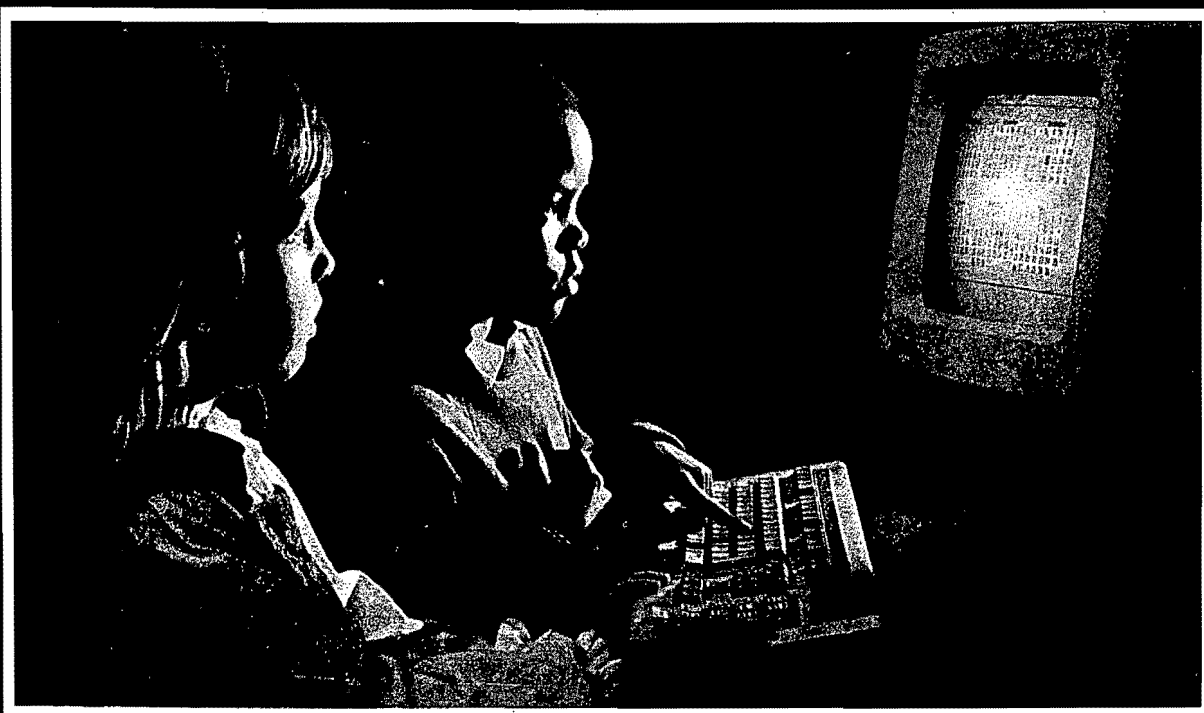

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A VISION
OF EXCELLENCE:



A LOOK AT EDUCATION
IN ARKANSAS.

BILL CLINTON ON EDUCATION

Government fails when our schools fail. For four years we've heard a lot of talk about "the Education President" but seen little government action to invest in the collective talents of our people.

Millions of our children go to school unprepared to learn. The Republicans in Washington have promised — but never delivered — full funding for Head Start, a proven success that gives disadvantaged children the opportunity to get ahead. And while states move forward with innovative ideas to bring parents and children together, Washington fails to insist on responsibility from parents, teachers, students — or from itself.

Putting people first demands a revolution in lifetime learning because education today is more than the key to climbing the ladder of economic opportunity; it is an imperative for our nation. Bill Clinton's National Economic Strategy will invest in our people at every stage of their lives. It will put people first by dramatically improving the way parents prepare their children for school, giving students the chance to train for jobs or pay for college, and providing workers with the training and retraining they need to compete and win in tomorrow's economy.

The Clinton Plan

Prepare every child for school

Establish tough standards

Reform our schools

Make our schools safe again

Give every American the chance to get ahead

Our schools should be the safest, not the most dangerous places in society — places where kids do fire drills, not bullet drills.

Too often our schools move people up the ladder whether they study or not, graduate people whether they know anything or not, and dump people in the work force whether they have real skills or not. And that is wrong.

community service workers together to provide comprehensive drug education, prevention, intervention and treatment programs.

- As President, Bill Clinton would also support a Safe Schools Initiative, which will provide funds for violence-ridden schools to hire security personnel and purchase metal detectors, and help cities and states use community policing to put more police officers on the streets in high-crime areas where schools are located.

Alternative and continuing education programs

- Help communities open centers that give dropouts a second chance through a Youth Opportunity Corps. Teenagers will be matched with adults who care about them and who will help them develop self-discipline and valuable skills.
- Bring business, labor and education leaders together to develop a national apprenticeship program that offers non college-bound students valuable skills training, with the promise of good jobs when they graduate.
- Scrap the existing student loan program and establish a National Service Trust Fund to guarantee every American who wants a college education the means to obtain one. Those who borrow from the fund will pay it back either as a small percentage of their income over time, or through community service as teachers, law enforcement officers, health care workers, or peer counselors helping kids stay off drugs and in school.
- Invest in worker retraining programs that require employers to spend 1.5 percent of payroll for continuing education and training for all workers, not just executives.

