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PART III: THE OPPORTUNITY WE DESERVE

[Introduction to Part III]

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1. A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL:

A NEW CIVIL RIGHT FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

[A]s we near the end of the 20th century—we, as a nation, cannot afford to allow intolerance or inequity to interfere with the ability of any citizen to acquire the most critical commodity—a quality education. On this special day, I shall speak to you about civil rights. A quality education, you see, must be considered a key "civil right" for the 21st century.

-- Richard Riley W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education,
Speaking on the 45th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*
May 17th, 1999.¹

A. INTRODUCTION

Excellence and equity in education are among the nation's most important challenges. I agree with my friend Dick Riley: We must make a quality education for every child in America a new civil right for the new millennium.

I was eleven years old in September 1957 and living in Hot Springs, Arkansas. I remember listening to the radio one morning as, fifty miles away in Little Rock, nine black students tried to walk through the doors of all-white Central High School. I was riveted as the story unfolded. Those nine boys and girls were not much older than I was, and I tried to imagine what it would be like to be them, as mobs of white protesters glared, shouted, and spat at them on their first day of school.²

It had been three years since the Supreme Court's historic decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared racial segregation in America's schools to be unconstitutional, and the conflict at Central High would become the nation's first major confrontation over court-ordered school desegregation. The courageous efforts of the Little Rock Nine served as a catalyst for the integration of thousands of segregated schools around the nation and, over a period of years, produced great strides in opportunity and understanding.

On November 6, 1998, some forty years after the Little Rock Nine first set foot in Central High, they came to the White House to receive the Congressional Gold Medal for their courage and their contributions to our nation. As President, I had the privilege of hosting them. At the ceremony, my friend Ernest Green, one of the original nine, spoke on behalf of the honorees. He said something of great significance. Yes, the Little Rock

Nine understood in 1957 the importance of their effort to end racial segregation in their schools. But more than anything else, the Little Rock Nine were simply seeking the highest quality education they could find. "We simply thought we were doing the right thing," Ernie said, "and that it was our duty as students in Little Rock to try to advance and receive the best education available."³

Today, we have learned many lessons from our years of struggle. One of the most important, for me, is the idea that our schools and our nation are stronger when persons of all races learn together. I have seen it with own my eyes.

If America is the land of opportunity, then, education has been the cornerstone of that ideal for generations. During the first great era of immigration, between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, American reformers recognized the economic and political importance of building a public school system that would serve all of the nation's children.⁴ The foundation of our modern democracy and free enterprise economy has been our belief in the great capacity of all citizens to lift up America while lifting up themselves. Education, as school pioneer Horace Mann said, can be America's "great equalizer."⁵

Of course, we have failed to live up to that egalitarian ideal, at times because of malice, and other times because of indifference or inadvertence. Today, it is disproportionately children of color for whom the ideal at times seems hollow. In the America we see, schools mirror the racial isolation of our neighborhoods, and there are troubling signs of deepening segregation.⁶

Throughout my presidency, education has been among my highest priorities, and we have made important progress. We have embraced the idea of high standards for all students, and we have taken several steps that will benefit poor and minority children the most, helping to narrow the opportunity gap. Our effort, for example, to help local schools hire 100,000 new teachers and reduce class size in early grades will help reduce racial disparities in class size and, according to researchers, boost student achievement⁷. But, much work remains.

Amidst encouraging signs of progress, stubborn racial disparities in both student achievement and educational resources persist. Tackling these problems is vitally important for several reasons. First, education is key to our economic growth, and will be even more so in the knowledge economy of the 21st century. America's prosperity will increasingly depend on the ability of institutions and people to innovate and continuously learn. And as our nation grows more diverse, our strength will depend more and more on

whether we provide high-quality educational opportunities to those children of color who today receive the least.

Clinton-Gore Accomplishments: Investing in Education; Investing in Our Future

More High-Quality Teachers with Smaller Class Sizes -- won a down payment on the President's new initiative to hire an additional 100,000 well-prepared teachers, helping school districts reduce class size in the early grades.

Teaching Every Child to Read by the 3rd Grade -- more than 1000 colleges have committed Work Study students to tutor children in reading, and thousands of AmeriCorps members and senior volunteers are organizing volunteer reading campaigns. Won \$260 million for a new child literacy initiative, consistent with the President's America Reads proposal.

Providing Safe After-School Opportunities for Nearly 400,000 Each Year -- expanded the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to provide safe and educational after-school opportunities for nearly 400,000 school-age children in rural and urban communities each year.

Preparing for the 21st Century by Expanding Access to Education Technology -- created the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund to help connect every school to the Internet by 2000, increase the number of multimedia computers in the classroom and provide technology training for teachers. Increased overall investments in educational technology by thirty-fold, from \$23 million in 1993 to \$698 million this year. Secured low-cost connections to the Internet for schools, libraries, rural health clinics and hospitals.

Establishing the GEAR-UP Mentoring Program for Middle School Children -- created a new mentoring initiative to help up to 100,000 low income middle school children prepare for college.

Expanding Choice and Accountability in Public Schools -- supported increase of public charter schools, from one independent public charter school in the nation in 1993 to more than 1,000 charter schools in 1998, on track toward 3,000 quality charter schools early next century.

Supporting Local Education Reform Efforts -- signed into law the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999 (Ed-Flex) to give all states the ability to use federal resources in ways that best complement local efforts and innovation.

Protecting Bilingual and Immigrant Education -- fought for and won a 35% increase for bilingual and immigrant education in the 1997 budget deal. For FY99, the Administration fought for and won a doubling of the investments in bilingual teacher training as part of the Hispanic Education Action Plan.

Providing Early Education to 835,000 Children with Head Start -- now reaching more kids than at any time since its creation in 1965 and more than 200,000 additional children than in 1992.

Expanding College Opportunities

Making 13th & 14th Grades as Universal As High School -- making the first two years of college universally available with \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship credits.

Expanding College Opportunity with Tuition Tax Credits, Education IRAs, Work Study and Increased Pell Grants -- 20% tax credit helps offset tuition costs for college or lifetime learning. The expanded IRA allows penalty and tax-free withdrawals for education. This year, nearly one million students will be able to work their way through college because of the President's expansion of the Work Study Program. And in 1999, nearly four million students will receive a Pell Grant of up to \$3,125, the largest maximum award ever.

Increased Funding and Grants for HBCUs, HSI and Tribal Colleges. Significantly increased funding for Historically Black Colleges, Hispanic-Serving Colleges as well as Indian Tribal Colleges.

Making College More Affordable -- cut student fees and interest rates on all loans, expanded repayment options including income contingent repayment, and improved service through the Direct Loan Program.

The Agenda Ahead

Second, education is also a powerful arena for strengthening our American community. When young people learn together and serve together across racial and ethnic lines they begin to break down stereotypes and the walls that have kept us apart. I have seen this work across our nation. Our diversity is a great strength in education, but one we exploit too little. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who led the fight for school integration a generation ago, put it best when he said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope our people will ever learn to live together."⁸

- Modernize and Renovate 6,000 of Our Public Schools.
- Finish Hiring 100,000 New Teachers for Smaller Classes.
- Increase After School Care to Enable More than One Million Children Each Year to Participate.
- Make Our Schools and Communities Safer with the Gun Enforcement Accountability Act.
- Increase Support for Teacher Training; Establish New Recruiting Incentives.
- Build on Proven Reform by Passing the Education Accountability Act.
- Reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to Hold States and School Districts Accountable for Results.
- Put More Computers and Education Technology in the Classroom.
- Provide Greater Relief for Working Families by Expanding Child Care for One Million Additional Children.

