

Positive Testing
Articles

LEVEL 1 - 97 OF 264 STORIES

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The Washington Post

March 07, 1997, Friday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A12

LENGTH: 718 words

HEADLINE: On **Education** Front, a Bipartisan Lesson; **Clinton** Praised for Backing Standards by Michigan's GOP Governor

BYLINE: John F. Harris, Washington Post Staff Writer

DATELINE: LANSING, Mich., March 6

BODY:

With prospects for bipartisanship growing ever more tenuous in Washington, President **Clinton** traveled to Michigan today for a lavish embrace from this state's Republican chief executive.

John Engler, one of his party's most prominent governors and on other occasions a tough **Clinton** critic, praised **Clinton's** call for national educational standards. "Michigan accepts your challenge," he told the president. Engler said the state will begin **testing fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math** to ensure that they are meeting the voluntary standards **Clinton** extolled in last month's State of the Union address.

The alliance between **Clinton** and Engler, however unlikely at first blush, has a certain logic. Both men have aligned themselves with issues such as overhauling welfare and imposing more rigorous academic and disciplinary standards on students.

Education is historically a local issue, but aides say this suits **Clinton** fine. He hopes to define himself increasingly in the second term by offering rhetorical leadership on non-Washington issues. And on this particular day, with congressional Republicans tormenting him over the Democratic fund-raising issue, he was only too happy to absent himself physically from the capital.

Traveling back to Washington on Air Force One this afternoon, **Clinton** declined to address fund-raising questions, including Wednesday's revelation that a top aide to first lady Hillary Rodham **Clinton** accepted a \$ 50,000 check for the Democratic National Committee, which some experts say may be a violation of law. He said he would take the questions at a Friday afternoon news conference.

But he said the furor is not hurting his mood -- "I am doing great" -- and disputed suggestions that it is eclipsing his other actions. "I thought my message got through just fine," he said of his speech to the state legislators. "They got it."

Clinton's remarks sometimes took on a lecturing tone. He said the national



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The Washington Post, March 07, 1997

testing he has endorsed would be voluntary, but that he is counting on the power of embarrassment to goad states into new policies. "I want to create a climate in which no one can say no," he said, "in which it is voluntary but you are ashamed if you don't give your kids the chance to do this."

The Education Department will develop the **reading and math tests** over the next two years, and Engler pledged that Michigan students will take it. But **Clinton** warned that people should not be sentimental when some students fail.

"If they don't do very well at first," **Clinton** said, "it's probably more our fault than theirs. And a lot of it is because when we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them. And we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it."

That line got a standing ovation, his best applause line of the day. But lawmakers were more subdued on several occasions when **Clinton's** remarks took an esoteric flight.

Emphasizing the importance of good child care early in life, the president asserted that children living with "two parents, even if they both work, that have reasonably good educations" will experience "700,000 positive interactions" in their first four years -- or about 500 a day -- leading to better brain development. But "a single parent with low self-esteem" and poor parenting skills will give a child only "150,000 positive interactions."

Clinton, who has joked that he may run for school board upon leaving the presidency, plunged into similar detail explaining why young people in many other countries do better in **math**: "In Germany or Singapore, students learn 15 to 20 **math** subjects in depth every year. Typically in the United States, we learn over 30 or 35 subjects in a superficial way."

Clinton today said he is directing the National Science Foundation to work with the Education Department to study ways to improve U.S. **math** performance.

Engler traveled to Lansing aboard Air Force One with **Clinton**. In his campaign for educational standards, **Clinton** is planning to speak frequently to state legislatures. Last month, he traveled to Annapolis to address the Maryland General Assembly, and next week he will go to Raleigh to speak to North Carolina legislators.

GRAPHIC: Photo, afp/paul j. richards, President **Clinton** is welcomed by state Rep. Nick Ciaramitaro to a joint session of the Michigan state legislature, where he spoke about education. Between the two is Gov. John Engler (R).

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 07, 1997

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Copyright 1997 Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times

April 22, 1997, Tuesday, Valley Edition

SECTION: Metro; Part B; Page 3; Zones Desk

LENGTH: 525 words

HEADLINE: ON THE ISSUE;
DOES NATIONAL **TESTING** MAKE THE **GRADE?**

BYLINE: ED BOND, SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

BODY:

In his State of the Union address in February, President **Clinton** called for national standardized **testing of fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math.**

The call was meant to refocus America on success in **education**, but it also created a debate about the role the federal government should have in setting such standards.

Recently, the head of the state Board of **Education** rebuked California's superintendent of public instruction for joining **Clinton's** campaign for **education** standards. But the superintendent explained that no formal endorsement had been made.

Should there be nationwide standardized **tests for fourth- and eighth-graders?**

Yvonne Chan, executive director of the Vaughn Next Century Learning Center in Pacoima:

"I think it's a good idea. I am looking for something that will show progress of the students. . . . However, I hope we will also supplement this with other periodic diagnostic **tests** we can give every few months, as well as state standardized testing. . . . But if the nation has one, I'd use it . . . We would like this **test** to document success and hope it will also provide guidance."

Carol Jago, director of the California **Reading** and Literature Project at UCLA:

"Absolutely yes. Parents, teachers and educational policymakers all need this data. Parents want to know how their children measure up against national averages. Teachers need to know how their instructional practices are reflected in student achievement. Policymakers need to base educational decisions on more than the political climate or advocacy. . . . There is no other way to build accountability into the system. Common assessments provide us with a common language for talking about what children should be learning in school."



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Los Angeles Times, April 22, 1997

Dan Edwards, spokesman for the governor's education office:

"The governor thinks that having nationwide standardized tests is not a bad thing, but he would like to be sure that we be careful of what do we base a nationwide test on and the type of questions we would be asking. . . . The governor supports the standardization of tests at the state level. The key step, however, is to have individualized student test scores so you could track particular students from grade to grade and mark his or her progress in the different subject areas. . . . We'd have to assume that any nationwide test would have to be done with nationwide standards. . . . To develop that we'd get 50 states chiming in on what the standards will be and in the end you end up lowering the bar. . . . A nationwide test of that variety wouldn't make much sense to us."

Lance Izumi, senior fellow with the Pacific Research Institute, a conservative think tank in San Francisco:

"At the national level you're going to have an incredible number of interest groups fighting over the system, the teachers unions, and administrators organizations and various testing companies all fighting over this. . . . I think it's going to be less likely you're going to have a rigorous test we're all going to agree on. . . . I believe the federal government role in education should be secondary to state and local."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: Carol Jago PHOTO: Yvonne Chan on nationwide testing

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 1997



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in Dearborn. "It's like being with family."

The NAIA also provides services for the American-Indian community, including job training. Wanda Dockstader, 40, of Detroit completed the training program there and works as a school service assistant at Detroit's Medicine Bear American Indian Academy.

She moved to Detroit in 1966 after leaving an Oneida reservation in Ontario.

The mother of three, Dockstader teaches American-Indian crafts at Medicine Bear American Indian Academy, a public school centered on the cultures and traditions of American Indians.

"I earned my GED in 1988, and I plan to attend Wayne State University," she said. "I'd like to see all Native Americans get their education because, to me, that's the only way to fulfillment."

The South Eastern Michigan Indian center in Center Line is another gathering place for American Indians. The organization provides direct services for Macomb, Oakland and St. Clair counties, including a food distribution program

and job training among others.

Ragsdale, of the South Eastern Michigan Indians, said: "We are one of the most complex of all people because we come from over 500 tribes, but we simply want the same respect that everyone else wants."

Who is a Native American?

The definition of Native American keeps changing among tribes and government agencies.

For example:

* **U.S. Department of Education:** A person is a Native American if he or she belongs to a state or federally recognized tribe, including tribes terminated by the federal government after 1940. The agency also recognizes immediate descendants of those people, all Alaska natives, and some special cases.

* **U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs:** A Native American is someone recognized by one of the 510 federally recognized tribes, or who can document their link to people on tribal rolls or government records kept in the 1800s. Members of tribes the U.S. government tried to

disband are not eligible. To receive hiring preference, BIA employees must be a member of a federally recognized tribe or at least one-half Native American blood.

* **Michigan Indian tuition waiver:** People who are a quarter or more Native American and who have lived in Michigan for at least 12 months are eligible for the state college tuition waiver.

* **Tribes:** Each tribe has the sovereign right to determine membership. Most Michigan tribes require one-quarter blood except for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, which admits all descendants of tribal members, and the Hannahville Potawatomi Indian Community, which requires members to be at least half Native American. Caption: Allan Gabriel carries a sacred incense of sage, tobacco and grasses during a Native-American religious ceremony at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Lincoln Park. James Borchuck / The Detroit News■

COMMENTARY

The Wall Street Journal

05/01/97

Letters to the Editor: Standards Tests Minus The Fear and Loathing

Lynn Cheney's diatribe against voluntary national tests ("Whose National Standards?" editorial page, April 2) misstates the problem and the proposed solution. Ms. Cheney contends that the president's proposed tests — which will help gauge how American students are doing compared with each other and with other nations' students — will lead to a national curriculum dictated by often unorthodox learning styles. But defining the proposed test as something it is not does not make it so. An examination of this issue minus the fearful hyperbole reveals the soundness and significance of the president's proposal.

As President Clinton and Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley have stated, reading is reading and math is math, throughout the country. That is, the

expectations for reading and math are, or should be, the same everywhere. Researchers agree that by the fourth grade, when the reading test is to be given, all students should know how to read well, no matter how they learn to do it, or they will be at a significant risk for a lifetime of diminished success in school.

Contrary to Ms. Cheney's view, President Clinton's plan for a voluntary national test will not endorse any of the teaching methods she so fears — or for that matter any instructional method at all. We want states to challenge students to master basic and advanced academic skills, but it remains up to states, local school districts, and teachers to determine the best method to teach their students. What these tests, which states

are not required to use, will do is offer states, local communities, teachers and parents a yardstick by which to assess whether their students and children are mastering critical basic skills early enough to succeed.

The tests will be based both on the well-established and respected National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test, which has been a crucial and reliable national indicator of student achievement for many years and is used by more than 43 states, and on the widely accepted Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), used by the U.S. and many other nations.

Marshall S. Smith

Acting Deputy Secretary
Department of Education
Washington■

LEVEL 1 - 41 OF 264 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Investor's Business Daily, Inc.
Investor's Business Daily

April 17, 1997

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. A28

LENGTH: 587 words

HEADLINE: 3;nr32;va-15> Will The White House Pass The Standards Test?

BODY:

Of President Clinton's 10 ideas to improve the schools, one holds real promise: his call for national standards and testing. But the wrong standards would be worse than none at all.

The president's plan would let each U.S. fourth-grader take a national reading test and every eighth-grader a math exam. Parents could then compare their children's scores to those of the district, state and nation.

Any data would be an improvement. As things now stand, parents, teachers and principals have no good way to compare student performance. We have only a handful of measures: the Scholastic Assessment Test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the odd international exam.

None is even close to universal, and few schools use them to evaluate their own performance, let alone students. And the NAEP has only broken down its results by state in the last few years.

Why does testing matter? It lets education "consumers" and "providers" know how their service stacks up. That's the best way to spur improvement.

Take California. In '92, the NAEP let the Golden State know it had tied Louisiana for last place in fourth-grade reading. Shocked, parents and concerned citizens forced the state to abandon "whole language" - an inferior way to teach reading that "experts" had inflicted on California a decade before.

Most parents respect teachers, often rightly so. But teachers have little control (or responsibility or accountability) in today's schools. Bureaucrats and unions set the real priorities, and those don't include letting any "consumer" be king. At best, they promise to do better if offered more money - while fighting the search for ways to do more with less.

A touch of education glasnost can wake parents up to the bitter truth. The slight rise in testing over the past 15 years has put the schools' poor showing in the spotlight - and helped fuel today's drive for reform.

But not all tests are equal. The education "blob" is happy to offer mush under the label of real tests. The Golden State establishment, for one, sunk millions into setting up the California Learning Assessment System. But the



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'state-of-the-art' result was useless psychobabble. It set out to probe student feelings and beliefs, not their skills or knowledge.

The establishment can mess up efforts to raise standards, too. The first set of national history standards, released in '94, made so much room for 'alternative' views that the result was blatantly anti-Western, even anti-American.

One more danger: If the 'blob' produces standards that are too low, they could become a ceiling beyond which few schools aim. Clinton's plan would avoid that by basing his tests on the NAEP's.

The president seems to truly care about education. He said the right things to the Democratic Leadership Council in December: 'We must dramatically reform our public schools, demanding high standards and accountability from every teacher and every student, promoting reforms like public choice, school choice and charter schools in every state.'

But will he fight for what he knows is right? His testing plan already falls short of President Bush's call for 15 national tests.

Yes, a more modest plan has a better chance of becoming law. But if Clinton waters it down much more, we'll have the politically correct history standards, or California's psychobabble testing, all over again.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 1997



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Copyright 1997 The Cincinnati Enquirer
The Cincinnati Enquirer

April 5, 1997, Saturday, KENTUCKY EDITION

SECTION: METRO, Pg. B1B

LENGTH: 777 words

HEADLINE: Education chief backs Clinton's test plan
State might help develop national exam

BYLINE: GIL LAWSON

SOURCE: The Courier-Journal

DATELINE: FRANKFORT, Ky.

BODY:

Education Commissioner Bill Cody would like fourth- and eighth-grade students in Kentucky to take a national reading and mathematics test proposed by President Clinton.

The test, which has not been developed yet, would consist of a reading test for fourth-graders and a math test for eighth-graders.

Mr. Cody said Kentucky could include the national test in the state-sponsored tests given annually to determine whether schools are meeting their goals. Parents want to make comparisons with other states, he said, and using the national test might save the state money, because the federal government would pay for the test the first year.

Four states - Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and California have already volunteered to participate in the test, which will start in 1999.

Mr. Cody said Wednesday that he wants to speak to members of the state Board of Education before making a commitment. He said the state Department of Education is also interested in helping develop the national test.

Mr. Clinton has said the test would be tied to accepted standards and would help parents and teachers see whether students were learning.

The test would last about 90 minutes and would provide individual scores. It would have multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions requiring a written response.