THE CLINTON PLAN

America needs an Education President who shows up for class every day, not just once every four years. In the first 100 days of my administration, I'll give Congress and the American people a real education reform package. I'll work day and night to get it passed, unlike our current President who often proposes and then leaves it to someone else to dispose of or not to act at all.

We have to work hard to see that every American school has a challenging, rich curriculum, and that every teacher has the opportunity to develop the skills that he or she needs to teach well.

Parents and children together

- Inspire parents to take responsibility and empower them with the knowledge they need to help their children enter school ready to learn; help disadvantaged parents work with their children to build an ethic of learning at home that benefits both.
- Fully fund programs that save us several dollars for every one spent — Head Start, the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program and other critical initiatives recommended by the National Commission on Children.

Establishing tough standards

- Work with educators, parents, business leaders and public officials to create a set of National Standards for what students should know.
- Create a National Examination System to measure our students' and schools' progress in meeting the National Standards.
- Achieve the 1989 Education Summit's "National Education Goals" by the year 2000: every child should begin school physically and mentally ready to learn; our high school graduation rate should rise from 71% to 90%, the current international standard; and students should be knowledgeable in math, science, language, history and geography when they graduate high school.

Reforming our schools

- Reduce the education gap between rich and poor students by increasing Chapter One funding for low-income students, and giving schools greater flexibility to spend the money in ways they think most effective, like reducing class sizes in early grades.
- Grant expanded decision-making powers at the school level — empowering principals, teachers and parents increased flexibility in educating our children.
- Support better incentives to hire and keep good teachers, including alternative certification for those who want to take up teaching as a second career and differential pay to attract and retain educators in shortage areas like math and science or in urban schools.
- Help states develop public school choice programs like Arkansas' with protection from discrimination based on race, religion or income.

Making our schools safe again

- Get drugs out of our schools: work with states and local communities to bring parents, educators, students, law enforcement personnel and

THE CLINTON RECORD IN ARKANSAS

Preparing children for school

- Established the first statewide Home Instructional Program for Pre-School Youngsters. HIPPY helps disadvantaged parents work with their children to build an ethic of learning at home that benefits both parent and child.
- Introduced programs to provide low-income women with access to comprehensive maternity and infant care. Arkansas' infant mortality rate has dropped almost 50% since 1978.
- Initiated the Better Chance Program, which provides \$5 million this fiscal year and \$10 million the next for early childhood programs for at-risk children ages 3-5.

Reforming the schools

- Set higher standards for all Arkansas schools: they must provide intensive instruction in basic skills, offer a much broader range of advanced courses, strictly limit class size, and regularly test student performance.
- Directed the state to issue a yearly report card on the schools.
- Permitted parents to choose the public schools their children attend as long as an acceptable racial balance is maintained.
- Provided a \$4,000 average salary increase for Arkansas teachers in 1991-- the highest percentage increase in the nation that year.

Demanding responsibility

- Required eighth graders to pass an exam to go to high school.
- Required teachers to take a basic competency test to keep their jobs.
- Revoked driver's licenses of students who drop out of school for no good reason.
- Authorized fines for parents who refuse to attend a parent-teacher conference or allow their children to be chronically truant.

Getting results

- Improved Arkansas' math and reading test scores. Between 1981 and 1991, the average state percentile rank for 4th grade students rose from the 46th to the 61st percentile in reading and from the 44th to the 69th percentile in math.
- Helped Arkansas achieve the highest high-school graduation rate in the region.
- Increased the percentage of Arkansas seniors attending colleges by 34% from 1982 to 1991.

Creating opportunity for all Arkansans

- With help from business, created a Youth Apprenticeship program to motivate non college-bound students to stay in school and do well.
- Created Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarships to provide college scholarships to middle income and poor students who achieve 2.5 GPAs in high school taking the college core curriculum, score 19 on the ACT, and stay off drugs.
- Established a college bond program allowing parents to buy short- or long-term college bonds, not taxed in Arkansas, to help finance their children's college education.
- Helped develop the Arkansas Industrial Training Program, which provides customized training to potential workers at new plants, expanding companies, or companies which are upgrading technologically.
- Established the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force, which identifies possible plant closings and layoffs, develops an appropriate plan, and offers retraining, placement, and other supportive services.



Major Education Address
Governor Bill Clinton
East LA College
Los Angeles, CA
May 14, 1992

Thank you very much. Thank you very much President Suarez. Ladies and gentleman, thank you for coming here today and for giving me the opportunity to come to this very important institution of education to talk about the subjects that I care very deeply about.