Finally, providing sound educational opportunities to our nation's youth is a moral imperative. Remember, if we fail our children, we fail ourselves. The decisions we make today could open the doors of unlimited possibilities for our children, or could shut them out of the promise of the 21st century. If we make sound choices today, not only will we make our nation stronger and our communities more dynamic -- we will also honor our obligations to future generations.

America's schools are becoming more racially and culturally diverse than ever. Since 1976, the percentage of minority students in public schools has increased from 24 percent to 35 percent⁹. The number of Hispanic students has more than doubled and the number of Asian Pacific American students has tripled¹⁰. Some schools are becoming diverse in ways we never dreamed. The schools of Fairfax County, Virginia, for example, have students from more than 180 countries who speak more than 100 different languages¹¹. In Fargo, North Dakota, one-third of the students at Madison Elementary School are enrolled in English as a Second Language classes. In a school with 265 students, more than a dozen different languages are spoken. By 2035, there will likely be no majority race in our public school population.¹²

The growing diversity of our school population is an enormous national asset. Imagine what our country will be like when we are able to fully harness the gifts and talents of all of our young people. And imagine what our children can achieve in classrooms where students of different

backgrounds, cultures, and faiths come together to forge friendships, learn lessons, and serve their communities.

But currently, we are not making the most of our growing student diversity. Over the last few decades, we have made important progress in educating students of all races. Though improvement has often been slow and uneven, test scores, high school graduation rates, and college participation rates have increased for all racial and ethnic groups. In some cases, these improvements have been greater for students of color than for whites, thus narrowing achievement gaps.¹³ Nonetheless, as the wide disparities in SAT and other measures illustrate, substantial challenges remain.¹⁴ The achievement gap between white, black, and Hispanic children poses a grave challenge. Moreover, the stereotype of all Asian Pacific American students as bound for academic access is inaccurate, as significant pockets of Asian Pacific students are at high risk for academic failure.¹⁵ Moreover, the racial disparities in achievement persist throughout the “pipeline” -- from preschool through higher education. Here are just a few examples:

- According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), average reading proficiency scores for 17-year-old Hispanic students are lower than, and average scores for black 17-year-olds are not significantly different from, the average score for 13-year-old white students.¹⁶

- Some 93 percent of whites and 87 percent of blacks ages 25 to 29 have a high school degree or an equivalency certificate, compared with only 62 percent of Hispanics and approximately 66 percent of Native Americans.¹⁷ With regard to Asian Pacific Americans, evidence compiled by the U.S. Commission on Civil rights suggests that the dropout rates of Southeast Asian youth are high and their post-high school aspirations low.¹⁸
- While the importance of a college degree is growing, so is the gap between whites and persons of color who have a degree: 33 percent of whites ages 25-29 have a four-year college degree or higher, compared with just 14 percent of blacks and 11 percent of Hispanics.¹⁹ This is a direct reflection of problems in K-12.

I believe the racial disparities in education stem in large part from continuing gaps in opportunity -- by that I mean the full range of resources, expectations and supports which, together with effort and responsibility, determine whether a child will achieve his or her full potential. A tragic irony is at work in American education: too often, the children who need a high-quality school experience the most are least likely to get it. And too often, those are children of color. Because our neighborhoods are separated by race and class, and because the vast majority of our schools still rely substantially on local property taxes for funding, a startling number of the school districts that serve mostly students of color are also desperately poor. Schools in a sea of poverty are too often

overwhelmed, or nearly so, by the extraordinary challenges they face. Consider: Students who live in low-income neighborhoods often bring the many burdens of their lives and their communities to school with them. Imagine teaching in, or attending, a school in which the majority of students are coping with hunger, homelessness, or family crises; crime in their hallways, their streets, their homes; or cramped living spaces where there is no quiet space to read or do homework.

These are the everyday, grinding pressures of poverty. Add to them the problems aging inner-city school buildings or ramshackle rural schools, disparities in teacher training, high proportions of students with special language needs and the almost nonstop barrage of dispiriting, dream-killing messages directed towards at-risk children – and you have a recipe for disaster.

But the inequalities of poverty and race should end at the classroom door. Sadly, too often, they do not. Students attending predominantly minority secondary schools, for example, have only a 60 percent chance of getting a math teacher certified to teach math and as little as a 50 percent chance of getting a science teacher certified in the subject being taught.²⁰ Seventy percent of predominantly minority schools have at least one serious building deficiency, such as poor heating, lighting, or ventilation²¹. Children for whom English is a second language often do not attend schools that have enough resources to help them learn English and to allow them to participate fully in other subjects. Although the gap between the number of black and Hispanic children using computers in school has recently narrowed, the difference in home computer usage is very large. In 1997, black and Hispanic children were almost 40% less likely to use computers at home than were white children,²² and studies

tell us that computers are used less effectively in predominantly minority schools²³. We are all but guaranteeing that these students will be handicapped in the 21st century economy they will inherit.

It is clear that we have not yet met our aspiration -- I consider it an obligation -- to provide all children with what Ernest Green and the Little Rock Nine bravely sought forty years ago: a high-quality education, and the chance for all students to learn together. To the parents of children who attend our best schools I pose this simple question: How would you feel if you had to send your child to a school with a leaky roof, outdated textbooks, no computers, and teachers teaching subjects in which they lack basic competence? Too many of our children face this reality every day. And more often than not, they are children of color.

These conditions are socially and economically destructive. They are also morally unacceptable. While we point fingers in every direction, individual opportunity and our national strength suffer. How much genius and creativity are we failing to harness because of continuing racial disparities in educational opportunity? What would our lives be like today if we had provided every American regardless of race or class with the educational opportunity to succeed to his or her full potential? Would we have a cure for cancer? Or AIDS? Would we have more efficient energy sources and technologies that greatly reduced pollution? Would we have a new global movement for world peace and human rights? How far would we have progressed in weaving our diversity into one great fabric of community, and in purging our hearts of stereotypes and fears?

B. MAKING A FOCUSED ATTACK
ON THE RACIAL GAP IN K-12 ACHIEVEMENT

The stark racial disparities in educational achievement mark the distance from the America we see to the America we deserve. In the America we deserve, every child will enjoy a high-quality education from preschool on. This education will be bolstered by high standards and will allow every student full and fair access to the best our schools can offer. I am proud of the steps taken by my Administration, including proposals to reshape dramatically the Federal government's major programs supporting public K-12 education. These ambitious efforts, most of which are inspired by effective state and local innovations and *all* of which rely on state and local partners, give us much of the foundation we need to create the opportunity we deserve in One America.

To build on that foundation, and specifically to ensure that we are relentlessly insistent on eliminating racial disparities in achievement, I believe that in the years ahead we should establish a new compact – uniting a set of partners in tackling the fundamentally important problem of racial disparities in primary and secondary educational opportunities and achievement. Let me begin, however, by describing the essential foundation, created by our accomplishments and our pending

proposals.

(1) The Solid Foundation We Have Built

For more than three decades, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA] has been the foundation of our nation's support for millions of poor students and their schools. Early in my Administration, we worked with Congress to enact Goals 2000 and a major reform of the bedrock Federal grant program intended to help states and districts educate poor children, the so-called Title I program within ESEA. Now funded at almost \$8 billion per year, the Title I program is distributed by a formula related to the number of poor children. That law now tells participating states that they must set high academic standards for all students, and that they must use tests or some other assessment measures to hold schools and school districts accountable for making progress in improving learning outcomes for poor children. That was an important beginning.

