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Series:	Sununu, John, Files
Subseries:	Cabinet Agencies Files

OA/ID Number:	29185
Folder ID Number:	29185-007

Folder Title:
Alexander (Education) (1991) [1]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
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LOW-INCOME SCHOOL CHOICE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

- o A three year, \$30 million per year, demonstration program to determine the effects on students and schools of providing financial assistance to low-income parents to enable them to choose the public or private school their child will attend.
- o Eligible students/parents must live in school districts with the highest concentrations of low income families.
 - any public or private (including sectarian) school, operating in accordance with state law, which has been in existence at least one year prior to the demonstration, could participate in the program.
 - Secretary must give priority to projects in which choice schools offer an enrollment opportunity to the broadest range of eligible children.
 - value of the certificate, in general, would be equal to the actual cost of tuition (with a stipend for transportation) except that it may not exceed the average per-pupil expenditure in the school district where the child would normally attend.
- o Demonstration sites would be located in up to six inner city or low-income areas of the country (\$5m per year). Grantees shall place a priority for the demonstration on the 20% of school districts in their state with the highest number of children from low income families.
- o Participating schools must conduct their programs in accordance with their traditional standards of admission, testing, and curriculum, and must admit children with certificates on the same basis as children outside the demonstration program.
 - schools releasing a student for any reason after receipt of certificate, before the student completes 75% of the school year, would provide a prorated reimbursement to the entity making the certificate available.
- o Children participating in the demonstration would continue their eligibility for Chapter 1 services. In addition, schools would not be exempt from requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- o Absence of children from any school district due to their choice of school shall be disregarded in determining any computation of federal education assistance for that district.
- o The Secretary of Education will conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the demonstration to describe the implementation of each demonstration project, and determine the effects on students, schools, and communities.

"Low-Income School Choice Demonstration Act of 1991"

Sec. 2. Purpose

To determine the effects on students and schools of providing low income parents and their children with financial assistance to enable them to select the public or private school of their choice.

Sec. 3. Definitions

- 1) "choice school" refers to any private or public school (including sectarian school) involved in the demonstration;
- 2) "eligible child" means a child in grades 1 through 12 who meets the financial eligibility requirements for free or reduced priced meals under the National School Lunch Act of 1947;
- 3) "eligible entity" means a public entity such as a state, State or local educational agency (LEA), or a consortium of public and private non-profit entities which can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Secretary, their ability to receive, disburse, and account for federal funds, and carry out the activities described in the Act;
- 4) "parents" includes a legal guardian or other individual acting in loco parentis;
- 5) "school" day or residential facility that provides elementary or secondary education (through grade 12) as determined under State law;
- (6) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.

Sec. 4. Authorization of Appropriation

\$30 million for fiscal year 1992, and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1993 and 1994.

Sec. 5. Program Authorized

- o 5% of appropriated funds may be reserved by the Secretary for administration.

- o Secretary would use the remaining funds to make up to six grants for the purpose of carrying out demonstration projects under which low income parents receive certificates for the cost of tuition, fees, and transportation for the school of their choice.
- o In addition, grants may be used by the grantee for administration of the demonstration project (up to 15% in any fiscal year for which certificates are provided) to develop, implement, and publicize the demonstration, to select students, develop and maintain financial records, and to comply with any necessary reporting requirements.

Sec. 6. Authorized Projects; Priority

- o Eligible projects must contain at least one school district that is among the 20% of school districts in the state with the highest number of children from low income families. In addition, the project must include the involvement of a sufficient number of public and private choice schools to allow for a valid demonstration.
- o Secretary must give priority to projects in which choice schools offer an enrollment opportunity to the broadest range of eligible children. In addition, priority must be given to projects that will serve areas with the highest numbers of children from low income families.

Sec. 7. Applications

With respect to "choice" schools the applicant must:

- o Describe the standards used by the applicant to determine eligible schools in terms of commuting distance and cost; and how the applicant proposes to encourage the participation of both public and private schools.
- o Provide assurances that choice schools will not impose higher standards of admission for children with certificates; that schools have been operating a lawful elementary or secondary education program for at least one year prior to accepting a certificate; and that the applicant will terminate any choice school that fails to comply with the conditions of its involvement.