I wanted to come to a community college in this community to talk about this subject because you represent the future of America's education and the future of America's economy.

It is enrollment in these kinds of institutions that is exploding. In my state last year, with the support of the state's business community, we raised the corporate income tax a half of a percent and put it all in two year institutions of higher education to try to make more opportunities for people like you.

The president told me on the way in today that this year this institution had to turn away between four and five thousand people who wanted to take advantage of the programs here. That is a significant problem for our economy and one which I hope to address today.

I want to talk about the role that education will play in your future and in your country's future. Education is the issue that I know most and care most about because I've spent more than eleven years now as a governor on the front lines of the battle to revolutionize, revitalize and reform education.

As a governor, as a co-chair of the nation's education summit, and as a parent of a child in the public schools of Little Rock, Arkansas, I have devoted my time and my energy to education, more so than to any other issue.

We know two things about the education in our country today. It's more important to our economic well-being than ever before and we still don't have the educational quality or opportunities that our people need. The key to our economic strength in America today is productivity growth. That's just a phrase that means more products and services from each one of us.

In the nineties and beyond, the universal spread of education - computers and high speed communications - means that what we earn depends on what we can learn and on how well we can apply what we learn to the workplaces of America.

That's why, as we know, a college graduate this year will earn seventy percent more than a high school graduate in the first year of work. That's why the earnings of younger workers who drop out of high school or who finish but receive no further education or training drop by more than twenty percent over the last ten years alone.

That's why too many students we know, that too many students drop out of school and too many who do finish still don't have the basic skills they need to get and keep good jobs. We know too that all children can learn, but that it's tougher to teach them when so many bring society's problems through the schoolhouse door.

We know that we have real gaps in American education. Opportunity gaps and responsibility gaps, which are more important to our national security today than the missile gaps which played such an important role in the presidential election of 1960.

The education opportunity gaps between ourselves and the rest of the world and among our own people are immense. We have a shorter school year than all our major competitors. We do less well than most all of them on comparative tests in math and science. And while we send more of our high school graduates on to college than any other nation, we do far too little for the forgotten half that do not go on to college or don't even finish high school; a group that other nations take care to train and retrain throughout their lifetimes.

Within our country there are wide gaps in the level of readiness for children to start school. Many lack the basic building blocks of knowledge and thinking without which learning simply cannot occur. There are huge gaps on how much we spend on students and in what kinds of courses and other opportunities they have. The distinguished American writer Jonathan Kozol had called these gaps "savage inequality."

Most important, there are massive performance gaps among our schools which cross economic and social lines. Excellent schools that I have seen with my own eyes in this country. Even in difficult inner-city neighborhoods like the Beasley Academic Center in Chicago, located in the neighborhood with the highest murder rate in Illinois, ranking consistently in the top ten percent of the schools in all tests.

Or Thomas Jefferson Junior High School, a mile from our nation's capital in Washington, which, in the middle 1980's, in three of four years, three of four years, with a ninety-eight percent minority population sent a team to the final four in the national junior high school mathematics competition.

I could give you example after example after example from Maine to California, which proves beyond question that all children can learn. But that fact leaves us all the more frustrated when these results are not achieved everywhere.

Just as there are opportunity gaps in education, there are also responsibility gaps as well. Places where our system fails because people don't do their part, politicians who posture instead of act on education, schools where turf battles get more attention than gang battles, bureaucracy to better shuffle papers than change lives, teachers who have burned out and have given up and are just going through the motions, parents who treat school and education as

finance child care, citizens who couldn't care less about education as long as they keep their local taxes down, and students who sometimes act more like kids in "Beverly Hills 90210" than the kids in "Stand and Deliver."

Just look at the Student Loan Program, for example. Since 1980, the cost of defaults in the Government Guaranteed Student Loan Program have increased fourteen times over, from 239 million dollars in 1980, to 3.4 billion dollars this year.

In Washington, D.C., five doctors who got the government to finance their medical education in return for promising to practice in chronically underserved rural or urban areas are now being sued for breaking their promise. People like these dead-beat doctors cost more than money, they deny medical education to others who would have kept their word and deny urgently needed medical care to blighted urban and forgotten pockets of rural poverty.

Look at the President on record in education. At the education summit in 1989 with the governors, I was part of a small group representing Democratic and Republican governors in the White House who worked late into the night to hammer out six education goals for our nation in the year 2000.

Let me just repeat them here. By the year 2000, all students should be mentally and physically ready to learn. By the year 2000, we should raise the on-time high school graduation rate to ninety percent, the international standard. By the year 2000, we should have national standards for our children should know at the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades in math and science, and language, and geography, and history, and other subjects and a meaningful and not a meaningless, a meaningful set of national exams to measure whether we know what we're supposed to know.

