



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

(617) 727-3600

WILLIAM F. WELD
GOVERNOR

ARGEO PAUL CELLUCCI
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

May 21, 1997

Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Room 4181
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Riley:

The Commonwealth is pleased to participate in the new national assessment of student achievement in reading at grade 4 and mathematics at grade 8, scheduled to begin in 1999. We look forward to this federal effort to raise achievement by setting high standards for what students should know in the critical areas of numeracy and literacy.

Our experience in Massachusetts has shown that it is crucial for the state to lead the effort to set rigorous academic standards for all students, and we are in the process of implementing the higher academic standards which are part of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993. This far-reaching legislation has helped increase expectations of student performance among educators and parents, and the measure of our success will be in our new state-wide assessment program for fourth, eighth, and tenth grade students, scheduled to begin in full in the spring of 1998.

In recent years, Massachusetts has been an active partner in many of the federal government's education initiatives. The GOALS 2000 legislation and the School-to-Work program have benefited many of the Commonwealth's schools. Federal support for Massachusetts charter schools is another important instance where federal-state partnership has helped improve public education. This new assessment initiative will provide important information about student achievement, and will further enhance the Commonwealth's efforts to improve our schools. Commissioner of Education Robert Antonucci stands ready to work with you and your staff to implement these measures.

Again, we are pleased to join with the Clinton Administration in supporting this new assessment program to raise the level of student learning, throughout the Commonwealth and across the nation.

Sincerely,

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William F. Weld

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Argeo Paul Cellucci".

Argeo Paul Cellucci



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NEWS RELEASE

contact: Milt Goldberg
202/289-2944

Business leaders endorse President Clinton's initiative to develop voluntary national tests

Washington, DC (May 21, 1997) - James F. Orr III, chairman and CEO of UNUM Corporation and chairman of the National Alliance of Business (NAB), today announced the endorsement of the Alliance for efforts supporting the initiative to develop voluntary national tests, originally proposed by President Clinton in his 1997 State of the Union address, to measure student reading skills in the 4th grade and mathematics skills in the 8th grade. The Alliance believes these voluntary tests could be used by state and local school districts to measure the progress of American students in these core subjects.

The Alliance recently surveyed its members on this issue and an overwhelming number supported the initiative to develop the voluntary national tests.

The Alliance works cooperatively with over 300 state and local business/education coalitions in partnership with school leaders, parents, and teachers to improve the quality of American education.

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The National Alliance of Business is a nonprofit, business-led organization dedicated to building a quality workforce by improving American education, forging a smooth transition from school to work, expanding life-long learning opportunities for incumbent workers and fostering strategies that simultaneously address worker security and employer flexibility. The Alliance is chaired by James F. Orr III, chairman and CEO of UNUM Corporation.



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Fax Cover Sheet

DATE: May 21, 1997

TO: Michael Cohen
Domestic Policy Council staff
The White House

FROM: Tom Lindsley

FAX NUMBER: (202) 456-7028

PHONE: (202) 289-2932

NAB FAX NUMBER: (202) 289-1303

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 2

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info@nab.com (email) <http://www.nab.com> (website)



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The Honorable Richard Riley
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United States Department of Education
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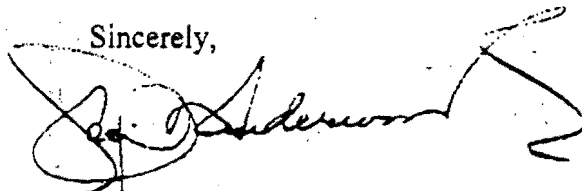
Dear Secretary Riley:

As Governor of the State of West Virginia, and on behalf of Dr. Henry Marockie, State Superintendent of Schools and Ms. Cleo Mathews, President, and the West Virginia Board of Education, I would like to express the State's support for President Clinton's proposed plan to develop a national testing program for all students in grades four and eight. We believe that our citizens deserve the best information possible regarding the effectiveness of the school system's efforts to provide a high quality education for all children and welcome the opportunity to demonstrate that such is the case.

At great personal sacrifice the people of West Virginia have consistently voted to support state and local schools with a greater percentage of their income than do most other states. We believe that those dollars have been well spent as evidenced by the improved performance of state students, on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and other measures. Unlike NAEP, the proposed program would provide an annual assessment in the critical areas of mathematics and reading by testing all students in grades four in reading and all students in grade eight in mathematics. The information gleaned from this assessment would establish the means to document for the first time what educational progress is being made--state by state and in the nation as a whole-- and provide West Virginia with national benchmarks of achievement.

We look forward to working with you in the coming months to make this proposal a reality. From our experience with a statewide testing program, we have learned just how valuable information gleaned from a systematic assessment program is to an effective and efficient school improvement process.

Sincerely,



Cecil Underwood
Governor of West Virginia

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

The Honorable Richard Riley
Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

May 21, 1997

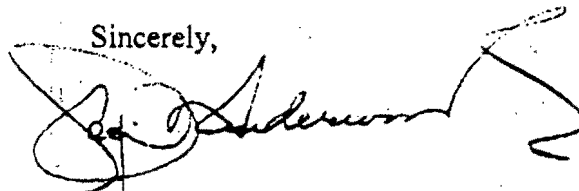
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WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Henry R. Marockie, State Superintendent of Schools
Building 6/1900 Kanawha Blvd. E./Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0330

Phone: 304-558-2681
Fax: 304-558-0048

West Virginia Board of Education

Cleo P. Mathews, President
Sheila M. Hamilton, Vice President
James J. MacCallum, Secretary
Michael D. Greer
Audrey S. Horne
Jim L. McKnight
Paul J. Morris
Charles H. Wagoner
Gary G. White

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Healthy Schools - (304) 558-3787

JTPA - (304) 558-1055

Public Relations - (304) 558-0882

Special Education - (304) 558-3741

Technology - (304) 558-2584

Vocational Education - (304) 558-3946

FAX TRANSMITTAL

TO: Mike Cohen	
FAX NUMBER: (202) 456-5581 / 456-7028	
FROM: Barbara Jones	
PHONE NUMBER: (304) 558-2118	
DATE/TIME: 5-21-97	
TOTAL PAGES: 2 (including cover page)	
SUBJECT:	
NOTES:	
OPERATOR:	

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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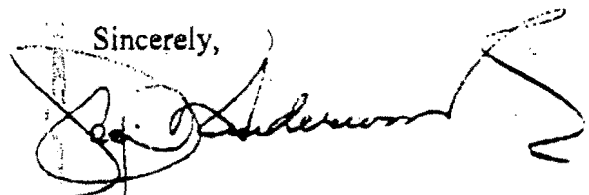
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