In my January, 1999 State of the Union address, however, I proposed that we accelerate that effort to put far greater emphasis on spurring concrete improvement in results while creating far stronger systems of accountability--not just to federal taxpayers, but to communities and families. I also proposed targeting federal resources to help turn around failing schools, to reward progress in raising achievement levels, and to put high-quality teachers in high-poverty schools. I also called for

the end of so-called “social promotion,” as well as the expansion of after-school and other academic support programs, and efforts to improve assistance to the growing number of students learning English. I proposed building in accountability at all levels to focus not only on improving education for every child in America, but also, especially, on narrowing the gaps between affluent suburbs and comparatively poor inner-cities and isolated rural areas. My proposals were part of a proposed rewrite of the ESEA I sent to Congress in May 1999.

A central tenet of all this work is the need to focus on actual student learning — to support strategies that produce results, and to stop subsidizing strategies that produce failure. We have seen states and school districts use this method to help all of their students achieve more. Let me give you an example. Dade County, Florida, which includes the city of Miami and is one of the most racially diverse school districts in America, had 45 low-performing schools on its “critical” list. But in two years, they raised their math and reading scores so much that all 45 were off the list. And they did this by focusing on results. Dade County officials and teachers refused to accept the proposition that because these students were poor or lived in tough neighborhoods, they could not learn.²⁴ In my visit to Chicago’s Jenner Elementary School in 1998, I witnessed first-hand what can be accomplished when the principal, students, parents and volunteers decide to take back their school and turn it around. Jenner, like every Chicago school has ended social promotion. But, every child who needs it gets to go to summer school. The results have been dramatic. At Jenner, reading and math scores have doubled.

Chicago's reform efforts are proving that public schools can work. If they can do it, so can every

ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION PROPOSALS

A new and improved ESEA will provide the foundation for excellence and equity in education. I believe it is essential to our education workplan for building One America. Here are some highlights:

- *Promote High Standards in Every Classroom*, by: adopting and applying rigorous academic standards; continuing efforts to reduce class size; requiring states to hold districts accountable for "continuous and substantial progress" in the number of students meeting high state standards; supporting technology in the classroom
- *Improve Teacher and Principal Quality*, by: national efforts to recruit talented principals; recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, especially for high-need schools
- *Strengthen Accountability for School and Student Performance*, by: supporting states in developing rigorous accountability systems; requiring states to identify and intervene in failing schools; coupling regulatory flexibility with strong accountability; developing sound "progress and promotion" policies, ending social promotion the right way
- *Support Safe, Healthy and Disciplined Learning Environments*, by: reforming the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, to focus on high-quality research-based programs; expanding comprehensive prevention efforts; requiring every school to have sound discipline policies
- *Strengthen Education for English-Language Learners*, by: improvements to the Bilingual Education Act; expanded and improved teacher training; ensuring fair and comprehensive assessment of students with limited English proficiency, including their annual progress in learning English

school in America.

The evidence is now coming in: Education reform that is based on high standards and on holding schools accountable for outcomes works. For students of color, it is particularly important to

provide schools and teachers with information categorized by race and socioeconomic status. A recent RAND Corporation study of education reform in North Carolina and Texas shows that this kind of accountability produces results. In both states, a sustained, statewide approach -- based on holding schools accountable for outcomes, raising academic standards, providing schools with the flexibility and other tools they need, and targeting resources for extra help to low-performing students and schools -- raised achievement for 4th and 8th graders. Texas, which showed particularly strong gains in math scores for students of color, held schools explicitly accountable for achievement of children in each racial group. The racial specificity and clarity of this outcome data seems to be directly linked to the state's impressive test score gains.²⁵

(2) The Compact for Equal Educational Opportunity

The changes I have suggested for ESEA reflect a number of principles that are fundamental to reforming education for our most disadvantaged, without regard to color, but making these changes is also critical for racial justice. Our nation can have no more important education goal than closing the racial gap in achievement because that is the area in which the shortfall between our national ideals and the stark realities is most dismaying.

For the broad Federal programs in ESEA, I have proposed specific attention to ideas that we know can make a difference, such as quality teachers, interventions to turn around or reconstitute

failing schools, and greater emphasis on accountability for results. But to take this a step farther, with a concerted focus on the particularly egregious problem of racial disparities, I believe we should be guided by four policy principles. First, we must demand accountability of everyone in the system -- at the end of the day we must be able to show specifically that disadvantaged minority students are learning more and closing the gap. Second, we must go the extra mile to ensure that the high learning standards the law requires for all students are, indeed, used for minority students as well, and that expectations for student achievement are not subtly or surreptitiously dumbed down in the face of challenges. Third, we must challenge jurisdictions, institutions and professionals to rethink their roles, reinvent their routines, redouble their partnership efforts outside the school system, and *bury their excuses*. If a child needs support services to succeed in school, we cannot let the problems fall between bureaucratic cracks; if a principal needs to shift funds to help veteran teachers master computer-aided instruction, they shouldn't get tangled up in red tape spooling out from above. And, fourth, for the Federal contribution to the effort, we must offer schools and educators greater flexibility but link that

A COMPACT FOR EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
--

flexibility and any added federal funding to measurable success.

As part of the *Compact for Equal Educational Opportunity*, the federal government would provide greater flexibility and new resources, on a competitive basis, to schools and districts that formulate promising proposals -- and then deliver real results -- attacking racial disparities in achievement. I hope that the flexibility built into this proposal will spur innovation, tailoring of approaches to fit local needs, and emulation across the country.

Imagine each local Compact as a partnership agreement, involving all levels of government, a variety of public agencies, key private sector actors and community based organizations. At its core would be a workplan for closing racial disparities in education.

Within the framework of ESEA, and based on what we know works, I envision that the workplans of each Compact district would include such things as: a) putting high-quality teachers in high-need schools; b) reducing disparities in computers and other resources; c) plans for results-based accountability at all levels, so that performance is measured fairly, and both failure and success in meeting performance standards have consequences--and not just for the students; d) engaging families, businesses, and other local institutions; e) building partnerships across jurisdictional lines of school districts and local government agencies; and f) creative responses to the needs English Language Learners.

But ultimately, the test will not be these particular "inputs", but the results.

I propose to put these principles to work in a new kind of partnership for education, building on ESEA. Quite simply, we need a new covenant to benefit America's children, with the goal of eliminating racial disparities in K-12 achievement. We need to enlist the participation of local jurisdictions as well as private sector allies in a *Compact for Equal Educational Opportunity*. The Compact will remind us that when it comes to education, in particular, all Americans are on the same side. It will be a coalition to which we bring our collective determination, creativity, and resources, helping to secure the opportunity all our children deserve.

How the individual states, districts and schools willing to participate actually make progress is far less important than gaining their commitment -- backed by accountability -- for doing what is needed. Let me give you an idea of how this new partnership might work:

School systems would commit to measure and close the racial disparities in achievement. They would adopt measurable goals and a strategy for meeting them. The strategy would be developed with participation from a wide range of stakeholders--from corporations to parents--and would identify roles for everyone.

The proposed strategy would have a timetable, and a report-card style system of public accountability so that everyone could see whether the schools are getting the results they are supposed to. The school system should identify the carrots and sticks that will be used so that everyone involved, from students to school boards, has all the right incentives to succeed.

The federal government might support the Compact in two ways. First, it should offer Compact districts and schools the broadest possible flexibility in federal grant programs, tied to accountability. Second, it should use a competition to award some

new funding to help districts implement their plans. Both of these forms of help should be based upon a judgment, perhaps by panels of national experts and leading school innovators, that the proposed strategies are likely to succeed in narrowing racial disparities. As with the broader ESEA reforms I have already proposed, we should permit experimentation, but we should at least emphasize doing the things that we know can make a difference.

Compact schools and districts that do not reduce racial disparities in achievement must feel the consequences. First, they would lose at least some of their grant flexibility from the federal government, and some of their Compact funding. Second, they would work with experts to reform their strategies, perhaps by getting different kinds of academic support, or perhaps through shock therapy and swift managerial change. Change should be measured in years, not generations.