With respect to eligible children the applicant must:

- o Describe the procedures used to determine eligibility -- either the criteria for free reduced price lunch, under the National School Lunch Act, or another procedure (subject to the Secretary's approval).

- o Describe the procedures to ensure maximum choice, particularly when grant funds are insufficient to support the cost of certificates for all individuals seeking to participate in the program, or when the requests for demonstration grant aid for attendance at a particular school exceed the number of available spots at the school.
- o Describe the procedures to ensure that Chapter 1 services continue to be provided to eligible children participating in the demonstration.
- o Describe the procedures to ensure that priority will be given to children from low income families.
- o Describe the procedures to ensure that the same selection criteria will be used for students from public and private schools.

With respect to the operation of demonstration the applicant must:

- o Describe the geographic area to be served; timetable for demonstration; procedures for issuance and redemption of certificates; procedures for pro-rata refund if any child is released from a participating school before completing 75% of the school attendance period; and procedures for timely parental notification of the availability of certificates.
- o Provide assurances that funds for the demonstration will be kept in a separate account and that other funds shall not be commingled with the demonstration grant; that all reporting and record keeping requirements will be satisfied; and that the applicant will cooperate with the Secretary in carrying out a national program evaluation.

Sec. 8. Education Certificates:

- o Value of the certificate shall be the cost of tuition normally charged by the private or public school of choice except that such certificate may not exceed the average per pupil expenditure for the public elementary or secondary school in the school district where the child would normally attend.
- o Certificates may be issued to parents and children for reasonable costs of transportation which are directly associated with the demonstration, whether the school is public or private.

- o Value of the certificate may be adjusted by a maximum of 10% in the second and third years of the child's participation to reflect any changes in tuition, fees, or transportation costs which are directly associated with the demonstration.
- o Eligible children currently attending a choice school that charges tuition may receive a certificate for use at that school except that such certificate may be valued only at the actual amount of tuition charged that child during the previous attendance year, and may be adjusted by up to 10% in the out years as discussed above. This ensures that existing private or parochial school subsidies are not displaced.
- o Certificates, and funds provided under certificates, shall not be considered income for Federal income tax purposes or for eligibility under any Federal program.

Sec. 9. Effect on Other Programs; Use of school lunch data

- o Children who are participating in these demonstrations and who would otherwise receive Chapter 1 services shall continue to do so.
- o Nothing in the Act shall be construed to interfere with the requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- o The fact that a certain number of children may leave a school district due to their choice of school shall be disregarded in any computation of such district's eligibility for any programs administered by the Secretary.
- o Except for determining eligibility for this demonstration, information provided through the National School Lunch Act shall otherwise remain confidential.
- o No provision of a State constitution or State law shall be construed to prohibit the use of a certificate under this Act at any choice school, including a private sectarian school.

Sec. 10. Parental Notification

- o Each grantee shall provide parents with all relevant information concerning the demonstration in a timely manner including information such as eligibility requirements, selection procedure, any admission requirements of choice schools, and information about each participating school.

Sec. 11. Evaluation

- o The Secretary shall conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the demonstration, assessing the educational achievement of participating and non-participating students, and the overall impact on participants, schools, and communities.

Sec. 12. Reports

- o Each grantee shall submit an annual report to the Secretary containing such information as may be required. The Secretary shall report annually to the President who shall in turn report to the Congress on the progress of the evaluation.

OCT 10 1991

A BILL

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Low-Income School Choice Demonstration Act of 1991".

PURPOSE

SEC. 2. The purpose of this Act is to determine the effects on students and schools of providing financial assistance to low-income parents to enable them to select the public or private schools in which their children will be enrolled.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 3. As used in this Act--

(1) the term "choice school" means any public or private school, including a private sectarian school, that is involved in a demonstration project under this Act;

(2) the term "eligible child" means a child in grades 1 through 12 who is eligible for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Act of 1947;

(3) the term "eligible entity" means a public agency, institution, or organization, such as a State, a State or local educational agency, a consortium of public agencies, or a consortium of public and private non-profit entities, that can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Secretary, its ability to--

(A) receive, disburse, and account for Federal funds;

and

(B) carry out the activities described in its application under this Act;

(4) the term "parent" includes a legal guardian or other individual acting in loco parentis;

(5) the term "school" means a day or residential school that provides elementary or secondary education (through grade 12), as determined under State law; and

(6) the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 4. For the purpose of carrying out this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated \$30 million for fiscal year 1992, and such sums as may be needed for each of the fiscal years 1993 and 1994.

