

LAURA CAPP

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ENCLOSURES FILED OVERSIZE ATTACHMENTS

12622

NARA 9991

• US Holocaust Museum

488-0400

- Dedicated on April '93

• Nat Park Service

634-1568 - Vietnam mem

- Speaker:

- Ded on NOV 13 1982

NOV 11 - 1982 - RR  
accepted mem on  
behalf of nation

- Doesn't believe he came  
on that day

- 426-6842, - Gen?

- Ded. on NOV 13 - 82

• Korean War mem

485-9880 - Gen?



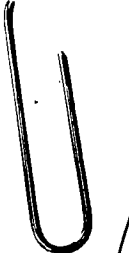
→ Louise  
Jones  
- call Tues-  
Sat

Ohio Historical Society  
Library

614-297-2510.

Archives Library Division

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## UPCOMING RESEARCH

-  **FDR Memorial**

- Statements by Presidents at every other major memorial
  - Lincoln (coolidge?)
-  **Jefferson (FDR?)**
  - Vietnam
  - Korea
-  **Holocaust**
- Statements by FDR on his own memorial
- Burns, Lauchtenberg, Bernstein (on New Deal), Goodwin
- POTUS Speeches/Statements on FDR
  - Hyde Park ('93)
  - FDR Ceremony (White House)

-  **Al Shanker Memorial Service**

- Speeches etc... of Shanker (AFT)
- POTUS on Teachers
- Quotes on teachers/teaching

- **Jackie Robinson 50th Anniversary**

- Biographical Info
- Historical Prospectives

- **Earth Day**

- Past POTUS Speeches
- Information on Earth Day Festivities around country

- **National Service Summit (Philadelphia, PA)**

- News Clips
  - Philadelphia News
  - Philadelphia Inquirer
  - Newsweek (has been tracking participation)
- POTUS on National Service (ask Jonathan for copies of stuff)

## ALBERT SHANKER

Albert Shanker is president of the 907,000-member American Federation of Teachers and has been re-elected to that position every two years since 1974. From 1964 to 1986, he was president of New York City's United Federation of Teachers. He is founding president of Education International, a federation of some 20 million teachers from democratic countries around the world.

Widely known as a leader in the educational reform movement, Mr. Shanker influences national, state and local policy through his writing and involvement in a variety of boards and organizations. He offers fresh and often provocative ideas in "Where We Stand," the Sunday New York Times column he has written for 25 years, as well as in many articles, speeches and television appearances. He is a member of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, an elected member of the National Academy of Education, and in April, 1996, was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He also served as a member of the National Council on Education Standards and Testing.

For many years, Mr. Shanker has been involved with national and international organizations dedicated to promoting civil and human rights, including the National Endowment for Democracy. He marched with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma and Montgomery, Ala., and supported voting rights efforts in the South. When schools in Prince Edward County, Va., were closed to prevent integration, Mr. Shanker helped establish freedom schools there. The first teacher to become a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, nominated by A. Philip Randolph, Mr. Shanker now is senior vice president of the AFL-CIO, and chair of its Education Committee. He has established AFT projects to assist democracy education in South Africa, Chile, Hungary, Poland and Russia. He is a member of the Labor Advisory Board of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, and sits on the advisory board of the Congressionally authorized Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation.

Born in New York City in 1928, Mr. Shanker attended the city's public schools and earned a BA with honors in philosophy from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. He did graduate work in philosophy at Columbia University, completing course requirements for the Ph.D. He taught elementary and junior high school math in the New York City schools. He also has taught at Harvard University and Hunter College.

He is married to the former Edith Gerber, previously a New York City teacher, and they have three children: Adam, Jennie and Michael. Mr. Shanker has another son, Carl, by an earlier marriage. In his free time, he pursues his interests in gourmet cooking and baking, music, art and audio electronics.

Albert Shanker's many honors and awards include:

- ☐ On the boards of Independent Sector, the A. Philip Randolph Institute and Bayard Rustin Fund, the Spencer Foundation and the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies.
- ☐ Member of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, the Trilateral Commission and the Jewish Labor Committee.

- Honorary doctorates from the State University of New York, Graduate Center of the City University of New York, Adelphi University, University of Rochester, Rhode Island College and Claremont College. He is a 1995 recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.
- Scholar in residence at the University of Chicago and UCLA.
- Winner of Annual Labor Management Award from the Work in America Institute and Medal for Distinguished Service from Teachers College, Columbia University.

## ABOUT ALBERT SHANKER

"Al Shanker, head of the American Federation of Teachers, has a winning idea. He wants to revive public schools by disciplining punks and demanding that kids actually learn before they move from grade to grade."

Tony Snow, Syndicated Columnist, 9/11/95

"There are few more measured commentators on U.S. education than Shanker, but happily there's nothing measured about his approach to classroom disruption: Set clear rules and punishments, apply them consistently, and remove offenders from class quickly....Shanker thinks all other school reforms will fail if we don't reclaim control of our classrooms."

The Oregonian, 9/5/95

"(Shanker) believes that unless we address the problem of discipline none of the other reforms will make any difference."

William Raspberry, Syndicated Columnist, 9/1/95

"Thank goodness for Al Shanker, say many who are pushing for education reform."

Daily Dispatch, Henderson, N.C., 4/19/95

"We see Shanker's theme this way: When teachers do an unmistakably better job at helping American kids learn the three R's, then and only then, will parents respond with more respect, more understanding and -- maybe -- more money. And we suspect that idea is by far the most promising in educational reform today."

Times-Leader, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 4/11/95

"Mr. Shanker, a longtime union organizer who has come to be widely respected as one of the handful of great thinkers in education, has shaped AFT policy for 20 years."

Washington Times, 7/17/94

"Al Shanker has been a tireless voice for teachers' rights and education reform. He's been a voice for what is right in our country, an eloquent voice for what is right."

Vice President Albert Gore, 7/17/94

"Everyone in the know, love him or hate him, admits Albert Shanker is one of the handful of great thinkers in American education....Known as the father of collective bargaining for teachers for his efforts in the 60s and 70s, Shanker has more recently become an adviser to presidents."

Washington Post, 1/28/93

"He continues to be one of the most creative thinkers in education."

USA Today, 1/9/90

"The transformation of Albert Shanker from public pariah to educational statesman is rooted in his conviction that American schools are in trouble and that rescuing them will require radical changes."

New York Times, 11/5/89

"A statesman praised by politicians and executives alike for his farsighted leadership."

US News & World Report, 2/8/88

"[A] respected educational leader whose visions of American school reform have shaken up the status quo."

Wall Street Journal, 11/24/87

7/22/96

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# Where We Stand

by Albert Shanker  
President, American Federation of Teachers

## Love Ya!

For years, promoters of the self-esteem movement have been asserting that low self-esteem is responsible for many of our students' social and academic problems. Their prescription? Give students big doses of praise and assure them that they are "special" and doing very well, even if their performance is mediocre or poor. You hear less about self-esteem these days--perhaps because the movement has not brought about the social transformation that advocates promised. Nevertheless, the latest Public Agenda report, "Getting By," suggests that the self-esteem movement has taken firm root among students, teachers, and the public. This is alarming for a number of reasons.

It is certainly true that people are more likely to succeed if they believe they will, and children are no exception. They also wilt under unfair or harsh criticism. Good parents and teachers have always known these things. However, there are obvious problems with the smiley-face approach advocated by self-esteem enthusiasts. Making mistakes and seeing them for yourself--or having them pointed out so you can correct them--are natural and important components of learning. But when self-esteem is an end in itself and generous praise is considered the way to get kids there, how likely are teachers to point out mistakes or students to learn from them?

Another problem is that the self-esteem movement separates self-esteem from achievement. If you tell students that they are terrific no matter what they do, either they won't believe you or they will see no reason for doing the hard work necessary to learn. But if you help them to achieve in real ways, you will be giving them a solid basis for self-esteem.

Clearly, self-esteem, as pushed by the self-esteem movement, is no panacea. Now, a study of relevant research says that it may actually be harmful, particularly when it is not founded in reality--which is the kind of self-esteem supporters have been advocating for the schools. An article by Roy F. Baumeister, Laura Smart, and Joseph M. Boden, which appeared in the scholarly journal *Psychological Review* (1996, vol. 103, no. 1) and in a shortened version in *American Educator* (Summer 1996), says that it is a big mistake to see self-esteem as totally positive. The kind of self-esteem that has you thinking well of yourself, whether or not you have any basis for doing so, also has a dark side--conceit, pride, feelings of superiority and entitlement. How many parents would want to encourage these attitudes in a child, and how would they feel if they thought the child's school was doing so?

Baumeister and his colleagues found that studies done by many different researchers linked unfounded self-esteem with bad behavior of all kinds, from schoolyard bullying and juvenile delinquency to murder, rape, and other crimes of violence. These studies show that a person who thinks he is great--and who has no objective reason for thinking so--is likely to turn on people who fail to share his good opinion of himself. And as he tries to assert his superiority, violence is likely to erupt.

Self-esteem enthusiasts would probably jump in here and say that this proves their case. These violent people, they would argue, really suffer from low self-esteem, which is masked by their arrogance. They don't feel OK about themselves at all and try to boost their self-esteem by violent actions. Baumeister and his colleagues say there is nothing to this. There is no evidence linking low self-esteem and violent behavior--though many researchers have sought to make the connection.

Furthermore, Baumeister says, it doesn't make sense to assume that high but unfounded self-esteem is a mask for low self-esteem. Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. For example, when Harold Stevenson and James Stigler compared the math achievement of American and Asian elementary school students, they found that American kids did considerably less well than Japanese and Chinese students. However, the Americans felt just fine about their performance; their self-esteem was very high. Was that masking feelings of low self-esteem? Hardly. What you see is what you get. American kids come from schools where they have been encouraged to think positively about themselves. Their sunny view of their math

skills simply shows that the lessons in self-esteem have taken.

American schools have been the victims of all kinds of faddish movements that were touted as cure-alls--from performance contracting, open schools, and "relevant" curriculums to EAI-type school management and self-esteem. Supporters usually insist that their claims are based on "research." If people were to ask, "What research?" they might find that there is none or that it can't pass scientific muster or, as in the case of self-esteem, that it proves the opposite of what supporters claim. Few people would take a medicine if there was nothing to back up the pharmaceutical company's claims. We should demand no less for our schools.

For a copy of the *American Educator* article, "Should Schools Try to Boost Self-Esteem?" by Roy F. Baumeister, write AFT/Self, 555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

◀ [Previous "Where We Stand" Columns](#)

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**ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT**  
**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS**

**State of the Union Address**

**Saturday, August 2, 1996**

**Cincinnati, Ohio**

Excuse me for sitting. It will preserve the energy I need to give a speech.

I come before you in what I understand is the hottest and latest hairdo.

(Laughter and applause)

Only I didn't know it until somebody told me.

(Laughter)

I want to thank all of you for the many messages of support, for your prayers, and your good wishes. They have meant a lot.

I would like to talk about our union, where we are and what we need to do. We are strong and we're still growing. In spite of the hits on unions, teachers' unions especially, we have passed the 900,000 mark this year. We've grown every year for the last 15 years. We've grown 60,000 members since the last convention. We are 907,000 strong.

When I think of it, when I joined the AFT, we had 50,000 members nationally; and here we grew 60,000 members in two years. We won 84 percent of the elections that we entered, and no union has done better; and this record includes all of our divisions: K-12, PSRPs, higher education, health care professionals, and state and local employees.

We've had this success because of our vision and our track record. We provide quality representation for our members, but also we have an emphasis on standards and the improvement of services, something which the public very much wants and which our members want, too.

I think something else our members appreciate are the tough stands we take on issues. We do not adopt a policy or a position because it happens to be popular. We would like it to be popular, and we do have some popular positions, but there are many that are unpopular. If we feel they are right, we stay with them.

We're also financially strong. As you know, we will not be moving for a dues increase this year, although we will for the second year.

But despite our successes and our strength, the last two years have been very tough years. There's just a huge set of problems that we've had to overcome. First, there's the growing voucher movement all across the country. We now have vouchers in two places, Milwaukee and Cleveland; but there are lots of state legislatures that came very close to adopting vouchers this year. There are many places where the battle can be won or lost in the next couple of years.

In Washington, D.C., it was very, very close. The entire budget for the city of Washington, D.C., was held up because the Republicans insisted on a voucher program for Washington in order for Washington to receive what in other cities would be called state aid.

Then there's privatization. Yes, EAI was kicked out of Baltimore; and they were kicked out of Hartford. And just a few weeks ago, we won in Wappingers Falls, New York, where the school board that brought in EAI was ousted; and the school board that's now in is opposed to EAI. So these were big victories.

Yet even though EAI was thrown out in all those places, EAI is under consideration at a number of schools in Washington, D.C., and in many other places. So this is not one of these threats that you defeat once and for all. You beat them in one place, and they show up someplace else. Because unfortunately, school boards are willing to hire an outfit which has proven that it's not been able to do anything positive anywhere that it's been.

There's also the very rapid movement toward charter schools. Now, some charter schools are fine. Some of them have been sponsored by us. Some that we don't sponsor are there with our blessings. But there are more and more states that are considering and enacting charter school provisions that do not permit the teachers in charter schools to be covered by collective bargaining laws, provisions which are essentially ways of creating a nonunion school system.

There are also many states that do not require charter schools to live up to state standards or to have their students take the same examinations that students take in regular public schools. So this, too, needs to be monitored very carefully.

Also during this same period of time, there's probably been the most radical transformation in the health care system that has ever occurred in modern times. Some of us don't know that because we have negotiated excellent health plans for our members; and by and large those plans are still intact. Maybe they're a little worse than they were 10 or 15 or 20 years ago, but they're still in very good shape. But those who are in the health care professions know it very well: the closings of hospitals, the buy-ups by large corporations, and the movement away from an emphasis on quality to an emphasis on a kind of managed health care where dollars are made whether or not the care provided is in the best interest of the patients.

During this same period of time, there have been massive cuts in higher education. I know that in the state of New York, within this last year, cuts of 25 to 30 percent took place in the total budget of our two major public universities. And that was following a number of years of previous cuts.

State and local public employees have felt and are about to feel the tremendous reductions in federal programs because many of those federal programs provide aid to the states to perform all sorts of state and local services. I heard on the news this morning that someone from Los Angeles said that the welfare reform bill is going to cost them a billion dollars or more. The same is true in New York State. When you take these cuts together with budget balancing, there's going to be tremendous anguish.

Over the years, we've won many battles. In the last two years, we've more than held our own. We have preserved an awful lot. There are even a few pluses, a few places where we've advanced. But these kinds of assaults aren't just going to go away. We need to do things differently, and we need to be more effective in the way we do them because we will not win the second round, the third, and the fourth -- and there will be second, third, and fourth rounds in some of these very same battles -- if we just use the same tools.

Now, what have we been doing? Largely, the people who have won these battles are sitting in this hall right now. You have gone to your state capitols. You have advertised. You have had petition campaigns. You've done all sorts of things to preserve your institutions. We in the national office have alerted you, whenever there was danger coming from Washington, D.C., to get messages to members of Congress. But by and large, these campaigns have been conducted and won by the leadership corps.

What percentage of our membership has been actively involved: One, two, three, four, five, six percent? Not 20 percent. Maybe in some local campaigns there have been more; but by and large, we've been winning our battles with a leadership corps. One of my main messages today is that we're not going to continue winning that way, that one of the things we've got to do is make better use of the strength that we have.

Yes, that strength consists of a good set of leaders. It consists of having a good institution and organization. It consists of having some money to advertise and do some public relations. But the main strength of the organization is in its members.

Having the leaders send telegrams or faxes is very important. We should continue to do that. It has an impact. But just think of what the impact would be if we could mobilize the energies of most of our members. Not only would we have greater effectiveness, but it's also part of the job of educating our members on the issues. And that is essential. Because when we take polls and when we have focus groups, we find that the leaders know the issues very well; and although the members know them pretty well, they don't know them as well. And when you involve members in doing things -- in sending letters, in sending their own faxes, in getting petitions, and speaking before other groups -- it transforms them and it transforms a campaign.

Obviously, the first thing we must do is before us: the political campaign. I'm not going to repeat the arguments for supporting Clinton and Gore and for supporting those members of Congress who support us in our programs. That has been done well already. But I do want to add that there are some Republicans who have supported programs we care about, and where that is the case we should support the Republican. It would be a terrible thing if some Republican up for re-election got defeated because he voted against vouchers.

In order to do this, we need to mobilize our members. So I want to talk with you about how to do that because it is not obvious.

I know the first time that we endorsed a candidate, I just sent out a letter saying that we have endorsed so-and-so. We did that a number of times. Basically, we announced to our members that we had endorsed so-and-so; and we expected that, because our members were AFT members and the AFT had endorsed Mr. X, they would say, "Okay. That's how I'll vote." Well, it doesn't work that way.

We have found in polls and focus groups that our members don't very much care whether we endorse one candidate or another. So if we just let them know who we've endorsed, we may get 15 or 20 percent to respond, but the others won't care.

Basically, we can get our members to support us if we talk to them about the issues that they feel we know about: issues of health care, higher education, elementary and secondary education, state and local public services, and so forth.

We can talk to a member and say we have endorsed Clinton and Gore because they fought against vouchers, because they were with us when there was a voucher referendum in California; the President actually went out there and campaigned against it. And we can say we endorsed them because the President and Vice President vetoed a number of federal budgets that had unacceptable education and health care cuts and public service cuts, and so forth.

In other words, if we say, "Vote for Clinton and Gore because they're Democrats and Democrats are pro-labor," it turns our members off. They will say the leadership is just wedded to the Democratic party and that's it or they're up there cavorting with those politicians.

We've got to be specific about the issues and not use slogans because most people don't have a framework for those slogans. If I were to say to you that candidate so-and-so is anti-labor, you would immediately translate that into five or ten or twelve different things. You would know exactly what I mean. But the average member does not translate it that way. Those slogans don't mean anything to them.

I would urge, in the strongest possible terms, that you don't just send out a letter and that you don't just send out an endorsement. Yes, get mailings out; but talk about the issues.

More important than mailings, set up phone banks. Call on the AFT's COPE Department to help you set them up. Because when you have phone banks, you get member-to-member contact; and it means that you have an opportunity to listen to what the members say, to what bothers them, what troubles them, and what could be said that might move them.

Of course, our members, like all of us, are not simple human beings. We're complex. To some, the

abortion issue will be more important than anything else. To others, taxes will be. To still others, something else will be. So we can't guarantee that reaching out will work. And it would be impossible in an organization of our size to have everybody with us.

We can be most effective face to face and with phone calls, person to person. We can be most effective if we stay away from slogans -- "He's anti-labor" or "The Democrats are good for us." We can be most effective when we're specific on issues that deal with education, with health care, with public services, with budget cuts, with higher education.

Give information. Don't debate issues that the member feels strongly about. Just put some things into members' heads that they will weigh as they get ready to vote. You won't be able to change them on very, very strong beliefs.

Remind members that education and training and health issues and higher education are really central to why Clinton vetoed so many budgets, to why the federal government was shut down. We've been asking for years, "When will a president make education priority number one?" Well, here's one who's made education and health care and lots of public services priority number one; and our members ought to know about it.

(Applause)

Our members also ought to think about this: If a president has made these issues his number one priorities and he loses, chances are that no other candidate will ever make them his top priorities. And we've got to make sure that he doesn't lose.

(Applause)

We should get as many of our members as possible involved in this campaign. Remember, when you train people to work on a phone bank, they get very good; they get to be professional. Then, they go back to their schools and they talk to other people during their lunch hour. They go back to their families and churches and clubs and campaign there. When you've trained somebody like that, he's much more effective than a person who just passively agrees with you and says that he's going to vote.

But as much as I think it's important to get everyone involved, I don't want us going into this election campaign with the notion that winning in November will mean we have solved all of our problems.

Remember that voucher initiatives are being pushed at the state and local levels. Privatization is a threat to every division of our union, and that's not only coming from the federal government; it is also coming through state and local initiatives. Not all threats are going to be resolved. Some of them will be, but a good many of them won't be except by continued action.

That means we have to mobilize our members -- and not just for the presidential campaign. They have to be mobilized for our other issues as well; and that's what the Lessons for Life campaign and the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Learning are about.

The first thing is to realize how we came up with the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Learning. As I have indicated to many of you, Public Agenda Foundation reports, polls, and focus groups show that the public is moving more and more to the point where they're willing to abandon public schools for private schools. They're not there yet, but it's about 50-50 right now. The news is quite bad.

The public says, "We don't care what you do about school reform or what you tell us about curriculum and standards for teachers. If you can't take care of the discipline problems in schools -- if you don't remove disruptive youngsters who destroy the education of everybody else -- the schools are not going to work for our kids or for anybody else's."

(Applause)

Members of the public want standards in core academic subjects. They don't want their kids telling

them, "No, don't help me with my homework, Mom. Don't worry. Spelling doesn't count." They don't want their youngsters saying, "We don't have to learn the tables. We can use a calculator." They don't want a system that doesn't prepare youngsters for either college or work and is not teaching things like honesty and respect.

Teachers want what parents want, and so does 85 percent of the public. Yet, people are being driven out of the public schools because the politicians who run the schools are not delivering what the public wants. It's easy to see why this is happening. Just as it's very difficult to activate our members, whether it's for political or other kinds of campaigns, it's hard to get parents or citizens to participate in local campaigns.

The people who are active tend to be those whose kids are disruptive. They organize into some sort of an advocacy group, and they run to the principal and the superintendent and the school board and charge that their kids are being pushed out of school. Almost all of the things that are unpopular happen because some advocacy group pushes for them, while the overwhelming majority remains silent. And probably the majority don't try to do anything because they feel that, every time they go to the school board, they just get the runaround.

So we're at a point where slightly more than half of the parents -- and that includes white and African-American parents -- say that if they had the money, they would send their kids to private school.

If we had a business and there were poll results showing that our customers wanted a product with A, B, C and D, we would give it to our customers. We would redesign our product to make sure it had what the customers wanted, even if it was ludicrous.

What our customers, the parents, want is not ludicrous at all. They want standards of conduct and standards for achievement, and they ought to be able to get what they want from our public education system.

(Applause)

It would be a damn shame if we ended up sending 97 percent of the kids to private schools with vouchers and all we had left in public schools were the disruptive students that the private schools wouldn't take. I would rather get rid of the 3 percent and keep the 97 percent where they belong.

(Applause)

Now, vouchers are still unpopular. You know how you can tell? Dole did not call his proposal "vouchers." And when Congress was trying to pass vouchers for Washington, D.C., they didn't call them vouchers, either. The public doesn't like vouchers. So supporters call them "scholarships" or "opportunity grants." You can always be sure that, when people use cover-up language, they're trying to put over something that is basically unpopular. The public still wants to preserve public education, but they're not going to wait forever.

We had a number of regional meetings across the country this past year, and we plan to continue them. I attended those meetings, and I was pretty tough. I said that any local that does not participate in and press for the Lessons for Life campaign is engaged in union malpractice. What I meant is that it is as much your duty to preserve public education as it is to negotiate a good contract; it is as much your duty to preserve public education as it is to defend a competent teacher who is under attack.

(Applause)

And there won't be a contract to negotiate or a place to defend teachers unless we preserve our institution, and we can only do that by mobilizing -- mobilizing all of our members; mobilizing parents, either as organizers or as individuals; going to business groups and getting their attention and their support; and going to citizens.

This is not a public relations campaign. Yes, when I am finished with my speech, you will see the names

of the individuals and groups that have endorsed Lessons for Life. The program has gotten tremendous support from all kinds of groups -- newspapers, governors, and state legislatures. But the purpose of the campaign in your community is to make sure that your school board adopts a discipline code and the code is enforced. And it is to make sure that academic standards are adopted. That means no automatic promotion. It means principals can't change teachers' marks. It means that schools don't graduate youngsters who can't read or write.

(Applause)

It means that we organize in our own communities -- teachers, parents, and the public -- to defeat school board members who don't support these policies and to make sure that in every single school district across the country there are high standards of conduct and high academic standards. Give the public what it wants, and give the teachers what they want because they both want the same thing: what's right for kids.

(Applause)

Over the last couple of years, we have been seeing a series of attacks on teachers' unions. I'm sure you saw the big article in U.S. News and World Report which was filled with misinformation. Last month, the front page of the Washington Post headlined, "Teachers' Unions Stand in Way of Reform." What was the reform we were standing in the way of? We're against vouchers, so according to these people, we're against reform. We sent a letter saying that not all reforms are good, and we oppose those that are bad. That's why we oppose vouchers.

However, we are going to be boxed in unless we have something positive to offer. We will be defined as the group that's always saying no on charter schools, no on vouchers, no to the attack on tenure, no to school closings, and so forth. People will say that the teachers' union is against everything they are trying to do to improve the schools.

What are we for? Well, to be for schools where there are high standards for discipline and high academic standards as they're defined in the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Learning, that's to be for something. We want to be defined by what we are and what we campaign for, by what we try to do and what we fight for, not by what the enemies of public education say we are.

So Lessons for Life is another campaign. If you have adopted it, great. If you've written to your local paper, fine. If you've gotten your school board or some business groups to adopt the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Learning, fine; but that is not the end. The end is what is happening in your schools. Do you actually have a discipline code that works? If not, you've got to make it work. You've got to bring public pressure to make it work. Do you have academic standards in place in the core subjects? If not, get them. Look at the materials in the Lessons for Life kit that was given to you, and you'll see many suggestions as to what other locals have done.

I would like to talk for a minute about changes that our union has to make. We have to deal with a number of tough issues. Some of them we have already dealt with, but there are misperceptions on the part of the public. One of these issues is tenure.

The anti-teacher groups have done a very good job of confusing the public by saying that tenure means a lifetime job. According to them, tenure means that you can never get rid of a teacher no matter how incompetent. For example, a segment of the television show "20/20" asserted that a teacher pulled a knife on a student in Michigan and got away scot-free. That turned out not to be true. The teacher was disciplined. The case went all the way up to the state tenure review board; and the teacher was suspended for two years without pay, which is quite a punishment, even though it was admitted by everybody that pulling the knife was a joke, not a real attack.

Nevertheless, we have a problem. There are also reports of cases that drag on for two-and-a-half years and cost \$250,000 or more to resolve. We need to do something about that. I know we can go to our state legislatures, and we can probably hold back change for a while; but there is no reason why we, as a teachers' union, should preserve the jobs of incompetent teachers, none at all.

(Applause)

On the contrary, incompetent teachers are probably very unhappy in their jobs and would be happier elsewhere. Incompetent teachers hurt their fellow teachers; and they certainly hurt students; and they hurt the entire profession.

(Applause)

We need to do something about this. Appeal procedures must remain fair, but where they are too long, they need to be shorter. Where they're too expensive, they need to become less expensive. We have a number of locals -- Cincinnati is one of them; Toledo is another, as well as Rochester and Minneapolis, and I'm sure I'm leaving out a few -- where there are peer assistance and peer review programs that deal with some of these problems. Outstanding teachers, members of the profession who are selected jointly by the union and by management, try to help teachers who are in trouble. Then, finally, they render a judgment as to whether the teacher has become successful or cannot succeed.

That really punches the opposition right in the nose. It says that not only do teachers not have lifetime jobs, not only are we against incompetents in the classroom, but we as teachers, and as a union, are also willing to take the responsibility for getting rid of incompetent teachers because management has not been able to do it well.

(Applause)

I know that this is controversial. The Executive Council considered a resolution on this set of issues, but the resolution was drawn up just before the convention. It is very, very complex, and when it was debated in the K-12 meeting, most people felt that it was not something that they would like to go with.

What we will do is refine that resolution in terms of the objections that were made to it; and we will take it to our Program and Policy Council and to the Executive Council and bring it to our next convention. Meanwhile, we will also take up the issue of tenure at our regional meetings. While we're doing this, I would urge you to talk over something that John Cole, the AFT vice president from Texas, talked about at the Executive Council meeting this morning.

It does not go over very well with the public when you say that teachers need tenure in order to protect academic freedom because most members of the public don't care much about that issue. John Cole found a much better argument. He said the reason for tenure is that you don't want to have a new set of inexperienced teachers every time a new school board is elected and they decide to reward their cronies with jobs.

(Applause)

A second issue that we need to deal with is school reconstitution. That is the process whereby a school that is considered hopeless is closed down and then reopened with all or some new staff and with all or some new students.

Reconstitution has already happened in some places, but get ready for a big increase because it's in the Chapter 1 legislation as a step to take against schools that fail to make progress. In other words, it's in the national legislation, so there's no way that we can just be silent about reconstitution and think it's going to go away. What we need to do is figure out how to handle it. What is really terrible about the way reconstitution is usually done is that only the teachers are viewed as being at fault. It's not the administration. It's not the way the school was run before. It's not the fact that large numbers of violent or disruptive students are allowed to remain in the school. It's the teachers who are blamed and often viewed as damaged goods. In most cases, teachers from a reconstituted school are permitted to look around for other jobs within the system, but often nobody else wants them.

There are places where reconstitution has been done well. New York City is one of them. They have been doing it for years, long before Chapter 1 or Title I; and the rules there actually give teachers certain

priorities in terms of where they transfer, as well as giving a percentage of them the right to transfer back into the reconstituted school. So it's done in a way that will preserve some continuity.

We have a resolution that will come before you which, if passed, will result in the appointment of an AFT task force to work out the knotty problems connected with reconstitution -- especially how to carry it out without the assumption, which is clearly wrong, that only the teachers are responsible when schools fail, instead of being just part of the equation.

In all these things, the public sees teachers' unions as being very strong. According to the newspapers, the NEA is able to do all sorts of terrible things. Sometimes we get put into the article and sometimes we're left out; but clearly we are viewed in somewhat the same way -- not on all issues but on quite a few.

The big problem is not that the public sees us as being strong. (I would certainly rather have the public see teachers as strong than as weak, which they did in the years before unions and collective bargaining.) They see us as using our strength not for good but to prevent good things from happening, and that's got to be changed.

Again, I want to underline that we change that perception by reaching out to the public, the parents, and business groups, which are members of the public. We change it by working with them on campaigns about issues on which we agree, like Lessons for Life.

We have been engaged for a number of years in merger talks with the National Education Association; and before I get into that, I would like to introduce and welcome the guests from the National Education Association who are here in the auditorium.

Would you please stand?

(Applause)

Two years ago, I reported that negotiations were on track. The idea was that we would not just look at what the AFT is and what the NEA is and make a bunch of compromises, slicing down the middle wherever there were differences -- and there are substantial differences on a number of issues. We would try to create an organization different from, and better than, either the AFT or the NEA. And we would try to do it in such a way that the public would not see the organization as the giant teacher gorilla of three-plus million standing in the way of reform but as an organization working for the interests of education and of children.

Shortly after that convention, the negotiations started drifting somewhat; and we were under time pressure because the NEA had placed a time constraint on their negotiating committee. We found ourselves just cutting a bunch of deals: "You do it this way, but we do it that way, so let's do it some other way, which is halfway in between."

After a short time, we got quite uneasy because we looked at what we were doing and said, "This is not what we set out to do. We intended to put together an organization that was better, an organization that was different. What we're doing is combining two different animals; and the result is not going to look right or feel right; and it's not going to work right."

So we agreed to break off negotiations because we realized that we would not be able to conclude them within the time constraints that the NEA had put on their team. That was in December of 1994.

We also agreed that things would not be the same again; that we were not going to have a big, national war with each other; that we would continue doing what we could to develop cooperative activities.

Early in 1995, the NEA team came back to us and said that, if we would agree to reopen negotiations, they would propose to their representative assembly that negotiations be reopened -- this time with no preconditions or time deadline and with an emphasis on cooperative activities at the local, at the state, and at the national level so that the members of the two organizations and leaders of the two

organizations could get to know each other better. By the time an agreement was proposed, if that happened, a lot of the misunderstanding and the hostility would have disappeared because of the cooperation.

