

PRESIDENT CLINTON TRAVELS TO NORTH CAROLINA AND FLORIDA

March 13 - 15, 1997

Press Background Information

President Clinton will announce new action on two aspects of his education agenda in events today and tomorrow in North Carolina and Florida. Today in Raleigh, the President will deliver an address to a joint session of the North Carolina General Assembly in which he will talk about his education agenda and specifically his call for standardized testing to measure students' abilities in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math. In Jupiter, Florida on Saturday the President will have more to say about addressing the problem of overcrowding in our nation's schools.

ADDRESS TO THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY House of Representatives Chamber

President Clinton will address a special joint session of the North Carolina General Assembly today to outline his plans for education reform and announce that both the state of North Carolina and the Department of Defense have agreed to accept his challenge to measure the performance of their students against widely accepted national standards in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, using voluntary national tests based on those standards. In his remarks, the President will also call on other states to follow North Carolina's lead in rewarding master teachers.

This will be the first address by a sitting President to a joint session of the North Carolina General Assembly. The President will be introduced into the chamber by Clyde Cook, Sergeant-of-Arms, and then introduced for his remarks by North Carolina Lt. Governor Dennis Wicker.

The Department of Defense schools include both the Department of Defense Dependent Schools and Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools. Altogether, the schools serve approximately 115,000 students in 233 schools in 14 countries, 6 states, and Puerto Rico. In North Carolina, there are 16 DoD schools serving close to 8,000 students in 16 schools at Camp LeJeune and Fort Bragg. Additional information on this announcement and on the President's broad education agenda is attached.

Following his remarks, the President will meet privately with the members of the legislature.

DSCC DINNER and SAXOPHONE CLUB EVENT Sheraton Bal Harbor

At the Sheraton Bal Harbor, the President will address a reception to benefit the DSCC, and later a Saxophone Club event. He will be introduced at each event by Florida Lt. Governor Buddy McKay.

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1997

**TOUR AND ADDRESS ON SCHOOL OVERCROWDING
Lighthouse Elementary School**

Friday morning in Jupiter, Florida President Clinton will tour the Lighthouse Elementary School, which suffers from serious overcrowding, and announce new action by his Administration to make funds available to states and local communities to address the problem. The President will be accompanied on the tour by Dr. Joan Kowal, Superintendent of the Palm Beach County Schools. The classroom the President will tour is pre-fabricated and houses 29 third grade students and their teacher, Stacy Laruiffa.

Following his tour, the President will address the student body of Lighthouse Elementary in the school playground. The speaking program will open with remarks by Superintendent Kowal, who will introduce a student, who will introduce the President for his remarks.

Additional information about the President's announcement will be made available in Florida.

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RAISING STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA RESPOND TO THE PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE

March 13, 1997

Department of Defense Schools Respond to the Challenge. Today, the President will announce that the overseas and stateside school systems operated by the Department of Defense have accepted his challenge to states and localities to measure the performance of their students against widely accepted national standards in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, using voluntary national tests based on those standards. By doing so, DOD will ensure that the students, parents and teachers associated with the Department of Defense will have honest, accurate information about whether students are mastering the basic skills.

Accepting the challenge means not only taking the new tests, but preparing students to succeed. Therefore, the President will also announce today that he is directing the Department of Defense Education Activity schools to use all available resources to prepare every one of its students to meet the national standards, in 1999 and each year thereafter. This will require steps such as providing parents with the information and assistance they need to be their child's first teacher, upgrading curriculum, implementing proven instructional practices and programs, taking best advantage of new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, supporting and rewarding good teaching, and providing students who need it with extra help and tutoring. The schools will report annually on the progress being made, and on the effectiveness of their strategies and approaches.

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North Carolina Responds to the Challenge. Today, Governor Hunt will announce that North Carolina also accepts the President's challenge and will participate in the new national tests. This makes North Carolina the third state, after Maryland and Michigan, to make this commitment. The President will note that North Carolina is already making good progress in its school reform efforts, with the state's math scores on the National Assessment of Education Progress the most improved of any state in the U.S.

IMPROVING TEACHING AND FOCUSING RESOURCES ON THE CLASSROOM

PRESIDENT CLINTON CHALLENGES STATES TO REWARD MASTER TEACHERS

Rewarding Outstanding Teaching. In his Call to Action for American Education, President Clinton challenged the nation to reward outstanding teaching, and called for 100,000 teachers to seek and achieve certification as master teachers by the independent National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, after completing a rigorous evaluation process. This would enable every school in the country to have one master teacher. Today, President Clinton will challenge every state to provide significant and meaningful rewards for master teachers, such as the 12% salary increase proposed by Gov. Hunt in North Carolina.