PROGRAM AUTHORIZED

SEC. 5. (a) From the amount appropriated to carry out this Act in any fiscal year, the Secretary may reserve up to five percent for evaluation of programs assisted under this Act, in accordance with section 11.

(b) From the remaining amount of such funds, the Secretary shall make grants, not to exceed \$5 million in the first year, to eligible entities to carry out not more than six demonstration projects under which low-income parents receive certificates for the costs of enrolling their eligible children in the public or private schools of their choice.

(c) Grants awarded under subsection (b) shall be used to pay the costs of--

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(1) providing education certificates to low-income parents to cover tuition, fees, and the allowable costs of transportation, if any, for their eligible children to attend a choice school; and

(2) administration of the demonstration project, not to exceed 15 percent of the amount received in any fiscal year for which the grantee provides certificates or 10 percent in any subsequent year, including, but not limited to--

(A) seeking the involvement of choice schools in the demonstration;

(B) providing information about the project, and the schools involved in it, to parents of eligible children;

(C) determining the eligibility of children to participate in the demonstration;

(D) selecting students to participate in the demonstration;

(E) determining the value of, and issuing, certificates;

(F) compiling and maintaining such financial and programmatic records as the Secretary may prescribe; and

(G) collecting and making available to the Secretary such information about the effects of the demonstration as the Secretary may need to conduct the evaluation described in section 11.

AUTHORIZED PROJECTS; PRIORITY

SEC. 6. (a) The Secretary may provide assistance under this

Act only to a demonstration project that--

(1) involves at least one local educational agency that--

(A) receives funds under section 1006 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and

(B) is among the 20 percent of agencies receiving funds under section 1006 in the State with the highest number of children described in section 1005(c) of such Act; and

(2) includes the involvement of a sufficient number of public and private choice schools, in the judgment of the Secretary, to allow for a valid demonstration project.

(b) In selecting grantees under this Act, the Secretary shall give priority to--

(1) projects that will serve areas with the highest numbers of children described in section 1005(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and

(2) projects in which choice schools offer an enrollment opportunity to the broadest range of eligible children.

APPLICATIONS

SEC. 7. (a) Any eligible entity that wishes to receive a grant under this Act shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may prescribe.

(b) Each such application shall contain--

(1) information demonstrating the eligibility of the applicant and its project;

(2) with respect to choice schools--

(A) a description of the standards used by the applicant to determine which public and private schools are within a reasonable commuting distance of eligible children and present a reasonable commuting cost for such children;

(B) (i) a description of the procedures used to encourage public and private schools to be involved in the project; and

(ii) a description of how the applicant will annually determine the number of spaces available for eligible children in each choice school;

(C) an assurance that each choice school will not impose higher standards for admission or participation in its programs and activities for eligible children with certificates provided under this Act than it does for other children;

(D) an assurance that each choice school will have been operating an educational program of the same type as the program for which it will accept certificates, for at least one year before accepting such certificates; and

(E) an assurance that the applicant will terminate the involvement of any choice school that fails to comply with the conditions of its involvement in the demonstration;

(3) with respect to the participation of eligible children--

(A) a description of the procedures to be used to determine the eligibility of children under this Act, which shall

include--

(i) the procedures used to determine eligibility for free and reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Act of 1947; or

(ii) any other procedure, subject to the Secretary's approval, that accurately establishes a child's eligibility within the meaning of section 3(2);

(B) a description of the procedures to be used to ensure that, in selecting among eligible children to participate in the demonstration, the applicant will--

(i) apply the same criteria to both public and private school children; and

(ii) give priority to children from the lowest income families; and

(C) a description of the procedures to be used to ensure maximum choice of schools for participating children, including procedures to be used when--

(i) the number of parents with certificates who desire to enroll their children in a particular school exceeds the number of such children that the school has agreed to accept; and