We said yes. It was a good proposal, and their representative assembly overwhelmingly adopted it last year, in 1995. That means they have withdrawn the preconditions on secret ballot, minority guarantees, and AFL-CIO affiliation. It does not mean that they don't believe in these things or won't fight for them strongly; it just means that they're not preconditions. These issues could still hold things up, but now the NEA team is free to negotiate on them whereas before they were not sure that they could.

Finally, within the last few months, we negotiated a no-raid agreement; and that will be before you. The NEA has accepted it. We felt and they felt that, at least for a time, the raiding should stop. The definition of raiding is somewhat different for states where there is collective bargaining than for states where there isn't. We did not want to create a situation where the negotiators would come up with an agreement for a united organization, but a certain number of states -- let's say, in the NEA -- would be against merger because we had just raided them in a couple of places. We didn't want to jeopardize what was possible on that basis. I'm sure that the no-raid agreement will be extensively debated; but I hope it is adopted because I think it will be very difficult to continue merger talks without it.

We have also agreed to send larger delegations to each other's conferences, and we've been doing that. We've had a joint meeting on privatization and one on setting specifications on health care. We've also had joint testimony at the Democratic and Republican platform committees.

The differences between the two organizations have not altogether disappeared. For instance, we had a very unhappy experience this past year in Congress during the reauthorization of legislation on educating children with disabilities. Our position is that disabled youngsters should be subject to the same discipline as other youngsters.

(Applause)

When a youngster misbehaves, the effect of his action, whether it be bringing a gun into school or bringing drugs or punching or hitting or yelling or screaming, is the same whether that youngster is special ed or not special ed. It has exactly the same effect on the education of the rest of the students and on the school.

(Applause)

Unfortunately, the two organizations were on opposite sides on that issue; and I hope that we can work that out.

The NEA has elected a new president. I know him quite well. He's been part of the negotiating team recently. Also, I've been on many platforms with him where both organizations were invited to speak. One of the three points of his election platform was a commitment to a merger, and I'm sure that we can work very well with him.

So we will keep you informed, and we hope that, within a reasonable period of time, we can put it together.

Everything that I've been saying indicates that we're in a serious contest. That's an understatement. We're in a deadly war. I know quite a few people on the other side -- the voucher side and the nonunion charter school side -- and they think they're on the verge of a major breakthrough. They think we'll have vouchers throughout the country, and all schools will receive public monies, or children will receive the money, which they can take to any school they want. They are calling this a new definition of public schools: All the schools will be public schools because they'll all have children in them who are financed with public funds. These people could be right.

In any contest of this sort, the two sides really have a story to tell. If you look at the presidential campaign, Bob Dole has a story. His story is that government's too big: You've got a lot of people doing

things that don't need to be done. People are taxed too much. If you just cut these programs, reduce taxes, and give people money to spend, that would stimulate the economy. Then, everything will be fine.

Bill Clinton has another story. It's that the world is changing very rapidly. We're faced with worldwide competition. From now on, the competition is not in terms of how you can use your hands because you don't hire a hand any more; you hire a mind. It's your training, your education that counts. And if we have a country with better-educated and better-trained people and a system for retraining and additional lifelong education, then we're going to beat out the competition. Otherwise, it will be a country that gets the work that's done for a few cents an hour or perhaps a dollar a day. Therefore, we need to invest in schools and in colleges and in all sorts of programs to create better-trained and better-educated people. The same thing is true with the health of our citizens and with other programs as well.

So there are two stories, and they're going to be competing as to which is more credible.

Dole will also come out for a big tax cut, saying that that will stimulate the economy (and won't unbalance the budget); and we'll see what Clinton says. They're each going to have stories as to what's wrong with the country and which way to take it.

When it comes to our situation, the other side also has a story. The story is that we are nearly all government employees. And even those of us who are not government employees are getting a lot of government money from programs like Medicare and Medicaid. We're all government-dependent, federal-government-dependent in many cases, and public facilities, like public schools, are a monopoly. If you are a monopoly, you do not have to be sensitive to what customers want because you can't lose them; they have no other place to go without paying for the service. In a monopoly, there are no rewards for success and there is no punishment for failure. So the people who work in schools that are successful get the same money as people in schools that are very unsuccessful. Furthermore, according to this story, there will be no change because unions have the power to stop change. So the only way to bring about change is to break up the monopoly and to weaken the power of the unions that are propping up this monopoly. The way you do this is by having more and more schools in which the school staff can't have a union. That includes parochial schools, charter schools in some states, and many of the private schools. Break up the system and allow competition. Give the money to private companies like EAI. Give it to individual schools and private schools. Just as the government monopoly did not work in Poland or Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union or Romania or Bulgaria, the government monopoly will not work in education or in public services or other fields. That's been proven.

What we have to do, the anti-union story continues, is set up a free, competitive market system. In countries with a market system, like Japan, the United States, and Germany, the citizens prosper, whereas in the countries that had monopolies, people are in very, very bad shape.

In addition to that, the other side says, we live in a democratic society. Give people a choice. If people want a different school, they should be able to have one. Who are we to treat people like children and say this is the only school your child can go to; this is the only course of study your child can take?

That's their story.

So we need our story. We need a story to counter the anti-union story. What is it? Well, our story is that public schools in these other countries, in Germany, Japan, Australia, and Canada -- the schools that are doing so well compared to ours -- are public schools. They're not charter schools; they're not private schools; and they're not parochial schools. So if public institutions can work very well in other democratic countries, they can work well in the United States, too.

(Applause)

Now, the teachers in those countries are unionized. The teachers in Australia are unionized. The teachers in Japan are unionized. The teachers in the United Kingdom are unionized. In Germany and France, they're unionized. And if other countries can have unionized teachers and good school systems, so can the United States.

(Applause)

It is not public schools that are at fault; they work everywhere else. It is the way in which American public schools are run, and the American Federation of Teachers wants to change the way our schools are run to ways that are similar to the successful schools of the world.

What are the practices that make schools in other countries successful? Well, none of those schools would tolerate disruptive students destroying the education of all other youngsters.

(Applause)

In all of those other countries, either the states or the nation has standards, which say, this is what youngsters learn in the second grade; this is what they learn in the third grade; this is what they learn in the fifth grade.

Now, here's a place where we have to educate our members and the public. Education means building on what the students have learned; and teachers cannot build on what the students have learned already unless they know what the kids have learned.

(Applause)

And you don't know because there are no standards in place.

Finally, the students in other countries do well because there are high stakes involved. They work hard because they know that, if they don't work hard, they will not pass the national examination to get them into college or get the certificate that allows them to get a good job. And as long as we tell students that they will be automatically promoted, automatically graduated, and automatically entered into remedial programs in higher education, there will be no successful education because the kids know that they don't have to work.

(Applause)

We don't need to abandon our public school system. We need to fix it, and we need to fix it along these lines. Furthermore, we don't want to replace it with something that is nothing but a roll of the dice, a gamble with education.

There is no country that has a voucher system. There is no country that is filled with charter schools. Nobody has ever tried out these schemes, and we have no notion as to whether they will work. Most experiments do not; most fail. In the Milwaukee voucher experiment, the only one that has existed here for as long as four or five years, the youngsters don't learn any more in the voucher schools than they learned in the public schools.

(Applause)

While the parents seem to be very happy with the voucher schools, they also seem to pull their children out pretty quickly. There's a tremendous turnover.

What we need to do is give the public hope that the schools can become what they want them to be. Here, too, please do not think that you can do this yourselves. Local presidents, delegates to the AFT convention, officers of locals can't do it alone. We have to involve the greatest asset that we have. I should say, in connection with the Lessons for Life campaign, that every one of our other divisions is developing a similar type of program, one that deals with quality standards and that will appeal to both the membership and the public.

We have to take this message to our 907,000 members. Lots of times, we do things for them -- and they don't even know what we've done or they take it all for granted. They only come to us, as leaders, to complain about what we weren't able to get or about something that occasionally we lose. But sometimes we have to turn to them. I know it's difficult. It's hard to get people to phone banks; it's hard

to get them to volunteer, to go out and get parental and community support. But I bet that the majority of the people here remember the time before collective bargaining. They remember when the union didn't have full-time people and when we developed a bargaining campaign by getting a lot of volunteers to come after school. You had telephones or you visited schools and dropped off literature, and you ran the mimeograph machine yourselves. You developed a lot of skills because there wasn't anybody else to do it for you. I remember that. How many people remember that?

Well, it was a great time. And it was great because everybody could feel that they had done it; it was not just a handful of people working for everybody else. So I ask that you go back and do something that's difficult. I know most of the time we feel it's easier to do a job ourselves than to try to get other people involved. But we will not win on this unless we mobilize a good percentage of our 907,000 members.

We've got a good story to tell. We have a great historic institution to preserve, and we know how to because we've done it before. We've overcome tremendous odds against money and animosity and power; and we've done it with the volunteer activity of a large number of members.

That's my message. That's what we need over the next couple of years, and I urge you to get with that. Do that and we'll win. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

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**The White House  
Office of the Press Secretary  
For Immediate Release**

**February 22, 1997**

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT**

Hillary and I were deeply saddened today to learn of the passing of Albert Shanker.

Al spent his life in pursuit of one of the noblest of causes: the improvement of our public schools. Since 1964, he led educational organizations--first as the President of the United Federation of Teachers in New York and for twenty-two years as the President of the American Federation of Teachers. He challenged the country's teachers and schools to provide our children with the very best education possible, and made a crusade out of the need for educational standards. He believed, as I do, that children should not go through school without learning the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Eadie, and his family tonight.

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The following remarks were made by President Clinton earlier today (2/24/97) to an audience of 1,200 college and university presidents attending the American Council on Education annual meeting in Washington:

"I would like to begin today, if I might, with a very personal and serious word. This is the first opportunity I have had, really, to say something publicly about the death of Al Shanker yesterday, one of the greatest educators of the 20th Century in this country. He was my friend for many years. I considered him my colleague. He believed that all children could learn -- with high expectations and high standards, high quality teaching and high accountability. He literally lived a life that was nothing less than a crusade, with intense passion and power. And I know that all of you will join me in wishing his wife and his family and the members of the American Federation of Teachers the best, and giving them our sadness and our thanks for a remarkable American who did his job very, very well."

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# Tributes to President Shanker

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2/22/97

**The following statement was issued by Sandra Feldman, President of New York City's United Federation of Teachers (UFT), upon the death of Albert Shanker**

"Al Shanker was a teacher's teacher -- brilliant, logical, caring and deeply committed to both public education and the labor movement as a means of creating a better life for all Americans. He could be passionate about his beliefs, yet at the same time had the rare ability to rethink issues and come up with fresh approaches as times changed. Al's mind never stood still; he was a person who constantly grew. He was my teacher, he was my mentor, and he was my friend. I will miss him terribly."

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2/22/97

**Statement from Bob Chase,  
President of the National Education Association,  
on the Death of Albert Shanker,  
President of the American Federation of Teachers**

American public education has today lost one of its most eloquent and effective advocates. Albert Shanker was more than just a leader; he was a tireless, outspoken champion of children and public schools.

The members of the National Education Association mourn the loss of a visionary. A true leader, Albert Shanker was always one bold step ahead of us all. In the 1960's, he helped take teachers into the brave new world of collective bargaining. In the 1990's, he urged America's teachers to turn their attention toward improving the quality of teaching and insisting on high standards for students and teachers. American public education will miss his articulate, courageous voice.

We extend our heart-felt condolences to Mr. Shanker's family and to our friends at the American Federation of Teachers.

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AFT Secretary-Treasurer Edward J. McElroy made the following statement  
announcing the death of AFT President Albert Shanker:

"We are enormously saddened by the death of our beloved president and leader Albert Shanker. He held the office of AFT president for twenty-three years, far and away the longest tenure of anyone in the 81-year history of that office.

"After his election in 1974, Al Shanker set to work on his life-long passion, building a powerful teachers' union within the house of labor. Under Al's guidance, the AFT became one of the fastest-growing and most innovative unions in America. Currently more than 900,000 members strong, the AFT almost tripled in size during Al's watch. As president of our union, Al became one of our country's leading experts on the subject of improving the performance of our educational system. Al was a relentless critic both of those who disparaged the future of public education and those who sought to cover up its shortcomings. He believed that we didn't ask enough of our students or of the schools they attend and that we didn't ask enough of the political system responsible for financing education. He never stopped working to build alliances between the AFT and those in the community who stood for a better education for all our young people.

"Al also was an innovator in the work of building a larger and more responsive and effective trade union movement. As president of the United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2, Al fought and won the battle to include paraprofessionals among the union membership. When he became AFT president, he opened up our union to new members from the health care professions and public employment, and he led the way to a restructured AFT governance system that reflected this diverse and growing membership base. At the end of his time leading the AFT, Al was actively exploring the possibility of merger between the AFT and the nation's other teachers' union, the National Education Association.

"Al was a leader in the fight for human and civil rights in the United States and abroad. The AFT was an organization to which those who were persecuted came for help. In the U.S., the AFT was the only education organization to petition the U.S. Supreme Court in favor of their landmark decision to end school segregation. As an AFT vice president and as president of the United Federation of Teachers, Al Shanker raised money and recruited teachers to staff the so-called freedom schools, which served the mostly minority children who were denied an education when some states closed their schools rather than admit minority children to previously segregated schools.

"Most of all, Al Shanker was a teacher. Like all great teachers, he emphasized the importance of looking at issues with an open mind and a minimum of preconceived notions. He taught those whom he brought to the AFT to be always open to new information and to be sure that our union was responsive to the needs of its members. Ultimately, he taught us that without a strong union our members could never be the professional educators the children in our public schools need. He was all about building a strong and effective AFT inside a strong and effective labor movement. We will always remember the lessons he taught, and we will honor his memory by continuing to build the AFT into the institution he envisioned.

"Edwina and I and the entire AFT family have his wife, Eadie, and his children, Carl, Adam, Michael, and Jennie, in our thoughts and prayers."

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Raleigh, North Carolina)

For Immediate Release

March 13, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE JOINT SESSION OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA LEGISLATURE

House of Representatives Chamber  
Raleigh, North Carolina

11:09 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Lt. Governor Wicker, Speaker Brubaker, Senator Basnight, the other state elected officials who are here; my good friend, Governor Hunt; Mayor Fetzer. I'd like to thank those who came down here with me today. I brought some of the members of your congressional delegation home -- they don't need to hear this speech, they've heard it before, but I was glad to have them here in moral support-- Congressman David Price; Congressman Bob Etheridge, your former superintendent of education; Congressman Mike McIntire; and Congresswoman Eva Clayton. I thank them for coming. (Applause.)

I also want to say I'm glad to be joined today by your neighbor, the Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, former governor of South Carolina -- (applause) -- and by our new Secretary of Defense, Bill Cohen of Maine. We're glad to have him with us today, too. Thank you, Secretary Cohen, for coming. (Applause.)

I was glad that you mentioned my Chief of Staff, Erskine Bowles. He wouldn't come here with me today because he was afraid all of you would think that he was shirking his duties and not at work. But let me tell you, he is doing a magnificent job. I'm very proud of him. I couldn't believe it when he agreed to come back to Washington and take this job -- especially because I knew it would cost him a small fortune. And he reminded me that his father used to tell him, once you have the tools you've got to spend some time to add to the wood pile. So he's up in Washington adding back to the wood pile. And you should all be very proud of him. He is a remarkable man. He's doing a good job. (Applause.)

I'd also like to thank the other North Carolinians on my staff -- two of the three of them are here today. Doug Sosnik, my former political director and senior counselor, is not here; but my Director of Communications, Don Baer, is here; and Charles Duncan, the Associate Director of Presidential Personnel. They both came home with me and they were glad to have the excuse to come home. And I appreciate their being here and their service.

I was told that this was the first time a sitting President has addressed the North Carolina State Legislature. If it's not true don't disabuse me now, because I'm about to say something here. (Laughter.) And I am very honored to be here. Even more important, I've spent a little time here over the years and I am honored and mildly surprised that you are here, because it's tournament time and you've got four teams, as usual, in the tournament. (Applause.)

You may know that I am something of a basketball fanatic. And you may know that one of my most memorable basketball experiences -- I once saw North Carolina and Kentucky play in the Dean Dome, and the car that I came in was towed. (Laughter.) But I had so much fun at the ball game I would have walked all the way back to Arkansas after it was over. (Laughter.) I make it a point never to take sides in basketball games unless my home team in Arkansas or my alma mater, Georgetown, are playing. But I am looking forward to the day when the great Dean Smith breaks Adolf Rudd's record. (Applause.)

There is much for the rest of the nation and especially the rest of the South of to admire in North Carolina -- the determined and visionary leadership that has characterized this state for many decades in education and economic development, in bringing harmony among peoples of different backgrounds.

When I was a young man, I followed the work here of then-Governor Terry Sanford who later became my friend and colleague. Eighteen years ago, when I first started my career as Governor of Arkansas, my best mentor and friend was Jim Hunt. And he is still my mentor and friend. Dick Riley were laughing with Jim Hunt -- we were together 18 years ago as the governors of Arkansas, South Carolina and North Carolina, and we were laughing that Jim was probably the only one of us who could still get elected governor in our home states after 18 years. (Laughter.) And I applaud him on that.

It was in Chapel Hill that the cornerstone was laid at our nation's first publicly funded university, in Kitty Hawk where man first took to the skies. And today, North Carolina is an aeronautics and an air travel hub center for millions of people. Your state universities receive the highest level of funding for research and development in the nation. You have connected more of your communities than any other state in the country to the Information Superhighway -- something I'm trying to do for every classroom and library in America by the year

2000. The Research Triangle has one of the highest per capita concentrations of Ph.D.s in the word, and you are clearly one of America's most dynamic centers of economic activity.

The most important thing about all this is not for me to brag on you, you know that already, but to emphasize the main point: These things do not happen by accident. They are the product of vision and disciplined, long-term effort.

Now, our country faces the challenges of a new century -- a whole new economy, a whole new way in which people will work and live and relate to each other here at home and around the world. It is driven by information and by technology. Its best hopes may be undermined by its darkest fears, by the old demons of racial and religious and ethnic hatreds, by terrorism and narco trafficking and organized crime.

This new time that we're moving into that, coincidentally, will be part of a new century and a new millennium, will give more people in this state and this nation the chance to live out their dreams than at any period in human history if we take advantage of it to seize our opportunities and deal with our challenges.

There is unprecedented peace and prosperity now. And it has been very rare in our country's history -- you can go back and find maybe a couple of other examples when we've had real security, a feeling of prosperity, and yet, a whole lot of challenges before us. Usually when people feel secure and relatively prosperous, one of two things happens -- neither of them very laudable, but it's part of human nature -- we either get sort of happy and self-satisfied and don't do anything, or because we are not gripped by big differences, we fall out with each other over small things and petty things make us less than we ought to be.

The point I want to make today is that we cannot afford either to be complacent or to be divided among ourselves about small things. For we have been given an opportunity almost unique in American history to fashion a future that will embrace everybody. And we cannot and dare not blow that opportunity.

If you look at where we are now, you can see the vistas of the future. Our economy produced 12 million jobs in four years -- never happened before in a four-year period. We've had constant decline in crimes. We've had the biggest drop in the welfare rolls in American history in the last four years. In North Carolina, you've seen the unemployment rate drop to 4.2 percent -- 75,000 people off the welfare rolls; 350,000 new jobs. That's going on all over America. But you know that we have more to do.

I have been going around the country to the Michigan and the Maryland state legislatures -- today the Vice President is in California speaking to the state legislature as I am here with you -- because I know that to achieve the vision that we share for America we all have to do our part. I've said many times that the era of big government is over. Your federal government is now

285,000 people smaller than it was the day I took office. It's the smallest its been since President Kennedy was in office, in real terms. As a percentage of the civilian work force, the federal government is now as small as it was when Franklin Roosevelt was sworn into office the first time before the New Deal.

But the challenges we face are still very big, indeed. If they cannot be solved by government alone, and especially by the federal government, obviously, a new partnership is required. And new efforts, new activity, new responsibility is required of people at the state level, at the local level and in their private lives. The biggest challenge we face today, I believe, is the challenge of creating a world-class education system that embraces every child that lives in this state and in this nation. And this must not be a political football.

In the Cold War, because we knew that communism threatened our existence, it became commonplace that politics would stop at the water's edge. And the Democrats and the Republicans would fight like cats and dogs over whatever it was they were fighting about, but when it came to standing up to the threat of communism we were together. If the President of one party went abroad on a mission of world peace, he was never criticized back home by members of the other party because politics stopped at the water's edge.

I think we understand today intuitively that education holds the key to our future in the 21st century. And I believe politics must stop at the schoolhouse door. (Applause.)

When I was governor, a long time ago now, North Carolina already had the highest percentage of its adults in institutions of higher education of any state in the South. The economy was growing and it was diversifying, and yet you still had more success in maintaining manufacturing jobs than any state in our region, and indeed, in the country. You know all this. Last year you had the biggest increase in 8th grade math scores, I noticed, in the country. I was in Michigan and I said that they had had the second biggest increase in math scores, and the minute I got in the car Governor Hunt made sure I knew who was number one. (Laughter.) So I knew that.

The Governor chose to be sworn in at the Needham Laughton High School, his old school, to make clear that school standards and teaching excellence will be his top priorities. But with all the progress that we have made, you know we've got a lot more to do.

Between 1992 and the year 2000, 89 percent of the new jobs created in this economy will require more than a high school level of literacy and math skills -- 89 percent. Today, even though over 80 percent of our children are graduating from high school, more than half -- or about half the people entering the work force are not prepared with these skills. We all know that is true.

For 20 years, inequality among working Americans grew. In the last few years it started to shrink -- in the last couple of years -- as we've gotten -- more and more of our new jobs are becoming higher-wage jobs and as growth and productivity are permitting wages to rise again.

Many people, just a couple of years ago, were saying, well, is the middle class vanishing in America, will it always be squeezed, are we going to create a country with a huge number of people that are very well off and an even much larger number of people that are poor, with a smaller middle class. We've seen in the last few years that that does not have to happen. We can begin to grow the middle class again with productivity and growth and the right kinds of new jobs, but we have to be able to provide the people with the skills to hold those jobs if we're going to maintain a high-wage, high-growth, high-opportunity society in America in the 21st century. And our schools are still turning out millions of young people who simply cannot do that.

That is why our number one priority has to be to make America's education the best in the world. We have to have a nation in which every 8-year-old can read independently, every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old can go on to college and every adult American can keep on learning throughout an entire lifetime.

In my State of the Union address, I laid out a 10-point call to action for American education that describes the steps we have to meet. First, we have to make sure the all of our children come to school ready to learn. Our balanced budget will expand Head Start to a million children. But we all must do more, and a lot of that has to be done at the state level. And I hope every state in the country is looking closely at the Smart Start program in North Carolina. (Applause.)

The idea of having all elements of a community in a community nonprofit environment working on not only education, but health care and parenting skills and child care, trying to give our poorest children a coherent early childhood is terribly important. Scientists have discovered that learning begins in the earliest days of life. And now we have to explore how parents and educators can best use these findings.

On April 17th, the First Lady and I will host the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning in Washington, and I want Smart Start to be an important part of what is considered there.

Let me just give you one simple example of the scientific findings. Over half of the capacity of the brain to absorb and to learn and to grow, the capacity is developed in the first four years of life. In the first four years of life, if a child has parents who understand this and who constantly -- whether they have a Ph.D. or they were high school drop-outs -- but who constantly work at nourishing the child's learning capacities, that child will get 700,000 positive contacts.

But in the typical experience of a child with a single parent, let's say, with very little education and no self-confidence about parenting and no training and no understanding, and a sense that no difference can be made, and the child that's left in front of the television in the first four years, that child will get 150,000 positive contacts -- a more than four-to-one difference.

Now, you tell me what the future is going to be life for them. Smart Start can change that. And our cooperative efforts can change that. But we have to understand that we have totally underestimated the impact of this whole thing. And the new scientific findings impose upon all of us a heavier responsibility than we have ever had for developing the capacities of our children in their earliest years. So I look forward to that. (Applause.)

I believe we have to do more to give constructive alternatives, creative alternatives for our young children in our public schools. I favor public school choice. I've been a pioneer supporter of the charter school movement. I think that it's important to open schools that stay opened as long as they do a good job, but only as long as they do a good job. And I know that this afternoon, your State Board of Education has the opportunity to open more charter schools than any state has ever opened at one time, to foster innovation and competition and renewal. I hope the Board will take that step today, and one more time, North Carolina will be in the vanguard of a movement you can be proud of. (Applause.)

We have got to have a commitment to rebuild our schools and give our children the facilities they need to learn in. We have the largest number of children in public schools in history. The Secretary of Education never gets tired of reminding me, since I am the oldest of the baby boomers, that our generation has finally been eclipsed in numbers by the people that are in the public schools today. We also have the physical facilities in many of our schools deteriorating at a rapid rate. So, for the first time in history, I have proposed a program that will enable us at the national level to support local efforts to increase their investment in the physical facilities of the schools by making sure that the interest rates are lower and the costs are lower in the places where the need is most critical.

I'm going to Florida after I leave you, and tomorrow morning, I will be at a school where there are 17, I understand, according to my briefing -- 17 trailers for classroom space around the existing school facility in a modest-sized community in Florida. That is not an atypical experience in many of our states.

We have to meet our national goal of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. We have to open the doors of college to all. North Carolina pioneered, with your network of four-year and two-year higher educational institutions, pioneered the idea that education ought to be a lifetime experience and that the doors ought to be open to everyone.

In the last four years, we have lowered the cost and improved the reach of the student loan program, added 200,000 slots to work-study, opened up almost 70,000 slots for college

through the national service program, AmeriCorps. We have worked very, very hard, but I think we have to do more.

It is clear to me -- if you look at the job profile, where 89 percent of the new jobs will require more than a high school education, we have to make two years of education after high school -- the 13th and 14th grades -- just as universal in America by the year 2000 as a high school diploma is today -- every bit as universal. (Applause.)

To achieve that our balanced budget plan proposes a \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship -- a tax credit that reflects the cost of the typical community college tuition in America, modeled on Governor Zell Miller's HOPE Scholarship program in Georgia. We propose to give people a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for the cost of any education after high school; an expanded IRA that you can withdraw from tax-free if the money is used to pay for higher education; and the largest increase in Pell Grants in 20 years, along with another 100,000 work-study slots. That will help North Carolina, and it will help America.

Finally, let me say on this subject, we know we have to make sure learning continues throughout a lifetime. We know that we have older and older students going back to community colleges, changing their careers and getting new careers and opening up new vistas. We have a federal response which I think is totally antiquated. There are at least, conservatively speaking, at least 70 different federal programs that were developed with the best of intentions to try to help to pay for various training programs for people who lose their jobs or people who are grossly underemployed.

I have proposed for four years -- with a Democratic Congress and with the Republican Congress -- getting rid of these programs and putting the money in a pot and sending a skills grant to an unemployed person or an underemployed person who has qualified for any of them, and let them go to the nearest community college or four-year college if it's the appropriate one -- whatever is nearest and best to get their education. We do not need a lot of government intermediaries here. People know -- people know what they need. They're capable of making a judgment.

In a state like North Carolina and most places in the country, nearly everybody's within driving distance of a community college that works. And that's -- I call that my G.I. Bill for America's Workers. And if you could prevail upon your legislators to support it, I would appreciate it. I've been trying for four years to pass that thing. I would appreciate it. (Applause.)

I think the most important thing we have to do is to make sure that our children have met certain national standards in basic courses. In 1989, when President Bush and the governors met at the University of Virginia, I had the honor of being the Democratic governor chosen to try to write the nation's education goals. And at the time we always assumed that out of those goals

there would come national standards and a system, a nationally recognized system of testing our children to see if they met those standards.

Well, that hasn't happened yet. And as a result, we still don't know. We don't really know whether every child in every classroom knows what he or she needs to know when he or she needs to know it in math and in basic language skills. I have challenged every state in this country to adopt high national academic standards, not just in math and language, but in other areas as well, to participate nationally by 1999 in an examination of 4th graders in reading and 8th graders in math so that we can see how every child is doing in meeting those basic standards.

Now, this is, I know, somewhat controversial. There are people who have actually argued that you couldn't possibly have a national examination reflecting national standards in a country as diverse as America -- as if it's some sort of plot, as if math is different in Raleigh than Little Rock; or any board of education could rewrite the rules of algebra for Alaska as opposed to Florida. I think that is inherently implausible.

When you compete here in North Carolina for a new high-tech plant, when the Research Triangle finds some new breakthrough, you do it based on an international competition --you have to win based on standards that are imposed. We have to be willing to hold our children to the same standards and to hold ourselves to the same standards.

Governor Hunt told me today that he will endorse our call for national standards and a testing plan. North Carolina, therefore, would be the third state to do so. The Republican governor of Michigan joined in, along with his legislative leaders, just a few days ago.

But let me say what I think we need to do. A lot of you know a lot about this. We have some standardized tests in America, but we don't have any tests to nationally accepted standards. The closest we have is the so-called NAEP test, the National Assessment of Education Progress. But, as all of you know, it only is given to a sample of students in various districts. There is no examination in America which says, here are the standards that everyone should know in language or math, and here is a test which reflects those standards; and it doesn't matter whether you're first or last in your class, it matters whether you get over this bar. If you're first in your class and nobody is over this bar, nobody know what they need to know. If you're last, but you're over the bar, you're still going to do okay in this old world.

I think that is very important. We all need to know that. We all need to know that. You know -- and let me also say that I know it won't be easy, because some of our kids won't do all that well at first. If you saw the State of the Union address you know that I introduced two students from 20 school districts in Northern Illinois who took the Third International Math and Science Survey and the 20 school districts up there tied for first in science and second in math in the survey, with Singapore for first. But if they had finished dead last I would have been equally proud of them because they were willing to actually hold themselves to international standards of achievements and measure themselves.

And this is where we need all of your help. I'm convinced that one of the reasons that we've never done this in America is that we were afraid if the news was bad we wouldn't know what to do about it. And I think that in so doing we have sold our children short. All the evidence is, all the scientific evidence is, all the anecdotal evidence is that almost all of our children, without regard to their race, their income and where they live, can learn what they need to know to compete and win in the global economy. And when we do not hold them to high standards because we are afraid that in the beginning they won't meet them, we are selling their futures down the drain and we are insulting them, because they can meet these standards.

What we have to be willing to do is to say, okay, we'll have these exams, we'll hold people to high standards; some people won't make it first; we don't want to punish people, we want to lift everybody up; but we can't know how to lift people up unless we know where we start.

When I go around the world people find it unbelievable that we have no national standard in America to tell our parents and our school leaders whether our children know what they're supposed to know in the basic skills that are necessary to learn all the other more sophisticated things we want people to know.

And I tell you, I believe in the kids of this country. I have been in schools in circumstances where it would be unthinkable that people could learn -- because of crime in the neighborhoods and because of poverty in the neighborhoods. And I have seen children performing at very high levels, meeting standards that would be acceptable in anyplace in the entire world. And I am tired of people telling me that there is some reason we shouldn't have that opportunity given to every American child. We are not protecting our children by denying them the chance to develop their God-given capacities to measure up to what they need to know and do, to do well in the future. And we ought to stop it and do better. (Applause.)

Now, on a lighter note, you may wonder why the Secretary of Defense is here with me today. (Laughter.) Before I came down here, Senator Helms asked me to tell you that he is not the guard that Jesse once said I would need to come to North Carolina. (Laughter and applause.) Ever since I got a Chief of Staff that does not speak with an accent, we've been getting along a lot better, Senator Helms and I. (Laughter.)

There is another reason that the Secretary of Defense is here today. We want to set an example -- we want to set an example, we think we ought to start the standards movements with the schools that we run at military bases. At 66 schools across our country and 167 more around the world, our Department of Defense educates 115,000 of our children every year. The Department of Defense runs a school system as big as that of the state of Delaware. And I met some of the children, some of the teachers and some of the parents out at the airport when I came in today.

