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The Advocate (Baton Rouge, La.)

February 9, 1997 Sunday METRO EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 15B; JOAN MCKINNEY

LENGTH: 738 words

HEADLINE: An emphasis on **education**

BYLINE: JOAN MCKINNEY, WASHINGTON BUREAU

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

WASHINGTON - At least one congressional Republican was impressed with the **education** message delivered last week by President **Clinton**.

A little cautious, maybe, but nevertheless impressed. That was the gist of Richard Baker's reaction moments after the president finished his State of the Union address.

Baker, R-Baton Rouge, also shared a thought with Chris John, a congressional newcomer and a Crowley Democrat. Neither could remember a president giving so much attention to **education** in a speech like this. This wasn't an **education** summit, where the event dictated the topic. On this occasion, the president chose the topic and what he would emphasize.

"I thought it was one of his better speeches a good job, particularly on education," said Baker.

The length of **Clinton's** education message, and the amount of program detail, probably is unmatched in any State of the Union he's heard, said Baker. "I'm excited about that," although "I don't understand all the elements he listed. "

To recap the 10-point education list:

A tax credit of up to \$ 1,500 and a tax deduction up to \$ 10,000 for college tuition.

Expanded Pell Grants for lower-income college students.

Internet connections in every classroom and library by 2000.

An expanded Head Start program to reach 1 million children by 2000.

A volunteer corps of 1 million, including Americorps college students, who will tutor young children in **reading**.



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Certification of 100,000 more "master teachers" who meet national standards for excellence.

Another 3,000 "charter schools," almost seven times the number now operating. Charter schools have innovative programs, operate under very local control and often are free of many regulations.

National tests for reading in the fourth grade and for math in the eighth grade. School districts would be free to use the exams or reject them. The federal government would finance the testing.

\$ 5 billion in federal seed money to finance \$ 20 billion in school construction projects in the next four years.

In general, higher federal spending on education: a 20 percent increase next year (for a \$ 51 billion education budget); and, by 2002, a 40 percent increase over present spending (a \$ 60 billion budget.)

At first blush, Baker saw a funding opportunity for his district.

He speculated that the president's education program "opens up prospects for our Carville project. " Baker backs a plan to transform the Hansen's Disease hospital complex at Carville, La., into a job-training center for teen-agers and young adults. The Carville project "should fit in somewhere," said Baker, given Clinton's interest in "more education for troubled youth. "

Baker didn't like everything he heard. The nationally devised standards for reading and math achievement worry him, if they're a step away from local control of education.

And he's not sure how the education programs will be funded.

Clinton mentioned a lot of programs that will spend money, but "there was nothing in his speech that saved money," said Baker. If Clinton tries to take the money from the military's budget, "that is very difficult for me. "

Rep. John said that as he listened to Clinton, he began asking himself: Had any State of the Union ever been focused so seriously on education? "I can't remember any other president doing that. He has taken the education programs to a new level I've never seen before. That's uplifting to me. "

Congress knew in advance that education would be one of Clinton's themes. Yet, the address itself - the emphasis on the theme - still was surprising, if John's experience is any indication.

Just hours before Clinton's speech, John participated in "a knock-down, drag-out meeting" where conservative Democrats - the "Blue Dogs" - were drafting the budget alternative they'll submit to the House. According to John, there wasn't any mention of financing an ambitious new education program. Now John anticipates that the



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Blue Dogs will focus some future discussions on education and answering this question: "How do we balance the budget, if the president wants to spend \$ 51 billion, or whatever, on education? "

"Some of the initiatives in his education platform are very, very aggressive. I think the challenge was set for us in a big way," but "I am happy to see it. "

GRAPHIC: PHOTO; Mugs of Rep. Richard Baker; Chris John

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Copyright 1997 McClatchy Newspapers, Inc.
The Fresno Bee

February 9, 1997 Sunday, HOME EDITION

SECTION: METRO, Pg. B6, BEE EDITORIAL

LENGTH: 524 words

HEADLINE: Toward a national standard;

Testing students in reading and math will give the states useful information about their schools.

BODY:

President Clinton's call for national test to measure the reading and math skills of American schoolchildren, even if heeded by Congress, won't cure the well-documented ills of public education in this country.

It could, however, enable parents and educators in the disparate states to better measure the progress of their students against those in other parts of the United States, and that could in turn drive the laggards to keep up. In an increasingly mobile society, in which students in California ought to know whether their math skills hold up against their peers in Connecticut and elsewhere, national standards and assessments make all kinds of sense.

That doesn't mean that this modest effort -- which would only address reading skills of fourth-graders and the math abilities of eighth-graders, and in which states would only participate if they volunteered -- won't be controversial.

Some critics charge that a national test, with results for individual students, will unfairly stigmatize poor children in struggling districts by comparing them to their more successful counterparts in privileged neighborhoods. But ignorance of the stark disparities in opportunity and achievement between students of different means is surely no way to bring them closer together.

And past claims that national tests are a federal government attempt to wrest control of children's education from states and local school districts are already being revived, though the fact that any test would be voluntary seriously undercuts the argument.

By whatever name, the test would be formulated by a group of education leaders chosen by the Department of Education. They will base the test on the already established and reliable National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which are given to fourth- and eighth-graders every four years.

Unlike those tests, which only inform states about the percentage of their students who read or do math above, at, or below grade level, the new national exams would be administered annually and would provide individual scores to all students, enabling school districts and parents to see where each child stands



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nationally.

Parents may not like what they see. In states such as Louisiana that have developed their own statewide achievement **tests**, for example, that **test** shows that 88 percent of Louisiana students are **reading** at a level deemed appropriate for their **grade**. Yet on the most recent NAEP **reading test**, only 15 percent of the students scored as proficient. That ought to be sending Louisiana a clear message about the adequacy of its own **reading standards**.

California, which has no statewide assessment, cannot yet make such comparisons. But the limited existing national **tests** have already proved useful here. The state's recent abysmal showing on the NAEP **test** helped spur significant reforms in the teaching of **reading** in the primary **grades**. If the expanded, individually scored national **test** that the president proposes is prepared well, it could provide an even greater service to all the states.

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Copyright 1997 The New York Times Company
The New York Times

February 8, 1997, Saturday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section 1; Page 10; Column 1; National Desk

LENGTH: 1137 words

HEADLINE: Clinton's Focus on Schools Hits Home

BYLINE: By PETER APPLEBOME

BODY:

In outlining his ambitious agenda for **education** this week, President Clinton tapped into a deep national yearning to improve the nation's schools, even if it might mean accepting the revolutionary notion of national standards and perhaps even national **tests** to compare students, schools and states.

But Mr. Clinton's plan to spend \$51 billion on everything from recruiting **reading** tutors to repairing tumbledown school buildings runs counter to two other currents: the traditional belief that **education** is essentially a local rather than a national concern, and the budgetary strictures and anti-tax sentiments that will make it extraordinarily difficult to increase Federal spending.

So for all the surface appeal of Mr. Clinton's dramatic educational call to arms, how much will eventually go into effect, how much is sound policy and how much is affordable remain very much in question.

"He's a master communicator," said Representative Bill Goodling, the chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, "but as people sort all of this out, I think they'll have a different opinion of his plan than they do now.

"There's no question that education is the sexiest thing out there right now, and the President knows that. But I think people have to ask how much of this is new and how much is just more of the same."

The education plan, which was the centerpiece of Mr. Clinton's State of the Union address on Tuesday, was most revealing in reflecting how far the nation had come toward accepting the importance of national standards. It may have been most vulnerable in its call for increased college financial aid and its notion of volunteerism as a cornerstone of literacy.

But experts say that if one of Mr. Clinton's goals was putting education at the top of the national agenda and forcefully identifying himself with it, the speech was a major step in that direction.

After fighting off Republican efforts in the last Congress to cut Federal spending on education, he called for a record \$51 billion for education in his budget proposal on Thursday.



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The New York Times, February 8, 1997

The plan seeks to raise standards, improve the quality of the nation's teachers, improve **reading**, enhance early learning and offer more choices -- particularly largely autonomous charter schools -- in the context of public education.

The President also called for more character education, \$5 billion to repair and rebuild crumbling school buildings, more financial aid to college students, improved adult education and a plan to connect all schools to the Internet by the year 2000.

The proposals drew their strongest support from mainstream educational groups, teachers unions and other professional educators.

"It was a home run," said Bella Rosenberg, assistant to the president of the American Federation of Teachers. "It was a coherent package of high standards for achievement and high standards of conduct."

By identifying himself so strongly with the critical importance of education and by melding diverse ideas, Mr. Clinton left most critics praising his commitment to educational innovation, though arguing over the specifics of his plan.

"He said it was his number one priority," said Jeanne Allen, president of the Center for Education Reform, which advocates choice options like vouchers and charter schools. "I think there is a fundamental misconception about what makes schools good and what makes children learn, but I think it's really important that the President spoke about education."

Many experts say the most significant aspect of Mr. Clinton's program is its enthusiastic embrace of national standards and even national **tests** for some **grades**. That reflects the degree to which a national presence -- but not a Federal one -- in standards and assessments has become perhaps the most important wave of educational change.

"What Bill Clinton has done has gone way beyond where the country was even at the Education Summit at Palisades last year," said Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy and co-director of New Standards, which has drawn up proposed voluntary standards for the nation's schools. "He's saying that not only do we need standards, we need national standards. That would have been almost unthinkable even a year ago."

The road to national standards will be long and bumpy. Some critics on the left think standardized **tests** are often biased and inaccurate, and many on the right chafe at a larger national role in education.

But for many analysts on both sides, Mr. Clinton's call for national standards -- and a **test** of the nation's **fourth graders** in **reading** and **eighth graders** in **math** -- had more potential than anything else in his proposal to improve education.

"I **graded** the different parts of the program, and the **grades** ranged from A to F, but the part I liked best was perhaps the most controversial one, which was the **test**," said Chester Finn, a prominent conservative critic of education and a



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senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

Mr. Finn said that at the opposite extreme was the President's proposed program of tax credits for education. Many skeptics, on the left and the right, say financial incentives to make a 13th and 14th year of education as common as high school is now could lead to **grade** inflation and cause schools such as junior colleges to use the new Federal money for their own needs rather than pass the savings on to students. Such incentives would help those who go to school already, they say, not open the door wider for those who do not.

"The poor are going to be largely unaffected by this," said Arthur Levine, president of Teachers College at Columbia University. "It won't improve access one iota."

Republicans in Congress question the price tag of Mr. Clinton's proposal and the addition of new programs to the 760 they say exist now in 39 Federal agencies at a cost of \$120 billion.

