



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE SECRETARY

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CONTACT: Etta Fielek
(202) 401-3026

LAMAR ALEXANDER
U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

STATEMENT
on the
FISCAL YEAR 1993 EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Washington, DC
January 29, 1992

Statement by Lamar Alexander

Highlights of the President's 1993 Education Budget

President Bush's 1993 budget request for the Department of Education is \$32.3 billion, 10 percent more than 1992. The President's budget priority is education. His education priority is radically transforming America's schools.

The budget puts more new discretionary* Federal dollars into Education, \$1.6 billion, than into any other Department--and this figure is in addition to:

** the largest funding increase in Head Start history, \$600 million, which is a part of the Health and Human Services budget; and

** record levels of Federal funding available for university research and development: basic research funds are up \$1 billion, including an 18 percent increase for the National Science Foundation; applied civilian research funds are up about \$1 billion; and the R&D 20 percent Federal income tax credit is made permanent, which should mean more private sector R&D.

This new education money would continue the President's emphasis on encouraging radical change in the national education system and helping America, community by community, reach the six National Education Goals.

*"discretionary dollars" are dollars not already required by law for entitlements

Also, to help reach the six National Education Goals:

** School readiness--the largest one-year increase of Head Start funding ever, up 27 percent to \$2.8 billion. This will make possible one year of Head Start for every eligible child whose parents want the child to participate.

** Competitive workforce and college costs--to help middle- and low-income students of all ages pay for college:

- o the largest one-year increase in Pell Grants ever, up \$1.2 billion or 22 percent to \$6.6 billion, and a \$3,700 maximum grant, up 54 percent;
- o increasing the size of Federal student loans and making the interest payments on student loans tax deductible;
- o allowing families to withdraw funds from their Individual Retirement Accounts without penalty in order to pay for education expenses; and
- o permitting students who are enrolled in only one college course to be eligible for Federal student loans and grants--making it easier for working Americans to continue their education and job training.

Summary of Education Budget Proposals

In summary, our 1993 dollar request reflects the steady growth of Federal resources for education under President Bush's Administration. While total spending on education in America will grow an estimated 25 percent since 1989, the Department's budget will grow 41 percent during that same 4 years if the President's 1993 budget is approved. The Federal share represents 8 percent of total education spending--and this is as it should be, since responsibility for education is primarily the responsibility of State and local institutions. The Department's 1993 budget is designed to transform education and open up new opportunities for every American--thereby leveraging the other 92 percent.

Transforming American Education

Our budget includes \$243 million, a \$95 million or 64 percent increase for research, statistics, and assessment funding to help the Nation develop national education standards and a voluntary national examination system. The President recommended in his AMERICA 2000 strategy that the Nation develop World Class Standards and a system of American Achievement Tests, and Congress created the National Council on Education Standards and Testing to advise on whether and how to do so. The Council has now recommended that national standards be adopted and that a system of assessments tied to them be developed. The Council recommended that the National Education Goals Panel be reconfigured and that it appoint members to a new National Education Standards and Assessments Council to serve as a coordinating body. The Senate last week unanimously approved legislation that would put in place the structure recommended by the Council.

efforts. Enactment of this proposal would provide new impetus to State efforts to implement choice plans by providing new funds to support model State and local initiatives. For example, in 1991, Pennsylvania, in a bipartisan effort, came very close to adopting the first Statewide public/private school choice program in the Nation. The Pennsylvania plan would have provided parents with a certificate valued at up to \$900 a year, if they chose to send their child to either a private school or a public school outside their neighborhood. The availability of Federal matching funds for part of the cost of the program would surely have made this approach even more attractive to the State.

School Readiness

For Head Start, the President proposes \$2.8 billion, a \$600 million or 27 percent increase over 1992--the largest one-year increase in the program's history--and a 127 percent increase since 1989. This will make possible one year of Head Start for every eligible child whose parents want the child to participate.

Other preschool efforts include Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Child Nutrition, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant, which will have collectively increased 42 percent since 1989.

For the Even Start family literacy program--parents and children learning together--we are requesting \$90 million, an increase of \$20 million or 29 percent over 1992.

Also the President's 1993 budget proposes three significant tax incentives promote investment in education.

First, the deduction of interest on loans for postsecondary education tuition, fees and reasonable living expenses would be allowed on existing and new student loans as of July 1, 1992. An estimated \$45 billion in existing Federal student loans to some 8 million borrowers, as well as many non Federal loans, could be affected.

Second, individuals would be allowed to withdraw savings from IRAs for college expenses without penalty.

Third, the current 20 percent research and experimentation (R&E) tax credit for individuals and businesses that provide research grants to universities would be extended permanently from its current expiration date of June 30, 1992.

For the Adult Education Act, we are requesting \$304 million, including an 11 percent increase for grants to help States provide literacy and high school equivalency training for some 4 million adults.

For Vocational Education, we are requesting \$1.2 billion, including a 4 percent increase for Basic Grants to States. We will also provide \$100 million, an 11 percent increase, for "Tech-Prep" vocational education programs, which integrate secondary and postsecondary education for students entering technical occupations.

Drug-Free, Violence-Free Schools

For the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, we are requesting a total of \$654 million, including a doubling to \$60 million of Emergency Grants for prevention programs in communities most affected by drug trafficking and abuse.

An additional \$56 million for the Department of Education is requested as part of a new multi-agency initiative, Weed and Seed, to marshal a number of social service program resources to help communities reclaim neighborhoods embattled by drugs and crime.

Improving Elementary and Secondary Education

We are proposing increases in a number of other important programs that improve elementary and secondary education by focusing on disadvantaged populations.

For instance, we will continue support for the Chapter 1 program to serve an estimated 6.6 million disadvantaged elementary and secondary students, including a \$100 million or 16 percent increase in Concentration Grants that target funds to areas whose students have the greatest need for compensatory education. For Special Education programs, we are requesting \$2.9 billion, an \$89 million increase, to help educate more than 4.6 million children with disabilities. Other increases will help almost 400,000 limited English proficient children learn English and 300,000 American Indian children receive supplementary education.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RE-
LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR 1989

APPROPRIATIONS

N, Mississippi, Chairman

SILVIO O. CONTE, Massachusetts
JOSEPH M. McDADE, Pennsylvania
JOHN T. MYERS, Indiana
CLARENCE E. MILLER, Ohio
LAWRENCE COUGHLIN, Pennsylvania
C. W. BILL YOUNG, Florida
JACK F. KEMP, New York
RALPH REGULA, Ohio
VIRGINIA SMITH, Nebraska
CARL D. PURSELL, Michigan
MICKEY EDWARDS, Oklahoma
BOB LIVINGSTON, Louisiana
BILL GREEN, New York
JERRY LEWIS, California
JOHN EDWARD PORTER, Illinois
HAROLD ROGERS, Kentucky
JOE SKEEN, New Mexico
FRANK R. WOLF, Virginia
BILL LOWERY, California
VIN WEBER, Minnesota
TOM DeLAY, Texas
JIM KOLBE, Arizona

Clerk and Staff Director

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 1988.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FISCAL YEAR 1989 BUDGET REQUEST

WITNESSES

HON. WILLIAM J. BENNETT, SECRETARY

LINUS WRIGHT, UNDER SECRETARY

BRUCE M. CARNES, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR PLANNING,
BUDGET, AND EVALUATION

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Mr. NATCHER. At this time, we take up the budget request for the Department of Education for the fiscal year 1989. We have before the committee the Secretary of Education, Mr. Bennett.

Mr. Bennett, it is a distinct privilege and honor to have you appear back before our committee. As we said to you the first year that you appeared, we wanted you to be a good Secretary of Education and we said that as long as you are for education, you are at the right place.

Mr. Secretary, the budget request as you well remember that was submitted to our subcommittee last year for education was just a little over \$14,000,000,000.

FISCAL YEAR 1989 BUDGET REQUEST

The budget that has been submitted to our subcommittee and to the Congress for fiscal year 1989 for education for the fiscal year 1989 is \$21,097,731,000. That is a considerable increase over the amount submitted last year.

As you will recall, we ended up in the Continuing Resolution last year. We passed our bill in the House on August 5 with a total of \$20,178,000,000. Now, the \$21,097,731,000 that you and your Department have submitted for the fiscal year 1989 does not include Indian education. If that were added, of course, that amount would go up.

MANAGING THE BILL ON THE HOUSE FLOOR

Mr. Secretary, I call those figures to your attention, figures that you are well acquainted with, and I want you to know that when

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The President has made education a priority for this Administration and in this budget. The Federal Government is ready to do its part. But in this political season we often hear that the answer is simply to spend more. The people know better. They know that it isn't enough just to spend more -- but that, as the President put it recently, "how we spend is as important as what we spend."

Our budget for 1989 does spend more, but, more important, it also spends better. Last year, we proposed to the Congress that the principle of accountability be applied to Chapter 1, the largest Federal elementary and secondary education program, and to the programs of the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.

The Congress is moving to adopt these important concepts. This year, we want to continue and expand our efforts to foster accountability in Federal education programs.

Let me now highlight some of our priorities and initiatives for 1989, beginning with elementary and secondary education.

For Chapter 1 we are requesting \$4.6 billion, an increase of \$238 million, which will enable us to provide assistance to about 5.6 million disadvantaged children. In keeping with our reauthorization proposals, most of this increase would be used to aid school districts with large concentrations of children from low-income families, and accountability for results will be enhanced. The rest of the increase would go primarily to all Chapter 1 eligible districts through the Basic Grants program.

Magnet schools are one of the real success stories of the education reform movement. Because they give parents greater choice, they are inherently more accountable. When magnet schools provide their students an excellent education, they also stimulate other, non-magnet schools to improve. For 1989, we are requesting \$115 million for magnet schools, a \$43 million increase. In addition, we will seek to broaden the program by extending eligibility to other school districts, not just those implementing desegregation. We further intend to promote parental choice by making available \$5 million for open enrollment demonstration programs in the public schools.

The Nation needs more good teachers who know their subjects. We are requesting \$10 million to support the new Fund for the Improvement and Reform of Schools and Teaching and intend to spend about \$4 million from the Secretary's Discretionary Fund for alternative certification programs, which bring talent into the teaching profession.

For bilingual education we are requesting \$157 million, an increase of \$10 million, based on the Administration's recommendation for increased local flexibility in choosing the best instructional approaches to help students become proficient in English.

Illegal drug use remains a serious problem in our schools and among our youth, and we will seek \$250 million -- the maximum amount authorized -- to fund the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. But again, we expect the Congress to adopt our proposals for greater accountability in the use of these funds.

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In vocational education, our goal is to improve program quality by strengthening the States' responsibility for setting, assessing, and enforcing standards of performance. We are asking for \$888 million. In adult education we are requesting \$150 million, an increase of \$16 million, in order to continue our efforts to reduce adult illiteracy.

Handicapped children and disabled adults are a high priority in the 1989 budget. Our request of \$3.6 billion, an increase of \$77 million, will enable us to assist over 4 million children and 1 million adults.

In our 1989 student aid budget, we are asking for \$8.8 billion to provide increased aid to almost 6 million students. We project that total Federal aid available will increase by nearly \$900 million to \$16.5 billion. Most of the increase will be in Pell grants, where we are seeking to increase the maximum grant to \$2,300. Also in Pell grants, we are asking for 1988 supplemental appropriations language that would allow us to handle the projected funding shortfall in academic year 1988-89 by reducing every Pell grant equally -- by about \$31 -- instead of implementing the statutory linear reduction. Our proposal would prevent any student from losing an award and would avoid significant reductions for others. We will need an indication of congressional action by April 30 in order to effect the across-the-board reduction. The Income Contingent Loan Program, begun last year on a demonstration basis, will be increased to \$50 million in order to extend the program to more colleges and universities. We are encouraged by the results so far.

Historically black colleges and universities are an important national resource, and they will receive \$80 million in the 1989 budget, an increase of about \$7 million.

Accountability will be a theme in student aid as elsewhere in the budget. Because colleges and universities have control over and benefit from campus-based aid (work-study and supplemental grants), it is reasonable to expect some accountability in return. We'll be proposing an incentive system whereby colleges' allocations will be based on how well they meet performance goals. Accreditation is another important aspect of accountability, and over the next few weeks, we will publish final regulations for recognizing accrediting agencies that emphasize assessment of student learning and truth in advertising.

Current student aid policies fail to reward -- indeed discourage -- savings. In order to counter this, to stimulate and encourage savings, we are proposing college savings bonds, which we believe to be a cost-effective means of helping provide for our children's future. Savings can also be encouraged by simplifying the present cumbersome and error-ridden student aid needs analysis system. We will propose a two-year trial to test a simpler, fairer system.

Our student aid system continues to groan under the heavy fiscal burden of defaulted loans, now costing taxpayers \$1.6 billion per year. This has got to change. We will once again ask the Congress to close the "ability to benefit" loophole that encourages the exploitation of ill-qualified students, by allowing Federal student aid to go to students who do not have a high school diploma or its

equivalent, leading to even more defaulted loans. We will also press the Congress to make lenders and guarantee agencies more accountable for defaults, so that responsibility is more fairly shared, and we will seek the authority to act against any school or college that abuses student aid or violates the public trust. And we will ask the Congress to remove restrictions that prevent us from using the new student loan data system to reduce defaults. Several of these proposals, along with others, will be sent to the Congress shortly as part of a student aid accountability legislative package.

If we're willing to spend \$8.8 billion to subsidize soaring college costs, then we also should be willing to spend something to help control those costs. With a \$2 million increase for the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education we intend to make a number of grants to colleges and universities to demonstrate means of achieving reduced costs and greater efficiency. Research and statistics will be increased \$13 million, to \$81 million. The increase will be used to expand the National Assessment of Educational Progress and to continue much-needed improvements in the Department's data collection activities. In addition, we would fund library programs at \$76 million under legislation that will be proposed to extend library services to disadvantaged and handicapped people, and support library resource sharing and research and assessment.

I'd like to mention one final initiative in this year's budget that isn't a line item and doesn't have a dollar amount attached to it. We will ask the Congress to give us the authority, in any of our discretionary grant programs, to award challenge grants to educational institutions. One of the best things a Federal dollar can do is to help raise two or three private dollars for a worthy project. Challenge grants are a fine example of how the public/private sector partnership ought to work.