Some critics at the national level, including the National Center for Fair & Open Testing, a non-profit group based in Cambridge, Mass., have questioned whether more testing would help improve schools and are concerned that teachers will "teach the test" while ignoring other subjects.

But several Kentucky education groups expressed support for the test, with



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some reservations about the additional time it would take away from classroom instruction.

Ann Walls, a fourth-grade teacher at Cochran Elementary in Louisville, said that she didn't want more time devoted to testing but that parents "are looking for some standard kind of measure" to make comparisons.

Mr. Cody said that if the test were used, it could eventually replace portions of the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System test, known as KIRIS, which is given each spring and is used to decide whether schools qualify for cash rewards or need state assistance. Substituting the new test for portions of KIRIS would mean that no extra time would be needed for testing, he said.

States would pick up the cost of the test after the first year. But Mr. Cody said there could be some savings if the cost is less than what the state now pays a private contractor to develop KIRIS.

He said the national test could also replace a standardized test that the state requires students to take in the ninth grade, the sixth grade and the last year of primary, formerly the third grade. The standardized test, just started this school year, can be used to make national comparisons, but results from this test aren't part of the KIRIS results and won't be used for accountability purposes.

Another change this school year spreads the KIRIS test over more grades so the time spent on testing will be reduced. In the past, students in the fourth, eighth and 11th grades were given tests, but this year grades five and seven will be added and the different academic subjects will be divided among the grades. This will reduce testing time from 14 hours to seven hours except in the 11th grade. KIRIS tests reading in the fourth grade and mathematics in the eighth grade.

Some states, including Kentucky, also participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. But that tests only a sampling of students and doesn't provide individual scores.

Earl Stivers, an eighth-grade mathematics teacher at Beaumont Middle School in Fayette County, said he thought the proposal was a good idea, as long as it didn't require more time being devoted to testing.

"I think parents are interested in how we compare" to the rest of the country, he said.

Mr. Stivers also said a national test could help textbook publishers because there would be consistent standards instead of different ones in each state.

Sen. David Karem, the Democratic floor leader from Louisville who is co-chair of a task force examining the Kentucky Education Reform Act, said the new test would be helpful if it brought "greater credibility" to the KIRIS test, which has been the target of critics who say it's not an accurate measure.

Sen. Dan Kelly, the Republican leader from Springfield, said he agreed with Mr. Cody's goals of saving money and having a national comparison but wants to make sure the test is reliable and valid - the same questions he has about



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Copyright 1997 The Courier-Journal
The Courier-Journal

April 4, 1997, Friday KY:KENTUCKY

SECTION: NEWS Pg.01B

LENGTH: 947 words

HEADLINE: Students may take new national test
Parents could compare results with other states

BYLINE: GIL LAWSON, The Courier-Journal

SOURCE: STAFF

DATELINE: FRANKFORT, Ky.

BODY:

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Four states - Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and California - have already volunteered to participate in the test, which will start in 1999.

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Clinton has said the test would be tied to accepted standards and would help parents and teachers see whether students were learning.

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Some critics at the national level, including the National Center for Fair & Open Testing, a non-profit group based in Cambridge, Mass., have questioned whether more testing would help improve schools and are concerned that teachers will "teach the test" while ignoring other subjects.

But several Kentucky education groups expressed support for the test, with



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The Daily News of Los Angeles

April 3, 1997, Thursday, VALLEY EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. N14

LENGTH: 405 words

HEADLINE: STATE SCHOOL OFFICIALS, EXECUTIVES BACK TESTING STANDARDS

BYLINE: Scripps-McClatchy Western Service

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

California's top public schools official and dozens of the state's high-tech executives Wednesday endorsed President Clinton's proposal for a national, voluntary testing standard for students.

State Superintendent of Public Schools Delaine Eastin joined Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and several Californians in lauding a national academic benchmark that they asserted would lead to better educated schoolchildren.

California follows Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina in backing the proposal.

"With California's endorsement, states and school systems that educate nearly 20 percent of America's schoolchildren are now on the road to measuring their students against those standards," Clinton said during a 45-minute round-table discussion in the White House.

"We need high national standards," Eastin said, "just as we need many other national goals. Then we can measure progress. Then we can prove to parents we're getting the job done and prove to the general public that public education is still America's highest-yielding investment."

The president's proposal would implement a set of performance standards and tests that would examine the reading skills of fourth-graders and the math knowledge of eighth-graders.

While Clinton characterized his efforts on behalf of national testing as a "crusade," his is a voluntary program that states and local school districts need not adopt.

Mandatory testing is controversial within education circles and likely would generate opposition from Republicans in Congress. Some in the GOP, though, have embraced the voluntary plan. Clinton addressed the Michigan Legislature last month as the guest of GOP Gov. John Engler, who supports it.

Watching the East Room discussion were two dozen executives of high-tech firms, including many headquartered in California, who back the president's



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testing proposal.

"It's the biggest, broadest bipartisan endorsement ever from the high technology industry," said John Doerr, a partner in the venture capital firm of Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers. "We all agree that we need national education standards."

Among the 200 high-tech executives nationwide who support the proposal are Jim Barksdale, chief executive officer and president of Netscape Communications; Gilbert Amelio, chief executive officer and chairman of Apple Computer, and Steve Case, chairman and president of America Online.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 4, 1997



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THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

April 3, 1997 Thursday, Final Chaser

SECTION: FRONT; Pg. A10

LENGTH: 326 words

HEADLINE: HIGH-TECH FIRMS BACK CALL FOR NATIONAL STUDENT TESTING

BYLINE: Knight-Ridder Newspapers

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

The chiefs of more than 200 major technological companies pledged Wednesday to use their clout to push educators to adopt voluntary national tests aimed at building a stronger educational system.

The executives, who gathered in Washington on Wednesday to endorse President Clinton's proposal to establish national testing standards for fourth- and eighth-graders, said U.S. schools are failing to provide enough skilled workers to fill thousands of high-tech jobs.

Without skilled workers, they warned, American leadership in technology and the economic growth that it brings is threatened.

"We are striving for what you would call in manufacturing a zero-defect result," Clinton said in a White House meeting with the technology executives.

The president said national standards should "guarantee that 100 percent of the children" graduate from high school with the skills required to go to college and train for high-wage jobs in places like northern California's Silicon Valley, one of the most economically vibrant regions of the country.

The high-tech endorsement lends weight to the idea of national standards to boost educational performance, a cornerstone in Clinton's second-term agenda.

It is also a political touchstone for Vice President Al Gore, whom most observers expect to run for president in 2000 - and who will need to court California and its high-tech industry in the process.

The difficulty in filling the jobs, according to high-tech companies, is that schools are not teaching enough children the proper skills in reading, math, science, engineering or computer programming to allow them to work in computer or biotechnology jobs.

"People in the high-tech sector bang their heads against each other trying to hire enough people," said Marc Andreessen, co-founder of Netscape Communications in Mountain View, Calif. "There's a whole series of things that have to happen to improve education. This is just a start."

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HIGH-TECH FIRMS BACK NATIONAL SCHOOL TESTS; BUSINESS LEADERS VOW TO PUSH CLINTON PLAN

By Knight-Ridder/Tribune.

The chiefs of more than 200 major technological companies pledged Wednesday to use their clout to push educators to adopt voluntary national tests aimed at building a stronger educational system.

The executives, who gathered in Washington on Wednesday to endorse President Clinton's proposal to establish national testing standards for 4th graders and 8th graders, said U.S. schools are failing to provide enough skilled workers to fill thousands of high-tech jobs.

Without skilled workers, they warned, American leadership in technology and the economic growth that it brings is threatened.

"We are striving for what you would call in manufacturing a zero-defect result," Clinton said in a White House meeting with the technology executives.

The president said national standards should "guarantee that 100 percent of the children" graduate from high school with the skills required to go to college and train for high-wage jobs in places like Northern California's Silicon Valley, one of the most economically vibrant regions of the country.

The high-tech endorsement lends weight to the idea of national standards to boost educational performance, a cornerstone in Clinton's second-term agenda.

Education is a subject of vital interest to the executives, whose high-tech

companies are forced to look overseas for programmers and whose assembly line workers must understand statistics.

"What this is really about is about the new economy and what our kids, our companies, and society has got to do to compete and prosper," said John Doerr, a venture capitalist.

"We all agree that we need national education standards. These companies that have endorsed this program today employ a half-million people. More importantly, they've created 130,000 jobs over the last four years. And even more importantly than that, they have hundreds to thousands of high-wage job openings right now that they're trying to fill."

The difficulty in filling the jobs, according to high-tech companies, is that schools are not teaching enough children the proper skills in reading, math, science, engineering or computer programming to allow them to work in computer or biotechnology jobs.

"People in the high-tech sector bang their heads against each other trying to hire enough people," said Marc Andreessen, co-founder of Netscape Communications in Mountain View, Calif. "There's a whole series of things that have to happen to improve education. This is just a start."

Delaine Eastin, California's superintendent of public instruction, also attended Wednesday's White House meeting and endorsed the national standards proposal.

She called the national standards vital to moving her state's schools forward and assuring parents that educators "can get the job done."

"Just because a kid gets an 'A' ... doesn't mean anything," she said. "I need (standards) to know how my kid measures up against kids in Connecticut and Kentucky."

If other California education officials echo Eastin's support—a course by no means certain—the state's 5.5 million public school students would join those in Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina, and those in U.S. military schools, in taking the tests beginning in 1999. While that's only four states, they contain about 20 percent of public school students.

In California, Republican Gov. Pete Wilson sounded a discordant note. "The bottom line is, she (Eastin) doesn't have the authority to set policy for the state of California," said Wilson spokesman Sean Walsh.

The tests would be designed by the U.S. Department of Education at a cost of \$10 million to \$12 million, paid out of existing research funds, said Education Secretary Richard Riley.

The administration also has pledged to absorb the costs of the first year of administering the tests, which Riley estimated at \$80 million to \$90 million. But that money must come from Congress in the 1999 budget. ■

MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE APR 03 1997

CEOs Join Clinton campaign for national school standards

AA President Clinton claimed new momentum in his push for national education standards and testing by enlisting 240 executives and a top California school official to lobby for the program. Clinton told a roundtable of parents, teachers and business leaders that the endorsements by Silicon Valley execs and Delaine Eastin, California's superintendent of public schools, amounted to "powerful new momentum to this crusade for national education standards."

Schools Chief, CEOs Back National Tests

Clinton Hails Endorsement as Sign of Widespread Support for Standards

By Rene Sanchez
Washington Post Staff Writer

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

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

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

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

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

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

While most other industrialized nations have strict national standards



BY SUEAN WALSH—ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRESIDENT CLINTON

... sees "powerful new momentum"

and tests for core academic subjects, standards and testing vary widely across the United States and are set largely by local school boards.

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

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

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

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

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For an overview of Clinton's proposed national testing standards, and transcripts of Education Department hearings on the proposal, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's Web site at www.washingtonpost.com

Clinton gets backing for national student testing

By TERENCE HUNT

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Clinton today won support from the nation's largest school system and 240 leaders of high-tech industries for his campaign for national testing standards for America's students.

Delaine Eastin, California's superintendent of public instruction, announced her backing for the president's initiative at a White House ceremony. White House officials consider her endorsement important because California has 5.5 million public school students.

"The people are behind you," Eastin told the president. "We'll work on this on a high priority basis ... to make this happen within the next couple of years."

"The most important thing of all is that we know whether we are learning what we need to know," Clinton said. "And that requires something America has put off doing for too long: the embracing of a genuine commitment to national standards of learning for our young people."

Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina already have committed themselves to Clinton's program, which envisions a national set of performance standards for fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math.

With California's participation, 20 percent of the nation's schoolchildren "will be enrolled in the type of testing regime the president has recommended that would bring high quality standards to our schools," presidential spokesman Mike McCurry said.

"Today, America's largest school system and leaders of its most forward-leaning high-tech industries have joined together to put California alongside Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and our military schools in the support of a national standards movement," the president said.

It was unclear whether Clinton's plan had bipartisan support from California's political establishment. McCurry said he did not know if Gov. Pete Wilson, a Republican, had expressed a view. Eastin, a Democrat, is elected statewide rather than appointed by the governor.

McCurry also said that leaders of high-tech industries based in California's Silicon Valley "are going to say that they, as an industry, are pledging their support for the president's initiative."

"Because that is a high job-creating sector of our economy, we believe that will be very significant," McCurry said. "The message will be loud and clear to states and legislatures that it's time to get with the program because one of our most important sectors, that will be hiring the graduates of the future, that these standards are necessary to produce the type of work force that they need to have available."

California Schools Chief Supports Nationwide Tests

By ELIZABETH SHOGREN
and RICHARD LEE COLVIN
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

WASHINGTON—Delaine Eastin, California's schools superintendent, committed herself Wednesday to securing the state's backing for President Clinton's proposal for national tests in reading for fourth-graders and math for eighth-graders.

"I believe we will in fact prevail," Eastin said after meeting with the president at the White House.

Although Clinton said California's schools were on board, Eastin's confident endorsement was more a battle cry than a guarantee that California schoolchildren will take the tests, which would be given for the first time in 1999.

A spokesman for Gov. Pete Wilson, a Republican, said the announcement was premature.

Dan Edwards said the governor favors the development of demanding academic standards and tests, but that it should be a state, not federal, responsibility.

"It's good for the president to use the bully pulpit to talk about high standards, but we're actually doing it in California," Edwards said, referring to a commission that is putting together grade-by-grade academic standards, due next fall, to be followed by statewide tests.

Clinton's initiative, unveiled in his State of the Union address two months ago, would for the first time give schoolchildren and their parents a national yardstick against which to measure performance. Now, states can measure performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, but districts and individual students cannot.

So far, Michigan, Maryland and North Carolina have endorsed the testing proposal, which is voluntary.

But before students in California see the tests, the State Board of Education—which is appointed

by Wilson—would have to vote for participation. And the Legislature would have to approve the cost of \$10 to \$12 per pupil for administering the tests after the

first year.

Eastin predicted that the board and the Legislature will approve the plan, but Wilson's office was skeptical. Even if the board and the Legislature were to reject the national tests, individual districts could decide to administer them to students.