And many people are skeptical of parts of the plan with the most surface appeal, like the idea of recruiting one million tutors into a national **Reading Corps**. "He seems to have this screwy idea that because two and a half million teachers who are paid to do this stuff are not very good at it, that sending a million amateurs into the classroom is going to make a difference," Mr. Finn said.

Still, if the details of the plan will face withering scrutiny, many educators say Mr. Clinton artfully caught the public's mood on education and did a real service in focusing attention on it.

"He's picked an issue that's very clearly at the top of the public's mind, and he's played the specifics pretty much off the polling data that's available," said Paul Houston, executive director of the American Association of School Administrators. "He's going to have a tremendous amount of public support, at least initially."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Copyright 1997 Globe Newspaper Company
The Boston Globe

February 6, 1997, Thursday, City Edition

SECTION: METRO/REGION; Pg. B5

LENGTH: 782 words

HEADLINE: Clinton hits home on schools;
Mass. a step ahead of president in education reform push

BYLINE: By Doreen Iudica Vigue, Globe Staff

BODY:

Bill Clinton may be calling for a standardized skills test and higher education standards nationwide, but Massachusetts education officials have a message for him: We're way ahead of you, Mr. President.

Beginning this spring, the state's Education Reform Act of 1993 will require all third graders to take a standardized test to prove they can read at grade level, and all 10th graders to take tests in reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies.

The tests are designed to find out how well students are learning. Although there is no statewide data on how many children are reading at grade level, education officials believe the third-grade test may prove difficult for many students, particularly those in urban schools. In Boston, for example, half of the third graders in 1995 read below grade level, according to the city's tests.

In his State of the Union address Tuesday, President Clinton called for nationwide voluntary testing for fourth-grade students in reading and eighth-grade students in math by 1999 in order to create higher, uniform learning levels.

"The president's goal is to implement these changes by 1999 and by then, the state of Massachusetts will be two years ahead of him," said Robert V. Antonucci, the state's education commissioner. "There are plenty of other states that also have ed reform and I think we're models for the president's plan."

Clinton put a premium on improving education in schools across America, and promised to fund the upgrades with \$ 51 billion in his budget, which is scheduled to be released today.

Antonucci and others viewed the increase in federal funding - about 1 or 2 percent more than public schools currently receive - as a symbol of the president's commitment to improving education, more than a tool to do so.

"More money tossed our way will just encourage the growth of what we've already started," said Mark Roosevelt, a former state legislator and co-architect of the Education Reform Act. "But I am cynical about the money. Our



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ed-reform bill will be \$ 2 billion from the state. We'll never get that from the feds."

Roosevelt said a national **test** is imperative if US students are to compete in the job market with international students. The United States has historically fared poorly when the **test grades** of its secondary students are held up to those of youths in Japan, for example.

"We need to take responsibility for our own standards, our own students, our own **tests** as a nation, not by each individual school system," said Roosevelt. "I'm all for comparisons on the international level. But developing the proper standards will take some work."

Critics of Clinton's plan argued that the last thing American students need is another standardized **test** and said they are concerned about who will set the standards and whether they will be high enough.

Alfie Kohn, author of five books on education and human behavior, including "Punished by Rewards," said research shows that an over-emphasis on performance can lead students to become less interested in learning and, ultimately, less likely to learn effectively.

Kohn called standardized, "fill-in-the-blank" **tests** "one of the worst enemies of good teaching" because it pressures educators to teach to the **test** and not to the student.

"When we take a mindless call for ratcheting up performance and then put yet more emphasis on machine-scored **tests**, we do a double disservice to our kids and the people who teach them," he said. "Every hour spent preparing kids to score well on standardized **tests** is an hour missing from innovative lessons."

There was some common ground among the educators, however. They agreed it was good to see bipartisan support for education improvements and were wary about how the proposed national education standards will be determined. And all wanted assurance that government and politics would not bigfoot the issues.

Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, meanwhile, wanted to urge the president to focus on cities, not states, to carry out his education proposals.

In a letter sent to Clinton yesterday, Menino proposed a "federal-local" partnership and noted that while governors play an important role in resource allocation for education, it is the nation's mayors who are "making a real impact in education reform."

Menino called for direct funding of education and job-training initiatives to cities with a population of 30,000 or more, asked that funding of charter schools be available to school systems with established "pilot" schools, and proposed that two new matching-grant programs be created in the US Department of Education that would involve mayors and the business community.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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THE HARTFORD COURANT

February 6, 1997 Thursday, STATEWIDE

SECTION: CONNECTICUT; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 885 words

HEADLINE: CLINTON GIVEN HIGH MARKS ON EDUCATION-REFORM IDEAS

BYLINE: ROBERT A. FRAHM; Courant Staff Writer

BODY:

President Clinton's decision to make education the top priority of his second term could bolster the efforts of educators and politicians to revamp Connecticut's schools and colleges.

In his State of the Union speech Tuesday, Clinton outlined a 10- point plan to improve America's schools. It included several ideas already under consideration in Connecticut, where the legislature also is expected to make education its top priority this year.

For example, the president called for:

- * More charter schools, innovative publicly supported schools designed to stimulate competition with existing public schools and give parents more choices. A state panel recently suggested charter schools as one means for improving urban school systems.

- * An expansion of preschool education, including the federal Head Start program. Lawmakers and educators have pledged to make preschool a key issue in Connecticut this year.

"Anybody who teaches in the city would tell you preschool education is a key," said Susan Zarbo, an eighth-grade teacher at Hartford's Kennelly School.

- * More scholarships and financial aid for college students -- an issue of deep concern in Connecticut and other states where tuition rates have soared in recent years.

"We need some national resolve [on education]. . . . What the president has done is galvanize us," said Claire L. Gaudiani, president of Connecticut College in New London.

Gaudiani is one of 60 college presidents who have pledged to assign students in work-study programs to help as reading tutors in elementary schools -- part of a national team of volunteers whom Clinton called upon to improve reading skills among America's children.

The president also called for establishing national academic standards, training more top-notch teachers, making job training more available to adults



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and connecting every classroom to the Internet.

There is little doubt that some of the president's proposals -- especially those with big price tags -- will generate intense debate, but Clinton called for bipartisan support, saying "politics must stop at the classroom door." Some observers believe he has tapped into an issue that has broad public appeal.

"He really did catch people's attention, and I think he's absolutely right," said U.S. Rep. Nancy L. Johnson, a Republican from New Britain. "If you go through his ideas, a lot of them are things Republicans have introduced in some form."

Johnson praised several of the president's recommendations, such as setting national academic standards, providing tuition assistance and creating as many as 3,000 charter schools by the year 2000.

"If we could get up to 150 charter schools in Connecticut, you'd see a change in standards, discipline, atmosphere, attitude," she said.

The charter school proposal could have particular appeal in Connecticut, where educators and politicians hope to create more options for parents in Hartford and other major cities.

The legislature is under pressure to create such options as it looks for ways to comply with a court desegregation order in the Sheff vs. O'Neill case. In that case, the state Supreme Court ruled last year that racial imbalance in Hartford's public schools violates the state constitution.

"To the extent some federal funds are available [for charter schools], that will help," said state Senate President Pro Tem Kevin B. Sullivan, D-West Hartford.

"It was good to see the president spend as much time as he did on the issue of education. . . . There is a lot here that people on all sides can wrap their hands around."

The tuition assistance proposals are a centerpiece of Clinton's plan.

Clinton proposed a \$1,500 annual tax credit and a \$10,000 annual tax deduction for college tuition as well as an increase in Pell Grant scholarships for low-income students.

"This might be something that can encourage young people to go to college and stay in school," said Dwayne Bolton, a senior political communications major at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain.

Bolton, of Bloomfield, president of Central's Student Government Association, said he is concerned that fewer students are getting direct scholarships while more are being forced to take out loans.

"You're talking about students trying to build a future . . . but they're already in a huge amount of debt."

Zarbo, the Kennelly School teacher, also liked the president's tuition assistance proposals but expressed doubts because of their potential cost.



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"I kind of thought that would be nice," said Zarbo, whose daughter is a high school senior, "but I think it would be practically impossible to do."

Meanwhile, Clinton's call for a "citizen army" of volunteers to help children learn to read by the end of the third grade is similar to a request by Connecticut Education Commissioner Theodore S. Sergi for volunteer reading tutors to assist in Hartford's schools.

Sergi is leading an effort to provide state assistance to Hartford schools, whose students have the highest poverty level and the lowest achievement test scores in the state.

Sergi said that all of Clinton's goals are consistent "with what we've been working on in Connecticut," but he rated the goal to improve reading skills as the most important.

"I support that 100 percent," he said.

GRAPHIC: GRAPHIC: (b&w), The Hartford Courant; Schools and You; The Impact of Clinton's Education Ideas; Here are some of the key points of the education plan outlined in President Clinton's state of the union speech. The president called for:; * More financial help for college students, including two years of a \$1,500 tax credit for tuition, a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for college tuition, an increase in Pell Grant scholarships for low-income students, and an IRA plan allowing tax-free withdrawals for tuition.; Outlook: The idea would have widespread appeal among families, but its potential cost could make it among the most controversial points in the President's plan. In Connecticut, lawmakers are expected to consider a similar IRA-type plan allowing withdrawals for tuition that would be free of state tax.; * The expansion of charter schools and the right of parents to choose among various public schools -- an effort to foster more competition and innovation.; Outlook: Charter schools -- publicly-supported schools that operate free of many administrative and union rules -- are a popular idea among school reformers, but some of these experimental schools have run into budget problems and opposition from local school officials. About half the states in the U.S. are testing charter laws, but in many cases the idea is simply too new to evaluate. Connecticut's first charter schools, for example, are not scheduled to open until the fall. Meanwhile, public school choice has been proposed for Connecticut's big cities, but the idea already is creating a heated debate in the legislature.; * National academic standards, saying that by 1999 every state should test every 4th-grader in reading and every 8th-grader in math.; Outlook: Many would welcome efforts to set high national standards, but educators are likely to favor individual state-developed tests over any single national test. This is especially true in states such as Connecticut, which already have created their own extensive testing programs.

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St. Louis Post-Dispatch

February 6, 1997, Thursday, FIVE STAR LIFT EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. 09A

LENGTH: 485 words

HEADLINE: AREA EDUCATORS **GRADE CLINTON'S** SCHOOL PROPOSALS

BYLINE: Samuel Autman; Of The Post-Dispatch Staff

BODY:

St. Louis schools Superintendent Cleveland Hammonds Jr. is excited. Meramec Elementary School principal Ruth Mach can barely contain herself. Jennings schools Superintendent Terry Stewart wants to wait and see.

It's a safe bet President Bill Clinton's proposal to spend billions more on American **education** was the talk of every teachers' lounge Wednesday. It certainly was the case at Clayton's Meramec Elementary School.

