scores and maintenance</li> <li>2. In first election, 3 of state's appointees ousted/ 2 replaced by pre-reconstitution individuals</li> <li>3. Criticized for lack of attention to learning program</li> </ol> |
| Logan County, WV | State appointed new superintendent/ reduced powers of board in 1992; relinquished control in 1996 [Ed Wk 9/18/96]      | 2 yr | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Test scores rose from 50th to 69th percentile</li> <li>2. Attendance rose to over 90% in all schools (was below in 6 of 23 schools)</li> <li>3. Dropout rate fell from 19.6 to 13.2%</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

# States stepping in at urban schools in crisis

Troubled by inadequate schools and unresponsive administrators, legislators are allowing states to intervene using drastic measures

By John Ritter  
USA TODAY

HARTFORD, Conn. — The news hit like a stake in the heart at America's second oldest school. Outside evaluators revoked Hartford Public High's accreditation — in effect, labeling the 350-year-old institution a failure.

But as troubling as that news was — teachers were shocked, students were angry — it was merely the catalyst for bigger events. Connecticut's Legislature, exasperated by the dismal performance of schools in the state's largest city, rushed through a law to abolish the locally elected school board and empower the governor to appoint a new one.

The June 1 state takeover came as a relief in Hartford after years of school board mismanagement, policy failure, political infighting and declining academic achievement. Across the country, takeovers are an increasingly popular tool of last resort when frustrations over bad schools collide with local inability — or unwillingness — to reform.

Yet there is no evidence that takeovers can turn school failure into success. No research suggests that they inspire wholesale academic improvement. New Jersey has been running two troubled urban districts, Jersey City and Paterson, since the late 1980s and seen only a modest bump in test scores. Among the most visible takeovers: Cleveland, Youngstown, Ohio; Newark, N.J.; Washington, D.C.; and Chicago. None of those school systems has shown dramatic results either, though educators caution that it probably is too early to expect big gains.

Schools in all those cities had hit rock bottom, just as they had in Hartford. And if educators agree on anything about the nation's dysfunctional urban schools, it's this: Turning them around will take a long time. Amortized problems — academic and non-academic — have to be addressed at once: crime and security, dilapidated buildings, mismanagement, curriculum overhauls, even bus routes and cafeteria food.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN  
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USA TODAY  
TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 1997

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Good  
BWD  
ABW/MSH

Urban  
week from today!

high school  
low

Staff page

Good - Jono

early AHS #15  
FOA reform  
Linn. Zahm  
Genetic Services

Jose Mark E. Polanco  
Justice ok. 111.  
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Mike, Tom -  
Shd we be calling on  
every state to pass a  
takeover law?  
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cc: EK

58%  
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- history

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Charles Pakin -  
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED

FROM: MIKE COHEN

SUBJECT: ACCOUNTABILITY, FAILED SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL CHOICE:  
AN ALTERNATIVE TO PAUL DIMOND'S PROPOSAL

CC: PAUL DIMOND  
PAUL WEINSTEIN

I have reviewed Paul Dimond's proposal, and have an alternative to put on the table. Paul's proposal would put us on the opposite side of the voucher debate than we are at present. I think that's the wrong approach for education, and the wrong place for the President to be. In addition, I don't think we need to use Title 1 to require accountability tests in the states; virtually every state already has a state testing system and reports results to parents and the public on a school-by-school or district-by-district basis.

However, we need a better answer to vouchers than we have, especially when the debate focuses on doing something for disadvantaged kids in failing (mostly inner city) schools. At present, our answer is that we will help improve the system, with a strategy of raising standards, improving curriculum, etc. While I am convinced these systemic steps need to occur, in and of themselves they do not provide much immediate help to kids in schools that are just plain failing.