"This is not about the political ideology of adults," Eastin said. "This is about the success of children in the next century."

Failing to provide students with tools needed to compare themselves with those across the country—and the world—would leave American children at a disadvantage in the increasingly competitive international workplace, Eastin said.

"In a global economy, after all, it is not unreasonable for parents to ask, how do their kids measure up compared to those in Germany or in Korea or anywhere else in the world," she said.

Clinton appeared eager to count the state as a supporter of his initiative. California's 5.5 million schoolchildren represent 11% of the nation's public school enrollment.

"Today, with California's endorsement, states and school systems that educate nearly 20% of America's schoolchildren are now on the road to measuring their students against those high standards," Clinton announced, perhaps prematurely. "If any state understands the challenges we face in the 21st century in the global economy and an Information Age, it is surely California, our gateway to much of the world and the home of many of the industries that will shape our future."

Also joining Clinton at the White House on Wednesday were representatives of California teachers unions, a parent from Pasadena, a reading teacher from Porterville and representatives of other state education groups.

To further bolster his program, Clinton invited representatives of the state's high-tech industries—many of whom gathered at a school in San Jose to participate in the White House event via satellite—to get on board.

"Finding enough educated employees is our greatest

challenge. It's an acute issue," said Marc Andreessen, co-founder and vice president of technology of Netscape Communications, one of 200 industry leaders who said they will help Clinton campaign for national standards and tests.

"It's hard to improve something if you can't measure it," Andreessen said. "If we tried to run a business like this [without standards and testing], we clearly would fail."

Andreessen and his colleagues said national tests would create the kind of competition needed to produce graduates qualified to hold the higher-wage jobs of the future.

"It will give parents a yardstick to judge their children's progress," said Kim Polese, CEO of Marimba, an applications technology company in Palo Alto.

But testing experts cautioned that the 90-minute tests would be too short to measure the range of skills needed to read well or attain mathematical competency. They also fear that the tests would overemphasize basic skills, causing teachers to put less time into lessons that require students to think critically or apply what they know.

Although the tests will be developed by private testing firms under contract with the U.S. Department of Education, they will be administered by states or individual school districts—or parents who choose to school their children at home.

More...

To deflect concerns that the testing program represents a federal intrusion into education, test scores will not be collected nationally. Instead, scores would be reported by states and local districts that administer the tests.

The purpose of the testing program is to create a check on the standards that have been set by 48 states, which administration officials said are far too low.

They also hope that the standards will spur changes in teacher training, textbooks and other areas. "The purpose is not to give a test, the purpose is to motivate changes to increase opportunities for kids," said Marshall Smith, acting deputy secretary of education. "The test is a lever to get there."

BOSTON GLOBE APR 04 1997

New Netday aims to increase classrooms linked to Internet

By James A. Duffy
GLOBE STAFF

The second of two Massachusetts NetDays, designed to bring the Internet into classrooms, will be held across the state tomorrow as more than 400 schools — 31 of them in Boston — are to be "hooked up" with computers.

A number of companies are contributing, including Lotus, Sun Microsystems and BankBoston, with perhaps the largest single donation, \$1 million, made by California-based SCom Corporation.

According to David Katz, worldwide education industry manager for SCom, \$700,000 will be spent on equipment for three Boston middle schools and 10 elementary schools, and \$300,000 for technical support.

NetDay started in Massachusetts last Oct. 26 as a way of supporting education reform, said Steven E. Miller, executive director of Mass. Networks Education Partnership, Inc. The event was modeled after a California effort, when President Clinton helped wire hundreds of schools in the state.

While Massachusetts supporters predicted 400 schools would go on line in October, only about 140 schools out of 1,500 statewide were hooked to the Internet that day. In an effort to meet the goal of 400, the nonprofit Mass. Networks planned the second NetDay for tomorrow.

"We stopped adding schools when we hit 430," Miller said. Mass. Networks has organized about 7,000 volunteers statewide to install and distribute between \$3 million and \$10 million in goods, services and technical support.

At Oliver Ames High School in Easton, volunteers plan to log on to the Internet from the school's library. At Memorial Elementary

School in the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District, volunteers will set up computers. And at Stoughton Middle School, volunteers will spend the day unpacking computers, tables and software.

Before October's NetDay, Massachusetts ranked second to last in the nation in networked classrooms, according to Mass. Networks. The group says the state has "significantly" improved since then, but could not give a ranking.

Training programs have also been set up today for both students and teachers. Tomorrow from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., the Museum of Science is sponsoring two seminars to introduce its technology integration program. Call 332-7350 to register. Internet workshops for teachers will be held in Brookline, Fall River, Lexington and Peabody from 10 a.m. to noon. Call 287-7204 for more information.

Pointing to Minn. Results, Officials Pitch National Test as Change Agent

By David J. Hoff

Washington

When Minnesota learned last week how its students compare with the rest of the world in math and science, the state's leaders started talking about what needs to change—from the state board room down to the classroom.

That's just the kind of discussion President Clinton hopes to spark with the national tests he is proposing in reading and math.

"A commitment to national standards is the best way we know to help local districts benchmark their own practices and to come up with ways that will help all the children achieve at a higher level," first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton said here last week at a round table discussion with members of the news media.

"We've hit a plateau in the standards movement," Marshall S. Smith, the acting deputy education secretary, added at the briefing intended to publicize Mr. Clinton's testing plan.

"States are not, in many cases, adopting really rigorous standards. ... These [national] tests are seen as a wake-up call, putting high-octane gasoline into the engine of the school reform movement," he said.

In Minnesota, school leaders and standards advocates received that jolt last week when a nonprofit organization that had paid to have students tested released the state's scores on a version of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, known as TIMSS.

The results showed that Minnesota's 8th graders ranked higher in science achievement than all but five of the 41 nations that took the test. In math, however, the state's achievement fell to the middle of the pack.

"What we have on the science side is incredible focus," said Bill Linder-Scholer, the executive director of SciMathMN, the nonprofit that paid \$380,000 for the TIMSS testing of a sample group of 5,000 students in grades 3, 4, 7, 8, and 12. Results

released last week were from the 2,000 8th graders who took the test.

"If we're really focused on what we're teaching, we really get system performance," he said.

Making Changes

But the state does not dedicate the same attention to math, Mr. Linder-Scholer said. Low-achieving students are often tracked out of higher-level courses such as algebra and geometry, he said, and teachers don't follow a standardized curriculum that emphasizes hands-on learning and problem-solving.

And even though the state has adopted standards in math and a test students must pass to earn a diploma, the TIMSS results show that neither the standards nor the test are challenging enough to stand up to international competition, Mr. Linder-Scholer said.

SciMathMN—a coalition of government agencies, businesses, and school officials—is recommending that the state push all students to learn algebra and geometry by the 8th grade and that the graduation test include open-ended questions in those subjects rather than its current reliance on multiple-choice questions.

The group also says the state should ensure that teachers are prepared to teach to a higher standard.

These are the types of changes that Clinton administration officials expect all states to start making if they choose to participate in the program that is to begin in 1999. President Clinton has been pushing national standards and testing as part of his 10-point education plan.

Setting a Benchmark

The new tests would be offered to 4th graders in reading and 8th graders in math and would yield individual results—not just statewide averages, such as the ones Minnesota received from the TIMSS project last week.

"It is not an attempt to micromanage what goes on in the classrooms of America, but instead to

set a national benchmark against which local districts can measure themselves," Mrs. Clinton said last week.

And because every student would receive scores on the tests, parents could use the results to demand improved services for their children.

"This will be the first time that parents, particularly in urban areas, will have honest, accurate information about how well their kids are doing," Michael Cohen, the president's education adviser, said at the briefing. "It ought to empower parents to call for and mobilize for education reforms in ways that have been more difficult for them to do now."

Last week, North Carolina signed up to participate, joining Maryland and Michigan in making commitments to the voluntary national tests, which have not yet been written. Another eight to 10 "have expressed a serious interest" in taking part, Mr. Cohen said.

Minnesota will have a head start when it comes to its students' science and math skills. The United States participated in the international testing effort, but only Minnesota, Colorado, and Illinois paid the consortium to test a sample size large enough to compare how their students achieve compared with children in other countries.

Minnesota's students achieved higher than the national average in both tests, much as they do on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and college-entrance exams. But by doing better in science than in math, they reflected the national results.

Twenty Illinois school districts also took the TIMSS test, and scored higher in science than in math.

"It was important to get a snapshot of where Minnesota is in terms of the rest of the world," Mr. Linder-Scholer said. "In the past, there was no way to say how we were doing as a state, except in very rough form."

TESTING OUR KIDS

While the Clinton administration pushes for national exams and standards, education experts debate the merits of his proposal

Challenges help students learn more

By Richard W. Riley
Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

PJ

Americans have turned with renewed vigor and interest to education as a means to build a stronger and more enriching future. Poll after poll demonstrates that students, teachers and parents all want an education that makes a difference, that challenges students to learn and better prepares them for future success.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The tests would be comparable to the widely accepted National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading and math tests, used by more than 40 states, and the math component of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). The existing tests are not sufficient, because they are intended only to be given to samples of students to calculate national averages. The new tests will be designed to evaluate individual students and, when used in a comprehensive crusade for educational excellence, will help improve teaching, learning and student achievement. This is precisely the type of initiative that the department ought to be pursuing in the Fund for Improvement of Education and we will continue to consult with the Congress and state officials as we go forward.

More..

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

reading, and math is math, whether we are in Dallas, Duluth or Des Moines.

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

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

according to the recent TIMSS test.

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

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

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

Goodling endorses reading, math tests

They must be voluntary, he cautions

By Susan Ferrechio
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The reading test would be mo-

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

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

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

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

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

Single Education Standard? States Are All Over the Map

By Scott Baldauf

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

SETTING standards for what a fifth-grader should know in mathematics might seem fairly elementary. But somehow, no two states seem to do it alike.

In Virginia, for example, students must be able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers. In Alaska, where standards are less specific, they must "use mathematics with confidence."

To end this type of disparity, President Clinton is urging all 50 states to adopt one rigorous set of academic standards for math, English, history, and science. He argues that nothing less than America's ability to compete in the global marketplace depends on it — a theme he tested yesterday on the Michigan legislature and the state's reform-minded Republican governor.

National standards are at the core of the most ambitious White House initiative to improve American education in a generation. But to achieve that goal, the president will have to win over a critical mass of state and local officials — many of whom believe that deciding what children should learn is their responsibility, and not the federal government's.

Still, support for the idea seems to be broadening. Already, pressure from parents and business leaders has moved many states to establish or revise academic standards.

"The movement to standards is primarily an economic issue,"

says Michael Kirst, education professor at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. "The big changes in education always come from outside, like Sputnik, the Vietnam War, ... That's what causes the system to move."

"In the 1980s, after the recession, Toyota replaced Sputnik," he adds. "That led to the idea that we can no longer afford local standards in an international market."

Business leaders say today's schools produce future employees who have never learned to read, write, or perform basic math. Many parents who have moved from job to job and state to state complain that their children are repeating some lessons and skipping others altogether.

For education reformers, Virginia has become the model for other states to emulate in the standards movement. "Virginia has probably done the best job so far of writing academic standards that are rigorous, specific, and clear enough to use in the classroom," says Heidi Gordon, a pol-

**'Virginia has ...
done the best job
so far of writing
standards....'**

— Heidi Gordon

icy analyst with the American Federation of Teachers in Washington. "The best standards draw a balance between content and skills, what you need to know and what you should be able to do."

In other states, standards vary from the specific to the vague. In Missouri, 11th-grade history students must "acquire a solid foundation which includes knowledge of: continuity and change in the history of Missouri, the United States, and the world." Their counterparts in Oregon, meanwhile,

will "demonstrate the ability to think critically, creatively, and reflectively in making decisions and solving problems."

Some educators say this disparity in standards puts students in some states at a disadvantage. "Look at California," says Mr. Kirst. "There was an uproar over the low scores in reading and math. This is a state with the sixth largest economy in the world, and we're tied with Louisiana, and ahead of only Guam and the District of Columbia. There's something ... wrong with that."

But a small group of states-rights advocates and conservatives say the push for national standards is misguided, at best.

"I'm philosophically opposed to a top-down approach," says John Fonte, a senior fellow at the Alexis de Toqueville Institute in Alexandria, Va. Many states may object to "political correctness" in history or English lessons, he says, or an emphasis on global warming in science.

"I prefer a competitive process rather than a collaborative one," he adds. "If 50 states set their own standards, some may get it wrong, but others will have the chance to get it right."

Some long-time supporters of the academic-standards movement say that the goal of higher achievement is still far off. Many states have had standards for a long time, they point out, but that has not stopped a general erosion in educational excellence.

"People say they want high standards," says John Silber, chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Education. "People also say they want to lose weight, but they don't."

To Dr. Silber, America's 19th-century curriculum, in which students had four years of math, science, and English, are most worth emulating. "That was a rigorous curriculum. It's just that we got to the point where we thought everything should be fun. Well, it can't all be fun."

Other educators warn that any push for high academic standards will be meaningless unless states test their students.

"Not one state has both high standards and high stakes, with real consequences for students and school personnel," says Edwin Delattre, dean of Boston University's school of education.

While some experts worry the standards movement will be watered down, others say parents will push states for improvement.

"You may have what you feel are strong standards," says Ms. Gordon, "but if parents can't understand them or don't like them, you'll be shot out the window."

LEVEL 1 - 102 OF 264 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Southeastern Newspapers Corporation
The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN)

March 2, 1997, SUNDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: VIEWPOINT, Pg. B3

LENGTH: 886 words

HEADLINE: NATIONAL TESTING IS NEEDED

BYLINE: Chester E. Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch; Chester E. Finn Jr. is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute; Diane Ravitch is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. They wrote; this for The Washington Post.

BODY:

PRESIDENT Clinton's proposal for national testing makes sense. As former assistant secretaries of Education in the Reagan and Bush administrations, we urge Congress to support it.

When George Bush and Lamar Alexander suggested something similar, which they called American Achievement Tests, congressional Democrats scoffed, and no such bill was ever introduced.