The proposals I have offered to reform the federal role in education, through ESEA, contain most -- perhaps all -- of the flexibility and some of the resources needed at the federal level to help create Compacts in states and communities around the country. The details of what particular school systems will try to do will of course vary within the broad principles I suggested earlier. In a sense, the most important aspect of all of this is to be forthright in focusing everyone on the goal of eliminating racial disparities in achievement, and implementing a locally tailored workplan to get it done.

In my years as a governor, working both within my state and on national policy, I came to appreciate fully that education is primarily a state and local responsibility. But I have also seen that sometimes a child's opportunity can be limited by the resources a local community can raise with a property tax, or the accident of a state's wealth or poverty, and political decisions about whether to be generous or stingy in aid to local schools. Some education programs -- whether they originate in Washington, the state capital, or "downtown" -- are confining, with regulations and narrow categorical purposes that are not well-coordinated with other education or social service efforts. And across the board, I have seen education treated as an island, cut off from the mainland of challenges and resources in the surrounding community and in families. I am proud of our hard work in the last several years tackling these problems, and determined to build on our accomplishments.

That is why our education workplan for One America must include a determined battle against jurisdictional, administrative, and partisan bickering. The Vice President has led an effort to "reinvent" the federal government so that we all focus on the services we provide children, families, and communities, and on the real effects those services have on people's lives. We must do the same as we form our *Compact for Equal Educational Opportunity*. Closing disparities in schools will require us to break down the walls between bureaucracies and even between local political jurisdictions -- walls that can prevent finding economies of scale, financial and professional resources, and the richness of

diversity that are vital to educational excellence. When it comes to the education of our children, politics – in all of its forms – must stop at the schoolhouse door. Those joining in our Compact must subscribe to that view.

I know this will not occur overnight or without debate, but I believe that in the end there will be a consensus: Our nation's ideals and our national prosperity require a new determination to make quality education for all a reality. On this issue, people of good faith and good will -- across party lines as well as lines of color and class -- agree: every American child must learn well.

The reforms sweeping public education are moving us in the right direction. In schools and states across the country, there are important signs of promise and progress. But the pace is too slow, and our ambitions must be still higher. Now, we must take on the additional challenge of closing the racial achievement gap, and do so directly. We should use the same methods -- accountability, flexibility, standards, doing what we know works, targeting resources on the greatest need -- that have begun to show promise for improving student achievement generally.

We have tolerated racial disparities in opportunity as well as in achievement for far too long. I share the burning impatience felt by many parents, civic leaders, and educators who are demanding more for all our children. Let us, together, channel that impatience, forging new partnerships that empower communities to break the cycle of disadvantage and eliminate gaps in student achievement.

As my Advisory Board on Race said in its final report to me, "To a great extent, we know what to do to promote educational equity and excellence; we just have to have the courage as a nation to do it. If we are successful here, fundamental change will follow." In the long-term, if we eliminate gaps in student achievement by race, we will ensure minority access to college and to a better future, and we will promote integration by making all public schools, and therefore the communities they serve, attractive to all Americans.

C: OTHER MEASURES TO BUILD EDUCATION EQUITY

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP:

The measures I have proposed to strengthen and reshape the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, together with the *Compact* to reduce racial achievement gaps, can be an important first step towards our goal of equity and excellence in education. But there are many other actions we can take at all levels of government and in communities everywhere, ranging from supporting families to ensuring that our schools are modern and safe.

- (1) Support families and promote early learning opportunities

THE BUFFALO EXPERIENCE

In 1993, the Buffalo School Board accepted a local bank's offer of seven million dollars over nine years to turn around an extremely troubled elementary school. Public School 68 suffered from low test scores, poor attendance, and discipline problems. Bob Wilmers, President of Manufacturers and Traders Trust, explains: "It was gnawing at me that we should make more of a contribution to the community, and I focused on education because it seems to me that's the biggest problem the country has." The bank did not merely sign over a check, it got involved. First, the bank created a board of trustees modeled after its own, and invited the education unions to join. Then, it conducted a nationwide search for a new principal and hired Yvonne Minor-Ragan, who was notable for turning around a Chicago public school, and renamed the school Westminster Community School. Wilmers even went so far as to assign one of his vice presidents to ensure that supplies were being delivered to the school and repairs made.

Two years into the partnership, student test scores remained low. In response, the bank hired outside consultants to train the teachers and brought in experts to analyze the performance of every child at the school. By the third year, the students delivered high test scores. Last school year, the students at Westminster scored in the 99th percentile in a statewide test of math and reading skills. Partnerships, like the Westminster School Partnership, can be effective in ensuring the success of all of our children.

A child's development in the earliest years is crucial to the rest of his or her life. Research shows that children who do not enter school ready to learn will spend a significant amount of time catching up to their peers and may never fully overcome initial learning gaps²⁶. Families are the key here. Parents and caregivers must be every child's first teachers.

The most important thing parents can do in the early years is read to their children. We have set a national goal of having all our children read independently and well by the end of third grade. To help achieve that goal, researchers tell us that parents should read to their children at least 30 minutes per day²⁷. In just the last few years, the percentage of parents who are reading to their children on a regular basis has increased dramatically, and that increase has been greatest among parents of color²⁸. This is important progress. But we can do better.

ADULT EDUCATION AND

FAMILY LITERACY INITIATIVE

Today, 44 million adults struggle with a job application, cannot read to their children, and cannot fully participate in our economic and civic life because they lack basic English proficiency. The President's proposed \$190 million adult education and family literacy initiative would provide \$95 million — or 25 percent more — in adult education grants. The program also provides \$70 million for a new English literacy/civics initiative and \$20 million to help develop new technology for adult learners. It creates a new 10% tax credit to employers who establish workplace literacy programs; and puts in place a new initiative to mobilize state and local communities to implement strategies to promote adult education and lifelong learning.

Today, parents of white children are still more likely to read to their children than are parents of minority children²⁹. One reason for this difference is the racial gap in literacy among adults. More than 40 million American adults cannot read English or read only at the lowest level, and persons of color

are overrepresented in this group.³⁰ Adults who cannot read cannot teach their children to read, and may not put as much emphasis on their children's schoolwork. For this and other important reasons, we must take action to increase adult literacy.

Beyond parents' roles, we must mobilize other aspects of the caring "village" my wife Hillary has spoken about so often. Children of all races must, but too often do not, have access to high-quality pre-school. Quality preschool boosts child development, which leads to higher achievement in school, better social adjustment, and even decreased involvement in crime³¹. Head Start plays an important role here by providing quality pre-school to nearly one million children of low-income families. But we are currently serving fewer than half of all eligible students, and only 32 percent of eligible Hispanic students³². There is more to do.

HEAD START

Finally, families must remain involved in their children's education throughout school. A child's chances of success, regardless of race or class, are immeasurably increased when his or her family participates in the child's education. The more directly involved parents are in each child's school, the greater the return³³. All schools should have parent compacts that clearly define parents' role in the school. As a *national goal*, I believe that every parent should be involved in their child's school, and that employers should provide the flexibility to help parents do so.

Head Start is America's premier early childhood development program. It provides comprehensive developmental and social services for America's low-income, pre-school children ages three to five, and their families. Culturally specific Head Start programs have been developed to serve both American Indian and Migrant farmworker families. Giving a boost to children's education and helping strengthen the skills of parents to better nurture and provide for their children and families in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. territories President Clinton has made the expansion and improvement of Head Start a top priority for his Administration. With the bipartisan support of Congress, he has delivered on that promise. In 1994 President Clinton established the new Early Head Start program, which expands the benefits of early childhood development to low-income families to children under three and pregnant women.