By the year 2000, we should be second-to-none in achievement in mathematics and sciences. By the year 2000, our schools should be safe, disciplined, and drug free. By the year 2000, we should have a lifetime system of learning which guarantees that we give all adults the chance to learn to read, the chance to get a GED if they don't have a high school diploma, and the chance to get training throughout a lifetime. Those were the goals.

Now, we knew that state and local governments would have to provide most of the funding for public education as they do now. But we also knew that in the decade of the eighties, the federal percentage of the federal budget going to education had declined by about fifty percent. And the percentage of local school budgets coming from federal funds had declined dramatically.

So, in the agreement, we asked the White House to make some commitments. And the White House promised to fully fund the Head Start program, among other things. Yet, now in the fourth year of Mr. Bush's administration, according to one study, only thirty-six percent of the eligible children of this country are being served by Head Start.

The President promised to support bilingual education. It has been cut by forty-seven percent in the 1980's while we have faced an explosion of immigrant population from around the world.

The President now promises to improve worker training but federal

employment and training outlays have gone down twenty-six percent in the 1980's and the President's current budget calls for removing two hundred and twenty four thousand trainees off the Job Training and Partnership Act, an act his own Vice President helped to write into the law. He himself has pledged to help end adult illiteracy by the year 2000, yet the president's proposed budget eliminates four needed literacy programs, including one that helps teach literacy to inmates incarcerated in prisons, when we know that ignorance is one of the main causes of crime in this country.

But one promise he has kept. When he said, and I quote, "I don't believe it is the Federal role to say the Federal government will pay for every kid to be educated in college." Now that's a commitment they've kept. He's taken bold, decisive action to keep that promise. He's proposed eliminating Pell grants for any family that earns more than ten thousand dollars a year. If your income's over ten thousand dollars a year, you're too rich to get any college aid. But, if you make three hundred thousand dollars a year you're still poor enough to need a capital gains tax cut. It isn't right.

Those who do receive pell grants know that they are so small that they are worth about half as much as they were a decade ago. The 1993 budget cuts student aid by 79 million dollars. The President even recently vetoed a bill that would have allowed Americans to deduct their interest on their student loans and from their tax returns and use IRA savings for college costs

Why did he veto that bill? Because the bill payed for this assistance to the middle class with a modest tax increase on the richest Americans. And he was opposed to the tax increase on people whose incomes went up in the 1980's, while their tax burdens went down. Now that the election is upon us, he has reversed part of eleven years of administrative effort by now advocating a policy to give greater access to students to student loans, eight or nine months after I called for universal access to student loans for all Americans.

It took this president more than a year after our education summit to send an education plan to Congress. And while there some impressive sayings in the President's America 2000 proposal, the heart of the Bush education plan is to tinker around the edges, to build five hundred and thirty-five new public schools, one for every congressman and senator. That's how the number was decided.

Instead of providing real incentives to improve and restructure all of our schools, raise up a few and leave the rest behind. The President's education plan amounts to a form of "trickle down education" that won't help Americans anymore than trickle down economics has helped us in the 1980's.

We must close the gaps in our society between what people are capable of achieving and what we ask of them, between what we promise our people and what we deliver. Regardless of whose to blame, and there's always enough blame to go around, what we really need is to forget about blame, roll up our sleeves and get to work.

Let's be clear, this situation is not all bad. There are great schools, great teachers, great principals in America - great

understand the importance of education to your future and who are filling the classrooms of our community colleges. There are public officials from school boards to governors and legislators to members of Congress, and yes, people in this administration in Washington who really do care about education, but the fact is we are not doing enough.

Because I've spent so much of my life over the last decade working on education, I wish we had time to talk about every aspect of it today. But today I have to confine myself to what I believe the President and the national government could do otherwise we won't be out of here until lunchtime and you'll be sorry I came.

America needs an education president who shows up for class everyday, not just once every four years. In the first 100 days of my administration, I'll give Congress and the American people a real education reform package. I'll work day and night to get it passed, unlike our current President who often proposes and then leaves it to someone else to dispose or not to act at all.

First, we must implement that portion of the national education goals which calls for the establishment of world class standards in math and science and other subjects. Today we have an educational system that too often moves people up the ladder whether they study or not, graduates people whether they know anything or not, and dumps people into the work force whether they have the skills it takes to succeed or not, and that is wrong.

We must develop a meaningful national examination system, not one of these so called "norm reference" tests that you give two or three years and then every American is making above the national average and the only people who make out are the people who sell the tests. We need to determine whether our students are meeting the standards we set and we shouldn't use the national standards and the national test simply to measure performance. They should be used to increase expectations and to give schools incentives and structures to improve students performance.

It is just not true that only our most gifted students can do demanding work. Our competitors all around the world know that effort, not ability, makes the biggest difference in educational achievement. That is the real lesson of the outstanding achievements achieved in inner city poor and rural schools by remarkable teachers. It is the lesson of the wonderful movie "Stand and Deliver," set here in Los Angeles, in which Edward James Olmos played Jaime Escalante whose advanced math students at Garfield High School, here in L.A., led the nation in passing the advanced placement tests.

