

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 30, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

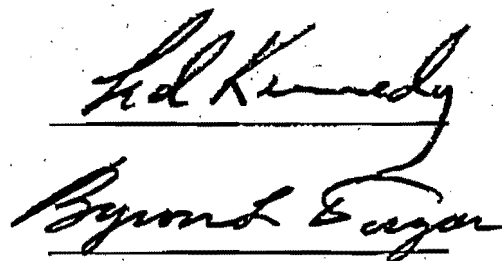
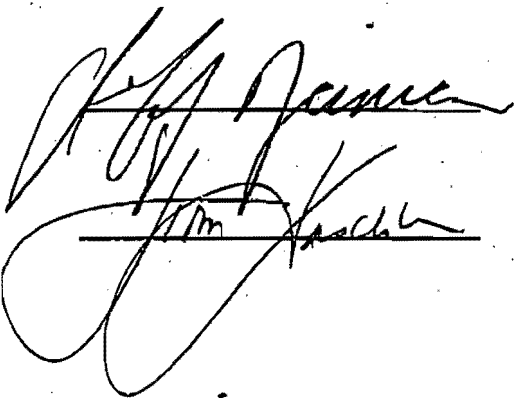
We the undersigned are writing in opposition to the so-called 'compromise' on national testing, which would effectively block the implementation of voluntary 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests that several states and school districts have already indicated their intention to use when they become available.

We believe that voluntary national tests using rigorous academic standards should be readied and states and local school districts should be allowed to make their own decisions about whether or not to use them. For the first time in our nation's history, a voluntary national testing program would allow parents around the nation to compare the academic performance of their children, their neighborhood schools, and their local district with any other place in the nation, using world-class standards.

However, the proposal now being considered would prevent states and districts from choosing to use voluntary national tests, because it bans any implementation of voluntary national tests without specific Congressional authorization. In contrast to the Senate-passed compromise, which ensured that the tests were entirely voluntary and transferred authority to develop and implement the new tests to the independent and bipartisan National Assessment Governing Board, this proposal puts the fate of the voluntary national tests in the hands of its sworn opponents.

Because we support letting states and districts make the choice about whether or not to use voluntary national tests, we would support your decision to veto the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations conference report if it included this provision.

Sincerely,



~~Tom K... ..~~
Hank

Ken W... ..

Camel Montef... ..

Barth... ..

Jay R... ..

D... ..

Carl L... ..

John G... ..

John Reed

Dale B... ..

W... ..

Th... ..

Don D... ..

Paul S... ..

Ch... ..

~~John G... ..~~

William G... ..

Max C... ..

W... ..

Oct. 30, 1951 5:25 PM NO. 858 P. 474

Patrick Leahy

Tom Johnson

Wm. L. Garrison

Max Bowers

R. L. Lunn

James C. Lister

Johnny

T. L. Lunn

J. L. Lunn

Frank R. Lankford

Daniel R. Lankford

Chuck Robb

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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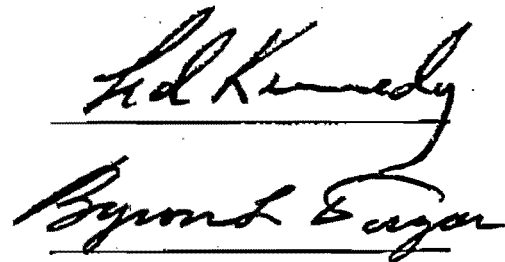
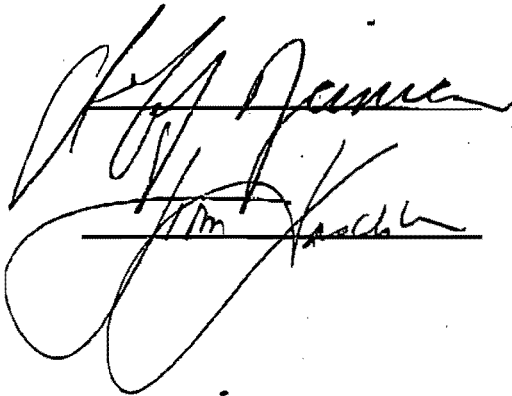
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Sincerely,



~~Jim Kelley~~
Ken Can

Ron Wyden

Carol Morley Bran

Barbara M. M. M.

Jan Relyea

Dwight Ford

Carl Linn

John Glenn

Jack Reed

Dale Bumpers

Bob Dole

Jeffery Keith

Don Dickinson

Paul Sarbanes

Clifford Smith

Hubert H. H.

Richard B. B.

Max Cleland

W. W. W.

Patrick Leahy

T. L. L.

Tom Johnson

J. L. L.

Wm. J. Fortson

Frank R. Lautenberg

Max Baucus

Daniel K. Akaka

R. L. L.

Chuck Robb

Donna Christensen

Johnny

AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH



October 20, 1997

The Honorable Bill Goodling
U.S. House of Representatives
Congress of the United States
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Goodling,

Let me respond to the questions in your letter of October 17, 1997.

The dates of the pilot tests of both the mathematics and reading tests for the Voluntary National Tests will depend on Congress's decision and on when that decision is made. They will depend further on the decision schedule and substantive recommendations of any Governing Board appointed to be responsible for the project.

Pursuant to the stop work order from the Department of Education issued September 25th 1997, all work related to the development of test questions ceased at close of business that day. As a result there are no questions ready to be pilot tested.

We have yet to decide on a definitive design for both the pilot and field tests. This task has also been delayed by the stop work order and the absence of firm specifications and decisions about important issues such as calculator usage. As a result, it is impossible to advise you of the total number of schools and students that will be necessary for each study. Since the current contract calls for the contractor to meet the NAEP standards for validity and reliability, we assume that we will need NAEP-like samples of students and schools for both the pilot and the field tests. Those estimates can only be made after test specifications are finalized. At that time we will submit our design recommendations for approval to whatever Agency or Governing body is designated as responsible for the project.

Following are the answers to the other questions in your letter of the 17th.

My letter of September 15th to the Chief State School Officers has not been retracted. Not knowing the possible resolution of the issues nor the schedule for such resolution, there was little I could offer that was concrete. We knew from several communications from their offices that they were all aware of the ongoing debates over the program's future here in Washington. Coverage in Education Week and in other media has been fairly complete and specific.

In response to my letter, some states have written and declined to participate because of very busy test schedules of their own and others have said that they will make a decision after the uncertainty is resolved. Other states and districts have volunteered to help and have called the 888 number we provided about specific test dates. We have told them that we can not be specific about schedules at this time and that we will contact them in the future when matters are settled. Thus, at this time, no sites have been selected for participation in the pilot test.

PELAVIN RESEARCH CENTER
1000 THOMAS JEFFERSON STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20007
(202) 944-3300 FAX: (202) 944-3454

- (1) Computer technology now makes it possible to generate a natural language letter to each student who takes the test, that describes in clear, understandable language how well he or she performed in responding to the questions on the test. Our intention is to make these letters more user friendly and less intimidating than a typical test report. Procedures for delivering this information to students will be recommended to the Governing Board for their consideration and decision.
- (2) The Voluntary National Tests are designed to be linked statistically to NAEP and to TIMSS precisely so that these comparisons to the NAEP achievement levels and to the TIMSS international average can be made. Each child's results can then be matched to NAEP's levels of BASIC, PROFICIENT and ADVANCED as well as to the international average of the 41 countries that participated in the TIMSS project. If this design is implemented, students will be able to compare their performance with those of other American 4th and 8th graders and of 8th graders from other countries. These comparisons would not be possible until the first operational administration. They would not be available during either the pilot or field test administrations.
- (3) Your questions seem to imply that we will be collecting "personal" information about students and their environments. These new tests are not intended to collect detailed information about student backgrounds, classroom or home environments. The information referred to in my letter has to do with each student's performance on the test itself. In our proposal to the Department of Education we have recommended that parents be provided similar natural language letters with a description of their child's performance on the test. It has also been suggested that parents be advised which questions were answered correctly and which were not so that they can discuss these with their children. Since these new tests are not designed to gather any information about teacher strategies, curricula or school programs, it will be impossible to comment in any way about "type of instruction."
- (4) As in NAEP, no State, district or school will be coerced or forced to participate. We do not need the participation of all 50 states to guarantee a valid sample.
- (5) I assume that Secretary Riley's reference to "national standards" in his September 25th statement is to the NAEP achievement levels which were developed through a national consensus process and which have been accepted by the 44 states participating in the NAEP state program. As mentioned above in response to your question number (2), these are my operating assumptions.

I hope these answers adequately address the questions posed.

Sincerely,



Archie E. Lapointe
Project Director

cc: The Honorable John Ashcroft
The Honorable Richard W. Riley

10/21/97 00:00 FAX 202-401-1438

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 17, 1997

By Facsimile: 202-944-5454; 202-401-1438

**Mr. Archie Lapointe
Project Director
Voluntary National Tests Initiative
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20007**

Dear Mr. Lapointe:

It is our understanding that you are planning to pilot test several questions for the Administration's new national tests in mathematics beginning the week of November 17, 1997 and reading the week of December 1, 1997. We are hereby requesting copies of the mathematics and reading test questions you plan to administer. We would like to receive copies of both sets of questions no later than 48 hours after receipt of this letter.

While we are aware that the Secretary announced on September 25, 1997 that the contractor will discontinue development of test items until the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) has approved specifications, it is our understanding that the Department is still planning site locations for test development. We would like to receive a list of the sites currently targeted for use in the pilot test no later than 48 hours after receipt of this letter and an indication of the total number you expect to choose for this pilot test phase.