"I really think he has caught the essence of all of us who are committed to education," Mach said. "I am particularly impressed with him thinking about lifelong learning."

The president's proposals would boost education spending by 20 percent, to \$ 51 billion. Outlined in his State of the Union Address Tuesday night, they include:

New national education standards and, by 1999, **testing** of every **fourth-grader** in **reading** and every **eighth-grader** in **math** to ensure those standards are met.

New spending to allow 100,000 more teachers to seek national certification as master teachers.

An effort to improve **reading** through the use of volunteer tutors and college students.

Promoting involvement of parents in early learning programs.

Increasing by sevenfold - to 3,000 - the number of charter schools, which allow experimentation in curriculum.

Spending \$ 5 billion to help communities pay for school construction.

Making two years of college as common as a high school education through scholarships, a \$ 1,500 tax credit for tuition and an increase in Pell Grants.

Hammonds, who heads the St. Louis Public Schools, was pleased to see Clinton use the presidency as a bully pulpit for the nation's schools. Facing



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St. Louis Post-Dispatch, February 6, 1997

much-needed renovations at Vashon High School, Hammonds is eager to see more money come from Washington for capital improvements.

He agreed with all of Clinton's outlined goals except one.

"I am not a supporter of charter schools," Hammonds said. "The public schools' move to school-based management is a response to the charter schools movement."

The charter school movement is an experimental concept in which schools are governed by parent-teacher boards and are free from the rules that most public schools must follow. School-based management, on the other hand, is a movement in public schools that shifts power from school boards to school-based boards made up of parents, teachers and administrators.

Clinton's biggest challenge, Hammonds said, will be getting Congress to back his proposals.

Mach believes Clinton is already headed in that direction.

"Any buzz I heard was the excitement that a Democratic president said something that was applauded by a widely Republican Congress," she said. "As an administrator, I welcome any discussion on education, negative or affirmative."

Stewart is a bit more skeptical.

"I think it all has to unfold through the legislative process," he said.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 1997



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February 6, 1997, Thursday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: LOCAL, Pg. 1B

LENGTH: 720 words

HEADLINE: COUNTY WELCOMES CLINTON PLAN FOR EDUCATION

BYLINE: SARAH TALALAY; Education Writer

BODY:

Rigorous **testing**, higher educational standards, and new and renovated school buildings are welcome news for South Florida school districts.

Especially coming from the nation's chief executive.

A day after President Clinton outlined his 10-point package for improving **education** for all the nation's students, local school officials and **education** experts said they hope the country is headed into a period of renewed interest - and in particular, money - for **education**.

"It's all good news to us that the federal government has taken such an interest in **education**," said Agustin Hernandez, a Palm Beach County school district planning specialist.

But officials pointed out that \$ 5 billion in federal dollars to help pay for school construction won't provide much for fast-growing South Florida districts. Broward isn't likely to receive more than \$ 16 million - only slightly more than the cost of a new elementary school.

And state and local officials say the key to making national standards successful will be allowing states to maintain control of their own schools. The state of Florida and Broward and Palm Beach counties have been at the forefront of establishing curriculum standards.

"While there is a great deal of continuity between what the president is advocating and what we are doing in Florida, I believe we should be cautious about expanding the federal role in public education, which has been and should remain a local and state responsibility," Florida Education Commissioner Frank Brogan said in a statement.

The cornerstone of Clinton's plan is the establishment of national standards that will spell out what skills students must master to be promoted from one **grade** level to the next. To determine that students are mastering the skills, by 1999 states should administer national **tests** in **reading** to **fourth-graders** and in **math** to **eighth-graders**, Clinton said.

His nine other points, including the need for new and refurbished school buildings, dedicated teachers and early parental involvement, are all means to



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Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale), February 6, 1997

getting students to be able to meet the more rigorous benchmarks.

Clinton's plans aren't new, said Ira Goldenberg, dean of the college of education at Florida International University, but rather ideas that have been pursued for years by educational organizations and school districts. They could, however, benefit from federal attention, he said.

But Goldenberg said as much as Clinton's emphasis on education is praiseworthy, it will not progress without the support of Congress, the business community, school districts and the public.

"Everyone knows vision, direction and planning don't take on a very real significance unless there is support for them," Goldenberg said. Florida officials already have established state standards. And the testing that will determine whether students are mastering the skills will be administered for the first time later this year - as a way to determine whether the tests are appropriate for assessing students' abilities.

"I would not anticipate that with any type of standard that would come out nationally - if we choose to accept it - we wouldn't have to change what we're teaching," Broward Schools Deputy Superintendent Frances Haithcock said. "We already test on those grade levels ... we're not waiting around for someone to tell us what to do."

"I guess Florida has jumped the gun," said Cynthia Pino, associate superintendent in the Palm Beach County school system. "I hope that the other states will join us in setting very high standards. We're doing everything we can to make sure our students achieve them."

Frank Newman, president of the Education Commission of the States, a national organization that helps states work with education policies, thinks Clinton's plans will work if he means to expand the National Assessment of Educational Progress testing program.

That program takes sample tests throughout the nation sporadically and doesn't provide results in a timely manner, Newman said. But if it tested students and provided results annually, it could serve as a national testing program.

Expanding the testing program would provide the states with the data needed to compare themselves with other states and determine whether their standards were good ones, Newman said.

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LEVEL 1 - 236 OF 264 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Omaha World-Herald Company
Omaha World Herald

February 5, 1997 Wednesday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 13

LENGTH: 915 words

HEADLINE: Nebraska Educators Praise Initiatives State of the Union Response

BYLINE: MICHAEL O'CONNOR, WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

BODY:

State and local **education** officials reacted mostly favorably Tuesday to President **Clinton's** State of the Union address, but at least one said some Nebraskans might view **Clinton's** emphasis on **education** as another sign that the federal government is stepping on local control.

"There are people who do not like the federal government and might think that now the government is going to get more involved in **education**," said Katherine Endacott, vice president of the Nebraska Board of **Education**.

Ms. Endacott said she hopes Nebraskans take **Clinton's** focus as a sign that improving **education** must be a No. 1 priority.

"His initiatives can have a major impact on the country," she said Tuesday night.

Clinton's address included a 10-point education program that included calling for national standards; providing \$ 5 billion in federal seed money to finance \$ 20 billion worth of school construction over four years; teaching every child to read well by the end of third **grade**; providing tax incentives and additional grant money for college education; expanding early childhood education programs; and teaching character education in schools.

John Langan, Omaha school board president, said **Clinton's** plan sends a message that education is vital to the success of the country.

"I think any time education is in the forefront, it's good for kids," Langan said.

The core of **Clinton's** proposal for making college more affordable is a tax credit, or Hope Scholarship, that would refund up to \$ 1,500 to families in each of the first two years that a child attends college and earns a "B" average or better. Alternatively, families could choose to deduct up to \$ 10,000 from their taxable income for each student enrolled in college.

The president also called for a 25 percent increase in the size of the Pell grant program, which pays the college tuition costs of 3.6 million of the nation's neediest students.



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John Payne, chairman of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, said the tax incentives and grant increases were needed.

"We have to try to keep higher education affordable." Clinton announced that the federal government will develop achievement tests in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math.

He stopped short of making it a requirement that schools administer the tests.

Instead, he plans to use his influence to rally the nation to embrace his call for a "national crusade for education standards." The Nebraska Board of Education has approved a draft of academic standards for reading, mathematics and other subjects.

The board has said it has no plans to develop a statewide test to measure state standards.

Instead, the board may have local districts use existing tests to measure for the standards.

Ms. Endacott and Langan said they would need more details on the national test before deciding whether it would be worth using.

Ms. Endacott said Clinton's plan for improving the condition of schools could help Nebraska.

"We have facilities that are in bad shape." A 1994 federal study indicated that 35 percent of Nebraska schools reported at least one building in need of extensive repair or replacement.

State of the Union Response Here are comments on President Clinton's speech by members of the Nebraska and Iowa congressional delegations.

Charles Grassley Senator, R-Iowa "It was a conciliatory call to action. It defined the problem.

Now it's up to us to go to work."

Tom Harkin Senator, D-Iowa "It was a great call for bipartisanship. It was a solid speech.

However, he should've mentioned agriculture when he talked about exports.

Agriculture is our No. 1 export."

Greg Ganske Rep., R-Iowa "After an hour of new proposals, it is clear that the era of big government is back.

He had a great opportunity to talk about the great issues facing our country. He didn't do it."

Leonard Boswell Rep., D-Iowa "I was inspired by his speech. I liked what I was hearing.

It was a long speech, but it went by in a flash.

These are things that are sorely needed by our country."

Chuck Hagel Senator, R-Neb.

"There was one reference to Medicare, a very fleeting reference to the biggest problem confronting us today.



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This guy doesn't talk about the tough issues.
I didn't think much of the speech."

Doug Bereuter Rep., R-Neb.

"I was very disappointed he came out so strongly against the balanced-budget amendment.
He says he's for a balanced budget, but then he talks about all his new spending programs."

Jon Christensen Rep., R-Neb.

"The State of the Union speech needs to be more about what's happening in our families, in our churches and our neighborhoods and not about what's happening in Washington."

Bob Kerrey Senator, D-Neb.

"I thought it was a good speech.
He said he is going to submit a balanced budget.
That's very significant.
Reagan didn't do it, Bush didn't do it, and Clinton didn't do it in his first two years."

Bill Barrett Rep., R-Neb.

"I liked what he said about balancing the budget, but I thought it was unfortunate that he again opposes the balanced-budget amendment.
I liked some of the things he said, but he didn't tell us how he plans to meet those goals."

NOTES:

Clinton's Message: Second Term. Sidebar included.

GRAPHIC: Mugs/8; Bob Kerrey; Chuck Hagel; Tom Harkin; Charles Grassley; Jon Christensen; Greg Ganske; Doug Bereuter; Bill Barrett

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 06, 1997



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Copyright 1997 The Patriot Ledger
The Patriot Ledger (Quincy, MA)

February 5, 1997 Wednesday All Editions

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 07

LENGTH: 295 words

HEADLINE: Lawmakers from Mass. like focus on **education**

BYLINE: Betty Mills, The Patriot Ledger Washington Bureau

SOURCE: The Patriot Ledger Washington Bureau

BODY:

WASHINGTON -- Massachusetts lawmakers praised President **Clinton** for highlighting **education** in his State of the Union address.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy said the president's **education** plan is "effective and achievable."

"The president recognizes the importance of investing in education while balancing the budget as the cornerstone of a stronger future for the nation," Kennedy said.

Kennedy said the idea to initiate a voluntary national **test** for **fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math** will help schools, teachers and students improve their performance.