(2) Provide Educational Resources and Opportunities Equitably

Over the last several years, we have embraced the idea of high academic standards for all students, including the use of tests to ensure that those standards are met. Half our states now have or will soon introduce high school tests that students must pass to graduate. These standards and tests can play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of teaching and learning in our schools. But we must also give all students a full and fair opportunity to meet the standards and pass the tests. If all our children

are going to be held to the same high standards, and they should be, then we have a responsibility to see that all of them have a fair opportunity to meet those standards and succeed to their full potential.

I'll be blunt: it's easy to talk tough about standards, but duck the politically difficult task of investing the needed resources, and then blame powerless poor kids when they can't make the grade. And it is easy to turn the standards-based reform movement into a testing movement. It's not. It must be about excellence and equity, and that must include fair investments.

The unequal distribution of educational resources is dramatic, especially in our poorest, most racially isolated communities where large numbers of minority children are struggling to learn in our lowest quality schools. As noted by William Taylor, Vice Chair of the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights: "While progress has been made in some state in equalizing resources, almost everywhere the children in these high poverty schools are shortchanged on resources -- on teachers, counselors, books, computers -- that are routinely provided in wealthier areas."³⁴

It's a tangled knot of problems: we have a tradition of local control; we then leave most local school districts heavily dependent on property taxes. School district boundaries separate the poor from the affluent -- and it is up to states to choose whether or not to redistribute resources to give every child a fair shot. In recent years, there have been over a dozen law suits brought under state constitutional provisions, challenging the school finance systems established by state laws. These have met with

some success and I hope much more change of this sort is on the way, preferably at the initiative of governors and legislators, without the disruption of litigation.

Money isn't everything in education, but we can't expect schools to succeed without adequate resources. In tracking the dollars, however, simple per-pupil expenditures don't really tell the story of how much money is going into the classrooms, directly to kids, teachers and learning. On the other hand, students and communities are very different, and sometimes the numbers are comparing apples and oranges. Inner city schools, for example, often have much higher costs for security, dilapidated facilities, children with expensive special needs, English language learners, and so forth.

The fact is, students in our poorest communities often face disadvantages in so many areas that it is impossible to adequately discuss them all. But let me mention several issues that I believe are most crucial: Teaching, curriculum, buildings, technology, and safety. In each of these areas, current and proposed federal policies give a push in the right direction, but states and communities can and should go farther – and faster – than Washington should push.

-- **Teaching.** A major stumbling block to quality education for all students, and especially for students of color, is the shortage of high-quality teachers. Study after study confirms what many of us have always known -- teachers are our most valuable educational resource³⁵. As class size decreases and teacher quality increases, all students, especially poor and minority children, perform better. Yet today, poor and minority children are more likely than their white peers to be taught in larger classes by less-qualified, less-experienced teachers.

-- **Curriculum.** Students of all races must have equal access to challenging courses. This is important not only for reasons of equity, but also because studies have shown that high school curriculum is one of the single most important predictors of students' college success³⁶. That is why early in my Administration, we pushed for and passed federal legislation that gave a vital boost to the high-standards reform movement, including the effort to ensure that poor children are offered challenging course work³⁷. Progress, however, is too slow. Today, poor and minority children are far more likely than middle class and white students to take "math for consumers" rather than a solid course in algebra. Today, minority students are far more likely than whites to attend a high school that offers few or no Advanced Placement courses, like calculus or second-year chemistry. And, most unfairly, research suggests that too many poor and minority children are put in "tracks" or so-called "ability groups" that might be advertised as offering extra help³⁸, but may in reality limit students' chances to attend college.

HIGH STANDARDS AND SUCCESS:

The El Paso Experience

We know that setting high expectations and offering challenging curriculum can help poor, minority schools achieve. El Paso, Texas – the 5th poorest major metropolitan area in the United States, with a school population that is more than 85% Hispanic – has formed a Collaborative for Educational Excellence between the schools, universities and community colleges, the mayor's office, and local religious, business, and community leaders. Over six years, the Collaborative has fostered a culture of excellence by setting high standards for all students, creating a more challenging math curriculum, and setting the goal that every student graduates from high school fluent in English and Spanish, ready to attend college.

The Collaborative's results have been encouraging. The number of schools in the district identified as low-performing has fallen, and the number of schools recognized as exemplary has risen dramatically. The percentage of students in El Paso passing the third-grade reading test now equals the Texas state average. Enrollment in algebra in the district rose from 59% in 1993 to 95% in 1996. And, over that same period, the percentage of students passing algebra rose from 32% to 58%. Minority passing rates in college preparatory courses have improved, in some instances doubling, since the Collaborative began its work.

If the courses most relevant to the jobs in tomorrow's economy are offered in suburban schools but not in the inner-city 15 miles away, should we be surprised if America's economic divide widens in the years ahead? We share an obligation to face these disparities in opportunity, and to end them.

I know that every child can learn. If you need proof, visit El Paso, where schools are setting high expectations for all children and providing the support that will help them succeed. This is a model that should be replicated elsewhere.

-- **Buildings.** Teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn effectively in overcrowded, deteriorating, or unsafe schools. What are we saying to our young people who go to schools with leaky roofs, crumbling walls, and flooded classrooms? We are saying that school doesn't matter, that education doesn't matter, that *they* don't matter. That message is wrong, and it is harmful. These conditions are most dramatic in our inner cities, where large percentages of minority students attend outdated, dilapidated schools often just minutes away from the modern suburban schools complete with the latest technology. Sixty-seven percent of schools in central cities report having at least one inadequate structural feature and close to 40% report at least one inadequate building³⁹. These conditions are also prevalent in our rural and tribal areas.

-- **Technology.** To prepare all students for jobs in the new economy, and to improve education more generally, every school must have a sufficient number of computers, access to the Internet, and

training on how teachers and students can use technology effectively. My administration has established a \$2 billion Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, designed to put more computers and more trained computer teachers into classrooms⁴⁰. The new "E-rate" championed by Vice President Gore discounts the price of technology for schools, especially those with high levels of poverty, thereby providing precious technology resources. But the bulk of the investment must come from state, local and private efforts. If we fail at this, the color divide will be compounded by a digital divide.⁴¹

-- **Safety.** In the past several years, we have seen how violence in schools can bring devastation, pain, and sorrow in our lives and in our communities. Although most of our schools are safe, violent crime is a real factor in ten percent of schools⁴². And, while we work to prevent the kinds of horrible tragedies that make headlines, like the shootings in Littleton, Colorado or Paducah, Kentucky, at the same time we must not forget the schools, mostly in the inner city, where nearby crime and violence are an almost constant threat. Black and Hispanic children are significantly more likely than whites to fear being attacked in school, to report having street gangs in school, to see a gun in school, and more⁴³. Moreover, there has been a startling rise over the last ten years in hate crimes and other harassment on school campuses, much of it anti-immigrant and anti-Asian.⁴⁴

(3) High Expectations and Accountability

-- **Students.** In addition to providing better resources, we must promote high expectations for all students. In large part this means holding all students to high academic standards and, as I have said, it means making sure that tracking does not restrict learning opportunities by categorizing students based not on their educational needs but on subtle biases triggered by their skin color or accent. This is discrimination in the form of low expectations by teachers and other adults. As I have said, we must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations.

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON:**A CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN**

My wife Hillary has been a champion of equal opportunity in education for over 20 years. Personally I have learned a great deal from her experiences both in the field, and as a member of many boards and commissions. In 1973 while on staff at the Children's Defense Fund, Hillary worked with Marian Wright Edelman to identify why thousands of American children were not attending school. After knocking on hundreds of doors, Hillary and her colleagues found that many school aged children were not attending school due to severe, moderate and in some cases, even mild disabilities. The results of these findings greatly added to the mounting evidence that federal legislation was needed to ensure a free and appropriate education for all children.

