

- Discuss w/ Bob, Mc
- like End of Year
Event the Best

America Reads
CHALLENGE

FAX TRANSMITTAL

DATE:

1/8/98

TO:

Mike Cohen

FROM:

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RE:

Attached Proposal

Happy New Year!

3 pages to follow



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 8, 1998

TO: Bob Shireman, Senior Policy Advisor, NEC
Mike Cohen, Special Assistant to the President for Education Policy
Bill Kincaid, Associate Director for Education Policy, DPC

FROM: Carol H. Rasco, Director, America Reads Challenge *CH*

RE: Potential 1998 White House America Reads Challenge Events

As year two gets underway for President Clinton's America Reads Challenge, the need to continue providing high profile opportunities to promote the initiative must be a primary focus. I have outlined below several possible events and messages that I believe will help move the initiative forward, and in particular help pave the way for a successful nationwide summer reading program.

January

Presidential Roundtable on Child Care and Literacy - As a prelude to, or just following, the State of the Union address, the President and/or First Lady or Vice President Gore could discuss child care and the importance of incorporating reading readiness skills at this critical point in child development. Invited guests could include the presidents or chairpersons of the top 25 national early childhood organizations as well as targeted organizations that could help to implement the inclusion of reading readiness skills in child care programs (e.g.: libraries, civic organizations, etc.). I convened a small meeting with representatives from a few of these groups in November and believe that their input would be invaluable to the President as he continues to formulate his education policies as well as inspiring the groups themselves to move ahead on this issue. The President could challenge these and other organizations to expand their foci to begin working with child care providers in addition to their work with parents and families. Some programs might include Pizza Hut's *Book It! Beginners*, American Association of Booksellers' *Read to Your Bunny*, Betty Bumpers (wife of Arkansas Senator Bumpers) and former First Lady Rosalyn Carter's immunization program, a RIF/VISA *Read Me A Story* program that could include Captain Kangaroo, who is RIF's official Reading Ambassador and whose program is directed at children ages 3-6 years of age. The President could issue an Executive Order to appropriate agencies with family programs to include early childhood literacy information and develop programs that offer tutoring and/or storytelling opportunities to parent and child customers during home visits, or while customers waiting for services at agency sites.

Late February or perhaps as a part of his Read Across America participation in early March:

Announce 1998 Nationwide America Reads Challenge Summer Reading Sites - The President could unveil the names of the cities who will host summer reading sites, and announce how federal agencies will join corporations in contributing to and supporting the sites. Concurrent events could be held in cities hosting sites to generate state and local press. The President could challenge national, state and local organizations and corporations to volunteer to support the summer programs. The President could be joined by award winning children's illustrator Tomie de Paola who will present President with official America Reads Challenge Summer Reading poster, and/or Stan Lee, creator of Spiderman and other comic book superheroes, who is celebrating his 75th birthday and whose foundation has offered to provide thousands of reprints of the Spiderman Reading Activity Comic Book developed for 1997 READ*WRITE*NOW! summer program, and who has offered to create an entire series of comic books for different ages focused on literacy.

March

Read Across America - The President could participate in the NEA's national night of reading by attending an event at a local school or library at which families will come together to read, and listen to storytellers. He could urge families to set aside at least one evening a week to designate as Family Reading Night, and encourage Americans to volunteer to become weekly readers at their local library or church/synagogue/temple. The President could invite Bill Cosby to attend the event with him. Mr. Cosby could read one of his new "Little Bill" books. The President could also announce the "Meet the President" on-line essay contest based on the children's book "Arthur Meets the President." Children participating in FWS tutoring programs would be invited to write an essay on "What Having a Reading Tutor Means to Me." Winner and top 10 finalists would be invited to May event. (See below)

One guy to
do poster
addition
just
precisely

NBA Reading Month - The National Basketball Association, in conjunction with RIF, recognizes March as Reading Month and holds "Reading Time Outs" in which they distribute books to schools, libraries and youth-serving organizations in team markets. They also co-sponsor with Scholastic, Inc., the *READ BIG* reading and writing challenge targeted at second and third grade classrooms nationwide. The President could invite key players and NBA executives to the White House to launch Reading Month, and announce that the NBA will encourage middle school students to add tutoring to the list of community service projects they can become involved in through the NBA's TeamUp Program. The NBA also creates PSAs that emphasize the fun and fundamentals of reading, and that are shown at games. The President could team up with one or more players to encourage Americans to volunteer their time to teach a child to read.

April

Annual White House Egg Roll Literacy Event - We will be submitting to the Social Secretary a memo under separate cover and will cc you.