Sixteen of those schools are at Camp LeJeune and Fort Bragg, right here in North Carolina, and nearly 8,000 students attend them. It's important that we give these children the best possible education, too -- especially these children, because their families sacrifice, they live far from home, they often risk their lives for their country. It's important, too, because these students come from every racial and ethnic background. They move from place to place as their parents are transferred from base to base.

Because of this mobility, no groups of students better underscores the need for common national standards and a uniform way of measuring progress than this group. If standards can work in these schools, they can work anywhere.

So I am pleased to announce today that, with the strong support of the Secretary of Defense, the Department of Defense schools have stepped forward to ask that their students be among the first to take the new tests when they become available. The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Education Riley have both committed their work.

Starting in 1999, students and classrooms, from Wiesbaden Air Force Base in Germany to Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, to Camp LeJeune will learn the same rigorous material and take the same national tests as students throughout this state, and I hope throughout our entire nation. We can make our public schools just like our military, the best on Earth, if, like our military, we are willing to adhere to high, rigorous standards for all people, regardless of their background. That's what we ought to do.

And I thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here today. (Applause.)

Let me also say that we know we have to do more work to prepare all of our students. And the Department of Defense is being directed today through its school system to use every resource to prepare the students for 1999 when the new math and science tests -- or math and reading tests are ready.

Let me mention one other thing that I think is very important, and it goes well with a lot of what you are doing here with your pre-school years and your early years. It is appalling to me that 40 percent of America's 8-year-olds cannot read a book on their own. But it's true. And the rest of this stuff is just sort of whistling the breeze if people can't read. So we have launched the America Reads Initiative, through the Department of Education, to mobilize an army of a million reading tutors, properly trained, to help make sure that by the year 2000 every 8-year-olds can read independently.

Thirteen North Carolina college presidents have pledged to commit a portion of their work-study students to serve as tutors, and I thank them for that. We're going to have 300,000 new work-study students over a four-year period. If we can put at least a third of them into reading instruction for our young children, we'll be a long way toward those million volunteers.

We ought to be clear about something else, too -- and here's something that I really take my hat off to Governor Hunt for. We cannot expect our children to meet high standards unless we demand that our teachers meet high standards. We have to do whatever is necessary to make sure that they do.

Last year, the report of Governor Hunt's National Commission on Teaching and America's Future laid out a blueprint for the road ahead. And all of you have together across party lines to develop a comprehensive legislative agenda that implements the report's recommendations. We have to start by recognizing and rewarding our best teachers. We all know what a difference a good teacher can make in the life of a child. I know what a difference my teachers made in mine.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, led by Governor Hunt, has encouraged teachers all over the country to improve their skills and seek certification as master teachers. North Carolina already has more certified national teachers than any other state in the country. And the Governor was kind enough to bring five or six of them out to the airport to meet me, and they were not ashamed of the fact that they had been board-certified master teachers.

Over 20 percent of all the teachers that have been certified are here in North Carolina. That's the good news. The bad news is that only about 500 teachers have been certified. In our balanced budget plan, there's enough money to help 100,000 teachers achieve this important credential. Now, the states need to do things like North Carolina has and offer to pay -- the Governor's plan would pay master teachers another 12 percent more. You have to encourage people. But we need 100,000 at least, because what we really want is at least a board certified master teacher in every single school building in America. If you get one in every single school building in America, we know from the research that they will change the education environment and help lift the standards that other teachers achieve and help to lift the quality of teaching in all the classrooms.

So that is one of the things that we're trying to do in our budget. But again, I'd say that we are following your lead and especially the years and years and years that Governor Hunt has put into this. In April, Secretary Riley will hold a national forum on attracting and preparing teachers with 50 of our nation's best teachers and thousands of others. And we are going to have to do more to encourage our brightest young people to become teachers.

Finally, we also have to make sure, as the Governor said, that while good teachers get a raise, the truly bad teachers who can't measure up should get a pink slip. We have to do that in an expeditious and fair way. Today, that is too time consuming and costly. In some states, it can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. That same money could be and should be used to reward good teachers and to train those who are trying to improve their skills. We can change this, as they have in Cincinnati where school boards and teachers unions have worked together in

partnership to find more efficient and fair ways to remove teachers who should leave the classroom. Encouraging teachers is not easy or cheap, but again, I say, we know what a phenomenal difference it makes.

Finally, to elevate teaching, I think we have to reform the way we spend money in our schools and give parents the tools to demand more accountability. Today, the Vice President is discussing that at the state legislature in Sacramento, California. His reinventing government initiative has helped us to shrink the national government to the smallest it's been in three decades and to take that money and invest it in education, invest it in technology, invest it in transportation, invest it in growing the economy and building a better future. We have to have the same sort of national effort to analyze the way expenditures are made in public education throughout America, so that we can support those who are committed to reducing unnecessary bureaucratic expenditures and increasing expenditures on children and teachers and learning.

Yesterday I did a town hall meeting, with 35 children, on drugs. And I asked all these kids -- and some of these kids had been on drugs and were off drugs, a couple of these kids were in treatment, some of them had been in families of gang members who had been involved in drugs, and then some of them had never used drugs. It was a whole panoply of kids. But I went through child after child after child, and I asked them to tell me about their circumstances. And they all said, we need mentors, we need programs we're interested in. And one after another they kept telling me about how their school had had to abandon its music program or its art program, its physical education programs, its intramural athletic programs -- all the things that happen after school or on weekend that keep kids involved in positive things.

We have to understand that however much money we have for our schools we have to make sure we are spending it first and foremost on instruction and, secondly, on ways designed to give the children the best chance to live productive, wholesome, good, constructive lives -- and that ought to be a national effort as well.

We have found phenomenal amounts of money that we could redirect in the federal government to reducing the deficit or investing in our future simply by slowly, but deliberately, eliminating hundreds of unnecessary programs, thousands of unnecessary regulations and reducing -- without running people off -- just slowly reducing the size of government until we have got it to the point where I mentioned to you earlier.

And we have to work on that in our schools because we cannot afford to waste a single dollar when it comes to these children's future. And it is folly to believe that we're not paying for it when we take these kids away from a chance to have a full, wholesome experience and to be in those schools after school hours or before school hours and doing things in addition to their academic learning. So I hope you will support that. (Applause.)

Let me just say one final word in closing about another big job we have to do together. We have to finish the work of welfare reform. In the first four years of my presidency, we gave

waivers from federal rules to 43 states to do all kinds of things to help move people from welfare to work. We now know that partly because of the growing economy, partly because of state welfare reform efforts, and partly because of a 50 percent increase in child support collections nationwide, the welfare rolls went down by 2.6 million in four years -- a record number.

Then the Congress passed and I signed the welfare reform bill, which says there will still be a national guarantee for poor children for food and medicine, but there's a limit to how long an able-bodied person can be on welfare without going to work. And we're going to give it to the states and let the states decide how to design their plans to move people from welfare to work.

Well, what I want to tell you folks is that this is like that old country singer, Chet Atkins, used to say, you've got to be awful careful what you ask for in this old life, because you might get it. And now you've got it. And here is what you have: In order to meet the demands of the law that was supported by almost every governor and every state official in the country, we must move about another million people from welfare to work. Now, keep in mind, when we reduced the welfare rolls by 2.6 million some of those were children -- only about a million of those were people moving from welfare into the work force. So we moved a million people in four years when the economy created almost 12 million jobs. We have to move another million in the next four years because of what the law says, whether the economy creates jobs or not. And it is your responsibility to design a plan to get that done.

Now, I want to help. And I have proposed federal legislation to give a tax credit of 50 percent for up to \$10,000 in salaries for people who hire people specifically off welfare. I have proposed to give extra cash to high-impact, high-unemployment areas so people can do public service work, community service work, if necessary.

But there are more things you can do. Your Work First program here in North Carolina is encouraging private employers by subsidizing paychecks and holding job fairs. These are the kinds of things we have to do everywhere. But you really need to look at how your program works. And you need to look at whether you have a system for challenging private employers to look at the incentives that are available. And you need to figure out how many people every country is going to have to move from welfare to work in order for you not to have a train wreck at the end of the next four years.

Every state has to do this. And it's going to have to be done county by county, community by community. Because I'm telling you, everybody that ever said people who are able-bodied on welfare ought to have to work now has a moral obligation to make sure that the people who have been told they have to work actually have jobs so they can work. We have to do that. (Applause.)

Let me just say -- I have been to a lot of states and looked at a lot of programs. In Missouri, they go to employers and say, we'll give you the welfare check for up to four years if you need it; but you have to pay people \$1.75 over the minimum wage and we'll give you the

welfare check as an employment-in-training supplement. And you can have it for a slot, but not for a particular individual, for up to 10 years if you'll just keep being part of our program. So they've got a lot of employers -- small, medium and large -- who are part of that .

You have to do something like that to do something for the employers who are not taxed. Community nonprofits and religious organizations can hire a lot of people from welfare into their ranks, and have a lot to do with integrating their families into the mainstream of life in North Carolina. But they have to have some incentive to do so.

The second thing I would urge you to do is to make sure that as you realize savings from people moving from welfare to work, I think you can meet your goals better if you turn around and invest at least the initial of those savings back into the transition. We did a good job of adding \$4 billion to child care for people moving from welfare to work. But we still may not have enough child care to do the job. And we know that is a huge barrier. You cannot ask people to hurt their kids when they go to work. And a lot of folks entering these entry-level jobs don't make much money. Now, we can carry them over with Medicaid health insurance for their kids for a while -- they've got to have the child care.

This bill gives you a lot of flexibility and now you have to design this program. I would just implore you to really get down to brass tacks, get the facts: How many people does North Carolina have to move from welfare into jobs in four years? How many is that per county? How many is that per community? What are the tools we have? Who have we asked to do the job?

I believe that the private sector is anxious to be asked to participate in this. I believe they want to end the permanent underclass in America and help people move into the thriving, growing middle class. But we have to do it in an organized, disciplined way state by state. We're going to do our part, but we need you to do yours.

Finally, let me say that it is obvious from looking at education that we have to have a new partnership in America. Washington can lead the way, but the work has to be done by all Americans. North Carolina has led the way for a long time.

I was smiling today when I got up and I thought about coming down here, and I thought about the first time I was ever in a meeting with Governor Hunt and Governor Riley -- 18 years ago -- we were all much younger then. And we had this idea that all the southern states would reach the national average in per capita income and have all these great opportunities for our people if only we could have an education system that was as good as anyplace in the country and it would reach everybody, without regard to race or income.

And, ironically, the mission that many of us who are southerners have carried for 20 or 30 years in our hearts is now the mission of America in a global society dominated by information and technology. And it is within our reach, literally, to give every single child in America the greatest future in human history if we create the conditions in which we can flourish

-- that's partly our job, through national defense and meeting the security challenges and providing a good economy -- but also having the tools.

We cannot guarantee the future for any child, but we can give every child the tools to make the most of his or her own life. That is now America's mission. It is a mission this state has pursued for a long time. If you will lead the way, America's best days are still ahead.

Thank you and God bless you all. (Applause.)

END

12:00 Noon EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 24, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

The Grand Hyatt Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

2:14 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Secretary, that was a good speech --(laughter) -- and fully illustrated Clinton's third law of politics, which is, whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high position. (Laughter.) Their objectivity is stunning. (Laughter.)

I thank Secretary Riley and all the people at the Department of Education for the work that they do. Stan Ikenberry, I'm glad to be here today, with all of you. President Knapp, thank you for your moving remarks about the HOPE Scholarship. You all laughed when Barry said he was making a great sacrifice by going to the Aspen Institute, but in Georgia, that's what they think. (Laughter and applause.)

President-elect Myers, and to my friend Barry Munitz -- you know, we're all in a lather up here in Washington these days about campaign contributions; everybody hates them, but nobody wants to go to public funding. So we seem destined to some period of hand-wringing. And since we're in a spirit of full disclosure, I have to tell you that in addition to my coming here today, I received a gratuity, which I intend to disclose before the whole world. I complimented Barry on his watch, and he gave it to me. (Laughter and applause.) And, cravenly, as we politicians are, I took it without blinking. (Laughter.) He swears it cost \$18.00. (Laughter.)

But I'll tell you why I bragged on it -- and all of you more or less of my age group can identify with this -- look how big the numbers are, I can -- (laughter.) It's the first watch I've ever seen I don't need glasses for. The more expensive they are, the smaller the numbers get. (Laughter.) So, thank you, Barry.

I would like to begin today, if I might, with a very personal and serious word. This is the first opportunity I have had, really, to say something publicly about the death of Al Shanker yesterday, one of the greatest educators of the 20th century in this country. He was my friend for

many years. I considered him my colleague. He believed that all children could learn -- with high expectations and high standards, high-quality teaching and high accountability. He literally lived a life that was nothing less than a crusade, with intense passion and power. And I know that all of you will join me in wishing his wife and his family and the members of the American Federation of Teachers the best, and giving them our sadness and our thanks for a remarkable American who did his job very, very well.

I also want to come here to thank you. Secretary Riley said, in his inimitable way, that this is a big day for us -- and this is a big day for us -- starting with the community colleges and their trustees and then going to this organization which represents, I thought at last count, almost 1,700 two- and four-year colleges and universities. Your views matter, your voice is heard, and your endorsement of our college opportunity agenda, including the HOPE Scholarships, the tax deduction for tuition and the large increase in Pell Grants will help to bring that opportunity into reality, and to fulfill my dream of opening the doors of college to every single American who wants to go. Thank you very, very much. I'm grateful to you. (Applause.)

This is a remarkable time in the history of our democracy. At the end of the Cold War we find ourselves as the world's remaining superpower, with a special responsibility to try to shape the future in a way that will advance the cause of peace and prosperity. We find our own economy strong and growing, producing more jobs in the last four years than in any comparable term in our history, with record numbers of new businesses being formed each and every year.

We know that this is a time of enormous change, but the impulse to satisfaction I'm sure is great. Normally, when democracies have times this good, one of two things happens -- sometimes both at the same time -- people get very self-satisfied and begin to relax, and, therefore, miss the underlying currents of what is really going on for the future; or they become too easily preoccupied with small matters and begin to divide among themselves over things that bring them down, instead of lift them up. We must give in to neither impulse.

Because the growth of the global economy and the absolute explosion in scientific and technical information associated with the Information Age give us an opportunity -- but not a guarantee, an opportunity -- for undreamed of new jobs and careers, for greater knowledge and understanding, not just for greater material wealth, but for enhancements in the quality of lives for families and communities, it is literally true that in the era toward which we are moving more people than ever before in all of human history will have a chance to live out their dreams. But it is also true that the chance cannot be realized unless we give them the power to make the most of their own lives. So this is no time to rest.

Four years ago, we knew we couldn't rest, and we set about laying the foundation for progress by changing the economic policy of the country to focus on investing in our people, getting our fiscal house in order, emphasizing science and technology and opening the doors of trade with the rest of the world. We changed our social policy, centering it clearly on family and community and focusing on action instead of rhetoric. The result is that we've had marked drops

in crime, the biggest drop in welfare rolls in the history of the country, the Family and Medical Leave law, action to stop teenagers from being exposed illegally to the sales and marketing of cigarettes, and a number of other initiatives.

Our foreign policy has begun to articulate the world that we want to make, working in an interdependent way with allies and friends of like mind throughout the world not only to advance the cause of peace and freedom and prosperity, but to stand up against the new threats to our security.

Along the way, we have fought -- and I hope largely resolved -- the battle that has dominated America for nearly 20 years now over what the proper role of our nation's government should be. You hardly hear anyone saying anymore that government is the enemy.

It was interesting -- in the last couple of days Hillary and I went to see -- or brought in the movie, because we have a theater at the White House -- it's the best perk of the job, I think -- (laughter) -- but we had about all the seriousness we could stand, and we watched that movie, "Dante's Peak," about the volcano exploding. And I couldn't help thinking, you know, the hero works for the U.S. Geological Service, and his life is saved in the end by a contraption developed not here at home for uses on the ground, but by NASA for use in space. And I thought, the government is not the enemy. The role of the government is to create the conditions and to give people the tools to build strong lives and families and communities and a strong nation -- and to give people the chance to live out their dreams.

Now that that foundation has been laid, and now that I believe we have also moved away from the very dangerous rhetoric of the last several years that seeks to divide us against one another based on our racial or ethnic or religious or other differences, toward an understanding that it is actually a great Godsend for us to be the world's most multiethnic, multiracial, multireligious democracy, we now can actually seize the opportunities that are before us. But the first and most important thing we have to do is to recognize that, beginning at the beginning, our education system will not provide us the opportunity to do that unless we change it.

For the beginning years we have to raise standards. For our colleges and universities, which are plainly the finest in the world, we simply have to make sure that the access is there for everyone who should go to have a chance to go.

The main point I want to make is that we actually are in a position now to mold our future untroubled by war abroad or disruption at home in a way that is very, very rare in human history. We have no idea how long this moment of tranquility will last. We have no idea how long we will be fully free to wake up and say, what am I going to do today, without being impinged upon by some external force that will shape us.

I was interested when the Secretary talked about Abraham Lincoln and the land grant. I used to teach at a land grant school, so I like that. But it's interesting that President Lincoln signed that land grant bill during the Civil War. And Lincoln once said during the Civil War --

he gave a statement today that I would be ridiculed nationwide if I said -- he said, my policy is to have no policy; I am controlled by events. Well, of course, he did have a policy -- he had the most important one of all -- I'm going to hold this Union together if we all have to die to do it, including me. That was his policy. But he also told an important truth. When the wheel runs off and things fall apart, you are to some extent controlled by events.

Today in a rare moment, America is not especially controlled by events, but we cannot be unmindful of the larger historical trends which will shape our future. And it is the moral obligation of every person in a position of responsibility in the United States to take this opportunity -- not to lay down on the job and not to fall into mindless debates, but to lift our sights and our visions to take advantage of this rare moment and make the most of it. And we could do no better than to give our people the finest set of educational opportunities in the world and to make sure every single one of them has those opportunities. (Applause.)

I was encouraged by the report I got out back, very brief, about the words that Senator Lott said earlier here today. During the Cold War we had a bipartisan foreign policy, because -- literally because the future of the country was at stake -- everybody agreed we'd like to fight with you and we'd like to kick you out if you're not in our party, but politics should stop at the water's edge.

Today, in the Information Age, politics should stop at the schoolhouse door, because our security depends upon our ability to give all our people the finest education in the world. (Applause.) My shorthand expression for what we're trying to do -- and you will all recognize there are many other things at stake -- is that we have to create an America in which every 8-year-old can read, every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old can go on to college, and every adult can keep on learning for a lifetime. My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion next year. But far more than money is required.

Three weeks ago at the State of the Union I issued a call to action for American education based on 10 principles necessary to prepare our people for the 21st century. First, we have to set world-class standards for our schools and develop a system of accountability, beginning for the first time with national standards-based reading tests in the 4th grade and math tests in the 8th grade.

Second, we have to make sure we have the best teachers in the world.

Third, we must make sure that every child can read on his or her own by the third grade. I see my friend the President of the Miami-Dade Community College out here, the largest community college in our country and one of the most diverse student bodies. Forty percent of the 8-year-olds in this country cannot read a book on their own -- 40 percent. And we have to do better than that if we want all of our children to be in two- and four-year colleges when their time comes.

Fourth, we have to make sure parents are more deeply involved in a constructive way in their child's learning from birth. The First Lady and I are going to host a conference on early childhood learning and brain development in the spring here.

Fifth, we have to give parents more power to choose the right public schools for their children and encourage school reforms like charter schools that set and meet high standards.

Sixth, we should encourage the teaching of character education in our schools -- and Secretary Riley has done a marvelous job of that -- and promote order and discipline at the same time by supporting local school initiatives, like school uniforms or truancy enforcement or curfews, and demanding zero tolerance for guns and drugs. I have seen in the most difficult neighborhoods in this country that children do not have to put up with violent, disruptive and destructive school environments. There are schools that are succeeding against all the odds. And if some can, all can. And until they all do none of us should be satisfied.

Seventh, we should support school construction at the national level. I believe, for the very first time -- because we have record numbers of school populations now, for the first time we've got a group bigger than the baby-boomers coming through, and the schools are growing at record rates while their facilities are deteriorating at record rates.

Eighth, we should make sure that learning is available for a lifetime by transforming what can only be described as a tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant that goes directly to workers. People who need and are eligible for federal training help, nearly all of them live within driving distance of a community-based educational institution that can give them what they need. And we do not need a lot of federal programs to get between them and those institutions. I have been trying for four years to pass this program. I hope you will help me get this done in this session of Congress, to create a new G.I. Bill for America's Workers that simply gives people a skill grant and lets them take it to the institution of education nearest them most able to meet their needs.

Ninth, we are determined to connect every classroom and library in this country to the Internet by the year 2000 and we're making good progress on that. But finally, and the thing that you have endorsed today, is our effort to meet the last goal, to throw open the doors of college to all people who are willing to work for the opportunity.

As the Secretary said, we have always expanded education. He began with Abraham Lincoln, and we might have begun with Thomas Jefferson, who advocated even as he advocated buying Louisiana -- for which I'm very grateful; otherwise I wouldn't be President -- (laughter) -- and America becoming a continental nation, that we should educate all of our children. Thomas Jefferson even advocated the education of every single child, boy or girl, of slave families in America. And we know from the beginning that it was the education of our leaders that gave them the vision to chart the course that has brought to this day.

I do believe, based on the sheer economic realities and the need for greater understanding of our interdependence in the world in which we're living that we have to make the first two years of college as universal as a high school education is today. Fifteen years ago, the typical worker with a college degree earned 38 percent more than a high school graduate; today, it is 69 percent. Two years of college alone means a 20-percent increase in learning and a quarter of a million dollars more in earnings over a lifetime.

Now, over the past four years we have put in place an unprecedented college opportunity strategy: Student loans provided directly to people who need them and that enable people to repay those loans as a percentage of their income. AmeriCorps, which has already helped 70,000 young people earn their way through college by serving their communities and their country. Two hundred thousand more students in Work Study as a result of last year's budget, and a very large increase in Pell Grants last year, taking the maximum grant to \$2,700 and expanding the number of people eligible.

The plan I have put before the Congress in my balanced budget would expand work-study again so that one million students will be able to work their way through college by the year 2000. We want 100,000 of these new work-study students to join our America Reads efforts to help make sure all our 8-year-olds can read independently by the year 2000.

I know that more than 80 college presidents have already committed thousands of their work-study students to work as reading tutors. I thank those of you who are here leading this effort, many of you on the front row here, and I'd like to ask all the rest of you to join us. Go back home, look at how many people you've got in work-study, see how many you could allocate to this effort.

We're going to have about 35,000 AmeriCorps students trained especially to train tutors. We're going to challenge the parents and the schools to open up to make sure we can get these volunteers in there to teach these kids to read. We cannot expect the schools to operate efficiently if children have to leave the third grade not even being able to read. They will never learn what they need to know. And college students will relate well to these young kids and have a chance to literally revolutionize future learning in America.

A lot of these children are not just poor kids, they simply -- many of them come out of cultures where their first language is not English and they did not learn to read properly. We should not let them go past the 3rd grade without knowing we have all done everything we humanly can to make sure that they can read independently. So I thank those of you from the bottom of my heart, who have volunteered already, and I ask the rest of you to join in that crusade. We need you and it will make all the difference.

Finally, let me say we have got to do more in other areas. For three years in a row now we've expanded Pell Grants for deserving students. But our budget this year, our balanced budget contains the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships in 20 years. We are adding \$1.7

billion in grants, a 25-percent increase, which will make 348,000 more students eligible -- many of them older students -- and will increase the maximum grant to \$3,000. And for 4 million low and middle income students the budget will cut student loan fees in half.

But if we're truly going to set a new standard, a 14-year standard, we've got to do more. That's why I have proposed America's HOPE scholarship based on the Georgia pioneering program; two years of a tax credit of \$1,500 for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college. We know it will work because of the testimonial you have already heard from President Knapp.

Second, I propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school to help families send children or parents to college, or to graduate, or medical school, or any other education after high school.

Third, I proposed an expanded IRA, expanded in terms of eligibility, in terms of who can save and in terms of purpose, so that families can save tax free to pay for education. Together these proposals mean that a family could save money for college tuition and never pay a penny of taxes on it. For example, families could put up to \$2,000 of income into the IRA each year without paying taxes, then withdraw up to \$10,000 a year for tuition and deduct that from income so that there will not be any taxes when they're paid out.

Cutting taxes to help people pay directly for college has never been done before on a national level. But we have cut taxes for years to help people buy a home or invest in a business because that's the way we felt we could encourage people to invest in their future and build the American Dream. And it has worked.

In the last four years we have seen homeownership rise to a 15-year high, and if the rate of increase continues by the year 2000 more than two-thirds of Americans will live in their own home -- an all-time record. In the last four years we have seen in each successive year a record number of new businesses formed in America. Today we ought to have that same kind of encouragement to invest in education, an even more important investment for the future. And I think that it is highly appropriate to adopt this device to achieve that goal.

Let me assure you, the Treasury Department is committed to working with the Department of Education and all of you to make this tax plan work. The IRS will not interfere with the affairs of educational institutions. We are committed to making this simple and straightforward for the academic community and especially for the students of every age. The plan will give families the power to choose the right education for themselves and the flexibility to decide the best way in which to pay for that education.

Now, just think about what this could mean. A young person who can't afford tuition or whose family can't afford it can now go down to a local community college right away and sign

up if they meet the standards, because the HOPE Scholarship will pay for it. Someone with a new family who is worried about college costs down the road can multiply his or her savings power by putting tuition money in an IRA tax-free every year while the children are growing up. Then, when they're 40 and worried they might need more education to move ahead, but can't spare time off from work, not only can they withdraw from the IRA for the kids, but the parents can to part-time, or at night. But all can go to college without tax consequences.

My plan is simple: \$1,500 a year tax cut for individuals to pay for college for two years; a \$10,000 a year tax deduction for families for any year of tuition after high school; an expanded IRA to help families save tax-free for education, plus the more and larger Pell Grant scholarships for deserving students, 300,000 more work-study positions, AmeriCorps, the Direct Loan Program.

This plan will throw open the doors of college and give every American the great chance to make the most of the world that we are moving into. College is opportunity for tomorrow. And creating that opportunity is our responsibility today.

I thank you again for your support of this plan. As we work in the weeks and months ahead to craft a bipartisan balanced budget, your endorsement today will be an historic element in making sure that this will be part of the ultimate budget plan. We need a balanced budget, but it has to reflect our values and it has to pave the way to a better future.

Today, we have committed to expanding educational opportunities by enacting the Hope Scholarship tax cut, the college tax deduction, the Pell Grant increases, the work-study increases. I thank you for standing with us. You are standing for opportunity for generations to come in a way that will change America forever for the better.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

2:40 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Lansing, Michigan)

For Immediate Release

March 6, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE JOINT SESSION OF THE  
MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE

The State Capitol  
Lansing, Michigan

11:36 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Governor. Thank you all for that wonderful welcome in this magnificent Capitol. I'm delighted to be here today with so many of your state officials -- Lieutenant Governor Binsfeld; your State Board of Education president, Kathleen Strauss. I don't know if Frank Kelley met Theodore Roosevelt, but he did meet me when I became Attorney General. (Laughter and applause.) And some days I feel about that old. (Laughter.)

I want to thank the Mayor of Lansing, Mayor Hollister, for meeting me at the airport, and all the other state officials and dignitaries who are here -- Representative Sikkema, thank you, sir; and Senator Cherry and Senator Posthumus.

I want to thank the members of Congress and others who flew down here with me today -- your former Governor, Jim Blanchard and his wife; Congressman Dingell; your Congresswoman from here, Congresswoman Debbie Stabenow; Representative Levin; Representative Kilpatrick; Representative Conyers; Representative Stupak; Representative Camp; and Representative Hoekstra and Representative Barcia. Did I get them all? (Laughter.) Nine, yes, we only had nine here.

I could only muster nine, but that's a quorum -- (laughter) -- even in the state legislature of the Michigan delegation. I thank them for coming down. Thank you, Wendell Anthony, for your invocation, and thank you for making me feel so welcome.

When I came in, the Speaker and I were looking up at this magnificent ceiling, and I noticed that the seal of the State of Michigan was right next to the seal of my home state of Arkansas. And maybe one reason for that is that the Congress approved us coming into the Union at the same time.

I was reading also the account of Theodore Roosevelt coming here 90 years ago. I know you have partisan differences today. You might be interested to know that 90 years ago there were 32 Republicans and no Democrats in the Senate. (Laughter and applause.) If you clap too much, I've got a great closing line -- Governor, you'll get mad at it. (Laughter.) There 95 Republicans and five Democrats in the House. And it was the aftermath of the Civil War.

I say this because our two states have been entwined in an interesting way over the course of time. We were allowed together into the Union because Michigan was a free state and Arkansas was a southern slave state, and Michigan became the party -- adhering to the party of Abraham Lincoln, of freedom, and the party of Theodore Roosevelt, which the Governor explained. And most of us Democrats are pretty proud of those folks, too. They represent the best in America.

Then, after the Great Depression, Michigan basically became the home of tens of thousands of people from my state who simply could not make a living anymore on the farm, and the factories of Michigan gave people from Arkansas, black and white together, the chance to come up here and build a decent middle class life and educate their children and be a part of what was then America's future. So anybody from my roots must be exceedingly grateful to the people of Michigan and the history and the heritage of Michigan.

When Theodore Roosevelt was here, he was going to Michigan State to address the graduates there, just as I did a couple of years ago. And I might say the President of Michigan State is here, and I told him today that he gave me a picture of Theodore Roosevelt's address to the graduates at Michigan State, and it now hangs on my office wall at the White House -- at the entrance to my little private office off the Oval Office and I look up there and see Teddy Roosevelt speaking every day that I go to work.

Before that, he came here and when he spoke here I suppose the place looked about like it does now, thanks to your magnificent renovation, and I applaud you for doing this. People all over America should remember it's worth investing a little money to protect your roots and your heritage, and the beauty and meaning of what we were, as well as what we hope to be.

In 1907 when Teddy Roosevelt came here we were at the dawn of the Industrial Era. This building had been wired for electricity only two years before he showed up. And when President Roosevelt left here to go to the college campus, he got in a newfangled contraption called a Reo automobile. I read the newspaper article from your local paper from 1907 this morning, and it said that it was something of a risk for him to get into the car, but it was probably the wave of the future, who knew what would turn out. (Laughter.)

Then, like a good politician, I read that when he was at Michigan State, at the campus, he learned that there were, in fact, two different car manufacturers competing with one another in Lansing, so he took the other one back. (Laughter.) He took a Reo out and an Olds back.

That was a rare moment. Just think what happened from that moment to this one. Think about the century that that moment and this one spans -- all but ten years of this century -- and why it became the American Century, what a big part of it Michigan was. Building the great middle class, offering a haven to people from all over America, and to immigrants who would come here from other lands to work, to make their way. Building an industrial power that could prevail in two world wars and overcome a great Depression. Building an ethical power that could live up to the meaning of its Constitution in the civil rights revolution, and expanding opportunities to young people to vote and to women to fully participate in the life of America. Just think what has happened in the 20th century.

When Roosevelt was here in 1970, it was a rare moment. We were moving on to the stage as a world power. Everyone recognized it. We had, by then, been a nation for more than 100 years, and everybody knew there was something unique about America -- a free democracy, where people could vote and decide and make their judgments. And it was growing and being nourished. We were exceedingly prosperous by the standards of the time.

And Roosevelt knew that you had to make the most of peace and prosperity and leadership, and he did. And so did his successor, Woodrow Wilson. And because of them together and the work they did with like-minded members of both parties, we built an era that set the framework for America's leadership, growth and prosperity, and the explosion of people into the middle class, which became the hallmark of Michigan's greatness.

