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FAX: 734-763-1504

TO: Shirley Sagawa

DATE SENT: Monday, May 24, 1999

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NUMBER OF PAGES (including this sheet): 2

SENDER'S NAME: Julie McDaniel for Professor Cecil Miskel

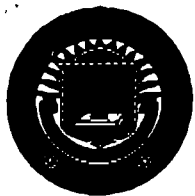
SENDER'S PHONE: (734) 647-2454

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May 24, 1999

Jim F
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Ms. Shirley Sagawa
Office of the First Lady
Old Executive Office Building
17th and G, NW
Room 100

Dear Ms. Sagawa,

The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in a study we are conducting aimed at identifying the issues, individuals and groups involved in the policy-setting process for early reading and literacy. Our goal is to better understand the dynamics of the policy environment for early reading and literacy, and the process through which federal reading policy is developed. We would like to ask you for your observations about the key issues in and influences on federal reading policy.

I am sorry we were unable to find a convenient time to meet during my last Washington visit. I will, however, be in Washington, DC from Tuesday, June 15, 1999 to Thursday, June 17, 1999. I am hoping that we might find a common time to meet during this visit. Again, the interview will take approximately 30 minutes and will be tape-recorded. Your responses will remain confidential and the recording will be erased at the end of the project. Before the interview, a list of interview questions and an informed consent statement will be sent to you.

Your thoughts and perspectives are crucial to the success of our study and, ultimately, to our efforts to improve the teaching and learning of reading in America's schools. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 734-647-2454 or to email me at miskel@umich.edu. I thank you in advance for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cecil".

Cecil G. Miskel
Professor



THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
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EDUCATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM
 610 E. UNIVERSITY, 1225 SEB
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Interview Schedule for Policymakers

Before we start our discussion of reading policy, I would like to confirm some information with you.

1. Purpose of the study.
2. Review the informed consent statement.
3. Verify name, position and organization.

Recent debates about federal reading policy include the Reading Excellence Act and K-3 reading initiatives, Title 1 (or IASA) requirements, whether to have a voluntary national test, and the level of reading achievement.

1. What significant issues in reading have you and others been dealing with during the past 2 or 3 years?
2. Depending on who is stating the case, the percentage of students who significantly under perform on tests such as the NAEP typically ranges from 10 to 50%. What percentage do you think is correct?
3. Changing to possible solutions over the past 2 or 3 years, what new approaches or programs in reading have been proposed?
4. Do you support national standards for reading? Explain.
5. Do you support national tests for reading? Explain.
6. Should reading instruction be based primarily on phonics? Explain.
7. Should reading instruction be based primarily on whole language? Explain.
8. Overall, what key components should form the nation's policy for reading?
9. During the 1990s, have there been political events or new ideas that have brought reading closer to the top of the policy agenda?

Many groups have been identified with trying to influence reading policy. Examples include K-12 and higher education associations and unions, parent and citizens, think tanks, government agencies, media, business and foundations.

10. What groups or individuals are most active in trying to influence federal reading policy?
11. What is your involvement in establishing federal reading policy?
12. What individuals or groups have contacted you or your office with regard to reading policy, proposed legislation, rules and so forth?
13. For the groups just mentioned, in what types of influence activities have they participated?
14. If you were interested in advocating legislation on a particular reading issue, what groups would be the most helpful to you in this effort?
15. Are there groups that you would hesitate to contact in this situation?
16. What factors explain the effectiveness of these groups?
17. Any other observations that you think might be of interest to me?

Thank you for your time and assistance!



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April 16, 1999

Ms. Shirley Sagawa
Office of the First Lady
Old Executive Office Building
Room 100
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Sagawa

During the past decade, the goal of ensuring that every child reads well and independently has become a national priority. Consequently, reading and reading policy have attracted increasing attention. Established in 1997, the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA), of which our study is a part, is committed to improving the reading achievement of America's children by generating and disseminating theoretical, empirical, and practical solutions to persistent problems in the teaching and learning of beginning reading.

The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in a study we are conducting aimed at identifying the issues, individuals and groups involved in the policy-setting process for early reading and literacy. Our goal is to better understand the dynamics of the policy environment for early reading and literacy, and the process through which federal reading policy is developed. We would like to ask you for your observations about the key issues in and influences on federal reading policy.

I will call you within a few days to request an appointment for a personal interview. I will be in Washington, DC from Monday, April 26, 1999 to Wednesday, April 28, 1999. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and will be tape-recorded. Your responses will remain confidential and the recording will be erased at the end of the project. Before the interview, a list of interview questions and an informed consent statement will be sent to you.

Your thoughts and perspectives are crucial to the success of our study and, ultimately, to our efforts to improve the teaching and learning of reading in America's schools. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 734-647-2454. I thank you in advance for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cecil G. Miskel".

Cecil G. Miskel
Professor