In addition to receiving copies of these pilot tests, we would like you to answer the following questions in regard to a September 15, 1997 letter you sent to State Superintendents concerning the pilot and field testing. The Secretary's announcement on September 25, 1997 did not mention pilot or field testing and only referenced the forwarding of "the test panel's recommended specifications to the test contractor." To the best of our knowledge, there was no letter or retraction of your September 15, 1997 letter to State Superintendents asking for help in pilot and field testing of these national tests. The letter you signed on September 15, 1997 raises important questions that we feel need to be answered regardless of your schedule for pilot testing. The Secretary's statement that the national tests "can be thought of as individualized versions of NAEP that, unlike NAEP, will for the first time provide parents, teachers and students with information about how well individual students are doing compared to national standards" also raises concerns about the development of national standards. We would ask that the answers to these questions also be submitted no later than 48 hours after receipt of this letter.

- 10/21/97 00:01 FAX 202 205 7751 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL TESTS
- (1) You state in the September 15, 1997 letter that "Students who take the test will personally receive information they can understand." Would you please elaborate on this sentence and explain exactly how students will "personally" receive information?
 - (2) The paragraph goes on further to state that "Each will be advised how well he or she stacks up when compared to agreed upon national goals and to other 4th and 8th graders across the country and across the world." What exactly are you using to offer this comparison point? What "national goals" are you referencing? Finally, if this is a pilot test, how are you going to offer a valid comparison to students across the country and the world as you state in your letter?
 - (3) On page two of the September 15 letter you state: "Parents will receive personal information about their child along with suggestions about how they can encourage learning and questions they might want to ask teachers." What types of personal information are being provided? Who is offering the suggestions to parents and how were these individuals selected? Are you advocating one type of instruction over another? Why is the federal government giving advice to parents on how to teach their children?
 - (4) The letter states that "Schools from all 50 states will be selected to participate. These participants will be the first in the nation to receive individualized reports geared towards students, parents and teachers." If this is a voluntary test, why are schools being "selected"? Also, why is "a representative from the Voluntary National Tests Initiative contacting you within a week to enlist your cooperation"? If this is truly voluntary, why are you trying to coerce individuals into participating? The mention of "all 50 States" predisposes that every state will agree to participate. If this is truly a voluntary program, how can you assume or guarantee all 50 States would participate given the fact that only 43 States participate in NAEP and only 7 have volunteered for the proposed Federal tests.
 - (5) Secretary Riley's September 25, 1997, press statement says "The voluntary national tests can be thought of as individualized versions of NAEP that, unlike NAEP, will for the first time provide parents, teachers and students with information about how well individual students are doing compared to national standards." To what national standards is the Secretary referring? We thought there were to be no national standards.

We look forward to a prompt response from you on these questions. If complete answers to each question will not be forthcoming as requested, we are seeking detailed explanations as to why they are not forthcoming and when we will have the answers.

Sincerely,


BILL GOODLING
U.S. House of Representatives


JOHN ASHCROFT
United States Senate

cc: Honorable Richard W. Riley

Congress of the United States**Washington, DC 20515****October 17, 1997****By Facsimile: 202-944-5454; 202-401-1438**

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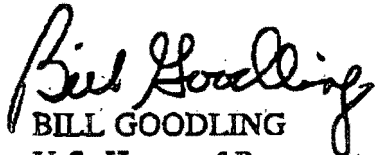
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BILL GOODLING
U.S. House of Representatives


JOHN ASHCROFT
United States Senate

cc: Honorable Richard W. Riley

BILL GOODLING
19TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

TOLL FREE DISTRICT NUMBER:
800-632-1811

CHAIRMAN:
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
THE WORKFORCE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3819

September 24, 1997

ROOM 2263
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-5836

DISTRICT OFFICES:
FEDERAL BUILDING
200 SOUTH GEORGE STREET
YORK, PA 17406-8898

CHAMBER BUILDING
212 NORTH HANOVER STREET
CARLISLE, PA 17013-2423

140 BALTIMORE STREET
ROOM 301
GETTYSBURG, PA 17325-2311

2020 YALE AVENUE
CAMP HILL, PA 17011-5456

44 FREDERICK STREET
HANOVER, PA 17331-3508

President Bill Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500-0005

SEP 25 PM 5:36

Dear Mr. President:

In your recent speech before the AFL-CIO, you said, "...there is nothing more important for the future of this country than giving our kids a decent education."

I agree with that statement 100 percent.

You went on to say, "For the first time, 4th graders scored above the global average in mathematics and science."

What you didn't say was that happened because of the efforts of the states to raise their academic standards and better prepare teaching staff with some financial assistance from the federal government.

You continued with the statement, "I know all children can learn and I know we've got people who can do the job. We've just got to support them and bear down and do more of the kinds of things that we know will work."

That is exactly what I am trying to do. With your shotgun approach -- with a little money spread everywhere -- I'm left with \$200 million to do the one major initiative you proposed that truly makes sense: improvements of literacy.

For \$200 million spread throughout the country, I have to design a program that will have all children reading-ready by the time they reach 1st grade. That means intensive pre-school reading readiness programs. That means an all-out effort to help parents become the child's most important teacher. That means training and retraining teachers in how to teach reading using proven research and methods. That means remedying those children who are presently in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades who are not reading at grade level.

That's a big order for \$200 million. But it is positively necessary to accomplish this before we get into the business of giving students one more standardized test.

Your stance on testing is making my job of authorizing an "America Reads" program almost impossible. I need your help if your most important initiative -- having all Americans read -- is ever going to see the light of day.

Sincerely,



BILL GOODLING
Chairman, House Committee on
Education and the Workforce

P.S. I called you last Thursday to discuss the "America Reads initiative.

WFG/ts



TERRY E. BRANSTAD
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

515 281-5211

September 15, 1997

Congressman William Goodling, Chairman,
Committee on Education and the Workforce,
U.S. House of Representatives,
2181 Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, D.C. 20515-6100

Dear Congressman Goodling:

President Clinton's proposal to create a national test for all fourth graders in reading and all eighth graders in math keeps repeating that state participation in this one-size-fits-all test is completely voluntary. Yet the stated goal is to recruit 20 states by 1999 and all 50 states by 2002. The Clinton Administration seems to be ignoring the Third International Math and Science Study and the National Assessment of Education Progress as two assessments that are currently used in a number of states to report student achievement. We have yet to see the recommendations from these two national assessments guide much policy development in the nation or the states to inform their standards, the development of textbooks and curricula, or ultimately improve student achievement.

The national test is a simplistic approach to education reform. The problem is not so much that testing is a bad idea. If implemented properly, testing gives states and local schools information about how students are achieving. It is, however, only one indicator of how a child is achieving. It might lead to increased improvements at least in theory. The problem is the reality of how the idea is being implemented at the federal level and ignoring all the education research about what we now know about how to improve schools and student learning.

States may have another problem with the President's national testing initiative. Virtually all states are working on state or local standards. In the end, the test would not measure these locally adopted standards and any test that does not measure what is being taught in the schools isn't worth the paper it's printed on.

Another major concern that we in Iowa and other states have is the potential high cost of administering a national test. The Administration's proposal would cost taxpayers approximately twelve dollars (\$12) per student per test. In Iowa, our local public and non-public schools voluntarily test their students with the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development at a cost of nearly eighty-eight (88) cents per student. With a limited amount of federal discretionary funds for education, is this the best use of federal dollars?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Terry E. Branstad".

Terry E. Branstad
Governor

TEB:cd

He leaned heavily towards the other one near the end --

MR. MCCURRY: I think late in the game he tended toward the mysterious and the novel -- (laughter) -- as opposed to the profound and the policy-oriented.

Q Mike, do you have an approximate date for the Clintons taking Chelsea to Stanford?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, I'd prefer not to publicly comment, but I think it's well-known what the schedule is out there, what the first day of classes are, when Parents' Day is. That's all available to you from the university.

Q Are they both going?

MR. MCCURRY: I don't have word on what their plans are yet. I believe so. But you got that question -- I don't think we've addressed the question publicly. I imagine so, but I don't know for a fact.

Q How more active is the President going to be in the next few weeks with regard to supporting McCain-Feingold, trying to get a vote on the Senate floor?

MR. MCCURRY: Quite.

Q In what way?

MR. MCCURRY: We'll let you know.

Q Is it going to go beyond what he's done in the past, occasionally expressing his support for McCain-Feingold?

MR. MCCURRY: We'll let you know when we've got plans.

Q Are you going to have fast track on Wednesday?

MR. MCCURRY: Likely, yes. Will I have a fast track? The President will advance the prospects for fast track authority, which would allow him to negotiate agreements that will continue to open up markets for the United States and continue to build a fundamental premise of our strong economy into the future. And he wants to make that case publicly and we'll say more about that on Wednesday.

Q If this Goodling amendment becomes enacted as part of the educational appropriations bill, will the President veto that bill?

MR. MCCURRY: It's not going to become law one way or another, but at the moment we're working quietly to try to fashion something that the President can sign. But he won't sign the unsignable.

Q Does that mean he'll veto it if it's part of the bill?

MR. MCCURRY: I didn't use the V word, I think. Did I use the V word? No, I didn't use the V word.

Q Well, the staff has used the V word in their recommendation to him, right, in the statement of administration

policy?

MR. MCCURRY: That's right, we have kind of like -- we're in this time of year now in which there are various gradients of veto threats. You've got senior advisor threats and Cabinet secretary threats -- and what's another good one? Advisors recommend. And then they got the press spokesman who will say he won't sign the unsignable. That's a good one. What else have we got? (Laughter.) And then there is the big gun.

Q What are you seeking in the way of a modification?

MR. MCCURRY: What the President outlined in his radio address I guess two Saturdays ago. It's pretty clear that he wants voluntary national testing developed in a bipartisan fashion. We think we can achieve that. We think it's important for Americans to have confidence that their schools can meet the high quality standards we need in the 21st century. And he thinks Americans will rally around to that cause. And those who don't support high quality national standards, tested so that we know whether we're meeting the standards that we set, will have to make the case why that's a bad idea.

Q He doesn't think the opposition is valid that minorities are at a disadvantage?

MR. MCCURRY: We think that you don't start by assuming failure, inability to meet standards; you start by setting high standards and figuring out the way to meet them. And we will work closely with minority communities to assure that that can be done.