When I was a kid in Arkansas our per capita income was barely half the national average. We all knew if you could find your way up here and got a job, you could still make a good living. That all began at the beginning of this century. It is a very rare thing for a country to have peace and prosperity and the possibility of shaping its own future. Abraham Lincoln said in the Civil War, my policy is to have no policy; I'm controlled by events. If I said that, I would be ridiculed, rightly so. But he was controlled by events. He did have a policy -- it was to keep the union together, and then to liberate us from the scourge of slavery. But he was controlled by events.

When the Depression came on and President Roosevelt called for an era of bold experimentation, he was controlled by events to some extent. He couldn't say, the major issue in America is the climate, or even education or anything else. He was controlled by events, and the war did that. And to some extent, the Cold War did that for us. When Sputnik went up and we got into the space race and wound up winning it, we were almost forced into it. Now we have peace and prosperity on the edge of an era of unimaginable possibility.

We just finished four years where our country, for the first time during one administration has produced 11.5 million jobs. Michigan, the unemployment rate has dropped, and the Governor said your welfare rolls are down 30 percent. You see this kind of progress, this energy, this movement, this possibility in America -- dramatic, new advances in science and technology occurring. This is a rare time.

What happens to people, usually, when they are prosperous and unthreatened? Well, they usually get complacent, and then they normally find some reason to fall out with one another, usually over something incredibly petty, just in the nature of human events. And I come here to say to you today, we here in America, and you here especially in Michigan who have done so much for so long, we cannot afford to do that. We owe something better to our children. We have been given this unique opportunity -- the same sort of opportunity we had when your predecessors were listening to Theodore Roosevelt here 90 years ago, except one on an even grander scale. And we have to make the most of it. We have to build America in the new century. And we also have to know that we have to do it as one America.

I am gratified that Governor Engler said what he did about the education program today. I am gratified that this bipartisan state legislature has given me such a warm welcome --for, we have to forge a new partnership for a new time.

While the era of big government is truly over -- the federal government now has 285,000 fewer people working for it than it did on the day I took the Oath of Office -- the era of big challenges for our nation is not over. And now, we know that national leadership can and must point the way, but the real responsibility is one we all share.

Especially, there are two areas I want to discuss today -- educational excellence, high standards for all students; and welfare reform, breaking the cycle of dependency for everyone capable of independence in America -- for these issues are at the core of what it means to prepare America for the 21st century, giving all Americans not only the opportunity, but the tools they need to make the most of their own lives in this new global knowledge economy.

The Governor referred to this in his remarks. When I gave The State of the Union address, I said that during the Cold War, because our national security was threatened by communism, politics stopped at the water's edge. Today, our national security depends upon our ability to develop the capacities of all of our people, so politics should stop at the schoolhouse door.

Between 1992 and 2000 -- think of this -- 89 percent of the new jobs created in this economy will require more than high school levels of literacy and math skills. But only half the people entering the work force are prepared for these high-paying jobs, even though about 80 percent of them are high school graduates. Our schools are still turning out millions of young people who simply are not equipped for the new world of work. That is why our number one priority must be to make our system of public education the best in the world, and you must

believe we can do this. (Applause.)

A few years ago, almost eight years ago now I had the honor of joining the other governors then serving with President Bush at the University of Virginia to write the national education goals. I still think they're pretty good goals. If you ask me what the consequences would be if they were implemented, we could say bluntly that it would mean that every 8-year-old would be able to read independently, every 12-year-old could now log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old could go to college, and every adult American could keep on learning for a lifetime. That is what I want to be the reality in this country.

In the State of the Union address, I laid out a 10-point plan, a Call to Action for American Education that describes the steps I believe we must all take -- beginning with the youngest children, expanding and improving early childhood learning. The First Lady and I will be having a conference on early childhood learning and the brain to try to deal with these enormously significant new findings over the last couple of years, what we know about not only when children learn, but how they learn, and what happens if we don't do for them what they should do.

An enormous percentage of the capacity of the brain to absorb information to operate is developed in the first four years. I'll just give you one statistic: The average child that grows up in a family with two parents caring for that child, even if they both work, that have reasonably good educations and deal with the basic developmental tasks, will give that child 700,000 positive interactions in the first four years. The average child being raised by a single parent with low self-esteem and low self-confidence and no training in parenting will get 150,000 positive interactions and spend roughly seven times as much time before a television doing nothing, in the first four years. This has enormous consequences for the way we become. So we're going to talk about that.

We have to open the doors of college wider than ever. If 90 percent of the jobs require more than a high school education, and the 1990 census shows that the only group of younger workers whose incomes went up instead of down after you adjust for inflation were those that had at least two years of some kind of training after high school, we ought to make the 13th and 14th years of education just as universal by the year 2000 as a high school education is today. (Applause.)

I know that for years Michigan has been in the forefront of that, helping people to save for college. I have a proposal to provide tax credits for the cost of a typical community college for two years, and tax deductions up to \$10,000 a year for the tuition cost in any post-high school education, and an expanded IRA that can be used for the same purpose. We have to do this.

We also have to give more of our workers the ability to keep on learning for a lifetime. For four years, through a Democrat Congress and a Republican Congress, I have been given

equal opportunity to fail to pass the G.I. Bill for American Workers. But it seems to me to be a simple idea. I just want to take the 70-odd programs that were developed with the best of intentions over the years, for this training program, that training program and the other one, put them in a big fund, and when a worker becomes eligible for help through unemployment or underemployment, send them a skills grant and let them take it to the local community college or the nearest education institution. They can find out for themselves what they need to do to improve their education. We don't need all that stuff in the middle of them, between them and the money. Send them the money, let them get the education. I hope you will help me pass that in the Congress. I think it is a good thing. (Applause.)

I want to help for the very first time through an innovative program to use federal funds to lower the interest rates on local bond issues to help schools with enormous building problems to repair their broken infrastructure, or build new facilities when they are doing their part. This is a very important thing.

We have the largest number of schoolchildren -- as Secretary Riley never lets me forget -- we have the largest number of schoolchildren in history in our schools this year, the first time we've ever had a bigger group than the Baby Boom generation. I have been to schools where the buildings were falling down. My wife was in a school this week where some of the floors were closed, and the kids were going to school on some floors and couldn't go into other floors or other rooms because they didn't comply with the building codes. I have been into other schools with beautiful old school buildings surrounded by temporary facilities to hold the children.

So I think it's an appropriate thing for us to do -- not to try to take over this function, and not to try to substitute for people assuming responsibility, but when there's a terrible problem and people are doing their own work, if we can, by a prudent and limited investment, lower the cost of that so that more people can afford to do more construction and repair, I think we should. (Applause.)

I'm also strongly committed -- the Vice President and I have been working on this very hard -- to getting every classroom and every library in the country hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000. And I want to thank your Congresswoman, Debbie Stabenow, for the work that she's done in supporting that. (Applause.)

Secretary Riley has awarded Michigan a grant of \$8.6 million for the technology literacy challenge to help your classrooms move into the 21st century, and I ask all of you to support that. There is enormous willingness in the private sector to help us get this done, and it can revolutionize -- just think of it -- if we can hook up every classroom and every library to the Internet by the year 2000, for the first time in the history of the country ever -- ever -- children in the poorest district, the richest districts, the middle-class districts -- all of them will have access to the same learning in the same way in the same time.

And those of you who have children or know children who are already proficient in

using the Internet, it's a stunning thing. The other day, my daughter picked a topic to do a research paper on and she said, Dad, can you get me a couple of books on this out of the library? I came home with four books, and she had eight citations she had gotten off the Internet -- eight articles on things. So my labors were one-third of her research project.

This is an incredible thing. If we make this available to all children, it will change in a breathtaking way what people can become, what our children can imagine themselves becoming. And I ask you to help us do that.

I thank you, Governor, for what you said about our support for greater discipline and safety and character education in the schools. I have proposed funding 1,000 new community school programs across the country to help our schools stay open after school, on the weekends in the summertime, to try to give those children who need some positive place to go, some support, some help to stay out of trouble, a place to do that.

I have studied very carefully this problem of rising juvenile crime when overall crime has been going down dramatically in America. And the communities that are reversing that trend, that had juvenile crime going down are the places that make sure that all those kids have something positive to say yes to, even as they're being told to say no to the wrong things. So I want the schools to be able to do that in every community where it's needed in the United States. (Applause.)

We have to make sure that we do everything we can to help our classroom teachers be the best they can be. For years, educators worked to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which is headquartered here in Detroit, Michigan.

Now, Michigan has the third highest number of board-certified master teachers in the country, and that's a good thing. But there are still only a few hundred who have been board-certified. My new budget will enable 100,000 teachers all across America to seek certification as master teachers. And our goal should be to have one certified master teacher in every single school in America. That will make more master teachers we need for those schools, and I hope we can do it. (Applause.)

As has already been said today, I do believe that we need a strong system of public education that gives parents and communities more freedom and flexibility. I think we should work together to give parents more choices for what public schools their children attend all across America. I think we should help teachers, parents, museums and others to create new public charter schools.

I have proposed to double the budget of the program so that we can increase by tenfold the number of charter schools we have by the year 2000, to create -- (applause) -- and I think it's important to emphasize what we want. We want high standards, schools that are open to all

children regardless of their backgrounds. We want an example of accountability which will then spread to all other public schools. But we want to say to them, you can stay open only as long as you do a good job. That's what the charter means; that's what a charter is.

Ultimately, what we want to do is to prove that we have a model here that can be used everywhere else. It is simply not true that if you have a few public schools that all the rest of them can't be good; if some of them are good that they all can't be good. That is not true. It is not true that because it's a public institution we can't achieve excellence everywhere. If that were true, we'd have some good Army units and some bad Army units. And we'd be afraid to go to war and you wouldn't sleep well at night. Isn't that right?

So you do not have to accept the feeling that you know this wonderful principal, and if only everybody else could be that way. That is simply not true. Leadership can be taught, leadership can be trained, and 90 percent of the children in this country plus -- 99 percent of them -- can learn what they need to know to succeed and triumph in the modern world. They can do it and we have to do it. (Applause.)

Now that you've clapped, I will say they are capable of it, but they don't know it today. Let's face the fact. The truth is that 40 percent of the 4th graders in this country still cannot read a book on their own. In Germany or Singapore, students learn 15 to 20 math subjects in depth every year. Typically in the United States, we learn over 30 or 35 every year in a superficial way. Then we have this comparative tests, they normally win -- especially since they stay in school longer than we do, day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out.

But without these skills, children will not be able to develop the capacity to think and to reason and to analyze complex problems. All these skills will be essential to succeeding in the world of the 21st century in jobs that have not been invented or even imagined yet.

Now, what do we have to have? We have got to have high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability. That is why I have challenged our nation to meet these national standards in the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, representing what every child, wherever he or she lives, however poor, rich, or middle class he or she is, must know to do well in the world of the 21st century. And I think we should begin by having every state test every 4th-grader in reading and every 8th-grader in math by 1999 to make sure these basic standards are met.

We already have widely accepted rigorous standards in both reading and math, and widely used tests that are based on these standards. They're just not given to everyone or designed to be given to everyone. Michigan and more than 40 other states have participated in a test called the National Assessment of Education Progress. The Education Committee members in the audience call it the NAEP test. It measures a state's overall performance against a high national standard of excellence.

Just last week we released the annual assessment of math performance and it shows, across the country, that are 4th-, 8th-, and 12th graders are doing better. And as the Governor said, the Michigan score is among the most improved in the nation.

Tens of thousands of students across the country have also taken the Third International Math and Science Survey, a test that reflects world-class standards our children must meet in math and science. The headquarters for that test is just down the road at Michigan State. And I want to thank Dr. William Schmidt at Michigan State for his leadership of this important study. I think he's here with us today. Where are you, Dr. Schmidt? (Applause.) He's here somewhere. Thank you very much, sir.

If you saw the State of the Union address, you know there are a group of children in northern Illinois that took this test in 20 school districts north of Chicago, and they finished tied for first in science and tied for second in math, I think. Very impressive.

Unfortunately, these test also don't provide scores for individuals, they simply measure how an entire area or group of people are doing. What we need are exams that will literally measure the performance of each and every student in each and every school. That way, parents and teachers will know how every child is doing compared to other students in other schools, other states, and other countries. And most important of all, they will know how the child is doing compared to what you need to know to go forward.

And I want to make it clear what the difference is. It doesn't matter if your child makes the highest grade in the class if nobody gets over the standards bar. Conversely, in this test it doesn't matter if your child makes the lowest grade in the class if everybody gets over the standards bar. That's the difference. We have a lot of these standardized test. We need tests that test to the standards, that say whether you crossed the threshold of what you must know to do well in the world of tomorrow.

That's why I'm presenting a plan to help the states meet and measure these standards. Over the next two years, the Department of Education will support the development of new test for the 4th grade reading and the 8th grade math, to show how every student measures up to high and widely accepted standards. They'll be developed by independent experts in consultation with leading math and reading teachers. The federal government will not require them, but these tests will be made available to every state that chooses to administer them. That is the significance of the announcement that the Governor made. I want to create a climate in which no one can say no; in which it's voluntary but you are ashamed if you don't give your kids the chance to do this. (Applause.)

Together, we are saying this. This is not a partisan issue. There is no Democratic or Republican way to use. There is no Maryland or Michigan way to learn. Reading is reading, math is math. No school board or state legislature can rewrite the rules of algebra in Alaska to make them different than they are in Arkansas. It cannot be done. Every state must put politics

aside, work in a bipartisan fashion, test our children in the same rigorous way. Politics should stop at the schoolhouse door.

This will not be easy. Some of our children won't do very well at first. We don't need to make them feel like failures, we need to make them understand we're doing this so we can know how to measure their success. If they don't do very well at first, it's probably more our fault than theirs. And a lot of it, I will say again, is because when we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less type of them. And we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. (Applause.)

I can tell you, over the last several years -- you know, I was a governor a long time -- I served with Governor Engler, I served with Governor Blanchard, I served with Governor Milliken. I have been all over this country to schools. I have seen schools in areas with high murder rates, where it was unsafe to get in the school, where there were no guns, no knives, no dope, no dropout, and test scores were above the state average. I could go through example after example after example. And every time I see one, I get more hopeful and more angry. Because if you can have one good school where the kids are learning against all the odds and all the obstacles, then you know when you leave that school there is no excuse for that not happening everywhere. This will help that happen everywhere. This will help that happen everywhere. (Applause.)

Let me make a comment now about one other part of this education program that I think is very important, and that's our America Reads program. We announced it here in Michigan last August in Wyandotte, when I was there on my train trip. And I did it with the help of two elementary school students, Justin Whitney and Elizabeth Schweyn. We announced the America Reads challenge, we set a goal mobilizing a million volunteer tutors to help every 8-year-old learn to read independently. We're going to use 11,000 of our AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize and train the Army, we're going to get at least 100,000 college students to help, and I might say in the last budget we added 200,000 more work-study slots, and there's another 100,000 in this budget, so we'll go to a million kids on work-study, and I want 100,000 of that extra 300,000 to help teach our children to read. And I'm pleased that 16 Michigan college presidents have already pledged to provide their fair share of those students. (Applause.)

I don't know if you remember what we did that hot August day, but Elizabeth and Justin read "The Little Engine That Could" to me, and I said I want every child to be able to do this and say, here's this book and I can read this all by myself.

Today, Elizabeth and Justin are here with us and I would like to ask them to stand up. Where are they? They're out there -- there they are. (Applause.) Thank you. I will do what I can to help your young people be ready to be tested. I am asking the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation to identify and coordinate resources throughout the federal government and through the nonprofit sector that can be used to help students to meet the math

standards. I want to help young people learn more science as well and to make the government a resource.

The federal government has some of the world's most esteemed laboratories and research institutions. We ought to make sure every high school math and science teacher has easy access to the work of these laboratories and the experts there through the Internet, and we're going to do our best to set up that kind of system and make it available to all of your teachers so they can in turn make it available to your students. (Applause.)

We can do this. We can do this. We can also meet the challenge of welfare reform, and I can't leave here without talking to you about it for a couple of minutes, because I want to make it clear where we are now, and this is something else we've got to do together. In the last four years, the welfare rolls went down by 2.5 million people, the largest drop in the history of the country. (Applause.) Now, how did that happen? And Michigan was -- had a reduction of 30 percent -- above the national average. How did that happen?

We know that about half the drop was the result of the economy producing 11.5 million jobs. We know about 30 percent to a third of it was the result of the fact that 43 of our states had vigorous welfare experiments, and the ones that were statewide, like yours, had better results. We know that there were some result from the fact that we increased child support collections, working together to get really tough. Within the states and across lines, child support collections went up by 50 percent in the last four years, and we know that helped some people to get off welfare.

Now we have a new law, and the new law says there should be time limits for how long the person could be on welfare; there should be time limits for how long a person could be on welfare consecutively -- two years before getting a job. There are tough work requirements. We leave the medical aid and food aid to poor children and their families in place. We increase the aid going in child care at the federal level, and then we give the states the flexibility to decide how to design the program to move people from welfare to work and support them at an appropriate level in the meantime.

Now, that's what it does. I signed the bill and I thought it was the right thing to do. But I also want you to know that we have to do now something else -- we have to make it work. That law was not the end of welfare reform, it was the beginning. It gave this problem to you. You remember what that old country musician, Chet Atkins, said -- you got to be careful what you ask for in this old life, you might get it. And so now you have it.

Now, we have been telling poor people they have to be more responsible; if you can work, you have to work; you've got to succeed at home as parents and in the work force. Now we have a responsibility. You're telling people they've got to go to work; we've got to make sure there's a job there for them if they go to work. (Applause.)

Let me say precisely what this means, because I want to be precise. I think it's very important that since the states have responsibility, every state needs to know exactly how many jobs have we got to create in Michigan only for people to move from welfare to work, how many jobs in Arkansas, how many jobs in Arizona, how many jobs. And how many jobs would that mean we'd have to do by county, and how are we going to do this.

Basically, if you look at the law's requirements and the fact that it's phased in, the requirement for states to put a certain number of people at work, you will have to -- as a nation, we will have to create about another million -- a little bit less, maybe 900,000 jobs for welfare recipients only, and move approximately another 2.5 million people off welfare in the next four years to meet the requirements of the law.

Now, in the last four years, we did it with 43 of the 50 states having welfare reform experiments, but only some of them were statewide. But we also had 11.5 million jobs. We never had that many before. Maybe we'll do it again. I'd like that a lot, and I'll work on it hard. (Applause.) But no one can predict with any certainty what will happen.

So you must imagine, how will we make it more -- and we don't have the money to have big public service employment. I do have some money in my budget to give to the urban areas especially and to isolated rural areas with high impact unemployment to help them do work that needs to be anyway in their cities. But that won't get the job done. Most of this will have to be done by private employers.

Our plan will give tax credits of up to 50 percent of the salary up to \$10,000 a year for people that hire people right off the welfare roll and do not replace someone else, they hire them for a real new job.

It will give other incentives for businesses to hire people off welfare, and incentives for job placement firms and for states to create more jobs for welfare recipients. You'll get more money if you create more jobs for them. And if your past is any indication, you'll be one of those that will be claiming the incentives -- and that's a good thing. And it does provide more money for training and for child care; and in our budget for the new transportation bill, more money for transportation, because that's a big issue in a lot of places for moving people from welfare to work. (Applause.)

But you are going to have to get help. And the private employer community and the community nonprofits community and the religious community, they're all going to have to help. You also have the option to do something else -- you can, totally at your own discretion, let people take some or all of the welfare check and you can give it to the employer as an employment and training subsidy. And some states are going to have to do that because their training dollars are inadequate so they're going to have to depend on on-the-job training. Missouri is doing this now in the Kansas City area, Florida has adopted a version of it, a number of other states have. I urge you to look at that. I think it's a legitimate thing to give a private

employer, for a limited period of time, a subsidy for training and for hiring people who are otherwise very hard to hire.

That's another point I want to make. Keep in mind, about half the welfare caseload gets off on their own; it's the other half that we have to liberate from permanent dependency and it's harder for them to get into the work force and harder for them to stay and harder for them to learn the basic things. And so we're going to have to go out to our employers and say, hey, we want to help you. Or in the case of the churches and the nonprofits, the tax credit is not worth anything to them because they don't pay taxes anyway. But the wage subsidy would be worth something to them to get them to enlist.

So, you know, I have really collected -- how many employers are there in America with more than 100 employees? How many nonprofits are there? How many religious institutions are there with more than 100 members in the congregation, or more than 200 members? Every state needs this information. Every community needs this information and those folks need to be hit up to do their part -- especially if you ever heard anybody in your local neighborhood cussing the welfare system who works people. Go back and say, okay, we got rid of it, now what are you going to do? What are you going to do? We need your help. (Applause.)

The last thing I wanted to say is -- and this may be a moderate problem in Michigan, will be a huge problem in some states -- I signed the welfare reform bill, but I said when I signed it I thought we made a mistake to eliminate all aid to legal immigrants. Now, when an immigrant comes to America, they say -- they have to promise that they won't try to get on welfare and they won't take any public money. That is true. But it's also true it takes five years to become a citizen, meanwhile you work and you pay taxes. And in a country like ours that lets in a significant number of immigrants -- in your largest county now, you have people from over 140 different racial and ethnic groups -- bad things are going to happen to good people just when they show up every day. There will be car wrecks, there will be serious illnesses, there will be crime victims, and I personally think it's wrong to either dump that problem on the door of the state legislature or, in the alternative, just tell them to do without.

And this is a great nation of immigrants. I think this is unworthy of us and I'm going to try to change it, and I hope that you will support that. It would be good for you if you do. (Applause.)

Thank you for making me feel so welcome today. Let me say again, you ought to go back and get the local paper and read the article about Teddy Roosevelt. You ought to think about what happened in the intervening 90 years. You ought to realize that we have an even greater opportunity now, and with it a greater responsibility to forge a new partnership to deal with the new possibilities of this bright new era. And if we seize this responsibility of ours, there is no telling what can happen -- good and wonderful and positive for America.

So it is our duty, but it is our good fortune. You ought to go home tonight and thank

God that you got a chance to serve the public at this moment in time. It is a rare time. And you ought to wake up tomorrow determined to do it with greater energy and enthusiasm and dedication than ever before.

Thank you and God bless you.

END

12:23 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 24, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

State Dining Room

10:50 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Good morning. Welcome to the White House. Dr. Ponder, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Shaw. Where's Bill Gray? Is he here? You're hiding your light under a bushel back there. (Laughter.) I wanted to say again to all of you how grateful I am to Bill Gray for the historic role that he assumed in restoring democracy to Haiti. We've got another year behind us now, Bill, and we're still going. Thank you. (Applause.)

Dr. Payne, and Dr. Hackley, Mr. Secretary. I'd also like to thank Catherine LeBlanc for her work on the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Welcome to the White House. I'm especially glad you could join us during Black History Month as we pay tribute to the contributions of African Americans to American life. None of those has been more important than our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities. When the doors of college were closed to all but white students, and black people's aspirations were scorned, Historically Black Colleges and Universities gave young African Americans the high quality education they deserved, the pride they needed to rise above cruelty and bigotry. As the graduates and teachers of HBCUs haven't just taken care of themselves, they fought for freedom and equal opportunity for all other Americans as well.

This has been important throughout our history, and in the future it will be more important than ever before, because education will be more important than ever before. To prepare our people for the new century every young American must have the world's best education.

You know better than anyone how much a difference an education can make. To name just a few of the young Americans who were educated at HBCUs, you'd have to look at Justice Marshall, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Reverend Jesse Jackson, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume, Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison, and of course, Dr. King. Eighty-five percent of our

nation's black physicians, 80 percent of our African American federal judges, 75 percent of our black PhDs, 50 percent of our black business executives and elected officials all were educated at HBCUs.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities have served with distinction, of course, in terms of their contributions to our administration: Our former Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary; former Surgeon General, Dr. Joycelyn Elders; the Director of Presidential Personnel, Bob Nash; and, of course, as the Vice President said, Alexis Herman, who is here with us today and who did a superb job for us as Director of Public Liaison -- and, with your help, will be a great Secretary of Labor, and I want your help. (Applause.)

Over the last four years, we have put in place a comprehensive college opportunity strategy to make college available to every American citizen. I directed the Department of Education and the White House Initiative on Historical Colleges to work to increase funding to HPCUs. We've made student loans less expensive and much easier to obtain under the Direct Student Loan Program. AmeriCorps, our national service program, has given tens of thousands of young people the chance to earn college tuition while serving in their communities. We have created already in the last budget 200,000 more work-study positions to help students work their way through college, and in the new budget there is another 100,000, which will mean we will go from 700,000 to 1 million work-study slots in only four years. (Applause.)

We know that financial aid is critically important. But some of your colleges, as many as 90 percent of the students, receive financial aid. Last year, we increased the Pell Grant program by 20 percent, taking the maximum grant up to \$2,700 from about wherever it was \$2,460. That was the biggest increase in 20 years.

This year's budget is bigger still. It increases Pell Grants by another 25 percent, the largest increase again in well over 20 years; and increases the maximum Pell Grant award to \$3,000 per year. It expands the program to include older students who are starting college late or returning to school. It raises the maximum family income level to include hundreds of thousands of families who did not qualify for Pell Grants before. In total, these changes will help almost 350,000 more families send a family member to college.

The balanced budget also includes a \$10,000 tax deduction to help families pay for college, and a \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, which is enough to pay for the tuition at the typical community college in America for two years.

This college opportunity agenda will open the doors of college wider than ever before. Now we need to work to make sure that the Congress, without regard to party, will enact these changes into law.

Before I answer questions now, I'd like to ask for your help with one more thing. We all know that literacy is the basic tool of learning. But 40 percent of our children cannot read

independently by the time they're eight years old. We can and must do better. My budget includes more than \$2 billion to help us with the literacy challenge, but that is not enough.

I launched our America Reads initiative to mobilize an army of reading tutors all across America. And I asked college and university presidents to help me achieve that. I sent a senior member of the White House staff, Carol Rasco, to the Department of Education to work with Secretary Riley to make sure the America Reads initiative does that. We have dedicated several thousand AmeriCorps volunteers to becoming trained so they can, in turn, train reading tutors to work with schools, with parents and with children to help make sure our children can read.

But now we need a lot of volunteers -- as many as a million -- and a lot of them will have to come from students. I am pleased to say that over 80 college presidents have already committed thousands of their work-study students to participate as reading tutors. I hope you will join them and commit a percentage of your own work-study students to help our children learn to read, because without literacy, the job manuals and the history books are both closed, and so are the doors of college. We need your help to open them wider.

I'm looking forward to working with you in the months and the years ahead, but especially this year to make sure that we pass this education in Congress, number one; and number two, that we enlist the idealism, the ability and the energy of our young college students in helping us to teach our children to read.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

10:59 A.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 4, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
IN STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

United States Capitol

9:15 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests, and my fellow Americans:

I think I should start by saying, thanks for inviting me back. (Applause.) I come before you tonight with a challenge as great as any in our peacetime history, and a plan of action to meet that challenge, to prepare our people for the bold new world of the 21st century.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of growth, we have won back the basic strength of our economy. With crime and welfare rolls declining, we are winning back our optimism, the enduring faith that we can master any difficulty. With the Cold War receding and global commerce at record levels, we are helping to win unrivaled peace and prosperity all across the world.

My fellow Americans, the state of our union is strong. (Applause.) But now we must rise to the decisive moment, to make a nation and a world better than any we have ever known. The new promise of the global economy, the Information Age, unimagined new work, life-enhancing technology -- all these are ours to seize. That is our honor and our challenge. We must be shapers of events, not observers. For if we do not act, the moment will pass -- and we will lose the best possibilities of our future.

We face no imminent threat, but we do have an enemy -- the enemy of our time is inaction. So, tonight, I issue a call to action -- action by this Congress, action by our states, by our people, to prepare America for the 21st century. Action to keep our economy and our democracy strong and working for all our people; action to strengthen education and harness the forces of technology and science; action to build stronger families and stronger communities and a safer environment; action to keep America the world's strongest force for peace, freedom and prosperity. And above all, action to build a more perfect union here at home.

The spirit we bring to our work will make all the difference. We must be committed to the pursuit of opportunity for all Americans, responsibility from all Americans, in a community of all Americans. And we must be committed to a new kind of government -- not to solve all our problems for us, but to give our people -- all our people -- the tools they need to make the most of their own lives.

And we must work together. The people of this nation elected us all. They want us to be partners, not partisans. They put us all right here in the same boat, they gave us all oars, and they told us to row. Now, here is the direction I believe we should take.

First, we must move quickly to complete the unfinished business of our country -- to balance our budget, renew our democracy, and finish the job of welfare reform.

Over the last four years, we have brought new economic growth by investing in our people, expanding our exports, cutting our deficits, creating over 11 million new jobs, a four-year record. (Applause.) Now we must keep our economy the strongest in the world. We here tonight have an historic opportunity. Let this Congress be the Congress that finally balances the budget. (Applause.)

In two days, I will propose a detailed plan to balance the budget by 2002. This plan will balance the budget and invest in our people while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. It will balance the budget and build on the Vice President's efforts to make our government work better, even as it costs less. It will balance the budget and provide middle class tax relief to pay for education and health care, to help to raise a child, to buy and sell a home.

Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. (Applause.) I believe it is both unnecessary and unwise to adopt a balanced budget amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis, and force unwanted results, such as judges halting Social Security checks or increasing taxes. Let us at least agree, we should not pass any measure -- no measure should be passed that threatens Social Security. (Applause.) Whatever your view on that, we all must concede we don't need a constitutional amendment, we need action. (Applause.)

Whatever our differences, we should balance the budget now. And then, for the long-term health of our society, we must agree to a bipartisan process to preserve Social Security and reform Medicare for the long run, so that these fundamental programs will be as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

And let me say something that's not in my script tonight. I know this is not going to be easy. But I really believe one of the reasons the American people gave me a second term was to take the tough decisions in the next four years that will carry our country through the next 50 years. I know it is easier for me than for you to say or do. But another reason I was elected is to support all of you, without regard to party, to give you what is necessary to join in these

decisions. We owe it to our country and to our future. (Applause.)

Our second piece of unfinished business requires us to commit ourselves tonight, before the eyes of America, to finally enacting bipartisan campaign finance reform. (Applause.)

Now, Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines here to craft tough and fair reform. Their proposal would curb spending, reduce the role of special interests, create a level playing field between challengers and incumbents, and ban contributions from noncitizens, all corporate sources, and the other large soft money contributions that both parties receive.

You know and I know that this can be delayed. And you know and I know the delay will mean the death of reform. So let's set our own deadline. Let's work together to write bipartisan campaign finance reform into law and pass McCain-Feingold by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy -- July the 4th. (Applause.)

There is a third piece of unfinished business. Over the last four years, we moved a record 2.25 million people off the welfare rolls. Then last year, Congress enacted landmark welfare reform legislation, demanding that all able-bodied recipients assume the responsibility of moving from welfare to work.

Now each and every one of us has to fulfill our responsibility -- indeed, our moral obligation -- to make sure that people who now must work, can work. (Applause.) Now we must act to meet a new goal: 2 million more people off the welfare rolls by the year 2000.

Here is my plan: Tax credits and other incentives for businesses that hire people off welfare; incentives for job placement firms and states to create more jobs for welfare recipients; training, transportation, and child care to help people go to work.

Now I challenge every state: Turn those welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I challenge every religious congregation, every community nonprofit, every business to hire someone off welfare. And I'd like to say especially to every employer in our country who ever criticized the old welfare system, you can't blame that old system anymore, we have torn it down. Now do your part. Give someone on welfare the chance to go to work. (Applause.)

Tonight, I am pleased to announce that five major corporations -- Sprint, Monsanto, UPS, Burger King and United Airlines -- will be the first to join in a new national effort to marshal America's businesses, large and small, to create jobs so that people can move from welfare to work. (Applause.)

We passed welfare reform. All of you know I believe we were right to do it. But no one can walk out of this chamber with a clear conscience unless you are prepared to finish the job. (Applause.)