And in 1992, when a bipartisan panel called the National Council on Education Standards and Testing recommended a form of national testing, a convoluted scheme that involved different tests based on common standards, the idea was ignored by congressional leaders and attacked by prominent educators.

Still, it was a good idea then, and it's a good one now.

In fact, Clinton's version of national testing is better than Bush's in these important respects: It doesn't require any new standards or tests to be devised, and it does not hinge on dubious efforts to attach multiple tests to uniform (nonexistent) standards.

The administration has figured out that the nation already has two excellent tests that measure student achievement in reading and math, the most basic of basic skills. Accordingly, the President has proposed that states and school districts be permitted to use a respected national test for fourth-grade reading and an equally admirable international test for eighth-grade mathematics.

Nobody is obliged to use these tests. The federal government will pay for the first round of testing, and after that it's up to states and districts.

They can, however, embed the national tests into their own testing programs, which virtually every jurisdiction has, and commercial publishers would be licensed to offer them, a welcome form of 'outsourcing' that would hold down costs, bureaucracy and allegations of unfair government competition.

Most important, they're good tests, incorporating standards far more rigorous



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Consider how powerful it will be for parents and teachers to compare the **math** prowess of their **eighth-graders** in, say, Phoenix or Minneapolis, to the performance of their peers in Korea and the Czech Republic. Consider the impact of parents in Denver or Boston actually seeing how well their **fourth-graders** read in relation to a national standard of proficiency.

According to every major poll, an overwhelming majority of the American people want national standards and **tests**. Until now, there has been no way for parents or public officials to get good information about how students are doing.

Instead, they've been stuck with college entrance **tests** that are not representative of the full population and that, in any case, aren't even administered until the end of high school. Or they have had to settle for "standardized" **tests** that yield spurious results about youngsters being "at or above grade level," even though "grade level" is simply a statistical average, not a true standard.

Only with such information in hand can parents make wise choices among schools; can parents and legislators appraise how well their school systems are doing; can teachers and principals determine how effective their efforts are, and take corrective action where needed.

To those worried about "local control," we say that these **tests** are a yardstick, not a harness. They give the federal government no new powers. The **test** results, in fact, will actually enhance local control by empowering consumers, policymakers and professionals to know what actions need to be taken locally to improve education.

So important is national **testing** that it must be safeguarded from politicization, a temptation sure to arise if the student results are as bleak as everyone expects.

To prevent this possibility, responsibility for national **testing** should be removed from the federal Education Department (and congressional committees) and placed under the control of an independent, nonpartisan body. Such an entity, called the National Assessment Governing Board, already exists.

The White House's current plan to give control of national **testing** to the Department of Education would, we think, be a big mistake.



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IF CLINTON will agree to turn the program for national testing into an autonomous agency, akin to the National Science Foundation (where the National Science Board sets policy) or the National Transportation Safety Board, then Congress should endorse this part of his education package. This proposal deserves their support.

Once upon a time it was even a Republican idea. Now it is a good American idea.

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Roanoke Times & World News

February 27, 1997, THURSDAY, METRO EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. A11

LENGTH: 911 words

HEADLINE: TEST AMERICA'S STUDENTS

BYLINE: CHESTER E. FINN JR. and DIANE RAVITCH

BODY:

PRESIDENT Clinton's proposal for national testing makes sense. As former assistant secretaries of the Department of Education in the Reagan and Bush administrations, we urge Congress to support it.

When George Bush and Lamar Alexander suggested something similar, which they called American Achievement Tests, congressional Democrats scoffed, and no such bill was ever introduced.

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They can, however, embed the national tests into their own testing programs, which virtually every jurisdiction has, and commercial publishers would be licensed to offer them, a welcome form of "outsourcing" that would hold down costs, bureaucracy and allegations of unfair government competition.

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So important is national **testing** that it must be safeguarded from politicization, a temptation sure to arise if the student results are as bleak as everyone expects.

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Chester E. Finn Jr. is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute; Diane Ravitch is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

- The Washington Post

LOAD-DATE: February 28, 1997



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Copyright 1997 McClatchy Newspapers, Inc.
Sacramento Bee

February 28, 1997, METRO FINAL

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B7

LENGTH: 1374 words

HEADLINE: AMERICA NEEDS A NATIONAL PROGRAM OF STUDENT TESTING

BYLINE: Chester E. Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch

BODY:

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Sacramento Bee, February 28, 1997

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GRAPHIC: BRINTON/Special to The Bee

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 1, 1997

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The Atlanta Journal and Constitution

February 19, 1997, Wednesday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: NATIONAL NEWS; Pg. 03A

LENGTH: 378 words

HEADLINE: 'Our national mission';
Education chief urges volunteer testing, tutors

BYLINE: Doug Cumming; STAFF WRITER

BODY:

Echoing President Clinton's "call to action" on education two weeks ago, the U.S. secretary of education Tuesday invoked war-time images of school improvement as "our great patriotic cause, our national mission."

Richard Riley, at the Carter Center in Atlanta for his fourth annual State of American Education address, said the time is right to focus attention on teaching the nation's youth, because "our country is prosperous and at peace." And, he noted, Democrats and Republicans seem at relative peace for the first time in years on the issue of education.

Shying away from anything that hints of a national curriculum or federal standards, Riley pushed Clinton's plan to ask states to voluntarily accept national fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math tests to show whether students have mastered challenging material.

Based on sample testing from recent years, such tests, paid for by Washington the first year, probably would show that Georgia's students are doing worse today than the current standardized tests lead people to believe.

Gov. Zell Miller, who was praised again by Riley for the HOPE scholarship and prekindergarten programs, said he would support such national tests in Georgia.

Riley, pushing Clinton's crusade for a million volunteer reading tutors, announced that four religious denominations in Atlanta and Georgia will be marshaling volunteers for this effort. The 500 African Methodist Episcopal churches in Georgia, for example, would be used for after-school tutoring by church members.

Riley's 50-minute speech, introduced by former President Jimmy Carter, touted all 10 points of Clinton's 1997 education agenda, including \$ 5 billion in federal school-construction funds. He mentioned the fast-growing Gwinnett County school system as needing such aid.

Riley also won applause by talking tough on bad schools and burned-out teachers. Close down or reconstitute those schools, he said, and give those teachers "a fair chance to leave the profession."



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He criticized tax vouchers for private schools, which are being proposed in Congress and in the Georgia Legislature, but praised charter schools and other innovations within the public system.

Riley will visit Atlanta's Inman Middle School today.

GRAPHIC: Color photo and teaser box: (appeared on A/01 with reference to A/03 story) Urging recommitment to educating youth, Education Secretary Richard Riley calls for construction funds and innovations in his State of American education address Tuesday at the Carter Center. / W.A.

BRIDGES JR. / Staff

Photo: Showing off photos of his latest grandchildren, Education Secretary Richard Riley opens his State of American Education address Tuesday at the Carter Center. / W.A. BRIDGES JR. / Staff

LOAD-DATE: February 20, 1997



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Copyright 1997 Gannett Company, Inc.
USA TODAY

February 17, 1997, Monday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: LIFE; Pg. 1D

LENGTH: 359 words

HEADLINE: Educators grade Clinton highly on school plans

BYLINE: Pat Ordozensky

DATELINE: ORLANDO, Fla.

BODY:

ORLANDO, Fla. -- President Clinton's plans to improve public schools are drawing praise from the nation's school administrators.

Educators applaud Clinton's efforts to focus attention on education, they like his idea of national tests and -- despite the federal government's minor role in school funding -- they think his initiatives can have an impact.

A poll of 673 educators at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention here shows:

-- 78% are pleased Clinton is moving education near the top of the national agenda with his State of the Union message and school reform proposals.

"The president is clearly recognizing the significance of education for the future of this country," says John O'Rourke of Pittsford, N.Y., national superintendent of the year.

-- 59% support Clinton's move toward voluntary tests of fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math.

-- 53% think his efforts will affect school improvement.

"Most of us think the president's initiatives are right on target," says Paul Houston, AASA executive director. "When he explained his support for national standards and tests, he made it clear that many children could suffer unless we are equally committed to helping children reach those standards and pass those tests."

Clinton's plea for national testing was brought to the AASA convention by Gerald Tirozzi, assistant secretary of education. He told school officials the feds will pay the first-year cost of administering the tests for all who volunteer.

"This will give you an opportunity," Tirozzi said, "to take

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USA TODAY, February 17, 1997

a snapshot of how your students are doing compared to the rest of the country."

The survey of convention-goers also shows:

-- 26% think higher standards are the top priority for improving schools; 21% say school funding is most important; 20% say the No. 1 need is better teacher training.

-- 57% say they would not require school uniforms even if their state laws permit it.

Of the 673 poll respondents, 370 are school superintendents. The rest are other administrators, principals and school board members.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Toward a national test

President Clinton's call for national testing to measure the reading and math skills of American schoolchildren, even if heeded by Congress, won't cure the well-documented ills of public education in this country. It could, however, enable parents and educators in the disparate states to better measure the progress of their students against those in other parts of the United States, and that could in turn drive the laggards to keep up. In an increasingly mobile society, in which students in California ought to know whether their math skills hold up against their peers in Connecticut and elsewhere, national standards and assessments make all kinds of sense.

That doesn't mean that this modest effort — which would only address reading skills of fourth-graders and the math abilities of eighth-graders, and in which states would only participate if they volunteered — won't be controversial. Some critics charge that a national test, with results for individual students, will unfairly stigmatize poor children in struggling districts by comparing them to their more successful counterparts in privileged neighborhoods. But ignorance of the stark disparities in opportunity and achievement between students of different means is surely no way to bring them closer together.

And past claims that national tests are a federal government attempt to wrest control of children's education from states and local school districts are already being revived, though the fact that any test would be voluntary seriously undercuts the argument. Thus it was no surprise that Clinton called the tests and the standards that will drive them "national" rather than "federal," a term that these days is considered an epithet in some circles.

By whatever name, the test would be formulated by a group of education leaders chosen by the Department of Education. They will base the test on the already established and reliable National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which are given to fourth- and eighth-graders every four years. Unlike those tests, which only inform states about the percentage of their students who read or do math above, at, or below grade level, the new national exams would be administered annually and would provide individual scores to all students, enabling school districts and parents to see where each child stands nationally.

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

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

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Copyright 1997 Gannett Company, Inc.
USA TODAY

February 6, 1997, Thursday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 256 words

HEADLINE: 83% back education testing

BYLINE: Dennis Kelly; Mimi Hall

BODY:

President Clinton's plan to test every fourth- and eighth-grader in reading and math has huge support, a USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll shows.

In the poll of 400 people Wednesday, 83% said they favored the idea and just 13% were opposed.

Clinton, in his State of the Union speech Tuesday, asked school districts to adopt national testing in 1999. The first year's cost would be paid by the federal government.

Clinton, meanwhile, traveled to Georgia Wednesday to ask for help in persuading Congress to approve \$ 51 billion in new education spending.

"I'm committed to doing my part. You must do yours," he said in a speech at Augusta State University.

He also said that he is not trying to undermine state control of education with national tests. "Algebra is the same in Georgia as it is in Utah."

Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition, said Wednesday a mandatory national standard "undermines local control of education."

Some educators favored the plan. Frank Newman of the Education Commission of the States, said tests now "are too infrequent and the results are not available quickly enough . . . to truly assess educational effectiveness."

But key Republicans looked at Clinton's \$ 51 billion price tag and said throwing money at problems is not the answer.

"Don't we have to look at what has already worked and what hasn't" before trying new programs? asked Chairman William Goodling, R-Pa., of the House education committee.

The poll's margin of error is 5 percentage points.



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USA TODAY, February 6, 1997

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 06, 1997



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Clinton proposes setting national standards for schools

By Dennis Kelly
USA TODAY

The national tests that President Clinton proposed Tuesday night would give states and local school districts a new yardstick to see how their students stack up against the rest of the country and the world.

Some observers said Tuesday they wanted to wait and see whether the test proposals would translate into an intrusion on local control.

But those same observers praised Clinton for using the bully pulpit to push tougher academic standards.

Clinton is proposing that states adopt newly developed, voluntary national tests for fourth-graders in reading and for eighth-graders in math. The tests would be administered beginning in 1999.

The reading test would be based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a federal

project that has used a random sample of U.S. students to gauge skills in math, reading and other subjects for 27 years.

The math test would be based on the Third International Mathematics

and Science Study (TIMSS), which tested 40,000 U.S. students against peers in 41 countries.

"This is actually one piece of the Clinton plan I like," says Chester Finn, senior fellow at the Hudson In-

stitute. "What's smart is he's using two well-regarded existing tests as the basis of this."

Other than NAEP, schools have little way of seeing how their students compare to those in other states. And few students take NAEP exams.

The Clinton administration also argues that the NAEP and TIMSS tests are based on some of the toughest standards around.

"I think on face value it sounds like a good thing, particularly when you're talking about a test as solid as NAEP," says Jeanne Allen, president of the Center for Education Reform, a conservative group that pushes for locally controlled reform. "But ... the devil is in the details."

Allen wants tough standards, but not ones generated by the federal government.

"I do not think the president is going to mandate these," says Anne Bryant, executive director of the Na-

tional School Boards Association. "I think it's something the president is holding out as something for us to strive for."

Clinton also renewed his call for making sure every student can read independently by third grade. He wants money to pay 30,000 reading specialists and coordinators to recruit and train 1 million tutors.

But Rep. William Goodling, R-Pa., chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, questions the need for more money. He says the nation has spent \$50 billion on Head Start and \$100 billion on Chapter 1, which gives federal aid to help with reading and math.

With literacy skills as low as they are, "we have to admit (the programs) didn't work," Goodling says. Instead, he says, the country needs to focus on family literacy and parenting skills so children have someone at home to help build their skills.

USA TODAY • WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1997 • A-3

Critics: College plan not aiding neediest

Critics of President Clinton's college aid proposal say it fails to help the neediest students.

Clinton wants:

► A \$300 boost in Pell Grants, to a \$3,000 maximum, and expanding eligibility to students who are financially independent.

► HOPE Scholarships of up to \$1,500 in a refundable tax credit. Students would be eligible for a second year if they earn at least a B average and stay off drugs.

► A tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for educational expenses.