Q On congressional legislation, anything new today on the proposed Department of Energy cuts and RIF-ing 2,000 people over there?

MR. MCCURRY: No, and I asked to check into that further, and I'll get some more information on that. That has come up here before, and I've asked for someone to report in to me about what the status is.

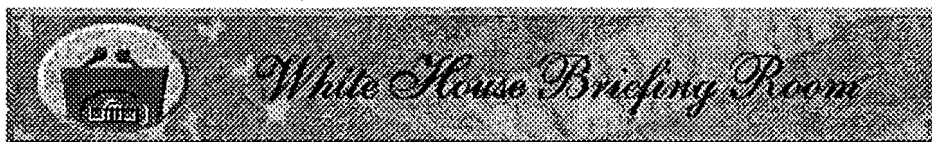
Q Now that the appropriations bills are going to start coming down, are you going to have the same process for the line item veto that you had in the reconciliation bills, where the bill first passes and then you review it? Or are you going to start identifying things ahead of the signing of the bill, and would say, if this is in here it's subject to the line item veto?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, by the statute, it has to be passed and signed into law before it's subject to the line item veto. But the negotiations that might occur with respect to the President's use of that authority can occur at any time.

Q Is he happy with The New York Times editorial supporting Castro?

MR. MCCURRY: I think the President thinks there's a very strong case to be made for opening up markets overseas and for having the authority that's been available to Republican and Democratic presidents alike to negotiate those agreements and appreciates the support given from whatever source.

Q Does the President on fast track still want to at least a house vote before he goes to South America?



September 8, 1997

AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL, 1997

Message Creation Date was at 8-SEP-1997 15:07:00

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 8, 1997

AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL, 1997

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Americans want the best for our children. We want them to live out their dreams, empowered with the tools they need to make the most of their lives and to build a future where America remains the world's beacon of hope and freedom and opportunity. To do this, we must all make improving the quality of education in America one of our highest priorities.

In my State of the Union Address earlier this year, I issued a call to action for American education to prepare our Nation for the 21st century. Working together, we must make our schools strong and safe, with clear standards of achievement and discipline and talented, dedicated teachers in every classroom. Every school and every State should adopt rigorous national standards, with national tests in 4th-grade reading and 8th-grade math to make sure our children master the basics. We must ensure that every student can read independently and well by the end of the 3rd grade. We must connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and help all students become technologically literate. We must modernize school buildings and expand school choice and accountability in public education. And we must encourage lifelong learning for all our citizens, from expanding Head Start programs to helping adults improve their education and skills.

These goals are ambitious, but they are crucial if we are to prepare for the challenges and possibilities of life in the 21st century. With the 1997 balanced budget agreement, we will begin to meet these goals by providing new resources to help children learn to read, the means to help connect every school to the Internet, and tens of billions of dollars in tax cuts to help families pay for college.

I urge all Americans to become actively involved in their local schools and

colleges and to make a real commitment to support education improvement and give our children the kind of support they need to succeed. The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education is setting a powerful example in this endeavor. These partners -- including the Department of Education and more than 3,000 schools, families, colleges and universities, community, cultural, and religious groups, businesses, elected officials and policymakers, and the men and women of our Armed Forces -- have pledged their support for our initiative, "America Goes Back to School: Answering the President's Call to Action." Through their dedication to our children, they are helping America's young people grow into responsible and productive citizens. They are proving that when communities unite, every student can achieve.

more

(OVER)

2

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 8 through September 14, 1997, as a time when America Goes Back to School. I encourage parents, schools, community and State leaders, businesses, civic and religious organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities expressing support for high academic standards and meaningful involvement in schools and colleges and the students and families they serve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#



NATIONAL

1. The Washington Post

August 19, 1997

House Republicans Fail to See the Need for Clinton's National Test Plan

By Rene Sanchez

Washington Post Staff Writer, page A11

President Clinton's struggling campaign to create new national tests for students in reading and math is about to hit its next obstacle: House Republicans.

As soon as Congress returns from its summer recess, one of the first priorities of some Republican lawmakers will be to try to derail, even abolish, the groundbreaking testing plan by prohibiting the **Education Department** from spending any money on it.

The department, which is moving swiftly to develop the tests, has paid little heed so far to congressional skepticism about the idea. But now it has to contend with Rep. William F. Goodling (R-Pa.), chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, who is rallying support for legislative proposals designed to stop the tests.

"We already have plenty of testing," Goodling said recently. "Nearly all of the states have their own testing programs. Why another measurement instrument to tell us what we already know?"

Last month, Goodling sent his House colleagues a letter detailing how the federal government is already spending more than \$500 million this year to help states develop their own achievement exams. Creating the national performance tests that Clinton envisions would cost roughly another \$22 million.

Battles over student testing are hardly new in American education, but Clinton's idea has ignited vehement debate because it would represent the first time the federal government set academic benchmarks by which all of the nation's schools could judge their performance. Beginning in 1999, the president wants all fourth-graders to take a new national exam in reading and all eighth-graders to do the same in math.

Clinton and many education and business leaders say the tests would help create a better national picture of what schools are doing right and wrong. Currently, states give students

proficiency exams, but what they expect them to know varies so much that drawing national conclusions about the quality of schools is often difficult.

Clinton's testing plan is voluntary and so far only six states, including Maryland but not Virginia, are on board. Also, 15 of the nation's largest urban school districts — including New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles — have agreed to use the tests. The District's public schools have not.

Some of the reluctance is practical: State leaders say they want to see the tests before committing to use them. But others have serious philosophical reservations about Clinton's plan, calling it another potentially costly example of unnecessary federal intrusion into local classrooms.

For all of those reasons, Goodling contends that the testing plan should be halted until congressional hearings are held, or until lawmakers explicitly vote to authorize it. That view is winning support from an array of politically conservative groups, such as the Christian Coalition and Family Research Council.

Also, some Democrats are worried that poor students in schools with limited resources could be at a disadvantage taking the tests.

Goodling has introduced a resolution and an amendment to a House appropriations bill to try to stop or delay the testing program.

But the administration's framework for the tests is already taking shape, six months after the president introduced the idea during his State of the Union address.

At this point, each test is to last 90 minutes and be based partly on an exam known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which is highly regarded by many educators for its rigor. Samples of students across the country have been taking versions of that test

every few years since 1969. The Education Department is also on the verge of awarding contracts to write the new tests.

Clinton, meanwhile, has not shown any interest in delaying the tests, which have long been a fixture in the schools of most other industrialized nations. He pleaded with the nation's governors at their annual meeting last month to embrace the idea, arguing that it will give American schools a powerful incentive to be more consistent and rigorous in what they demand of students in such vital subjects as reading and math. Many top business executives also are campaigning for the president's testing plan.

"We think having a sense of urgency is important," said acting Deputy Education Secretary Marshall S. Smith. "We've been sitting back on this issue too long, tolerating curricula that do not adequately prepare many of our students."

Education Secretary Richard W. Riley has testified before congressional panels several times this year about the tests, and the department has held briefings with governors.

Administration officials also say Clinton has tried to be sensitive to Republican concerns about federal meddling in schools by making the tests voluntary, relatively short, and focused only on two core subjects in two pivotal grades.

And today, Education Department officials will meet with state leaders to discuss the tests.

"We are addressing basic skills in the grades where there are generally agreed-on goals for students," Smith said. "There's substantial public support for that."

To date, the Education Department has fared well in most of its political wrestling matches with the Republican-led Congress. Republican talk of abolishing the department has

THE FEDERAL PAGE

House Republicans Fail to See the Need for Clinton's National Test Plan

By Rene Sanchez
Washington Post Staff Writer

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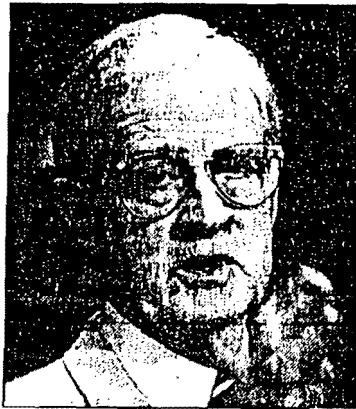
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MARSHALL S. SMITH:

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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"We are addressing basic skills in the grades where there are generally agreed-on goals for students," Smith said. "There's substantial public support for that."

To date, the Education Department has fared well in most of its political wrestling matches with the Republican-led Congress. Republican talk of abolishing the department has vanished, and Clinton's most prominent education initiatives—a new lending program for college students and Goals 2000 grants for school reform—are largely intact.

But the emerging debate over the national tests may be the most sensitive yet, because they would expand the federal government's role in education.

Republican alarm about that change, particularly if it comes without congressional approval, is growing. One lawmaker, Rep. Robert W. Schaffer (R-Colo.), recently sent a letter to his House colleagues that denounced Clinton's plan as "the first step to a top-down, national curriculum"—exactly the image the White House does not want of the new tests.

Speed
Read
CDS

Mike Tanya Bill -

I take it this is happening?
Elena

Bill Goodling

More Testing Is No Solution

If testing is the answer to our education problems, it would have solved them a long time ago. American students are tested, tested, tested, and the Clinton administration is proposing to test our children again.

Contrary to The Post's Aug. 7 editorial, "Get On With Student Testing," regarding President Clinton's national test initiative, the proposal is not "bogged down in politics and process." The proposal is bogged down because Americans don't want and don't need a new national reading test for fourth-graders and a new national mathematics test for eighth-graders.

Though the president and Secretary of Education Richard Riley are convinced that more testing is the way to boost the academic achievement of American students, I disagree—and so do many of the nation's governors, educators, legislators, and members of Congress (both Republican and Democratic). To date, only six governors

have indicated interest in the president's proposal.

The Post is correct in saying that I intend to block funding for the initiative, but my effort is not political. It's common sense. As a former teacher,

Taking Exception

principal and school superintendent, I know the value and purpose of testing. I also know that we don't need new national tests. The president's proposal comes at a time when we already have plenty of testing. Nearly all the states and many local school districts have their own testing programs. We already have two federally funded tests. The first and oldest is NAEP (the National Assessment of Educational Progress), which is a sampling of students in various subjects. The second test is provided under TIMSS (the Third International Mathematics and

Science Study). All of this testing occurs above and beyond the classroom tests that teachers create.