In Arkansas, Hillary continued her work in education by serving as Chair of the Arkansas Education Standards Committee, which was instrumental in bringing substantial reform to Arkansas' public schools. Hillary also served on the Commission on Quality Education of the Southern Regional Board and the William T. Grant Foundation's Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship. The Grant Commission produced the *Forgotten Half*, a report which studied how young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who do not attend college fare in society at large. This report offered workable solutions for outreach and programming.

Since coming to the White House, Hillary has continued her crusade to ensure a world class education for all American children by spearheading initiatives on teacher quality, increased academic standards and accountability. She has also been a constant advocate for quality child care, increased Head Start funding and ensuring that all parents read to their children from the earliest of ages. Like me, Hillary knows that it is absolutely necessary we ensure that all American children enter school ready and willing to learn. I am proud of what Hillary has done and continues to do for America's children.

--**Ending Social Promotion.** One of the more insidious manifestations of low expectations comes in the form of social promotion. Ending that practice is an important part of achieving equity and excellence in education. There are millions of students earning passing grades in their schools while scoring miserably on all kinds of standardized tests that compare them with students elsewhere. Some of these “social promotions” occur because teachers and administrators simply don’t expect that certain kids can and should achieve at grade level. Others occur because it is extremely difficult to hold back entire classes of students, even if all of those students have not yet learned enough to earn a grade-level promotion. These kinds of “social promotions” move a student along, but don’t serve those students in the long-run.

So, yes, we need to end social promotion. *But we must do it the right way.* Simply holding a child back to repeat an unsuccessful learning experience is no solution, either. Especially since retaining a child in grade can produce alienation and, ultimately, increase dramatically the chances that child will drop out of school. So, before it comes to that, schools must offer extended learning time, after-school programs, and tutoring to students who need extra help. We must enforce civil rights laws to ensure that the no-social promotion policies aren’t abused, and invoked to hold behind those students whom teachers and administrators believe “can’t learn,” or whom they just can’t manage to provide with the needed interventions and supports. But, overall, we must make sure that students

aren't simply given credit for "seat time," but really learn the kinds of lessons and skills that they will need for future success.

Put differently, the test of our success is whether students can progress at the appropriate pace, meeting high standards as they go, completing high school with a diploma that prepares them for the world ahead. We want to eliminate social promotions while at the same time reducing the number of students who "flunk" and are held back.

(4) English Language Acquisition

**Hispanic Education Action Plan and
White House Initiative on Educational
Excellence for Hispanic Americans**

The demographics of diversity make it imperative *for all of us* that we do a far better job of ensuring that children get the support they need to learn English. Hispanics, for example, constitute a rapidly growing portion of our nation's labor force, and are projected to be one-quarter of the nation's workforce by 2050. But today, two out of five Hispanic children live below the poverty line, and

Because the high-school drop-out rate of Hispanics is unacceptably high, President Clinton's FY99 budget included the first-ever Hispanic Education Action Plan. As part of this plan, the President proposed significant increases in the Title I funding and a number of other programs that enhance educational opportunity for Hispanic Americans.

The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans is coordinating government-wide efforts and national outreach to support Latino parents as they work to ensure that their children get a good education.

ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS

TO IMPROVE BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Some highlights of the Administration's May, 1999 proposals to assist schools participating in the Federal Bilingual Education Act programs serving English language:

- Emphasizes that students learn English and reach the same challenging academic standards as all other children;
- Improves teacher professional training;
- Requires participating schools to administer annual assessments of English proficiency;
- Helps districts that have rapidly expanding numbers of LEP students and schools that have little experience in serving LEP students teach these students to high standards;
- Strengthens program accountability by (1) giving priority to districts with track records of success; (2) requiring annual evaluation reports to better measure progress and determine grant continuation; and (3) requiring grantees to meet program objectives or carry out an improvement plan in order to receive continued funding;
- Promotes learning of a second language by continuing the funding priority for programs that develop proficiency in more than one language.

thus suffer the educational disadvantages that come with low-income status.⁴⁵ Figures for certain Asian groups are even worse.⁴⁶ Some of the informal, traditional means of language acquisition that worked reasonably well for earlier generations may work less well today in language-minority communities that are rapidly expanding and comparatively isolated from English-speakers in terms of neighborhood, schools, workplaces and even popular culture. It is truer now than ever that, as a nation, we must better help all children, no matter what their native language to learn English. It is the gateway to a quality education, a quality job, and family security. This will bring higher wages for all, and will help ensure a strong economic future for America. And it is a measure of our justice.

But we face a growing challenge of teaching students who are not yet fluent in English. By the most recent official estimates, approximately 3 million children in the United States are English Language Learners (ELL)⁴⁷. Most of those children speak, as a first language, either Spanish or an Asian Language.

We have a chronic and severe shortage of qualified bilingual teachers. In California, 19 percent of all students are English Language Learners⁴⁸, yet for every bilingual teacher who speaks Spanish or an Asian language, there are 81 ELL Hispanic students and 561 ELL Asian Pacific American students⁴⁹. Experts estimate that almost 1/3 of ELL students, receive no specialized education, despite the Supreme Court's ruling⁵⁰. To provide some limited help addressing some of these needs, my FY2000 budget proposed an increased investment to hire 6,000 more teachers, who will both help their

students learn English and help them meet challenging academic standards all-around. But because parents are fundamental to their children's education, I have also proposed a \$70 million "English Language and Civics Education Initiative," which will help provide adult ELL students with high-quality English-language training.⁵¹

There is a strong consensus across racial and ethnic lines, and within immigrant communities, that all students should learn English. So that's not the issue. The reality is that many of these children are not getting the tools and resources they need to become fluent. We have a responsibility to fix that problem. The worst thing we can do is blame the kids.

(5) Racial Isolation and School Resegregation

A final major challenge to achieving excellence and equity in education is the problem of resegregation, i.e., the separation and isolation of students in one-race or nearly one-race schools. With the era of overt, state-imposed racial separation over, the segregation we see today results from a complex amalgam of forces. Much of it is the lingering effect of past unconstitutional policies in education or discriminatory practices in housing. Some of it is due to the powerful effects of class, or of suburbanization -- although those forces are not themselves unrelated to race. Some of what we see is undoubtedly the product of instances of present discrimination, too. But whatever the causes, and

however much of it is the grip of history's heavy hand still upon us, the existence of widespread racially separate education is a threat to our goal of One America.

Integration should be properly understood as one important element of quality in our educational system. As the Advisory Board stated in its final report, "Simply put, high-quality, integrated schools provide a more complete educational experience for all students than high-quality, segregated schools." But too many of our students today do not attend integrated schools. After a burst of progress in the late 1960s and early 1970s, segregation in our elementary and secondary schools, particularly in urban districts, is worsening. And the problem is taking on new complexity as a result of our changing diversity.⁵²

Today, 8 of the 10 largest districts in America have greater than 75% minority enrollment⁵³. Moreover, minority students within large districts are likely to attend racially isolated schools. Today, 67 percent of black students and 74 percent of Hispanic students attend primary and secondary schools with greater than 50 percent minority enrollment, and more than one-third of black and Hispanic students attend schools with more than 90 percent minority enrollment⁵⁴. Rates of segregation are worse for blacks than they were 15 years ago and, for Hispanics, 25 years ago⁵⁵. Hispanics now experience the highest rates of school segregation of any minority group⁵⁶. In many metropolitan areas, poor, majority-black or Hispanic schools are located very close -- sometimes minutes away by highway -- to wealthier, mostly white institutions. Even in so-called integrated schools, however, too many

students are resegregated into different classes, with students of color overrepresented in remedial and special education classes.⁵⁷ And so, in the midst of burgeoning diversity, we have increasing racial isolation.