Finally, let me mention one technical matter. This budget proposal contains elementary, secondary, and adult education funding based on legislation now pending in the Congress -- H.R. 5. Shortly after enactment of this legislation, we will be transmitting a revised budget allocation reflecting the changes made in the final version of H.R. 5. Depending on the legislation's final form, the distribution of funds you see here among the affected programs and activities may change to some -- I would expect small -- degree. In any case, our policies would remain the same.

Department officials and I look forward to working with you to achieve a responsible budget in an expeditious manner.

I would be happy now to respond to your questions.

Biographic

NAME : William J. Bennett

POSITION : Secretary of Education

BIRTHPLACE AND DATE : Brooklyn, New York

EDUCATION : Williams College,
University of Texas
Harvard Law School

EXPERIENCE :

1985 - Present : Secretary, United States Department of Education

1981-1985 : Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities

1979-1981 : President and Director, Research Triangle Institute
Adjunct Associate Professor, University of North Carolina

1977-1981 : Adjunct Associate Professor, North Carolina State University

1976-1979 : Executive Director, Research Triangle Institute

1972-1976 : Assistant to the President, Boston College
of Philosophy, Boston

1975-1976 : Academic Administrator, Council on Educational Administration, Boston

1975 (Fall) : Speaker/Instructor, Boston Police Academy

1974-1975 : Associate Chairman, Humanities Faculty, Boston College

1973-1974 : Chairman -- "The National Humanities Conference"

1973 (Spring) : Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin

1971-1972 : Associate Dean of Philosophy, Boston College, Massachusetts

1970-1971 : Tutor -- Social Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts

1969-1971 : Resident Advisor, Cambridge, Massachusetts

1970 (Summer) : Assistant Professor, Texas, Austin, Texas

1967-1968 : Assistant Professor, University of Mississippi

1966 (Summer) : Instructor, Government, North Carolina

01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

(dollars in thousands)	<u>1980 Appropriation</u>		<u>1981 President's Budget</u>		<u>1981 Appropriation</u>		<u>1982 President's Budget</u>		<u>1982 Appropriation</u>	
	Percent of		Percent of		Percent of		Percent of		Percent of	
<u>ED Discretionary Only by Level</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$7,126,565	61.3%	\$5,665,884	52.8%	\$6,525,657	57.3%	\$4,960,759	53.5%	\$6,053,575	56.8%
Postsecondary.....	4,057,750	34.9%	4,613,911	43.0%	4,410,930	38.7%	3,911,982	42.2%	4,191,973	39.3%
Other.....	445,212	3.8%	459,182	4.3%	446,760	3.9%	392,222	4.2%	417,521	3.9%
Total.....	11,629,527	100.0%	10,738,977	100.0%	11,383,347	100.0%	9,264,963	100.0%	10,663,069	100.0%

01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

(dollars in thousands)	<u>1983 President's Budget</u>		<u>1983 Appropriation</u>		<u>1984 President's Budget</u>		<u>1984 Appropriation</u>		<u>1985 President's Budget</u>	
<u>ED Discretionary Only by Level</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$4,153,201	61.1%	\$6,505,738	57.8%	\$5,696,716	56.8%	\$6,927,591	57.7%	\$7,019,293	60.9%
Postsecondary.....	2,300,299	33.8%	4,281,402	38.0%	3,973,086	39.6%	4,642,069	38.7%	4,147,546	36.0%
Other.....	342,100	5.0%	474,231	4.2%	351,813	3.5%	433,215	3.6%	364,428	3.2%
Total.....	6,795,600	100.0%	11,261,371	100.0%	10,021,615	100.0%	12,002,875	100.0%	11,531,267	100.0%

01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

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(dollars in thousands)	1985 Appropriation		1986 President's Budget		1986 Appropriation		1987 President's Budget		1987 Appropriation	
<u>ED Discretionary Only by Level</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$7,643,674	54.5%	\$7,185,245	62.0%	\$7,374,628	55.3%	\$6,941,826	59.7%	\$8,676,270	56.3%
Postsecondary.....	5,890,905	42.0%	4,066,787	35.1%	5,508,528	41.3%	4,328,943	37.2%	6,233,168	40.5%
Other.....	486,365	3.5%	343,597	3.0%	452,928	3.4%	365,986	3.1%	490,148	3.2%
Total.....	14,020,944	100.0%	11,595,629	100.0%	13,336,084	100.0%	11,636,755	100.0%	15,399,586	100.0%

01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

Bennett *Bennett*

(dollars in thousands)	1988 President's Budget		1988 Appropriation		1989 President's Budget		1989 Appropriation		1990 President's Budget	
	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total
<u>ED Discretionary Only by Level</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$7,301,993	63.7%	\$9,217,984	57.3%	\$9,501,053	56.5%	\$9,833,034	57.8%	\$10,377,476	57.1%
Postsecondary.....	3,783,851	33.0%	6,369,679	39.6%	6,827,814	40.6%	6,663,691	39.1%	7,211,841	39.7%
Other.....	384,540	3.4%	501,733	3.1%	475,101	2.8%	526,119	3.1%	588,154	3.2%
Total.....	11,470,384	100.0%	16,089,396	100.0%	16,803,968	100.0%	17,022,844	100.0%	18,177,471	100.0%

01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

(dollars in thousands)	1990 Appropriation		1991 President's Budget		1991 Appropriation		1992 President's Budget		1992 Appropriation	
<u>ED Discretionary Only by Level</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$10,958,419	59.1%	\$11,844,831	60.0%	\$12,587,748	59.8%	\$13,363,148	61.2%	\$13,919,325	61.2%
Postsecondary.....	7,001,119	37.8%	7,314,475	37.1%	7,797,322	37.1%	7,816,487	35.8%	8,097,416	35.6%
Other.....	572,872	3.1%	567,488	2.9%	655,825	3.1%	652,114	3.0%	711,298	3.1%
Total.....	18,532,410	100.0%	19,726,794	100.0%	21,040,895	100.0%	21,831,749	100.0%	22,728,039	100.0%

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01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

Alexander

(dollars in thousands)	1993 President's Budget		1993 Appropriation		1994 President's Budget		1994 Appropriation		1995 President's Budget	
	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total
<u>ED Discretionary Only by Level</u>										
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$14,625,790	60.3%	\$13,869,474	58.5%	\$14,982,418	56.4%	\$14,411,646	58.7%	\$16,147,208	62.0%
Postsecondary.....	8,869,136	36.6%	9,074,651	38.3%	10,733,172	40.4%	9,316,433	38.0%	9,079,386	34.9%
Other.....	757,727	3.1%	749,680	3.2%	841,313	3.2%	804,473	3.3%	825,828	3.2%
Total.....	24,252,653	100.0%	23,693,805	100.0%	26,556,903	100.0%	24,532,552	100.0%	26,052,422	100.0%

01-Dec-94

DISCRETIONARY ONLY 1980-1996 BY LEVEL

(dollars in thousands)	1995 Appropriation		1996 Rev. Request to OMB		1996 OMB Passback		1996 Options for Appeal	
ED Discretionary Only by Level	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total
Elementary and Secondary.....	\$15,289,343	60.9%	\$16,989,016	62.1%	\$15,873,410	62.2%	\$16,345,584	62.2%
Postsecondary.....	9,005,509	35.8%	9,373,965	34.3%	8,826,806	34.6%	9,051,077	34.4%
Other.....	826,614	3.3%	982,466	3.6%	812,178	3.2%	893,790	3.4%
Total.....	25,121,466	100.0%	27,345,447	100.0%	25,512,394	100.0%	26,290,451	100.0%

Finn leads war for tough education

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Hudson Institute, gearing up for a war of ideas over the education of America's children, has designated bomb-thrower Chester E. Finn Jr. its general.

"There's been considerable backsliding in the education reform efforts of the last year or two, and ideas that we thought had begun to prevail at least in discourse about education — ideas like high standards for all kids and choice and real consequences and accountability — are beginning to get softened and replaced," Mr. Finn said yesterday at a meeting with editors and reporters of The Washington Times.

"There's been a real easing off in things like accountability," he said. "Instead we see lots of talk about opportunity to learn and things like teacher training, class size and other inputs for altering education."

Mr. Finn has pushed for rigorous educational standards and tests for more than two decades, earning a reputation as a blunt and abrasive combatant on panels and the commentary pages of major newspapers.

His latest job, pushing "sensible" education reform from Hudson, is to try to regain ground lost when the Clinton administration came into power.

His title at the Indianapolis-based think tank is John M. Olin fellow. He also is co-founder with Diane Ravitch of the Educational Excellence Network, a project started in 1981 to enhance the exchange of ideas and information among those who recognize the need to reform American education. It is now housed at Hudson.

Mr. Finn was an assistant secre-

tary of education in the Reagan administration. When Lamar Alexander was education secretary, Mr. Finn was part of a brain trust that drew up plans for the Bush administration's America 2000 education reform plan, elements of which remained in the Clinton administration's Goals 2000 legislation.

Mr. Finn, on leave from the faculty of Vanderbilt University, is in a four-month segue from Chris Whittle's Edison Project, where he was a founding partner, to Hudson.

"We've birthed a new entity, which we call the Education Policy Committee of the Educational Excellence Network," Mr. Finn said.

It consists of a battalion of about 40 "tough-minded thinkers" about education reform, including William J. Bennett and Mr. Alexander, both former education secretaries; former and current state education commissioners; and mayors.

The committee sponsored a report, due out in early September, that is critical of a number of the directions that education reform has gone under the Clinton administration.

Mr. Finn is particularly critical of the "effort in Ohio to undo the state high school graduation test on alleged civil rights violation

grounds, at the very same time as out of the other side of their mouth they are asserting that they believe in high standards for students."

Mr. Finn's goal is to provide valiant opposition to some of the bad ideas about education reform.

"I do believe ideas have consequences, and if there's a one-sided argument taking place out there, the one side talking is going to win," he said. "There needs to be a second side."

The Educational Excellence Network's forthcoming report on school reform points to a developing "schizophrenia on standards" as a major barrier to progress in improving American schools.

It also chastizes school reformers for letting academic "outcomes-based standards" get hijacked by educators with laundry lists of student outcomes based on attitudes.

It's the opening salvo in the battle of ideas about education.

"It's an intellectual, conceptual and ideological war," Mr. Finn said. "It's a war of ideas, and it's not a tea party. It's 50 million kids and \$300 billion a year and 50 legislatures and governors, many of whom regard education as one of the most important things in their state."

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Should you talk to
both John Anderson
& head of Hudson &
say: What's this? We've

been supporting NASC with
Hudson as partner / ~~was~~ agreed
to meet/speak. So now they have
an attack expected? Tang

Finn leads war for tough education

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Hudson Institute, gearing up for a war of ideas over the education of America's children, has designated bomb-thrower Chester E. Finn Jr. its general.

"There's been considerable backsliding in the education reform efforts of the last year or two, and ideas that we thought had begun to prevail at least in discourse about education — ideas like high standards for all kids and choice and real consequences and accountability — are beginning to get softened and replaced," Mr. Finn said yesterday at a meeting with editors and reporters of The Washington Times.

"There's been a real easing off in things like accountability," he said. "Instead we see lots of talk about opportunity to learn and things like teacher training, class size and other inputs for altering education."

Mr. Finn has pushed for rigorous educational standards and tests for more than two decades, earning a reputation as a blunt and abrasive combatant on panels and the commentary pages of major newspapers.

His latest job, pushing "sensible" education reform from Hudson, is to try to regain ground lost when the Clinton administration came into power.

His title at the Indianapolis-based think tank is John M. Olin fellow. He also is co-founder with Diane Ravitch of the Educational Excellence Network, a project started in 1981 to enhance the exchange of ideas and information among those who recognize the need to reform American education. It is now housed at Hudson.

Mr. Finn was an assistant secre-

tary of education in the Reagan administration. When Lamar Alexander was education secretary, Mr. Finn was part of a brain trust that drew up plans for the Bush administration's America 2000 education reform plan, elements of which remained in the Clinton administration's Goals 2000 legislation.

Mr. Finn, on leave from the faculty of Vanderbilt University, is in a four-month segue from Chris Whittle's Edison Project, where he was a founding partner, to Hudson.

"We've birthed a new entity, which we call the Education Policy Committee of the Educational Excellence Network," Mr. Finn said.

It consists of a battalion of about 40 "tough-minded thinkers" about education reform, including William J. Bennett and Mr. Alexander, both former education secretaries; former and current state education commissioners; and mayors.

The committee sponsored a report, due out in early September, that is critical of a number of the directions that education reform has gone under the Clinton administration.

Mr. Finn is particularly critical of the "effort in Ohio to undo the state high school graduation test on alleged civil rights violation

grounds, at the very same time as out of the other side of their mouth they are asserting that they believe in high standards for students."

Mr. Finn's goal is to provide valiant opposition to some of the bad ideas about education reform.

"I do believe ideas have consequences, and if there's a one-sided argument taking place out there, the one side talking is going to win," he said. "There needs to be a second side."

The Educational Excellence Network's forthcoming report on school reform points to a developing "schizophrenia on standards" as a major barrier to progress in improving American schools.

It also chastizes school reformers for letting academic "outcomes-based standards" get hijacked by educators with laundry lists of student outcomes based on attitudes.

It's the opening salvo in the battle of ideas about education.

"It's an intellectual, conceptual and ideological war," Mr. Finn said. "It's a war of ideas, and it's not a tea party. It's 50 million kids and \$300 billion a year and 50 legislatures and governors, many of whom regard education as one of the most important things in their state."

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Mile

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"My Minute"



LAWAN
ALEXANDER

Driving in South Carolina. I saw this bumper sticker:
"I love my country, but I fear my government."

One of the fears I hear the most about is the government in Washington taking over local schools.

People are afraid that Washington, D.C. "experts" will impose their views about everything from safe sex to world history on public schools.

This is not just the ranting of some fringe group. Look at President Clinton's new "Goals 2000" education law.

The New Hampshire State Board of Education asked me not long ago this question: "Isn't Goals 2000 just a first cousin to President Bush's America 2000?"

My answer was: "No." My advice was: "Treat Goals 2000 about the same way you would treat a fox dressed like a duck at a duck family reunion."

Goals 2000:

- turns a national movement into a federal program;
- creates a sort of national school board that overrides local control;
- puts Washington experts and union leaders in charge instead of Governors;

- focuses on what is spent, instead of what children learn;
- encourages "outcome-based" education instead of focusing on whether children are learning the academic basics;
- bans tests with consequences.