"This proposal is a significant step in the right direction to raise academic achievement for all students," Kennedy said. "In effect, with these proposals, President **Clinton** is **testing** Congress, too. And this is one **test** Congress can't afford to flunk."

Sen. John F. Kerry called the speech "a very comprehensive, strong statement. I was pleased particularly because I concentrated in my campaign on the issues of education, job security and crime."

Kerry predicted the education package will clear Congress, although he said the proposals to beef up college loans may be changed. "The loans may be targeted more," he said, to benefit lower-income taxpayers. "But this is fundamentally a good direction."

Rep. Barney Frank, D-Newton, said, "It was a very good, liberal Democratic speech. The overall problem is that there are not enough resources to go around. He will fight hardest for education. We probably have a pretty good chance to expand the grants and tax credits."

Frank said the defense budget must be cut to pay for the new initiatives outlined by President **Clinton**.



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"He wants to do a lot of very good things, and balance the budget. He has to reduce the military budget," Frank said.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 1997



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Copyright 1997 Denver Publishing Company
Rocky Mountain News

February 6, 1997, Thursday

SECTION: LOCAL; Ed. F; Pg. 8A

LENGTH: 414 words

HEADLINE: Colorado schools a step ahead
Many programs **Clinton** suggested are already in state's classrooms

BYLINE: Brian Weber; Rocky Mountain News Education Writer

BODY:

President **Clinton's** new 'national crusade' for educational excellence is already being waged in Colorado.

Nearly all the innovations **Clinton** promoted in his State of the Union address Tuesday - charter schools, choice programs, statewide achievement standards and intense **reading** instruction - are commonplace in Colorado.

Clinton also wants students to pass a national skills **test** for **reading** in **fourth grade** and **math** in **eighth grade**. Colorado passed a law last year to require third-graders to read at their **grade** level.

'It was uncanny how many issues we're working on that he highlighted,' said Beverly Ausfahl, president of the Colorado Education Association, the state's primary teacher's union. 'His talking about it reinforces what we're trying to do here.'

But there were also new ideas in **Clinton's** speech that are welcomed by Colorado educators.

His proposed tax credits for college tuition and more grant money show respect for higher education - both for younger and continuing adult students, said Gary Galluzzo, dean of education at the University of Northern Colorado.

'It was an education speech for the information age,' said Galluzzo.

Clinton said his proposed federal budget for next year will ask for \$ 51 billion for education, a 20% increase over this year. But the Republican-controlled Congress must agree.

It will, predicted Gov. Roy Romer.

'When he got to education they were all standing,' said Romer, who attended the speech.

Romer said he expects plenty of tangible help particularly with tax breaks, tutors from Americorps and doubling federal money to start charter schools.



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Rocky Mountain News, February 6, 1997

Gary Apel, a teacher at Denver's Lincoln High School who coordinates a program for lagging students, said policymakers must remember that college is not for everyone.

"I think we need to focus on vocational training," he said. "Not all these kids want to go to college or need to."

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: February 10, 1997

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The Record

February 6, 1997; THURSDAY; ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A01

LENGTH: 1275 words

HEADLINE: EDUCATORS WARM TO CLINTON'S CRUSADE ;
AGENDA RAISES STATUS OF SCHOOLS

BYLINE: DAVID GLOVIN and JOHN MOONEY, Staff Writers

BODY:

President Clinton's crusade to produce the world's finest education system features dozens of proposals that have long been tossed around by school reformers.

But educators said Wednesday that together, the proposals represent a grand effort to overhaul an education system that has been the subject of withering attack in recent years.

Even proposals that might be expected to meet criticism, such as his call for voluntary testing against national standards, a proposal that has been resisted by states in the past, were greeted warmly.

"National standards don't get rid of local control," said Bruno Manno, a senior fellow at the conservative Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. "If they're done properly, they leave plenty of room for school districts to add requirements or give shape to the needs of the local community."

Clinton laid out a 10-point master plan in his State of the Union address Tuesday night.

Among the proposals, which he called the top priority of his second term: The federal government would develop rigorous national tests in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math and invite states to test students in these areas by 1999. States would retain the power to devise their own curriculums.

The federal government would offer funding to help as many as 100,000 "master teachers" to achieve national certification as experts in their field. The teachers would be expected to tutor novice educators as well as to lead classes.

. \$ 5 billion in federal aid would be set aside for school construction and repair, supplementing another \$ 15 billion in state and local contributions.

1 million volunteer tutors would be recruited to teach reading to



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children in after-school and summer programs, at a cost of \$ 2.75 billion.

States should allow parents to choose their children's public school and should foster efforts by parents and others to create innovative "charter" schools.

Clinton also called for two years of a \$ 1,500 tax credit for college tuition, a tax deduction of up to \$ 10,000 a year for post high-school tuition, and expanded retirement accounts that allow families to save tax-free for college.

None of the proposals is particularly new or radical. The president, for instance, urged a broad program for college savings during last year's campaign, and a sweeping report recently raised questions about teacher competence and urged funding for master teachers.

Similarly, New Jersey, like 47 other states, is adopting a new statewide curriculum, and on Wednesday, Governor Whitman formally awarded "charters" to 17 groups that have won state approval to start innovative public schools. Whitman, who has also proposed a college savings plan, said New Jersey was "further along" in its reform efforts than the president was proposing.

Also, the federal government's role in education is limited, Washington supplies just 6 percent of funding for public schools, and most of that is targeted to poor districts. State and local governments also largely control the policies and practices.

But in packaging these proposals in one bundle, and using a high-profile forum to push them, Clinton lent new urgency to the nation's 15-year push to improve its schools.

"Taken together, it means we have to redo education as a system," said Frank Smith, an education professor at Columbia University. "He Clinton called for charter schools, which means a new way to do schooling. He called for national teacher certification, which is a new way to raise competence for teachers. He called for national standards, which means kids have to learn more."

That's not to say the proposals will be easy to implement. A spokeswoman for the New Jersey Education Association said the teachers union opposed expert certification for educators because districts often cut the wages of non-experts to pay higher salaries to master teachers.

Nor is there any assurance that states will come up with the matching funds required for the school construction initiative; New Jersey lawmakers voted down a \$ 1 billion plan last year.

For that matter, the \$ 5 billion construction initiative would hardly make a dent in the nation's building needs. Officials estimate that \$ 6 billion is needed in New Jersey alone to upgrade crumbling structures.



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In addition, states may falter even with the best of intentions.

New Jersey in 1989 signed on to a national effort to ensure that by the year 2000, 90 percent of all students graduate. But a report issued Wednesday showed that only 83.5 percent graduated in 1995, a slight decline from four years earlier.

The report also shows that only three of four **eighth-graders** are competent in **reading, math,** and writing, even though New Jersey pledged that all **eighth-graders** would be skilled in these areas by 2000.

Meanwhile, Manno, of the Hudson Institute, said Clinton failed to offer a broad enough agenda to truly revolutionize education. "I'm not sure the elements of the K-12 plan are bold enough," he said. "Is creating 1,000 charter schools by the year 2000 in a country with 15,000 school districts bold enough? It strikes of mediocrity."

Educators, however, widely backed Clinton's call for national **testing** and standards, noting that U.S. children scored merely average in last year's international comparison of student achievement in **math** and science.

Clinton's proposal would require only minimal involvement of the federal government in education. Instead, he called for basing new **tests** on existing **math and reading** exams that were used in the international comparison.

Mahwah superintendent Murray Blueglass said parents needed to know that children are performing competitively, and that high schools already subject top students to national comparisons when they sit for advanced placement exams. "A national curriculum makes a lot of sense," he said.

New Jersey higher education officials also applauded Clinton's attempt to hold down college costs. The average tuition of a public four-year institution in New Jersey is about \$ 4,000, and more than double that when fees and living expenses are added. County college tuition averages about \$ 2,000.

"One can always say it is not enough," said Ramapo College President Robert Scott. "But I think we are in an exciting time for education, and providing financial resources to students to have a real choice whether to go to college is really the thing to do."

Scott said the \$ 10,000 tax deduction would be a great help to Ramapo families. "Our tuition with fees is about \$ 3,750, and just think, that will now be tax-deductible," he said. "That will very appealing to our people."

Staff Writer Ovetta Wiggins contributed to this article.

(SIDEBAR, PAGE a18)



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CLINTON'S EDUCATION PLAN
GRADES K-12

- * Establish voluntary national standards with **tests** in **fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math**.
- * Recruit 1 million volunteer tutors to teach **reading** to children.
- * Encourage states to let parents choose any public school they want for their children.
- * Spend \$ 5 billion for school construction projects.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- * Provide tax credit of \$ 1,500 a year for two years to families paying college tuitions, provided the student achieves a B average.
- * Provide tax deduction for tuition payments up to \$ 10,000 a year for families that do not claim the tax credits.
- * Expand scholarships for low-income students by 25 percent.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 1997



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Copyright 1997 The News and Observer
The News and Observer (Raleigh, NC)

February 6, 1997 Thursday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL/OPINION; Pg. A18

LENGTH: 459 words

HEADLINE: Priorities in order

BODY:

President Clinton was cheered by members of both parties when, in Tuesday night's State of the Union address, he said, "Politics should stop at the schoolhouse door." If those Republicans and Democrats who put their hands together really mean it, the president's education goals can truly change America for the better.

Clinton's initiatives are thoughtful, make sense, and best of all are do-able. Why should it be insurmountably difficult to set national achievement standards, and measure them through testing, on reading for 4th graders and math for 8th graders? Why shouldn't the splendidly successful Head Start program be expanded to its full potential to give poor youngsters a better chance at a promising beginning to their education? Why shouldn't schools have updated technology connecting them to the Internet?

The wonders of invention, of space travel, of medical research have gone so far past the wildest dreams of Americans - similar energy, if invested in public education, could do the same for our children and the schools they attend. By calling for national goals, Clinton has not mandated federal intervention, but federal inspiration.

The president's push, in fact, focuses much responsibility on states to increase school construction, improve adult education and make public schools more accountable. But a worthwhile federal program he cited as in need of encouragement was one setting national teaching standards to award nationally recognized credentials to great teachers. That effort is being led by North Carolina's Jim Hunt.

Through tax breaks and savings, the president said, more Americans could go to college. His goal of having a 13th and 14th year of education become the norm is worthy, but Congress and the states must be careful here. Tax breaks and savings incentives are popular, but need-based scholarships remain an important opportunity. And the president's idea to tie a minimum B average for college students to a \$ 1,500 tax credit needs work; colleges grade in many different ways now, and critics



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have rightly wondered if such a tie-in might result in artificially high **grades** for students who won sympathy points from instructors.

There should be as well some encouragement for colleges to trim excessive costs (which often outpace inflation) to see that students - and scholarship providers - are getting the most for their money.