My wife and daughter and I have watched that movie together a lot of times. Every few months my daughter asks me to go rent it again. I asked many members of my administration to go and see the movie when it came out. And when they would come out of the movie, I would say, "What was the lesson of the movie?" And they would say, "That guy is an amazing teacher." I'd say, "No, that's one lesson. The real lesson is all children can learn."

All over this country, when parents and teachers and administrators challenge students to do their best, they come through with world class performances. It is not a question of I.Q. It is a question of vision, will, organization, and effort.

high standards and real measurement.

The second thing we need to do is to make sure all of our kids start out on a level playing field, because national standards can't be fair unless we do. We have to work hard to see that every American school has a challenging, rich curriculum, that every teacher has the opportunity to develop the skills that he or she needs to teach well.

In the past, the poor and the minority and the immigrants have too often been the victim of the system which held them to lower standards than others and provided fewer opportunities than other children got. Too often less is expected and less is provided. We must both have high standards and a level playing field of opportunity so that all can reach the standards.

One of the things that means is preschool for every child who needs it. Surely a country that found 500 billion dollars to bail out the savings and loan industry can find five billion dollars to fund the Head Start program. Surely we can carry out the recommendations of the National School Readiness Task Force, which I chair, so states and localities can offer prenatal care, day-care, and family support services that can prevent learning problems and equip children to make the most of school.

Surely we can provide more funds for the Chapter One program so that we can have smaller classes in the early grades for poor and disadvantaged children. There are now clear, national studies, coming out of the state of Tennessee, which demonstrate conclusively that if you get class sizes for poor kids down as low as fifteen to one in the early grades, they have permanent measurable lasting learning gains which increase the chances of their staying in school, succeeding, and winding up in a place like this, just as you have. And we ought to pursue those reforms.

Finally, we ought to restore schools as the safest, not the most dangerous place in our society again - not a place where kids do bullet drills instead of fire drills. Earlier this year, I visited Thomas Jefferson High School in Brooklyn, where one month later, two students, to whom I spoke, were shot to death while walking in the hall.

Three years ago I visited a grade school here in east L.A. Well, actually I was in South Central L.A., and I visited a grade school, a 6th grade class, and I asked these children what they were most worried about. They were bright, articulate, intelligent children, they were most worried about being shot going to and from school. They were most worried then about being forced to join gangs when they got in the eighth grade. Those kids now are in the 9th grade. I've often wondered in the last few days after what happened here, how many of them wound up in gangs, whether they looted and whether they're all still alive. They're all our children.

A national government ought to provide security equipment, help cities put more police on the streets, on the beat, in the neighborhoods around school, pass the Brady Bill to require a waiting period before people with criminal records or mental health histories or too young to get guns without asking, proving anything.

These are all our children. And, there can be no level playing field where people are not safe in their schools. I also believe that we need to give some people a level playing field by giving them some more leverage in the schools they attend. I support Magnet schools in big cities. I support public school choice. I think parents of children ought to have the ability to go to schools other than the ones their residence dictates within the public school system.

But, the present administration, wants to use public funds to subsidize parents to send their children to private schools. Now, while I support public school choice, and our state was the second state to adopt it, I am unalterably opposed to a voucher system to give people public money to take to private schools.

We already spend less than many of our competitors on kindergarten through twelfth grade education, the smaller percentage of our income. Now is not the time to further diminish the financial resources of schools when budgets are being slashed by states all across America. When the federal government has restricted its commitment to education, now is not the time to adopt a private school plan.

The third thing, I think we ought to do, is to launch an all-out effort to increase our high school graduation rate to ninety percent by the year 2000. Nearly a quarter of our high school students fail to graduate on time. In some cities the drop out rate is fifty percent. That dooms the people who do it to a series of low skilled, low wage jobs, or a life on the outskirts of society, which often leads to crime and prison.

It's no wonder we have the highest incarceration rate in the world and spend more money to keep people in prison than to send them to college. We need to make something of the lives we're wasting.

In my state, we do something that might not work in a big city, but it works in a rural state. You drop out of school for no good reason you lose your drivers license. More than 1,750 young people have lost their drivers license since we passed the law, but our state now has the highest graduation rate in our region. The other state that's about tied with us is West Virginia, another poor state that was the first state to adopt the drivers license law.

If I were President, and when I become President, we will help schools prevent dropouts and reach out to the young people who do drop out to bring them up to the same world class standards that we expect of everyone else. We need to give students incentives to stay in high school.

Programs like the "I Have a Dream" Program in New York, where Eugene Lang, a businessman, promised a group of students that if they would stay in school, he would send them to college. A program like the "Contact" Program in Orlando, Florida, where a young friend of mine, named Charles White, organizes business people to work one on one with students who might get in trouble, and keep them in school, and give them summer jobs, and assure there's a future for them after they get out of high school.