Every single Republican Senator voted to strip this kind of law in October, 1992. If I were still Governor, I would say "no thanks" to Goals 2000 because of the strings.

The worst part of Goals 2000 is what Congress didn't do. No renewed commitment to rigorous academic standards. No push to charter thousands of new schools. No move to take federal regulations off the classroom teacher. No GI Bill for Kids so that poor families can also choose the best schools for their children.

In 1981, I suggested to President Reagan that most elementary and secondary education programs be turned over entirely to the states.

I feel even more strongly about that today. Parents and communities—instead of the company town, Washington, D.C.—will do a better job deciding what is best for our children's future.

Lawan

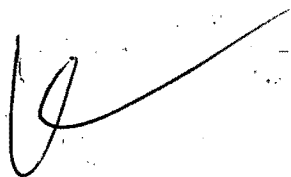
—From August's Republican Neighborhood Meeting

Sept.19, 1994

Mike:

"Splitting hairs with nuclear bombs" is how I would describe the attached bullets from Lamar Alexander. Thought you would want to see it.

Kirk

A handwritten signature, likely of Kirk, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

cc: Mike Cohen

A Conversation with Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison

Lamar Alexander's proposal: cut in half the pay of Congress, cut in half the time they meet in Washington, remove the rules that keep members from holding a real job—except for full disclosure.

When the drive across America reached Houston, he and the U.S. Senate's newest member, Kay Bailey Hutchison, discussed the idea.

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison: Cutting our pay and sending us home would be a great thing for this country. Go back to the concept of our founding fathers. Have citizen legislators.

Alexander: It is a catchy phrase for a serious idea. If Members of Congress had more meals at hometown diners instead of Capitol Hill restaurants there would never be these 1400 page bills on crime and health care.

Hutchison: People at home who live in the real world and pay taxes and have to follow these mandates understand a lot more about what Congress is doing to the people of this country than people who've been in Congress for 30 years and who have never met a payroll and who don't know what it's like to live with the laws they pass for the rest of us.

Alexander: Some people in Washington told me a citizen legislature wouldn't have the time for all the committees to meet, the bills would have to be shorter and not as many bills could pass. I said, "What's so wrong with that?"

Hutchison: You should have heard the complaints when I cut my own Senate budget by 20 per cent and then introduced an amendment that would cut the Senate budget by 7.5 per cent.

Alexander: To me, a true citizen legislature means term limits as well as time limits.

Hutchison: When I ran for Senate I made some promises. And one of those was term limits for myself and everyone else.

Alexander: I have never heard so much resentment toward the government in Washington—not just at Republican meetings, but from the public housing administrator, the homeless shelter director, the former Cherokee chief, the self-employed contractor, the teacher.

Hutchison: I hear the same thing, every day in Texas. We are at a fork in the road in this country. Republicans are going to have to lead this country to get it back on track.

"My Minute"



LAMAR ALEXANDER

Driving in South Carolina, I saw this bumper sticker: "I love my country, but I fear my government."

One of the fears I hear the most about is the government in Washington taking over local schools.

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Lamar

—From August's Republican Neighborhood Meeting

Across America

ONE NEIGHBORHOOD AT A TIME

AUGUST 1994

Sending Washington, D.C. Home

Lamar Alexander's drive across America stopped in Portland, Maine to broadcast August's Neighborhood Meeting. Gov. John McKernan and participants in nearly 3000 other Meeting sites discussed transferring federal job training programs to states and communities.

"I've been hearing from almost everyone that the government in Washington is getting too big for its britches," Alexander said. "People resent it. We need to send Washington home."

"Last month we talked about cutting the pay of Congress and sending them home. We should send home chunks of the federal bureaucracy, too."

- "In May we discussed Sen. Nancy Kassebaum's proposal to send \$53 billion in federal welfare programs to the states with the feds picking up an equal dollar amount of state Medicaid costs."

- "We could do the same with 150 elementary and secondary programs costing about \$15 billion."
- "Rep. Bill Zeff (NH) suggests sending home about 90 federal job training programs as well."

Alexander cited Gov. McKernan's pioneering work in creating youth apprenticeship school-to-work programs as "one more good example that states and



GOV. JOHN MCKERNAN AND LAMAR ALEXANDER AT AUGUST MEETING

Washington, D.C. what they need."

Rep. Zeff: "We want to take most of the 90 federal job training programs, eliminate some, and give a block grant to states to come up with creative solutions. In total, there are 154 programs administered by 24 different agencies that cost \$24 billion each year. It's like spaghetti going in all different directions."

Carl Miller, FL: "I'm director of vocational education for Martin County. Individuals know what's best for their communities and many times cumbersome bureaucratic rules cause successful programs to go by the wayside."

Sen. Jane Amero, ME: "What we've discovered is that the vast majority of our students who are not enrolled in a college prep course

"ON THE ROAD" SUPERLATIVES:

Most Unique Food: Boudin, served at "The Boudin King" in Jennings, La. It is best described as what's left over from the hog after you make the sausage, served in its "natural casing."

Roughest Roads: Arkansas.

Clearest Insight: "The federal government could cook our lunch today, but if they did, by the time it got here, it would be cold and we'd all be gone." E. Baton Rouge, D.A. Doug Moreau.

Best Bumper Sticker: "Make welfare as hard to get as a building permit."

NEXT MONTH'S NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING



TOPIC: What we need to do to get the federal government off our backs and how to transfer federal job training programs to states and communities.

WHAT: Live call-in broadcast from New Orleans, LA with Neighborhood Meeting Chairman Lamar Alexander. He will be joined by some of those he visited during his 8500 mile, 38-state summer drive across America.

HOW: Jack Kemp will join by satellite.

WHEN: Second Tuesday, September 13, 8 p.m. EDT.

WHO: More than 3000 Meeting sites in every state connected by satellite and cable TV.

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

By cable: We're on cable in early 600 cities; ask your local cable company to carry the meeting at no charge to you.

By satellite: Find a satellite dish (try schools, sports bars, libraries) and tune in the coordinates.

C-Band: Galaxy 7,

Transponder 23

Ku-Band: Galaxy 7,

Transponder 4

A test signal begins at

7:30 p.m. EDT.

By video: Order these VHS tapes of the Meeting to show your neighborhood by calling 800-772-7376.

Day: Republican Solutions to Welfare Crisis

Theme: The Lessons of D-Day

Topic: Shrinking the Federal Government

Guest: Changing Our Schools, Saving Our Jobs

register your Meeting, or to find

Hudson Institute

September 6, 1994

The Honorable Richard Riley
Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, SW #6133
Washington, D. C. 20202-0100

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am delighted to enclose a copy of the report being released this week by Hudson Institute's Educational Excellence Network and its newly formed Education Policy Committee. The report assesses significant developments in American education during the last school year with a view toward identifying areas that need more attention if our nation is to make progress toward world-class schools during the year ahead.

While you may have disagreements with some of the conclusions of this report, I think you will find others, such as our concern about the "hijacking" of "outcomes-based education," much in keeping with your own priorities. We would be glad to make additional copies of this report available to you for distribution, if you would like to do so.

We at Hudson look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the vital task of improving American education. I hope you find this report a useful step in that direction.

Sincerely,


Leslie Lenkowsky
President

Enclosures

cc: Terry Peterson
Billy Webster
✓ Michael Cohen

Herman Kahn Center
P.O. Box 26-919, Indianapolis, Indiana 46226
317-545-1000 • FAX 317-545-9639

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Hudson Institute

U.S. SCHOOLS

"SCHIZOPHRENIC ON STANDARDS"

SAYS NEW HUDSON REPORT

Contact Peter J. Pitts, (317) 545-1702

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The report points to a developing "schizophrenia on standards" as a major barrier to progress in improving U.S. schools. As a result, the potential positive impact of the Clinton administration's "Goals 2000" program -- which codifies into federal law eight education goals aimed to create "world class standards" for student achievement -- is likely to be undermined at both the state and national levels.

The report refers to the U.S. Department of Education's own challenge of Ohio's minimum competency tests for high school graduation on grounds that the exams are biased as an example of this schizophrenia. The EEN report quotes from a letter to Secretary of Education Riley, signed by 14 members of Congress, raising concern over the investigation:

"In our view, this situation raises serious questions about the feasibility of standards and assessment efforts in all states and raises the question of whether or not the Department will allow any high stakes standards and assessment provisions to ever be implemented."

"That's true schizophrenia with respect to standards," said EEN co-founder and Hudson Institute's John M. Olin Fellow Chester E. Finn, Jr. "We should never accept the notion that standards and expectations should be lower for some groups than for others, or that different results on a test mean the test should be faulted. That's not educational excellence -- those are excuses."

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317-545-1000 • FAX 317-545-9639

According to the report, the past year in American education earned only a "C+," but "the average is not as significant as the specific component parts," according to Finn. Six notable developments discussed in the report are: (1) the enactment of Goals 2000; (2) the Ohio civil rights challenge; (3) the national backlash against outcomes-based education; (4) the spread of "charter" schools; (5) private management of public education; and (6) growing interest in school vouchers.

The report details the issues, as well as offering the views of the Network's new Education Policy committee (EPC), whose members include two former U.S. Secretaries of Education, Lamar Alexander and Bill Bennett, together with almost 50 of the most respected names in American education. Quotes from EPC members appear throughout the report.

"The EEN has helped launch the national excellence movement by continually reminding policymakers, journalists, educators, and parents that education must be judged by whether children are learning," said EEN co-founder Diane Ravitch. "What sounded heretical in 1981 is now no longer even controversial. But the battle is only half won. We must continue to insist on real standards, consistently applied, and we must relentlessly seek out ways to improve the delivery of educational services."

The Educational Excellence Network was founded in 1981 by Ravitch and Finn to enhance the exchange of ideas and information among those who recognized the need for the reform of American education. EEN became a part of Hudson Institute in 1992 and is directed by Research Fellow Carol D'Amico.

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EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chester E. Finn, Jr., *Chairman*

Diane Ravitch, *Co-Chairman*

Joseph Adelson, *Professor of Psychology, University of Michigan*

Lamar Alexander, *Former Secretary of Education, Counsel to Baker, Worthington, Crossley, & Stansberry*

Jeanne Allen, *President, Center for Education Reform*

Leslye Arsht, *President, Goals 2000 Coalition*

James K. Baker, *Chairman of the Board and CEO, Arvin Industries, Inc.*

Stephen H. Balch, *President and Executive Director, National Association of Scholars*

Jim Bencivenga, *President, Hull Council for Business and Cultural Development*

William J. Bennett, *Former Secretary of Education, Co-Director, Empower America*

Clint Bolick, *Vice President and Director of Litigation, Institute for Justice*

Samuel Brunelli, *Executive Director, American Legislative Exchange Council*

Linda Chavez, *John M. Olin Fellow, Center for the New American Community, Manhattan Institute*

Saul Cooperman, *President, Ready Foundation*

Ramon Cortines, *Chancellor, New York City Public Schools*

Edwin Delattre, *Dean of the School of Education, Boston University*

Denis P. Doyle, *Senior Research Fellow, Hudson Institute*

Pierre du Pont IV, *Former Governor of Delaware, Partner, Richards, Layton, and Finger*

C. Emily Feistritz, *President, National Center for Education Information*

John Fund, *Editorial Page Writer, The Wall Street Journal*

Nathan Glazer, *Professor of Education and Sociology Emeritus, Harvard University*

Stephen Goldsmith, *Mayor, Indianapolis, Indiana*

Joan Grady, *Senior Program Director, Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory*

Bill Honig, *Professor, School of Education, San Francisco State University*

Wade F. Horn, *Director, National Fatherhood Initiative*

William J. Hume, *Chairman of the Board, Basic American, Inc.*

David Kearns, *Chairman, New American Schools Development Corporation*

Patrick J. Keleher, Jr., *President, TEACH America*

Leo Klagholz, *Commissioner, New Jersey State Department of Education*

Byron S. Lamm, *Executive Director, State Policy Network*

Rick C. Lavis, *former Co-Chairman, Arizona Business Leaders for Education*

Rob Melnick, *Director, Morrison Institute for Public Policy*

William Moloney, *Superintendent, Calvert County Public Schools, Maryland*

John Murphy, *Superintendent, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, North Carolina*

Joseph Murphy, *Department and Chair of Education, Vanderbilt University*

Grover Norquist, *President, Americans for Tax Reform*

Paul H. O'Neill, *Chairman and CEO, Aluminum Company of America*

Lawrence C. Patrick, Jr., *Member of the Detroit Board of Education, Partner, Jaffe, Raitt, Heuer and Weiss,*

Mitchell B. Pearlstein, *President, Center of the American Experiment*

Elizabeth Rohatyn, *Vice President, Felix and Elizabeth Rohatyn Foundation*

Ted Sanders, *Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Ohio*

Bret Schundler, *Mayor, Jersey City, New Jersey*

Donald M. Stewart, *President, The College Board*

Abigail Thernstrom, *Adjunct Professor, School of Education, Boston University*

Herbert J. Walberg, *Research Professor of Education, University of Illinois at Chicago*

Robert L. Woodson, *President, National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise*

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14510

Looking Back, Thinking Ahead

American School Reform
1993 - 1995

A report by the
Educational Excellence Network
and its
Education Policy Committee

Mike Cohen

Introduction

Hudson Institute is a private, not-for-profit research organization founded in 1961 by the late Herman Kahn. Hudson analyzes and makes recommendations about public policy for business and government executives and for the public at large. It does not advocate an express ideology or political position. However, more than thirty years of work on the most important issues of the day has forged a viewpoint that embodies skepticism about the conventional wisdom, optimism about solving problems, a commitment to free institutions and individual responsibility, an appreciation of the crucial role of technology in achieving progress, and an abiding respect for the importance of values, culture, and religion in human affairs.

Since 1984, Hudson has been headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana. It also maintains offices in Washington, D.C.; Montreal, Canada; and Brussels, Belgium.

The views in this report are solely the views of the authors. No opinions, statements of fact, or conclusions contained in this document can properly be attributed to Hudson Institute, its staff, its members, or its contributing agencies.