And we must join together to do something else, too -- something both Republican and Democratic governors have asked us to do -- to restore basic health and disability benefits when misfortune strikes immigrants who came to this country legally, who work hard, pay taxes and obey the law. To do otherwise is simply unworthy of a great nation of immigrants. (Applause.)

Now, looking ahead, the greatest step of all -- the high threshold of the future we now must cross -- and my number one priority for the next four years is to ensure that all Americans have the best education in the world. (Applause.)

Let's work together to meet these three goals: Every 8-year-old must be able to read; every 12-year-old must be able to log on to the Internet; every 18-year-old must be able to go to college; and every adult American must be able to keep on learning for a lifetime. (Applause.)

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion next year. But far more than money is required. I have a plan, a Call to Action for American Education, based on these 10 principles.

First, a national crusade for education standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards, representing what all our students must know to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st century. Every state and school must shape the curriculum to reflect these standards, and train teachers to lift students up to them. To help schools meet the standards and measure their progress, we will lead an effort over the next two years to develop national tests of student achievement in reading and math.

Tonight, I issue a challenge to the nation: Every state should adopt high national standards, and by 1999, every state should test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met. (Applause.)

Raising standards will not be easy, and some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. The point is not to put our children down, but to lift them up. Good tests will show us who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools need to improve. They can help us to end social promotion. For no child should move from grade school to junior high, or junior high to high school until he or she is ready.

Last month, our Secretary of Education Dick Riley and I visited Northern Illinois, where 8th grade students from 20 school districts, in a project aptly called "First in the World," took the Third International Math and Science Study. That's a test that reflects the world-class standards our children must meet for the new era. And those students in Illinois tied for first in the world in science and came in second in math. Two of them, Kristin Tanner and Chris Getsla, are here tonight, along with their teacher, Sue Winski; they're up there with the First Lady. And they prove that when we aim high and challenge our students, they will be the best in the world. Let's give them a hand. Stand up, please. (Applause.)

Second, to have the best schools, we must have the best teachers. Most of us in this chamber would not be here tonight without the help of those teachers. I know that I wouldn't be here. For years, many of our educators, led by North Carolina's Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked very hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. Just 500 of these teachers have been certified since 1995. My budget will enable 100,000 more to seek national certification as master teachers. We should reward and recognize our best teachers. (Applause.) And as we reward them, we should quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up, and we should challenge more of our finest young people to consider teaching as a career.

Third, we must do more to help all our children read. Forty percent -- forty percent -- of our 8-year-olds cannot read on their own. That's why we have just launched the America Reads initiative -- to build a citizen army of one million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by the end of the 3rd grade. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. We want at least 100,000 college students to help. And tonight I am pleased that 60 college presidents have answered my call, pledging that thousands of their work-study students will serve for one year as reading tutors. (Applause.)

This is also a challenge to every teacher and every principal. You must use these tutors to help students read. And it is especially a challenge to our parents. You must read with your children every night.

This leads to the fourth principle: Learning begins in the first days of life. Scientists are now discovering how young children develop emotionally and intellectually from their very first days, and how important it is for parents to begin immediately talking, singing, even reading to their infants. The First Lady has spent years writing about this issue, studying it. And she and I are going to convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this spring, to explore how parents and educators can best use these startling new findings.

We already know we should start teaching children before they start school. That's why this balanced budget expands Head Start to one million children by 2002. (Applause.) And that is why the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their annual family conference this June on what we can do to make sure that parents are an active part of their children's learning all the way through school.

They've done a great deal to highlight the importance of family in our life, and now they're turning their attention to getting more parents involved in their children's learning all the way through school. And I thank you, Mr. Vice President, and I thank you especially, Tipper, for what you do. (Applause.)

Fifth, every state should give parents the power to choose the right public school for their children. Their right to choose will foster competition and innovation that can make public schools better. We should also make it possible for more parents and teachers to start charter

schools, schools that set and meet the highest standards, and exist only as long as they do. Our plan will help America to create 3,000 of these charter schools by the next century -- nearly seven times as there are in the country today -- so that parents will have even more choices in sending their children to the best schools.

Sixth: Character education must be taught in our schools. We must teach our children to be good citizens. (Applause.) And we must continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews enforce truancy laws, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs in school. (Applause.)

Seventh: We cannot expect our children to raise themselves up in schools that are literally falling down. With the student population at an all-time high, and record numbers of school buildings falling into disrepair, this has now become a serious national concern. Therefore, my budget includes a new initiative --\$5 billion to help communities finance \$20 billion in school construction over the next four years. (Applause.)

Eighth: We must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- just as universal in America by the 21st century as a high school education is today, and we must open the doors of college to Americans. (Applause.)

To do that, I propose America's HOPE Scholarship, based on Georgia's pioneering program: two years of a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college. I also propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school; an expanded IRA you can withdraw from tax free for education; and the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships in 20 years. (Applause.) Now, this plan will give most families the ability to pay no taxes on money they save for college tuition. I ask you to pass it -- and give every American who works hard the chance to go to college.

Ninth: In the 21st century, we must expand the frontiers of learning across a lifetime. All our people, of whatever age, must have a chance to learn new skills. Most Americans live near a community college. The roads that take them there can be paths to a better future. My G.I. Bill for America's Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant to go directly into eligible workers' hands. For too long, this bill has been sitting on that desk there without action -- I ask you to pass it now. Let's give more of our workers the ability to learn and to earn for a lifetime. (Applause.)

Tenth: We must bring the power of the Information Age into all our schools. Last year, I challenged America to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, so that, for the first time in our history, children in the most isolated rural towns, the most comfortable suburbs, the poorest inner city schools, will have the same access to the same universe of knowledge. (Applause.) That is my plan -- a Call to Action for American Education. Some may say that it is unusual for a President to pay this kind of attention to education. Some

may say it is simply because the President and his wonderful wife have been obsessed with this subject for more years than they can recall. That is not what is driving these proposals.

We must understand the significance of this endeavor: One of the greatest sources of our strength throughout the Cold War was a bipartisan foreign policy; because our future was at stake, politics stopped at the water's edge. Now I ask you -- and I ask all our nation's governors; I ask parents, teachers, and citizens all across America -- for a new nonpartisan commitment to education -- because education is a critical national security issue for our future, and politics must stop at the schoolhouse door. (Applause.)

To prepare America for the 21st century we must harness the powerful forces of science and technology to benefit all Americans. This is the first State of the Union carried live in video over the Internet. But we've only begun to spread the benefits of a technology revolution that should become the modern birthright of every citizen.

Our effort to connect every classroom is just the beginning. Now, we should connect every hospital to the Internet, so that doctors can instantly share data about their patients with the best specialists in the field. And I challenge the private sector tonight to start by connecting every children's hospital as soon as possible, so that a child in bed can stay in touch with school, family and friends. A sick child need no longer be a child alone. (Applause.)

We must build the second generation of the Internet so that our leading universities and national laboratories can communicate in speeds 1,000 times faster than today, to develop new medical treatments, new sources of energy, new ways of working together.

But we cannot stop there. As the Internet becomes our new town square, a computer in every home -- a teacher of all subjects, a connection to all cultures -- this will no longer be a dream, but a necessity. And over the next decade, that must be our goal. (Applause.)

We must continue to explore the heavens -- pressing on with the Mars probes and the international space station, both of which will have practical applications for our everyday living.

We must speed the remarkable advances in medical science. The human genome project is now decoding the genetic mysteries of life. American scientists have discovered genes linked to breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and medication that stops a stroke in progress and begins to reverse its effect, and treatments that dramatically lengthen the lives of people with HIV and AIDS.

Since I took office, funding for AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health has increased dramatically -- to \$1.5 billion. With new resources, NIH will now become the most powerful discovery engine for an AIDS vaccine, working with other scientists to finally end the threat of AIDS. (Applause.) Remember that every year -- every year we move up the discovery

of an AIDS vaccine will save millions of lives around the world. We must reinforce our commitment to medical science.

To prepare America for the 21st century, we must build stronger families. Over the past four years, the Family and Medical Leave law has helped millions of Americans to take time off to be with their families. With new pressures on people in the way they work and live, I believe we must expand family leave so that workers can take time off for teacher conferences and a child's medical checkup. We should pass flex-time, so workers can choose to be paid for overtime in income or trade it in for time off to be with their families. (Applause.)

We must continue -- we must continue, step by step, to give more families access to affordable, quality health care. Forty million Americans still lack health insurance. Ten million children still lack health insurance -- 80 percent of them have working parents who pay taxes. That is wrong. (Applause.)

My balanced budget will extend health coverage to up to 5 million of those children. Since nearly half of all children who lose their insurance do so because their parents lose or change a job, my budget will also ensure that people who temporarily lose their jobs can still afford to keep their health insurance. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job. (Applause.)

My Medicare plan modernizes Medicare, increases the life of the trust fund to 10 years, provides support for respite care for the many families with loved ones afflicted with Alzheimer's. And for the first time, it would fully pay for annual mammograms. (Applause.)

Just as we ended drive-through deliveries of babies last year, we must now end the dangerous and demeaning practice of forcing women home from the hospital only hours after a mastectomy. (Applause.) I ask your support for bipartisan legislation to guarantee that a woman can stay in the hospital for 48 hours after a mastectomy. With us tonight is Dr. Kristen Zarfes, a Connecticut surgeon whose outrage at this practice spurred a national movement and inspired this legislation. I'd like her to stand so we thank her for her efforts. Dr. Zarfes, thank you. (Applause.)

In the last four years, we have increased child support collections by 50 percent. Now we should go further and do better by making it a felony for any parent to cross a state line in an attempt to flee from this, his or her most sacred obligation. (Applause.)

Finally, we must also protect our children by standing firm in our determination to ban the advertising and marketing of cigarettes that endanger their lives. (Applause.)

To prepare America for the 21st century, we must build stronger communities. We should start with safe streets. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row. The key has been community policing. We must finish the job of putting 100,000 community police on the streets

of the United States. (Applause.) We should pass the Victims Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

And I ask you to mount a full-scale assault on juvenile crime, with legislation that declares war on gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; extends the Brady Bill so violent teen criminals will not be able to buy handguns; requires child safety locks on handguns to prevent unauthorized use; and helps to keep our schools open after hours, on weekends, and in the summer, so our young people will have someplace to go and something to say yes to. (Applause.)

This balanced budget includes the largest antidrug effort ever: to stop drugs at their source, punish those who push them, and teach our young people that drugs are wrong, drugs are illegal, and drugs will kill them. I hope you will support it. (Applause.)

Our growing economy has helped to revive poor urban and rural neighborhoods. But we must do more to empower them to create the conditions in which all families can flourish and to create jobs through investment by business and loans by banks.

We should double the number of empowerment zones. They've already brought so much hope to communities like Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half in four years. We should restore contaminated urban land and buildings to productive use. We should expand the network of community development banks. And together we must pledge tonight that we will use this empowerment approach -- including private sector tax incentives -- to renew our Capital City, so that Washington is a great place to work and live, and once again the proud face America shows to world. (Applause.)

We must protect our environment in every community. In the last four years, we cleaned up 250 toxic waste sites, as many as in the previous 12. Now, we should clean up 500 more, so that our children grow up next to parks, not poison. I urge you to pass my proposal to make big polluters live by a simple rule: If you pollute our environment, you should pay to clean it up. (Applause.)

In the last four years, we strengthened our nation's safe food and clean drinking water laws; we protected some of America's rarest, most beautiful land in Utah's Red Rocks region; created three new national parks in the California desert; and began to restore the Florida Everglades. Now we must be as vigilant with our rivers as we are with our lands. Tonight, I announce that this year I will designate 10 American Heritage Rivers, to help communities alongside them revitalize their waterfronts and clean up pollution in the rivers, proving once again that we can grow the economy as we protect the environment. (Applause.)

We must also protect our global environment, working to ban the worst toxic chemicals and to reduce the greenhouse gases that challenge our health even as they change our climate.

Now, we all know that in all of our communities, some of our children simply don't have what they need to grow and learn in their own homes, or schools or neighborhoods. And that means the rest of us must do more, for they are our children, too. That's why President Bush, General Colin Powell, former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros will join the Vice President and me to lead the President's Summit of Service in Philadelphia in April.

Our national service program, AmeriCorps, has already helped 70,000 young people to work their way through college as they serve America. Now we intend to mobilize millions of Americans to serve in thousands of ways. Citizen service is an American responsibility which all Americans should embrace, and I ask your support for that endeavor. (Applause.)

I'd like to make just one last point about our national community. Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics, and it's very important. But the enduring worth of our nation lies in our shared values and our soaring spirit. So instead of cutting back on our modest efforts to support the arts and humanities, I believe we should stand by them and challenge our artists, musicians, and writers -- (applause) -- challenge our museums, libraries and theaters -- (applause) -- we should -- we should challenge all Americans in the arts and humanities to join with our fellow citizens to make the year 2000 a national celebration of the American spirit in every community -- a celebration of our common culture in the century that has passed, and in the new one to come in a new millennium, so that we can remain the world's beacon not only of liberty, but of creativity, long after the fireworks have faded.

To prepare America for the 21st century we must master the forces of change in the world and keep American leadership strong and sure for an uncharted time.

Fifty years ago, a farsighted America led in creating the institutions that secured victory in the Cold War and built a growing world economy. As a result, today more people than ever embrace our ideals and share our interests. Already, we have dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided our parents' world. For the first time, more people live under democracy than dictatorship, including every nation in our own hemisphere, but one -- and its day, too, will come. (Applause.)

Now, we stand at another moment of change and choice --and another time to be farsighted, to bring America 50 more years of security and prosperity. In this endeavor, our first task is to help to build, for the first time, an undivided, democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, prosperous and at peace, America is more secure.

To that end, we must expand NATO by 1999, so that countries that were once our adversaries can become our allies. At the special NATO summit this summer, that is what we will begin to do. We must strengthen NATO's Partnership for Peace with non-member allies. And we must build a stable partnership between NATO and a democratic Russia. (Applause.) An expanded NATO is good for America. And a Europe in which all democracies define their future not in terms of what they can do to each other, but in terms of what they can

do together for the good of all -- that kind of Europe is good for America.

Second, America must look to the East no less than to the West. Our security demands it. Americans fought three wars in Asia in this century. Our prosperity requires it. More than two million American jobs depend upon trade with Asia.

There, too, we are helping to shape an Asian Pacific community of cooperation, not conflict. Let our progress there not mask the peril that remains. Together with South Korea, we must advance peace talks with North Korea and bridge the Cold War's last divide. And I call on Congress to fund our share of the agreement under which North Korea must continue to freeze and then dismantle its nuclear weapons program. (Applause.)

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China -- for the sake of our interests and our ideals. An isolated China is not good for America. A China playing its proper role in the world is. I will go to China, and I have invited China's President to come here, not because we agree on everything, but because engaging China is the best way to work on our common challenges like ending nuclear testing, and to deal frankly with our fundamental differences like human rights. (Applause.)

The American people must prosper in the global economy. We've worked hard to tear down trade barriers abroad so that we can create good jobs at home. I am proud to say that today, America is once again the most competitive nation and the number one exporter in the world. (Applause.)

Now we must act to expand our exports, especially to Asia and Latin America -- two of the fastest growing regions on Earth -- or be left behind as these emerging economies forge new ties with other nations. That is why we need the authority now to conclude new trade agreements that open markets to our goods and services even as we preserve our values. (Applause.)

We need not shrink from the challenge of the global economy. After all, we have the best workers and the best products. In a truly open market, we can out-compete anyone, anywhere on Earth.

But this is about more than economics. By expanding trade, we can advance the cause of freedom and democracy around the world. There is no better example of this truth than Latin America where democracy and open markets are on the march together. That is why I will visit there in the spring to reinforce our important tie.

We should all be proud that America led the effort to rescue our neighbor, Mexico, from its economic crises. And we should all be proud that last month Mexico repaid the United States -- three full years ahead of schedule -- with half a billion dollar profit to us. (Applause.)

America must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace --- from the Middle East to

Haiti, from Northern Ireland to Africa. Taking reasonable risks for peace keeps us from being drawn into far more costly conflicts later.

With American leadership, the killing has stopped in Bosnia. Now the habits of peace must take hold. The new NATO force will allow reconstruction and reconciliation to accelerate. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. They are doing a remarkable job there for America, and America must do right by them. (Applause.)

Fifth, we must move strongly against new threats to our security. In the past four years, we agreed to ban -- we led the way to a worldwide agreement to ban nuclear testing. With Russia, we dramatically cut nuclear arsenals and we stopped targeting each others citizens. We are acting to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of land mines. (Applause.) We are working with other nations with renewed intensity to fight drug traffickers and to stop terrorists before they act, and hold them fully accountable if they do. (Applause.)

Now, we must rise to a new test of leadership: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. (Applause.) Make no mistake about it, it will make our troops safer from chemical attack; it will help us to fight terrorism. We have no more important obligations -- especially in the wake of what we now know about the Gulf War. This treaty has been bipartisan from the beginning -- supported by Republican and Democratic administrations and Republican and Democratic members of Congress -- and already approved by 68 nations.

But if we do not act by April the 29th -- when this Convention goes into force, with or without us -- we will lose the chance to have Americans leading and enforcing this effort. Together we must make the Chemical Weapons Convention law, so that at last we can begin to outlaw poison gas from the Earth. (Applause.)

Finally, we must have the tools to meet all these challenges. We must maintain a strong and ready military. We must increase funding for weapons modernization by the year 2000, and we must take good care of our men and women in uniform. They are the world's finest. (Applause.)

We must also renew our commitment to America's diplomacy, and pay our debts and dues to international financial institutions like the World Bank, and to a reforming United Nations. (Applause.) Every dollar we devote to preventing conflicts, to promoting democracy, to stopping the spread of disease and starvation, brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending today is just one percent of the federal budget -- a small fraction of what America invested in diplomacy to choose leadership over escapism at the start of the Cold War. If America is to continue to lead the world, we here who lead America simply must find the will to pay our way.

A farsighted America moved the world to a better place over these last 50 years. And so

it can be for another 50 years. But a shortsighted America will soon find its words falling on deaf ears all around the world. (Applause.)

Almost exactly 50 years ago, in the first winter of the Cold War, President Truman stood before a Republican Congress and called upon our country to meet its responsibilities of leadership. This was his warning -- he said, "If we falter, we may endanger the peace of the world, and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation." That Congress, led by Republicans like Senator Arthur Vandenberg, answered President Truman's call. Together, they made the commitments that strengthened our country for 50 years.

Now let us do the same. Let us do what it takes to remain the indispensable nation -- to keep America strong, secure and prosperous for another 50 years. (Applause.)

In the end, more than anything else, our world leadership grows out of the power of our example here at home, out of our ability to remain strong as one America.

All over the world, people are being torn asunder by racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts that fuel fanaticism and terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy, and the world looks to us to show that it is possible to live and advance together across those kinds of differences.

America has always been a nation of immigrants. From the start, a steady stream of people, in search of freedom and opportunity, have left their own lands to make this land their home. We started as an experiment in democracy fueled by Europeans. We have grown into an experiment in democratic diversity fueled by openness and promise.

My fellow Americans, we must never, ever believe that our diversity is a weakness -- it is our greatest strength. (Applause.) Americans speak every language, know every county. People on every continent can look to us and see the reflection of their own great potential -- and they always will, as long as we strive to give all of our citizens, whatever their background, an opportunity to achieve their own greatness.

We're not there yet. We still see evidence of abiding bigotry and intolerance, in ugly words and awful violence, in burned churches and bombed buildings. We must fight against this, in our country and in our hearts.

Just a few days before my second Inauguration, one of country's best known pastors, Reverend Robert Schuller, suggested that I read Isaiah 58:12. Here's what it says: "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." I placed my hand on that verse when I took the oath of office, on behalf of all Americans. For no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, our backgrounds, our politics -- we must all be repairers of the breach.

I want to say a word about two other Americans who show us how. Congressman Frank Tejeda was buried yesterday, a proud American whose family came from Mexico. He was only 51 years old. He was awarded the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart, fighting for his country in Vietnam. And he went on to serve Texas and America fighting for our future in this chamber. We are grateful for his service and honored that his mother, Lillie Tejeda, and his sister, Mary Alice, have come from Texas to be with us here tonight. And we welcome you. (Applause.)

Gary Locke, the newly elected Governor of Washington State, is the first Chinese-American governor in the history of our country. He's the proud son of two of the millions of Asian-American immigrants who have strengthened America with their hard work, family values and good citizenship. He represents the future we can all achieve. Thank you, Governor, for being here. Please stand up. (Applause.)

Reverend Schuller, Congressman Tejeda, Governor Locke, along with Kristin Tanner and Chris Getsla, Sue Winski and Dr. Kristen Zarfes -- they're all Americans from different roots, whose lives reflect the best of what we can become when we are one America. We may not share a common past, but we surely do share a common future.

Building one America is our most important mission -- "the foundation for many generations," of every other strength we must build for this new century. Money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It can only come from the human spirit.

America is far more than a place. It is an idea, the most powerful idea in the history of nations. And all of us in this chamber, we are now the bearers of that idea, leading a great people into a new world. A child born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20th century. Everything that child will know about America will be because of what we do now to build a new century.

We don't have a moment to waste. Tomorrow there will be just over 1,000 days until the year 2000. One thousand days to prepare our people. One thousand days to work together. One thousand days to build a bridge to a land of new promise. My fellow Americans, we have work to do. Let us seize those days and the century.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless America. (Applause.)

END

10:15 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 3, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Washington Convention Center  
Washington, DC

2:22 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you for that wonderful welcome. And thank you for your good spirit and your enthusiasm. And I want you to keep it all the way to November. (Applause.)

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to begin by thanking Keith Geiger for seven magnificent years of leadership for the teachers of America. (Applause.) He has been a great leader, a true champion for educational reform. And I was more moved than I can say by the kind words he spoke before I came out.

I'm sorry that we're a little late, but I understand that our security precautions delayed your voting. (Laughter.) I'm sorry for that, but I do want to congratulate Bob Chase and all of you who will be leading the NEA. (Applause.)

I also want to thank our Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, who came over here with me. I believe he is the best Secretary of Education we've ever had, and I thank him for that. (Applause.) I also want to thank Dick Riley for having what at the time was a novel idea. He thought he ought to have an actual teacher working with him in the Secretary's office. And she's here today. I want to thank Terry Dozier for leaving the classroom and coming to work with Secretary Riley. (Applause.)

I'd like to thank the NEA for sending Sharon Robinson, our Assistant Secretary for Education Research and Improvement, to our administration. (Applause.) And I also want to thank -- Debra DeLee who's done a great job managing our convention in Chicago and getting ready for this great new campaign. (Applause.)

Four years ago I had the pleasure of addressing this assembly. And when I looked at the film that you just showed back stage, I saw that address and I said, gosh, I had a lot less gray hair then. (Laughter.) Well, I earned that gray hair. (Laughter and applause.) But if it advanced the cause of education and insured a better future for the children of our country, every gray hair was worth it. And I thank you for staying with us in these fights. (Applause.)

As teachers, administrators, custodial workers, the member of the NEA are out there every day working with and for our children. I thank you for that. And today, I want to talk to you about where we're going from here.

Four years ago, when you endorsed my candidacy, I told you that I was running because I wanted to see a vision I had of our country in the 21st century fulfilled. I wanted our nation to go into the next century with the American Dream genuinely alive for every American without regard to race or gender or religion or region or the station that he or she starts out in life. I wanted to see our country come together instead of be driven apart by our differences. I was tired of seeing the American people cut up into little pieces at election time for short-term political gain, instead of reveling in our diversity, respecting our differences, and joining hands around shared values. And I wanted to restore the sense of community in America. (Applause.)

And I, finally, felt very strong that our country, at the end of the Cold War and the dawn of this new global information age, had to continue to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. I had a simple strategy. I wanted to renew the basic bargain in America of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a commitment to the community of our country -- the idea that we can do more together than we can apart.

Well, we've been working on that for three and a half years. I guess it's about time for a report card before we make a decision on contract renewal. (Laughter.) I want to talk about three things here -- the record, the alternative and the future.

When I became President, our economy was stagnant. We had the slowest job growth since the Depression. We had a spiraling deficit. I said, please enact this economic plan, to Congress. We'll cut the deficit in half and produce 8 million jobs in four years. Well, you know what the Republicans did. They all voted against it and said it would bring on a recession. Well, they were wrong, and we were right. (Applause.) In three and a half years, we now know the deficit will be cut by more than 50 percent in four years. And instead of 8 million new jobs, our economy has produced 9.7 million new jobs in three and a half years. (Applause.)

I asked the Congress to pass the Crime Bill with 100,000 new police officers, a ban on assault weapons, more funds for punishment and prisons, but more funds for prevention, too; to allow children to do something constructive after school and on the weekends, and to help them pay for summer jobs in communities that couldn't afford it.

The leadership of the other party fought us every step of the way on that and on the Brady Bill. They told a lot of people out in the rural areas of our country who love to hunt that their

weapons would be in danger if our dangerous proposals passed, and that nothing would be done to lower the crime rate. Well, we have had a couple of years to see now. Do you know that we have had two deer seasons in my home state and two ducks seasons, and every single hunter is still shooting with the same rifle they had before the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban passed. They did not tell them the truth. (Applause.)

But there are some people who didn't get guns -- 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers did not get guns under the Brady Bill. They were wrong and we were right about that. (Applause.)

In 1996 the crime rate will go down for the fourth year in a row in America because we're putting more police officers on the street, working with communities, helping kids, giving people something to say yes to, preventing crime as well as catching criminals. They were wrong about that, too. We need to keep on going until we put all those police officers on the street. (Applause.)

When it came to welfare reform, I said we ought to move people from welfare to work, but we should be good to the children and tough on the work requirements -- not easy on work and tough on the kids. That's the fight I had with the majority in Congress today, and why I vetoed what they call welfare reform. They said we couldn't do it. But we have now given over 60 -- 60 -- permissions for experiments to over 40 states. Three-quarters of the people in this country on welfare are already under welfare reform experiments. And you know what -- child support enforcement has gone up 40 percent since I have been in office -- (applause) -- and there are 1.3 million fewer people on welfare today than there were the day I took the oath of office. (Applause.)

When it came to families and communities, it seemed to me what we had to do was to make it possible for more people to succeed at home and at work. Most parents are working people today, and most people who work have to work to support their children. We ought to be struggling to make it possible for people to succeed at home and at work. So we cut income taxes for 15 million hard-pressed working families, so that no one who works full-time and has a child in the home would be in poverty. We passed the Family and Medical Leave law so people could get a little time off when a baby was born or a family member was sick. (Applause.)

And guess what? Poverty began to go down for the first time in many years. And for the first time in a decade average wages are going up. (Applause.) So I believe we're moving this country in the right direction.

Perhaps most important, as the film and as your speakers have said, thanks to the Congress that was in place in 1993 and 1994, we expanded Head Start dramatically, passed the Goals 2000 program, reformed Chapter One, passed the School-to-Work program, expanded Pell grants, passed the Direct College Loan program, which cut the cost and improved the repayment terms so that no person should ever fail to go to college because they were worried about the burden of the loans they would owe afterwards.

These things have made a real difference. And we passed a national service program that has allowed 45,000 young people to earn some money for college by serving their communities all across the United States. (Applause.) That's the first element of the contract evaluation. We had a strategy; it was implemented; the results were good.

The second thing I want to say is that when you're fixing to hire somebody, there's always the questions of, well, if you don't hire this person, who will you hire? And in this case, the happy choice for America's educators, for America's parents and for all American citizens is, you don't have to guess in this election. There is no guesswork. (Applause.)

You know what both parties will do. You know what both candidates will do. They've already put their program in. It would be the law today, except I vetoed it. If you want it, you can get it; give them the White House and the Congress, it will be the law of the land in six months. (Applause.)

You think about that. You just think about that. (Laughter.) If you want, for example, to back away from our commitment to 100,000 police, you want to repeal the assault weapons ban, you want to undermine protection for the environment and safety in the workplace, and made it easier for corporations to raid their employees' pensions funds -- if those are the things that you want, you can have it. Just give them the Congress and the White House, and they'll give it to you. They already tried to do it once. We stopped them, and we will stop them again. (Applause.)

If you believe we ought to drastically cut or eliminate all these education reforms -- even the Eisenhower Professional Development Program, which you have continued to support in your own way, and I congratulate you on your commitment to that -- well, you can get that. Give them White House and the Congress, and they'll give it to you. They tried once, and we stopped them. If you want, in other words, people who believe it was a mistake to pass the Family and Medical Leave law, a mistake to pass the Brady Bill, a mistake to pass the Crime Bill, a mistake to pass the economic program, you can have it.

But that is the choice. And let's not be muddle-headed about this. We now have the evidence. The American people can simply choose. One position is the one that I embrace and that virtually all the members of our party embrace who are running for the Congress. And that is that the American people should have opportunity -- not guarantees, but opportunity -- to make the most of their own lives if they're willing to be responsible for it. That is the clear understanding that we become a greater country when we work together. The other side says, government is always the problem, and you're better off if you're on your own. I think that we're right and they're wrong. But the American people are being given the chance to decide, and you have to help them make that decision. (Applause.)

Finally, there is the third element of the contract decision and maybe the most important,

and that is, so what if you did a good job, that's what we hired you for. (Laughter.) What are you going to do tomorrow and next year and for the next four years? And that's very important, because while things are better now than they were four years ago, this country still has significant challenges. The crime rate is down, but juvenile crime is up. The economy is up, but not every American who works is up. The country is closer to peace than it was, but as we saw again last week, we still face the problems of terrorism, organized crime, the proliferation of dangerous weapons. And we have to work together with our friends around the world to continue to push for peace and freedom.

So what about the next four years? Well, there's plenty to do, folks. In the area of the economy, unless we can get this Congress to act, we've got to raise the minimum wage. We can't let it fall to a 40-year low, it's not right. (Applause.)

Yesterday I was in Chicago -- (applause) -- and I had an occasion to go to Grant Park to that great Taste of Chicago festival they have every year. (Applause.) I hated this, I had to go from food booth to food booth to food booth. (Laughter and applause.) And it was a burden, but someone had to do it. (Laughter and applause.) But, anyway, I was at one of these booths talking to the folks who work there and this young woman looked at me and she said, you know, I really appreciate the fact that you're trying to raise the minimum wage and I hear these people who are opposed to it say everybody in the minimum wage is some middle-class kid living at home with his parents. And she said, let me tell you something: I'm a 28-year-old single mother with two children, I work for the minimum wage and I go to college at night, and it's not true and I need a raise. And that's the truth. And we need to do it. (Applause.)

We need to pass the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill so that people don't lose their health insurance when they change jobs or someone in their family has been sick. (Applause.) We need to pass a real welfare reform bill that is tough on work but good to kids, that lifts up families and enables people to succeed at home and at work. (Applause.) That's what we want for everybody. (Applause.)

We need to finish the job of putting 100,000 police on our streets, because we're not through. The crime rate is still too high, and it will be too high until you go home at night, turn on the television, and you're genuinely surprised if the lead story on your evening news is the latest terrible crime. I want you to be surprised about it again, and we can bring that kind of safety back to American if we work at it. (Applause.)

We need to pass Family Leave II and give working people the opportunity to have more flexible work hours and let people take a little time off not just when a baby's born or when there's a family emergency, but also to take their parents or their kids to regular doctor's appointments and to go to parent-teacher conferences at the school. (Applause.)

And in education we have a lot to do together. I am committed to seeing every classroom and library in every school in this country hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000, and we're

going to keep doing it. (Applause.)

I want to thank our teachers who are working -- 100,000 of them -- with the support of the NEA and other groups, to teach another 500,000 teachers in what they call the 21st Century Teachers Effort, to be the kind of teachers who can make maximum use of the new technology going into the classrooms. We need to do that. (Applause.)

We need to make college education even more available. That's why I proposed a \$10,000 tax deduction per year for the cost of college tuition. That's the right kind of tax cut and it would help a lot of teachers who are parents. (Applause.)