But low-income families who pay little or no taxes wouldn't benefit from the deduction, says Larry Gladieux, executive director for policy analysis, The College Board. And the HOPE program is a tax credit, applied only against existing tax liability.

By Mary Beth Marklein

in Dearborn. "It's like being with family."

The NAIA also provides services for the American-Indian community, including job training. Wanda Dockstader, 40, of Detroit completed the training program there and works as a school service assistant at Detroit's Medicine Bear American Indian Academy.

She moved to Detroit in 1966 after leaving an Oneida reservation in Ontario.

The mother of three, Dockstader teaches American-Indian crafts at Medicine Bear American Indian Academy, a public school centered on the cultures and traditions of American Indians.

"I earned my GED in 1988, and I plan to attend Wayne State University," she said. "I'd like to see all Native Americans get their education because, to me, that's the only way to fulfillment."

The South Eastern Michigan Indian center in Center Line is another gathering place for American Indians. The organization provides direct services for Macomb, Oakland and St. Clair counties, including a food distribution program

and job training among others.

Ragsdale, of the South Eastern Michigan Indians, said: "We are one of the most complex of all people because we come from over 500 tribes, but we simply want the same respect that everyone else wants."

Who is a Native American?

The definition of Native American keeps changing among tribes and government agencies.

For example:

* **U.S. Department of Education:** A person is a Native American if he or she belongs to a state or federally recognized tribe, including tribes terminated by the federal government after 1940. The agency also recognizes immediate descendants of those people, all Alaska natives, and some special cases.

* **U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs:** A Native American is someone recognized by one of the 510 federally recognized tribes, or who can document their link to people on tribal rolls or government records kept in the 1800s. Members of tribes the U.S. government tried to

disband are not eligible. To receive hiring preference, BIA employees must be a member of a federally recognized tribe or at least one-half Native American blood.

* **Michigan Indian tuition waiver:** People who are a quarter or more Native American and who have lived in Michigan for at least 12 months are eligible for the state college tuition waiver.

* **Tribes:** Each tribe has the sovereign right to determine membership. Most Michigan tribes require one-quarter blood except for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, which admits all descendants of tribal members, and the Hannahville Potawatomi Indian Community, which requires members to be at least half Native American. Caption: Allan Gabriel carries a sacred incense of sage, tobacco and grasses during a Native-American religious ceremony at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Lincoln Park. James Borchuck / The Detroit News■

COMMENTARY

The Wall Street Journal

05/01/97

Letters to the Editor: Standards Tests Minus The Fear and Loathing

Lynn Cheney's diatribe against voluntary national tests ("Whose National Standards?" editorial page, April 2) misstates the problem and the proposed solution. Ms. Cheney contends that the president's proposed tests — which will help gauge how American students are doing compared with each other and with other nations' students — will lead to a national curriculum dictated by often unorthodox learning styles. But defining the proposed test as something it is not does not make it so. An examination of this issue minus the fearful hyperbole reveals the soundness and significance of the president's proposal.

As President Clinton and Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley have stated, reading is reading and math is math, throughout the country. That is, the

expectations for reading and math are, or should be, the same everywhere. Researchers agree that by the fourth grade, when the reading test is to be given, all students should know how to read well, no matter how they learn to do it, or they will be at a significant risk for a lifetime of diminished success in school.

Contrary to Ms. Cheney's view, President Clinton's plan for a voluntary national test will not endorse any of the teaching methods she so fears — or for that matter any instructional method at all. We want states to challenge students to master basic and advanced academic skills, but it remains up to states, local school districts, and teachers to determine the best method to teach their students. What these tests, which states

are not required to use, will do is offer states, local communities, teachers and parents a yardstick by which to assess whether their students and children are mastering critical basic skills early enough to succeed.

The tests will be based both on the well-established and respected National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test, which has been a crucial and reliable national indicator of student achievement for many years and is used by more than 43 states, and on the widely accepted Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), used by the U.S. and many other nations.

Marshall S. Smith
Acting Deputy Secretary
Department of Education
Washington■

LEVEL 1 - 41 OF 264 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Investor's Business Daily, Inc.
Investor's Business Daily

April 17, 1997

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. A28

LENGTH: 587 words

HEADLINE: 3;nr32;va-15> Will The White House Pass The Standards **Test**?

BODY:

Of President Clinton's 10 ideas to improve the schools, one holds real promise: his call for national standards and **testing**. But the wrong standards would be worse than none at all.

The president's plan would let each U.S. **fourth-grader** take a national **reading test** and every **eighth-grader** a **math** exam. Parents could then compare their children's scores to those of the district, state and nation.

Any data would be an improvement. As things now stand, parents, teachers and principals have no good way to compare student performance. We have only a handful of measures: the Scholastic Assessment **Test**, the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the odd international exam.

None is even close to universal, and few schools use them to evaluate their own performance, let alone students. And the NAEP has only broken down its results by state in the last few years.

Why does **testing** matter? It lets education "'consumers'" and "'providers'" know how their service stacks up. That's the best way to spur improvement.

Take California. In '92, the NAEP let the Golden State know it had tied Louisiana for last place in **fourth-grade reading**. Shocked, parents and concerned citizens forced the state to abandon "'whole language'" - an inferior way to teach **reading** that "'experts'" had inflicted on California a decade before.

Most parents respect teachers, often rightly so. But teachers have little control (or responsibility or accountability) in today's schools. Bureaucrats and unions set the real priorities, and those don't include letting any "'consumer'" be king. At best, they promise to do better if offered more money -while fighting the search for ways to do more with less.

A touch of education glasnost can wake parents up to the bitter truth. The slight rise in **testing** over the past 15 years has put the schools' poor showing in the spotlight - and helped fuel today's drive for reform.

But not all **tests** are equal. The education "'blob'" is happy to offer mush under the label of real **tests**. The Golden State establishment, for one, sunk millions into setting up the California Learning Assessment System. But the



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'state-of-the-art' result was useless psychobabble. It set out to probe student feelings and beliefs, not their skills or knowledge.

The establishment can mess up efforts to raise standards, too. The first set of national history standards, released in '94, made so much room for 'alternative' views that the result was blatantly anti-Western, even anti-American.

One more danger: If the 'blob' produces standards that are too low, they could become a ceiling beyond which few schools aim. Clinton's plan would avoid that by basing his tests on the NAEP's.

The president seems to truly care about education. He said the right things to the Democratic Leadership Council in December: 'We must dramatically reform our public schools, demanding high standards and accountability from every teacher and every student, promoting reforms like public choice, school choice and charter schools in every state.'

But will he fight for what he knows is right? His testing plan already falls short of President Bush's call for 15 national tests.

Yes, a more modest plan has a better chance of becoming law. But if Clinton waters it down much more, we'll have the politically correct history standards, or California's psychobabble testing, all over again.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 1997



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April 5, 1997, Saturday, KENTUCKY EDITION

SECTION: METRO, Pg. B1B

LENGTH: 777 words

HEADLINE: **Education** chief backs **Clinton's test** plan
State might help develop national exam

BYLINE: GIL LAWSON

SOURCE: The Courier-Journal

DATELINE: FRANKFORT, Ky.

BODY:

Education Commissioner Bill Cody would like **fourth- and eighth-grade** students in Kentucky to take a national **reading and mathematics test** proposed by President **Clinton**.

The **test**, which has not been developed yet, would consist of a **reading test** for **fourth-graders** and a **math test** for **eighth-graders**.

Mr. Cody said Kentucky could include the national **test** in the state-sponsored **tests** given annually to determine whether schools are meeting their goals. Parents want to make comparisons with other states, he said, and using the national **test** might save the state money, because the federal government would pay for the **test** the first year.

Four states - Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and California have already volunteered to participate in the **test**, which will start in 1999.

Mr. Cody said Wednesday that he wants to speak to members of the state Board of Education before making a commitment. He said the state Department of Education is also interested in helping develop the national **test**.

Mr. **Clinton** has said the **test** would be tied to accepted standards and would help parents and teachers see whether students were learning.

The **test** would last about 90 minutes and would provide individual scores. It would have multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions requiring a written response.

Some critics at the national level, including the National Center for Fair & Open **Testing**, a non-profit group based in Cambridge, Mass., have questioned whether more **testing** would help improve schools and are concerned that teachers will "teach the **test**" while ignoring other subjects.

But several Kentucky education groups expressed support for the **test**, with



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some reservations about the additional time it would take away from classroom instruction.

Ann Walls, a **fourth-grade** teacher at Cochran Elementary in Louisville, said that she didn't want more time devoted to **testing** but that parents "are looking for some standard kind of measure" to make comparisons.

Mr. Cody said that if the **test** were used, it could eventually replace portions of the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System **test**, known as KIRIS, which is given each spring and is used to decide whether schools qualify for cash rewards or need state assistance. Substituting the new **test** for portions of KIRIS would mean that no extra time would be needed for **testing**, he said.

States would pick up the cost of the **test** after the first year. But Mr. Cody said there could be some savings if the cost is less than what the state now pays a private contractor to develop KIRIS.

He said the national **test** could also replace a standardized **test** that the state requires students to take in the ninth **grade**, the sixth **grade** and the last year of primary, formerly the third **grade**. The standardized **test**, just started this school year, can be used to make national comparisons, but results from this **test** aren't part of the KIRIS results and won't be used for accountability purposes.

Another change this school year spreads the KIRIS **test** over more **grades** so the time spent on **testing** will be reduced. In the past, students in the **fourth**, **eighth** and 11th **grades** were given **tests**, but this year **grades** five and seven will be added and the different academic subjects will be divided among the **grades**. This will reduce **testing** time from 14 hours to seven hours except in the 11th **grade**. KIRIS **tests** reading in the **fourth grade** and mathematics in the **eighth grade**.

Some states, including Kentucky, also participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. But that **tests** only a sampling of students and doesn't provide individual scores.

Earl Stivers, an **eighth-grade** mathematics teacher at Beaumont Middle School in Fayette County, said he thought the proposal was a good idea, as long as it didn't require more time being devoted to **testing**.

"I think parents are interested in how we compare" to the rest of the country, he said.

Mr. Stivers also said a national **test** could help textbook publishers because there would be consistent standards instead of different ones in each state.

Sen. David Karem, the Democratic floor leader from Louisville who is co-chair of a task force examining the Kentucky Education Reform Act, said the new **test** would be helpful if it brought "greater credibility" to the KIRIS **test**, which has been the target of critics who say it's not an accurate measure.

Sen. Dan Kelly, the Republican leader from Springfield, said he agreed with Mr. Cody's goals of saving money and having a national comparison but wants to make sure the **test** is reliable and valid - the same questions he has about



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KIRIS.

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April 4, 1997, Friday KY:KENTUCKY

SECTION: NEWS Pg.01B

LENGTH: 947 words

HEADLINE: Students may take new national test
Parents could compare results with other states

BYLINE: GIL LAWSON, The Courier-Journal

SOURCE: STAFF

DATELINE: FRANKFORT, Ky.

BODY:

Education Commissioner Bill Cody would like **fourth- and eighth-grade** students in Kentucky to take a national **reading and mathematics test** proposed by President Clinton.

The test, which has not been developed yet, would consist of a **reading test** for **fourth-graders** and a **math test** for **eighth-graders**.

Cody said Kentucky could include the national test in the state-sponsored tests given annually to determine whether schools are meeting their goals. Parents want to make comparisons with other states, he said, and using the national test might save the state money, because the federal government would pay for the test the first year.

Four states - Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and California - have already volunteered to participate in the test, which will start in 1999.

Cody said Wednesday that he wants to speak to members of the state Board of Education before making a commitment. He said the state Department of Education is also interested in helping develop the national test.

Clinton has said the test would be tied to accepted standards and would help parents and teachers see whether students were learning.

The test would last about 90 minutes and would provide individual scores. It would have multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions requiring a written response.

Some critics at the national level, including the National Center for Fair & Open Testing, a non-profit group based in Cambridge, Mass., have questioned whether more testing would help improve schools and are concerned that teachers will "teach the test" while ignoring other subjects.

But several Kentucky education groups expressed support for the test, with



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some reservations about the additional time it would take away from classroom instruction.

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States would pick up the cost of the **test** after the first year. But Cody said there could be some savings if the cost is less than what the state now pays a private contractor to develop KIRIS.

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Sen. Dan Kelly, the Republican leader from Springfield, said he agreed with Cody's goals of saving money and having a national comparison but wants to make sure the **test** is reliable and valid - the same questions he has about KIRIS.

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The Daily News of Los Angeles

April 3, 1997, Thursday, VALLEY EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. N14

LENGTH: 405 words

HEADLINE: STATE SCHOOL OFFICIALS, EXECUTIVES BACK **TESTING** STANDARDS

BYLINE: Scripps-McClatchy Western Service

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

California's top public schools official and dozens of the state's high-tech executives Wednesday endorsed President **Clinton's** proposal for a national, voluntary **testing** standard for students.

State Superintendent of Public Schools Delaine Eastin joined **Clinton**, Vice President Al Gore and several Californians in lauding a national academic benchmark that they asserted would lead to better educated schoolchildren.

California follows Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina in backing the proposal.

"With California's endorsement, states and school systems that educate nearly 20 percent of America's schoolchildren are now on the road to measuring their students against those standards," **Clinton** said during a 45-minute round-table discussion in the White House.

"We need high national standards," Eastin said, "just as we need many other national goals. Then we can measure progress. Then we can prove to parents we're getting the job done and prove to the general public that public education is still America's highest-yielding investment."

The president's proposal would implement a set of performance standards and **tests** that would examine the **reading skills of fourth-graders and the math knowledge of eighth-graders**.

While **Clinton** characterized his efforts on behalf of national **testing** as a "crusade," his is a voluntary program that states and local school districts need not adopt.

Mandatory **testing** is controversial within education circles and likely would generate opposition from Republicans in Congress. Some in the GOP, though, have embraced the voluntary plan. **Clinton** addressed the Michigan Legislature last month as the guest of GOP Gov. John Engler, who supports it.

Watching the East Room discussion were two dozen executives of high-tech firms, including many headquartered in California, who back the president's



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testing proposal.