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Indianapolis, Indiana

Looking Back, Thinking Ahead: American School Reform, 1993 - 1995

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Educational Excellence Network
Hudson Institute
P.O. Box 26-919
Indianapolis, Indiana 46226
(317) 545-1000

Education "reform" has become a sizable industry in its own right during the past decade, but its results to date have been dismal. In summer 1994, the National Assessment of Educational Progress released the latest student achievement trend data in reading, writing, math, and science. Slight gains are visible in science in recent years, as are minor upticks in math—but only in relation to unacceptably low baselines. As for literacy, most young Americans are functioning at rudimentary levels: enough to get through the day, perhaps, but not enough to sustain a strong democracy, a competitive economy, and a vibrant culture.

How is it that so much energy and expense are going into the enterprise of school reform, yet we have so little to show for it? With this report, the Educational Excellence Network (EEN) and its new Education Policy Committee (EPC) hope to shed a bit of light on that paradox with regard to the past year and to illuminate the path that lies before us as the new school year opens.

As we review 1993-94 in American primary/secondary education, the most that can be said is that a couple of good things happened and several encouraging trends were apparent. At the same time, we find backsliding on key matters, opportunities missed, and mischief made.

In this report, we've concentrated on two categories of event that are central to what the Network stands for:

- **Standards** (what do we expect American children to know and be able to do by the

- **Reinventing Education** (what changes need to be made to the current system if we're to reach our destination?)

Examining the past year, we find that education policymakers at all levels have gotten fuzzy and ambivalent about high academic standards, even as some have strengthened the instruments of change. But why, it is fair to ask, improve the means of transportation if one is vague about one's destination?

Looking ahead, opportunities abound, but will decision-makers take the risks, avoid the pitfalls, and stick to their guns in the face of tough and sometimes nasty resistance? Would that we had more confidence in their resolve.

In the interest of focus and brevity, we've been selective in this report, omitting topics (such as early childhood education) that some EPC members had hoped to see here and neglecting some worrisome developments (such as the College Board's decision to "re-center" the SAT scores) that we could not fully examine. Nor have we said anything about the continuing "culture wars" and welfare policy struggles that have such great bearing on the lives of children and the content of their education. Still, we hope that you will find this report informative and useful, sometimes controversial, perhaps a touch alarming. And if you're not already a member of the Educational Excellence Network, we invite you to join. Information can be found on the last page of this publication.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.
Co-Chair
Education Policy Committee

Diane Ravitch
Co-Chair
Education Policy Committee

Part 1: Where We're Going Schizophrenia on Standards

In 1989 when President Bush and the nation's governors met in Charlottesville to set ambitious new national education goals, it appeared that the key U.S. education policy shapers had embraced the idea that education is properly measured by its results, not by budgets, pupil-teacher ratios, teacher salaries, or other measures of "input."

The third and perhaps most important of the national goals states that, by the year 2000, all children will "leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography." Toward this end, President Bush and Education Secretary Lamar Alexander developed the "America 2000" strategy, including "world class standards" for student achievement and high-caliber examinations to monitor progress.

Since that time, the notion of "world class standards" has been widely discussed. Washington funded seven subject-specific standard-setting groups (and several more have obtained private resources). State-level efforts to create standards and assessments are widespread, and local initiatives of this kind are growing more common. Some of the design teams supported by the New American Schools Development Corporation are honing their own sets of standards. The American Federation of Teachers recently compiled an international collection of 12th grade exit exams in biology, the first in a series of publications designed to inform American standard-setting efforts.

A dumbed-down academic program offers nothing of value to children, especially children of color. This type of program is a one-way ticket to disaster.

Ramon Cortines

It reminds me of the story of the farmer who boasts of the water, feed, space and contentment of his chickens. "But," asks the skeptic, "Do they lay eggs?"

Saul Cooperman

Great
P.R.
No
SUBSTANCE

The worst part of Goals 2000 is what Congress didn't do. No renewed commitment to rigorous academic standards. No push to charter thousands of new schools. No move to take federal regulations off the classroom teacher. No GI Bill for Kids so that poor families can also choose the best schools for their children.

Lamar Alexander

Goals 2000, if implemented properly, can live up to its rhetoric. If not, it is a vehicle for special interests to smother state and local reform.

William Moloney

Test-makers and publishers continue to develop curricula and assessment instruments intended to propel American students to greater levels of achievement.

So far, so good. The events described below, however, suggest that—for all the talk—many have weak knees when it comes time to proceed up the rocky path that must be scaled if we are truly to demand more from our students and our schools.



The News: Goals 2000 Enacted into Law

The passage of Goals 2000 marked what the Clinton Administration and some others hope will be a new era of nationwide education reform activity catalyzed by a stronger federal role and parallel—the word “systemic” is often used—actions by states and localities.

Goals 2000 codifies eight education goals—the six developed post-Charlottesville and a brace of new ones touting professional development for teachers and parental involvement in schools. The legislation also creates two new federal boards charged with establishing national academic and skill standards and with certifying state standards and assessments. The act says that acceptance of standards is voluntary at the state and local levels.

Goals 2000 also authorizes funds for states and localities to help underwrite various reform efforts (standards and assessments, to be sure, but also professional development, parental and community involvement, dropout prevention, etc.). Those funds flow upon Education Department approval of state/local “improvement plans.” Approximately \$90 million was allocated for this purpose in 1994. The fiscal '95 figure will be around \$390 million.

Our View: Jury is Out on Goals 2000

Pitchers of ink were poured over this measure during its prolonged stay on Capitol Hill, particularly when it passed through legislative stages of a kind that often lead to considerable mischief (stages such as committee markups and political negotiations). Thanks, however, to articulate critics, steadfast governors,

skeptical senators, and, at one point, the personal intervention of President Clinton, many worrisome features were dropped or softened.

Today, Goals 2000 looks like little more than (a) a codification of national education goals, (b) several new (or more permanent) structures for encouraging and monitoring the nation's progress toward those goals, and (c) a medium-sized new federal grant program which—at its outset, anyway—the Department of Education is administering in a low-key fashion.

Yet the measure's shortcomings are profound: Congress dropped important elements of the “goals-standards-accountability” reform paradigm, notably any meaningful testing system. (Moreover, tests developed with Goals 2000 money cannot be used by states and localities for “high stakes” purposes such as high school graduation.) The new federal councils, once appointed and staffed, may well make plenty of mischief; it appears that they will consist largely of interest group representatives. National “opportunity to learn” (i.e., input) standards are coming back in new garb and, probably, with sharp teeth and talons. And in return for their crumb of federal aid, states and localities are apt to have to jump through ever-more hoops.

Nobody familiar with the history of federal education programs could reasonably expect Washington to resist the temptation to add ever-more conditions and requirements to these monies. Perhaps most worrisome, the very idea of goals-based school reform has been “federalized,” leaving states, communities, teachers, and parents with a diminished sense of obligation to solve their own problems.



The News: Office for Civil Rights Challenges Ohio Exams

As part of Ohio's 1987 education reform package, the state created a new set of tests to ascertain whether

Let's be fair. No new program of this magnitude has ever managed to approve state plans this quickly.

Ted Sanders

Goals 2000 provides a false sense of security to the nation that somehow all is now well. The message is "Let's wait until Goals 2000 has time before we act any more."

Jeanne Allen

Many rural states are eager to accept the Goals 2000 funds and to follow directives pertaining to it. Top-down edicts are anathema in these states, but they need and want the federal funding.

Joan Grady

If groups or individuals differ in educational achievement, we need to know so something can be done about it. Simply calling people equal who aren't or disguising the facts about competence makes standards meaningless.

Herbert J. Walberg

OCR has demanded student-identifiable data. Makes one wonder again about the motive, when one considers federal protections to families' right to privacy.

Ted Sanders

graduating seniors had at least minimum competency in reading, writing, math, and citizenship. To give students ample time to prepare for these assessments (which are pegged to approximately an eighth-grade curriculum), actual linkage of diploma to tests was deferred until 1994.

Now the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is investigating Ohio's test to determine whether it violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It seems a complaint was logged when approximately 90 percent of white students had passed all four parts of the test as of March 1, when 80 percent of black students had passed. (Students who fail the first time may retake the exam many times, over several years, and they can receive supplemental instruction to assist them in passing.) Two months later, the number of white students passing had risen to 95 percent and the total of successful black students had increased to nearly 90 percent. Complainants to OCR earlier had filed a lawsuit that an Ohio Federal District Court disposed of in a decision which left intact the tests and graduation standard. The agency continues its investigation nonetheless.

In its initial letter to the Ohio Department of Education, OCR stated that "an acute civil rights issue will arise if the Ohio Department of Education's proficiency test causes disparate numbers of minority students across the state to be denied the opportunity to graduate with a high school diploma."

Our View: Clinton Administration Talks Out of Both Sides of Its Mouth

In May, fourteen members of the U.S. House of Representatives wrote to Education Secretary Richard Riley to raise concerns and questions about OCR's action. They argued—rightly, we believe—that the Department of Education is hypocritical when, on the one hand, it promotes high academic standards through Goals 2000 while, on the other hand, investigating Ohio for actually employing such standards in ways that might alter the behavior of teachers and learners. The OCR investigation also smacks of the pernicious notion that expectations should be manipulated so that the

"impact" of standards will be exactly the same for all demographic subgroups.

We agree with the congressmen's observation: "This situation raises serious questions about the feasibility of standards and assessment efforts in all states and raises the question of whether or not the Department will allow any high stakes standards and assessment provisions to ever be implemented."



The News: Outcomes Backlash

Outcomes-based education took a number of body blows during the 1993-94 school year, as it became the object of intense political controversy—so much so that the phrase "outcomes-based" has nearly vanished from current policy discourse. Among other events are the following:

- Then-governor Douglas Wilder of Virginia rescinded the Commonwealth's draft school outcomes.
- The voters of Littleton, Colorado, threw out a trio of school board members under whose leadership a number of Littleton schools had created innovative outcomes-based programs. In their place, a new band professing a return to the basics.
- At both local and state levels, Minnesota backpedaled on school outcomes.
- The Connecticut legislature declined to promulgate statewide "standards" due in part to forceful objections from parents opposed to "OBE." (The ill-fated reform measures also provided for charter schools and school choice. Opponents also included the state's teacher unions and a number of complacent suburban communities.)
- Heated political and legislative battles about "OBE" were fought from Ohio to California, Colorado to Pennsylvania.

It is possible to set an outcome and to test for students' knowledge of the racial and ethnic composition of the American population, or the progress of Civil Rights legislation. But when one sets an outcome such as "proper respect for diversity," teachers don't know how to incorporate it in their teaching, test-makers don't know how to test for it, and one has only multiplied confusion and conflict.

Nathan Glazer

You can't talk about outcomes now for fear of the anti-OBE crowd tagging you. A sad result for discussing our best argument for change.

Rick Lavis

Outcomes-based programs effectively teach both good and bad ideas just as a sharp knife can be used for good and bad purposes.

Herbert J. Walberg

The establishment's misuse of OBE to promote political correctness and the indoctrination of children has done the education reform movement a great service by unmasking the ambitions of the state and energizing parents.

Grover Norquist

Our View: OBE Was Hijacked

As long ago as the first "Coleman Report," in 1966, serious education reformers have seen that money and kindred school inputs are no satisfactory proxy for pupil achievement and other desired educational results. The results that matter most, of course, are the knowledge and skills actually acquired by students.

That sensible impulse helped give rise to the 1989 Charlottesville "summit" and to the national education goals that followed. It has impelled governors and legislatures throughout the land, as well as many local districts and individual schools, to proclaim that they would no longer judge schools by what goes in but, rather, by what emerges. Instead of regulating schools through compliance with burdensome rules and procedures, policymakers would focus on goals, standards, and accountability for results—liberating professional educators to achieve these results as they saw fit, and liberating families to select the schools that suited them from among an array of options. All this led, in turn, to numerous efforts to spell out precisely what results were sought, how these would be measured and reported, and what accountability mechanisms would attach to their attainment or non-attainment.

Major problems arose, however, when policymakers moved from concept to details. It was, of course, necessary for someone to spell out *which* particular outcomes a state or community would expect of its young people. This might have been done by asking a panel of ordinary citizens to itemize the core knowledge and fundamental skills ordinary Americans want their children to acquire in school. But that is not what typically happened. Instead, policymakers tended to entrust the process to "experts" with very different conceptions of the purpose and role of schooling, conceptions that often have more to do with social change than with core academic skills and knowledge.

The result, in many places, was a laundry list of outcomes that are skimpy on—even contemptuous of—such skills and knowledge but replete with attitudes, social relationships, and ideological positions.

(This type of approach has been referred to as "Transformational" OBE.) Many of these "outcomes" were—and remain—inappropriate, offensive, and even sacrilegious to many Americans. And such results are even more burdensome when achieving them is made compulsory and inescapable throughout the public (and sometimes private) schools of an entire community or state.

The upshot has been an intense political backlash against the very idea of outcomes-based education. The critics are justified in many respects. Unfortunately, an awfully important baby could go down the drain with the OBE bath water, and the country could find itself returning to an era when "inputs," services, and intentions are the main gauge of educational quality and performance. (For more information on this subject, see "Outcome-Based Education: Miracle Cure or Plague," by Bruno V. Manno, *Hudson Briefing Paper* No. 165.)

If we believe all children cannot be tested, then how can we believe all children can learn?

William Moloney

Part 2: Getting There From Here

Cracks in the Education Cartel

"Process" decisions should be deregulated, and process intervention should be deferred except where results are consistently not being achieved. We can't succeed as rigid bureaucracies that define quality as begrudging compliance with rules.

Leo Klagholz

In "Reinventing Public Education," a lucid and important new Rand study, Paul Hill writes as follows:

Two theses are central to this report. (1) The seeds of today's disappointments were sown when education reformers of the 19th century defined a public school as an institution financed, owned, and managed by a local agency of government; and (2) public management of education has created a governance system divorced from public needs and democratic change, a system incapable of renewing itself.

Just as the idea of gauging quality by results rather than "inputs" has begun to shape policy and discourse about education, so too can we glimpse signs of a new conception of "public" education.

With ample cause, policymakers at all levels are growing more concerned about efficiency, effectiveness, and consumer satisfaction. From national efforts to "reinvent government" to state and local actions to "privatize" public services from garbage collection to prison management, there are bountiful examples of ways the public sector is attempting to borrow some of the conditions and incentives of the private market.