The goals of quality and integration in education are complementary. Diversity is not about political correctness. We know that, for minorities, racial isolation in K-12 education is almost always combined with concentrated poverty, and quite often with an underperforming education system; integrated schools are far more likely to narrow the racial disparities in achievement.⁵⁸ Nearly 90 percent of these racially isolated schools also have a majority of children in poverty, and therefore face the extra burdens typical of deeply poor communities.⁵⁹ A minority student is 16 times more likely than a white student to be in a high-poverty school.⁶⁰

Moreover, integration has real, tangible benefits for *all* students, and for our society. Academic studies suggest that when students of different races work together toward common goals, they can break down racial stereotypes, improve race relations, and improve student achievement.⁶¹ Diversity improves teaching and learning by providing a range of perspectives that enrich the learning environment. It teaches good citizenship by giving students the opportunity to learn with, learn from, and build relationships with people different from them. It improves students' preparation for employment by teaching them how to function in work settings with people of different backgrounds

and beliefs. And it fosters the advancement of knowledge by encouraging students to study a rich variety of issues and cultures.

One way to break the boundaries set by neighborhood racial segregation is to promote charter schools, magnet schools and related forms of public school choice. These strategies are based on a simple idea: public schools of choice can create distinctive approaches or special emphases to reflect the fact that students learn in different ways. Some students are hands-on learners, some thrive in group-learning situations, and others need more one-on-one attention. Recognizing that no one school or program can meet the special needs of every student, public school choice gives students and families the flexibility to choose among public schools and programs with different educational settings, teaching strategies, and academic emphases.

Fenton Avenue Charter School, an urban public school in the San Fernando Valley, is a powerful example of how an urban school can transform the way children are educated with a "charter" guaranteeing real decision-making authority in exchange for accountability for results. Once one of the worst schools in the San Fernando Valley, Fenton's rank in student performance has improved from the bottom to the top in the Los Angeles area since becoming a charter school in 1994, when compared to schools with similar student populations. It was named a California Distinguished School in 1997, and it serves a student population that is overwhelmingly low-income and minority. With a strong

emphasis on reading, Fenton has used its charter to set clear performance goals tied to academic standards, and it has overhauled the school to help students meet these standards.

I strongly support the growth of charter schools and magnet schools, and student and parent choice among public schools. The proposals I sent to the Congress in May, 1999 to improve the Elementary and Secondary Education Act include elements designed to strengthen these approaches.⁶²

Public school choice is increasingly available in school districts across the nation. In 1993, 11 percent of public school students in grades 3 through 12 attended a public school that was chosen by their parents⁶³. This number rose to about 15 percent of students by 1996⁶⁴. In recent years, many more public school options have been created. There is evidence that disadvantaged students have less access than other students to high-quality public school options.⁶⁵ However, well-designed public school choice has great promise as a tool for increasing equity and excellence in education, especially if states encourage strategies that cut across school district boundaries. Charter schools and public school choice together help families obtain the kind of education they want for their children within the public schools. Families ought not be restricted by neighborhood, and thus restricted by race- and class-boundaries. In this way, these are helpful tools in promoting diversity.

Many urban parents, understandably tired of waiting for their local public schools to improve, have begun to entertain the idea of private school vouchers as a solution. And many parents, both urban and suburban, remind educational reform advocates that local control of schools is a long-standing and important American tradition. I understand the impetus behind these concerns. But I want to point out their liabilities.

I am for choice, but not through the use of vouchers, which could damage, perhaps irreparably, the public school system that has been one of the cornerstones of this society. And I am for local control. But not when it re-enforces race and class segregation.

It is clear that the American people agree with me. Ninety percent of all children in this country attend public schools, and the vast majority of Americans believe in the value of public schooling.⁶⁶ And, data also shows that the vast majority of *all* adults and students, no matter what race or socioeconomic status, believe that children of different races should attend school together.⁶⁷

Finally, let me note here something that we will talk about in greater detail later, in the workplan for Jobs and Community Economic Development section of this book. There is an inescapable connection between school and neighborhood integration. No matter how much school choice we have, if our neighborhoods are overwhelming separated by race, many of our school

children will be, too. School excellence is probably the most important part of the answer, because if a school is excellent, families of all races will be attracted to it, and attracted to the neighborhood near it.

CONCLUSION

The greatness we have achieved in this century has depended upon our willingness to make the tough choices and investments vital to secure our future. Tearing down the walls of disparity and division in American education is as vital to our future as our vigilant defense of democracy or securing our leadership in the new global economy. For too long we have professed support for equal opportunity without grappling with the glaring inequities faced by too many of our children. As the new century begins, it is time to recognize that quality education, with an equal opportunity to achieve, is a civil right indispensable to our effort to create One America with racial and ethnic justice.

I have no illusions about the difficulty of this. Yet, as challenging as it may be to some of our old ideas about roles and responsibilities, this vision is true to our best ideals. And we must not fail to

act. The costs of delay are mounting. Our children and our nation are in danger of falling behind in a world that is forging ahead.

Remember, these are all our children. Each of them is eight years old but once. The choices we make will put them on a track to nowhere or a track toward achieving their full, God-given potential. If we do not prepare them well, they may spend a lifetime struggling to find a way in from the cold margins of the new economy. And if our children learn apart, they won't know how to live together. This requires more than passing laws against hateful conduct. It requires a passage of spirit, from the old world of racial separation, to a new world of shared hopes, common values, and unity. Education is the vessel that will get us there. It must be our number one priority. Nothing less is at stake than the strength of our economy, the vitality of our democracy, and the dream of our nation.

How we meet the challenge remains a window on our hearts.

Endnotes:

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1. Richard W. Riley, *The Opportunity for a Quality Education: The Civil Rights for the 21st Century* (May 17th, 1999).
 2. Of course, the President is going to want to edit this to make sure it is an accurate recollection.
 3. Ernest Green, White House signing ceremony designating Little Rock Central High School a National Historic Site (November 6, 1998).
 4. Fn. David Tyack, *The One Best System?*
 5. Fn. See Dewey, *Education and Democracy*.
 6. [Cite Gary Orfield paper, June 1999, Report of the Harvard School Desegregation Project, Civil Rights Project at Harvard. (617-496-6367)]
 7. See e.g. Elizabeth Word, John Johnston, Helen Pate Bain, DeWayne Fulton, Jane Boyd Zaharias, Charles M. Achilles, Martha Nannette Lintz, John Folger, Carolyn Breda, *The State of Tennessee's Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) Project: Technical Report, 1985-1990* 166-169 (1990).
 8. Fn.
 9. US Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics(hereafter, NCES) *Condition of Education 1998* 269, Table 43-1.
 10. *Id.* and *Digest of Education Statistics 1997 edition*, Indicator 43, Table 3.
 11. President's speech. Scott Palmer?
 12. This was added (Roderick Harrison)
 13. For example, since 1976, even as the pool of students taking college entrance exams has grown dramatically, average SAT scores for students of color have increased 21 points for Mexican Americans (from 781 to 802 out of 1600), 24 points for Asian Pacific Americans (from 932 to 956), 42 points

for American Indians (from 808 to 850), and 58 points for blacks (from 686 to 744), while average scores for whites have increased only 2 points (from 944 to 946). See *Digest of Education Statistics 1997* 132, Table 128.

14. We have these; see Liz' copy F15.

15. Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, *An Invisible Crisis: The Educational Needs of Asian Pacific American Youth* 16-30 (1997).