May

End of School Year Celebration of FWS and Agency Tutoring Programs - The President could invite tutors and their students from the greater DC area who have participated in tutoring programs sponsored by Federal agencies and FWS America Reads Challenge programs to a celebration on the South Lawn of the White House. Cabinet officials could host "lawn parties" where they could read to small groups of children. Winner of Meet the President contest would read winning essay on tutoring. Book character "Arthur the Aardvark" could assist President in presenting medallions to winner and runners up. The event could be downlinked or webcast to celebrations held at 830+ FWS America Reads Challenge colleges and universities nationwide. The President could announce that the number of colleges signed on to the FWS America Reads Challenge has reached 1,000 for the Fall 1998 academic school year. 

CC: Leslie Thornton, Chief of Staff
David Frank, Communications Director

AMERICA READS: HELPING ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD CAN READ WELL AND INDEPENDENTLY

October 31, 1997

"Every child in America -- every single child in America needs to be able to read well, and needs to be able to read independently by at least the end of the 3rd grade, so that all this other learning can occur."

President Clinton, September 8, 1997

Today, the President returned to the Lighthouse Elementary School in Jupiter, Florida to meet with students, parents, teachers, and community education supporters to discuss the importance of a solid foundation in reading and to highlight his America Reads initiative. He called on all Americans -- schools, libraries, religious institutions, universities, students, the media, community and national groups, business leaders and senior citizens -- to help ensure that every child can read well and independently by the end of 3rd grade. Lighthouse Elementary's reading and parental involvement programs show how schools and communities can help all children learn.

PRESIDENT CLINTON UNDERSCORES HIS COMMITMENT TO THE AMERICA READS CHALLENGE. American students today generally read as well as ever, but 40% of our fourth graders scored below the basic level on the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress. Studies indicate, however, that well-designed tutoring programs result in student gains in reading. The America Reads Challenge sets forth the first comprehensive, nationwide effort to support after-school, summer, and weekend tutoring in reading, linking parents, teachers, AmeriCorps members, trained reading professionals, and volunteer tutors to school, library, and community literacy efforts.

The America Reads Challenge includes several essential strategies to help our children learn to read: creating more learning opportunities to supplement classroom reading instruction; encouraging parental involvement; and bringing best teaching practices into classrooms.

The President's five-year, \$2.75 billion America Reads Challenge Act, which was forwarded to Congress in April, would fund 25,000 reading specialists and coordinators to mobilize 1 million tutors for 3 million children in grades K-3 who need extra help. Recognizing that parents are their children's first and most important teachers, the Act would also foster effective programs to provide assistance for interested parents to provide the firm foundation their children need to do well in school and become successful readers. In addition to this legislation, President Clinton has asked college presidents to allocate work-study slots to college students to become America Reads tutors, and almost 800 colleges have already pledged students to tutor in elementary schools. Finally, America Reads incorporates early childhood development through the expansion of Head Start and Even Start, brings the best teaching practices to classrooms, supports research and evaluation on reading, and fosters partnerships with the private sector.

PRESIDENT CLINTON APPLAUDS LIGHTHOUSE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S EFFORTS TO MOTIVATE YOUNG READERS. The Lighthouse Elementary School participates in Florida's Sunshine State Young Readers program, a statewide reading motivation program that encourages students to read high quality literature and participate in a statewide vote for their favorite book. In 1996, over 1,000 public schools participated and over 75,000 students read and completed book reports on the 15 books on the Sunshine State reading list.

PRESIDENT CLINTON HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT. The President commended Lighthouse Elementary parent volunteers who contribute 1,000 volunteer hours per month to assist teachers in the classroom, help prepare documents, and provide assistance in the library. Research continues to show that parental involvement is a crucial factor in children's learning -- students score better in reading, achieve higher grades, and have fewer discipline problems.

America Reads event

Attendees:

15 college presidents; we already have 8 (possibly 10):

- Robert Corrigan, San Francisco State University
- Leo O'Donovan, Georgetown University
- Graham Spanier, Pennsylvania State University
- Ted Sanders, Southern Illinois University
- William Kirwan, University of Maryland
- Charles Bunting, Vermont State Colleges
- Richard Levin, Yale University
- Eduardo Padron, Miami-Dade Community College
- (--Judith Ramaley, University of Vermont)
- (--Byron McClenney, Community College of Denver)

15 officials of higher education associations

12 tutors from the six D.C. reads colleges (more if needed)

12 second graders from Garrison Elementary (the D.C. Reads pilot)

20 parents and school staff

20 Education and National Service staff (including two or three AmeriCorps shirts)