But I think we should do even more. I believe if you look at all the evidence, it is clear that it is simply not enough to have a high school education if you want to get a good job with a growing income. And I believe the time has come to make two years of education after high school just as universal as a high school education is. (Applause.)

I believe the way to do that is to give the American people a tax credit, every single person a tax credit of \$1,500 a year for the cost of going to your local community college, and make it refundable so that everybody can afford to go. Give it to everybody the first year; give it to everybody that keeps a B average the second year; let everybody at least have access to a diploma from a community college and we will raise incomes in this country and bring this country together. It is the right thing to do. (Applause.) Thank you.

I believe that we should do even more for people who are in the work force. I proposed, with the help of the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education, that we take 70 big federal job training programs and consolidate them and put them into a block of money and give people who are unemployed or underemployed a certificate that basically says, you can take this to your local community college or to any training facility you want for up to two years. If you lose your job, you can immediately begin to get retraining at the place of your choice in your community that will help you the most to start your life again. (Applause.)

I also think we need to do more to help you in your work. I think we should -- I want you to understand that if the budget process this year works out like it did last year -- I hope it won't; I'm working hard with the Congress -- but I am not going to tolerate an assault on the fundamental structure of educational opportunity and educational excellence in this country. It is wrong. It is wrong. (Applause.)

We have to do more to help you to make schools safe and going to and from school safe. We have worked hard, but still no teacher should ever fear when he or she is in the classroom or going to and from school. No student should be so afraid -- (applause) -- no student should be so afraid that they cannot learn. And we work very hard to preserve funding for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, to enforce our zero tolerance for guns in the schools policy. And we will continue to work to help schools deal with the problems that they face every day, that

teachers face every day, and to try to find opportunities to bring people together.

Last year, I had the opportunity to work with the Secretary of Education and the Justice Department on a set of guidelines to schools to deal with the complex questions that often arise when children seek to practice or at least express their religious convictions. We didn't want to turn our schools into religion-free zones, and we didn't want to violate the First Amendment. Because of the work that Secretary Riley and the Attorney General did, we have heard from schools all over America saying, this is not an issue anymore, we have resolved this, we thank you very much. And I hope it has helped you in your school.

We said to people in California and around the country -- (applause) -- who wanted to try experimenting with school uniforms -- well, they did it in Long Beach, and you can do it, too, if you want to do it. (Applause.) And I went to Long Beach, California, and I heard young people tell me amazing stories about this. A young man stood up and said, we picked our uniforms in our school. We picked green and white because the gang colors are red and blue. And, for the first time, all our kids can now walk to and from school, and they're not scared anymore. He said, it's the first time in two years, I can walk to school without having to look over my shoulder.

I had another young woman say that even the wealthiest kids in the school district were better off after they adopted their policy because now, people judge themselves based on what was on the inside instead of what was on the outside. (Applause.) I thought it was pretty perceptive. It may or may not be the right thing to do. But I sure think you ought to have the right to do it.

We have worked hard with other communities to develop community curfews. One of our suburban communities here in the Washington area adopted one just last week. I was in New Orleans talking about the community curfew there. (Applause.) There was a huge drop, a huge drop in juvenile crime in the city of New Orleans after they adopted their curfews. Kids don't need to be out on the street at all hours of the night, they need to be home or in a secure place. (Applause.)

And, by the way, the thing I really liked about what they did in New Orleans is that they didn't punish people who were on the streets. They took them to a community curfew center and they started working with them, and they found out what the children needed and what they were facing, so that it would not only have the disciplinary effect of getting kids off the street, it has the positive effect of giving at least them a chance to meet with people who could help them to put their lives in good order and take it in the right direction. (Applause.)

Now, I want to propose today one other thing that I think it quite important, that I have cared a lot about for a long time. One of the most important things we can do to promote learning and to keep our children safe is the most obvious, old-fashioned thing that I dealt with when I was in school myself -- back in the dark ages -- (laughter) -- and that is to insist that children be in

school and not on the streets. (Applause.)

Truancy is a warning signal that a child is in trouble and is often a gateway to crime. The difference between success and failure in life for our children is whether they're learning on the streets or in the school where they belong. The street is not an acceptable alternative to the classroom. (Applause.)

When I was governor we actually passed a bill which made it possible for local communities to fine parents if they refused to show up at parent-teacher conferences or permitted their children to be chronically absent. I know the NEA has called for federal action to crack down on truancy. So I want to tell you about two things that we're doing in response to the call that you issued. First, earlier today I directed the Department of Education to send this manual -- I don't know if you can see it -- it says, "Manual to Combat Truancy" -- to every school district in America. It shows that when parents are held accountable and when communities come together, you can do something about this problem.

In Milwaukee, for example, attendance is taken at every period in all high schools. Police pick up truants and take them to counselling, again not just negative but positive. Parents are called at home if their child did not attend school. Daytime burglaries -- down by one third.

In Atlantic County, New Jersey, -- (applause.) I'd say that's the highest density of teachers per capita in America based on the cheers there. (Applause.) Listen to this. In Atlantic County, New Jersey, families of truants receive intensive counseling and the vast majority of the students wind up going back to school.

In New Haven, middle school truants go before a panel of high school students. (Applause.) This is very interesting. In New Haven, middle school students go before a panel of high school students and have to sign responsibility contracts.

So these are good things to do. The federal government should not decide what to do; we should help you determine what you're going to do. We should support you when you do it. We should make sure it's legally defensible. And we should encourage every community to do the same thing to put our children back in school. (Applause.)

Yesterday Secretary Riley announced that he would give a total of \$10 million to 25 school districts to help them keep their children in school. This is a beginning. But I want you to know because of what you and others in education have said to me all across the country, this will become a national priority, and we will keep at it with you until we turn this issue around. And I thank you for that. (Applause.)

Now, those are the three points I want to make. (Laughter.) One, when you helped me and Al Gore and indeed our entire administration family -- and by the way, I wish the First Lady were here, but she's in Central Europe today, representing the cause of freedom, and I thank you

for that. (Applause.) When you helped us, we said, we have a vision for what we want our country to look like in this extraordinary era of possibility. We have a strategy to achieve that vision. Well, three and a half years later, we did what we said we'd do, or we got caught trying. (Laughter.) The results have been positive. Second, there's a clear difference here. And third, we've got good ideas for the future, and a lot of work still to do.

Now, what I want you to think about as I leave -- we've had a great time today, and I loved all the cheering and the shouting, and it made chills run up and down my spine and kind of got me in the humor for the next three or four months to do what we have to do. And I thank you for that. (Applause.)

But this is what we used to call back home, preaching to the saved. (Laughter.) And there's something to be said for that, but it's not enough. And I want you to take just one moment to be serious before I go. I want you to just ask yourself, now or when you leave, to take a few moments to think about everything you can think about your country today -- all the good and the things that you think are not so good -- and then say, what would I like America to look like when my children or my grandchildren are my age? What do I want America to be like 20, 30, 40, 50 years from now?

We are going to walk across a bridge into the next century beginning with this election. And it's not like 1992 where you can say credibly, this is change against the status quo. That's not so. There is no status quo option. These are two very different visions of how we should walk into the 21st century and what kind of bridge we should build to go there. And the decisions we make will profoundly affect what America looks like when your children and your grandchildren are your age.

Now, in the end, that matters more than all the petty concerns we might have. It matters more than even the immediate and serious personal concerns we might have. Because in the end, for the same reason you decided to commit your careers to education, our fundamental obligation is to maintain and strengthen this country. And we have never been able to do it except by broadening opportunity and by bringing more and more people together, by breaking down the barriers of bigotry and prejudice and fear and bringing this country together in this vast melting pot of freedom that is the most remarkable experiment in self-government in all of human history. We are being given an historic responsibility now, you and I, to pick which bridge we're going to walk into the 21st century. And that will determine what this country will be like when our children and grandchildren reach our age.

So, what I want to ask you to do is to go beyond the preaching to the stage. I want to ask you to walk out of this hall determined, with all your other responsibilities and all your other pressures and all the challenges of the classroom and the schoolhouse, to spend whatever time you can between now and November talking to your family, your friends, people who don't work with you every day, people who don't have the same insight you may have into what goes on here about these big questions.

Because I believe with all my heart, if the American people are given back this choice, if they get to look at the big things not the divisive, distractive, destructive, puny elements that too often dominate our politics, the American people will do what they've been doing for over 200 years, they will make the right decision. And your children and your grandchildren will be the richer for it.

Thank you. And God bless you all.

END

2:58 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Palisades, New York)

For Immediate Release

March 27, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION EDUCATION SUMMIT

IBM Conference Center  
Palisades, New York

12:25 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Governor Miller, Governor Thompson; Lou Gerstner -- thank you for hosting this terribly important event. To all of the governors and distinguished guests, education leaders and business leaders who are here, let me say that I am also delighted to be here with the Secretary of Education, Governor Dick Riley. I believe that he and Governor Hunt and Governor Branstad and I were actually there for -- when the "Nation At Risk" report was issued, as well as when the Education Summit was held by President Bush. I want to thank Secretary Riley for the work that he has done with the states and with educators all across the country. And I know that every one of you has worked with him, but I'm glad to have him here and he's been a wonderful partner for me, and I think for you. (Applause.)

This is an extraordinary meeting of America's business leaders and America's governors. I know some have raised some questions about it, but let me just say on the front end I think it is a very appropriate and a good thing to do, and I applaud those who organized it and those who have attended.

The governors, after all, have primary, indeed, constitutional responsibility for the conditions of our public schools. And the business leaders know well, perhaps better than any other single group in America, what the consequences of our failing to get the most out of our students and achieve real educational excellence will be for our nation.

So I am very pleased to see you here, doing this, and I want to thank each and every one of you. I also think you have a better chance than perhaps anyone else, even in this season, to keep the question of education beyond partisanship, and to deal with it as an American challenge that all the American people must meet and must meet together.

All of you know very well that this is a time of a dramatic transformation in the United States. I'm not sure if any of us fully understands the true implications of the changes through which we are all living, and the responsibilities that those changes impose upon us. It is clear to most people that the dimensions of economic change now are the greatest that they have been since we moved from farm to factory and from rural areas to cities and towns 100 years ago.

In his book, "The Road From Here," Bill Gates says that the digital chip is leading us to the greatest transformation in communications in 500 years, since Gutenberg printed the first Bible in Europe. If that is true, it is obvious beyond anyone's ability to argue, that the educational enterprise, which has always been central to the development of good citizens in America, as well as to a strong economy, is now more important than ever before.

That means that we need a candid assessment of what is right and what is wrong with our educational system and what we need to do. Your focus on standards, your focus on assessment, your focus on technology is all to the good. We know that many of our schools do a very good job, but some of them don't. We know that many of our teachers are great, but some don't measure up. We know that many of our communities are seizing the opportunities of the present and the future, but too many aren't.

And, most important, we know that -- after the emphasis on education which goes back at least until 1983 and the whole country and, to my native region, to the South, to the late '70s when we began to try to catch up economically with the rest of the country -- we know that while the schools and the students of this country are doing better than they were in 1984 and better than they were in 1983, when "The Nation At Risk" was issued, and in 1989 when the Education Summit was held at Charlottesville, most of them still are not meeting the standards that are necessary and adequate to the challenges of today. So that is really what we have to begin with.

Now, America has some interesting challenges that I think are somewhat unique to our country in this global environment in which education is important, and we might as well just sort of put them out there on the front end -- not that we can resolve them today. The first is that we have a far more diverse group of students in terms of income and race and ethnicity and background and, indeed, living conditions than almost any other great country in the world.

Second, we have a system in which both authority and financing is more fractured than in other countries, is typically the case. Third, we know that our schools are burdened by social problems, not of their making, which make the jobs of principals and teachers more difficult.

And, fourth, and I think most important of all, our country still has an attitude problem about education that I think we should resolve, that is even prior to the standards and assessment issue, and that is that too many people in the United States think that the primary determinant of success and learning is either IQ or family circumstances instead of effort. And I don't. And I don't think any of the research supports that.

So one of the things that I hope you will say is in a positive way that you believe all kids can learn, and in a stronger way that you believe that effort is more important than IQ or income -- given the right kind of educational opportunities, the right kind of expectations. It's often been said that Americans from time to time suffer from a revolution of rising expectations. This is one area where we need a revolution of rising expectations. We ought to all simply and forthrightly say that we believe that school is children's work and play; that it can be great joy, but that effort matters.

I see one of our business leaders here, a former state senator from Arkansas, Senator Joe Ford. His father was the head of our educational program in Arkansas for a long time. We had a lot of people in one-room schoolhouses, 40 and 50 and 60 years ago, reading simple readers who believed that effort was more important than IQ or income. They didn't know what IQ was. And we have got to change that. And governors, every governor and every business leader in this country can make a difference.

I'm no Einstein, and not everybody can do everything, but if you stack this up from one to the other, all the Americans together in order by IQ, you couldn't stick a straw between one person and the next. And you know it as well as I do. Most people can learn everything they need to know to be good citizens and successful participants in the American economy and in the global economy. And I believe that unless you can convince your constituents that that is the truth, that all of your efforts to raise standards and all of your efforts to have accountability through tests and other assessments will not be as successful as they ought to be. And I think, frankly, a lot of people, even in education, need to be reminded of that from time to time.

Now, let's get back to the good news. Thirty or 40 years ago, maybe even 20 years ago, no one could ever have conceived of a meeting like this taking place. Governors played little role in education until just a couple of decades ago. And business didn't regard it as their responsibility. In the late '70s and early '80s this whole wave began to sweep America. And one important, positive thing that ought never to be overlooked is that the business leadership of America and the governors of this country have been literally obsessed with education for a long time now. And that's a very good thing, because one of the problems with America is that we tend to be in the grip of serial enthusiasms. It's the hula hoop today and something else tomorrow. Boy, that dates me, doesn't it? (Laughter.)

In this country the governors have displayed a remarkable consistency of commitment to education. And at least since 1983, the business community has displayed that commitment. And I think it's fair to say that all of us have learned some things as we have gone along, which is what has brought you to this point, that there is a -- you understand now, and I've heard Lou Gerstner talk about it in his, almost his mantra about standards -- that we understand that the next big step has to be to have some meaningful and appropriately high standards and then hold people accountable for them.

I think it's worth noting that the 1983 "Nation At Risk" report did do some good things.

Almost every state in the country went back and revised its curriculum requirement. Many revised their class size requirements. Many did other things to upgrade teacher training or to increase college scholarships or to do a lot of other things.

In 1989 I was privileged to be in Charlottesville working with Governor Branstad and with Governor Campbell, primarily as we were trying to get all the governors together to develop the statement at the Education Summit with President Bush. And that was the first time there had ever been a bipartisan national consensus on educational goals.

The realization was in 1989 was that six years after a "Nation At Risk," all these extra requirements were being put into education, but nobody had focused on what the end game was. What did we want America to look like? It's worth saying that we wanted every child to show up for school ready to learn, that we wanted to be proficient in certain core courses and were willing to assess our students to see if we were, that we wanted to prepare our people for the world of work, that we wanted to be extra-good in math and science and to overcome our past deficiencies. All the things that were in those educational goals were worth saying.

Another thing that the Charlottesville summit did that I think is really worth emphasizing is that it defined for the first time, from the governors up, what the federal role in education ought to be and what it should not be. I went back this morning, just on the way up, and I read the Charlottesville statement about what the governors then unanimously voted that the federal role should be and what it should not be.

When I became President and I asked Dick Riley to become Secretary of Education, I said that our legislative agenda ought to be consistent, completely consistent with what the governors had said at Charlottesville. So, for example, the governors said at Charlottesville, the federal government has a bigger responsibility to help people show up for school prepared to learn. So we emphasized things like more funds for Head Start and more investment in trying to improve the immunization rates of kids and other health indicators; and more responsibility for access to higher education, so we tried to reform the Student Loan Program and invest more money in Pell Grants and national service and things like that.

And then, more responsibility to give greater flexibility to the states in K-12 and to try to promote reform without defining how any of this should be done.

And so that's what Goals 2000 was about. We tried to have a system in which states and mostly local school districts could pursue world-class standards based on their own plans for grass-roots reform. And we overhauled the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and we redid Title I to do one thing that I think is very important: We took out of what was then in the law for Chapter One, which was lower educational expectations for poor children -- it was an outrage, and we took it out of the law. I don't believe that poor children should be expected to perform at lower levels than other children.

And Dick Riley, since he has been Secretary of Education, has cut federal regulations over states and local school districts by more than 50 percent. It seems to me that that is consistent with exactly what the governors said at Charlottesville they wanted done.

Now, the effort to have national standards, I think it's fair to say, has been less than successful. The history standards and the English standards effort did not succeed for reasons that have been well analyzed, although I'm not sure the debate was entirely worthless; I think the debate itself did some good.

But there are recommended standards that have been widely embraced, coming out of the math teachers, that most people think are quite good, and the preliminary indications for science are encouraging. And I want to say again, it would be wrong to say that there's been no progress since 1983. The number of young people taking core courses has jumped from 13 percent in '82, to 52 percent in '94. The national math and science scores are up a grade since 1983, half of all the four-year-olds now attend preschool, 86 percent of all our young people are completing high school. We're almost up to the 90 percent that was in the National Education Goals. That is progress.

But what we have learned since Charlottesville and what you are here to hammer home to America is that the overall levels of learning are not enough, and that there are still significant barriers in various schools to meeting higher standards.

I accept your premise; we can only do better with tougher standards and better assessment, and you should set the standards. I believe that is absolutely right. And that will be the lasting legacy of this conference. I also believe, along with Mr. Gerstner and the others who are here, that it's very important not only for businesses to speak out for reform, but for business leaders to be knowledgeable enough to know what reform to speak out for, and what to emphasize, and how to hammer home the case for higher standards, as well as how to help local school districts change some of the things that they are now doing so that they have a reasonable chance at meeting these standards.

Let me just go through now what I think we should do in challenging the country on standards for students, as well as for teachers and schools. I suppose that I have spent more time in classrooms than any previous president, partly because I was a governor for 12 years, and partly because I still do it with some frequency. I believe the most important thing you can do is to have high expectations for students -- to make them believe they can learn, to tell them they're going to have to learn really difficult, challenging things, to assess whether they're learning or not, and to hold them accountable as well as to reward them.

Most children are very eager to learn. Those that aren't have probably been convinced they can't. We can do better with that. I believe that once you have high standards and high expectations, there is an unlimited number of things that can be done. But I also believe that there have to be consequences. I watched your panel last night, and I thought -- the moment of levity

on the panel was when Al Shanker was asked, when I was teaching school and I would give students homework, they said "does it count?" That's the thing I remember about the panel last night. All of you remember, too. You laughed, right? (Laughter.) Does it count? And the truth is that in the world we're living in today, "does it count" has to mean something, particularly in places where there haven't been any standards for a long time.

So if the states are going to go back and raise standards so that you're not only trying to increase the enrollment in core courses, you're trying to make the core courses themselves mean more -- I heard Governor Hunt last night say he'd be willing to settle for reading and writing and math and science -- I think were the ones you said.

Once you have to -- if you're going to go back and define what's in those core courses and you're going to lift it up, you have to be willing, then, to hold the students accountable for whether they have achieved that or not. And again, another thing that Mr. Shanker said that I've always believed, we have always downgraded teaching to the test, but if you're going to know whether people learn what you expect them to know, then you have to test them on what you expect them to know.

So I believe that if you want the standards movement to work, first you have to do the hard work in deciding what it is you expect children to learn. But then you have to have an assessment system, however you design it, in your own best judgment at the state level, that says, no more social promotions, no more free passes. If you want people to learn, learning has to mean something. That's what I believe. I don't believe you can succeed unless you are prepared to have an assessment system with consequences.

In Arkansas in 1983 when we redid the educational standards, we had a very controversial requirement that young people pass the 8th grade tests to go on to high school. And not everybody passed it. And we let people take it more than once. I think it's fine to do that.

But even today, after 13 years, I think there are only five states in the country today which require a promotion for either grade to grade or school to school for its young people, to require tests for that. I believe that if you have meaningful standards that you have confidence in, that you believe if they're met your children will know what they need to know, you shouldn't be afraid to find out if they're learning it, and you shouldn't be deterred by people saying this is cruel, this is unfair, or whatever they say.

The worst thing you can do is send people all the way through school with a diploma they can't read. And you're not being unfair to people if you give them more than one chance, and if at the same time you improve the teaching and the operation of the schools in which they are. If you believe these kids can learn, you have to give them a chance to demonstrate it. This is only a cruel, short-sided thing to do if you are convinced that there are limitations on what the American children can do. And I just don't believe that.

So that I think is the most important thing. I believe every state, if you're going to have meaningful standards, must require a test for children to move, let's say, from elementary to middle school, or from middle school to high school, or to have a full-meaning high school diploma. And I don't think they should measure just minimum competency. You should measure what you expect these standards to measure.

You know, when we instituted any kind of test at home, I was always criticized by the fact that the test wasn't hard enough. But I think it takes time to transform a system. And you may decide it takes time to transform a system. But you will never know whether your standards are being met unless you have some sort of measurement and have some sort of accountability. And while I believe they should be set by the states and the testing mechanism should be approved by the states, we shouldn't kid ourselves. Being promoted ought to mean more or less the same thing in Pasadena, California, that it does in Palisades, New York. In a global society, it ought to mean more or less the same thing.

I was always offended by suggestion that the kids who grew up in the Mississippi Delta in Arkansas, which is the poorest place in America, shouldn't have access to the same learning opportunities that other people should and couldn't learn. I don't believe that.

So I think the idea -- I heard the way Governor Engler characterized it last night, I thought was pretty good. You want a non-federal, national mechanism to sort of share this information so that you'll at least know how you're doing compared to one another. That's a good start. That's a good way to begin this. I also believe that we shouldn't ignore the progress that's been made by the Goals panel, since Governor Romer was first leader of that going through Governor Engler, and by the National Assessment on Educational Progress. I know a lot of you talked about that last night. They've done a lot of good things, and we can learn a lot from them. We don't have to reinvent the wheel here.

I also would like to go back and emphasize something I heard Governor Hunt say last night. I think we should begin with a concrete standard for reading and writing because the most troubling thing to me is that we've been through a decade in which math and science scores have risen and reading scores have stayed flat. Intel recently had to turn away hundreds of applicants because they lacked basic reading and writing skills.

Now, that will present you with an immediate problem because if you want to measure reading and writing, you will not be able just to have a multiple choice test which can be graded by a machine. You'll have to recognize that teachers do real work with kids when they teach them how to write, and you have to give them the time and support to do that. And then there has to be some way of evaluating that. I know that's harder and more expensive, but it really matters whether a child can read and write.

And for all the excitement about the computers in the schools -- and I am a big proponent of it -- I would note that when we started with a computer program in our school, and I believe

when Governor Caper started in West Virginia, he started in the early grades for the precise purpose that technology should be used first to give children the proper grounding in basic skills. So I think that's quite important.

Secretary Riley says that every child should be able to read independently by the end of the third grade. And, parenthetically, that if that were the standard, I think we would be more successful in getting parents to read to their children every night, which would revolutionize the whole system of education anyway.

The second thing I think we have to do is to face the fact that if we want to have these standards for children, standards and tests, we have to have a system that rewards and inspires and demands higher standards of teachers. They, after all, do this work; the rest of us talk about it and they do it.

So that means that, first of all, you've got to get the most talented people in there. There's been a lot of talk about this for a decade now, but most states and school districts still need work on their certification rules. We should not bar qualified, even brilliant young people from becoming teachers. The Teach For America group in my home state did a wonderful job, and a lot of those young kids wind up staying and teaching, even though they can make two and three times as much money doing something else. Every state should, in my view, review that.

I also believe any time you're trying to hold teachers to higher standards they should be rewarded when they perform. I know that in South Carolina and Kentucky, if schools markedly improve their performance, they get bonuses and the teachers get the benefit. That's not a bad thing, that's a good thing, and we should have more of that.

I want to thank Governor Hunt for the work he's done on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. We had the first group of teachers who are board-certified in the White House not very long ago. Every state should have a system, in my opinion, for encouraging these teachers to become board-certified. The federal government doesn't have anything to do with that. Encourage these teachers to become board-certified because they have to demonstrate not only knowledge, but teaching skills. And when they achieve that level they should be rewarded. There should be extra rewards when they do that.

We also need a system that doesn't look the other way if a teacher is burned out or not performing up to standard. There ought to be a fair process for removing teachers who aren't competent, but the process also has to be much faster and far less costly than it is. I read the other day that in New York it can cost as much as \$200,000 to dismiss a teacher who is incompetent. In Glen Ellen, Illinois, a school district spent \$70,000 to dismiss a high school math teacher who couldn't do basic algebra and let the students sleep in class. That is wrong. We should do more to reward good teachers; we should have a system that is fair to teachers, but moves much more expeditiously and much more cheaply in holding teachers accountable.

So states and school systems and teachers unions need to be working together to make it tougher to get licensed and recertified, easier and less costly to get teachers who can't teach out of the classrooms, and clearly set rewards for teachers who are performing, especially if they become board-certified, or in some state-defined way prove themselves excellent.

The third thing I think we have to do is to hold schools accountable for results. We have known now for a long time; we have no excuses for not doing -- we have known for a long time that the most important player in this drama besides the teachers and the students are the school principals, the building principals. And, yet, still, not every state has a system for holding the school districts accountable for having good principals in all these schools and then giving the principals the authority they need to do the job, getting out of their way and holding them accountable, both on the up side and the down side. To me, that is still the most important thing. Every school I go into, I can stay there about 30 minutes and tell you pretty much what the principal has done to establish a school culture, an atmosphere of learning, a system of accountability, a spirit of adventure, you can just feel it, and it's still the most important thing.

Secondly, the business community can do a lot of work with the governors to help these school districts reinvent their budgets, I think. There are still too many school districts spending way too much money on administration and too little money on education and instruction. And there needs to be some real effort put into that, that goes beyond rhetoric. I mean, I was given these statistics, which I assume are true because I had it vetted four different times -- I hate to use numbers -- if it is true that New York City spends \$8,000 a student on education, but only \$44 goes to books and other classroom materials, that's a disgrace, that's wrong. And that's true in a lot of other school districts.

We cannot ask the American people to spend more on education until we do a better job with the money we've got now. That's an area where I think the business community can make a major, major contribution. A lot of you have had to restructure your own operations, a lot of you have had to achieve far higher levels of productivity. If we can reduce the federal government by 200,000 people without undermining our essential mission, we can do a much better job in the school districts of the country.

Let me also say I think that we ought to encourage every state to do what most states are now doing, which is to provide more options for parents. You know, the terms of the public school choice legislation and the charter schools -- a lot of you have done a very good job with the charter schools. But I'm excited about the idea that educators and parents get to actually start schools, create and manage them and stay open only if they do a good job within the public school system. Every charter school I visited was an exciting place. Today, 21 of you allow charter schools. There are over 250 schools with are open, 100 more are going to open next year. Freed up from regulation and top-down bureaucracy, focusing on meeting higher standards. The schools have to be able to meet these standards if you impose them.

Secretary Riley has helped 11 states to start new schools, and in the balanced budget plan

I submitted to Congress last week, there is \$40 million in seed money to help start 3,000 more charter schools over the next five years, which would be a tenfold increase. That may become the order of the day. So I believe we need standards and accountability for students, for teachers and for schools.

Let me just mention two other things briefly. I don't believe you can possibly minimize -- and a lot of the governors I know have been in these schools -- you cannot minimize how irrelevant this discussion would seem to a teacher who doesn't feel safe walking the halls of his or her schools, or how utterly hopeless it seems to students who have to look over their shoulders when they're walking to and from school. So I believe that we have to work together to continue to make our schools safe and our students held to a reasonable standard of conduct, as well.

You know, we had a teacher in Washington last week who was mugged in a hallway by a gang of intruders -- not students, a gang of intruders who were doing drugs and didn't even belong on the school grounds. We have got to keep working on that. All the federal government can do is give resources and pass laws. That's another thing the business community can help with, district after district. This entire discussion we have had is completely academic unless there is a safe and a disciplined and a drug-free environment in these schools. (Applause.)

We passed the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act, the Gun-Free Schools Act. We supported random drug testing in schools. We have supported the character education movement. We've almost ended lawsuits over religious issues by the guidelines that Secretary Riley and the Attorney General issued, showing that our schools don't have to be religion-free zones. We have worked very hard to help our schools do their job here.

The next thing I hope we can do -- all of us -- in this regard, is to help to work our schools stay open longer. Our budget contains \$14 million for helping people set up these community schools to stay open longer hours. But remember that 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon to 6:00 p.m. in the evening are the peak hours for juvenile crime, and all that comes back into the schools. So I think that's another thing we really need to look at. A lot of these schools do not have the resources today to stay open longer hours, but they would if they could.

And one of the primary targets I would have if I were a local leader trying to redo my district school budget is to reduce the amount spent on administration so that I could invest more money in keeping it open longer hours, especially for the latch-key kids and the other kids that are in trouble that don't have any other place to go. So that's something that I think is very important.

Finally, let me just echo what Governor Miller said about the technology. We did have a barn-raising in California, and we hooked up actually more than 20 percent of the classrooms to the Internet on a single day. But we need every classroom and every library and every school in America hooked up to the Internet as quickly as possible. We set a goal as the year 2000; we could actually get there more quickly. I propose that in the budget, a \$2 billion fund to help the

communities who don't have the money to meet the challenge, but every community, every state in America, at least, has a high-tech community that could help get this done.

The Congress passed a very fine Telecommunications Act that I signed not very long ago which gives preferential treatment to people in isolated rural areas or inner-city areas for access to schools and hospitals. So the infrastructure, the framework is there.

Anything you can do to help do that, I think is good if the educators use the technology in the proper way. And I'll just close with this example. I was in the Union City School District in New Jersey not very long ago. That school district was about to be closed under the State of New Jersey's school bankruptcy law -- which I think, by the way, is very good, holding school districts accountable, and they can actually lose their ability to operate as an independent district in New Jersey and the state takes them over if they keep failing.

There are a lot of first-generation immigration children in that school, it was basically a poor school. Bell Atlantic went in and worked with others. They put computers in all the classrooms, they also put computer outlets in the homes of a lot of these parents. And you had -- I talked to a man who came here from El Salvador 10 years ago who is now E-mailing his child's principal and teacher to figure out how the kid's doing.

But the bottom line is, the dropout rate is now below the state average and the test scores are above the state average in an immigrant district of poor children, partly because of the technology and partly because the business community said, hey, you kids are important, and partly because the place has a good principal and good teachers.

But I do think that the business community -- if you look at the technology as an instrument to achieve your higher standards and to infuse high expectations into the community and to give the kids the confidence they need that they can learn, then this technology issue is a very important one.

Well, that's what I hope we'll do. I think we ought to have the standards, you should set them. We'll support you however you want. But they won't work unless you're going to really see whether the standards are being met and unless there are consequences to those who meet and to those who don't. I think you have to reward the good teachers and get more good people in teaching, and that we have to facilitate the removal of those who aren't performing.

I think the schools need more authority and should be held more accountable. We've got to redo these central school budgets until we have squeezed down the overhead costs and put it back into education. And unless we have an environment in which there is safety and discipline, we won't succeed. And if we do have an environment in which the business community brings in more technology, we will succeed more quickly.

I believe that this meeting will prove historic. And again, let me say, I thank the

governors and the business leaders who brought it about. In 1983, we said we've got a problem in our schools, we need to take tougher courses, we need to have other reforms. In 1989, we said we need to know where we're going, we need goals. Here in 1996, you're saying you can have all of the goals in the world, but unless somebody really has meaningful standards and a system of measuring whether you meet those standards, you won't achieve your goals. That is the enduring gift you have given to America's schoolchildren and to America's future.