As a result of all this testing, we know that nearly half our students are not performing as well as they should be. We should help these students—not test them again. The Post editorial maintains that new national tests are needed in order to "identify a child's academic weaknesses and plan improvements." This is already accomplished through the panoply of tests already in use. Moreover, test developers and publishers maintain they are creating uniform tests that are comparable state to state and school to school. I have other concerns with the administration's proposal:

■ The administration is sending mixed signals. Since 1993 President Clinton and Secretary Riley have actively pushed their Goals 2000 program, which encourages, and provides funds for, states to create their own standards and tests. In essence, the administra-

tion has backed decentralized reform. Now, with this new test proposal, it appears to be backing centralized reform. Why the switch?

■ The development of national tests is too controversial for the administration to act without congressional review or authorization. The administration has no bill, nor has it indicated any intention of seeking legislation for this initiative. For instance, federal legislation allows for NAEP. But the U.S. Department of Education has quickly planned these new tests without wide public input. In addition, valid tests take years to construct. The fast-track nature of this initiative alarms many educators and policymakers.

■ New national tests could lead to inappropriate and unfair comparisons of schools and students. For instance, we already know that suburban students in Upper St. Claire, Pa., will, in all likelihood, outperform students from center city Pittsburgh. Why? Students from Upper St. Claire have more edu-

cational advantages. No reason exists to develop another test to show us the deficiencies of disadvantaged students.

■ Tests don't generate higher academic performance. The administration and the U.S. Department of Education have talked as if a new national test will create better students. It won't. Standardized tests assess performance; they don't generate it. And with any testing proposal we should be wary of the tendency of teachers to teach to the test.

■ New national tests could lead to a national curriculum. In developing new assessments, the tendency is to create a new curriculum to match those assessments. But like new national tests, a national curriculum is something Americans don't want and don't need. Local control is a hallmark of American education. Given what happened with the federally funded U.S. history standards project (a dismal initiative that generated political correctness rather than history), we

don't need to engage in any effort that could lead to a national curriculum. Unlike the NAEP tests, which are governed by an independent board, these new tests will come from the U.S. Department of Education. That puts the department in an extremely powerful position in our local schools.

Instead of developing new national tests, I would rather send dollars to the classroom, bolster basic academics and increase parental involvement. I want to direct federal resources to family literacy and preschool readiness. I also want to take steps to improve teacher preparation and the teaching and learning conditions in our schools. Those should be our priorities—not more testing.

The writer, a Republican representative from Pennsylvania, is chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Breco

We need a strong
negotiator to help

Re

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN

8-17-97

The Washington Post

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1997

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2181 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

August 6, 1997

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(TTY) — (202) 226-3372
MINORITY — (202) 225-3725
(TTY) — (202) 226-3116

**STOP THE RUN-AWAY TRAIN: COSPONSOR THE GOODLING RESOLUTION TO PUT
THE BRAKES ON NATIONAL TESTING**

Dear Colleague:

Just prior to the August recess I indicated my intention to offer an amendment to the FY 1998 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations' bill. My amendment would have prohibited the spending of any FY 1998 Department of Education funds to plan, develop, or implement the Administration's national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math. I still intend to offer the amendment when Congress returns and takes up the bill in September.

Rather than seek Congressional approval for these tests, the Department of Education has chosen to move full-speed-ahead with the development of the tests in 1997 and 1998—all without specific or explicit Congressional approval. The real issue here is that the development of individualized, national tests is too controversial and potentially divisive for the Administration to act without Congressional discussion and approval.

In addition to the amendment, I have just introduced, on August 1, 1997, a Sense of the House resolution, H.Res. 214, which expresses the Sense of the House that the Department of Education should suspend all efforts to move ahead with these tests until such time as Congress provides specific, explicit statutory authority.

I have bipartisan support for this effort. Currently, there are 22 cosponsors: Mr. Boehner, Mr. Petri, Mr. Owens, Mr. Ballenger, Mr. Barrett of Nebraska, Mr. Hoekstra, Mr. McKeon, Mr. Sam Johnson of Texas, Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Graham, Mr. McIntosh, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Paul, Mr. Schaffer, Mr. Peterson of Pennsylvania, Mr. Deal, Mr. Hilleary, Mr. Scarborough, Mr. Goode, Mr. Hefley, Mr. Kingston, and Mr. Chambliss.

Send a message that the policy-making role of Congress shall be respected. Please join me in cosponsoring this important resolution. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Kent Talbert of the Committee staff at 225-6558.

Sincerely,

BILL GOODLING
Chairman

MAJORITY MEMBERS:

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(TTY) —(202) 225-3372
MINORITY —(202) 225-3725
(TTY) —(202) 225-3116

SUPPORT THE GOODLING AMENDMENT
JUST SAY "NO" TO MORE FEDERAL
CONTROL OF EDUCATION

Dear Republican Colleague:

Please join me in supporting House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman Bill Goodling's amendment to prohibit federal funding for a new federal test being developed by the Clinton administration.

Despite the fact that there is no explicit federal law to authorize the development and implementation of a federal test, the President has chosen to bypass Congress and the American people to develop this "top down test" managed by the U.S. Department of Education. Developing a test of this magnitude truly epitomizes tampering as opposed to sound planning. Clearly, the Department of Education has little or no prior experience in an undertaking of this nature.

Imagine federal bureaucrats developing a national test with no input from Congress or the American people. In the opinion of education experts and analysts who have studied the Clinton proposal, this is but the first step to a top-down, national curriculum controlled by the federal government and the U.S. Department of Education.

Ask yourself this: Should the quality of our schools be assessed by the federal bureaucracy, or instead by a battery of proven and independent measures?

I have attached a letter from a broad range of family groups supporting the Goodling amendment. Please join them, me, and Chairman Goodling in supporting this important effort.

Very truly yours,

Bob Schaffer
Colorado

HUG 14 97 18-18 10.014 P.02

Stop National Testing Now

July 29, 1997

American
Association of
Christian Schools

American Family
Association

Christian
Coalition

Concerned
Women for
America

Eagle Forum

Family Research
Council

Family Life
Seminars

Coalition for
America

Home School
Legal Defense
Association

National Right to
Read Foundation

Traditional
Values Coalition

TO: The Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Honorable Richard Armey, Majority Leader
The Honorable Tom Delay, Majority Whip
The Honorable John Boehner, Chairman of the Republican Conference
The Honorable Bob Livingston, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Gerald Solomon, Chairman, House Rules Committee

RE: Stop President Clinton's Unauthorized National Testing Plan TODAY!

Gentlemen:

President Clinton has made a controversial and unilateral decision to create a national achievement test based on "real, meaningful national standards." Although the test is supposed to be voluntary, the President has declared "I believe every state must participate and that every parent has a right to honest, accurate information about how his or her child is doing." That doesn't sound particularly voluntary.

We strongly oppose national testing for several reasons and urge support for Chairman Goodling's amendment to specifically forbid any expenditure of funds for this purpose in the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill.

First, we believe national testing will lead to an unwarranted national curriculum, stifling local control of education at the level of textbooks and teachers. One of the basic precepts of the American Psychological Association's *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* is that students may not be given tests unless they have had an opportunity to learn the material on the test. In a leading federal case from Florida, *Debra P. v. Turlington*, a high school graduation test was invalidated because there had been no validity study done which matched the curriculum in use by all students with the test required for graduation. The only way to have a test that imposes "real, meaningful national standards" is to have a national curriculum.

Education, like the economy, does not work when it is managed by centralized government. American public education has been on a crash-and-burn descent that is directly related to the increase of centralized control.

Second, the Administration lacks the proper authority to spend funds on the development of national tests. As House Education and the Workforce Committee

Chairman Goodling has repeatedly stated, "While I personally oppose federal involvement in developing individualized tests, the real issue here is that the development of individualized, national tests is too controversial and potentially divisive for the President to act without specific congressional discussion, review, and authorization."

Finally, a federal foray into educational testing would duplicate private efforts. National Standardized tests currently provide parents with valuable information about their children's performance in relation to national norms. The Stanford Achievement test is just one example. A federal testing program would not only be inappropriate, but also unnecessary.

Language included in the Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill allows the Administration to proceed with the planning and development of national tests. Although the bill requires a National Academy of Sciences study prior to implementation of the tests, this does not provide a sufficient safeguard.

These tests would assess fourth graders and eighth graders in reading and math, respectively, above and beyond the existing National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) tests. Yet, President Clinton and the Department of Education have already begun the design and contract process for these tests without the proper oversight.

We urge you to include language in the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill which strictly forbids the Administration from spending any money on the planning, development, implementation, or administration of any new national testing program.

Gary L. Bauer

Gary Bauer
Family Research Council

Michael C. Farris

Mike Farris
Home School Legal
Defense Association

Rev. Lou Sheldon

Rev. Lou Sheldon
Traditional Values Coalition

James D. Jacobson

James D. Jacobson
National Right to Read
Foundation

Carl O. Herbster

Dr. Carl Herbster
American Association
of Christian Schools

Don Wildmon

Don Wildmon
American Family
Association

Don Hodel

Don Hodel
Christian Coalition

Beverly LaHaye

Beverly LaHaye
Concerned Women for America

Phyllis Schlafly

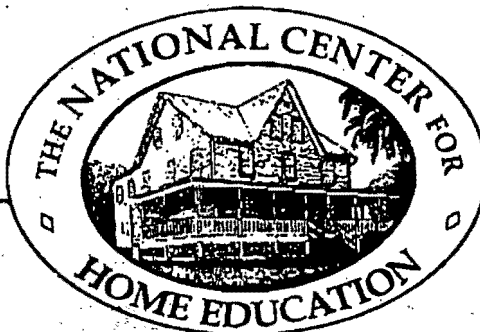
Phyllis Schlafly
Eagle Forum

Tim LaHaye

Tim LaHaye
Family Life Seminars

Paul Weyrich

Paul Weyrich
Coalition for America



MICHAEL P. FARRIS, ESQ.
President

DOUGLAS W. PHILLIPS, ESQ.
Attorney

CHRISTOPHER J. KLIKA, ESQ.
Executive Director

DOUG DOMENECH
Director of Governmental Affairs

MARK WEAVER
Conference Coordinator

August 13, 1997

The Honorable George Miller
U.S. House
2205 RHOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Miller:

The purpose of this letter is to find out your position on President Clinton's proposed national achievement test. We need to know your stand on this issue by August 31 in order to inform our membership as to which offices need to be contacted in September.

