

Author: William Kincaid at WDCT01
Date: 3/7/96 1:20 PM
Priority: Normal
TO: Kay Kahler at WDCB01
TO: Tom Lyon at WDCB01
TO: David Thomas at WDCB01
TO: Melinda Kitchell at WDCB01
CC: Terry Peterson at WDCB01
CC: Mike Smith
CC: Margaret Battle at WDCB01
CC: Maria Ferguson at WDCJ01
TO: Kerri Morgan at WDCB01
TO: Vicky Stroud
Subject: Re[2]: White House Request

Val -
who should I
get to work on
this - ?
Bill

----- Message Contents -----

Kerri--

I will try to get something together as soon as possible. One problem is that the folks who would ordinarily work on this (Val Plisko, et al) are involved with the Title I Independent Review Panel all day. But we will get something pulled together.

-- Bill

Everyone: I am replying on Kay's behalf. She said this really should come from Mike Smith's shop, so I am forwarding to Mike and Bill Kincaid. Kay said if OUS can get this info together, we'll do the wordsmithing and get it to the White House. They have requested the info ASAP. Thanks.

David Thomas has kindly and quickly provided us with the NAEP reading data for CA; it is next to my computer if anyone needs it.

Reply Separator

Subject: White House Request
Author: Kerri Morgan at WDCB01
Date: 3/7/96 11:51 AM

JEANNE GRIFFITH
→ RON HALL
NLS
- SHARIF SHAKRANI

I'm NOT SURE EITHER

NAEP?

Kay, et al:

Lorrie McHugh in White House Media Affairs called and asked us to prepare talking points on low test scores in California. She isn't sure which test scores. However, the President is going out there tomorrow and needs information.

Lorrie needs the info ASAP. If someone will get it to Margaret, she can fax it over for Kay.

Thanks, Kerri

Background On California Test Scores

The latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) shows that California's students do not do as well as students nationally on assessments in reading and mathematics.

- On the 1994 reading assessment, California's 4th grade students scored only higher than students in Louisiana and Guam.
- Scores of California 4th graders showed a significant decline in 1994 from scores for 1992.
- Scores of 4th and 8th graders in California were also in the bottom third of states on the 1992 mathematics assessment.

California's declining test scores must be viewed in the context of the state's declining investment in both K-12 and postsecondary education.

- Tax measures (most notably, Proposition 13) have sharply reduced funding available for education.
- Per-pupil expenditures have fallen dramatically. In 1976-77, California was near the U.S. average in K-12 per-pupil expenditures. By 1994-95, California had fallen to 42nd in per-pupil expenditures -- \$1,170 less than the U.S. average of \$5,894.
- Class sizes have grown. By 1994-95, the state ranked last out of all the 50 states and D.C. in class size -- 24.1 students per teacher. Unlike the national trend of shrinking pupil-teacher ratios, California's ratio is now back up to its 1969 level, after declining in the 1970s.
- Resources for learning have been reduced. In 1994-95, California ranked 50th in the nation in the ratio of books and librarians to students. As of the fall of 1993, Kansas had more school librarians than California; Texas had more than four times the number.

Meanwhile, demands on the California education system have been increasing.

- The proportion of children in poverty has been increasing, contrary to the national trend. From 1985 to 1992, the proportion increased from 21.1% to 22.7%.
- The number and the percentage of children with limited English proficiency have risen dramatically. The number of LEP children doubled from 1985 to 1994 to 1.2 million, according to state reports. The decennial census shows that the percentage of school-age children who do not speak English well or do not speak it at all increased from 4% to 6% from 1980 to 1990.

[Caution: in talking about the demands on the California system, recall that we are opposed to legislation (such as Prop. 187 or measures pending in Congress) that would restrict access to elementary and secondary education based on immigration status.]

Despite the scarcity of funds devoted to education in California, Governor Wilson has continued to refuse to release \$42 million dollars in Goals 2000 funds that can be used to raise standards and improve teacher training, establish charter schools, and increase access to technology.