The direction in which I think we need to head builds on the President's challenge to states to intervene in schools that are failing and do something serious to turn them around:

- The President needs to make a clear statement that his opposition to vouchers and his support for public education does not extend to supporting schools that are plainly failing. We should not, and will not, defend failure in the public education system.
- The President should reiterate his challenge to state and local education officials to use the testing and accountability provisions they already have in place to identify persistently failing schools, and take steps to turn them around. At present, somewhere in the neighborhood of 10-15 states seriously intervene in failing schools, beyond telling them to develop an improvement plan.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Every state eventually will be required to have an intervention strategy for failing schools, as a result of Title 1 requirements. However, that strategy is phased in over a relatively length period of time. The proposal here is meant both to preserve and build upon

- **The President should extend the challenge, by calling on states and local school districts to close failing schools, create new charter schools in their place, and allow parents in these schools to send their kids to the new charter or to any other public school in the state/district. He should back up this challenge by offering any state or district that agrees to take this approach:**
  - Funds to help support the start up of the charter schools (perhaps from a set-aside we can build into the existing charter schools program);
  - Additional funds to be used specifically for providing the kids in the failed schools with extra help and tutoring after school. There should neither be a requirement nor an expectation that this extra help would be provided by the school and its staff. Nor should this be designed to reward failing schools with extra resources. Rather, this should be designed to focus on kids rather than on the schools, and should be an invitation for local government, community-based organizations, the private sector, higher education and employers to all pitch in. The message here is that if the state/district seriously steps up to the plate to fix the school, the federal government will provide financial support for extra help for the kids, so they can catch up to their peers while their school is being turned around.

This component would require some modest funding. Since only a handful of states and districts are at the point of meeting the proposed challenge, and then only for a handful of schools each, the initial funding requirements would not be large.

- If the failing schools are Title 1 schools and the kids are Title 1 eligible (in most situations, this will be the case), Title 1 funds should follow the kid to the new public school, whether it is the charter school or a different public school of the family's choosing.

This last component may at times be at odds with our efforts to better target Title 1 funds to the schools with the largest concentration of disadvantaged students. However, in general we have been willing to waive this requirement if the state or school district has a compelling reform strategy and needed to use Title 1 funds to support it. I think the approach I have proposed here would meet that test.

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the Title 1 requirements. It leaves in place the phase-in period, which is in part tied to the expectation that the state will put new standards and assessments in place first. At the same time, it is intended to focus much more quickly -- immediately -- on the most serious cases, based on existing standards and assessments.

This approach has the advantage of building on our support of public school choice and charter schools, and of focusing explicitly on concrete and practical steps that can be take to help kids who need it. I believe that one of the ways in which we are vulnerable on the voucher debate is that we come across as having nothing to offer kids who are stuck in failing schools except the promise of long term reform, while voucher proponents offer a seemingly easy escape to other settings. The fact that vouchers will undermine public schools while helping only a small proportion of the kids who need it is not as compelling as a response which also provides immediate and direct help to kids.

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Takeovers that have teeth are those that give new boards power to move teachers and principals around, experts say. In districts with unions, that means power over contracts.

In Connecticut, a strong union state, the Legislature handed Hartford a mixed bag. The new board can go over union leaders' heads and appeal to the membership to approve changes. But a membership no vote kills the proposal.

Two years from now, though, all bets are off. The law sets up a clean slate for talks on a new contract. If disputes between the board and the union go to binding arbitration, the arbitrators can ignore precedent or any previously negotiated work rule. The law says the arbitrators are bound only by what's best for the children. If the board makes the case that a change is good for kids, the teachers must comply.

For now, almost everyone is taking a high road. Superintendent Patricia Daniel, hired this year by the old board, does not believe the goal of raising Hartford's test scores in just three years is unrealistic. "I won't use the fact that kids are from welfare families as an excuse for not learning," she says. "And I will not let anyone else here use that as an excuse."

Teachers union president Cheryl Daniels says if the new board "really wants to help it will embrace the people working in the system already."

At Hartford Public, the immediate worry of students like Sani Senna, a sophomore honors student, is whether the accreditation crisis will pass before her chance of a college scholarship is ruined. "We're all middle class or lower-middle class here and we can't afford it."

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School takeover

MIKE, Tom —  
Shd we be calling on every state to pass a takeover law?

- BR

cc: EK

Takeover

Carl 1/4/95