(ii) grant funds are insufficient to support the total cost of choices made by parents with certificates;

(D) a description of the procedures to be used to ensure compliance with section 9(a)(1), which may include--

(i) the direct provision of services by a

local educational agency;

(ii) arrangements made by a local educational agency with other service providers; and

(iii) an increase in the value of the education certificate, under section 8(a)(2)(A);

(4) with respect to the operation of the demonstration--

(A) a description of the geographic area to be served;

(B) a timetable for carrying out the demonstration;

(C) a description of the procedures to be used for the issuance and redemption of certificates;

(D) a description of the procedures by which a choice school will make a pro rata refund of the certificate for any participating child released or expelled by the school, or who withdraws from the school for any reason, before completing 75 percent of the school attendance period for which the certificate was used;

(E) a description of the procedures to be used to provide the parental notification described in section 10;

(F) an assurance that the applicant will place all funds received under this Act into a separate account, and that no other funds will be placed in such account;

(G) an assurance that the applicant will provide the Secretary periodic reports on the status of such funds;

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(H) an assurance that the applicant will cooperate with the Secretary in carrying out the national program evaluation described in section 11; and

(I) an assurance that the applicant will maintain such records as the Secretary may require, and comply with reasonable requests from the Secretary for information; and

(5) such other assurances and information as the Secretary may require.

EDUCATION CERTIFICATES

SEC. 8. (a)(1) The basic value of an eligible child's education certificate under this Act shall be the cost of tuition and fees normally charged by the public or private school chosen by the child's parents.

(2) Subject to such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe--

(A) the value of the certificate may be increased to cover the additional reasonable costs of transportation directly attributable to the child's participation in the demonstration or the cost of complying with section 9(a)(1); and

(B) education certificates may be issued to parents of children who choose to attend schools that do not charge tuition or fees, to cover the additional reasonable costs of transportation directly attributable to the child's participation in the demonstration or the cost of complying with section 9 (a)(1).

(b) The value of the education certificate may be adjusted

in the second and third years of an eligible child's participation to reflect any increases or decreases in the tuition, fees, or transportation costs directly attributable to that child's continued attendance at a choice school, but shall not be increased for this purpose by more than 10 percent over the value for the proceeding year.

(c) If a participating eligible child was attending a public or private school that charged tuition in the year before the first year of a grantee's participation under this Act, the basic value of the certificate for such child shall be the tuition charged by such school for such child in such preceding year, adjusted in accordance with subsection (b).

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the basic value of an eligible child's certificate shall not exceed the per pupil expenditure for elementary or secondary education, as appropriate, for the preceding year by the local educational agency in which the public school to which the child would normally be assigned is located.

(e) Certificates, and funds provided under certificates, shall not be deemed income of the parents for Federal income tax purposes or for determining eligibility for any other Federal program.

EFFECT ON OTHER PROGRAMS; USE OF SCHOOL LUNCH DATA

SEC. 9. (a)(1) Eligible children participating in a demonstration under this Act, who, in the absence of such a demonstration, would have received services under part A of

chapter 1 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 shall be provided such services.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the requirements of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any local educational agency participating in a demonstration under this Act may count eligible children who, in the absence of such a demonstration, would attend the schools of such agency, for purposes of receiving funds under any program administered by the Secretary.

(c) Notwithstanding section 9 of the National School Lunch Act, a grantee under this Act may use information collected for the purpose of determining eligibility for free or reduced price meals to determine a child's eligibility to participate in a demonstration under this Act and, if needed, to rank families by income, in accordance with section 7(b)(3)(B)(ii). All such information must otherwise remain confidential, and information pertaining to income may be disclosed only to persons who need that information for the purposes of a demonstration under this Act.

(d) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to supersede or modify any provision of a State constitution or State law that prohibits the expenditure of public funds in or by sectarian institutions, except that no provision of a State constitution or State law shall be construed to prohibit the expenditure in or by

sectarian institutions of any Federal funds provided under this Act.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

SEC. 10. Each grantee under this act shall provide timely notice of the demonstration project to parents of eligible children residing in the area to be served. At a minimum, such notice shall--

- (1) describe the demonstration;
- (2) describe the eligibility requirements for participation;
- (3) describe the information needed to establish a child's eligibility;
- (4) describe the selection procedures to be used if the number of eligible children seeking to participate exceeds the number that can be accommodated;
- (5) provide information about each choice school, including information about any admission requirements or criteria; and
- (6) include the schedule for parents to apply for their children to participate.