The governors have to lead the way, the business community has to stay involved. Don't let anybody deter you and say you shouldn't be doing it. You can go back home and reach out to all the other people in the community because, in the end, what the teachers and the principals and, more importantly, even what the parents and the children do is what really counts. But we can get there together. We have to start now with what you're trying to do. We have to have high standards and high accountability. If you can achieve that, you have given a great gift to the future of this country.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

1:00 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 23, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AT AWARD CEREMONY FOR THE  
1995-1996 NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

The Rose Garden

1:45 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Secretary Riley. To all of our Teachers of the Year and their friends and family members; to Senator Wellstone, Senator Graham, Congressman Minge and to the educators and their supporters who are here. Let me say that this is a day I look forward to every year, and every year God has blessed us with good weather in the Rose Garden. And that ought to tell you something about where teachers will stand in the ultimate measure of things. (Laughter and applause.)

As I think you know, I have been away now for some day son a trip which literally took me around the world, from Korea to Japan to Russia. And before I make the remarks I'd like to make in honor of our Teacher of the Year and her counterparts here, I think it's important to comment on a couple of events that are unfolding now here in Washington.

Let me begin with a compliment to the Congress for working in a bipartisan way for the American people. Last week Congress passed strong legislation to crack down on terrorism which I expect to sign right here tomorrow. I thank them for that. I also am pleased that Congress is moving forward on the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, which would improve access to health care for 43 million Americans, and, if an amendment adopted by the United States Senate is carried through, would include mental health coverage for American families who need that. (Applause.)

I'm also pleased to report that we're continuing to make significant progress on bipartisan agreement for the remaining spending bills this year. There is, of course, more to do. I am very hopeful that Congress will now, as a result of movements in the House and comments in the Senate by Republican members, go ahead and raise the minimum wage for working people. No

one can raise a family on \$4.25 an hour, and if we're going to have family values coming out of Washington, we ought to start by valuing families that are working hard, trying to stay off welfare and doing their best to raise their kids. We ought to do it with no gimmicks, a bill that I can sign into law. (Applause.)

And, finally, let me say that I hope that Congress can now bring this bipartisan momentum to bear on the challenge of finally passing a seven-year balanced budget plan. Last year and early this year, we had over 50 hours of negotiation between the congressional leaders, the Vice President and me. We made real progress toward agreeing on a balanced budget. Our plans have in common more than enough savings to balance the budget, provide tax relief to working families, and reflect our values by protecting the fundamental structures of Medicare and Medicaid, and our commitments to education and a clean environment.

Last week, the Congressional Budget Office certified that the budget plan I presented to Congress would balance the budget in seven years. This is the first time in 17 years that the Congressional Budget Office has determined that a President's proposed budget is balanced. Moreover, the CBO has issued new and now more optimistic budget projections, which will make the task of agreeing on a balanced budget significantly easier for both sides.

It's been over three months now since the negotiations over how to balance the budget were suspended. I think we all understood there were intervening events that required this work to be suspended. But the time for waiting is now over. Now is the moment to finish the job and work toward a balanced budget.

We should resume negotiations over how best to do this in seven years. My door is open and it's time to get the job done. We should begin again to seriously talk about this budget process. We should include congressional leaders, obviously the leadership, but also a broad enough range of representatives from both parties and both Houses who represent a broad diversity of views so that we can actually agree on something that can pass. We should put together a mainstream coalition to get the job done.

Now, if we do that, that will help all the educators. Why? Because if we have a balanced budget amendment, interest rates will come down, investments will go up, the economy will be stronger, and people will pay more funds in local school taxes so that they can support your educational institutions.

We can make this a season of bipartisan achievement. We're off to a good start. There will be time enough for us to honestly debate our disagreements in the fall. We don't need a year-long campaign. Most countries just have campaigns of five or six or seven weeks. In the coming weeks, we should take the time to sit down and work together on an area where we are very, very close to real agreement. If we stop fighting about yesterday and balance the budget, we can face the challenges and have the debates of tomorrow.

Let me say, too, that this is really about laying a foundation for the future -- the same kind of work that you do. There is nothing more important than building the right kind of

future for America, whether it is in balancing the budget or teaching our children. This fact was brought home to me again very forcefully in my recent visits to Korea and Japan and Russia. At each stop, I had discussions with leaders of those countries which focused on a fairly simple but very big question: How can we all work together to preserve world peace, to enhance human freedom and define ways to enable all of our people to seize the opportunities of this new information, technology-driven age?

The dimensions of economic change we are now experiencing because of these sweeping changes and because of the end of the Cold War and the growth of a global market are the most profound changes affecting our economy and, therefore, how our people work and live that this country has experienced in 100 years, since people move fundamentally from the farm to the factory.

And I might say that Bill Gates, the American computer wizard, gave a speech not very long ago that I had the privilege to hear, and he wrote in his book, "The Road From Here," that the changes we are now experiencing in communications are the most profound the world has experienced in 500 years since Guttenberg printed the first Bible in Europe with a printing press.

We have to build a bridge to the 21st century that all Americans who are willing to work for it have a chance to cross. Education is the way we do it, the way we can give every child a future, to live the American Dream, to make the most of his or her own life, to build solid families and strong communities and a strong America. If our children succeed, America will do very well, indeed.

So we have to renew our schools and throw open the doors of college to all who want to go who are qualified for it. That's why, even as we cut the deficit in half in four years, we have maintained our commitment to invest in education, all the way from Head Start through the Goals 2000 program, that Secretary Riley mentioned, through access to college. (Applause.) But we also have to acknowledge that the demands of the 21st century require an honest assessment of what is right and wrong with our educational system, what money will fix, and what cannot be fixed by money alone.

The education agenda Secretary Riley and I are pursuing is consistent with what parents and states have called for -- tougher standards and accountability and higher expectations and greater opportunities. I believe that in a fundamental way, education is a matter of high expectations, high standards, good teachers, concerned parents and a supportive community.

High technology will play a bigger and bigger role, and that's why the Vice President and I are trying to make sure that every school and every library in this country, every classroom and every library in the country, from the smallest rural school to the largest urban one, all of them are connected to the Information Superhighway by the year 2000. (Applause.)

But we all know that we have to have those other things: the good teachers, the concerned parents, high expectations, the high standards. We know that these things will make a difference. At last month's National Governors Association Education Summit, I challenged the states and the governors there to create a system that rewards and inspires and demands higher standards for teachers, removing barriers that attract the most talented people, rewarding teachers who meet these high standards, making it easier to remove people who should leave the classroom.

But in the end, we know that what we have to do, all the rest of us who give these speeches, is to support the good teachers. The magic that occurs between the teacher and the student is still the ultimate -- the ultimate key to successful education. It is partly a science, but largely an art. It is sometimes a mystery and always a wonder.

All of us who ever amounted to anything like to tell people that we were born in a log cabin we built ourselves. (Laughter.) We'd like for everybody to believe we were self-made. But the truth is, I don't believe there's a single person in America who is really successful today, at least there aren't many, who can't point to at least one and sometimes a lot more teachers that had a profound impact on his or her life. I know that is certainly true of me.

I carried on a correspondence with my sixth-grade teacher until the day she died at the age of 90; she wrote me a week before she died. I have kept up with many of my teachers from elementary and high school and college all my life, because I know that I wouldn't be here if it weren't for them.

And I'm so glad that our Teacher of the Year not only brought her own fine children who are a pretty good monument to her teaching -- Sarah and Christie and Mark -- but also five of her students, because they really represent the ultimate success of all of your endeavors.

I want to thank, again, Mary Beth Blegen and all of you for devoting your lives to teaching. Mary Beth has taught humanities, history, writing and English for more than 30 years at Minnesota's Worthington High School. When she was first hired, it was a violation of child labor laws. (Laughter and applause.)

MS. BLEGEN: Thank you. Thank you very much. (Applause.) Oh, you are such a good man.

THE PRESIDENT: She has seen many of the changes that all of us have witnessed in America. Worthington has evolved from a mostly white and rural middle class community into one that is more economically and ethnically diverse. It is a community that has seen a shift in jobs from primarily agricultural jobs to factory jobs and other supporting jobs.

Her greatest achievement has been her ability to help her students understand the

complex relationships that exist in our changing world. And I might say that that may be toughest thing we all have to do. We have to figure out how to meet the challenges tomorrow while preserving our basic values. We have to understand that for every complicated problem there is normally a simple, appealing answer that is wrong. That does not mean that our values can't be simple, straightforward and unbending, but it does mean we have to understand these kind of complex relationships that she has done such a marvelous job of explaining to her students.

She is the embodiment of the all American teacher -- a hard working, dedicated, caring person, always working to do better. Her approach to teaching, they tell me, is just as fresh and enthusiastic today as it was 30 years ago. I think anyone who can do that and avoid burn-out and, instead, keep burning on deserves an award for that, if nothing else. And she's done it while raising these three fine children of her own, one of whom has followed in her footsteps as a teacher.

Mary Beth likes to say, good teaching changes lives. She has changed countless lives in 30 years of teaching, and I am proud that she is here as a symbol of all the good that America's teachers do every day all across America. (Applause.)

MS. BLEGEN: I think we should just listen to him talk. (Laughter.)

Mr. President, I bring greetings to you from teachers and students from all over the country, particularly from our rural community of Worthington, Minnesota. We want you to know that we care about children and we care about the future of those children.

Every one of us here as a teacher today goes day after day into her or his schoolroom and practices what we believe to be the most important work. It helps so much to know that you support us. Thank you for honoring teachers.

You preempted me a bit. I was going to say, I'm sure you remember teachers that you had who you remember as being so important to you. Maybe one of my students sitting here said it best in her letter to you -- because all my students wrote letters to you -- when she said, "What better way to solve national problems than through making education a priority." A student's voice, President Clinton, for you. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. We're adjourned.

MS BLEGEN: Thank you, President Clinton. I will tell stories about this for a long time. (Laughter.)

END

2:00 P.M. EDT

# Reaching the Next Step

## HOW SCHOOL TO CAREER CAN HELP STUDENTS REACH HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PREPARE FOR GOOD JOBS

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### Introduction

In 1983, when the National Commission on Excellence in Education released "A Nation at Risk," American educators and the general public received the first in a series of wake-up calls that have echoed now for more than a decade. The message then was that students were not mastering a challenging academic curriculum while in elementary and secondary school, and they were graduating without the knowledge and skills they would need to live fulfilling, productive lives.

Fourteen years after "A Nation at Risk," much has changed in our schools. Many "reforms" have been tried, and small improvements have been made. But the nature of the problem is the same. Too many of today's high school graduates do not have the academic knowledge and skills they need to get good jobs, to enter first-rate vocational training programs or to earn four-year college degrees. Their grades and their diplomas may lead youngsters to think they are prepared, but for most, that balloon bursts when they get out into the world and learn that they don't have the skills that most high-paying jobs require; they don't have the credentials to enter the better training programs that could lead to good jobs; and they didn't learn enough in their academic courses to prepare them for college-level work.

### How Severe Is the Performance Problem?

Is it an exaggeration to say that most high school graduates are not well prepared for the world they face when they leave school? We don't think so. The most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress results (1994) show that an alarmingly low number of American high school students perform well in the core academic subjects:

- ❑ *Reading:* Only 36 percent of 12th graders read at a "proficient" level; 25 percent of 12th graders can't read at a "basic" level.
- ❑ *Writing:* Only 30 percent of 11th graders write at a "proficient" level; 15 percent can't write at a "basic" level.
- ❑ *Math:* Only 60 percent of 17-year-olds have mastered basic high school-level math skills such as computing with decimals, fractions and percents; recognizing geometric figures; and solving simple equations. Only 7 percent of 17-year-olds can solve multi-step problems and use beginning algebra.
- ❑ *Science:* While a majority of 17-year-olds know some basic scientific facts and principles, less than half demonstrate mastery of in-depth scientific knowledge and straightforward scientific reasoning.
- ❑ *History:* Fewer than half of 12th-grade students achieve at the "basic" level, which denotes "partial mastery" of subject matter, and only 11 percent reach the "proficient" level.

Some point to the high number of students going on to college as a sign that youngsters emerge from high school well prepared. These numbers are deceiving. Although more than 60 percent of American high school graduates go on to higher education (a high number compared to most foreign countries), many end up dropping out before getting a degree. It takes seven years for approximately 50 percent of college entrants to earn a degree.

The poor preparation of high school graduates is further illustrated by the proliferation of remedial courses at colleges and universities across the country. Ninety percent of postsecondary institutions now offer remedial courses. That's nine out of ten colleges teaching the equivalent of high school courses. According to the American Council on Education, one-third of college freshmen took remedial math courses in 1994, and over one-quarter of freshmen took remedial English. In California, 60 percent of incoming freshmen to the largest state university system in the country tested low enough in math and English that they were required to take remedial courses.

Perhaps the strongest evidence that high school graduates are not well prepared comes from employers. A 1991 Harris poll asked parents, students and employers whether high school graduates were well prepared in reading, writing and math. Large numbers of parents and students said yes--71 percent and 63 percent, respectively--but only 21 percent of employers agreed. In fact, businesses have found it increasingly necessary to provide employees with remedial educational training. According to a survey for *Training* magazine, 18 percent of American businesses provided remedial education training for employees in 1984. By 1995, that figure had jumped to 43 percent.

## Bad for the Economy

When high school graduates aren't prepared to enter the workforce, it takes a toll not only on them but also on businesses and the broader economy. As more and more American businesses face stiff global competition, jobs have become more demanding, and the need for well-educated, well-trained employees has increased. According to a 1995 survey by the Education Quality of the Workforce (EQW) policy group, 56 percent of employers reported that the skill requirements for their jobs were increasing; only 5 percent said they were decreasing.

But businesses are having a hard time finding workers with the knowledge and experience to fill these jobs. One-third of the corporations surveyed by EQW said that they had trouble finding skilled labor. And the problem is just as real for small- and mid-sized businesses. A recent survey by Arthur Andersen found that 25 percent of such business owners worried that a lack of qualified workers will soon hamper their growth, a figure that has nearly doubled from 13 percent in 1993.

## Who Is Hurt the Most?

The low level of achievement in American schools is a problem for the American economy. But it is a tragedy for the students who do not meet their potential, particularly those students who don't go on to get a college degree. In the typical American high school, students planning on attending selective colleges enter the "college-preparatory" track and take a certain set of core academic courses. While these courses are not always as rigorous as those taken by college-bound students in other high-achieving countries, the college-prep curriculum does open the doors to a college education, and those four additional years of learning open even more doors. Moreover, students entering selective colleges have a strong incentive not only to take rigorous courses but also to study hard and earn good grades: If they don't, they won't be admitted.

The picture is much different for those who do not go on to earn a college degree after high school. These students may have to earn a certain number of credits to graduate from high school, but they are rarely required by the school to take rigorous courses or to master complicated academic material. Additionally, there is no external incentive spurring them on to take difficult courses or undertake the diligent study and constant practice that is necessary to master complex material. Most two-year colleges, and over 12 percent of four-year colleges and universities, have an open admissions policy under which they admit high school graduates regardless of their high school rank or test scores. For students who intend to enter the workforce directly after high school, there is no pay-off for studying. Employers may care about whether a student has received a high school diploma, but they don't ask what grades students received or whether students earned those grades in the most basic courses or the most advanced.

To a great extent, these students are not challenged or motivated by school, nor do they leave prepared

for any particular career or occupation. The result is that some high school graduates end up unemployed, and many others find themselves jumping from one low-paying job to the next in search of skills and stability until the age of 23 or 24.

Perhaps most scandalous is that these youngsters are led to believe they are being prepared to step out into the world. They are told that all they need to do is earn a certain number of credits to graduate, so they do. Some even get good grades in their courses, leading them to believe that they are learning what they will need to be successful. Reality doesn't set in until after they receive their diploma and it is too late to go back and learn what they were never exposed to. In essence, those who rely the most on their high school education get the least out of it, and they don't realize what they are missing until it is too late.

## **The Promise of Standards**

For several years, there has been an emerging consensus among educators, business leaders and policy makers nationwide that the first step to changing how we educate children is setting higher academic standards from kindergarten through 12th grade. Just as businesses can't measure improvements in production without knowing what they want their products to look like, schools can't change without first determining what they want children to learn.

This was the message early in 1996 at the second National Education Summit, when governors and business leaders came together to show their commitment to raising standards in schools. They agreed that schools must set higher standards for students in their states and that states must support the kind of changes that will help students reach those standards.

But offering harder courses doesn't guarantee success. For students who have not traditionally sought out and done well in demanding classes, teachers will need better instructional strategies based on the latest research. Schools--with help from the business community--will need to provide students with exposure to career opportunities and job skills so that youth can see the relevance of what they are learning in school. Schools will also have to tie incentives and consequences to standards so that students will be motivated to work hard in school. In the end, no child should be allowed to pass from grade to grade and then graduate from high school without having learned what he will need to succeed. And both business and the postsecondary community have to send the message, through their hiring and admissions policies, that hard work in school matters: Working hard and doing well in school should lead to a good job or postsecondary opportunities. Failing to work hard should not.

## **School to Career**

One movement that has the potential to bring together the high standards, proven instructional strategies, exposure to work and incentives for study is referred to by many as "school to work." The idea is to ratchet up the academic preparation students receive in high school while increasing their exposure to the world of work.

Because it speaks to both the academic needs of students and their need for work skills and experience, school to work has the support of educators, organized labor and the business community. It also has support from the federal government. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act, signed into federal law in 1994, provides seed money for state and local systems to develop new programs that will better prepare students for life after high school. As a result of this legislation, education groups, teachers, business organizations and labor unions are working together at the national, state and local levels to come up with the right mix of academic standards, career connections, supports and incentives for students to achieve.

In our judgment, the challenge of the school-to-work movement is to focus on providing an upgraded education to those youngsters who have traditionally been so ill served by high school and to prepare them for a productive life. In part, this means preparing them to enter a career and earn a successful living. But that is not all. A good liberal arts education has a fundamental role to play in preparing young people to live responsible lives as democratic citizens and to live intellectually fulfilling lives

where learning becomes its own reward. Of course, we want high school graduates to understand how what they are learning in school will benefit their careers. The economic payoff of a good education is one of the most significant incentives for students to work hard. But as teachers, we feel a deep devotion to the civic and social values of a good education. As one newspaper columnist recently put it: "Education aims to enrich lives, not just line pockets."

## The Purpose of this Publication

School to work is a powerful idea. But as the idea becomes more popular, the school-to-work label will become attached to a great variety of programs--not all of them with the same purpose or quality.

While many of the reforms undertaken in the name of school to work are solid and will greatly help students now ill served by the system, others could leave schools and students worse off. If, for example, school-to-work proposals lead to a focus on narrow job skills or more specialized vocational training that displaces strong academic preparation, we will be doing our students and our society a disservice. If, in our zeal to prepare more youngsters for jobs after high school, we end up closing the door to college, that would be a step backward. If, as we work to make the curriculum and pedagogy more relevant to students, we compromise the quality of the academic content students are exposed to, we will have only made the situation worse. And if, in the name of school to work, we end up dismantling or weakening the academic preparation that is now offered in college-prep programs, we may solve one problem but will create another.

School to work has the potential to dramatically improve education for those students who have traditionally been left uninspired and unprepared by high school. We believe that school to work can best serve these students by creating an educational experience for them that includes the recommended features below. These recommendations are based on the premise that a strong liberal arts education is the foundation for the future success of all students, and only when our schools can provide students with such an education will we be giving them a real chance at fulfilling, productive, successful lives.

The seven recommendations call for the following:

- 1) provide a common, high-quality, rich curriculum to all students--regardless of their ability, background or likely life choices--well into secondary school, thus providing the foundation for a demanding high school education;
- 2) expose all high school students to rigorous academic coursework in all core subjects, not allowing non college-bound students to settle for "remedial" or undemanding "general"-level courses;
- 3) use effective, engaging teaching methods, including a heavier dose of applied learning;
- 4) provide students with exposure to the workplace--in ways that reinforce and show the relevance of academic learning;
- 5) create incentives for students to study and achieve;
- 6) provide training and support for teachers; and
- 7) regularly evaluate whether the programs are leading to improved student achievement.

From now on in this publication, we will use the term "school to career" rather than "school to work" to help make a very important point. We are not arguing for narrow vocational education programs that only prepare students for specific jobs. The American Federation of Teachers' vision of school to career calls for providing students with the solid academic foundation that can enable them to go on to college if they choose, enter quality postsecondary training and degree programs, and retrain easily for other jobs should a shift in the labor market occur or an opportunity for promotion present itself. It involves helping those students who are now so ill served by our system to meet rigorous academic standards and to understand the connection between success in school and success in their careers. "School to career"

seems to us a more accurate description of our broader vision.

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# Recommendations

## Recommendation #1

### *Provide all students with a strong academic foundation prior to high school*

In American education today, there are no common academic standards that students are expected to meet. Students in different schools learn different things and are held to different expectations. Students in some schools are taught a challenging curriculum and are held to high standards. Students in many other schools are not, and the low expectations seem to affect disproportionately children in poor neighborhoods.

This lack of clear standards has led to a system where students pass from grade to grade regardless of what they have learned. In a recent AFT poll, nearly three out of five teachers said that students arrive in their classrooms at the beginning of each year at such different levels of preparation that the teachers must spend significant time reviewing old material so that the less-prepared students are not left behind. The problem is particularly serious in urban schools, where 70 percent of teachers report having to spend considerable time at the beginning of the year bringing students to the same level.

If we want to improve the quality of the high school experience for the majority of our young people, if we want to be able to do away with low-level courses and dead-end tracks, we need to begin by setting clear, rigorous academic standards and making sure students meet those standards from the earliest grades on.

This means that every state should establish a common core curriculum for all students. The content of that curriculum--what students should learn in each subject and each grade--should be clearly defined so that students receive consistent, coordinated instruction as they progress through the system. And students should not be passed from grade to grade unless they have learned the material in the curriculum. In other words, every sixth-grade teacher should know that incoming students have substantially mastered the knowledge and skills of the fifth-grade curriculum, regardless of which teacher or school they came from. And it is that teacher's responsibility to make sure those students have learned the sixth-grade material before moving to the seventh grade.

An essential ingredient of such a system is targeted assistance and intervention for low-achieving students. With higher standards and a challenging curriculum, it is inevitable that some students will struggle with the material. Once standards are in place, the emphasis can be on early identification of learning problems. Teachers can assess whether students are reaching the set standard with standardized diagnostic tests or other tools. Resources--tutors, instructional materials that use different pedagogical techniques, additional time, and guides that enable parents to help students at home--can then be made available to provide the extra instruction the students need.

Another ingredient of a successful standards system is incentives to work hard. In high-achieving foreign countries, such as France and Japan, students follow a common core curriculum from elementary school until high school; they then take a series of tests to determine how well they have learned the common core prior to entering high school. Although students who fail these tests are not denied entering high school, students know that their achievement on these tests has a major impact on their future. They also know that good jobs and admission to college will require taking certain courses in high school and meeting certain standards at the end of high school. And they understand that in order to take the more demanding courses in high school, they will have to score high enough on the tests at the end of middle school.

The AFT believes that all students should be expected to reach a common set of academic standards by

the time they reach high school. This is the only way to be sure they are prepared to take rigorous courses and reach the high exit standards all high schools should establish. To ensure that students are not socially promoted into high school, states may want to consider initiating gateway tests similar to those used in other countries at the end of middle school. Students who don't do well on these tests should receive extra help; they should have second and third chances to achieve the standards.

Without clear and rigorous standards in place, and without incentives for students to care about those standards, many students will not receive a challenging curriculum, and many will continue to move from grade to grade without accumulating the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in high school and beyond. We can't expect high schools to magically solve the achievement problem without support from the earlier grades. This is why schools and school systems that are serious about preparing youngsters for work and citizenship when they graduate from high school must make sure that changes extend all the way down to the elementary grades.

## **Recommendation #2**

### ***Expose all secondary students to rigorous academic coursework in all core subjects***

The primary goal of a high school's school-to-career program should be to help all students master challenging academic material, a foundation that can prepare them for work, citizenship and life. The first step is to expose all students to tougher academic courses. In the typical high school, it is only those students planning on attending selective colleges and universities who are expected to master a challenging curriculum. These students take algebra, geometry, trigonometry and sometimes calculus; they take biology, chemistry and physics; they take "honors" or AP history courses; and they take honors or AP English courses, which require them to read great works of literature and write essays and research papers.

But most students confront an unchallenging curriculum. Some students take and get credit for "remedial" or "basic" courses. These courses--often with names like business and consumer math, consumer chemistry and outdoor education--offer little academic content and virtually no preparation for either work or postsecondary education. The largest number of students take what are often called "general" track courses. These courses are far more challenging than the remedial courses, far less challenging than AP courses, and, most significantly, far less challenging than the courses taken by students in other industrialized countries where student achievement is much higher. These students may take geometry, but not algebra. They may take biology, but not chemistry or physics. They take four years of English, but their classes may avoid great works of literature and the writing of papers in favor of a focus on adolescent fiction or contemporary film. They may take three or four years of social studies, but most of it on narrow "topics" and little of it in broad, rigorous history courses.

### **Eliminate remedial courses, upgrade "general" courses**

Students who take remedial and general courses get a diploma but end up with a weak academic foundation. Many of these students enter college, but end up paying to take remedial courses covering material they should have learned in high school. Many also end up dropping out of college without a degree. Those who enter the workforce learn quickly that they are not adequately prepared for high-skilled work or to take advantage of better employment opportunities. In today's economy, even high-paying factory jobs require more skills and knowledge than many general-track students are ever exposed to.

This story from the *Wall Street Journal* illustrates the academic background students need to get good jobs--and the frustration they experience without it.

Andre Miles has applied for a job at Lincoln Electric Co. three times in the past three years, but he has never gotten past a screening interview.

"It is frustrating that I don't even have a chance," says the 22-year-old construction worker. He isn't alone. More than 20,000 applications have been submitted to Lincoln in the past 18 months, and most were rejected. Yet, the maker of motors and welding products says it still has positions to fill and can't find the workers it needs.

...Lincoln currently has about 200 openings, with hourly pay ranging from \$8.39 to \$20. While some openings are at the lowest rung of the plant, the company also needs many skilled tool-and-die makers, mold makers and machinists.

...But few of the thousands of applicants who applied for jobs at Lincoln could do high-school trigonometry or read technical drawings, and most didn't show an aptitude for learning how to operate computer-controlled machines--skills that Lincoln says even entry-level workers need.

...Mr. Miles, the 22-year-old repeatedly turned away at Lincoln, says he thinks his 2.6 grade-point average in high school "wasn't too shabby." In school, he played football and worked part-time at a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant, but took just one basic algebra course. Today, he wishes he had taken more math.

"If I knew then what I know now, I would have acted differently," he says, noting that Lincoln's starting salary is more than the \$7.50 an hour he makes after two years of unskilled construction work. "If I got that job [at Lincoln], at least I wouldn't have to wear the same tennis shoes for two years."...

But students need more than just high-level math and science courses. A special report from the National Alliance of Business argues that it's time to abandon "the simplistic notion that preparation for work requires only a set of technical skills, while thoughtful citizenship requires knowledge and understanding cultivated by the arts and humanities. Perhaps this rigid dichotomy made sense in the Industrial era, but no longer." The paper goes on to argue that "high-powered study in traditional disciplines such as science, history, the arts, civics and foreign language "can enhance young people's readiness for today's job market" (see sidebar).

But even were there is no economic rationale for it, all students need and deserve exposure to a broad, rich liberal arts curriculum. In his book *The Schools We Need*, E.D. Hirsch calls access to such a curriculum a basic civil right. He argues that every child in America ought to be guaranteed more than just a seat in a public school; they should be given access to a rich curriculum that can enable them to participate and prosper in American society. Mortimer Adler, founder of the Paideia schools, made the same argument in *The Paideia Proposal*:

"We cannot say out of one side of our mouth that we are for democracy and all its free institutions including, preeminently, political and civil liberty for all; and out of the other side of our mouth, say that only some of the children...are educable for full citizenship and a full human life." (p. 7)

This is the philosophy driving many successful school-to-career systems in American schools. The Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) High Schools That Work consortium is one such example. That program, in 650 schools, rejects the practice of "teaching different academic content to different students within the same school."

SREB schools eliminate general math classes and require all students to learn algebra and geometry. For example, one SREB school eliminated general math from the high school curriculum, moved pre-algebra to the middle school level, and no longer allowed students to count business math toward graduation. SREB schools also eliminate low-level English courses and require all students to take a core curriculum with a strong literature component and a heavy emphasis on writing. One school requires students in every grade to write a formal paper each week.

The Turner Technical Arts school in Dade County, Florida, provides an example of a school-to-career system built on a strong academic core curriculum. Like the SREB schools, Turner has done away with low-level courses. All Turner students are required to take four years of English and three years of social studies at levels universities would accept as prerequisites for entry; all students are required to take math courses up through algebra, and many--depending on their career focus--are also required to take Algebra II and rigorous science courses, such as chemistry and physics, typically taken only by the college bound.

The point, of course, is not simply to change the names of the courses but to strengthen content. How do you know if new courses are as rigorous as they should be? There is no simple formula. There are, however, three measures schools can use to help answer this question:

- ❑ Compare the content and expectations of upgraded courses with courses and exams taken by average-achieving students in other high-achieving countries (see sidebar)
- ❑ Make sure courses are sufficient for entry to state universities so that students do not require remediation; and
- ❑ Assess students' achievement in the new courses as compared to their achievement in the old courses. If the course content is strong, achievement should go up.

### **Students can meet higher standards**

Some people just assume that tougher course requirements will lead to a higher drop-out rate and more failure. But the experience of schools that have tried it--including those in the SREB consortium--shows the opposite.

Research conducted by Andrew Porter et al. on the effect of transition courses designed to move students from general math to college preparatory math in New York and California show that the more students are exposed to rigorous content, the higher they achieve on the National Assessment of Educational Progress's math test. In the case of "stretch Regents" courses in New York state--courses that teach students the same material as the college-track Regents courses but take either an extra semester or year to complete--New York City students' NAEP gains after one year nearly doubled those of students in general math courses.

## **Recommendation #3**

### ***Use effective and engaging teaching methods***

One promising approach, which many in the school-to-career field advocate, is greater use of "applied" learning, wherein students use what they have learned in real-world contexts. One obvious strength of applied learning is to capture students' interest and thus motivate them by showing the relevance and usefulness of what they are learning. It can be a very effective way to motivate students to learn complex academic concepts.

The success of this approach is supported by research from the field of cognitive psychology on contextualized learning. These findings document the educational usefulness of having students work through, and come to understand, complicated material by drawing on prior learning to solve a variety of different problems.

The Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) offers a Principles of Technology course based on applied learning. Traditional physics programs use three steps to introduce students to such concepts as the conversion of potential energy to kinetic energy. First, discuss the concept; second, present an equation that describes the phenomenon; and third, offer students a few simple exercises to apply the new concept.

The Principles of Technology course does all of this and then allows the student to explore the principle in action; to see, for example, how a car's coil spring works to provide a smooth ride. The course then provides opportunities for students to explore the same concept at work in many situations--in pressure regulators, brake retracting springs, safety valves--helping them understand the broad applicability of a scientific concept. See sidebar for an example.

This approach to academic topics takes more time than the traditional method of teaching. The CORD physics course takes two years to cover what traditionally is taught in one year of physics. But for students who otherwise might not complete the physics course--or who might complete it but not fully understand what they've been taught--the extra time is well spent.

Sometimes people only think of math and science as subjects in which students can benefit from this type of learning experience. The truth is, some of the best history and government classes engage in a form of this practice. Take mock law trials, for instance, where students are given a case to study and asked to apply their knowledge of the law to the roles of prosecutor, defense attorney, judge and

witnesses. Or consider the model United Nations program, which places students in the roles of ambassadors and engages them in mock U.N. hearings and debates. These roles require students to do their own research and to develop a fairly sophisticated understanding of international events, such as the Vietnam War or the Cuban Missile Crisis. And because all students are expected to participate, it is harder for those having trouble with the material to slip by unnoticed.