We urge you to support Congressman Goodling's amendment to H.R. 2264, the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill, which would prohibit all funds to be used to develop, plan, implement, or administer any national test in reading or math.

President Clinton has made a controversial and unilateral decision, completely bypassing Congress, to create a national achievement test based on "real, meaningful national standards." Although the test is supposed to be voluntary, the President has declared "I believe *every* state must participate and that *every* parent has a right to honest, accurate information about how his or her child is doing." That doesn't sound particularly voluntary.

We strongly oppose national testing for several reasons and urge support for Chairman Goodling's amendment to specifically forbid any expenditure of funds for this purpose in the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill.

- First, we believe national testing will lead to an unwarranted national curriculum, stifling local control of education at the level of textbooks and teachers. As University of Kansas Professor John Poggio remarked during a brain storming session at the Department of Educational Research & Improvement on February 28, "What gets tested is what will be taught."

One of the basic precepts of the American Psychological Association's *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* is that students may not be given tests unless they have had an opportunity to learn the material on the test. In a leading federal case from Florida, *Debra P. v.*

Turlington, a high school graduation test was invalidated because there had

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 3000, Purcellville, VA 20134

Phone: (540) 338-7601
D. C. Melnic (703) 478-8585 Fax: (540) 338-9333

Shipping Address
17333 Pickwick Dr., Purcellville, VA 20132

been no validity study done which matched the curriculum in use by all students with the test required for graduation. The only way to have a test that imposes "real, meaningful national standards" is to have a national curriculum.

- Second, the Administration lacks the proper authority to spend funds on the development of national tests. As House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman Goodling has repeatedly stated, "While I personally oppose federal involvement in developing individualized tests, the real issue here is that the development of individualized, national tests is too controversial and potentially divisive for the President to act without specific congressional discussion, review, and authorization."
- Thirdly, a national test would conflict with state standards. Rebecca Kopriva of the Delaware Department of Education stated at the February 18 meeting:

"We can't afford [at the state level] to have our tests be significantly different than yours [national tests]. Even if we think it is significantly better, because this is going to drive a lot of what we are doing. And it won't only drive it in grades four and eight. It's going to drive it through out the years because they are going to gear to grade four and eight. So just be aware of that."

- Finally, a federal foray into educational testing would duplicate private efforts. National Standardized tests currently provide parents with valuable information about their children's performance in relation to national norms. The Stanford Achievement test is just one example. A federal testing program would not only be inappropriate, but also unnecessary.

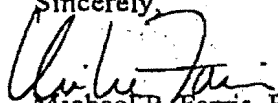
Language already included in the Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill allows the Administration to proceed with the planning and development of national tests. Although the bill requires a National Academy of Sciences study prior to implementation of the tests, this does not provide a sufficient safeguard.

These tests would assess fourth graders and eighth graders in reading and math, respectively, above and beyond the existing National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) tests. Yet, President Clinton and the Department of Education have already begun the design and contract process for these tests without the proper oversight.

We urge you to support Congressman Goodling's amendment to the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill which strictly forbids the Administration from spending any money on the planning, development, implementation, or administration of any new national testing program until authorized by Congress.

Please notify us if you intend to support Congressman Goodling's amendment. If we do not hear from you by August 31, we will assume you are either undecided or supportive of President Clinton's testing agenda and will notify our membership accordingly.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Farris, Esq.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2181 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
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HAROLD FORD, JR., TENNESSEE

March 5, 1997

MAJORITY--(202) 225-4527
(TTY)--(202) 225-3372
MINORITY--(202) 225-3725
(TTY)--(202) 225-3116

The Honorable Richard W. Riley
Secretary
Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, S. W.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Riley:

We are pleased to know of President Clinton's commitment to improving the education of all students, just as we are. Likewise, we agree with the Administration that states and communities need objective information, often in the form of statewide systems of standards and assessments, about how students are doing. This information can help provide a needed spark for education improvement.

In this light, we will review the Administration's proposals on standards and assessments. However, other than a few brief mentions in budget documents and other Departmental public relations materials, our Committee has yet to receive any official guidance on the Administration's plans in this area.

From what we ascertain, the President's national testing proposal in reading and math constitutes a major change in Federal education policy. Given this change, we believe Congress should have clear information on the Administration's intentions, and that your proposal receive the careful scrutiny it deserves -- both by Congress and the public at-large. In our view, proposals like this must be backed by a consensus on the Hill and in the country if they are to achieve success when implemented.

We are particularly interested in knowing the explicit statutory authority on which the Administration relies for the testing. It is also important that we know what specific category of funds the Administration intends to allocate for the tests. We would appreciate your assistance in clarifying these two issues, as well as in answering several questions that are included in the attached document. The answers to these questions will assist us in giving the Administration's proposal the careful consideration it deserves.

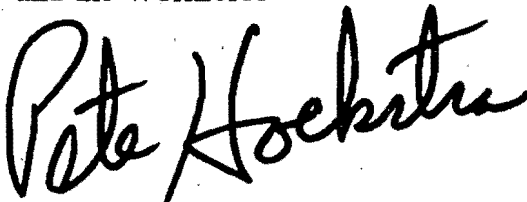
In our view, this is a serious proposal that deserves serious debate and consideration. Tests, whether national or state, are but a measure of progress. While testing does provide a

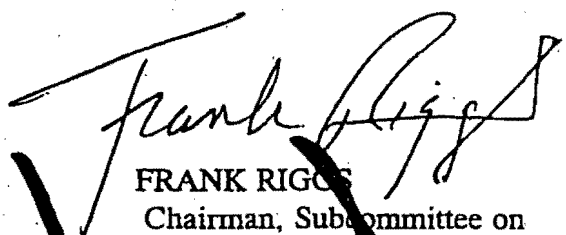
measure of progress, we believe national education policy should give priority to the things that we know work--helping children master the basic academic subjects, engaging and involving parents, and getting dollars to the classroom where they can do the most good. These are our top priorities, and we look forward to working with you on these issues, as well as on your standards and testing proposal.

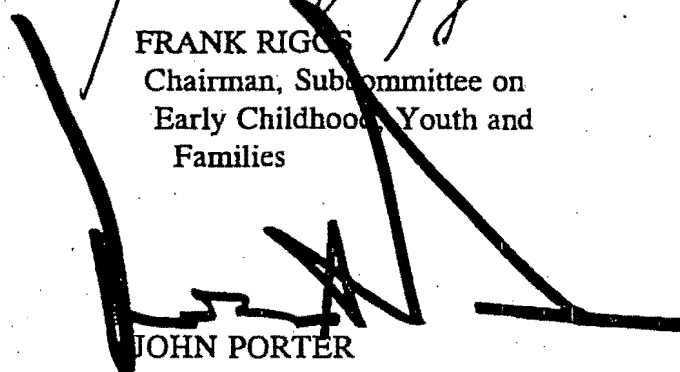
We would appreciate receiving the responses to the questions no later than March 19, 1997. Thank you in advance for your assistance. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


BILL GOODLING
Chairman, Committee on Education
and the Workforce


PETER HOEKSTRA
Chairman, Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations


FRANK RIGGS
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Early Childhood, Youth and
Families


JOHN PORTER
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and
Related Agencies of the
Committee on
Appropriations

cc: William Clay, Ranking Minority Member of
the Committee on Education and the Workforce

Matthew Martinez, Ranking Minority Member of
the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth
and Families of the Committee on Education
and the Workforce

Patsy Mink, Ranking Minority Member of the
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
of the Committee on Education and the Workforce

David Obey, Ranking Minority Member of
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies of the
Committee on Appropriations

1. Why did the Department not include a specific written budget request for the proposal in the Department of Education budget documents that were submitted to Congress earlier this year?
2. What does the President perceive to be the difference between "federal government standards" and "national standards"?
3. Do you intend to seek explicit Congressional authority and approval for the development and implementation of the national tests, similar to the explicit statutory authority Congress gave for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)?
4. If you believe authority already exists under current law for the development and implementation of the national tests, under what specific statutory authorization does such authority exist? Include specific U.S. Code titles and subsections.
5. Under what specific program's appropriation does the President propose to pay for the development and implementation of the new national tests? What, if any funds, do you intend to reprogram in FY 1997 or FY 1998 for the national tests?
6. (a) What do you expect will be the total cost of development of these tests and on what basis do you make the estimate?

(b) What do you expect will be the total costs per student and on what basis do you make the estimate?

(c) What portion of the costs will be borne by the federal budget during the development phase and what portion will be borne by states and school districts?

(d) What portion of the costs will be borne by the federal budget during the first administration of the tests?

(e) What portion of the costs will be borne by the federal budget in the years following the first administration of the tests?
7. (a) What is the specific timetable for the development of these tests?

(b) What is the specific timetable for including any "requests for proposals", grants, or contracts?

(c) What is the specific timetable for the meeting of advisory committees on this issue, if any?

(d) What is the specific timetable for any other stages in the process or activities associated with the process not mentioned in (a)-(c) above?

8. (a) Do you plan to use actual NAEP tests (i.e. those used for the national and state assessments) for the individualized tests you propose or do you intend to create new test instruments?

(b) If the latter, what specifically will be their relationship to NAEP?