Although such efforts can be found in numerous domains of local, state, and federal activity, the education establishment has largely succeeded in preserving its stone wall around traditional forms of "public" schooling. Defenders of those forms stress the word "public," to evoke

patriotism, goodness, and the American Way. Indeed, the word itself is swell. The problem arises when it is equated with a uniform, rule-bound, bureaucratic, government monopoly staffed solely by government employees and more attuned to their interests than to the well-being of its consumers.

Fortunately, we're seeing the early signs of a fresh definition of "public" education, one having more to do with who is served rather than who provides the service. Last year we saw several dramatic efforts to transform the ways public education is organized and delivered.

The three most notable and promising attempts at "reinvention" are the nationwide surge in "charter school" legislation, renewed attempts to foster school choice, and experiments of communities in contracting with private providers for education services.

The News: *Charter School States Doubled Last Year*

The charter school movement, pioneered in 1991 by Minnesota, advanced rapidly in 1993 and 1994. Charter school legislation has now passed in a dozen states. Bills are pending in almost as many others. Although these measures vary considerably (and none has made it unscathed through the legislative gantlet), all allow for the creation of new public schools that are more or less self-governing; created and managed by diverse groups and entities; largely freed from regulatory constraint and bureaucratic oversight; held accountable for results; and chosen by their students (or parents) rather than populated via involuntary assignment.

The process of chartering a school is complex, and key elements differ from state to state: the types of charter applicants allowed, the composition of the charter-granting bodies, the degree of residual regulation, etc. Teacher unions' opposition to the charter school movement has generally been intense. Unions (and sometimes school boards and administrators) have lobbied for greater regulation of such schools, for their inclusion within collective bargaining agreements, and for tight caps on the total number of charter schools.

In Michigan (which recently enacted one of the farthest reaching charter laws), a regional director of the Michigan

Standards are the foundation upon which a quality instructional program is built. We need to experiment in the provision of public education.

Ramon Cortines

Each charter school provision is a hairline fracture in the concrete bunker of the establishment.

Grover Norquist

Education Association warned the president of Saginaw Valley State University that the union would take action if the university authorized "unplanned, uncontrolled charter schools . . . without the input of educators and administrators." He threatened to encourage union members who are Saginaw Valley graduates to stop donating to the university; to stop union teachers from participating in teacher training or graduate courses at the university; and to encourage local superintendents and school boards to end their involvement with university programs. A spokesman for Governor John Engler, a strong backer of the charter school legislation, denounced these threats as "goon squad tactics."

Our View: Charter Strategy Has Promise; Laws Continue to Improve

The virulence with which elements of the establishment have reacted to the charter school movement underscores our hunch that the states are onto something here. But the main promise of this reform strategy rests in its potential to go beyond a limited number of "demonstration sites" and to foster marketplace dynamics within the public education system by increasing and dramatically diversifying the "supply side" of the school reform equation.

The charter strategy is not without risk, however. Not all charter schools are created equal or have the potential to achieve desired effects. The existence of a charter doesn't mean that children attending that school will inevitably learn more or that what they learn will be worth knowing. Moreover, several states have enacted charter statutes that are so burdensome to comply with that few (sometimes none) have bothered. (One critic terms these "fake charter school laws".) Georgia, for example, places so many obstacles before charter starters that nobody has even applied in the Peach State. California's charter law caps the total number of charter schools at 100, hardly enough to have significant impact on the state's 8,000 schools.

Other states, such as Wisconsin and Kansas, require charter schools to be authorized by local school

Charter schools are a timid, temporizing step in the right direction. But teachers' and administrators' unions that dominate education legislation have already ensured that charter schools won't be seriously tried.

Herbert J. Walberg

The fear of privatization can be a most useful spur to public education reform.

William Moloney

boards, which may not welcome the competition the charter schools are designed to foster. Indeed, the kinds of boards that charter applicants are likely to be keenest to get out from under are the very kind least apt to okay the application. (Joe Nathan and James Ysseldyke, who are monitoring the Minnesota charter schools, wrote that empowering local schools to approve or disapprove charter requests is "like giving *The New York Times* the power to decide whether *The Wall Street Journal* can be sold in New York City.")

Several jurisdictions have addressed this problem by permitting charter school organizers to appeal to the state level. In Massachusetts, charters are *only* granted by the state, a practice that has created its own problems. (For example, it is more difficult for charter school operators to find buildings in which to place their schools, because the charter law makes no provision for capital costs and irked districts have been reluctant to volunteer their facilities.)

Although charter schools are no panacea, we are optimistic about their promise as a reform strategy. The latest states to pass laws have learned from those that preceded them, and the newer legislation (such as in Michigan and Arizona) has generally been bolder and more "liberating." We hope that even more dramatic results will follow once charter school operators show that such liberation permits true innovation, and once parents get into the habit of choosing among schools that aren't all essentially identical.



The News: More School Districts Contract for Services

Although private management of public schools seemed farfetched only a couple of years ago, today a growing number of school systems are either experimenting with such arrangements or considering doing so. Not only are school districts finding it easier and cheaper to contract for janitorial, bus, and cafeteria services, but they are also discovering the benefits of using outside contractors to

The market forces of competition set in motion by charter schools will now help drive quality, teacher professionalism, and true accountability to new heights in even our poorest neighborhoods.
Larry Patrick

In the Cherry Creek, Colorado, School District, a parent group wanted to start a charter school for gifted and talented children. Rather than deal with losing money and the best and brightest to a charter school, the district swung into gear and created a magnet school.
Joan Grady

Across America, a new generation of mayors is struggling to save their cities by devoting more resources to fighting crime, investing in neighborhoods, and attracting private investment. But nothing cities do can work unless our public schools improve dramatically. In the battle for fundamental education reform described in this report, nothing less than the future of our cities is at stake.

Stephen Goldsmith

provide educational services and, in certain cases, the management of entire schools. Some of the new "charter" schools are making similar arrangements.

Many school systems have long contracted with private firms for ancillary services, but the "out-sourcing" trend gained considerable visibility in 1992 when Baltimore signed a contract with Educational Alternatives, Inc. (EAI) to manage one middle school and eight elementary schools in that city.

This past year, private management has begun to spread, despite continuing opposition by teachers' unions. In Minneapolis, for example, the new school "superintendent" is a private firm; instead of hiring a traditional public school administrator, the school board contracted with Public Strategies, Inc. to manage the district. The Edison Project expects to operate public schools in Ohio, Florida, Kansas, Hawaii, Michigan, Texas, Massachusetts, California, and Colorado. Hartford, Connecticut, and Pinckney, Michigan, are working out arrangements with EAI to manage their entire systems. Washington, D.C., hired Sylvan Learning, Inc. to provide remedial instruction to high school seniors who read below the 9th grade level. (In Baltimore, Sylvan runs part of the Chapter I program, a federal initiative to provide additional instruction to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.) Berlitz is handling foreign language instruction in several public schools. Charlotte-Mecklenburg superintendent John Murphy has signaled his intention to invite bidders to manage some of the district's schools. Likewise, in Indianapolis the mayor and school superintendent have held discussions with private firms about operating some of that city's schools.

Our View: Contracting Brings Marketplace Discipline to the Public Sector

Let us quickly acknowledge that the jury is still out on whether student achievement rises when public schools are privately managed. The Baltimore data are mixed, and the other ventures are too recent to show results. But the innovation holds great promise. The private sector has the flexibility and imagination to

devise more options through which public education can accomplish its work, and it can incorporate innovations and efficiencies that have eluded the traditional system. Moreover, these innovations can help put desirable pressure on other schools to reform themselves. (Not only are the EAI-maintained schools in Baltimore said to be clean and in good repair for the first time in years, but many of that city's "regular" public schools are now also reported to be tidier, as their custodians awakened to the possibility that their jobs could be in jeopardy.)

Perhaps the greatest benefit of contract management is stricter accountability: rather than attempting to bring about reform by forcing schools to comply with rules and procedures, out-sourcing uses results for quality control. Private firms are contractually bound to reach specific goals. If a private manager does not produce the agreed-upon results, its contract can be canceled. The school board may then resume running the schools or may hold a competition for new outside managers.

Like charter schools, experiments with private management of public schools have been vigorously resisted by the usual entrenched interests. In the District of Columbia, for example, Superintendent Franklin Smith had hoped to turn over ten to fifteen of his worst-performing schools to private management beginning in 1994. Smith asserted that the "Band-Aid solutions we have used in the past have not worked. It is time to find more innovative measures—now, while public education can still be saved."

His proposal would have faced any contractor with a mighty challenge—and a great opportunity. But the moment passed. Smith's plan was tabled, in no small part because of racial politics that may have been stirred by a furious teachers' union. In response to plans by Education Alternatives, Inc., one opponent said, "With 89.9 percent of the school student body African American, why would we bring in rich white folks who don't have any credentials in educating anybody?" Another opponent said, "Outside

Public schools should not be afraid of competition—so long as the competition is fair. The public schools have no monopoly on good educational ideas, and some of the best and worst of this nation's schools can be found in both the public and private sectors.

Ramon Cortines

contractors have no concern for the way of life in the District."

According to the 1994 *Kids Count Data Book*, published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the District of Columbia has the highest U.S. rates of low birth-weight babies, infant mortality, child deaths, births to single teens, juvenile violent crime arrests, teen violent deaths, and children in single-parent families. We wonder what aspects of the D.C. "way of life" the opponents of private management are so keen to preserve.



The News: Vouchers Have Mixed Year; Advocates Undaunted

Although public support for school choice has been steadily growing, political initiatives that would allow parents to choose their children's schools had ups and downs in 1993 and 1994. The two most significant initiatives took place in Puerto Rico and California. There were photo-finishes in both the Arizona and Connecticut state legislatures, as reform bills that included provisions for school choice went down by narrow defeats in both states. The Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Kansas legislatures also considered, but did not enact, choice legislation during the past year.

Puerto Rico

In September 1993, Puerto Rico Governor Pedro Rosello signed a law creating the second publicly funded K-12 voucher program applying to U.S. citizens. The Puerto Rico program makes school vouchers available to families with annual incomes below \$18,000. These \$1,500 vouchers can be used at either public or private institutions, including church-affiliated private schools. High school students can also use their vouchers to enroll in university courses. (The major difference between this program and the nation's other publicly funded voucher program is that in the Milwaukee program the vouchers are limited to nonsectarian schools.) The Puerto Rico program is funded

with \$10 million in revenue raised through privatization of the island's telephone company. If students choose to use their vouchers in public schools, the vouchers provide additional resources to those schools, supplementing funds that the commonwealth already provides for each pupil.

In April, a San Juan Superior Court judge declared portions of the program invalid, holding that Puerto Rico's constitution bars the transfer of public money to private schools, religious or otherwise. That ruling has been appealed to the Puerto Rican Supreme Court, where it is currently pending. Meanwhile, the lower court's injunction against the program has been lifted for the time being, meaning that the program will continue at least through the 1994-95 school year.

California

Last fall, California voters defeated Proposition 174, an ambitious ballot referendum that would have provided parents statewide with vouchers worth at least half the cost of educating a child in a California public school. These would have been redeemable at public or private schools. The initiative failed by a 71 to 29 percent margin.

Analysts have offered various explanations for the initiative's stark failure: it did not make allowances for disadvantaged students and those with special needs; not enough controls were placed on participating schools; there was weak support for the initiative in the suburbs, where voters were disinclined to threaten the perceived quality of their existing schools with an influx of inner-city students. Other analysts credit well-financed media campaigns by opponents of the initiative.

There's no single compelling explanation. In any case, proponents are expected to regroup and make another attempt to enact a voucher program, perhaps redesigned or limited to a specific geographic area or demographic group. Exit polls revealed that more than half of those opposed to Proposition 174 would have supported a different school choice initiative, whereas only 18 percent of Californians are altogether opposed to the concept of choice.

Only choice transfers power from bureaucrats to parents. As school choice plans proliferate, the Berlin Wall of monopoly public education will come down, brick by brick.

Clint Bolick

The school choice movement is the civil rights movement of the 1990s.

Grover Norquist

When people pay for goods and services with their own money, they are more careful about their choices. They expect more from providers in competition with one another, and they generally get it.

Herbert J. Walberg

Our View: Parents Want Choice and Will Get It Eventually

Threaten the status quo with death, and it may accept partial dismemberment. This may explain why those with vested interests in the current education system have gone along—sometimes grudgingly—with limited waivers of regulations, experiments with diverse innovative programs, charter schemes, “controlled” choice plans, and other partial measures. While such initiatives are often worthy in their own right and do confer additional choices on a limited number of students, they do little to alter underlying assumptions or power relationships within the system. The idea of giving parents the ability to choose where they want to send their children to school is rooted in American democratic principles. And it promises to turn our current education system on its head, by forcing schools to become responsive—and accountable—to the students, parents, and society they purport to serve.

How controversial is “choice” in education policymaking circles today? Those who want power to remain with the producers tend to raise innumerable objections, but even they have begun to calm down as long as the range of options is confined to government owned-and-operated schools. One encounters livelier arguments and stronger resistance when independent-but-still-public schools such as “charter” schools are added to the mix. And, of course, choice schemes remain hot buttons when wholly private schools are included, notwithstanding evidence from innumerable surveys that most Americans favor the idea.

On the whole, choice advocates are encouraged by recent developments. Public school choice programs in their various forms—including the more radical “charter” approach—are flourishing. As for vouchers, despite last year’s setbacks, 1995 could be a banner year. The recent near-misses in Arizona, Connecticut, Kansas, Georgia, and Michigan will probably lead to reconsideration in those jurisdictions. Watch for a dramatic voucher-and-more education reform initiative in Jersey City, where Mayor (and EPC member)

Bret Schundler rode into office on a strong choice platform. In Pennsylvania, where a statewide voucher plan came close to enactment in 1991, proponents are gearing up for a second run. In Milwaukee, there will probably be a new push to include religious schools in that city’s voucher program.

As for the legal challenge in Puerto Rico, it was not unexpected and is not a lethal blow to the voucher movement. (In Milwaukee, a similar lawsuit was filed and won, but the program was upheld on appeal.) If Puerto Rico’s program survives, it may well boost efforts to enact similar plans elsewhere. If the lower court’s ruling is ultimately upheld (as many observers expect), this could dampen other states’ efforts. But some Constitutional experts believe that U.S. Supreme Court decisions over the last decade concerning aid to religious schools indicate that a majority of the justices would hold that religiously neutral assistance to school-children is constitutional. (In truth, four decades of confused and confusing jurisprudence in this area have sown uncertainty on all sides.)