EVALUATION

SEC. 11. The Secretary shall conduct a rigorous evaluation of the demonstration program authorized by this Act. Such evaluation shall--

- (1) describe the implementation of each demonstration project and its effects on all participants, schools, and

communities in the project area; and

(2) compare the educational achievement of all students in the project area, including--

(A) students receiving certificates; and

(B) students not receiving certificates.

REPORTS

SEC. 12. (a) Each grantee under this Act shall submit an annual report to the Secretary, at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

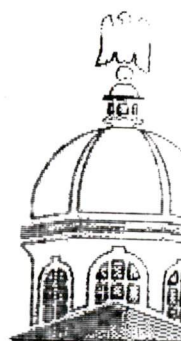
(b) (1) The Secretary shall report annually to the President and the President shall report annually to the Congress on the progress of the local demonstrations, including information submitted by each grantee and from other sources.

(2) The Secretary shall submit a report to the President and the President shall submit a report to the Congress on the national evaluation described in section 11 within nine months after the conclusion of the demonstrations.

#

CONCORD

Friday, July 5, 1991



Portsmouth

Vouchers on ballot

Voters to decide tuition rebate of 25%

By **ANDREW GALARNEAU**
Monitor staff

PORTSMOUTH — A proposal to provide education vouchers to Portsmouth parents will be on the ballot in November, although some city officials don't think the idea will get much further.

City councilors voted 5-4 earlier this week to put the measure on the ballot, with some councilors expressing skepticism about its constitutionality but others intent on letting Portsmouth residents make up their own mind about the plan.

Vouchers in theory would allow parents to take some of their tax money back from the public school system and spend it elsewhere — at private and parochial schools, or as a salary for a parent to home-school children. Vouchers were proposed in two bills in the Legislature this year but defeated out of constitutional concerns.

Portsmouth would be the first New Hampshire community to try a voucher system and could face a court challenge. The state Supreme Court ruled in 1969 that tax breaks for parents of private school pupils would be discriminatory because it effectively would subsidize private schooling, including parochial schools.

The Portsmouth proposal would amend the city charter to allow parents to receive checks for up to 25 percent of what it would cost to have their child attend public school in Portsmouth, as long as their child was educated elsewhere. That money could be spent on private or parochial schools, or pay a parent to home-school the child.

It would also create a five-member Education Voucher Committee to oversee the program.

Bill Bronson, former president of the Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, proposed the idea.

"Many parents feel there is a crisis in education that must be dealt with," Bronson told councilors.

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EDUCATION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE MEETING
OCTOBER 11, 1991
3:00 P.M.

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EDUCATION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE MEETING

OCTOBER 11, 1991

3:00 P.M.

List of staff members to attend meeting:

BILL BURROW
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456-2126

DAN CASSE
Deputy Director of Cabinet Liaison,
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STEVE DANZANSKY
Chief of Staff,
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DAVID DEMAREST
Assistant to the President for Communications
456-7620

CHARLES KOLB
Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
456-6515

JANE BARNETT LEONARD
Associate Director
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456-7845

LEIGH ANN METZGER
Special Assistant to the President
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456-7142

LISA MORIN
Special Assistant to Associate Director,
Legislative Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
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RAE NELSON

**Deputy Associate Director for Education Policy
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456-7777**

BOB OKUN

**Department of Education, Assistant Designate
for Legislative Affairs
401-1028**

ROGER PORTER

**Assistant to the President for Economic and Domestic Policy
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TOM SCULLY

**Associate Director,
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SHAWN SMEALLIE

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Elementary/Secondary Education Bills (AMERICA 2000)

House

Kildee/Goodling bill takes block grant approach. It needs considerable work to target funding toward true educational reform.

Choice provisions are generic and do not address private/public distinctions. However, language is acceptable because it allows us to draft regulations that would allow for private school choice in individual states.