16. See *Changing America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being by Race and Hispanic Origin*, Council of Economic Advisers, 18 (September 1998).

17. *Id.* at 21.

18. LEAP Asian Pacific American Public Policy Institute and UCLA Asian American Studies Center, *The State of Asian Pacific America: Economic Diversity, Issues & Policies* 64 (1994).

19. *Id.* at 22.

20. *Condition of Education 1998* supra note 8 at 301, Table 58-2.

21. *School Facilities: America's Schools Report Differing Conditions*, U.S. General Accounting Office, 50, Table II.12 (June 14, 1996).

22. The statistics for home computer usage are, for grades 1 - 8: 54% of white students, 21% of black students, and 19% of Hispanic students; and for grades 9 - 12: 61% of white students, 21% of black students, and 22% of Hispanic students. The statistics for computer use at school are, from grades 1 - 8: 84% of white students, 72% of black students, and 68% of Hispanic students; and for grades 9 - 12: 72% of white students, 73% of black students, and 63% of Hispanic students. From *Digest of Education Statistics 1998*, NCES, forthcoming.

23. Harold Wenglinsky, *Does It Compute?*, Educational Testing Service: Policy Information Center, 23 -24 (September 1998).

24.²⁴ From President's remarks to the Students, Teachers, Parents and the Community of

Jackson Mann Elementary School, Brighton Massachusetts, February 2, 1999.

25. See David Grissmer and Ann Flanagan, "Exploring Rapid Achievement Gains in North Carolina and Texas," National Education Goals Panel, November 1998; and Gary Orfield, "Strengthening Title I: Designing a Policy Based on Evidence," forthcoming.
26. Best source we could come up with so far: Nicole Rabner suggested recent NAS report on school readiness...which we don't have...
27. Again, the NAS report?
28. See *Changing America*, *supra* note 14 at 15, Table 1.
29. Id.
30. *Adult Literacy in America: A Look at the Results of the National Adult Literacy Survey*, National Center for Educational Statistics, 16 (1993).
31. See Steve Barnett, "Long Term Effects of Early Childhood Programs on Cognitive and School Outcomes," Hirokazu Yoshikawa, "Long Term Effects of Early Childhood Programs on Social Outcomes and Delinquency," and Ellen C. Frede, "The Role of Program Quality in Producing Early Childhood Program Benefits," all in *The Future of Our Children*, Vol 5. No. 3, (Winter 1995).
32. [According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start Bureau (based on U.S. Census Bureau, *Poverty Status of People in 1997*).]
33. See, e.g., *The Family is Critical to Student Achievement*, Center for Law and Education, Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla, eds. (1997).
34. Statement of William L. Taylor before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Mar.16, 1999).
35. See, e.g., Eric Hirsch, "Teacher Policy: A Summary of Current Trends," in *State Legislative Report*, National Conference of State Legislatures, Vol. 24, No. 5, (February 1998).

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36. Scott? Is this right?
37. Data? What part of the early administration proposals concentrated on poor and minority kids' curriculum?
38. Need to find source
39. General Accounting Office. Get full cite from CR draft.
40. Details? Cite
41. Again, need a statistic or a story or something illustrative here. Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear*
42. *Annual Report on School Safety 1998*, 3 (October 1998) (Citing, "Principle/School Disciplinarian Survey on School Violence," National Center for Education Statistics (1997)).
43. *Id.* at 5 citing, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey* (1989 and 1995).
44. National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, *Audit of Violence Against Asian Pacific Americans, Fourth Annual Report* (1997).
45. National Council of La Raza, Hispanic Participation in Selected Federal Anti-Poverty Programs, Issue-Brief, July 1997.
46. Some, 26% of Vietnamese in the United States, 43% of Cambodians and 64% of Hmong live below the poverty line. As a nation, we must better help all children, no matter what their native language. [Cite from Felicia.]
47. The 2.3 million figure is an estimate from 1993. It is likely that the 1999 number is higher. Most LEP children are clustered in large-city school districts, and in a small number of states. From Fleischman, H.L. and Hopstock, P.J., *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students, Volume 1 Summary of Findings and Conclusions*, Arlington VA, Development Associates, Incorporated, 1993. [from ED website]
48. The number was 19% in 1993 - 1994. From *Schools and Staffing in the*

United States, A Statistical Profile 1993 - 1994, at 154, National Center for Education Statistics, (July 1996). Felicia's note: I'm sure the number is now up to 25%. The National Performance Review reported that figure 3/5/99, according to ED reports released this week, but neither Tom Snyder @ NCES nor the ED website yet have the data available.

49. Laurie Olsen et al; *An Invisible Crisis: The Educational Needs of Asian Pacific American Youth*, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, 21 (1997).

50. Check NCES; this is from a phone conversation with Charles Kamasaki.

51. This is provisional – ED has not yet signed off.

52. [Get cite from Michal Kurlaender in Gary Orfield's office, 617-496-6367.).

53. *Common Core of Data Public Education Agency Universe, 1996-1997*, National Center for Educational Statistics (unpublished).

54. Orfield et al., *supra* note 20, at 11.

55. Gary Orfield, Mark Bachmeier, David R. James, Tamela Eitle, *Deepening Segregation in American Public Schools* 11, Table 4 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Project on School Desegregation) (April 1997).

56. Study cited in *State of Hispanic America 1991: An Overview*, National Council of La Raza, February 1992, p. 10.

57. Scott

58. "Most studies of achievement in desegregated schools are analyses of test score data from the fall to the spring of the first year of desegregation. These studies have been analyzed and classified in a variety of ways. Desegregation critic David Armor argues that the gains are too small to be significant. Robert Crain, a desegregation expert at Columbia University, described the average gains as more significant, arguing that it was essential to sort out the studies to understand the story. In an important study with Rita Mahard,

Crain found that desegregation that started at the beginning of elementary school and lasted throughout the school years had larger benefits, as did access of minority students to suburban schools. Janet Schofield has done the most recent major summary of the research literature. She found that there were significant but relatively modest test score gains, especially in reading and English. Schofield noted considerable evidence of benefits in college and later life that relatively simple techniques to have students work together across racial lines may significantly increase the benefits of desegregation.” Gary Orfield, “Unexpected Costs and Uncertain Gains of Dismantling Desegregation,” in *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education*, Gary Orfield and Susan Eaton, eds., (New York: The New Press, 1996), p. 105. Orfield cites Rita E. Mahard and Robert L. Crain, “Research on Minority Achievement in Desegregated Schools,” in *The Consequences of School Desegregation*, ed. Christine H. Rossell and Willis D. Hawley (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), pp.103-125; and Janet Schofield, in *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks (New York: McMillan Publishing, 1994).

59. *Id.* At 19, Table 7.

60. Is this accurate? The original sentence said: Or, to put it another way, if you compare students in schools that are overwhelmingly minority (90 percent or more) with those that are overwhelmingly white, a minority student is 16 times more likely than a white student to be in a high-poverty school.

61. Robert E. Slavin, *Cooperative Learning* 44, 45, 68, 73, 75 Longman Publisher, New York & London (1983). These stats on achievement do not specify *minority* achievement. Waiting for more articles.

62. See Title V, The Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999 (reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as proposed by the Clinton Administration in May, 1999).

63. U.S. Department of Education. (1997). *The Condition of Education 1997*. Washington, DC. P. 23.

⁶⁴. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics. (1999). Unpublished tabulations from the 1996 National Household Education Survey.

⁶⁵. Bruce Fuller, Richard F. Elmore, with Gary Orfield. (1996). *Who Chooses? Who Loses? Culture, Institutions and the Unequal Effects of School Choice*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

66. Phi Delta Kappan? Or ED/Kent McGuire?

67. Kinder and Sanders, *Divided by Color*, polling data