Republican naysayers already have weighed in with rhetoric wondering aloud if there will be enough money for the president's goals. Rather than looking for excuses not to act, they should be trying even harder to find ways to help American families realize those goals.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Copyright 1997 Charleston Newspapers
The Sunday Gazette Mail

February 09, 1997, Sunday

SECTION: News; Pg. P4A

LENGTH: 1177 words

HEADLINE: CLINTON'S PLAN WOULD PUT EDUCATION ON THE NATIONAL STAGE 0

BYLINE: Peter Applebome

BODY:

NEW YORK TIMES SERVICE

In outlining his ambitious agenda for **education** last week, President Clinton tapped into a deep national yearning to improve the nation's schools, even if it might mean accepting the revolutionary notion of national standards and perhaps even national **tests** to compare students, schools and states.

But Clinton's plan to spend \$ 51 billion on everything from **reading** tutors to repairing tumbledown school buildings runs counter to two other currents: the traditional belief that **education** is essentially a local rather than a national concern, and the budgetary strictures and anti-tax sentiments that will make it extraordinarily difficult to increase federal spending.

So for all the surface appeal of Clinton's dramatic educational call to arms, how much will eventually go into effect, how much is sound policy and how much is affordable remain very much in question.

"He's a master communicator, but as people sort all of this out, I think they'll have a different opinion of his plan than they do now," said Rep. Bill Goodling, the Republican chairman of the House Committee on **Education** and the Workforce. "There's no question that



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education is the sexiest thing out there right now, and the president knows that. But I think people have to ask how much of this is new and how much is just more of the same."

The education plan, which was the centerpiece of Clinton's State of the Union address Tuesday, was most revealing in reflecting how far the nation has come toward accepting the importance of national standards. It may have been most vulnerable in its call for increased college financial aid and its notion of volunteerism as a cornerstone of literacy.

But experts say that if one of Clinton's goals was putting education at the top of the national agenda and forcefully identifying himself with it, the speech was a major step in that direction.

After fighting off Republican efforts in the last Congress to slash federal education funding, he called for a record \$ 51 billion for education in the budget proposal that he unveiled Thursday.

The plan seeks to raise standards, improve the quality of the nation's teachers, improve reading, enhance early learning and offer more choices - particularly largely autonomous charter schools - in the context of public education.

The president also called for more character education, \$ 5 billion to repair and rebuild crumbling school buildings, more financial aid to college students, improved adult education and a plan to connect all schools to the Internet by the year 2000.

The proposals drew their strongest support from mainstream educational groups, teachers unions and other professional educators. "It was a home run," said Bella Rosenberg, assistant to the president of the American Federation of Teachers. "It was a coherent package of high standards for achievement and high standards of conduct."

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By identifying himself so strongly with the critical importance of education and by melding diverse ideas, Clinton left most critics arguing over the specifics of his plan, but praising his commitment to educational innovation.

"He said it was his number one priority," said Jeanne Allen, president of the Center for Education Reform, which advocates choice options such as vouchers and charter schools. "I think there is a fundamental misconception about what makes schools good and what makes children learn, but I think it's really important that the president spoke about education."

Many experts say the most significant aspect of Clinton's program is its enthusiastic embrace of national standards and even national tests for some grades. That reflects the degree to which a national presence - but not a federal one - in standards and assessments has become perhaps the most important wave of educational change.

"What Bill Clinton has done has gone way beyond where the country was even at the Education Summit at Palisades last year," said Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy and co-director of New Standards, which has drawn up proposed voluntary standards for the nation's schools. "He's saying that not only do we need standards, we need national standards. That would have been almost unthinkable even a year ago."

The road to national standards will be long and bumpy. Some critics on the left think standardized tests are often biased and inaccurate, and many on the right chafe at a larger national role in education.

But for many analysts on both sides, Clinton's call for national standards - and a test of the nation's fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math - had more potential than anything else in his

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proposal to improve education.

"I **graded** the different parts of the program, and the **grades** ranged from A to F, but the part I liked best was perhaps the most controversial one, which was the **test**," said Chester Finn, a prominent conservative critic of education and a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

Finn said that at the opposite extreme was the president's proposed program of tax credits for education. Many skeptics, on the left and the right, say financial incentives to make a 13th and 14th year of education as common as high school is now could lead to **grade** inflation and cause schools such as junior colleges to use the new federal money for their own needs rather than pass the savings on to students. Such incentives would help those who go to school already, they say, not open the door wider for those who do not.

"The poor are going to be largely unaffected by this," said Arthur Levine, president of Teachers College at Columbia University. "It won't improve access one iota."

Republicans in Congress question the price tag of Clinton's proposal and the addition of new programs to the 760 they say exist now in 39 federal agencies at a cost of \$ 120 billion.

And many people are skeptical of parts of the plan with the most surface appeal, like the idea of recruiting 1 million tutors into a national **Reading Corps**. "He seems to have this screwy idea that because two and a half million teachers who are paid to do this stuff are not very good at it, that sending a million amateurs into the classroom is going to make a difference," Finn said. Still, if the details of the plan will face withering scrutiny, many



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educators say **Clinton** artfully caught the public's mood on education and did a real service in focusing attention on it.

"He's picked an issue that's very clearly at the top of the public's mind, and he's played the specifics pretty much off the polling data that's available," said Paul Houston, executive director of the American Association of School Administrators. "He's going to have a tremendous amount of public support, at least initially."

LOAD-DATE: February 10, 1997



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Copyright 1997 Globe Newspaper Company
The Boston Globe

February 18, 1997, Tuesday, City Edition

SECTION: EDITORIAL PAGE; Pg. A10

LENGTH: 313 words

HEADLINE: **Tests** as tools

BODY:

Roll out the standardized **math and reading tests**, but use them wisely.

Educational standards aren't a cure-all, but President Clinton has put his finger on a vital point: The United States can't be much of a superpower if not all its citizens can **read** TV Guide.

So Clinton is asking - not requiring - states to **test their 4th graders' reading** skills and their **8th graders' math** skills to see if they meet a national standard.

It's a good idea. Standardized **tests** are imperfect, but they can pinpoint gaps. Students either know long division or they don't; they can comfortably read a newspaper or they can't.

As it stands, intellectual segregation in America forces businesses and colleges to moonlight as high schools. And in actual high schools, students slip through even when their skills will clearly condemn them to obscurity.

National standardized **tests** should help prevent this by acting as an early-warning system. But there is a risk of Bell Curve-itis: Using **test** scores - as Donald Murray did in his book "The Bell Curve" - to make sweeping, self-serving generalizations about who is smart and, by implication, who is deserving.

Fortunately, educators around the country have done better, using **test** scores to identify problems that need to be solved. The trick is making sure that students don't become only educational lab rats to be prodded and observed. Enlist students as partners in using nationalized **tests** and entire communities are more likely to end up on the side of effective reform.

But national standards cannot work alone. Otherwise they're only sad indicators of the blatantly obvious: Some schools are academic palaces; others double as holding facilities.

The true national **test** will be how well the country reacts to students' scores - a serious **test** of how much national commitment supports the national rhetoric.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH



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Copyright 1997 News World Communications, Inc.
The Washington Times

February 27, 1997, Thursday, Final Edition

SECTION: Part A; COMMENTARY; OP-ED; Pg. A17

LENGTH: 809 words

HEADLINE: The good news about standards

BYLINE: William J. Moloney

BODY:

By devoting nearly half of his State of the Union address to **education**, President Clinton once again demonstrated the power of the "bully pulpit." Regardless of what one thinks of his ideas, the president assuredly has everyone from pundits to politicians talking about **education** and many sensing the onset of a sea change in how America reforms its troubled schools.

Amidst the president's too numerous to list proposals for bettering **education**, what is real and what is not? Which might happen, and more importantly, which should happen?

By far the most important element of the president's message was his clarion call for national standards, reinforced by a specific summons to the states to **test fourth grade reading and eighth grade math** by 1999.

Before liberals and conservatives alike leap to attack these notions, they should carefully understand what is being proposed and more critically, what is not.

Properly understood, national standards are not a federal mandate but rather a consensus benchmark of educational quality for voluntary adherence. The best precedent for this voluntary system of standards is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which since 1969 has produced what we call "The Nation's Report Card." Over time most states but not all have freely chosen to participate in NAEP and in doing so have given America its only reliable baseline indicator of educational quality as well as a chance to see how their own student achievement levels stack up against other states and nations. An illustration of the value of such information is the recently released "Quality Counts," the massive state-by-state analysis jointly sponsored by Education Week and the Pew Foundation Charitable Trust in which NAEP data was used to hammer home the disgraceful but instructive truth that less than 30 percent of American children are proficient in either **reading or math**.

Make no mistake, selling the idea of national standards will not be easy; disparaging attacks from left and right have already begun. Reflexively, conservatives see a federal power grab, and the looming specter of a "national school board" out to micro-manage every classroom in America. Liberals reach



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essentially the same conclusion albeit from a different direction by invoking their visceral distaste for anything that smacks of conformity or that might suppress the inalienable right of freelancing teachers to do their own thing once the classroom door is closed. Both sides thus distort national standards into straw men they find easy to demolish. In doing so they ensure that America's reform efforts will continue to flail about in chaotic and wasteful fashion while yet another generation pays the awful price for their ideological shortsightedness.

Amidst this liberal/conservative obtuseness, oddly it is our chameleon-like president - constantly baffling friend and foe alike - who seems to have got the thing right. Skeptics will see this as some poll driven Morrisism served up by the greatest retail politician of the age, but the fact is that on core cultural issues Mr. Clinton has better instincts than any Democrat and as the election showed, he can articulate GOP issues better than any Republican.

In truth, America desperately needs voluntary national standards. 14 years after "A Nation At Risk," education reform remains a bedlam of 50 states and 15,000 school districts independently striving yet unable to even decide what Algebra is, let alone how to **test** for it. The Ebonics farce was but an extreme example of the ludicrous curricular controversies that rage within every discipline: phonics versus whole language in **reading**, "Euro-centric" versus multicultural in history, academic versus "hands-on" science, and old versus new **math**. As the recent TIMSS report showed, the main reason U.S. kids do so poorly in **math** and science is the highly inconsistent content found in American classrooms.

For over a generation, the Lake Woebegone variety of testing wherein all the kids were literally "above the national average" hid from the American people the tragic extent of their children's achievement deficit. Together with rampant **grade** inflation (62 percent of all **grades** are now B or better) these **tests** validated the widespread denial of America's educational dysfunction. Add to this the unofficial open admissions policy prevailing at 85 percent of America's financially strapped colleges and universities and it is no surprise that accountability has virtually disappeared.

The time for honest testing -however painful - has come. Simply put, without national education standards, there will be no national education revival.