(c) How do you know their results will be comparable?

9. (a) If you are proposing to engage outside organizations in the preparation and conduct of these tests, such as through grants or contracts to non-federal entities, which specific ones do you propose to use?

(b) How will the grantees or contract recipients be selected and by whom?

(c) If by officials of the Department of Education, name those officials.

(d) If by "peer review", please name the federal officials who will select the reviewers and the types and qualifications of reviewers to be used.

10. (a) What specifically, if any, is to be the relationship of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) to the proposed new tests?

(b) It has been reported that you may have decided that these tests, although based in some way on NAEP frameworks and NAGB standards, will be created and managed outside the existing NAEP administrative and policy structures. Please explain.

11. (a) Do you plan to use the NAGB "proficient" standard, or the "basic" standard as the fundamental "national standard"?

(b) If the latter, how do you justify changing from the standard that both NAGB and the National Education Goals Panel have adopted as the level of achievement that all young Americans should be expected to reach?

12. How will you assure that use of these tests will be, and remain, voluntary and not become mandatory tests?

13. (a) Will it be possible for states and communities to "embed" or integrate the national tests in their own state and local testing programs?

(b) How exactly will this be done?

14. (a) Please explain in detail the "standards" in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) that, in your view, qualify TIMSS to be the proper basis for the eighth grade math test?

(b) How do TIMSS standards differ, if at all, from NAEP standards?

(c) If the President's plan for testing moves forward, does it not make more sense to use eighth grade NAEP standards and tests for math? Why or why not?

15. (a) Why have you decided to limit this program to fourth grade reading and eighth grade math?

(b) How do you plan to deal with states, that might prefer, for example, to use NAEP instruments for fourth grade math and eighth grade reading? Or science?

16. Will the reading test be given only in English or in other languages as well?

17. What accommodations, if any, do you intend to make for students with disabilities who take these tests?

18. (a) In what form do you expect the test results to be made available to parents?

(b) How will the confidentiality of individual test-takers be protected?

(c) Will parents be able to obtain school-specific data?

(d) Will parents be able to obtain school-specific data for schools other than the one(s) their own child or children attend?

19. (a) Do you intend to create new advisory committees to help design and oversee this program? If so, please explain.

(b) If so, why are you doing that rather than relying on NAGB?

(c) Who will appoint these new committees?

(d) What types of individuals will be appointed?

(e) How many individuals will be appointed to such committees?

(f) What criteria do you intend to use for such appointees?

20. How do you plan to deal with states which may have state assessments and standards which are more rigorous than any new national tests or standards?

21. Will states that wish to do so be free to use these test results for "high stakes" purposes?

22. What is the relationship of the new tests to the state standards and state assessments aspects of Goals 2000?

23. (a) At least 32 states have developed state standards, and an additional 14 report that standards development is underway. In addition, 45 states report that they have statewide assessment systems. How will "national standards" affect states who have already developed and are using state standards?

(b) If the national standards are different from the states standards, will the states have to change their standards?

24. What provision, if any, does the President's proposal make for private and home-schooled students to be able to take these tests?

25. How will you ensure test security?

26. Will states be permitted to require teachers to take the same tests that their pupils are taking?

27. If a state decides not to use the national tests in reading and math, can a local educational agency still go forward and use the test?

DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

Testimony for the Honorable Richard W. Riley

Secretary of Education

Mr. Chairman:

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Administration's proposal for voluntary national tests.

As you know, in his State of the Union Address on February 4th, President Clinton issued a "call to action" for ensuring that all Americans have the best education in the world. We know that every child in America can meet higher standards, if we have the courage and the vision to set the standards, to teach up to them, and to test whether the children have learned what we taught. Many states and school districts - along with thousands of educators, parents and business and community leaders - have been working to develop better academic standards for students. In almost every core subject, we are better off today because of their efforts in defining essential knowledge, skills, and understanding in a range of subjects. But the work is not yet done.

The President's plan is to urge states and schools to adopt rigorous national standards with national tests in reading in English at the 4th grade and in mathematics at the 8th grade to make sure our children master the basics of education. In these two basic skill areas - - of fourth grade reading and eighth grade mathematics - - there is little disagreement about what children should know and be able to do. Reading is reading and math is math, throughout the country. And the expectations for reading and math are -- or should be -- virtually the same everywhere. While many U.S. fourth graders perform well on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment,

40% of our students do not reach the "basic" achievement level. In the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), the U.S. average score for 8th grade math is below the international average and only 5% of U.S. eighth grade students score in the top 10% internationally. That's just not good enough in my book.

Researchers agree that by the fourth grade all students should know how to read well or they will be at significant risk for a lifetime of diminished success in school. Research shows that students unable to read well by the end of the 3rd grade are more likely to become school dropouts and truants, and have fewer good job options. At 4th grade, students are expected to read so they can learn science, history, literature, and mathematics. If they can read by then, they can read for a lifetime.

It is also important that our students master the basics of math and the essentials of algebra and even geometry by the eighth grade. They will then have the foundation to take challenging college prep courses in high school and compete in the world arena. The U.S. ranks below average internationally in 8th grade math. We must do better.

The voluntary tests will be a powerful force for making sure that all students are provided the challenging curricula and excellent teaching they need and deserve to master the basics.

These voluntary tests will give parents and communities reliable benchmarks for student performance which will show how well their students and children are progressing toward meeting challenging national standards of excellence. These new standard measures of excellence can help parents hold schools accountable for improved performance, can help teachers and principals improve curriculum and instruction, and can give students a guide for charting their own progress. The purpose is not to give a

test. The purpose is to motivate changes and opportunities for children all over this country to learn to read well in the fourth grade and to learn to achieve challenging standards in mathematics in the eighth grade. This test is not a national curriculum, but a national challenge.

The Department of Education is committed to helping prepare schools, teachers, and students to reach these high standards. We will work with schools, school districts, states and parents as they move forward to meet this challenge. The President's America Reads initiative will help mobilize an army of 1 million volunteer tutors to help children reach the basic level of performance on the NAEP reading test. We are working closely with organizations such as the National Science Foundation and the National Academy of Sciences to help develop these tools. Our budget - - with investments in teacher preparation, teaching the basics and advanced skills, technological literacy, public school choice and charter schools - - takes a strong step in this direction as well.

Since January, we have held four public meetings at which we heard from test publishers, State assessment directors, teachers, administrators, and others. I am pleased to tell you that we have received compelling input in each of these open forums that has assisted in the development of these tests.

The national tests will be based on the well-established and respected National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test, which has been a crucial and reliable national indicator of student achievement for many years and is used in more than 43 states, and the widely accepted Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), used by the U.S. and 40 other nations. The performance standards for these tests were developed for NAEP through a national consensus process. Although the voluntary tests

will be modified to test individual students, rather than samples of students, they will assess much of the same challenging content and employ the same performance levels as NAEP and TIMSS. We have decided that the NAEP eighth grade mathematics test should be the basis for the national test in eighth grade instead of the TIMSS. The framework for TIMSS was the result of international negotiation, which required that compromises be made. (Do we want to mention this? Might there be questions about what kind of compromises?) Many experts told us that the content standards for the NAEP test are more reflective of widely accepted standards for what U.S. students should know and be able to do in eighth grade mathematics. Nonetheless, TIMSS provides a very important and useful international benchmark, and the eighth grade math test will also let teachers and parents know how their students compare with their peers around the world.

The Department of Education has the authority to develop and make these tests available under the Fund for the Improvement of Education authorized by Title X, Section 10101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We plan to use approximately \$10 million in fiscal year 1997 and \$12 million in fiscal year 1998 for initial development of the tests. We will seek additional appropriations in 1999 to reimburse States and districts for the costs of administering these tests in the first year. We estimate that the costs of administration will fall between \$10 and \$12 per student. Based on our current projections this should be around 100 million dollars. (Sue or Judy, what does Mike Smith say about this? Something like "this is one tenth of one percent of the total federal expenditure on education.")

The American people have told us clearly that education is their top concern, and we have had an overwhelming response of support for the national education standards. In the two months since the President challenged every state to adopt high national standards, support has come from Republicans and Democrats, teachers and business people, parents and educators. As you know, Governor Hunt and Governor Engler have endorsed the voluntary national tests for their students in North Carolina and Michigan.

Several weeks ago, more than 240 of America's high-tech industry leaders endorsed the bi-partisan call for national education standards. CEOs and company presidents such as Jim Barksdale of Netscape Communications, Steve Case of America OnLine, Louis Gerstner of IBM, and Lewis Platt of Hewlett-Packard joined this effort and pledged to write Governors and other state officials in support of the President's national testing initiative and high national education standards. The National Business Roundtable, the (other endorsers??? National Association of ...) have all publicly endorsed the President's call for voluntary national tests.

I hope we do not cloud our children's future with arguments that are not really relevant about Federal government intrusion. As the President said in his State of the Union Address, politics must stop at the school house door.

I want to make it perfectly clear, Mr. Chairman, that states will not be required to use these tests. What these tests will do is offer states, local communities, teachers, and parents a yardstick by which to assess whether their students and children are mastering critical basic skills early enough to succeed. No state will be required to use these tests to continue receiving Goals 2000 funds or any other federal funds. States are free to use the national tests as part of their state assessment programs, and we will work with them to

make sure that this can be accomplished. States or local school districts will decide in what form the test results will be provided to parents and whether or not parents will be able to obtain school-specific data for their own schools and for schools other than the one(s) their own child or children attend. If a state decides not to use the national tests, school districts within the state would still be free to use the tests, and we would encourage them to do so.

The voluntary national test will not endorse any teaching or instructional methods. It remains up to the states, local school districts and teachers to determine the best way to help their students meet these high standards.

We intend to make these tests as accessible to students with disabilities as possible. The tests will be offered in Braille and large print versions as well as an audio cassette version of the mathematics test. Additional accommodations provided by test administrators will include extended time, and one-on-one testing and other accommodations normally provided to the student when he or she participates in other tests at the school. The math test will be made available in a Spanish-English version.