A program like the "Academic Challenge Grant" that we adopted in my state, where we made more than two-thirds of our kids, by income, the bottom two-thirds, eligible to get a thousand dollar a

recommended college courses, stayed off drugs, and behaved themselves as a matter of right, they got the scholarship. We need to give people incentives to stay in school.

But, we need to help those who drop out anyway. We need things like youth opportunity centers which have been proposed in New York. Opportunity Centers that would provide youngsters regular contact with an adult who cares about them. It would give students who don't succeed in traditional school settings a second chance to make it in an alternative learning environment.

I'd like us to consider forming a youth opportunity corp that would recruit young high school dropouts for a year or two, pay them entry level wages, and help them develop self discipline, learning skills and skilled training. As we reduce our military forces in the wake of the Cold War, we could make the most of the training facilities and the expert personnel of our military, the best training ground on earth, by using them to teach in the youth opportunity corp and giving them the chance to continue to serve their country instead of just putting them into the street.

A youth opportunity corp would give drop outs the opportunity and the discipline to complete their high school diploma at the same standards as everyone else and a second chance to earn a decent living.

The fourth thing we should do is to challenge American business to live up to its responsibility, to help Americans develop skills in the workplace. Something's wrong with a country that strips the dignity from blue collar work by permitting younger workers with a high school diploma to watch their earnings drop twenty percent over a decade.

In our administration, we'll establish a national apprenticeship program, like those in Europe, that will encourage non-college bound students to stay in school, take challenging courses, move into the work force and then get two years of further training on the job in cooperation with institutions like this community college. That's what we need to do for those kids.

Last year in our state we passed a statewide apprenticeship bill. The other day, a woman in northwest Arkansas told our program director there how proud she was that her daughter will now be earning a higher wage as a result of the apprenticeship program that her own mother makes in her regular job.

For that mother and that daughter, the American dream is still coming true. Knowing your child can have an opportunity for a better life is an important part of restoring hope in this country. We also need to establish a national system to teach every adult in the work force to read and give every working adult the chance to earn a high school diploma within the next five years. It doesn't cost that much money, you could do a lot of it in the work force.

In my state, a very small state of 2.4 million people, we spend more money on adult education now than our next-door neighbors in Texas, a state five times our size. But, it is the best money we have ever spent.

We have increased by more than four times in the last eight years the number of adults in our job training program and it is...

to lift their income. We ought to teach everybody to read who has got a job, give everybody that has a job a high school diploma. Then they can come here.

Instead of treating job training as a poor step child, in our administration, we will require every employer to invest one to one-and-a-half percent of payroll in the retraining of their own work force. This is what our competitors do. And we will require them to spend it on workers all along down the line.

In America, seventy percent of the job training paid for by private company goes to the top ten percent of the employees. And our competitors in Europe and Japan, job training programs go to people up and down the line because smart folks know that the front line workers make the money for you and you better retrain them every year if you want your productivity to continue to rise.

At the same time, we need to force our government to straighten out and streamline the unbelievable bureaucratic maze of the countless of publicly funded training programs - each with their own application forms, eligibility criteria, rules and procedures. That needs to be done too.

Finally, to respond to what your president said, we need to make sure every American that wants to, has the chance to go to college.

For the last twelve years, under the last two presidents, until this president election year conversion last month in Pennsylvania, these administrations have worked harder to make it harder for millions of Americans to get help to go to college.

Here's what I would like to do. I think we ought to scrap this existing student loan program. We waste over three billion dollars on default and one billion dollars of bank subsidies every year. I'd like to replace it with what I call a domestic GI bill.

A national service trust that would give every American, regardless of income, the right to borrow the money to finance a college education. All of you could show up and borrow the money. You won't have to be poor, although to be sure you could be poor and get it. You could be middle class and get it. You could be upper-middle class and get it. But you have to be willing to pay the money back.

And it would be your choice. You have one of two options. You could sign a contract to pay the money back as a small percentage of your income after you go to work which you would pay at tax time so you couldn't beat the bill. But you would pay not just according to how much you borrowed but also according to how much you make.

So, we would never cripple people or discourage them from becoming teachers or public servants or doing other work that might pay less money but be otherwise more rewarding. You would pay according to your ability to pay.

Or, you could chose to pay it off with public service. If you borrowed the funds for two years of education, you could do one year of work, at a reduced salary, payed by the national government as a teacher, a law enforcement officer, in a drug program working with troubled children, working to help kids stay

out of gangs and in schools, solving the problems of your community and getting your own education. We could get a whole generation of Americans to do that.

In the end, politicians can't and won't solve this problem for you. If we are going to compete and win again, we are all going to have to work harder and work smarter and become life-long learners. I know this can happen because I have seen it happen before.