William J. Moloney is Calvert County Superintendent and a member of the Governing Board of the National Assessment of Education Progress.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 1997



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Copyright 1997 News World Communications, Inc.
The Washington Times

March 14, 1997, Friday, Final Edition

SECTION: Part A; NATION; Pg. A7

LENGTH: 470 words

HEADLINE: Goodling endorses **reading, math tests**;
They must be voluntary, he cautions

BYLINE: Susan Ferrechio; THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BODY:

President Clinton's plan to introduce national **tests** in **reading and mathematics** is gaining support from a House Republican leader on **education**.

Rep. Bill Goodling of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Committee on **Education** and the Workforce, told The Washington Times yesterday he will back national **testing** in public schools, as long as it is not mandatory and is first approved by Congress.

"I support producing the **tests** as long as everybody understands it is strictly voluntary," Mr. Goodling said. "I want teachers to know exactly what students need to learn about in [**math and reading**]."

Mr. Goodling, a former teacher and school superintendent, made the comments after the committee's hearing yesterday on the president's education initiatives, which include spending \$90 million to develop and implement national testing by 2002.

The plan also calls for spending \$5 billion on school construction and \$260 million on training **reading** tutors, and offering \$1,500 tax credits to college students with a B-minus average.

Mr. Goodling said that he has some doubts about the testing plan because he has not seen details about how it would be implemented.

"What it can lead to if we're not careful is rating and ranking school systems based on those **tests** and that is totally unfair," he said.

If Mr. Clinton's plan is implemented, **fourth-grade** students would be **tested** in **reading and eighth-grade** students in mathematics.

Mr. Clinton yesterday touted his school standards plan in Raleigh, N.C., part of a state-by-state effort to convince lawmakers to adopt the national **tests**. He ordered the Pentagon to require standardized **tests** in classrooms for children of military personnel.



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The Washington Times, March 14, 1997

The **reading test** would be modeled after the National Assessment of Education Progress **test**, or NAEP, which is now administered randomly on a voluntary basis. The **math test** would be based on the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which recently compared U.S. students' performance with those in other developed countries.

Mr. Goodling said the plan is "doomed" if the **Clinton** administration tries to implement it without the support of Congress.

Opponents to the national testing plan argue that the federal government has no business interfering in local education-reform efforts.

Cheri Yecke, a member of the Virginia State Board of Education appointed by Republican Gov. George Allen, **testified** before the committee yesterday that such **tests**, and the standards they would set, would harm the state's success with its own reform initiatives.

"I do not see national testing as a legitimate role for the federal government," Mrs. Yecke said. "If the nationalization of education is allowed to occur, then in 30 years we will have a disaster on our hands."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 14, 1997

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Copyright 1997 The Dallas Morning News
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

March 16, 1997, Sunday, HOME FINAL EDITION

SECTION: SUNDAY READER; Pg. 1J

LENGTH: 1158 words

HEADLINE: **TESTING** OUR KIDS;
Challenges help students learn more

BYLINE: Richard W. Riley, Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

BODY:

Americans have turned with renewed rigor and interest to **education** as a means to build a stronger and more enriching future.

Poll after poll demonstrates that students, teachers and parents all want an **education** that makes a difference, that challenges students to learn and better prepares them for future success.

Reflecting this national enthusiasm and concern, President **Clinton** has outlined a bold "call to action" to spur a national crusade on behalf of educational excellence. This commitment includes helping children master the basics, improving teaching, promoting educational technology and modernizing our schools. It will work to increase parent and community involvement in schools, helping families pay for college through increased Pell grants, Hope Scholarships and tax deductions - expanding all the tools available to citizens to make the most of their own lives.

At the core of this strategy is a simple but vitally important concept: Our schools need to establish clear, meaningful standards of achievement for what students should be expected to learn and achieve in the basics and core subjects. Extensive research confirms that students who are challenged to learn and who focus on high academic standards usually learn more. Low standards and a watered-down curriculum lead to just the opposite result.

To achieve these high standards, the president has set as a goal that every American child should be able to read well independently by the start of the **fourth grade**, and that every American child should understand the basics of **math** and algebra by the end of the **eighth grade**. All our research tells us that **reading** independently by the **fourth grade** and having good **math** skills - including algebra and some geometry - by the **eighth grade** are critical turning points in the education of our young people and the future success of these children in school and in their careers.

A child who doesn't learn to read by the **fourth grade** is likely to be less interested in **reading** about science, history and literature, and more likely to drop out and be at risk for a lifetime of diminished success in school and employment. A child who doesn't have this strong foundation in **math** is less likely to take more advanced **math** and science courses in high school and be



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prepared to enter and succeed in college and the increasing competition in the working world.

To achieve these higher standards of learning and achievement, while simultaneously ensuring that the control of education remains firmly rooted at the local level, President Clinton has proposed a promising, workable and sensible solution - challenging, voluntary national **tests** for individual students in **fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math**.

These tests, to begin in 1999, will make the achievement of **reading well** and **independently by grade four**, and **mastering math**, including algebra, by **grade eight**, meaningful and useful to students, teachers, parents and grandparents. They will allow every teacher, family, school and community to know how their students compare with their peers around the country and throughout the world. They will help parents know if their children are mastering critical basic skills early enough to succeed in school and prepare for college. And, equally important, they will help eliminate inequity in education because there will be one set of expectations and standards for all students, rich and poor.

The **tests** would be comparable to the widely accepted National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) **reading and math tests**, used by more than 40 states, and the **math** component of the Third International **Math and Science Study** (TIMSS). The existing **tests** are not sufficient, because they are intended only to be given to samples of students to calculate national averages. The new **tests** will be designed to evaluate individual students and, when used in a comprehensive crusade for educational excellence, will help improve teaching, learning and student achievement.

These are national, not federal **tests**, designed to empower parents, teachers and communities to know where they stand. They mean more local control, not less. Guidance for **test** development will come from the most successful **math and reading** teachers across the country, as well as from parents, and local and state education, civic and business leaders. As former governors, the president and I firmly oppose any form of national control over schools and their curriculum. But we must not hide behind our passion for local control of schools or use it as an excuse for not holding ourselves to standards of excellence. After all, **reading is reading, and math is math**, whether we are in Dallas, Duluth or Des Moines.

If a student or school does poorly on these **tests**, the object will not be to push them down, but to pull them up. The **tests** will identify students and schools that need help. Communities then must move to offer extra support - after-school and summer tutoring, increased parent and community involvement, more focused teaching, or whatever it takes to lift student achievement. And if schools continue to fail even after these efforts to fix them, then we must reconstitute or close them and start over. We must do whatever it takes.

We have made substantial progress in improving **math** and science education, as the most recent NAEP **tests** demonstrate, with improved **eight-grade math** scores in Texas and across the nation. This improvement reflects the work of the nation's **math** teachers in developing challenging standards, which are beginning to have an impact on the classroom. But now we need to get these standards into every classroom and apply them to every student. Only 20 percent of our young people are taking algebra by the end of the **eighth grade**. In the rest of the advanced



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world, the vast majority of students have studied algebra by then. As a result, these nations surpass America in **math** achievement at **grade** eight, according to the recent TIMSS **test**.

Too often, individual state assessments, evaluations and standards of learning achievement fail to stand up to the kind of strict scrutiny and rigorous, challenging measurement that is so crucial to educational excellence. A recent Southern Regional Education Board study found that in some states, more than 80 percent of the students meet state educational assessments, but 20 percent or less of these students make the **grade** when held up to higher standards of achievement based on excellence. If a state participates in a national **test** in the crucial subject areas of **reading and math**, we can eliminate this kind of disparity.

It is time to come together to build an America that is committed to learning. President **Clinton's** call to action on behalf of educational excellence, spearheaded by a national **test** to achieve high academic standards, is a good start.

Richard W. Riley is U.S. secretary of education.

GRAPHIC: CHART(S): (DMN) Sample Questions For National **Tests**.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 21, 1997



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Copyright 1997 The Washington Post
The Washington Post

April 03, 1997, Thursday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A04

LENGTH: 604 words

HEADLINE: Schools Chief, CEOs Back National **Tests**; Clinton Hails Endorsement as Sign of Widespread Support for Standards

BYLINE: Rene Sanchez, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

President **Clinton's** campaign to give students new national **tests** in **reading and math**, the most controversial part of his second-term **education** agenda, picked up the support yesterday of two significant allies: the chief of public schools in California and a group of 240 prominent executives in the nation's technology industry.

During a short White House forum on **education**, **Clinton** and Vice President Gore hailed those endorsements as compelling evidence that his **testing** proposal, which is unprecedented in American schools, is being embraced nationwide.

"California and all of you who are here today have given powerful new momentum to the crusade for national **education** standards," the president said.

But even as **Clinton** praised the state's school superintendent, Delaine Eastin, for backing the national **tests**, aides to California Gov. Pete Wilson (R) said yesterday that the state has not decided if it will support the president's plan.

"The idea is still being reviewed," said Dan Edwards, a spokesman for Wilson on education. "Her endorsement does not speak for all of the education hierarchy of California. . . . It says nothing but that she personally supports the idea."

Clinton has vowed to make the voluntary **tests** a top priority of his second term and has traveled to several state legislatures in the past few months to promote the idea. It is one of the most politically sensitive issues in education because some officials fear it could lead to excessive federal intrusion in local schools.

While most other industrialized nations have strict national standards and **tests** for core academic subjects, standards and **testing** vary widely across the United States and are set largely by local school boards.

There have been several other high-profile attempts this decade by business and education leaders to develop voluntary national standards, but those initiatives often have produced more controversy than results.

Three states -- Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina -- have committed to



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The Washington Post, April 03, 1997

Clinton's plan, and California's support would be quite significant. With more than 5 million students, it accounts for more than 10 percent of the nation's public school enrollment. Eastin, who is an elected official, vowed to fight for it. "We'll work on this on a high-priority basis," she said, "to make this happen within the next couple of years."

Beginning in 1999, Clinton wants to test all fourth-graders in reading and all eighth-graders in math with two separate exams that are highly regarded among educators for academic rigor. Clinton has pledged to have the federal government pay for the first year of testing. Afterward, states may have to pick up the tab.

The 240 industry leaders who joined Clinton at the White House yesterday, many of whose companies are based in California, also pledged to begin campaigning for the tests in every state. "We all agree that we need national education standards," said John Doerr, a venture capitalist who is helping lead the group. "These companies that have endorsed this program employ a half-million people. More importantly, they've created 130,000 jobs over the last four years. And even more importantly, they have hundreds to thousands of high-wage job openings right now that they're trying to fill."