The test items will be released annually and absolutely no individually identifiable data will be collected by the federal government. We see the tests as a tools for parents, teachers, and communities to improve their school system.

Administering, scoring and reporting will be done through licensing arrangements, and there will be an overall Advisory Committee of testing experts and reading and math experts, as well as an independent evaluation panel that reports annually to Congress and the President on the success of the testing program. (Is this appropriate for the Secretary to address or should Mike Smith handle this?)

Mr. Chairman, we owe it to our students, to our children, and to our grandchildren to provide the very best education available. These tests will not label anyone a failure, but they will help us figure out how to help all of our children succeed. This is an historic opportunity for our country to reach out to our students and to work together to make sure no child is left behind as we enter the 21st century. I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on this exciting effort to keep American children at the head of the class. I am now happy to respond to any questions that you or your colleagues may have.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATEMENT BY
RICHARD W. RILEY
SECRETARY

on
Voluntary National Tests

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the President's call for rigorous national standards and his pledge to develop national tests--in reading in English at the fourth grade and in mathematics at the eighth grade. These tests will be made available for use by states and districts so that teachers and parents can know how well students meet rigorous standards and how well they compare with their peers across the country and around the world. The Department of Education will support the development of these tests, but we will not require that any state or district use them. These will be voluntary national tests.

Mr. Chairman, it is important that I stress at the outset that this plan is about high standards and about improving expectations and opportunities and life chances for all our children. It is not just about tests.

The results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, or TIMSS, released last fall showed that differences in academic performance are linked primarily to what is taught and how it is taught. TIMSS showed that higher-level academic content--taught by teachers with a deep understanding of that content and how to teach it--leads to improved student performance. TIMSS highlighted the importance of setting tough standards in mathematics and of making sure that teachers are prepared to teach to those standards. TIMSS reinforced other research carried out in the United States over the past 20 years. Cognitive science and careful school improvement

We got most of the info on ed reform from NAEP - debate oh we are doing this on a scale / what we do - no test no test no test

Q Kids get score - SAT; not in NAEP

Q Adv Committee
Q AM
Q Am

(SH)

efforts make it clear that all children can learn to far higher standards than we currently ask of them.

Common sense and thoughtful studies tell us that the content of the curriculum is important. We also know from research that the way you teach matters. TIMSS found that topics taught in U.S. eighth grade mathematics classrooms are at only a seventh grade level by international standards and that American students are more often taught procedure, rather than how to understand mathematical concepts in real-life, applied contexts.

The need to increase expectations and set challenging academic standards for students is generally accepted by the public. Many states and school districts--along with thousands of educators, parents, and business and community leaders--have been working to develop higher standards for students. In almost every core subject, we are better off today because of their efforts in defining essential knowledge, skills, and understanding in a range of subjects. But the work is not done.

Perhaps you are aware of a study done by the Southern Region Education Board. Mark Musick compared, in a number of states, the percentage of students who reached the proficient level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the percentage who reached the proficient level on the state's own assessment. In many states, far more students scored at the proficient level on the state assessment than on NAEP. Far too often, standards are still not high enough. Some of the standards being adopted are not challenging at all.

The national tests will help make high standards a reality. They will offer a common set of expectations and standards in the basic skills of reading and mathematics. Our decision to develop tests in fourth grade reading--in English--and eighth grade mathematics was very deliberate. Both the subjects and the grades were carefully chosen. Reading and mathematics are the basic skills, and fourth and eighth

grades are the critical transitions.

We all know that being able to read independently by the fourth grade is an essential skill. In general, in U.S. schools, we stop teaching reading by the fourth grade. It is at this point that we expect children to read to learn other subjects. Children who are unable to read independently by the critical transition period of the fourth grade cannot read to learn science or history or literature or to solve word problems in mathematics. And these are the children, research shows, who most often drop out before they graduate. They are the children who are at risk for a lifetime of diminished success in school and employment. Fully 40 percent of America's fourth graders currently don't read at the basic level as measured by NAEP. And 70 percent are not reading at the proficient level.

Mathematics has been less acknowledged as a basic skill, but it now needs to be universally emphasized. Just as we know that reading well by fourth grade is a crucial academic checkpoint in the development of a young person, so too do we know that learning challenging mathematics concepts by eighth grade is essential. Because it is then that students are often put on different tracks--college bound or not, for instance--and it is often their levels of mathematics achievement that determine what those tracks will be.

Students who reach this point and the appropriate level of achievement will be ready to take the sequence of courses in high school that prepare them for college and careers. Mathematics is a gateway to learning many more advanced skills, including the language of technology and science, and it is a tool for more sophisticated analysis and problem-solving. Nearly 40 percent of our eighth graders are not achieving at the basic mathematics level as measured by NAEP, and 75 percent are not achieving at the proficient level. Fully 55 percent of U.S. students score below the international average in eighth grade mathematics.

In both instances then--in fourth grade reading and eighth grade mathematics--we are talking about ensuring opportunity. If we don't set high expectations, and we don't provide challenging curricula and excellent teaching, children will not learn all that they are capable of learning. We know that children who aren't challenged to learn generally learn less. Quality and equality are tightly linked. Only when our students all learn at high, challenging levels, will we have equality. Whether rich or poor, all of our students deserve an education that will help them prepare for a successful future.

And, if we can change the odds of success for our children in reading and in mathematics, we will have established a strong foundation for the success of our Nation and our democracy.

Let me tell you a little about the tests we envision. First, the specifications for these tests will be based on the test frameworks used to develop the fourth grade reading assessment and the eighth grade mathematics assessment that are part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress. These test frameworks were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers through a national consensus process, and they are widely accepted. This is evidenced by the fact that 42 states participate in the state-level NAEP assessments. Basing the test specifications on the NAEP frameworks will ensure that the new national tests measure the knowledge and skills that are measured by the NAEP assessments.

New test instruments must be developed because the NAEP assessments are not designed to be individual student tests. In NAEP, numerous test booklets are used, with some students using one test booklet, other students another booklet, and so on. In this way, NAEP can assess performance on a very comprehensive set of items while keeping the testing time for individual students to a minimum. In the case of the national tests, all participating fourth graders will take the same reading test, and all

participating eighth graders will take the same mathematics test.

The results from these tests will be linked to the results from the NAEP fourth grade reading and eighth grade mathematics assessments and, in the case of mathematics, to the results from the eighth grade mathematics test used in TIMSS. This will allow parents and teachers to know where their children and students perform in relation to the NAEP levels of basic, proficient, and advanced. In the case of mathematics, they will also be able to know, for example, whether students score above or below the international average, and if above, whether they score on a par with the top 10 percent internationally.

No data from individual students will come to the Department of Education. We will not give these tests. We will pay to have contractors develop them, with advice they receive from the panels of experts they establish. Once the tests have been developed, they will be licensed to test publishers, states, and school districts that can show that they can ensure security and standard administration and scoring of the tests. School districts and private schools that are not licensed will be able to obtain the tests through licensed test publishers. The first tests will be ready for use in the spring of 1999.

Each year, after the time period for actual administration of the national tests ends, the test instruments and scoring guides will be made available on the World Wide Web. This will allow others, such as home schoolers, to use the tests, and it will provide parents, teachers, and the public an opportunity to see what students should know and be able to do. If possible, sample tests will be developed and made available in the fall of 1998 so that parents and teachers will also have access to this information prior to the first administration of the tests. We intend to do everything possible to make information available to help teachers, parents, and students prepare for these tests.

These tests can help stimulate the kinds of changes that are necessary to provide all students with the curriculum and instruction that are too often available only to the more advantaged among them. The first step is providing concrete examples of what students should know and be able to do. Releasing these tests is part of that first step. Working with other agencies and organizations, we intend to do more. Attention must also be focused on professional development, including higher education, inservice and preservice training, improved public awareness, and making sure that teachers have the support and assistance of parents and communities in using the results of these tests to strengthen teaching and learning.

Mr. Chairman, the American people have told us clearly that education is their top concern and that it should be a top priority of the Federal Government. We have had an overwhelming response of support for national standards. In the two months since the President challenged every state to adopt high national standards, support has come from Republicans and Democrats, teachers and business people, parents, and educators. As you know, Governor Hunt and Governor Engler have endorsed the voluntary national tests for their students in North Carolina and Michigan.

Several weeks ago, more than 240 of America's high-tech industry leaders endorsed the bipartisan call for national education standards. CEOs and company presidents such as Jim Barksdale of Netscape Communications, Steve Case of America OnLine, Louis Gerstner of IBM, and Lewis Platt of Hewlett-Packard joined this effort and pledged to write Governors and other state officials in support of the President's national testing initiative and high national education standards. The Business Roundtable's Education Task Force has also publicly endorsed the President's call for voluntary national tests.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that support for these tests is strong and growing. They will be an invaluable tool as we strive to provide every young person in this country with

Del. Sells

the opportunity to create a strong future for herself or himself with an education that matters. States and school districts and the publics they serve will decide whether the tests should be used. We will absolutely not require them. I look forward to working with you and other members of the Committee as we proceed to develop them and make them available for use.

Deputy Secretary Smith and I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**STATEMENT BY
RICHARD W. RILEY
SECRETARY**

**on
Voluntary National Tests**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the President's call for rigorous national standards and his pledge to develop voluntary national tests--in reading in English at the fourth grade and in mathematics at the eighth grade. I am submitting my testimony for the record and I would like to sum up my testimony by making a few opening comments.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to stress at the outset that these proposed voluntary tests are about high standards, improving expectations giving more young people opportunities and life chances. We are not in the business of testing for testing sake. Indeed, for my entire tenure as the U.S. Secretary of Education I have been reluctant to go in this direction. But I believe new facts require us to change our thinking.

We are rushing head long toward the 21st century, yet too many of our young people are falling by the wayside. Forty percent of our young people can not read as well as they should by the end of the third grade. And this nation is below the international average when it comes to 8th grade math.