But just because a healthy dose of applied learning will aid many students' education doesn't mean all teachers should use applied learning all the time. And just because applied learning done well is educationally powerful doesn't mean that any classroom activity called applied or "hands on" necessarily is. As with any educational methodology, applied learning must be incorporated into the curriculum thoughtfully and moderately, using good materials and good instruction. Here are several principles educators need to keep in mind as they work to incorporate applied learning into their repertoire:

- ❑ **Applied learning is a means to an end: improved academic achievement.** Applied courses and lessons should have as their primary goal helping to improve students' academic performance. A lesson that is fun and "relevant" to students' lives but doesn't lead students to better and more deeply understand the academic material isn't a good use of either the students' or the teacher's time. For example, a series of lessons where students spend a lot of time planting a garden but fail to grasp the concept of photosynthesis.
- ❑ **Applied lessons often take longer.** Because applied lessons and courses involve students in projects and tasks not normally incorporated into the high school curriculum, they usually take longer to complete. Choices must be made between achieving depth--which applied lessons often provide--and breadth, as both are important to a quality education.
- ❑ **Clear standards should help guide decisions about courses and pedagogy.** To assure that key topics are not lost in the effort to create applied lessons, clear standards that describe what all students ought to learn in each grade--not a desire to include particular applied lessons--should guide decisions about what material is taught in a given grade.
- ❑ **Applied learning may not always be appropriate.** Teachers shouldn't feel compelled to turn every lesson into an activity--some things simply don't lend themselves to being taught in an applied way. And some students may learn perfectly well without using applications.
- ❑ Applied lessons are not always the best way to engage students. Sometimes it can be a more compelling learning experience to read a good book or listen to a great lecture than to do something more hands on. Applied learning techniques should be part of every good teacher's repertoire, but it should not be the only methodology.

Teaching is not like building a house or cooking a meal. There is no blueprint or recipe for reaching every child in every lesson. Some students will absorb and retain information better by reading on their own or listening to their teachers; others will learn better by working out their ideas with their peers; and some by actually doing something that requires application of that knowledge in a real-world context. Most teachers achieve more with a balanced repertoire of strategies and activities.

## Recommendation #4

### *Provide career exposure to improve academic performance and to prepare students for life after high school*

As students approach graduation, serious consideration of what comes after high school emerges. The more that students believe their courses prepare them for that next step, the more likely they are to be motivated to work hard and do well in those classes. Unfortunately, most high school students today do not see any connection between hard work in school and success after graduation. Typically, only those students applying to the more competitive colleges and universities recognize that taking tough courses and getting good grades translates into success after high school.

If we are to prepare all students for life after high school, schools need to provide direction and nurture determination. Four ways of doing so follow.

- ❑ Provide students with information about what their academic, training and work options are after

graduation.

- ☐ Make clear to them the knowledge and skills required to take advantage of each option.
- ☐ Make sure that the courses and programs offered in high schools actually provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to access each option.
- ☐ Offer students coursework that will give them advanced standing in their next learning experience.

## Career Exposure

Most young people are unaware of the career options available to a high school graduate. Without programs that provide such information, their employment prospects may be limited by what their parents, relatives or friends have pursued. This is particularly debilitating for poor children whose exposure to the world of work is often very narrow.

What kind of information should schools try to provide students? It helps to look at this from the student's perspective. Here are some of the questions students should be encouraged to ask and schools should help answer--both through good guidance counseling programs and structured exposure to the work world and its connection to the classroom:

- ☐ What career fields am I most interested in?
- ☐ Will those fields provide adequate compensation to support my desired lifestyle?
- ☐ Is the career field one in which opportunities are plentiful? And what about the future--is it an expanding or a shrinking field?
- ☐ Is employment available in my community or will relocation be necessary?
- ☐ What kinds of knowledge and skills will I need to be successful in these careers?
- ☐ Will this career require additional training after high school? If so, where is the best place to receive additional training? What knowledge and skills will I need to enter these training programs?

At Laurence Dunbar High School in Fort Worth, Texas, students get these questions answered through a brief but focused job-shadowing experience (**see sidebar**). Students spend several days with a mentor at a job site participating in the day-to-day work activities and discussing the specific academic skills the job requires. Students come to the work site with a prepared list of questions that help them focus their time and discussion on how workers use academic knowledge and skills in their jobs. When they return from their job-shadowing experience, the students are expected to share what they have learned with the rest of the class.

But the career connection for Dunbar students does not end there. As a result of a joint project between the Fort Worth school district and the local chamber of commerce, Dunbar students have access to a guidebook that describes the academic and work skills required for various jobs in the community. For example, if a student is interested in becoming a nurse, the student's career counselor could open this manual and show the student the level of reading, writing, math, speaking/listening, computer and reasoning skills that nurses in the area report needing to do their jobs. Those students who are not sure what they want to do when they graduate can also consult the guide to find out what type of math or writing skills various jobs require.

## Career-oriented programs and courses

There are many ways schools can organize programs to help students make the connection between academics, the world of work and life after graduation. In addition to the rigorous core curriculum discussed earlier, schools can provide vocational courses that give students exposure to career fields; they can teach occupational skills; and they can reinforce the academic skills taught in core courses.

But how to get there from here? One avenue is simply to have vocational and academic teachers work together more closely. A particular mathematical formula or a scientific concept relevant to an auto mechanics class, for example, can be taught concurrently in academic and vocational classes. In addition, math and science teachers should draw on students' experiences in their vocational courses to help make the academic material inviting and relevant.

This kind of integration is possible only when the curriculum and standards for the academic and vocational courses are set forth explicitly, specifically and publicly. When academic and vocational teachers discuss such standards, they can identify opportunities for integration. Absent documents that detail standards clearly, integration is likely to be ad hoc, with faculty finding interesting but not necessarily pertinent ways to integrate their coursework.

There are also more elaborate ways to structure the high school experience to provide students with a career focus that can also help bring relevance to their academic studies. Some schools are creating "career pathways" or a "career focus"--a coherent, prescribed sequence of academic and vocational courses designed to provide students with a rigorous set of core academic courses while exposing them to a particular career or set of careers. These pathways are typically organized along broad occupational lines, such as health care or manufacturing/engineering technology.

This pathways approach is taken by the SREB High Schools That Work consortium. In addition to the core academic courses all students are required to take, SREB requires students to declare a "career focus" and to take additional courses. For some students, that focus may be a particular occupation or industry--health care, for example--while for others it may be admission to college. The point is not to lock students into a particular occupation but, rather, to give them a focus around which they can organize their courseload and prepare themselves for postsecondary opportunities. SREB's career focus courses, whether they deal with auto mechanics, engineering or computers, expose students to the world of work and education after high school while reinforcing the academic knowledge and skills they're studying in their core courses.

In St. Mary's County, Maryland--an SREB site--career pathway students take a core set of college-preparatory-level academic courses plus 10 semesters of additional academic and vocational courses chosen from four broad career pathways: engineering/ mechanical technology, health/human services, business/management and college preparatory.

Regardless of the pathway chosen, all St. Mary's students must take algebra, geometry and an additional higher-level math course; earth/space science and biology; and four years of what the district considers college-prep English and social studies. Depending on the pathway, students take additional vocational and academic courses that augment that pathway.

Instead of graduating without a focus, St. Mary's students are prepared to enter a four-year college or move immediately into a community college program that will lead to a well-regarded technical certificate and, in turn, to a skilled, well-paying job. And if the labor market changes, the student will have the academic foundation necessary to enter a new field and retrain for a new job. **For more details, see sidebar.**

Some schools are going further and creating schools-within-schools, called "career academies," which allow students to focus on a particular occupation for most of their high school years (**see sidebar**). More than just a set of courses, career academies are usually created to match local employment trends and opportunities, and they are designed to prepare students to enter that trade or field after graduation. In some cases, entire schools have become career academies.

This approach can be appropriate for students interested in a particular career field and in locations where jobs in the field are plentiful. Aviation High School in New York is such a school. It requires students to take a core set of academic courses that lead to a standard academic diploma and a core set of vocational courses in aviation mechanics and technology pegged to certification standards set by the Federal Aviation Administration. Upon graduation, Aviation students are prepared to take the FAA certification exam, which, when passed, will enable them to enter the airline industry in a high-paying job that for most people would require years of training after high school.

### **Work-based experiences**

One popular way schools choose to expose students to career options is through job-shadowing opportunities, internships and other work-based experiences. When schools work with employers to ensure that the experience is meaningful and academically enriching for students, these opportunities can

be an effective way to motivate students in their academic courses and to demonstrate the relevance of those courses to the working world. But if that academic connection is not made clearly, and the goal is simply to give students work experience, it may do youngsters more harm than good. Recent research by Laurence Steinberg and Elizabeth Cauffman indicates that as many as 66 percent of all American high school juniors and seniors work--compared with 37 percent in Canada, 20 percent in Sweden, and less than 2 percent in Japan. Working long hours, they say, often results in "disengagement from school," thereby hindering academic progress.

For a work-based learning experience to help and not hinder students' academic progress, it should:

***Establish a clear academic focus***--The effectiveness of a work-based experience depends on how well what the student does on the job reinforces what happens in the classroom. The academic side of the work-based experience should be explicitly stated and should relate closely to the student's academic curriculum.

***Maintain the central role of the school***--The student's first obligation is to master the academic curriculum in high school. The workplace experience should not impede this. Students' work experience should not substitute for academic classes, nor should students be pulled from their academic classes to attend internships. Embedding employability skills, often referred to as SCANS skills, in the curriculum is a helpful way to bridge school and the workplace. See sidebar for a definition of the SCANS skills.

***Hire or appoint a work-based learning coordinator***--The coordinator will take responsibility for ensuring that every internship is an academically rich experience. Too frequently, already overburdened teachers are expected to arrange the internships, maintain the contacts with the workplaces and gather labor market information. Schools must designate someone to fulfill these important duties and reduce his or her other responsibilities to free up the necessary time. Often, this role is best filled--or substantially supplemented--at the district level, where a coordinator can use contacts with various companies to arrange quality work experiences for students at a number of schools.

***Assign a workplace mentor to each student***--No student should spend time in an internship without guidance. Continuous mentoring should be part of every school's agreement with businesses, and mentors should be familiar enough with the academic curriculum to help students make the connection between classroom work and "real-world" work.

***Students should not be used as cheap labor***--Students should not be placed in work settings where they will either displace existing workers or preempt hiring a worker. Every precaution must be taken to ensure that all child labor laws and OSHA safety regulations are followed. Additionally, in work sites that are organized, the local union should be fully involved in the program.

***Limit hours***--To ensure that internships complement and do not detract from students' academic work, schools should limit the number of hours per week students spend in a job to no more than 20. A student's job placement should not interfere with schoolwork.

***Placement should account for workplace environment***--Internships must be based on the needs of students, not the labor needs of employers. Students should not be placed in occupational clusters for which projections indicate long-term declines in the labor market; nor should they be placed in job sites where layoffs are prevalent. Schools must also make sure that student placements do not displace or otherwise have a negative impact on existing workers.

## Recommendation #5

***Create an incentive for students to study and achieve: Make the high school diploma count***

Most American students could achieve at much higher levels. Such increased achievement can only occur, however, if students are willing to work harder than they do today. In a recent poll, AFT teachers listed "lack of student motivation" as one of the top three problems they face in their schools.

One reason students lack the motivation necessary for them to take challenging courses and excel in their studies is that they do not believe hard work in high school will influence their futures in any meaningful way. They know that most employers will not ask to see their high school transcript--so why should they put in the extra effort? For many of these youngsters, the diploma remains the biggest incentive for staying in school and completing the requisite courses. It is their minimum ticket to a career and entry into a community college, the military or a vocational program.

But the truth is, most high school diplomas don't signify much more than attendance. Students have to show up for a certain number of days per year and "pass" a certain number of courses, but that's about it. A high school diploma these days cannot be viewed as a certificate of academic mastery, and employers know it. That's why quality businesses rarely hire recent high school graduates. Instead, they wait until those graduates have several years of experience in low-wage jobs or they hire people with college degrees or certificates from training programs.

In other countries, the certificates students receive when they exit high school are valuable and carry a clear message to colleges and employers. A *Realschule* certificate in Germany represents a known and significant level of academic achievement. It can lead to immediate entry into high-skilled careers or access to the best training programs. An academic *Baccalaureat* diploma in France guarantees entry to a four-year college. A technical *Baccalaureat* is necessary to enter serious job-training programs and careers.

The main reason these certificates carry so much weight is that students have to earn them. Students can't receive their diploma without having taken a core set of academic courses and without having met challenging standards. This means more than simply racking up course credits. In most cases, students have to pass rigorous tests at the end of high school to demonstrate their command of the material. And the grades they get in their courses are often a significant factor in their final score.

To increase the status of the diploma in American high schools, and to make it worth striving for, schools need to make the diploma stand for something. Students should not receive a diploma if they haven't reached clearly defined, rigorous academic standards. The elimination of remedial courses and the upgrading of general courses discussed earlier pave the way for this, but it may also be necessary to require students to demonstrate their mastery on formal exams.

Schools should also consider a differentiated diploma system that would encourage students to focus their studies in their later high school years. During the last several years of secondary school in France, for example, students decide whether they will pursue an academic Baccalaureat that will prepare them for college or one of a variety of technical Baccalaureat degrees that will prepare them to enter various careers or job-training programs. Students who finish each of these programs take a set of exams in academic subjects and in more specialized areas, and those who pass the exams receive a diploma specific to their domain. An academic diploma entitles students to attend a university (they cannot be admitted without one), and a technical Baccalaureat opens the door to a particular range of careers. As mentioned earlier, employers respect these certificates and factor them into their hiring decisions.

In this country, several states are designing systems of standards and exams that will lead to differentiated diplomas in high school. In one state, for example, students will be required to take tests and meet certain standards in the core academic subjects at the end of tenth grade. Students who do not pass these tests will be given second and third chances, but they must pass the tests in order to graduate. Once students pass the tenth-grade tests, they will have an opportunity to work toward two different types of diplomas, each connected to a set of standards. One pathway will lead to a certificate of advanced academic mastery, which will signify preparation for postsecondary education. The other path will lead to a more career-oriented technical certificate that will open the doors to good jobs and quality training programs.

States that establish tough graduation standards and offer advanced certificates are sending the right message: achievement counts.

### **Link College Entry and Employment to Student Achievement**

Putting higher standards in place and encouraging students to work hard and plan ahead in high school will not be easy, and schools cannot do it alone. Colleges and universities should institute admissions standards that make it clear to students that they must take serious courses and succeed at them if they intend to enter college. Employers, too, must make it a practice to reward academic achievement. At the National Education Summit, governors and business leaders agreed that business should implement hiring practices "that will require applicants to demonstrate academic achievement through school-based records, such as academic transcripts, diplomas, portfolios, certificates of initial mastery and others as appropriate." Employers of high school students should also consider rewarding their student employees who earn high grades with contributions to funds for the students and other incentives. Contact the National Alliance of Business for information on their efforts to motivate students to work hard in school.

Schools can ensure that transcripts, grades and graduation certificates actually stand for something; employers and higher education institutions have the power to make high standards worth reaching. For this reason, school-to-career programs must begin early and energetically to enlist employers and higher education institutions to reward high achievement. For an example of how one school district is doing this, [see sidebar](#).

## Recommendation #6

### *Provide quality professional development*

Implementing the recommendations laid out in this publication will demand more of educators than ever before. They will need a deeper knowledge of subject matter, a better understanding of the array of teaching strategies that will help students meet higher academic standards, and a commitment to working closely with colleagues to design rich learning activities that connect school to the world of work. None of this can happen, however, without quality professional development.

Professional development must be a dynamic process that requires educators to continually reflect on their teaching, strengthen their knowledge of subject matter and perfect their pedagogical skills. Dynamic professional development will:

***Deepen educators' subject matter knowledge***—As the standards in courses are raised and watered-down courses eliminated, students will be taking more advanced courses and will be expected to learn more. Many teachers who have become familiar with teaching lower-level courses will shift to teaching higher-level courses. Therefore, educators will need to deepen their content knowledge in order to teach complex subject matter.

***Expand educators' repertoire of teaching strategies***—As noted earlier, lifting the achievement of students who have not traditionally flourished in school will require teachers to draw on a broader range of effective teaching strategies, including more use of applied learning. Teachers will need exposure to these techniques, including an understanding of how, why and under what circumstances they are effective. It is essential for teachers to understand the research that supports the new teaching practices. But, that alone is not sufficient. Teachers cannot be expected, based on abstract theory, to invent a year's worth of new lessons from whole cloth. Rather, excellent collections of lessons, units and courses that incorporate applied learning should be made available to teachers. Professional development should be substantially focused on enabling teachers to effectively use and build on these materials. At its best, this kind of professional development will include time for teachers to brainstorm and talk with colleagues about their experiences. This will need to be done in a way that engages educators in learning about and studying their own teaching in order to perfect their methods. Teachers will also need release time to observe quality teaching by their peers.

***Be an on-going, coordinated effort***—The evidence is overwhelming that the most effective professional development programs are those that provide opportunities for teachers to learn something new, to practice it in the classroom, and to receive coaching on it. One-shot trainings that assume that knowing something new means you can and will successfully apply it in the classroom will not fill the bill. Educators will need to continue to share their successes and failures and fine tune their methodologies as

students and curriculum change.

***Allow time for collaboration between academic and vocational teachers***—Reinforcement of academic content by vocational teachers, use of vocational examples by academic teachers and the alignment and sequencing of course content cannot happen between academic and vocational teachers if they do not have joint planning time. With such time, and with such a focus, academic and vocational teachers can discover the connections between their courses and can align lessons to reinforce different concepts. For example, a math and a carpentry teacher can align their curriculum so that students learn a particular math formula and then apply the formula in a carpentry project.

***Be a priority for the school, district or regional entity***—Professional development initiations will not work unless the time and resources are available for teachers to observe exemplary teaching and work collegially to upgrade their skills. Japanese teachers, for example, spend roughly 40 percent of their working day on professional development and collegial work, compared with only 14 percent for American teachers.

***Offer paid summer internships and other opportunities to teachers***—Frequently, educators have not had exposure to workplaces and are not familiar with the level of knowledge and skills that so many jobs now require. Internships with local businesses will allow educators to observe employees using academic skills in today's workplaces. This allows educators to speak credibly and with rich examples about the relevance of students' academic study to their future careers. These experiences empower educators to answer students' eternal question: "Why do I need to know this?"

## Recommendation #7

### ***Use student achievement data to regularly evaluate progress***

Anytime a school institutes broad changes in the way it educates children, people begin to pay close attention. Parents get concerned that their children might suffer, school boards and other politicians worry about being held accountable, and those who prefer the status quo will always be looking for reasons to call the reforms a failure and get back to the way things were. If schools are committed to making long-term changes, they need to be able to demonstrate that their new programs are working. They also need reliable information to help them make improvements and adjustments along the way.

Implementing reform is a complicated matter. Goals need to be clearly specified and efforts made to monitor progress toward meeting them. Evaluation serves several functions: It can be used to determine if:

- ☐ the program as designed is actually being implemented,
- ☐ the program, or one of its features, needs adjustment,
- ☐ the program is meeting the goals for which it is intended, and
- ☐ there are no adverse consequences associated with the program.

As we have stressed throughout this publication, the primary focus of every good high school program--and therefore of good school-to-career programs--should be to help all students meet challenging academic standards. It follows, then, that schools need a reliable method of collecting and analyzing student achievement data. There are a variety of data that can be collected that will have an impact on students' academic progress and will help schools with internal planning--course enrollment data, attendance rates, teachers' grades--but the most important and credible data will come from external assessments. If students are not already required to take state or local tests tied to clear academic standards, schools, themselves, should require it.

At a minimum, school-to-career programs should be examining the following questions to determine whether their programs are effective and how they might be improved:

- ☐ Do graduates demonstrate academic proficiency as measured by state tests of academic performance in the core disciplines, English, mathematics, science and social studies?

- ❑ Do employers find that the graduates of school-to-career programs have the requisite basic skills for entry-level positions?
- ❑ Do technical training programs find that graduates of school-to-career programs are prepared to benefit from the advanced training they have to offer?
- ❑ How many students go to four-year colleges? How many complete college and receive their degree? How many go to technical schools and community colleges, and where do they go from there? How many get jobs right out of high school in their career field? What salaries are they earning? How many need to take remedial courses in college or on the job?

There are, of course, a host of questions that an on-going evaluation of such programs could, and should, address, including issues related to faculty professional development, curriculum relevance, student satisfaction and the like. What is most important is the orientation of program administrators toward continually monitoring progress in implementing the program, making required adjustments, and examining student outcomes--both academic and job related--to assure that the program is meeting the goals for which it was designed.

In order to determine whether a program should be expanded to additional sites, an evaluation should address the following question:

- ❑ Is this reform program more effective than the existing programs for students not previously enrolled in college-prep programs in assuring that students reach high academic standards and have the skills and knowledge necessary to enter postsecondary training, college or the quality job market?

To answer that question, the evaluation must be properly designed to assure that the reform program students and the "traditional" program students are comparable in regard to characteristics known to be related to achievement, i.e., gender, poverty level and ethnicity, and that their achievement levels prior to receiving the programs--traditional or reform--were the same.

## Conclusion

Just as it takes money to make money, it takes knowledge to make knowledge. 'For whoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath' (Matthew 13:12). The paradox holds more inexorably for the intellectual than for money capital. Those who are well educated can make money without inherited wealth, but those who lack intellectual capital are left poor, indeed.

--E. D. Hirsch Jr., 1996

America is known around the world as the land of liberty and opportunity. Immigrants arrive in this country every day hoping for a chance to participate in a free society and pursue the American dream. Not everyone begins on a level playing field in this country, but our system of public education should ensure that with hard work and a commitment to learning, everyone has an equal chance to lead a productive, successful life.

It is safe to say that right now our education system is not living up to this ideal. Research shows that those students who go on to get a college degree after high school are more likely to find good jobs and earn a decent living. But the majority of high school graduates do not end up receiving a four-year degree, and although some schools are doing a good job providing these students with the academic and work preparation they will need to be successful after high school, many schools are not. This underserved majority of students can benefit greatly from well-designed school-to-career initiatives.

The recommended features of school-to-career that are discussed in this report grow from two related premises: that for the good of our nation's economy and because it's right for our youth, these students should get a far more rigorous, broad academic education than they are now getting; such an education is the best preparation any student can get for further education, for life *and* for work.

And, the twin premise: For many high school students, especially those not successfully enrolled in a rigorous college prep program, the best path to this goal will include a continuing effort to connect their school learning to the jobs they're hoping to hold and the lives they're hoping to lead--something that will be aided by a generous helping of applied learning and exposure to the work world.

We believe that this perspective is the best starting point for designing school-to-career initiatives. As states, communities and schools look to establish school-to-career programs, they need to be sure that the work preparation goal does not supersede the academic goal. Reforms whose sole intention is to prepare students for jobs are missing the mark. High school graduates without a firm grounding in the core academic subjects will not be well-rounded, versatile employees. They will not possess the knowledge and skills they need to change careers or take advantage of new opportunities within their chosen fields. And they will have been denied the opportunity to fully exercise their intellects and know the satisfaction of learning for its own sake. On the flip side, youngsters who have met high academic standards by the end of high school--who have analyzed historical events, who have conceived and executed scientific experiments, who have discussed the meaning of great art, literature, and music, who have mastered algebra and geometry--will enter the job market with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

With the right combination of support and incentives, we believe all students are capable of taking tougher courses and learning more demanding academic material. But for this to happen, schools, teachers and parents will have to stand firm. If students are falling behind, the response cannot be to lower the standard or to say that the student is not cut out for academics. Teachers may need to consider new teaching approaches to reach these students, and schools may need to require students to stay after hours for tutoring. And parents will need to support this stance. Struggling students need to be given extra help, not excuses.

In the end, the success of school-to-career reforms may hinge on the support of the business community. If schools raise their standards, but employers do not pay attention to those standards, students will see no reason to work hard. On the other hand, if employers ask to see high school transcripts and give preference in hiring to students who meet the standards, that will send a powerful message. It is time to create a system where working hard in school really does pay off. It is time for students who want to work hard to get the help they need. This is the vision of school to career that we will be working to bring to America's schools.

## **Bibliography**

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This publication was prepared pursuant to a subcontract with the Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI) of the AFL-CIO with a grant (# 1540) from the National School-To-Work Office. Points of view and opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official position or policy of either organization.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) represents the professional, economic and social concerns of more than 900,000 members, primarily elementary and secondary school teachers, paraprofessionals and other school employees and higher education faculty. The AFT is committed to helping its members bring excellence to America's classrooms and full professional status to their work.

"Reaching the Next Step" is a publication of the AFT Educational Issues Department. The department provides members and affiliates with research, publications, technical assistance and training programs related to their professional concerns.

For further information regarding the ideas put forth in this document, you may contact Dawn Krusemark of the AFT Educational Issues Department. Copies of this publication are available by sending \$5 to the AFT Order Department, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20001. Make checks payable to American Federation of Teachers.

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**NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS**

# Meeting the Challenge of Educating Our Children: President Clinton and 21st Century Teachers

May 29, 1996

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*"Our challenge is to provide Americans with the educational opportunities we'll all need to for this new century. In our schools, every classroom in America must be connected to the information superhighway with computers and good software and well-trained teachers."*

-- President Clinton,  
State of the Union Address, January 23, 1996

**Teaching the old basics, learning the new basics.** In remarks today to more than 250 of the nation's Blue Ribbon schools, President Clinton will emphasize the value of teaching the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, while stressing the need for teachers to learn, share and teach the new technologies that are shaping the world around us. These awards honor schools and the communities that sustain them.

**Today, President ClintonL Announces A New Volunteer Initiative: "21st Century Teachers":** Today, the President will announce that the nation's education leaders are joining him in the creation of a new voluntary corps -- **21st Century Teachers** -- to help all teachers learn to how to use new technology to improve teaching and learning in every school, classroom, and home in America.

- ❑ **An Integral Part of President Clinton's Technology Literacy Challenge.** The President has challenged the private sector, states and localities, schools and communities and the Congress to transform teaching and learning in America's schools through new information-age technologies so that every child can become technologically literate.
- ❑ **A National Partnership to Train Teachers.** Today, following several months of planning and work with the White House, the nation's leading parent, teacher, and school board organizations are stepping forward together to meet a vital component of the President's challenge: Assuring that all teachers will be trained to use the new educational technologies. This national volunteer partnership has made a commitment to the President to reach the following goals:
  - ❑ 100,000 teachers, already familiar with the new technology, will be signed up on the Internet this summer (similar to California Net Day sign-ups) to lead a kick-off event as school begins this fall to introduce their colleagues to the potential of education technology
  - ❑ The 21st Century Teachers will train more than 500,000 other teachers beginning in October and continuing throughout the school year in using computers, educational software, and the Internet.
  - ❑ Parents, school boards, business groups, colleges and universities have volunteered to provide new resources and support to help technologically literate teachers help other teachers use new and more powerful learning tools to help all students learn the new basic skills essential for the 21st century.

**A Challenge to Business Leaders:** In recent meetings with the President, business leaders have been unanimous in recognizing the importance of training teachers to teach new technologies. **In acknowledging the commitment made by the education community today, President Clinton will call on the business community to join in this national partnership and provide essential support, expertise, information, and resources for 21st Century Teachers to succeed.**

**Supporting America's Technology Literacy Challenge:** President Clinton urges Congress to join in meeting our national challenge to make all students technologically literate by the 21st century. The President urges bipartisan support for the \$2 billion, 5-year Technology Literacy Challenge Fund --

funded in the President's balanced budget -- which will leverage funds to encourage states to develop strategies with the private sector and local communities to ensure that all American schools make effective use of technology. The fund would play a vital role in providing states and local communities with the focus, the incentives, and the resources needed to help teachers get the training they need.

# **President Clinton Challenges America to Ensure our Children's Educational Future**

**March 27, 1996**

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**Speech to the National Governors' Association Education Summit.** Today, President Clinton speaks to the National Governors' Association, in Palisades, New Jersey, about our challenge to improve education for America's children. The President will urge states, communities, businesses, parents, teachers and students to come together to meet this national challenge.

**A critical challenge that demands action.** We must face two basic realities: Some of our public schools are failing and we cannot walk away. If we work together, we can revitalize our schools. President Clinton is doing everything in his power to focus America's attention on this urgent challenge.

**Real progress.** President Clinton has helped America make real progress on meeting this challenge by giving communities more flexibility and demanding more accountability in return. He has:

- Enacted Goals 2000, emphasizing standards and accountability;
- Worked with businesses and communities to make the School-to-Work program a reality;
- Cut regulations at the Department of Education by half, and revised the rest to encourage flexibility and emphasize results.
- Helped take guns and drugs out of our schools with the Gun Free Schools Act, the Safe and Drug Free Schools initiative and by supporting random drug testing of student athletes.

**Five challenges.** In today's speech, the President will issue six new challenges to states, communities, businesses, parents, teachers and students to make our schools stronger.

## **1. Standards for students:**

**A. "No free pass."** Challenge every state to develop achievement tests at every level that students must pass to graduate or be promoted. If students aren't ready to move on, we must work with them after school and over the summer, and if necessary, hold them back.

**B. Every Child Reading by the End of Third Grade.** Set a concrete standard for the most basic of skills: reading. Every school district, teacher and parent, must be committed to ensuring that every child is reading by the end of the third grade, and every parent should read to their child 30 minutes a day.

## **2. Standards for teachers:**

**A. Change Certification Rules that Bar Many Talented Young People from being Teachers:** Support alternative certification procedures with high standards to bring talented people into teaching as long as high standards are met. Governor Clinton reformed certification procedures in Arkansas. We should do it everywhere.

**B. Reward Excellent Teachers and Find Ways to Dismiss Incompetent Teachers:** Challenge teachers to meet high standards for performance and states to reward them when they do. Make it easier and cheaper to remove incompetent or ineffective teachers, while providing more rewards for successful teachers and schools. We shouldn't bash teachers; we should try to find ways to keep the best teachers in the classroom.

## **3. Standards for our schools:**

**A. Focus on teaching, not administration.** Challenge states to cut regulation and overhead, and spend more on the classroom, not on administration.

**B. Public school choice, charter schools.** President Clinton believes that parents should be given the right to choose which public school their children will attend. The President's balanced budget calls for seed money to help start 3,000 charter schools over the next five years.

**C. Close or fix broken schools.** Challenge states to take direct action to shut down or fix schools that don't work.

#### **4. Make schools safe, disciplined and drug free.**

**A. Permit Uniforms and Drug Testing.** Support School uniforms and other innovative approaches to increase discipline and reduce violence. In Long Beach, school uniforms have helped reduce school crime 36%.

**B. Make It Easier for Teachers and Schools to Take Appropriate Disciplinary Action.** Children can't learn and teachers can't teach unless there is order in the classroom. More states should follow the lead of Indiana, New York and Maryland in giving teachers and schools the power to remove disruptive students.

**C. Enforce tough truancy laws.** Follow the model of Police Chief Reubin Greenberg in Charleston, South Carolina.

**D. Community Schools as Safe Havens.** Support Crime Trust funding that encourages community schools to stay open for longer hours -- at the time when students need a safe haven and when most juvenile crime is committed. We must provide young people a safe place to go to keep off the streets, particularly during the peak hours of juvenile crime -- between 3:00-6:00 p.m.

#### **5. Accept technology literacy challenge for all students.**

**A. Ensure that Technology Literacy Challenge is Met for Every Schools and Every Student:** States and local communities must ensure that students do not become divided by access to technology. States should accept the President's \$2 billion Technology Literacy Challenge to help ensure that all students are technologically literate and all schools can meet the four pillars of the technology literacy challenge: classrooms wired to the information superhighway; computers in every school and classroom; technology-trained teachers, and engaging learning software that challenges students.

**B. Ensure Teachers Can Teach Their Students to Become Technologically Literate:** Work with teacher unions, colleges and corporate America to ensure that every new teacher can use and teach technology.