Clinton said the nation has put off the tests "for too long." He argued that they would give schools a framework to create higher academic goals and a better way to judge whether students are meeting them. "The most important thing of all is that we know whether we are learning what we need to know," he said.

GRAPHIC: Photo, ap/susan walsh, PRESIDENT CLINTON

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 03, 1997

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Copyright 1997 The Baltimore Sun Company
The Baltimore Sun

April 24, 1997, Thursday, HOWARD EDITION

SECTION: LOCAL (NEWS), Pg. 4B

LENGTH: 402 words

HEADLINE: **Education** secretary praises state's 'cutting edge' efforts

BYLINE: Howard Libit, SUN STAFF

BODY:

Calling Maryland a leader in the "national crusade for **education**," U.S. Secretary of **Education** Richard W. Riley told an audience at Howard Community College last night that the **Clinton** administration's **education** proposals will help students in the state's schools, colleges and universities.

"Maryland is at the cutting edge when it comes to raising standards, creating challenging **tests**, connecting schools to the Internet," Riley said at a Town Hall Meeting on **Education**. "I think this [national government] has a tremendous duty to help, and that's part of the president's call to action for American **education** in the 21st century."

Riley told more than 100 local and state educators, students, politicians and residents how the administration plans to expand opportunities for students to attend college, help such rapidly expanding communities as Howard County build new schools and ensure that all children are **reading** independently by the beginning of **fourth grade**.

Last night's 90-minute meeting was sponsored by U.S. Rep. Benjamin L. Cardin, a Democrat who represents Maryland's 3rd District. Riley was joined by Nancy S. Grasmick, state superintendent of schools, and Patricia S. Florestano, Maryland secretary of higher education.

Before answering questions, Riley spent much of the meeting reviewing the president's 10-point plan for education, praising Maryland for being the "first state to accept the challenge" of **Clinton's** plan to develop "rigorous, voluntary national **tests** in **fourth-grade reading** and **eighth-grade math**."

The president pushed for those national **test** standards in February when he spoke to a joint session of the Maryland General Assembly. Maryland and Howard also stand to benefit from an administration proposal to subsidize up to half of the interest costs of bonds that local jurisdictions must sell to pay for new schools, Riley said. The plan would provide Maryland with \$ 58 million in new federal money, enough to support more than \$ 231 million in new construction.

Riley also urged people to write to the Federal Communications Commission in support of discounting the rate of telecommunications services for schools and libraries.



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The Baltimore Sun, April 24, 1997

For college students and their families, Riley described proposals to increase tax deductions for tuition for the middle class and expand the Pell Grant program for lower-income students.

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Copyright 1997 Roll Call Associates
Roll Call

June 2, 1997

LENGTH: 2507 words

HEADLINE: President's Plan Helps Relieve the Tuition Squeeze
Promoting 'America Reads' and Revisiting the Construction Initiative Should Be
Education Priorities

BYLINE: By Richard Riley

BODY:

More than any other issue before President Clinton and Congress, **education** is riding "the Big Mo" - momentum. Since President Clinton proclaimed **education** to be his top priority for his second term, several bipartisan actions have produced groundbreaking developments that will benefit America's schools and children.

Congress reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities **Education** Act - a move that resolved longstanding, sensitive disputes regarding how best to serve children with special needs.

The Federal Communications Commission voted to give schools and libraries discounted access fees for telecommunications services to help make the Internet and other online materials available in the classroom.

The budget agreement reached by Congress and the White House includes plans to provide \$35 billion in higher **education**-related tax relief to help America's students and families pay for college, as well as important investments in discretionary appropriations for K-12 **education**.

Each of those actions represents a breakthrough on those issues. Further, during my tour of Congressional hearings this spring, I was greatly impressed by the broad and bipartisan agreement among Members in both chambers on the priorities regarding how best to improve education. The President's commitment to challenging academic standards; strengthening **reading** achievement; expanding public school choice; ensuring safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools; getting useful technology into America's classrooms; improving the quality of teaching; and enhancing access to post-secondary education is shared by nearly everyone.

As we seek agreement on several critical spending and tax items and reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, we must continue to put students first and leave politics at the schoolhouse door.

One of our central challenges is helping low- and middle-income families meet the rising costs of college. More than ever before, a person's education attainment is the strongest predictor of his or her economic prospects. A typical college graduate earns 50 percent more than a high school graduate and more than twice that of a high school dropout. Since the best jobs of the information age require at least some education beyond high school, it is in the



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Roll Call, June 2, 1997

national interest to help people invest in themselves through education.

The President's fiscal 1998 spending plan offers a comprehensive approach to this issue while staying within the constraints of a balanced budget. For the financially neediest students, the plan provides significantly larger Pell Grants and more college work-study jobs. For middle-income students, it gives new relief in the form of college-related tax cuts - a tax credit called the Hope Scholarship (patterned after a successful program in Georgia) and a tuition tax deduction.

A 29 percent increase to the Pell program - upping its annual budget from \$5.9 billion to \$7.6 billion - will enable us to help low-income students in several ways. The neediest students will see the size of the maximum Pell award grow from \$2,700 to \$3,000, and more than 890,000 others will see their assistance grow by an average of \$800. Further, revisions in the formula used to determine Pell eligibility will provide grants to an additional 218,000 students.

America's middle class needs help, as well, to deal with what I call "the tuition squeeze." These families earn too much to qualify for aid awarded on the basis of financial need but too little to pay tuition costs out of pocket. We believe that a family earning \$40,000 or \$50,000 while trying to pay for college (for children or adult students) should benefit from the kind of middle-class tax relief that Democrats and Republicans agree is warranted. Families in this income range are taking on increasingly higher levels of debt to pay college costs, and this kind of targeted tax relief can go a long way toward easing their reliance on loans.

There are sound economic reasons for targeting middle-class tax relief in the form of a higher education-related tax cut. Throughout the industrial age, America used the tax code to stimulate private-sector investment in plants and equipment. As our economy becomes increasingly knowledge-based, the tax code can and should be used to make such capital investments in our people.

A complement to those proposals will be our plan for reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. After consulting with Congress and the higher education community, we are in the final stages of developing our proposals around four broad principles: (1) access to higher education, which we view as opportunity with responsibility; (2) the support of effective teaching, high standards, and high achievement; (3) simplified program delivery and improved management; and (4) improved outreach to potential students with stronger links among elementary and secondary education, post-secondary education, and employers. We anticipate presenting these proposals to Congress and the public shortly.

In other areas, we have several tightly focused initiatives that tackle some of the most fundamental challenges in American education.

First and foremost on that list is the President's "America Reads Challenge," an initiative that will be aided by the Department of Education but carried out at the grassroots level. The goal of the challenge is to help children read well and independently by the end of the third grade.

Why is mastery of this most basic of basics so critical at that point in a child's education? Research shows that children who cannot meet that standard are less likely to succeed in school and are more likely to drop out.

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Roll Call, June 2, 1997

That's what is so disturbing about the fact that 40 percent of American **fourth-graders** scored below the basic proficiency level on the 1994 National Assessment of Education Progress **test**. The America Reads Challenge can help to lay the foundation that enables millions of young Americans to lead a fulfilling life in the 21st century.

The President's plan for America Reads will support the work of 25,000 **reading** specialists and volunteer coordinators across the nation. Their task will be to train and organize one million volunteer tutors nationwide - including parents, teachers, college work-study students, corporate partners, and others - to serve in the **Reading Corps**. These tutors will work with teachers and librarians to help children who need extra, individualized help by providing them with after-school, weekend, and summer tutoring.

America Reads is a \$2.75 billion commitment over five years to support local communities and organizations, as well as national and regional efforts. The crux of these efforts will focus on enlisting and training tutors for the **Reading Corps**. Another component, called Parents as First Teachers, will support programs that assist parents in helping their children learn to read. Such programs put a strong emphasis on helping children before they enter school - a period that the latest research on the brain tells us is vital to the development of a child's cognitive skills.

America Reads will supplement our primary efforts to support education excellence for disadvantaged children. We seek increased investment in Title I, the core federal investment in the teaching of basic skills, to direct more resources to communities and schools with the highest concentration of children from low-income families. A greater commitment to Even Start would expand local family literacy programs that combine early childhood education for pre-schoolers with instruction in basic literacy skills for their parents. Support for bilingual education would give students who speak a language other than English the extra help that they need to learn to read English.

How do we know whether our children are meeting challenging academic standards? Meaningful assessments are a key element to a quality education. They let parents know that their students have mastered essential skills. To that end, President Clinton has proposed the development of voluntary national **tests** in **reading and math** so that parents, teachers, and students will know how well students perform in relation to world-class standards. We believe that these **tests** should be administered at critical junctures in a child's education - **fourth grade in reading and eighth grade in mathematics**. This will be the first time that rigorous **tests of reading and math** skills will be tied to national standards.

Although the budget agreement does not include funding for the President's school construction initiative, this pressing issue should be revisited given the current circumstances. The need for help is clear - with the number of K-12 students at an all-time high and growing annually, 6,000 new schools need to be built in the next decade to meet the demand for space. In schools across the country, classes are meeting in closets, alcoves, and other spaces never meant to hold a class. If we expect our children to meet to high standards, we must ensure that they can assemble in an environment that is conducive to learning.

Before discussing pending appropriations items, I want to address one issue

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that I hope we can put behind us - the erroneous and misleading claim that there are 788 federal education programs. This line is used to suggest that our current investment in education is excessive, but a cursory examination of the list shows that most of the programs have nothing to do with America's schools. The list includes programs that support scientific research in areas of national concern (including the environment, energy, and biomedical science), programs that provide broad assistance in areas like food and nutrition or road building, and programs that provide specialized professional training. Do we really want to eliminate the FBI Academy? Or training programs for air-traffic controllers? Let's get past these divisive tactics and focus on more constructive endeavors.

At the Department of Education, we are committed to quality control. By working with Congress to do away with programs that are no longer necessary, we have eliminated more than 40 programs since the Clinton Administration took office, and we propose to end or consolidate ten more in our fiscal 1998 budget. These steps have produced a more efficient and effective department.

The President's 1998 budget proposes a number of investments in targeted areas to support states and communities that are using standards of excellence in an effort to improve their schools.

The Technology Literacy Challenge Fund helps rural and inner-city schools develop links to the Internet and equips teachers with the skills they need to integrate computers into their classroom instruction.

Expansion of the Goals 2000 program would permit grants to an estimated 16,000 schools, one-third more than the 12,000 schools now receiving such assistance.

Investment in school-to-work opportunities (evenly divided between the Departments of Education and Labor) would help all 50 states to fully implement their strategies for preparing students for careers and further education.

A broader commitment to charter schools will promote innovation and provide critical startup funds for as many as 1,100 new schools created by teachers, parents, and community members who want to develop new and effective means of teaching and learning.