"It's the biggest, broadest bipartisan endorsement ever from the high technology industry," said John Doerr, a partner in the venture capital firm of Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers. "We all agree that we need national education standards."

Among the 200 high-tech executives nationwide who support the proposal are Jim Barksdale, chief executive officer and president of Netscape Communications; Gilbert Amelio, chief executive officer and chairman of Apple Computer, and Steve Case, chairman and president of America Online.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 4, 1997



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THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

April 3, 1997 Thursday, Final Chaser

SECTION: FRONT; Pg. A10

LENGTH: 326 words

HEADLINE: HIGH-TECH FIRMS BACK CALL FOR NATIONAL STUDENT TESTING

BYLINE: Knight-Ridder Newspapers

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

The chiefs of more than 200 major technological companies pledged Wednesday to use their clout to push educators to adopt voluntary national tests aimed at building a stronger educational system.

The executives, who gathered in Washington on Wednesday to endorse President Clinton's proposal to establish national testing standards for fourth- and eighth-graders, said U.S. schools are failing to provide enough skilled workers to fill thousands of high-tech jobs.

Without skilled workers, they warned, American leadership in technology and the economic growth that it brings is threatened.

"We are striving for what you would call in manufacturing a zero-defect result," Clinton said in a White House meeting with the technology executives.

The president said national standards should "guarantee that 100 percent of the children" graduate from high school with the skills required to go to college and train for high-wage jobs in places like northern California's Silicon Valley, one of the most economically vibrant regions of the country.

The high-tech endorsement lends weight to the idea of national standards to boost educational performance, a cornerstone in Clinton's second-term agenda.

It is also a political touchstone for Vice President Al Gore, whom most observers expect to run for president in 2000 - and who will need to court California and its high-tech industry in the process.

The difficulty in filling the jobs, according to high-tech companies, is that schools are not teaching enough children the proper skills in reading, math, science, engineering or computer programming to allow them to work in computer or biotechnology jobs.

"People in the high-tech sector bang their heads against each other trying to hire enough people," said Marc Andreessen, co-founder of Netscape Communications in Mountain View, Calif. "There's a whole series of things that have to happen to improve education. This is just a start."



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LOAD-DATE: April 6, 1997



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HIGH-TECH FIRMS BACK NATIONAL SCHOOL TESTS; BUSINESS LEADERS VOW TO PUSH CLINTON PLAN

By Knight-Ridder/Tribune.

The chiefs of more than 200 major technological companies pledged Wednesday to use their clout to push educators to adopt voluntary national tests aimed at building a stronger educational system.

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Education is a subject of vital interest to the executives, whose high-tech

companies are forced to look overseas for programmers and whose assembly line workers must understand statistics.

"What this is really about is about the new economy and what our kids, our companies, and society has got to do to compete and prosper," said John Doerr, a venture capitalist.

"We all agree that we need national education standards. These companies that have endorsed this program today employ a half-million people. More importantly, they've created 130,000 jobs over the last four years. And even more importantly than that, they have hundreds to thousands of high-wage job openings right now that they're trying to fill."

The difficulty in filling the jobs, according to high-tech companies, is that schools are not teaching enough children the proper skills in reading, math, science, engineering or computer programming to allow them to work in computer or biotechnology jobs.

"People in the high-tech sector bang their heads against each other trying to hire enough people," said Marc Andreessen, co-founder of Netscape Communications in Mountain View, Calif. "There's a whole series of things that have to happen to improve education. This is just a start."

Delaine Eastin, California's superintendent of public instruction, also attended Wednesday's White House meeting and endorsed the national standards proposal.

She called the national standards vital to moving her state's schools forward and assuring parents that educators "can get the job done."

"Just because a kid gets an 'A' ... doesn't mean anything," she said. "I need (standards) to know how my kid measures up against kids in Connecticut and Kentucky."

If other California education officials echo Eastin's support—a course by no means certain—the state's 5.5 million public school students would join those in Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina, and those in U.S. military schools, in taking the tests beginning in 1999. While that's only four states, they contain about 20 percent of public school students.

In California, Republican Gov. Pete Wilson sounded a discordant note. "The bottom line is, she (Eastin) doesn't have the authority to set policy for the state of California," said Wilson spokesman Sean Walsh.

The tests would be designed by the U.S. Department of Education at a cost of \$10 million to \$12 million, paid out of existing research funds, said Education Secretary Richard Riley.

The administration also has pledged to absorb the costs of the first year of administering the tests, which Riley estimated at \$80 million to \$90 million. But that money must come from Congress in the 1999 budget. ■

MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE APR 03 1997

CEOs join Clinton campaign for national school standards

AA President Clinton claimed new momentum in his push for national education standards and testing by enlisting 240 executives and a top California school official to lobby for the program. Clinton told an roundtable of parents, teachers and business leaders that the endorsements by Silicon Valley execs and Delaine Eastin, California's superintendent of public schools, amounted to "powerful new momentum to the crusade for national education standards."

Schools Chief, CEOs Back National Tests

Clinton Hails Endorsement as Sign of Widespread Support for Standards

By Rene Sanchez
Washington Post Staff Writer

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

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

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

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

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

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

While most other industrialized nations have strict national standards



BY SUSAN WALSH—ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRESIDENT CLINTON

... sees "powerful new momentum"

and tests for core academic subjects, standards and testing vary widely across the United States and are set largely by local school boards.

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

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

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

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

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For an overview of Clinton's proposed national testing standards, and transcripts of Education Department hearings on the proposal, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's Web site at www.washingtonpost.com

Clinton gets backing for national student testing

By TERENCE HUNT

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Clinton today won support from the nation's largest school system and 240 leaders of high-tech industries for his campaign for national testing standards for America's students.

Delaine Eastin, California's superintendent of public instruction, announced her backing for the president's initiative at a White House ceremony. White House officials consider her endorsement important because California has 5.5 million public school students.

"The people are behind you," Eastin told the president. "We'll work on this on a high priority basis ... to make this happen within the next couple of years."

"The most important thing of all is that we know whether we are learning what we need to know," Clinton said. "And that requires something America has put off doing for too long: the embracing of a genuine commitment to national standards of learning for our young people."

Maryland, Michigan and North Carolina already have committed themselves to Clinton's program, which envisions a national set of performance standards for fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math.

With California's participation, 20 percent of the nation's schoolchildren "will be enrolled in the type of testing regime the president has recommended that would bring high quality standards to our schools," presidential spokesman Mike McCurry said.

"Today, America's largest school system and leaders of its most forward-leaning high-tech industries have joined together to put California alongside Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina and our military schools in the support of a national standards movement," the president said.

It was unclear whether Clinton's plan had bipartisan support from California's political establishment. McCurry said he did not know if Gov. Pete Wilson, a Republican, had expressed a view. Eastin, a Democrat, is elected statewide rather than appointed by the governor.

McCurry also said that leaders of high-tech industries based in California's Silicon Valley "are going to say that they, as an industry, are pledging their support for the president's initiative."

"Because that is a high job-creating sector of our economy, we believe that will be very significant," McCurry said. "The message will be loud and clear to states and legislatures that it's time to get with the program because one of our most important sectors, that will be hiring the graduates of the future, that these standards are necessary to produce the type of work force that they need to have available."

California Schools Chief Supports Nationwide Tests

By ELIZABETH SHOGREN
and RICHARD LEE COLVIN
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

WASHINGTON—Delaine Eastin, California's schools superintendent, committed herself Wednesday to securing the state's backing for President Clinton's proposal for national tests in reading for fourth-graders and math for eighth-graders.

"I believe we will in fact prevail," Eastin said after meeting with the president at the White House.

Although Clinton said California's schools were on board, Eastin's confident endorsement was more a battle cry than a guarantee that California schoolchildren will take the tests, which would be given for the first time in 1999.

A spokesman for Gov. Pete Wilson, a Republican, said the announcement was premature.

Dan Edwards said the governor favors the development of demanding academic standards and tests, but that it should be a state, not federal, responsibility.

"It's good for the president to use the bully pulpit to talk about high standards, but we're actually doing it in California," Edwards said, referring to a commission that is putting together grade-by-grade academic standards, due next fall, to be followed by statewide tests.

Clinton's initiative, unveiled in his State of the Union address two months ago, would for the first time give schoolchildren and their parents a national yardstick against which to measure performance. Now, states can measure performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, but districts and individual students cannot.

So far, Michigan, Maryland and North Carolina have endorsed the testing proposal, which is voluntary.

But before students in California see the tests, the State Board of Education—which is appointed

by Wilson—would have to vote for participation. And the Legislature would have to approve the cost of \$10 to \$12 per pupil for administering the tests after the first year.

Eastin predicted that the board and the Legislature will approve the plan, but Wilson's office was skeptical. Even if the board and the Legislature were to reject the national tests, individual districts could decide to administer them to students.

"This is not about the political ideology of adults," Eastin said. "This is about the success of children in the next century."

Failing to provide students with tools needed to compare themselves with those across the country—and the world—would leave American children at a disadvantage in the increasingly competitive international workplace, Eastin said.

"In a global economy, after all, it is not unreasonable for parents to ask, how do their kids measure up compared to those in Germany or in Korea or anywhere else in the world," she said.

Clinton appeared eager to count the state as a supporter of his initiative. California's 5.5 million schoolchildren represent 11% of the nation's public school enrollment.

"Today, with California's endorsement, states and school systems that educate nearly 20% of America's schoolchildren are now on the road to measuring their students against those high standards," Clinton announced, perhaps prematurely. "If any state understands the challenges we face in the 21st century in the global economy and an Information Age, it is surely California, our gateway to much of the world and the home of many of the industries that will shape our future."

Also joining Clinton at the White House on Wednesday were representatives of California teachers unions, a parent from Pasadena, a reading teacher from Porterville and representatives of other state education groups.

To further bolster his program, Clinton invited representatives of the state's high-tech industries—many of whom gathered at a school in San Jose to participate in the White House event via satellite—to get on board.

"Finding enough educated employees is our greatest

challenge. It's an acute issue," said Marc Andreessen, co-founder and vice president of technology of Netscape Communications, one of 200 industry leaders who said they will help Clinton campaign for national standards and tests.

"It's hard to improve something if you can't measure it," Andreessen said. "If we tried to run a business like this [without standards and testing], we clearly would fail."

Andreessen and his colleagues said national tests would create the kind of competition needed to produce graduates qualified to hold the higher-wage jobs of the future.

"It will give parents a yardstick to judge their children's progress," said Kim Polese, CEO of Marimba, an applications technology company in Palo Alto.

But testing experts cautioned that the 90-minute tests would be too short to measure the range of skills needed to read well or attain mathematical competency. They also fear that the tests would overemphasize basic skills, causing teachers to put less time into lessons that require students to think critically or apply what they know.

Although the tests will be developed by private testing firms under contract with the U.S. Department of Education, they will be administered by states or individual school districts—or parents who choose to school their children at home.

More...

To deflect concerns that the testing program represents a federal intrusion into education, test scores will not be collected nationally. Instead, scores would be reported by states and local districts that administer the tests.

The purpose of the testing program is to create a check on the standards that have been set by 48 states, which administration officials said are far too low.

They also hope that the standards will spur changes in teacher training, textbooks and other areas. "The purpose is not to give a test, the purpose is to motivate changes to increase opportunities for kids," said Marshall Smith, acting deputy secretary of education. "The test is a lever to get there."

BOSTON GLOBE APR 04 1997

New Netday aims to increase classrooms linked to Internet

By James A. Duffy
GLOBE STAFF

The second of two Massachusetts NetDays, designed to bring the Internet into classrooms, will be held across the state tomorrow at more than 400 schools — 31 of them in Boston — are to be "hooked up" with computers.

A number of companies are contributing, including Lotus, Sun Microsystems and BankBoston, with perhaps the largest single donation, \$1 million, made by California-based 3Com Corporation.

According to David Katz, worldwide education industry manager for 3Com, \$700,000 will be spent on equipment for three Boston middle schools and 10 elementary schools, and \$300,000 for technical support.

NetDay started in Massachusetts last Oct. 28 as a way of supporting education reform, said Ste-

ven E. Miller, executive director of Mass. Networks Education Partnership, Inc. The event was modeled after a California effort, when President Clinton helped wire hundreds of schools in the state.

While Massachusetts supporters predicted 400 schools would go on line in October, only about 140 schools out of 1,500 statewide were hooked to the Internet that day. In an effort to meet the goal of 400, the nonprofit Mass. Networks planned the second NetDay for tomorrow.

"We stopped adding schools when we hit 430," Miller said.

Mass. Networks has organized about 7,000 volunteers statewide to install and distribute between \$8 million and \$10 million in goods, services and technical support.

At Oliver Ames High School in Easton, volunteers plan to log on to the Internet from the school's library. At Memorial Elementary

School in the Hampden-William Regional School District, volunteers will set up computers. And at Stoughton Middle School, volunteers will spend the day unpacking computers, tables and software.

Before October's NetDay, Massachusetts ranked second to last in the nation in networked classrooms, according to Mass. Networks. The group says the state has "significantly" improved since then, but could not give a ranking.

Training programs have also been set up today for both students and teachers. Tomorrow from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., the Museum of Science is sponsoring two seminars to introduce its technology integration program. Call 832-7850 to register. Internet workshops for teachers will be held in Brookline, Fall River, Lexington and Peabody from 10 a.m. to noon. Call 287-7204 for more information.

Pointing to Minn. Results, Officials Pitch National Test as Change Agent

By David J. Hoff

Washington

When Minnesota learned last week how its students compare with the rest of the world in math and science, the state's leaders started talking about what needs to change—from the state board room down to the classroom.

That's just the kind of discussion President Clinton hopes to spark with the national tests he is proposing in reading and math.

"A commitment to national standards is the best way we know to help local districts benchmark their own practices and to come up with ways that will help all the children achieve at a higher level," first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton said here last week at a round table discussion with members of the news media.

"We've hit a plateau in the standards movement," Marshall S. Smith, the acting deputy education secretary, added at the briefing intended to publicize Mr. Clinton's testing plan.

"States are not, in many cases, adopting really rigorous standards. ... These [national] tests are seen as a wake-up call, putting high-octane gasoline into the engine of the school reform movement," he said.