Meanwhile, eleven privately funded voucher programs have been established in the U.S., starting with the well-known CHOICE Charitable Trust program begun in Indianapolis by Golden Rule Insurance. These programs, which provide scholarships to students from low-income families to attend the school of their choice—and typically require some level of co-payment by their parents—are all oversubscribed. More than a few of their beneficiaries are now advocates for changes in public policy.

We should let a thousand trials of new ideas go forth.

However, I’m not about to abandon wholesale a public system, with all its problems, for a substitute which has not been thoroughly tested.

Ted Sanders

Poor youngsters who prefer a religious education are the nation’s last unprotected minority; required by law to attend school, they have no choice—in America—but to attend a government school. In no other democracy are children so treated.

Denis P. Doyle

Part 3: Looking Ahead

It's an intellectual, conceptual, and ideological war. It's a war of ideas, and it's not a tea party. It's 50 million kids and \$300 billion a year and 50 legislatures and governors, many of whom regard education as one of the most important things in their state.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.

We award 1993-94 in education a "C+," a mark that traditionally suggests tolerable effort (assuming no grade inflation) but lackluster results. (Those who have come to view the "B" as average should be even less content with our appraisal.)

Goals 2000 has received a lukewarm reception from some states, which seem to be hesitating for several reasons. As noted in the "Outcomes Backlash" section, there is strong, organized opposition to outcome-based education, especially the "transformational" kind. These critics fight *Goals 2000* for the same reasons. Some states seem reluctant to mount a sizable and potentially fractious effort to obtain their portion while funding levels are so low. Perhaps most importantly, "opportunity to learn" standards pose a sizable legal scare. Just as the decade-long wave of school finance equalization lawsuits has swept across the states, it is anyone's guess (and will doubtless be the courts' final call) what states are buying into when they hitch their wagons to new "opportunity to learn" standards.

Private-sector providers of education services, while full of long-term potential, face immense challenges in cracking one of the world's largest and toughest monopolies. Present suppliers have an enormous advantage, and the inertia-cum-complacency among consumers is such that effective competition is hard to mount. New ideas take time to gain hold; results are slow to arrive; doomsday prophets and nay-sayers are always ready to criticize; suppliers may not respond to new methods of organization; and profits

may be thin. Of all the methods of reforming American education, the notion of contracting out for services now appears second only to vouchers in the fierceness of establishment resistance. Given such opposition, we will be watching closely to see whether these start-up firms will be able to maintain the momentum they have gained during the past several years.

There are three other important items to watch in the upcoming year:

More meddling by Washington

Before the ink has even dried on *Goals 2000*, Congress is back at it, now putting the final touches on its reauthorization of the massive Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the primary source of federal aid to U.S. public schools. A Senate-House conference committee will meet to resolve numerous differences between the versions passed by the two chambers. As with the crime and health-care bills, this measure is so bulky (more than a thousand pages) and complex that few have read it all, practically nobody can explain how its many parts work in relation to one another, and those making decisions about it must depend on input from staff and interest groups, which in turn focus only on the portions that affect them.

Considerable new mischief may lie ahead. Buried in this round of ESEA changes are all sorts of intricate ties between the conditions attached to federal funds provided through these programs and the "standards" envisioned in *Goals 2000*. It's likely that states and localities that want Uncle Sam's money in the future (and few can afford to abjure it) will find themselves obliged to follow federal dictates considerably more stringent than the "voluntary" kind that apply to *Goals 2000* alone. We anticipate a painful pincer action as the two measures begin to operate in tandem.

Another ominous consequence of ESEA may be emasculation of the independent governing board that for the past six years has set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and the transfer of those decisions to political appointees and bureaucrats at the Education Department. NAEP is the nation's primary

Does anyone still believe that a good idea can make it through the public education gantlet reasonably erect, intact, and akin to its original shape?

Mitch Pearlstein

source of reliable data on student achievement, and the quality, timeliness, and credibility of those data have benefited greatly from its broad-based, twenty-three-member panel that includes governors, legislators, parents, business leaders, school board members, teachers, principals, and superintendents. Although the Senate-passed version of ESEA retains that board in its present form, the House version removes most of its authority. Ironically, the main reason a few House members and staff aides want to weaken the panel is because it has insisted on reporting NAEP results in relation to *standards*, asking how well American youngsters are achieving in relation to how they *ought* to be doing.

School Finance Reform

In a bold move in mid-1993, the Michigan legislature abolished the local property taxes as the primary means of funding public education. This dramatic step responded—among other things—to mounting concern over spending differences between poor and rich school districts. Later legislation increased and partly equalized school spending in Michigan and established a new funding mechanism based on state sales and cigarette taxes. No sooner had Michigan decoupled property taxes from local schools than other states began to consider doing likewise. (Legislators in Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Vermont, South Carolina, New Jersey, Minnesota, and Illinois have reportedly been exploring the Michigan approach.)

There is reason for states to pause before making such a leap. Though there was legitimate concern in Michigan about gross district-to-district funding inequities, and although schooling is certainly not free, as long as results are what matter most—as we believe—it's reasonable to focus on what is being achieved with the money that's spent. While certain reform strategies may require increased funding (a longer school year, new technology, etc.), more money can also yield glitzy, extraneous programs that have very little to do with standards, effective instruction, and accountability. Changed funding methods may also cause other problems. Once taxpayers' money "goes to Lansing," it loses its intimate association with their kids, their

neighbors' kids, and the teachers in the school down the street. As payments for education become indirect and distant, more of a "state problem," support for education could actually shrivel. California provides some evidence to suggest that this concern is no red herring.

Annenberg Grants

Last year, philanthropist Walter Annenberg pledged a generous \$500 million to support school reform. The first installment of his gift went to three groups involved in national projects—the Coalition of Essential Schools, the New American Schools Development Corporation, and the Education Commission of the States. Another sizable portion is expected to be parceled out to reformers in big cities. We are delighted to see Ambassador Annenberg's extraordinary largesse targeted to the cause of elementary/secondary education renewal. The challenge for the various projects that receive this support is to stick to their reform guns. Too often we've seen promising ideas get watered down in committee, diluted by "stakeholder" interests, tempered by fashion and political correctness, or compromised to serve too many masters. If that happens, one critic warns, "Mr. Annenberg will discover that he has only fed a light lunch to the bureaucratic beast of the public school monopoly."

THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE NETWORK

The Network's origins date to 1981—nearly two years before the nation was declared “at risk” by the National Commission on Excellence in Education—when Chester E. Finn, Jr., and Diane Ravitch realized that something was sorely amiss in American education and, with a number of like-minded colleagues, resolved to do something about it.

They observed that most youngsters were not learning nearly enough; that many of those entering college and the workforce were ill-prepared; that key achievement indicators (such as SAT scores and National Assessment results) had been declining for at least a decade; that the stunning economic success of other countries usually had much to do with the rigor of their education systems; and that quality and standards were sorely lacking through most of American K-12 schooling.

What to do? First, get the ideas right and get timely information into the hands of those who need it. The Network's founders agreed on a clear, strong statement of principles they believe should guide the renewal of American education. They began a monthly publication called *Network News & Views*. Over the years, the Network also undertook a number of special projects and studies, yielding half a dozen books and reports. During this time, its membership grew to about 2,000—a mix of education practitioners, scholars, policymakers, journalists, analysts, parents, and activists.

THE EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE

The recently formed Education Policy Committee (EPC) is rooted in the Educational Excellence Network's old National Advisory Committee. Today's EPC advises the Network's leadership, staff, and parent Hudson Institute on priorities for Network activities: publications, research projects, policy analyses, special briefings, issue identification, etc. Perhaps more importantly, it is also a proactive group that engages directly in the battle of ideas now taking place in American education.

During the 1980s and into the present decade, it appeared as if the Network's principles, enumerated in this report, were penetrating American education. Though practice never wholly caught up to precept, visible progress was being made. Although the Network's principles still have influential adherents at the state and local levels, a powerful counterrevolution is underway, led by people and groups that favor the status quo and have vested interests in its perpetuation.

The Education Policy Committee was established to rebut antiquated ideas, advance the Network's precepts, and carry the banner for educational excellence. It's not a political force; it doesn't endorse candidates or lobby for bills. It's a battalion in the war of ideas. Consisting of visible, vocal, respected reformers—including two former U.S. secretaries of education, state-level pioneers, professional educators, distinguished scholars, critics, and advocates—the EPC will make a reasoned, forceful case for true education reform. Through speeches, testimony, media appearances, timely articles, incisive reports, articulate recommendations, and forceful commentary, the EPC and its members will function as the Network's “strike force.”

EPC members will take public positions on key issues facing American education; offer advice to policymakers and the public; put forth “white papers,” reports, and recommendations (this being the first such); and employ a variety of mechanisms and media to make themselves heard and enhance the impact of their ideas.

EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE

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*Except those indicated by an asterisk, members of the Education Policy Committee concur with the substance of this report, but not necessarily with its exact words, which were written by EEN staff and EPC co-chairs. Quotations attributed to individuals are, of course, the words of those individuals.

STAFF

Carol D'Amico
Director

Michael P. Garber
Deputy Director

Jane E. Calvert
Christopher C. Prawdzik
Research Analysts

Robin M. Polin
Administrative Assistant



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They smile again!

K

The Unfinished Work of School Reform

by Scott W. Hamilton and Bruno V. Manno

The essence of our education problem today is that our young people are not learning enough for their own or their nation's good. Weak academic achievement — even among those who complete formal schooling — is at the center of the United States' persistent education problem.

It has been more than 11 years since the 1983 "Nation at Risk" report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education (created in 1981 by the Reagan Administration) warned that America's "educational foundations...are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people."¹ But the sad fact is that, despite great commotion and varied attempts at reform, we have not turned things around in our schools. Almost all significant education indicators and trend lines are flat.

Flat, too, is the education reform movement that until recently kept the issue on the national front burner in the nation's capital, where today health care and welfare reform, not education, are the hot topics of debate. Reform movements come in waves, to be sure, and a number of them have washed over American schools during the past century. Has the push for education reform receded? What have we learned over the past decade and what should we be saying and doing to transform our schools so they can adequately prepare all students — regardless of background — to find success in the worlds of work, family, and citizenship?

Scott W. Hamilton, a former staff member of the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the U.S. Department of Education in the Bush Administration, is a Research Fellow in Hudson Institute's Project on the American Dream. Bruno V. Manno is a Senior Fellow in Hudson Institute's Education Policy Studies Program and previously served as U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education for Policy and Planning in the Bush Administration; he serves on the National Policy Forum's Council on Improving Schools and Education.

¹"A Nation at Risk," The National Commission on Excellence in Education, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office (1983), p. 5.

Still a National Worry

If you ask Americans outside the Beltway if education reform is a priority, a majority will respond in the affirmative. The Gallup Poll has tracked the public's attitudes toward schools for 25 years.² Results in recent years show that Americans not only worry about the condition of our schools, but they also are clear on what changes need to be made. Specifically:

- 89 percent say developing the best education system in the world is essential to America's future strength, more important than the most efficient industrial system (60 percent) or the strongest military (40 percent);
- 81 percent favor requiring public schools in their community to conform to national achievement standards and goals;
- 70 percent favor the use of standardized national tests to determine if a student advances to the next grade level — with 72 percent wanting to rank the local public schools by student achievement;
- 77 percent think federal agencies should give local authorities more say in how the money they receive is spent; and,
- 62 percent favor allowing families to choose which public schools students attend in their communities, with even stronger support for this policy among minorities (70 percent for blacks, 66 percent for Hispanics) and inner city residents (70 percent).

Agenda for Reform

As the opinion data suggest, most Americans believe that transforming America's schools requires big changes in the approaches and attitudes common in today's public school systems. This view translates

²Stanley M. Elam, Lowell C. Rose, and Alec M. Gallup, "The 25th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," *Kappan*, October 1993, pp. 138-152. Data are the most recently published (1991) for all topics except testing (1993).

into a broad-based agenda that includes at least four elements:

- Standards that define what we expect young people to know and do and how they perform;
- Tests that tell us whether our young people are meeting these standards;
- Cutting red tape and deregulating the process of schooling to allow for more diversity among the types of schools children can attend and what teachers do in them; and,
- Giving families consumer power so they can choose which school best meets their needs.

Some choose to pursue a single element of this agenda, such as advocating only vouchers. Others hijack the terminology, yet stand in direct opposition to this agenda, such as the so-called "outcome-based education" advocates. Because education is a realm that, regrettably, has its own obfuscating language, it is necessary to sift through the various terms (and the views they represent) to see what these approaches would mean for our schools.

Singular Solutions

Some people insist that the widespread freedom to choose a school (including private schools), by unleashing market forces, would itself solve the achievement problem. This is only partially correct. School choice is a necessary condition for significant reform, but it is by no means sufficient. It needs a "supply-side" complement to create and evaluate new and different schools.

There is another group — call them nostalgists — who believe that the schools and curricula of a bygone era would be adequate for children today. While some of their grievances about today's schools have great merit, and some of the schools of yesteryear would be an improvement over many of the schools we have today, the world has changed more than nostalgists acknowledge. Assembly-line, industrial-age classrooms might have been good enough in the past, but they are an anachronism in a high-tech and information economy. More constructive would be a different view of school that combines the virtues and values of the past with the changed demands of today's world.

Apologists: the "Inputs" Crowd; Washington Knows Best

Predominant on the left — and within the education establishment — is the "everything is fine, but send money" approach to school reform.³ Adherents of this view contend that most schools are actually doing well enough, particularly when measured in non-academic terms, and when all of society's various pathologies and plagues are taken into account. What problems do exist are caused by lack of resources, if not on the part of schools and teachers, then on the part of students and their families. As Secretary of Education Richard Riley recently declared, "...poverty is our greatest barrier to educational achievement."⁴

This is the prevailing belief animating many in Congress, the Clinton Administration, and most in the education establishment who pushed for Bill Clinton's election. Their general policy for what ails education calls for more of the same: the greater amount of money for the least amount of change, with the money going to those who have long controlled the schools and like them pretty much the way they are.