The President Clinton will also call on Congress to do its share, by supporting his proposal to devote \$105 million over five years to support the work of the NBPTS, assisting the board to complete assessments in 25 academic areas covering the fields of 90% of the nation's teachers. The funding would also help to defray the costs of teachers taking part in the rigorous certification process. The President's proposal is designed to help reach the target -- set by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, chaired by Governor Hunt -- of certifying over 100,000 teachers within the next ten years. The President will note that North Carolina boasts the most board-certified teachers of any state.

Removing Incompetent Teachers from the Classroom. Noting that our students can only reach high standards if their teachers do, the President will strongly renew his call to counsel burned-out teachers to improve, and quickly and fairly remove those who don't measure up. The President will challenge teachers and local school boards around the country to come together and agree on ways to insure that every classroom is lead by a competent teacher -- no excuses, no exceptions. As an example, he will point to a program in Cincinnati, Ohio, which pairs struggling teachers with experienced mentor teachers to help them improve. After two years of mentoring, the Lead Teacher either rates the teacher as satisfactory or recommends contract termination.

Attracting and Preparing Good Teachers. Last month, Secretary Riley announced that he would host a national conference on attracting and preparing good teachers, drawing on the nation's 50 top teachers, along with 50 leading university presidents and deans of teacher's colleges around the country. Today, the President will announce that this conference, to be held next month, will serve as the focal point for a national conversation on how to improve teaching around the country, by linking via satellite to discussion sites in every state in the Union. The conference will focus on effective ways to inspire talented young people to enter the teaching profession, and will help shape future Administration proposals, to be included in the Higher Education Act reauthorization, for federal support to attract the best into teaching, and to strengthen teacher education.

Getting More Resources into the Classroom. Today, the President will announce that he has asked the Vice President to lead a national effort to challenge states and school districts to shift more education resources to the classroom, where they can improve teaching and learning, and away from administrative overhead. The Vice President will elaborate on these themes in a speech to the California legislature later today.

White House Conference on Early Development and Learning. Today, President Clinton will announce the date and themes of the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children. The day-long Conference will take place on April 17, 1997 at the White House. The Conference will highlight how critically important children's experiences before school are to their development and their later success in school and in life, and focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on the brain, particularly for parents and care-givers.

Accepting the Challenge to Provide More Choice in Public Education. The President will note that the North Carolina State Board of Education has the opportunity today to approve the most charter schools ever created at one time, answering the President's challenge to foster greater innovation and choice for families in public education. The President praised North Carolina for using a careful review process focused on accountability for results, helping insure that the new schools will help students meet high standards. The President has proposed doubling funding for charter schools to over \$100 million, supporting planning and start-up costs for up to 1,100 new schools nationwide.

Continuing to Build Support for the Nationwide Effort to Improve Reading. Finally, the President will announce today that 15 colleges and universities in North Carolina have committed more than 1300 work study students to serve as reading tutors over the next 5 years as a part of the America Reads Initiative.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: PARTICIPATION OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS AND DOMESTIC DEPENDENT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NATIONAL TESTING

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools overseas and the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools here at home play an important role in enhancing the quality of life and overall readiness of the Armed Forces of the United States. They provide military families deployed overseas and within the United States with outstanding educational opportunities, and they play a vital role in preparing the children of military and civilian personnel in the Armed Forces for the future.

Students in these schools deserve the best we can offer, starting with the highest expectations and most challenging academic standards available. Drawn from all racial and ethnic backgrounds, located in 15 countries throughout the world and in 7 states and Puerto Rico here at home, and highly mobile, no group of students better underscores the need for common national standards and a uniform way of measuring progress.

That is why I am pleased the Department of Defense Dependent Schools and Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools have accepted the challenge of benchmarking the performance of their students against widely accepted national standards in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math, using voluntary national tests aligned with these standards. This step will ensure that students, parents and teachers in the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools will have honest, accurate information about whether students are mastering the basic skills. Along with states of Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina, the DoDEA schools are among the first in the nation to commit to participate in this testing program, beginning in 1999.

Accepting this challenge means much more than administering new tests. It means beginning immediately to prepare students to meet these standards. This will require steps such as providing parents with the information and assistance they need to be their child's first teacher, upgrading the curriculum, implementing proven instructional practices and programs, taking best advantage of new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, supporting and rewarding good teaching, and providing students who need it with extra help and tutoring.

The DoDEA schools have already begun this task, but much more needs to be done. And the lessons the DoDEA schools learn from these efforts can be valuable for other schools throughout our Nation.

Therefore, I am directing the Department of Defense Education Activity schools to use all available resources to prepare every one of its students to meet these standards, in 1999 and each year thereafter, and to report annually on the progress being made toward this objective, and on the effectiveness of the strategies and approaches the DoDEA schools use to achieve it.