In Minnesota, school leaders and standards advocates received that jolt last week when a nonprofit organization that had paid to have students tested released the state's scores on a version of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, known as TIMSS.

The results showed that Minnesota's 8th graders ranked higher in science achievement than all but five of the 41 nations that took the test. In math, however, the state's achievement fell to the middle of the pack.

"What we have on the science side is incredible focus," said Bill Linder-Scholer, the executive director of SciMathMN, the nonprofit that paid \$380,000 for the TIMSS testing of a sample group of 5,000 students in grades 3, 4, 7, 8, and 12. Results

released last week were from the 2,000 8th graders who took the test.

"If we're really focused on what we're teaching, we really get system performance," he said.

Making Changes

But the state does not dedicate the same attention to math, Mr. Linder-Scholer said. Low-achieving students are often tracked out of higher-level courses such as algebra and geometry, he said, and teachers don't follow a standardized curriculum that emphasizes hands-on learning and problem-solving.

And even though the state has adopted standards in math and a test students must pass to earn a diploma, the TIMSS results show that neither the standards nor the test are challenging enough to stand up to international competition, Mr. Linder-Scholer said.

SciMathMN—a coalition of government agencies, businesses, and school officials—is recommending that the state push all students to learn algebra and geometry by the 8th grade and that the graduation test include open-ended questions in those subjects rather than its current reliance on multiple-choice questions.

The group also says the state should ensure that teachers are prepared to teach to a higher standard.

These are the types of changes that Clinton administration officials expect all states to start making if they choose to participate in the program that is to begin in 1999. President Clinton has been pushing national standards and testing as part of his 10-point education plan.

Setting a Benchmark

The new tests would be offered to 4th graders in reading and 8th graders in math and would yield individual results—not just statewide averages, such as the ones Minnesota received from the TIMSS project last week.

"It is not an attempt to micromanage what goes on in the classrooms of America, but instead to

set a national benchmark against which local districts can measure themselves," Mrs. Clinton said last week.

And because every student would receive scores on the tests, parents could use the results to demand improved services for their children.

"This will be the first time that parents, particularly in urban areas, will have honest, accurate information about how well their kids are doing," Michael Cohen, the president's education adviser, said at the briefing. "It ought to empower parents to call for and mobilize for education reforms in ways that have been more difficult for them to do now."

Last week, North Carolina signed up to participate, joining Maryland and Michigan in making commitments to the voluntary national tests, which have not yet been written. Another eight to 10 "have expressed a serious interest" in taking part, Mr. Cohen said.

Minnesota will have a head start when it comes to its students' science and math skills. The United States participated in the international testing effort, but only Minnesota, Colorado, and Illinois paid the consortium to test a sample size large enough to compare how their students achieve compared with children in other countries.

Minnesota's students achieved higher than the national average in both tests, much as they do on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and college-entrance exams. But by doing better in science than in math, they reflected the national results.

Twenty Illinois school districts also took the TIMSS test, and scored higher in science than in math.

"It was important to get a snapshot of where Minnesota is in terms of the rest of the world," Mr. Linder-Scholer said. "In the past, there was no way to say how we were doing as a state, except in very rough form."

TESTING OUR KIDS

While the Clinton administration pushes for national exams and standards, education experts debate the merits of his proposal

Challenges help students learn more

By Richard W. Riley
Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

PJ

Americans have turned with renewed vigor and interest to education as a means to build a stronger and more enriching future. Poll after poll demonstrates that students, teachers and parents all want an education that makes a difference, that challenges students to learn and better prepares them for future success.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The tests would be comparable to the widely accepted National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading and math tests, used by more than 40 states, and the math component of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). The existing tests are not sufficient, because they are intended only to be given to samples of students to calculate national averages. The new tests will be designed to evaluate individual students and, when used in a comprehensive crusade for educational excellence, will help improve teaching, learning and student achievement. This is precisely the type of initiative that the department ought to be pursuing in the Fund for Improvement of Education and we will continue to consult with the Congress and state officials as we go forward.

More...

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

reading, and math is math, whether we are in Dallas, Duluth or Des Moines.

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

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

according to the recent TIMSS test.

Too often, individual state assessments, evaluations and standards of learning achievement fall to stand up to the kind of strict scrutiny and rigorous, challenging measurement that are so crucial to educational excellence. A recent Southern Regional Education Board study found that in some states, more than 80 percent of the students meet state educational assessments, but 20 percent or fewer of these students make the grade when held up to higher

standards of achievement based on excellence. If a state participates in a national test in the crucial subject areas of reading and math, we can eliminate this kind of disparity.

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

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

Goodling endorses reading, math tests

They must be voluntary, he cautions

By Susan Ferrechio
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The reading test would be mo-

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

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

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

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

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

Single Education Standard? States Are All Over the Map

By Scott Baldauf

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

SETTING standards for what a fifth-grader should know in mathematics might seem fairly elementary. But somehow, no two states seem to do it alike.

In Virginia, for example, students must be able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers. In Alaska, where standards are less specific, they must "use mathematics with confidence."

To end this type of disparity, President Clinton is urging all 50 states to adopt one rigorous set of academic standards for math, English, history, and science. He argues that nothing less than America's ability to compete in the global marketplace depends on it — a theme he tested yesterday on the Michigan legislature and the state's reform-minded Republican governor.

National standards are at the core of the most ambitious White House initiative to improve American education in a generation. But to achieve that goal, the president will have to win over a critical mass of state and local officials — many of whom believe that deciding what children should learn is their responsibility, and not the federal government's.

Still, support for the idea seems to be broadening. Already, pressure from parents and business leaders has moved many states to establish or revise academic standards.

"The movement to standards is primarily an economic issue,"

says Michael Kirst, education professor at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. "The big changes in education always come from outside, like Sputnik, the Vietnam War.... That's what causes the system to move."

"In the 1980s, after the recession, Toyota replaced Sputnik," he adds. "That led to the idea that we can no longer afford local standards in an international market."

Business leaders say today's schools produce future employees who have never learned to read, write, or perform basic math. Many parents who have moved from job to job and state to state complain that their children are repeating some lessons and skipping others altogether.

For education reformers, Virginia has become the model for other states to emulate in the standards movement. "Virginia has probably done the best job so far of writing academic standards that are rigorous, specific, and clear enough to use in the classroom," says Heidi Gordon, a pol-

**'Virginia has ...
done the best job
so far of writing
standards....'**

- Heidi Gordon

icy analyst with the American Federation of Teachers in Washington. "The best standards draw a balance between content and skills, what you need to know and what you should be able to do."

In other states, standards vary from the specific to the vague. In Missouri, 11th-grade history students must "acquire a solid foundation which includes knowledge of: continuity and change in the history of Missouri, the United States, and the world." Their counterparts in Oregon, meanwhile,

will "demonstrate the ability to think critically, creatively, and reflectively in making decisions and solving problems."

Some educators say this disparity in standards puts students in some states at a disadvantage. "Look at California," says Mr. Kirst. "There was an uproar over the low scores in reading and math. This is a state with the sixth largest economy in the world, and we're tied with Louisiana, and ahead of only Guam and the District of Columbia. There's something ... wrong with that."

But a small group of states-rights advocates and conservatives say the push for national standards is misguided, at best.

"I'm philosophically opposed to a top-down approach," says John Fonte, a senior fellow at the Alexis de Toqueville Institute in Alexandria, Va. Many states may object to "political correctness" in history or English lessons, he says, or an emphasis on global warming in science.

"I prefer a competitive process rather than a collaborative one," he adds. "If 50 states set their own standards, some may get it wrong, but others will have the chance to get it right."

Some long-time supporters of the academic-standards movement say that the goal of higher achievement is still far off. Many states have had standards for a long time, they point out, but that has not stopped a general erosion in educational excellence.

"People say they want high standards," says John Silber, chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Education. "People also say they want to lose weight, but they don't."

To Dr. Silber, America's 19th-century curriculum, in which students had four years of math, science, and English, are most worth emulating. "That was a rigorous curriculum. It's just that we got to the point where we thought everything should be fun. Well, it can't all be fun."

Other educators warn that any push for high academic standards will be meaningless unless states test their students.

"Not one state has both high standards and high stakes, with real consequences for students and school personnel," says Edwin Delattre, dean of Boston University's school of education.

While some experts worry the standards movement will be watered down, others say parents will push states for improvement.

"You may have what you feel are strong standards," says Ms. Gordon, "but if parents can't understand them or don't like them, you'll be shot out the window."

LEVEL 1 - 102 OF 264 STORIES

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The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN)

March 2, 1997, SUNDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: VIEWPOINT, Pg. B3

LENGTH: 886 words

HEADLINE: NATIONAL TESTING IS NEEDED

BYLINE: Chester E. Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch; Chester E. Finn Jr. is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute; Diane; Ravitch is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. They wrote; this for The Washington Post.

BODY:

PRESIDENT Clinton's proposal for national testing makes sense. As former assistant secretaries of Education in the Reagan and Bush administrations, we urge Congress to support it.

When George Bush and Lamar Alexander suggested something similar, which they called American Achievement Tests, congressional Democrats scoffed, and no such bill was ever introduced.

And in 1992, when a bipartisan panel called the National Council on Education Standards and Testing recommended a form of national testing, a convoluted scheme that involved different tests based on common standards, the idea was ignored by congressional leaders and attacked by prominent educators.

Still, it was a good idea then, and it's a good one now.

In fact, Clinton's version of national testing is better than Bush's in these important respects: It doesn't require any new standards or tests to be devised, and it does not hinge on dubious efforts to attach multiple tests to uniform (nonexistent) standards.

The administration has figured out that the nation already has two excellent tests that measure student achievement in reading and math, the most basic of basic skills. Accordingly, the President has proposed that states and school districts be permitted to use a respected national test for fourth-grade reading and an equally admirable international test for eighth-grade mathematics.

Nobody is obliged to use these tests. The federal government will pay for the first round of testing, and after that it's up to states and districts.

They can, however, embed the national tests into their own testing programs, which virtually every jurisdiction has, and commercial publishers would be licensed to offer them, a welcome form of 'outsourcing' that would hold down costs, bureaucracy and allegations of unfair government competition.

Most important, they're good tests, incorporating standards far more rigorous



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than those most states are now using.

THE **READING TEST** is based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which has been around almost three decades but has never been used by districts or schools to report the progress of individual students. The NAEP **reading test** is solid, multifaceted and has rigorous standards built into it.

For **eighth-graders**, the White House proposes to make available the **math** part of the Third International **Math** and Science Study (TIMSS), given to a half-million youngsters in 41 countries. The standards are built into the international comparisons. It's TIMSS results that enabled us to see that our **eighth-graders** perform poorly in mathematics compared with their peers in many other industrial countries.

Consider how powerful it will be for parents and teachers to compare the **math** prowess of their **eighth-graders** in, say, Phoenix or Minneapolis, to the performance of their peers in Korea and the Czech Republic. Consider the impact of parents in Denver or Boston actually seeing how well their **fourth-graders** read in relation to a national standard of proficiency.

According to every major poll, an overwhelming majority of the American people want national standards and **tests**. Until now, there has been no way for parents or public officials to get good information about how students are doing.

Instead, they've been stuck with college entrance **tests** that are not representative of the full population and that, in any case, aren't even administered until the end of high school. Or they have had to settle for "'standardized'" **tests** that yield spurious results about youngsters being "'at or above **grade** level,'" even though "'**grade** level'" is simply a statistical average, not a true standard.

Only with such information in hand can parents make wise choices among schools; can parents and legislators appraise how well their school systems are doing; can teachers and principals determine how effective their efforts are, and take corrective action where needed.

To those worried about "'local control,'" we say that these **tests** are a yardstick, not a harness. They give the federal government no new powers. The **test** results, in fact, will actually enhance local control by empowering consumers, policymakers and professionals to know what actions need to be taken locally to improve education.

So important is national **testing** that it must be safeguarded from politicization, a temptation sure to arise if the student results are as bleak as everyone expects.

To prevent this possibility, responsibility for national **testing** should be removed from the federal Education Department (and congressional committees) and placed under the control of an independent, nonpartisan body. Such an entity, called the National Assessment Governing Board, already exists.

The White House's current plan to give control of national **testing** to the Department of Education would, we think, be a big mistake.



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IF CLINTON will agree to turn the program for national **testing** into an autonomous agency, akin to the National Science Foundation (where the National Science Board sets policy) or the National Transportation Safety Board, then Congress should endorse this part of his education package. This proposal deserves their support.

Once upon a time it was even a Republican idea. Now it is a good American idea.

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 1997



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SECTION: EDITORIAL, Pg. A11

LENGTH: 911 words

HEADLINE: **TEST AMERICA'S STUDENTS**

BYLINE: CHESTER E. FINN JR. and DIANE RAVITCH

BODY:

PRESIDENT Clinton's proposal for national **testing** makes sense. As former assistant secretaries of the Department of **Education** in the Reagan and Bush administrations, we urge Congress to support it.

When George Bush and Lamar Alexander suggested something similar, which they called American Achievement **Tests**, congressional Democrats scoffed, and no such bill was ever introduced.

And in 1992, when a bipartisan panel called the National Council on **Education Standards and Testing** recommended a form of national **testing**, a convoluted scheme that involved different **tests** based on common standards, the idea was ignored by congressional leaders and attacked by prominent educators.

Still, it was a good idea then, and it's a good one now.

In fact, Clinton's version of national **testing** is better than Bush's in these important respects: It doesn't require any new standards or **tests** to be devised, and it does not hinge on dubious efforts to attach multiple **tests** to uniform (nonexistent) standards.

The administration has figured out that the nation already has two excellent **tests** that measure student achievement in **reading and math**, the most basic of basic skills. Accordingly, the president has proposed that states and school districts be permitted to use a respected national **test** for **fourth-grade reading** and an equally admirable international **test** for **eighth-grade mathematics**.

Nobody is obliged to use these **tests**. The federal government will pay for the first round of **testing**, and after that it's up to states and districts.

They can, however, embed the national **tests** into their own **testing** programs, which virtually every jurisdiction has, and commercial publishers would be licensed to offer them, a welcome form of "outsourcing" that would hold down costs, bureaucracy and allegations of unfair government competition.