In 1978, a distinguished educational advisor consultant named Kern Alexander came to my state and said that a child would have a better chance to get a good education in Arkansas than virtually any other state in the country. We didn't point the fingers or place blame, we just went to work. In the early eighties, when I became governor for a second time, my wife and I and a committee of distinguished Arkansans that she chaired, traveled our state and talked to parents and teachers and ordinary citizens.

We began what has been a decade-long struggle to raise standards and improve opportunity in our state. We have raised taxes twice and put all the money into education. The sales tax in 1983 and then half-a-cent on the sales tax and a half-a-percent on the corporate income tax in 1981.

We have done some things no other state has done. We became the first state in the country to require existing teachers to take and pass a test to continue to get recertified. You can imagine how popular that was. But, you know what, after two years most of them passed and those that didn't shouldn't have been recertified, and they weren't. And, we raised pay and morale in the end.

We became the first state to require students at the eighth grade level to pass an exam to be promoted on to high school. They said, "Oh, you can't do that, you'll increase the dropout rate." But you know what? The dropout rate went down and the graduation rate went up because there were no more bored kids in high school who couldn't at least read, because of the eighth grade test.

We went for smaller classes in the early grades, for elementary counselors for the kids. We had the lowest high school college-going rate in the country in 1980, but now we are up to the national average.

These things can happen. We can change the future and the opportunity for all the people in America if we work together, if we have high standards, if we close the opportunity gap, if we close the responsibility gap.

You know, I was born at the end of World War II in a state where the whole state had a per-capita income that was just a little above half the national average. Most of us lived, in other words, below what you would call the poverty line now. We didn't know much about that or anything else having to do with federal statistics. But we did know that if we worked hard and played by the rules, we could get ahead.

What bothers me so much about America today is that there are so many people who are being left out of that opportunity channel. I got a chance to get a world class education, starting in my public school. I had the opportunity to work my way through college, to work my way through law school. I had six jobs doing

it but it didn't kill me. But it was economically possible because I also had a scholarship and a loan. I had the kinds of things that now too many people don't have.

And I know, that if it hadn't have been for my education, the help I got in scholarships and loans as well as the chance I had to work my way through school, I wouldn't be standing here giving you this speech today.

And I got into this race today because I could not tolerate any longer seeing millions of Americans squander the opportunities that ought to be theirs because we do not have a good economic policy to create more jobs in this country and because we do not take advantage of what is there because of educational gaps in performance, achievement and standards that exist.

And, I tell you, one of the major issues that ought to be on the front-burner in this presidential election is who can be the real education president and how America can be the country that put education first again.

Thank you very much.



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Bill Clinton
Governor

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1. In 1983, the Arkansas School Standards were adopted and have become the foundation of the state's education reform movement. The program established minimum standards to be met by all Arkansas schools, including intensive instruction in basic skills, a range of required courses including advanced courses, limits on class sizes and regular testing of student performance.

2. Financing for the implementation of the new Standards was provided by a sales tax increase which provides \$168 million annually for education only.

3. One of the most significant results of the first wave of education reform was availability in all Arkansas schools of key courses needed for college. Enrollment in advanced courses more than doubled by 1987. Students enrolled in advanced math and computer courses tripled. Black students taking the recommended core (advanced classes) increased 68% from 1987 to 1991.

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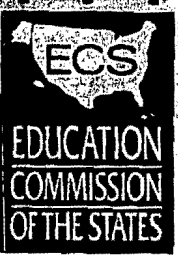
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LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES INVOLVING OPEN ENROLLMENT (CHOICE) STATE STATUS

STATE	Comprehensive Statewide Program*	STATUS
Alabama		legislation defeated in 1990; limited controlled in-district choice was approved in 1991
Alaska		
Arizona	1994	defeated in 1989 legislative session; 1992 legislation failed; statewide plan passed in 1994 legislature
Arkansas	1989	statewide plan passed legislature in 1989
California		legislation passed and signed in 1993 for mandatory intradistrict choice (within districts) and voluntary interdistrict choice; voucher initiative on ballot in November 1993
Colorado	1994	measure was defeated in 1989; 1990 legislature approved pilots; refinements passed in 1991; November 1992 ballot initiative on vouchers defeated 67% to 33%; interdistrict plan passed 1994
Connecticut		1995 bills on public and private school choice were not brought to a vote
Delaware	1995	allows parents to choose any public school for their child(ren) to attend
District of Columbia		1996 U.S. Congress proposal to provide vouchers for D.C. students to attend private schools
Florida		legislation defeated in 1992; 1996 proposed "Parental Choice in Education Act"
Georgia		1989 legislature approved study of the concept
Hawaii		
Idaho	1990	passed statewide plan in 1990 legislature
Illinois		study conducted in 1990 on choice concept for Chicago; statewide plan pending in 1990 legislature; voucher legislation was defeated; choice pilots only; refined in 1991 legislature
Indiana		legislation defeated in 1990; limited plan in Indianapolis approved 2/93; state law does stipulate that a parent (or student after age 18) may request a transfer to another school corporation "if the student may be better accommodated" in the transferee corporation; both the sending and the receiving corporation must agree to the transfer
Iowa	1989	passed statewide plan in 1989 legislature; refined in 1991; legislation to further refine in 1992
Kansas		
Kentucky		
Louisiana		limited/controlled statewide plan passed in 1992