Our after-school initiative would help launch as many as 1,000 after-school programs to give families a safe place to extend learning beyond the school day.

Finally, a vital part of helping our children learn more is ensuring that their teachers are challenged and supported in ways that help them do their job better. Expansion of the Eisenhower Professional Development State Grants provides support in an area that local schools often cannot afford, and provides opportunities for teachers to learn from their peers and update their teaching methods. Support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will speed up the development of standards and assessments in more than 30 teaching fields, and it will enable teachers to go through the rigorous National Board evaluation process - an important step in identifying and rewarding master teachers.

President John Kennedy once observed that our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. America's families are committed to

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doing what it takes to raise education achievement for all Americans to the levels needed for success in the 21st century. We have enjoyed great success in recent months in this area, and it is my fervent hope that we can continue to set aside politics and come together - Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike - for the sake of America's children.

Richard Riley is the Secretary of Education.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

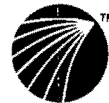
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Math & science

Clear lessons from international scores

^{A18} Here's the first question state education policymakers should ask in response to new results from international science and math tests: When's the next plane to Singapore?

Wow, are those Singapore eighth-grade kids good — besting the world by wide margins in both math and science. Educators should want to learn as much as possible about the curriculum and teaching techniques — if not the repressive social climate — Singapore educators use that lead to such outstanding student learning. They should stop in Japan and Korea as well, whose students also lead the 41 countries that participated in the test.

But even if they can't get to Singapore, they can learn a lot from these tests. One of the many excellent features of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study is that each school provided detailed information on curriculum and instruction techniques.

The test results reveal that all the leaders have a clear, consistent, focused curriculum. Minnesota's startling success in science — tied for fourth in the world — demonstrates those same qualities. Most state schools use the same textbooks, with teachers trained and certified in their subject matter. If a curriculum is clear and well-designed, and teachers do a good job with it, students will learn, whether in Minnesota or Singapore. Because Minnesota teachers focus on earth science, students' understanding is tops in the world.

This lesson also explains why Minnesota students do less well, although better than the national and world averages, in algebra and geometry. Our schools divert far too many students from such classes compared to schools in other countries.

The solution to that deficiency is also clear. State officials should add algebra and geometry questions to the new standard for high school graduation. Then teachers will teach it far more broadly.

There's much for Minnesota to celebrate in these international test results. So when will education officials at the Department of Children, Families and Learning start celebrating and stop reflexively slapping Minnesota's remarkable educational achievement? When will it be accepted that Minnesota schools actually do some things right?

According to background demographics, Minnesota's remarkably high score in science and above-average score in math cannot be explained by the state's relatively homogenous population, but by the way teaching is done in the schools. Yet Bob Wedl, commissioner of the department, reacted to the scores with a statement that "doing fine is not good enough. Minnesota simply must be among the best in the world." Well, Minnesota is among the best in the world in science, and without the socially repressive environment of front-runner Singapore, Wedl should be crowing, not carping, about this achievement. Educators from all over the country, and from most of the world's democracies, will be studying Minnesota to learn why our schools do so well in science.

The scores and background data in this study are the best ever available in the world, finally providing an apples-to-apples comparison of educational effectiveness among the vast majority of the world's industrial competitors. It's interesting to note that education department officials did not seek to make available the state data that allowed this comparison with students in other nations. That honor belongs to SciMathMN, a partnership of business, education and state government. When state officials declined the chance to break out the Minnesota test data, SciMathMN leaped at the chance, the only state fully to do so. That history makes the comments of Bill Linder-Scholer, executive director of SciMathMN, more credible than Wedl's: "When we focus on the right content, and deliver it well to students, Minnesota students really perform."

U.S. Bases Join Education Test Effort

Military-Run Schools Enlist in National Standards Plan, Clinton Says

By John F. Harris
Washington Post Staff Writer

RALEIGH, N.C., March 13—President Clinton traveled today to North Carolina, where most folks at the state Capitol were too polite to bring up the name of this state's senior senator and a certain remark he made two years ago.

So it fell to Clinton to raise the awkward subject of Sen. Jesse Helms, among the most zealous of the president's Republican antagonists, who once warned Clinton that he "better have a bodyguard" if he visited military bases in the Tarheel State.

Noting that he had traveled here with Defense Secretary William S. Cohen—Helms's old GOP colleague in the Senate—Clinton joked that no one should get the wrong idea.

"Before I came down here, Senator Helms asked me to tell you that [Cohen] is not the guard Jesse once said I would need to come to North Carolina," Clinton cracked, drawing spirited applause and chortling from state lawmakers.

Cohen was traveling with Clinton today as the administration announced that schools on the nation's military bases will **enlist in Clinton's** program for national educational testing starting in 1999. North Carolina Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. (D) also announced that the state would participate in the voluntary national tests. The Education Department is drafting reading tests for fourth-graders and math tests for eighth-graders.

As for Helms, who was not in the audience, Clinton said their relationship has lost some of its old bite. "Ever since I got a chief of staff that does not speak with an accent," Clinton said, "we've been getting along better, Senator Helms and I."

That was a reference to North Carolina native Erskine B. Bowles, Clinton's top aide and a longtime family friend of Helms's.

Clinton's speech here was the latest in the traveling road show that he and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton have embarked on in recent weeks to encourage state legislatures to impose more rigorous instruction and testing policies on local schools.

Clinton has gone from Maryland to Michigan to North Carolina, essentially delivering the same speech, with only minor variations in theme. North Carolina, a state with numerous military installations, was a logical place to announce raising standards at the 233 schools the Defense Department operates for 115,000 students at U.S. bases overseas.

Clinton also made a rhetorical pitch for raising teacher standards. He noted that in Cincinnati the

school board and teachers union have worked together to streamline procedures for removing bad teachers. "While good teachers get a raise," Clinton said, "the truly bad teachers who can't measure up should get a pink slip."

The administration has been taking pains to reassure conservatives that its testing proposals are not an attempt to encroach on local schools. When Clinton talks about national standards, he envisions "a national challenge, not a national curriculum," said Education Secretary Richard W. Riley, who also traveled to North Carolina.

Raleigh was the first stop on a three-day jaunt devoted only partly to work. Later in the day in Miami, Clinton was set to attend two fundraisers, as his effort to raise money for Democratic candidates and the Democratic National Committee continues unabated despite questions concerning whether the administration bestowed improper access on large donors in the 1996 campaign.

A fund-raiser for the DNC was expected to take in about \$100,000 in contributions of \$250 each. The

fund-raiser for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) and Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.) is likely to bring in about \$1 million in donations of \$5,000 each. The DSCC has not accepted the voluntary curbs Clinton imposed at the DNC, which bar "soft money" gifts greater than \$100,000, but the president continues to raise money for the group.

On Friday morning, Clinton is scheduled to talk about federal efforts to aid school construction and will spend the rest of the day and most of Saturday doing what is apparently the primary purpose of this visit: playing golf.

Clinton is playing in a private, member-guest tournament sponsored by golf pro Greg Norman, who owns a lavish seaside estate near Palm Beach.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To review the president's fiscal 1998 budget request and to read a primer on the federal role in education, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's Web site at www.washingtonpost.com

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

A Commonsense Approach

Last week, the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) released its eagerly awaited results for eighth-grade students in 41 nations. TIMSS is important for a number of reasons. It tested more students than any comparable study—over half a million randomly selected youngsters. And because it ironed out the technical problems that led to questions about earlier international comparisons, we can have real confidence in its findings.

What do TIMSS test scores say about the math and science achievement of U.S. eighth graders? We are not at the bottom. In fact, we are in the middle of the pack—a little below the average in math and a little above in science. This puts us pretty much on a par with many of our major trading partners—Germany, England, and Canada, for example. That is *good* news. The bad news is that we are not on top—with Singapore, Korea, Japan, the Czech Republic, and Hungary—which is where we have to be.

How do we get there? TIMSS provides some important signposts. Researchers not only tested students; they also compared curriculums and textbooks from all 41 countries; they questioned students, teachers, and administrators about attitudes, practices, and policies; and they carried out classroom observations and videotaped and analyzed math lessons in Japan, Germany, and the U.S. The first installment of TIMSS provides a kind of window into what goes on in eighth-grade math and science classrooms throughout the developed world. When the reports on fourth and twelfth grades come out, we will have a fuller picture, but much is already clear.

TIMSS calls into question a number of fashionable explanations and remedies for mediocre student achievement. For one thing, we are not going to raise student achievement by instituting a longer school day or school year: TIMSS tells us that U.S. students already spend more time in class than German or Japanese students. Nor will it help to give our students more homework or somehow induce them to turn off the TV. TIMSS shows that American students get more homework than Japanese students and watch no more television than they do. Some obvious solutions we've heard about turn out not to be so obvious after all.

However, TIMSS is unequivocal about what the school systems of successful nations share—and it is not vouchers or charter schools or any of the other jazzy schemes that we are being urged to try. Nearly all of these nations have clear and rigorous national or state curriculum standards, and everything they do in the schools is hitched to these standards. We do not have such standards.

When TIMSS researchers analyzed U.S. textbook and curriculum samples, they found that what our students are taught in math and science is fragmented and unfocused. This should be no surprise given the fact that our national system still consists of 15,000 school districts, each making its own decisions about curriculum. Textbooks in standards-based systems focus on what the standards say that students must know. Here, where textbook publishers want to accommodate as many different school curriculums as possible, we have textbooks crammed with topics, nearly all treated in a superficial way. Since districts rely on these textbooks, it is no wonder that the curriculum is, as TIMSS says, "a mile wide and an inch deep."

Another critical difference between high-performing systems and ours is that their standards involve incentives for working hard in school—and consequences for failing to. Students in these systems understand that success in school—and on rigorous gateway exams—will be important to their future. In Japan, for example, students who have been educated together through eighth grade take a tough exam that decides what high school they will go to, and this, in turn, influences what college they will get into. In the U.S., there are no such stakes connected with academic achievement. So except for students who hope to enter a selective college, there is no reason to work hard. Are these differences related to the high achievement of Japanese students on TIMSS and the average achievement of ours? There is no question about it.

We have made some progress in bringing standards and stakes for students to this country, but supporters face an uphill battle. In the meantime, "innovative" solutions to our school problems grab media and political attention—vouchers, charter schools, private management of public schools (remember EAL?). They often grab the funding, too. TIMSS demonstrates once again that the answer is not one of these new or sexy or headline-making proposals. High standards of achievement with stakes attached are an old-fashioned, commonsense approach that is not the stuff of slogans. But it works in other successful school systems, and it can work here.

The Third International Mathematics and Science Study report, "Pursuing Excellence," is available for downloading (<http://www.ed.gov/NCES/timss>).