Another dimension of the education establishment's approach to school reform is that, generally speaking, Washington knows best and soon will appear on your doorstep as Uncle Sam bearing gifts. As with any gift from Uncle Sam, the long-term results will be more red tape, bureaucracy, and directives imposing rules and regulations on schools, communities, and states and requiring state plans that must be approved by the Secretary of Education.

If federal fiscal reality were different, the Administration would undoubtedly propose significantly increasing the federal contribution to

The sad fact is that, despite great commotion and varied attempts at reform, we have not turned things around in our schools. Almost all significant education indicators and trend lines are flat.

³The following exemplify this revisionist approach: Gerald W. Bracey, "Why Can't They Be More Like We Were?" *Kappan*, October 1991, pp. 104-117; C.C. Carson, R.M. Huelskamp, T.D. Woodall, "Perspectives on Education in America," *Journal of Educational Research*, May/June 1993, pp. 259-310; Gerald W. Bracey, "The Third Bracey Report on the Condition of Public Education," *Kappan*, October 1993.

⁴Richard W. Riley, "Fulfilling the Promise of Brown," remarks prepared for delivery at the 40th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C., May 17, 1994, p. 9.

schools. But the budget constraints are real. So, the Clinton Administration is sending the contradictory message that states and communities must rely on Washington for directives — but on states for funding. Neither the focus on resources nor the view that Washington knows best bodes well for solving our problem of poor academic achievement.

GOALS 2000

This anachronistic approach, manifest in the Administration's little noted GOALS 2000 law, involves paltry sums of money and will do nothing to improve learning in America's classrooms. It continues a worrisome movement toward more congressional and special interest meddling. Most telling about the GOALS 2000 legislation: The nation's governors did not endorse it.

Predominant on the left — and within the education establishment — is the "everything is fine, but send money" approach to school reform.

The Clinton Administration boastfully announced the passage of its mangled legislation this spring, with Gordon M. Ambach, executive director of the Washington-based Council of Chief State School Officers, calling it the "most significant federal legislation in 30 years."⁵ Many groups within the education establishment welcomed it with open arms — always a bad sign for those committed to challenging the status quo in education. Social critic Irving Kristol called GOALS 2000 an "expensive disaster" in the making. It proves Kristol's first law of education reform: "Any reform that is acceptable to the educational establishment, and that can gain a majority in a legislature, federal or state, is bound to be worse than nothing."⁶

GOALS 2000 creates a new federal body, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council, that will act as a sort of national school board. It is to be composed of experts, activists, and interest group representatives who will "certify" state education plans and standards (with the likelihood that receipt of federal money will be contingent upon such certification).

⁵National Journal, Washington, D.C., April 30, 1994, p. 1041.

⁶Irving Kristol, "The Inevitable Outcome of 'Outcomes'," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 1994, p. 14A.

It also offers a small amount of money to states and localities that take federally approved steps to meet those standards. Though the law allows funding for some promising ideas (e.g., contracting with private firms to manage new independent public or "charter" schools), it is mostly "business as usual." Some of the boldest ideas for changing the system — giving families more choices, for example — are ruled out altogether.

Most worrisome of all, the new law gives fresh credibility to school spending levels and other "input" gauges instead of focusing on results. So-called "opportunity to learn" standards will be created for "inputs" such as school spending, condition of facilities, how teachers teach, class size, and curriculum. These are likely to be entered into evidence in a spate of new lawsuits (spawned by education interests) to force states to redistribute — and add to — resources.

The national standards that GOALS 2000 helps to legitimize are turning out to be temples of curricular correctness. The new federal dollars may not be used for tests or assessments that make any difference to kids (e.g., high stakes exams that determine high school graduation or college admission), nor are the goals and standards accompanied by any meaningful accountability system for those charged with meeting them. This means the law is unlikely to change what anybody does, prompt better teaching, or stimulate more learning.

Though GOALS 2000's "opportunity to learn" standards are optional, the rechartering of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act may require states to meet them as a condition for federal school aid. When asked how states and communities should view GOALS 2000, former U.S. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander said, "I would treat it about the same way you would treat a fox dressed as a duck at a duck family reunion."⁷

What was most striking about the passage of GOALS 2000 was the universal yawn with which it was greeted. Despite an elaborate signing ceremony, it drew little media attention. The stillness within the Beltway likely comes as a result of two things. First, in addition to the current unfashionability of the issue, the scholars, pundits, and political figures who used to make their living arguing about education seem to have taken leave of the fray. Thus, there is a conspicuous absence of national leadership — the bully pulpit role that can and should inform our conversations, help set a direction, and encourage bold steps in re-

⁷"Federal File," *Education Week*, March 30, 1994, p. 16.

forming education. Second, many reformers have abandoned the hope that Washington can do anything but make things worse.

The Reform Battle: Surrender, Cease-fire, or Détente?

The 1980s and early 1990s were full of contentious public discussion about what to do about the "rising tide of mediocrity" in our schools. Most agreed, however, that whether U.S. education had fallen from the heights of some earlier golden era, the fact was that the world had changed

The national standards that GOALS 2000 helps to legitimize are turning out to be temples of curricular correctness. The new federal dollars may not be used for tests or assessments that make any difference to kids.

and schools needed to be dramatically overhauled in order to prepare all students adequately.

Unfortunately, after more than 11 years of reform attempts at the federal, state, and local levels, we do not have much to show in terms of results. Some "reforms" such as reduced class size and other ways of expanding programs or increasing spending (per pupil expenditures rose by a third during the 1980s) reflected the conventional wisdom about school reform. Others, such as higher graduation requirements, site-based management, competency tests, and performance pay for teachers were more novel. But truly bold measures have yet to emerge in a significant way, measures such as vouchers or tuition tax credits, high stakes testing, or extended school days. In essence, we are right where we started. Consider the following samples of evidence:⁸

- Internationally, the achievement of U.S. youngsters is at the middle (in reading) or bottom (in science, math, geography);
- SAT test scores fell 35 points from 1972 to 1992;

⁸For sources on this and other evidence see: "Education in States and Nations: Indicators Comparing U.S. States with the OECD Countries in 1988;" "Adult Literacy in America;" "120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait;" "Youth Indicators: Trends in the Well-Being of American Youth;" "The Condition of Education 1993," all from the U.S. Department of Education, 1993; "The National Education Goals Report 1993," two vols., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (1993); C. Emily Feistritzer, *Report Card on American Education*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Education Information (1993).

- Only a small portion of high school graduates have the knowledge and skills sought by employers, colleges, and policymakers; and,
- A 1992 survey of adult literacy showed just 11 percent of U.S. high school graduates — and only half of those with bachelor's degrees — could, for example, accurately re-state in writing the main point of a newspaper article.

The bottom line is poor academic achievement, and today there is no reason to be satisfied with it: these are not the kind of results America can tolerate. The chief culprits behind our education paralysis are essentially unchanged from a decade ago:

- The producers of education (administrators, teachers, unions, etc.) have created a monopoly and control education instead of the consumers (parents);
- Schools, by and large, exhibit a stultifying lack of purpose;
- Few states or communities have set academic standards for students to meet, and low expectations, particularly for minority students, are the rule not the exception;
- Parents and communities have little useful or reliable information about results — how well their students and their schools are performing;
- Where there is information about results, there is no accountability — no rewards for success or penalties for failure; and,
- The schools most American students attend are still based on a school design from the 19th century.

Choosing Different Battles

In the face of such stubborn conditions, it is easy to understand how the boldest education reformers are apt to be as exasperated as they are battle-weary. The politics of education reform are as vicious as any, and actually bringing significant changes about is daunting, considering

the ingrained laws, customs, ideology, and regulations that dominate our huge, slothful, decentralized system. In 1984, Ross Perot described his efforts at school reform in Texas as "...the meanest, bloodiest, and most difficult thing I've ever been into."⁹ Moreover, as school choice advocates in California, Colorado, and elsewhere can attest, the force the National Education Association brings to bear in mounting opposition to change can be dizzying.

Unfortunately, after more than 11 years of reform attempts at the federal, state, and local levels, we do not have much to show in terms of results.

In response, many advocates of bold education reform have instead set about creating the kinds of schools, programs, or educational tools they had previously only spoken of in policy terms. For example, Chester E. Finn, Jr. and John Chubb, two of the best known critics of the poor quality and uniformity produced by the public school monopoly, have joined the Edison Project to create a nationwide system of privately-managed public schools.¹⁰

On another front, Patrick Rooney of the Golden Rule Foundation started a national trend when he began his private scholarship program in Indianapolis, Indiana. Nearly 5,000 needy students are receiving a private school education with no government money in 11 cities, including San Antonio, Texas, and Washington, D.C.¹¹

Former Secretary of Education William Bennett and education expert E.D. Hirsch have created new resources for those (teachers and others) interested in the character and cultural issues that confront education. Bennett, who has long talked about the need to make the teaching of character central to education, assembled an extraordinary collection of stories that teach virtues such as courage, friendship, and honesty. As of this writing, *The Book of Virtues* has been on *The New York Times* best seller list for more than 31 weeks. Hirsch, who angered radical

⁹Chester E. Finn, Jr., *We Must Take Charge*, New York: The Free Press (1991), p. 179 (quoting Perot).

¹⁰The Edison Project, begun in 1991 by Christopher Whittle, is a privately sponsored, nationwide for-profit venture to create new public schools that provide a "world-class" education. Open to all students and funded with tax dollars at about today's total per-pupil expenditure level, the Project contracts with public authorities to develop and manage schools in a particular community.

¹¹*Just Doing It. First Annual Survey of the Private Voucher Movement In America*, Washington, D.C.: The National Scholarship Center, April 1994.

multiculturalists, cognitive skills advocates, and relativists within the education establishment when he published his book, *Cultural Literacy*, has developed a curriculum for elementary schools that is being used by 141 schools in 26 states. These text books, available at most book stores, are also popular among parents even if their children's schools are not using them.¹²

None of this, though, has been able to drown out the voices of the education establishment. Their new call is for "systemic reform." The "systemic" reformers are busy manipulating bureaucratic levers in order to replace the current system of government mandates for schools with what they believe are more consistent and "rational" mandates. As we saw in the GOALS 2000 discussion, they believe Washington knows best and that tinkering with practices and resources — inputs — is the way to cure what ails schools. They now are focused on "reinventing" the U.S. Department of Education — a federal check-writing and rule-making machine — in order to inject more money into schools, and by doing so, bribe and cajole states and districts to do their bidding.

The teachers' unions and other ardent defenders of the status quo who used to snipe back at reformers are no longer threatened. They have a sympathetic White House and they have their cabinet agency back.

Federal Obsolescence

The good news is that there seems to be a growing recognition that, in education, as in many other areas, the federal government is obsolete. It cannot reform schools for a locality or state, and the red tape attached to its money usually makes things worse instead of better for teachers. There is less faith among reformers that anything that can be agreed upon at the federal level is worth the trouble.

Looking to Washington to improve our nation's schools, after all, is a relatively recent habit, dating back to the Great Society, with precursors in the era when Sputnik was launched. The federal budget for education continued to expand through the Nixon and Ford Administrations and culminated in Jimmy Carter's making good on his campaign promise to create a Department of Education in 1979.

¹²"Core Knowledge In the Schools," Core Knowledge Foundation, 2012-B Morton Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

The federal government's steady attempts to encroach on education was slowed somewhat when Ronald Reagan became President promising to eliminate the Department of Education. Though he gave up on that, he was able to reduce its size and slow its growth even while Congress continued to make great mischief.¹³

What's more, the states had become the majority fiscal partners in the late 1970s, and governors such as Lamar Alexander in Tennessee and Tom Kean in New Jersey were beginning to enact "comprehensive" education reform legislation. By the time the 1983 "Nation at Risk" report and the "excellence movement" captured the public's imagination, few called for the federal government to take charge.

Twenty years before, almost no one would imagine that American's schools could be changed without direction and dollars from Washington. In the mid-1980s, however, it seemed more fitting to entrust this matter to states and communities. Governors were not asking the federal government to take this on; they acknowledged that education was their issue and their responsibility. In fact, the 1986 manifesto *Time for Results*, issued by the National Governors' Association, began a five-year project by the governors to reform education systematically in each of the 50 states. In its introduction, NGA chairman (then Tennessee Governor) Lamar Alexander wrote: "The governors are ready for some old-fashioned horse-trading. We'll regulate less, if schools and school districts will produce better results."¹⁴

Many governors did take steps to free schools from state regulations, but they were not able to stem the tide of federal regulations. In Ohio, for example, a school or district might have to submit as many as 330 reports totalling 1,094 pages during a year. Of those, 173 pages are for uncoordinated federal reports and auditing requirements. In return, for that burden, the federal government supplies only 5 percent of the funding for Ohio's schools.¹⁵

At its high water mark in 1980, federal education spending accounted for about 10 percent of the total amount the nation spends on

elementary and secondary education. Today, it is just under 7 percent.

With the action at the state and local levels, Secretaries of Education such as Bennett and Alexander essentially ignored the traditional "constituents" of the federal bureaucracy, (i.e., teacher unions and other elements of the education establishment), and instead traveled the country, visited schools and communities, and tried to keep the focus on what needed to be done — most of which could only be done at the local level. To be sure, they both sent Congress proposals such as the "G.I. Bill for Children," which would have given middle and low-income families scholarships — consumer power — to spend at any lawfully recognized school of their choice — public, private, or religious.¹⁶ And they found ways to mete out small sums in support of other reform initiatives. Most important, however, they kept pounding the drum for education reform and offered ideas, information, encouragement, and feedback that struck out at the conventional wisdom and undermined the status quo.

As school choice advocates in California, Colorado, and elsewhere can attest, the force the National Education Association brings to bear in mounting opposition to change can be dizzying.

National Leadership Vacuum

The distinction between legislation and leadership seems lost on the Clinton Administration. Its focus is exclusively on what happens inside the Beltway. Whereas federal meddling in the domain of states and localities is detrimental, national leadership is crucial. Revitalizing America's schools requires that we resume a serious conversation about education. Such a conversation can awaken an intolerance of bland, "value-free" schools and focus on three duties:

The first duty is to keep the claptrap to a minimum, which, when it comes to education, is no easy task. Few professions are more easily seduced by knavish notions than education. Left unattended, some educators are apt to convince themselves (and attempt to convince others) that "self-esteem" or "cognitive skills" matter more than what students

¹⁶Lamar Alexander, *A GI Bill For Children*, John M. Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs, Ashland, Ohio, 1992.