STATE	Comprehensive Statewide Program*	STATUS
Maine		1995 proposed legislation to broaden public education options
Maryland		
Massachusetts		legislation held over from 1989 but changed to a policy allowing districts the option; refinements in 1991; legislative panel recommended repealing the "choice" program in 1992 but bill to do so died; passed in 1993
Michigan		legislation from 1989 defeated in 1990; 1991 legislation passed allowing for intradistrict (within district) open enrollment only
Minnesota	1988	passed legislation in 1988; refined in 1990; further refined in 1996
Mississippi		legislation was defeated in 1989 and 1992
Missouri		defeated in 1989; legislation defeated in 1990; legislation passed in 1991 but must go to a vote of the people in 11/91; voters defeated; legislature passed voluntary, interdistrict plan in 1994; proposed voucher program in 1995
Montana		legislation defeated in 1990
Nebraska	1989	statewide plan passed 1989 legislature; refinements passed in 1990 and 1991
Nevada		legislation was defeated in 1989
New Hampshire		legislation pending in 1990 resulted in the appointment of a study committee; legislation defeated in 1991; passed voluntary open enrollment in 1995 (Charter Schools and Open Enrollment Act) whereby any school legislative body may vote to designate one or more of its schools as an open enrollment school (but no school shall be required to be an open enrollment school (194-B:2)
New Jersey		district pilots were approved in 1989 legislature
New Mexico		statewide plan was defeated in 1989 legislature
New York		voluntary interdistrict urban-suburban transfer program to reduce racial isolation
North Carolina		legislative hearings were held in 1989 but no bill was introduced; no further action beyond discussions in 1991
North Dakota	1993	plan passed in 1993; provides timeline for application to schools outside district of residence and procedures for school boards to accept/reject applicants based on capacity of program, class, grade level or building
Ohio	1989	statewide plan passed 1989 legislature; refined in 1991; legislation for voucher pilot for Cleveland passed in 1995 - includes religious and other private schools; challenged in state court lawsuit
Oklahoma		legislation from 1989 died in 1990 session
Oregon	1991	ballot initiative which would have resulted in vouchers to parents for up to \$2500 for costs incurred sending children to private schools or from teaching kids at home was defeated in 11/90 elections; statewide open enrollment plan passed in 1991
Pennsylvania		legislature did major study of the topic in 1992 but no legislation was passed; 1995 proposal for school choice pilot and voucher program for low-income families
Puerto Rico		1993 "Special Scholarship and Free Selection of Schools" enacted; \$1500 vouchers provided to low-income students to attend public, private or religious schools; challenged, and the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico ruled funds given to public school students for access to private schools unconstitutional. Amended July 1995
Rhode Island		
South Carolina		
South Dakota		1996 proposed legislation for public school choice

STATE	Comprehensive Statewide Program*	STATUS
Tennessee	1992	approved in 1992 legislation, but informal open enrollment practiced for decades
Texas		bill died without committee hearings in 1989; Senate Bill 1, enacted 1995, included provision for charter schools to select an open enrollment designation; bill also allows students to be assigned/transferred from one school to another within jurisdiction; transfers, by agreement, are also permitted between districts
Utah	1990	statewide plan passed 1990 legislature; refinements passed in 1992; "Each school district and public school is authorized and encouraged to do the following: . . . (c) implement a public school choice program to give parents, students, and teachers greater flexibility in designing and choosing among programs with different focuses between schools within the same district and between different districts, subject to space availability, demographics, and legal and performance criteria."
Vermont		proposed 1996 legislation would enable a pupil to attend any public school
Virginia		
Washington	1990	statewide plan passed 1990 legislature: each school district shall adopt and implement a policy allowing intradistrict open enrollment; each district shall adopt a policy establishing standards for accepting or rejecting applications from nonresident students or students being home-schooled
West Virginia		
Wisconsin		legislation defeated in 1989; limited plan approved for Milwaukee in 1990 providing vouchers which may be used at any nonsectarian, private or public school in the city; proposal in 1995 to expand to include religious schools pending in courts
Wyoming		

*Statewide Comprehensive Program = Districts are required (or strongly encouraged) to participate and a student may attend any public school, not just one within his/her district of residence.

Compiled by the Information Clearinghouse

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The Education Commission of the States is a nonprofit, nationwide interstate compact formed in 1965. The primary purpose of the commission is to help governors, state legislators, state education officials and others develop policies to improve the quality of education at all levels. Forty-nine states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are members. It is ECS policy to take affirmative action to prevent discrimination in its policies, programs and employment practices.

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