Most important, they're good **tests**, incorporating standards far more rigorous than those most states are now using.



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For **eighth-graders**, the White House proposes to make available the **math** part of the Third International **Math** and Science Study, given to a half-million youngsters in 41 countries. The standards are built into the international comparisons. It's TIMSS results that enabled us to see that our **eighth-graders** perform poorly in mathematics compared with their peers in many other industrial countries.

Consider how powerful it will be for parents and teachers to compare the **math** prowess of their **eighth-graders** in, say, Phoenix or Minneapolis, to the performance of their peers in Korea and the Czech Republic. Consider the impact of parents in Denver or Boston actually seeing how well their **fourth-graders** read in relation to a national standard of proficiency.

According to every major poll, an overwhelming majority of the American people want national standards and **tests**. Until now, there has been no way for parents or public officials to get good information about how students are doing.

Instead, they've been stuck with college-entrance **tests** that are not representative of the full population and that, in any case, aren't even administered until the end of high school. Or they have had to settle for "standardized" **tests** that yield spurious results about youngsters being "at or above **grade** level," even though "**grade** level" is simply a statistical average, not a true standard.

Only with such information in hand can parents make wise choices among schools; can parents and legislators appraise how well their school systems are doing; can teachers and principals determine how effective their efforts are, and take corrective action where needed.

To those worried about "local control," we say that these **tests** are a yardstick, not a harness. They give the federal government no new powers.

The **test** results, in fact, will actually enhance local control by empowering consumers, policy-makers and professionals to know what actions need to be taken locally to improve education.

So important is national **testing** that it must be safeguarded from politicization, a temptation sure to arise if the student results are as bleak as everyone expects.

To prevent this possibility, responsibility for national **testing** should be removed from the federal Education Department (and congressional committees) and placed under the control of an independent, nonpartisan body. Such an entity, called the National Assessment Governing Board, already exists.

The White House's current plan to give control of national **testing** to the Department of Education would, we think, be a big mistake.

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Roanoke Times & World News, February 27, 1997

If Clinton will agree to turn the program for national **testing** into an autonomous agency, akin to the National Science Foundation (where the National Science Board sets policy) or the National Transportation Safety Board, then Congress should endorse this part of his education package. This proposal deserves their support.

Once upon a time it was even a Republican idea. Now it is a good American idea.

Chester E. Finn Jr. is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute; Diane Ravitch is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

- The Washington Post

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LEVEL 1 - 108 OF 264 STORIES

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Sacramento Bee

February 28, 1997, METRO FINAL

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B7

LENGTH: 1374 words

HEADLINE: AMERICA NEEDS A NATIONAL PROGRAM OF STUDENT **TESTING**

BYLINE: Chester E. Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch

BODY:

PRESIDENT **CLINTON'S** proposal for national **testing** makes sense. As former assistant secretaries of the Department of **Education** in the Reagan and Bush administrations, we urge Congress to support it.

When President Bush and Lamar Alexander suggested something similar, which they called American Achievement **Tests**, congressional Democrats scoffed, and no such bill was ever introduced.

And in 1992, when a bipartisan panel called the National Council on **Education Standards and Testing** recommended a form of national **testing**, a convoluted scheme that involved different **tests** based on common standards, the idea was ignored by congressional leaders and attacked by prominent educators.

Still, it was a good idea then, and it's a good one now.

In fact, **Clinton's** version of national **testing** is better than Bush's in these important respects: It doesn't require any new standards or **tests** to be devised, and it does not hinge on dubious efforts to attach multiple **tests** to uniform (nonexistent) standards.

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Sacramento Bee, February 28, 1997

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Consider how powerful it will be for parents and teachers to compare the **math** prowess of their **eighth-graders** in, say, Phoenix or Minneapolis, to the performance of their peers in Korea and the Czech Republic. Consider the impact of parents in Denver or Boston actually seeing how well their **fourth-graders** read in relation to a national standard of proficiency.

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Sacramento Bee, February 28, 1997

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GRAPHIC: BRINTON/Special to The Bee

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 1, 1997



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The Atlanta Journal and Constitution

February 19, 1997, Wednesday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: NATIONAL NEWS; Pg. 03A

LENGTH: 378 words

HEADLINE: 'Our national mission';
Education chief urges volunteer testing, tutors

BYLINE: Doug Cumming; STAFF WRITER

BODY:

Echoing President Clinton's "call to action" on education two weeks ago, the U.S. secretary of education Tuesday invoked war-time images of school improvement as "our great patriotic cause, our national mission."

Richard Riley, at the Carter Center in Atlanta for his fourth annual State of American Education address, said the time is right to focus attention on teaching the nation's youth, because "our country is prosperous and at peace." And, he noted, Democrats and Republicans seem at relative peace for the first time in years on the issue of education.

Shying away from anything that hints of a national curriculum or federal standards, Riley pushed Clinton's plan to ask states to voluntarily accept national fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math tests to show whether students have mastered challenging material.

Based on sample testing from recent years, such tests, paid for by Washington the first year, probably would show that Georgia's students are doing worse today than the current standardized tests lead people to believe.

Gov. Zell Miller, who was praised again by Riley for the HOPE scholarship and prekindergarten programs, said he would support such national tests in Georgia.

Riley, pushing Clinton's crusade for a million volunteer reading tutors, announced that four religious denominations in Atlanta and Georgia will be marshaling volunteers for this effort. The 500 African Methodist Episcopal churches in Georgia, for example, would be used for after-school tutoring by church members.

Riley's 50-minute speech, introduced by former President Jimmy Carter, touted all 10 points of Clinton's 1997 education agenda, including \$ 5 billion in federal school-construction funds. He mentioned the fast-growing Gwinnett County school system as needing such aid.

Riley also won applause by talking tough on bad schools and burned-out teachers. Close down or reconstitute those schools, he said, and give those teachers "a fair chance to leave the profession."



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He criticized tax vouchers for private schools, which are being proposed in Congress and in the Georgia Legislature, but praised charter schools and other innovations within the public system.

Riley will visit Atlanta's Inman Middle School today.

GRAPHIC: Color photo and teaser box: (appeared on A/01 with reference to A/03 story) Urging recommitment to educating youth, Education Secretary Richard Riley calls for construction funds and innovations in his State of American education address Tuesday at the Carter Center. / W.A.

BRIDGES JR. / Staff

Photo: Showing off photos of his latest grandchildren, Education Secretary Richard Riley opens his State of American Education address Tuesday at the Carter Center. / W.A. BRIDGES JR. / Staff

LOAD-DATE: February 20, 1997



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LEVEL 1 - 131 OF 264 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Gannett Company, Inc.
USA TODAY

February 17, 1997, Monday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: LIFE; Pg. 1D

LENGTH: 359 words

HEADLINE: Educators grade Clinton highly on school plans

BYLINE: Pat Ordozensky

DATELINE: ORLANDO, Fla.

BODY:

ORLANDO, Fla. -- President Clinton's plans to improve public schools are drawing praise from the nation's school administrators.

Educators applaud Clinton's efforts to focus attention on education, they like his idea of national tests and -- despite the federal government's minor role in school funding -- they think his initiatives can have an impact.

A poll of 673 educators at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention here shows:

-- 78% are pleased Clinton is moving education near the top of the national agenda with his State of the Union message and school reform proposals.

"The president is clearly recognizing the significance of education for the future of this country," says John O'Rourke of Pittsford, N.Y., national superintendent of the year.

-- 59% support Clinton's move toward voluntary tests of fourth-graders in reading and eighth-graders in math.

-- 53% think his efforts will affect school improvement.

"Most of us think the president's initiatives are right on target," says Paul Houston, AASA executive director. "When he explained his support for national standards and tests, he made it clear that many children could suffer unless we are equally committed to helping children reach those standards and pass those tests."

Clinton's plea for national testing was brought to the AASA convention by Gerald Tirozzi, assistant secretary of education. He told school officials the feds will pay the first-year cost of administering the tests for all who volunteer.

"This will give you an opportunity," Tirozzi said, "to take



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USA TODAY, February 17, 1997

a snapshot of how your students are doing compared to the rest of the country."

The survey of convention-goers also shows:

-- 26% think higher standards are the top priority for improving schools; 21% say school funding is most important; 20% say the No. 1 need is better teacher training.

-- 57% say they would not require school uniforms even if their state laws permit it.

Of the 673 poll respondents, 370 are school superintendents. The rest are other administrators, principals and school board members.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 17, 1997

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Toward a national test

p. 06

President Clinton's call for national testing to measure the reading and math skills of American schoolchildren, even if heeded by Congress, won't cure the well-documented ills of public education in this country. It could, however, enable parents and educators in the disparate states to better measure the progress of their students against those in other parts of the United States, and that could in turn drive the laggards to keep up. In an increasingly mobile society, in which students in California ought to know whether their math skills hold up against their peers in Connecticut and elsewhere, national standards and assessments make all kinds of sense.

That doesn't mean that this modest effort — which would only address reading skills of fourth-graders and the math abilities of eighth-graders, and in which states would only participate if they volunteered — won't be controversial. Some critics charge that a national test, with results for individual students, will unfairly stigmatize poor children in struggling districts by comparing them to their more successful counterparts in privileged neighborhoods. But ignorance of the stark disparities in opportunity and achievement between students of different means is surely no way to bring them closer together.

And past claims that national tests are a federal government attempt to wrest control of children's education from states and local school districts are already being revived, though the fact that any test would be voluntary seriously undercuts the argument. Thus it was no surprise that Clinton called the tests and the standards that will drive them "national" rather than "federal," a term that these days is considered an epithet in some circles.

By whatever name, the test would be formulated by a group of education leaders chosen by the Department of Education. They will base the test on the already established and reliable National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which are given to fourth- and eighth-graders every four years. Unlike those tests, which only inform states about the percentage of their students who read or do math above, at, or below grade level, the new national exams would be administered annually and would provide individual scores to all students, enabling school districts and parents to see where each child stands nationally.

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

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

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Copyright 1997 Gannett Company, Inc.
USA TODAY

February 6, 1997, Thursday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 256 words

HEADLINE: 83% back education testing

BYLINE: Dennis Kelly; Mimi Hall

BODY:

President Clinton's plan to test every fourth- and eighth-grader in reading and math has huge support, a USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll shows.

In the poll of 400 people Wednesday, 83% said they favored the idea and just 13% were opposed.

Clinton, in his State of the Union speech Tuesday, asked school districts to adopt national testing in 1999. The first year's cost would be paid by the federal government.

Clinton, meanwhile, traveled to Georgia Wednesday to ask for help in persuading Congress to approve \$ 51 billion in new education spending.

"I'm committed to doing my part. You must do yours," he said in a speech at Augusta State University.

He also said that he is not trying to undermine state control of education with national tests. "Algebra is the same in Georgia as it is in Utah."

Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition, said Wednesday a mandatory national standard "undermines local control of education."

Some educators favored the plan. Frank Newman of the Education Commission of the States, said tests now "are too infrequent and the results are not available quickly enough . . . to truly assess educational effectiveness."

But key Republicans looked at Clinton's \$ 51 billion price tag and said throwing money at problems is not the answer.

"Don't we have to look at what has already worked and what hasn't" before trying new programs? asked Chairman William Goodling, R-Pa., of the House education committee.

The poll's margin of error is 5 percentage points.

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USA TODAY, February 6, 1997

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 06, 1997



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Clinton proposes setting national standards for schools

By Dennis Kelly
USA TODAY

The national tests that President Clinton proposed Tuesday night would give states and local school districts a new yardstick to see how their students stack up against the rest of the country and the world.

Some observers said Tuesday they wanted to wait and see whether the test proposals would translate into an intrusion on local control.

But those same observers praised Clinton for using the bully pulpit to push tougher academic standards.

Clinton is proposing that states adopt newly developed, voluntary national tests for fourth-graders in reading and for eighth-graders in math. The tests would be administered beginning in 1999.

The reading test would be based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a federal

project that has used a random sample of U.S. students to gauge skills in math, reading and other subjects for 27 years.

The math test would be based on the Third International Mathematics

and Science Study (TIMSS), which tested 40,000 U.S. students against peers in 41 countries.

"This is actually one piece of the Clinton plan I like," says Chester Finn, senior fellow at the Hudson In-

stitute. "What's smart is he's using two well-regarded existing tests as the basis of this."

Other than NAEP, schools have little way of seeing how their students compare to those in other states. And few students take NAEP exams.

The Clinton administration also argues that the NAEP and TIMSS tests are based on some of the toughest standards around.

"I think on face value it sounds like a good thing, particularly when you're talking about a test as solid as NAEP," says Jeanne Allen, president of the Center for Education Reform, a conservative group that pushes for locally controlled reform. "But ... the devil is in the details."

Allen wants tough standards, but not ones generated by the federal government.

"I do not think the president is going to mandate these," says Anne Bryant, executive director of the Na-

tional School Boards Association. "I think it's something the president is holding out as something for us to strive for."

Clinton also renewed his call for making sure every student can read independently by third grade. He wants money to pay 30,000 reading specialists and coordinators to recruit and train 1 million tutors.

But Rep. William Goodling, R-Pa., chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, questions the need for more money. He says the nation has spent \$50 billion on Head Start and \$100 billion on Chapter 1, which gives federal aid to help with reading and math.

With literacy skills as low as they are, "we have to admit (the programs) didn't work," Goodling says. Instead, he says, the country needs to focus on family literacy and parenting skills so children have someone at home to help build their skills.

USA TODAY • WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1997 •

A-3

Critics: College plan not aiding neediest

Critics of President Clinton's college aid proposal say it fails to help the neediest students.

Clinton wants:

► A \$300 boost in Pell Grants, to a \$3,000 maximum, and expanding eligibility to students who are financially independent.

► HOPE Scholarships of up to \$1,500 in a refundable tax credit. Students would be eligible for a second year if they earn at least a B average and stay off drugs.

► A tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for educational expenses.

But low-income families who pay little or no taxes wouldn't benefit from the deduction, says Larry Gladieux, executive director for policy analysis, The College Board. And the HOPE program is a tax credit, applied only against existing tax liability.

By Mary Beth Marklein