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Background on Pending Workforce Legislation: Youth Impact

The “CAREERS” bill, introduced by Congressman Goodling and passed by the House, proposes to reform workforce preparation for adults and youth. The bill incorporates some elements of the Administration’s proposal to reform job training and to give all youth the chance to prepare for good careers and further learning. The bill differs from the Administration’s proposal in one key aspect: it would terminate the School-to-Work Opportunities Act.

- **There is nothing in either proposal, that would force young people early on into choosing careers.** On the contrary, both proposals would expand young people’s options, by making sure that they have the chance to get the good, solid *academic* preparation and the broad *occupational* skills that will let them move on to promising careers and further learning. This preparation will give youth far broader horizons than is now the case, when many young people leave high school with neither the academic skills nor the occupational skills to be successful in today’s economy. Many of these youth today face dead-end jobs at low wages. That is just not acceptable.
- Our proposal for youth is built on the approach of The School to Work Opportunities Act, which passed with broad bipartisan support and I signed in 1994. School to Work is providing support to states to design their own school-to-work systems. The law gives states and communities extraordinary flexibility to develop the programs for youth that best meet their needs and the needs of the local economy. 27 states now have School-to-Work grants.
- The school-to-work approach encourages schools to integrate academic and vocational learning, and also encourages youth to move from high school into further learning, for example, through the “Tech-Prep” approach that links secondary schools with at least two years of college or postsecondary training. Another school-to-work approach that is working is the “Career Academy” approach, in which students choose broad occupational categories of their own interest to explore while they are in high school. They get to talk over their studies and their internships with mentors from local businesses who work in the fields that interest them. Not only do students tell us that these programs hold their interest, we now have evidence that they are keeping at-risk kids in school longer, and that far greater numbers of these young people are going on to college than would have been expected without these school-to-work opportunities.
- Despite the fact that both the Administration’s proposal and the CAREERS proposal aim to prepare young people for more promising careers, CAREERS (the House bill) would repeal the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, and put a premature end to States’ plans to develop their school-to-work system.
- Both Congressman Goodling’s bill and our proposal for workforce development--for adults and youth--give extraordinary flexibility to states to spend federal dollars within a very broad framework.
- There is nothing in the Administration’s proposal that would constitute an unfunded mandate.

UPDATE

Workforce Development Legislation

March 7, 1996

Status

- H.R. 1617, the CAREERS Act, passed the House on September 19, 1995 by a vote of 345-79.
- S. 143, the Workforce Development Act, passed the Senate (as H.R. 1617) on October 11, 1995 by a vote of 96-2.
- House and Senate conferee staff had been meeting for the past several weeks. However, meetings were postponed last week. No new meetings (either at the staff or Members level) have been scheduled.

Brief Summaries

H.R. 1617

The House bill would consolidate scores of existing federal education and training programs into three block grants to states for adults, youth, and adult education and literacy. The bill would go into effect in fiscal year 1997 with an authorization of nearly \$5 billion that year. Among the programs consolidated would be the Carl Perkins Act, the Adult Education Act and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. The House bill would also require states to establish a State skill grant system for adult training.

S. 143

The Senate bill would consolidate scores of education and training programs into a single block grant authorized at about \$8 billion, beginning in fiscal year 1998. 25% of the grant would go toward education, 25% would go toward employment and training, and 50% would go into a "flex account" to Governors to use for either education, training or economic development activities. As in the House bill, the Perkins, Adult Education and School-to-Work Acts would be repealed. The Senate bill would amend the Vocational Rehabilitation Act to create better linkages between the vocational rehabilitation and job training systems. The bill would also eliminate the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education and the Employment and Training Administration at the Department of Labor and create a new "federal partnership" that would be responsible for administering the block grant. The Senate bill also allows, and provides some incentives for, establishing State skill grant systems for adult training.