¹³Chester E. Finn, Jr., "Education Policy and the Reagan Administration: A Large But Incomplete Success," *Educational Policy*, vol. 2, 1988, pp. 343-360.

¹⁴*Time For Results: The Governors 1991 Report on Education*, National Governors' Association, Washington, D.C. (1986), p. 3.

¹⁵Letter, Governor George V. Voinovich to Secretary Lamar Alexander, June 19, 1992, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Education, quoting study by Ohio's Legislative Office of Education Oversight.

know; that competition is bad; that children can only be taught effectively by someone of their own race; or that teaching ethnic awareness is more important than American history and math.

The second duty is to keep a check on Washington while reminding and encouraging communities to take charge of their schools. Congress, education interest groups, and various do-gooders perhaps cannot help themselves from trying to force the rest of the country to adopt what *they* believe is the best way of educating our children. But this tendency needs to be checked, and checked often, with reminders that Washington cannot reform schools. Americans need to be reminded that they can and should take charge of their schools.¹⁷

The third duty is to help set a general direction for education reform — help people imagine possibilities and stay focused on the most important matters. We believe a President and his Secretary of Education ought to be talking up two reform elements for localities and states to consider, the first being standards and tests, the second being diversity and choice. What follows is our recommendation for the agenda Washington ought to be preaching.

Standards and Tests

Successful endeavors start with clear expectations and goals. Our schools, by and large, do not. Educators can rarely describe in any detail what they are trying to accomplish, what are their benchmarks for quality, and by what criteria they determine how they are doing.

At the very least, this means high school graduation standards that consist *not* of time spent in particular classrooms but rather of demonstrable knowledge and skills. There are efforts underway at the national level to create standards in several subjects, and these, along with other resources from professional groups, may be of help to states and communities.¹⁸ Some of these national standards, however, will tend

¹⁷For a useful description of the federal role in education, see Chester E. Finn, Jr. "A Tempest in a Teapot: The Current Federal Role in Education," *Alumni Bulletin*, Harvard Graduate School, Summer 1988.

¹⁸For examples see: "The Modern Red Schoolhouse: Primary, Intermediate, and Upper Level Standards," Hudson Institute, Indianapolis, Indiana, March 1994; "The Edison Project: Student Standards for the Readiness Academy;" "Student Standards for the Primary Academy;" "Student Standards for the Elementary Academy," all from The Edison Project, New York, 1994; for a list of national organizations working on standards in subject areas, see

toward political correctness, downplay knowledge, and overemphasize "cognitive skills."—This should not be left to "experts," nor is it necessary for a community or school to start from scratch.

However standards are created, they must be implemented and enforced at the local level and not involve standardization or a national curriculum. The local level is the only level where matters such as what values are taught in schools can properly be resolved. There must not be any federal demand to read certain books, teach specific courses in a fixed order, or meet some sort of federal graduation requirements. These and other issues should be decided by states and communities.

In order to measure progress toward the standards it has set for its schools, every locality needs reliable tests to assess student and school performance. Some educators resist accountability and claim it is unfair. The sorts of exams we are talking about would be tests that teachers teach to and that have consequences for graduation, employment, and higher education. For those who work in schools — teachers, principals, etc. — compensation and advancement would be based on these results.

Tests should permit results to be compared across classrooms, schools, districts, the states, the nation, and internationally. Furthermore, other types of timely, reliable, and comparable information (for example, college entrance rates and placement in the work force) must be collected and shared in understandable form with the public. We should begin using the best testing tools we have rather than wait for the perfect tests. To assure fairness, such a system should be implemented in phases and independent of those who govern, manage, and teach in the schools.

In short, an accountability system ought to have at least the following elements: exams tied to the established goals and standards of the state or community; a range of teacher-designed tests for diagnosis and classroom correction; external tests, prepared and administered — like an independent audit — by people other than the school system's own managers; accurate and timely information from the assessments on whether and how well students are mastering the standards; and rewards (or sanctions) for achieving (or not achieving) the desired results.

"High Standards for All," U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., 1994, pp. 5-7. To request a copy call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

A Word about Outcome-Based Education

When judging educational quality, either we focus on what schools spend or we focus on what students achieve, what they know and can do.

Left unattended, some educators are apt to convince themselves (and attempt to convince others) that "self-esteem" or "cognitive skills" matter more than what students know; that competition is bad; that children can only be taught effectively by someone of their own race; or that teaching ethnic awareness is more important than American history and math.

The last third of this century has seen a fundamental shift in the way educational quality is determined — a shift from resources to results, from inputs to outcomes.¹⁹

This shift arose for one primary reason. Elected officials and the consumers of education — mostly parents and business leaders — wanted to hold individuals, schools, and systems accountable for their efforts and to appraise educational quality by investigating what children are actually learning.

Today, defining learning results that all children should master — what many call outcome-based education — is an issue over which many are doing fierce battle across America today. The Education Commission of the States reports that 25 states have developed or implemented an outcome-based approach, and 11 others have made outcomes a part of state accreditation or assessment processes. Why, one may fairly ask, is defining the results all students must master the object of such outcry?

The general pattern of events in many of the states that have tried to implement an outcome-based approach to education is almost always the same: the governor or state legislature establishes a commission to develop learning outcomes for the state's public schools; well-intentioned elected officials hand responsibility for specifying outcomes to groups dominated by education views antithetical to those the public officials thought they were mandating; the commission develops a laundry list — sometimes hundreds — of outcomes; a wide cross-section of the public raises an

¹⁹For a more complete discussion of the outcome-based education issue see: Bruno V. Manno, "Outcome-Based Education: Miracle Cure or Plague?", *Hudson Briefing Papers*, Hudson Institute, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1994.

outcry; and the state government cancels the plan or at least the most offending parts of it.

The main problem with the outcomes that emerge from this process and lead to the public outcry is they are often heavy on behaviors and beliefs. They are vaguely worded and largely in the "affective domain." They show little concern for core academic content with not much focus on knowledge and skills. They describe mental processes such as attitudes, dispositions, and sentiments — behavioral and social outcomes rather than knowledge and skills.

The following examples from draft state outcome-based education documents describe proposed mandatory outcomes for all students. For example, in Ohio, a graduate is expected to be able to "function as a responsible family member...[and] maintain physical, emotional, and social well-being." In Pennsylvania, "each student shall gain knowledge and have exposure to different cultures and lifestyles." And in Minnesota, the state expects schools to ensure that "the graduate demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential to...develop physical and emotional well-being." These examples are more the rule than the exception.

Such "outcomes" often mask quasi-political or ideologically correct positions. They are so vague as to make it impossible to measure in any useful and valid way whether students are achieving them.

In short, the meaning often attached to the term "outcome-based education" turns the process on its head and all but precludes real "results-oriented" accountability. Like many educational fads, the current outcome-based education effort takes a sensible-sounding principle — focusing on outcomes — and hijacks its meaning in such a way that its implementation will defeat its purpose.

Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, says it well: "Those pushing for reform should wake up and realize that, as presently conceived [i.e., vaguely worded, numerous, fuzzy], outcomes-based education will do...nothing to raise student achievement."²⁰

How did this hijacking occur? It begins with a fundamental problem: this broad approach to defining outcomes (called transformational outcome-based education by some) is rooted in the conception of the purpose and role of education embedded in it. This conception has deep roots in educational progressivism — particularly the writings of John

²⁰Albert Shanker, "Outrageous Outcomes," *The New York Times*, September 12, 1993, p. 7B.

Dewey and his followers — and in the viewpoint that it is possible and justifiable for educators to use schools to create a new social order. Schools are seen as instruments for social change whose goal is to instill our young people with “politically correct” values and attitudes.

For the state to declare that students cannot graduate from a government school they must attend unless they demonstrate values and attitudes the state prescribes has all the trappings of Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*. If such an approach means a focus on “values,” attitudes, and social relations rather than knowledge and skills, there is especially good reason to question it.

Entrusting the education bureaucracy with the process of specifying outcomes is a sure way to create a set of outcomes that will alarm many parents and other lay people. This is evident in the surge of opposition that had its first large-scale manifestation in Pennsylvania and has spread to many states.

But in rejecting an outcomes focus in education we risk a return to a focus on inputs or resources — in short, how much schools spend. In judging educational quality either we focus on what goes into the system — inputs, or what comes out of the system — results.

There is a way out of this dilemma. First, the process of defining what our children should know and be able to do is too important to be controlled by state and local education bureaucrats. And it is far too vital and localized an issue to entrust to the tender mercies of an expanded federal bureaucracy. Such a process must be under “civilian” control. And while it may fall to school boards and other policymaking bodies formally to establish goals and standards for the schools, it is the responsibility of parents, voters, and other taxpayers to ensure that these policymakers do not lose their way.

Second, we need greater diversity in the nature of schools, with families free to choose those schools that best meet their needs. This will allow for more pluralism among schools within a community and not force a single idea of education down the throats of those families and teachers who prefer different ones.

The “charter school” movement, too, may help to resolve the outcome-based education fire storm. It allows for the creation of independent public schools to which parents can choose to send their children because of the outcomes it proposes to produce.

Diversity and Choice

Most likely a hallmark of the 1990s will be a trend toward greater diversity in the types of schools children can attend, the approaches to instruction that professionals use, and the preparation that individuals receive to become educators, with families free to choose the schools which best meet their needs. For decades, our public school bureaucracy, with the rules, structure, and natural proclivities of any public sector monopoly, has rendered a product that is extraordinarily uniform and colorless. We tell all students (except those whose families have the means to pay for private school or “vote with their feet”) which of these nearly-identical schools they must attend. This forced uniformity produces schools that deliver mediocre results, and breeds the kind of divisiveness we see in the battle over outcome-based education. That is why the movement toward greater choice among a wider variety of schools has so much promise.

With a few exceptions — magnet and alternative schools — the standard model today is an 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. day, five-day-a-week, nine months per year, with one school-of-education trained teacher lecturing most of the time to a classroom of students using little more than the technology of chalk and mimeographs. It is an outdated model. We are too big and diverse a country to expect any single model (let alone an outdated one) to be right for every student in every community. Schools must become much more customer-driven to meet the variety of needs, values, and traditions of many different young people, families, and communities. This process is taking place, albeit slowly.

As states and communities begin to adopt standards and adapt them to their different situations, they will focus attention on and judge quality by the academic results students achieve. There will be less monopoly control and centralized government regulation of schools, of what they do, and of how educational services are delivered. This decentralization will lead to greater diversity, rather than uniformity, in the ways schools organize and configure themselves, and in the methods and tech-

For the state to declare that students cannot graduate from a government school they must attend unless they demonstrate values and attitudes the state prescribes has all the trappings of Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*.

niques teachers use to teach to these high standards.

Deregulation should also apply to the preparation of professionals. In our quest for educators, we cannot limit ourselves to graduates of teacher or administrator training programs. We need to foster different paths into the classroom and the administrator's office. Individuals with sound character who know their subjects, want to teach children, and are willing to work with master teachers to learn the art and craft of teaching should be permitted to teach or administer in America's schools.

Eleven states have enacted charter school legislation, and several others are considering it. Though details vary by state, such plans allow teachers and others, including parents, to request permission from a designated local or state authority to start a new charter school. These are generally schools of choice, attracting students with their distinctive elements (e.g., high standards, educational philosophy, schedule, organization, etc.). No one is assigned to them.²¹

The terms of the school charter can free teachers from the regulations and bureaucratic red tape that strangle originality and diversity. In exchange, teachers are held accountable for students mastering agreed-upon knowledge and skills. In short, teachers swap red tape for results and develop a system of accountability based on well-defined results.

An extension of the charter schools movement is the idea of "contract" schools, whereby school boards engage outside managers to design and run schools or to provide educational services. According to the Rand Corporation's Paul Hill, this approach "allows schools to be operated by a variety of public and private organizations, based on school-specific contracts that define each school's mission, guarantee a certain amount of public funding, and spell out the terms of accountability."²²

In this and other examples, a new understanding of the nature of a "public" school and its governance begins to emerge. Traditionally, as Diane Ravitch has observed, "Public schools are defined as 'only those schools owned and operated by the government,' yet places of public accommodation (e.g., hotels, restaurants, buses, theaters, etc.) are de-

²¹ Ted Kolderie, "Charter Schools: The States Begin to Withdraw the 'Exclusive'," *News and Views*, February 1994, pp. 103-108.

²² Paul T. Hill, "Reinventing Urban Public Education," *Kappan*, January 1994, pp. 396-401. For further details see: Paul T. Hill, *Reinventing Public Education*, Washington, D.C.: RAND Institute for Education and Training (1994), pp. 1-82.

financed as public not on the basis of who owns them but by whom they serve."²³ The definition of a public school is starting to shift toward the latter category, so that any school that embraces world-class standards, meets nondiscrimination, health, and safety requirements, and is held accountable for its results, becomes viewed as a public school, without reference to whether a government agency operates it.

If we succeed in creating schools that focus on results — by teaching to high standards, providing teachers and principals with less red tape and more flexibility, and making schools increasingly diverse — it will make less sense to have education bureaucrats or courts assign children to schools. Schools will attract their own students. By their choices, parents will keep the standards high, because *all* families will have the ability to vote with their feet — and their pocketbooks. The present monopoly of education by government schools must be broken up.

Conclusion

The past decade of education reform has not been entirely in vain. It has pushed the focus away from the federal government and toward communities (at least it was pushing that way until Bill Clinton came along). It has won widespread support for the ideas that all students can learn to high levels and that schools should be held accountable for results. It has debunked the notion that schools need to be exactly the same and that only well-off families should have a choice of schools for their children. By doing all these things and more, the reform movement of the 1980s has spawned the beginnings of what could be a transformation of education in America.

But that will entail completing the unfinished work of bold education reform, school by school, community by community. For many students — particularly those in the inner city — that day cannot come soon enough. Parents are fed up and angry. Community activists are frustrated by the intransigence of our education problems. Much is at stake. There is a wide consensus among Americans on the direction education must go, but getting there will take the leadership and focus of a President who will lead.

²³ Diane Ravitch, "Somebody's Children: Necessary Steps in Expanding Educational Opportunity," remarks delivered at a conference at Princeton University, May 24-26, 1994.