The results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, or TIMSS, released last fall are very instructive. TIMSS found, for example, that topics taught in U.S. eighth grade mathematics classrooms are at only a seventh grade level by international standards – and that American students are more often taught procedure, rather than how to understand mathematical concepts in real-life, applied contexts.

TIMSS reinforced other research carried out in the United States over the past 20 years. What we are talking about here is fundamentally changing the expectations we have for our young people and using these tests to change those expectations.

Reading is the very first basic and by international standards we do quite well when it comes to reading. We are second in the world when it comes reading proficiency. But we also know that too many young people are not meeting our new challenging standards – which I might add are much more demanding than current international standards. At present, 40 percent of America's fourth graders do not read at the basic level as measured by NAEP. And 70 percent are not reading at the proficient level.

Too often, these are the very children struggle to learn, fall farther behind, fill up our special ed classes and over time lose interest, give up and drop out. This is why I have been stressing the importance of reading and improved literacy for such a long time.

I am convinced that a strong and early focus on reading fundamentals will go a long way to reducing special ed costs, reducing truancy and keeping more young people from dropping out of school.

The need to increase expectations and set challenging academic standards for students is widely accepted by the public. Indeed, the public is demanding it. I am encouraged by the strong support we are getting from the education community. A recent survey conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals indicates strong support for these voluntary national tests.

As you know, Governor Engler and Governor Hunt -- two well recognized national leaders when it comes to education -- are strong advocates for these tests and they have already announced that students in Michigan and North Carolina will take the tests. I am also pleased to say that the state of Maryland was the very first state to sign up.

Several weeks ago, more than 240 of America's high-tech industry leaders endorsed the bipartisan call for national education standards. CEOs and company presidents such as Jim Barksdale of Netscape Communications, Steve Case of America OnLine, Louis Gerstner of IBM, and Lewis Platt of Hewlett-Packard joined this effort and pledged to write Governors and other state officials in support of the President's national testing initiative and high national education standards.

The Business Roundtable's Education Task Force has also publicly endorsed the President's call for voluntary national tests.

So we are moving in the right direction but our work is not done. Let me cite a study done by the Southern Region Education Board (SREB). In that study Mark Musick -- the author and a member of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) -- compared the percentage of students who reached the proficient level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the percentage who reached the proficient level on the state's own assessment.

In many states, far more students scored at the proficient level on the state assessment than on NAEP. The point that Mark Musick is making quite clearly is that standards are still not high enough. States are adopting standards with the best of intentions but they may not be as challenging as they could be. I believe that these proposed national tests will give states another way of measuring the progress they want to achieve.

I want to stress here that our decision to develop tests in fourth grade reading--in English--and eighth grade mathematics was very deliberate. Reading and mathematics are the basic skills, and fourth and eighth grades are the critical transitions. We want to make sure that all of our children have mastered these basics once and for all -- to get their fundamentals down.

We know, for example, that being able to read independently by the fourth grade is an essential skill. In general, in U.S. schools, we stop teaching reading by the fourth grade. It is at this point that we expect children to read to learn other subjects.

Mathematics has been less acknowledged as a basic skill, but it now needs to be universally emphasized. If reading well is the first crucial academic checkpoint in the development of a young person, then doing well in math by the eighth grade is second when it comes to preparing our young people for college and jobs for the 21st century.

Most experts view geometry and algebra as the gateway courses that prepare young people for college. Yet, nearly 40 percent of our eighth graders are not achieving at the basic mathematics level as measured by NAEP, and 75 percent are not achieving at the proficient level. Fully 55 percent of U.S. students score below the international average in eighth grade mathematics.

In both instances then--in fourth grade reading and eighth grade mathematics--we are talking about ensuring opportunity. If we don't set high expectations, and we don't provide challenging curricula and excellent teaching, children will not learn all that they are capable of learning. We know that children who aren't challenged to learn generally learn less. Quality and equality are tightly linked.

Let me now tell you a little about the tests we envision.

First, it is very important to stress that these tests are voluntary and that the decision to take these tests is a decision that must be by state and local authorities. Here I want to be quite clear in stating that state and localities will not lose one penny of federal funding if they choose not to take these tests. These proposed tests are an opportunity not a requirement, a national challenge not a national curriculum.

Second, the specifications for these tests will be based on the frameworks used to develop the fourth grade reading assessment and the eighth grade mathematics assessment that are part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress. These test frameworks were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers through a national consensus process, and they are widely accepted.

At present, 42 states participate in the state-level NAEP assessments. Basing the test specifications on the NAEP frameworks will ensure that the new national tests measure the knowledge and skills that are measured by the NAEP assessments.

Third, new test instruments must be developed because the NAEP assessments are not designed to be individual student tests. In NAEP, numerous test booklets are used, with some students using one test booklet, other students another booklet, and so on. In this way, NAEP can assess performance on a very comprehensive set of items while keeping the testing time for individual students to a minimum.

In the case of the national tests, all participating fourth graders will take the same reading test, and all participating eighth graders will take the same mathematics test. The results from these tests will be linked to the results from the NAEP fourth grade reading and eighth grade mathematics assessments and, in the case of mathematics, to the results from the eighth grade mathematics test used in TIMSS.

Fourth, as a result of these linkages to the NAEP and TIMSS tests parents and teachers will have a very clear "benchmark" to how their children and students are performing in relation to other states. And in the case of mathematics, they will also be able to know, where they stand in terms of the international average. We will have a very clear world class benchmark.

Fifth, no data from individual students will come to the Department of Education. We will not give these tests. We will not keep records of any individual test scores. We will pay to have contractors develop both of these tests, with advice they receive from the panels of experts they establish.

Once the tests have been developed, they will be licensed to test publishers, states, and school districts that can show that they can ensure security and standard administration and scoring of the tests. School districts and private schools that are not licensed will be able to obtain the tests through licensed test publishers. The first tests will be ready for use in the spring of 1999.

Sixth, each year, after we have given the tests, the test instruments and scoring guides will be made available on the World Wide Web. This will allow others, such as home schoolers, to use the tests, and it will provide parents, teachers, and the public an opportunity to see what students should know and be able to do.

If possible, sample tests will be developed and made available in the fall of 1998 so that parents and teachers will also have access to this information prior to the first administration of the tests. We intend to do everything possible to make information available to help teachers, parents, and students prepare for these tests.

Seventh, it will cost us about \$25 million to develop these tests -- \$10 million in 1997 and \$12 million in 1998 -- and we will use funds available from the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE). We will not need funding for the actual administration of these tests until 1999.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I believe that these voluntary national tests are a positive step forward for American education. I believe they will fundamentally alter our thinking when it comes to defining the expectations we set for our children. I will say it again and again -- our children are smarter than we think and we simply need to challenge them to stretch their minds so that they can learn more.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that support for these tests is strong and growing. I look forward to working with you and other members of the Committee.

I happy to answer any of your questions that you may have.

Thank you.

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[Supp FY97]

HLC.

Amendment to H.R. 1469, as Reported Offered by Mr. Goodling of Pennsylvania

Page 51, after line 23, insert the following new section:

1 PROHIBITION OF FUNDS FOR NEW NATIONAL TESTING
2 PROGRAM IN READING AND MATHEMATICS
3 SEC. 3003. None of the funds made available in this
4 or any other Act for fiscal year 1997 or any prior fiscal
5 year for the Fund for the Improvement of Education
6 under the heading "DEPARTMENT OF EDU-
7 CATION—Education Research, Statistics, and Improve-
8 ment" may be used to develop, plan, implement, or admin-
9 ister any national testing program in reading or mathe-
10 matics.

To BW -
KS -
Mike Cohen -

This is a Goodling Amendment to
the House Disaster Supp.
Our SAP should address it?
—Ken A

May 8, 1997 (12:13 p.m.)



Mike_Smith @ ed.gov
05/15/97 07:01:00 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Michael Cohen

cc:

Subject: Re: Test/Rep. Etheridge

Kay: Missy Kincaid and Gary Phillips should be receiving these memos and vetting all of the responses. They are working full time on this thing and know a lot more about exact details now than any of the rest of us. We should have Garry and Missy and Sue Betka looking at all of our responses and, if they can, briefing key folks on the hill. As you know Sue developed the answers to the long list of questions generated by the House committee a month or so ago. Below are some of my comments but they are limited since I have not seen the questions nor Terry's responses.
Mike

I just talked to Rep. Etheridge about the national test. He wanted to know how long it will take to score the tests and return the results to the parents, teachers, schools, etc. He said that was a big problem in North Carolina and that if we can't ensure that the tests will be scored quickly, then we will be "DEAD, D..E..A..D..D..D" (his words, his spelling). He wants me to call him back on Thursday with the answer. Can either of you provide? The tests will be scored as fast as possible -- we are trying to figure out a way to get them back to the schools and parents in late Spring of the same year that they will be given. This means two months or so after the tests are given. This is NOT like NAEP!!!! AT ALL!!! We are facing a norm in the field of the results being returned in the fall from a test given in the spring. We do not want that norm to be ours. In addition the test will be immediately released after the window of time in which it will be given. At that time it will be available with all sorts of information about it to all parents and teachers.

Also, he'd like to have the talking points. Mike, have you looked at Terry's comments. Are you ready to let them be sent out? I have not looked at Terry's comments -- Gary should be vetting these for accuracy.

Mike, I asked Delia to try to write a better answer to the questions (apparently) being raised by MALDEF. Is that appropriate or can you write that answer? George Miller's staff specifically asked for an answer to Kay: I don't know what questions are being raised by MALDEF. We are

giving the math test in Spanish. The reading test is a test of reading english. There is some discussion that Puerto Rico is having with ETS to develop a comparable test of reading Spanish -- I do not believe that we could move to such a test without changing our intentions for this assessment or without going to the Secretary and President. Mike C has been thinking about this issue -- what exactly is MALDEF's question.

I got hold of a copy of Rep Goodling's Dear Colleague letter on the tests. We need to develop answers alligned to that letter. I'll get you all copies. -- Kay