In full Committee (next week) attempts will be made to strike Kildee's choice language-- and they may prevail. If so, we will have floor amendments for private school choice (both Kildee's language and the "Hatch demo program" discussed below).

Senate

We have ended negotiations with Kennedy three times over private school choice. The Democrats don't want any of our three private school choice initiatives:

- 1) Chapter 1 funds (\$6.7 B low income) follow the child;
- 2) \$200 voucher bonus pool;
- 3) \$30 M per year, six city demonstration.

NB private school
Targeted / Low Income Private School Choice

When the Kennedy - Mitchell bill goes to the floor (could be any time in the next month) we will have all three amendments offered.

We have very little chance of prevailing on #1 or #2. However, if we focus on the "Hatch Demo" we have a very good chance of getting 50+ votes.

The program is a well focused and targeted demo that focuses on low-income kids to give them private school choice. This is the *Ice-Breaker* on private school choice. If we can get solid demo going in six cities over the next three years there will be no way to stop private school choice. It is also essential to get 51+ in the Senate on record as supporting private school choice.

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

(George Bush Library)

Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
01. Memo	From Leigh Ann Metzger to John Sununu Re: Meeting on Education Legislation (1 pp.)	n.d.	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Chief of Staff to the President, Office of the
Series: Sununu, John, Files
Subseries: Cabinet Agencies Files
WHORM Cat.:
File Location: Alexander
 (Education) (1991) [1]

Open on Expiration of PRA
 (Document Follows)
 By JP (NLGB) on 10/28/05

Date Closed:	12/29/2004	OA/ID Number:	29185-007
FOIA/SYS Case #:	1998-0004-F[2]	Appeal Case #:	
Re-review Case #:	2005-0426-S	Appeal Disposition:	
P-2/P-5 Review Case #:		Disposition Date:	
AR Case #:		MR Case #:	
AR Disposition:		MR Disposition:	
AR Disposition Date:		MR Disposition Date:	

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
 P-2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
 P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
 P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
 P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
 P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Removed as a personal record misfile.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

(b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
 (b)(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
 (b)(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
 (b)(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
 (b)(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
 (b)(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
 (b)(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
 (b)(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SUNUNU

FROM: LEIGH ANN METZGER

SUBJECT: Meeting on Education Legislation
Friday, October 10
3:00 PM Roosevelt Room

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the education legislation and to reiterate the Administration's support for key components of that legislation, including choice.

As you are aware, there were three (3) choice components originally proposed in the Administration's education bill. They included: a) voucher of Chapter 1 services ; b) \$200 million unspecified incentives to school districts using choice already; c) \$30 million demonstration project for six (6) school districts.

According to OMB, negotiations on the Hill have broken down several times over the issue of "choice". There is some question as to the depth of commitment of the Administration (and the Department) to choice as a component of the bill. If choice is a mandatory component, what is the Administration willing to settle for regarding choice and what is the strategy to negotiate to that point. OMB requested this meeting with the education choice advocates to encourage their support for the choice demonstration project.

Attached is a list of invitees for the meeting.

EDUCATION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE MEETING
OCTOBER 11, 1991
3:00 P.M.

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18
Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs

DRAFT

CENTER FOR CHOICE IN EDUCATION

ISSUE BRIEF

*Public Opinion
on
Choice in Education*

September 25, 1991

CENTER FOR CHOICE IN EDUCATION

ISSUE BRIEF

Public Opinion on Choice in Education *Executive Summary*

September 25, 1991

One of the most evident—yet frequently unrecognized—facts about school choice is that the American public solidly supports it. Moreover, support for choice cuts across socioeconomic, racial and partisan lines. In fact, many are surprised to discover that choice finds particularly strong support among minorities, inner-city residents, lower-income Americans, and young adults.

For example, the 1991 Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Poll, released in August 1991, found:

- 62 percent of Americans—69 percent of minorities, 70 percent of inner-city dwellers, and 71 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds—support choice among public schools.
- 50 percent of Americans—57 percent of inner-city residents, 57 percent of both blacks and Hispanics, and 60 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds—support vouchers.
- Support for choice is several points stronger among Democrats than among Republicans (7 points on public school choice, 4 points on vouchers).

Secretary Lamar Alexander has made school choice a critical part of AMERICA 2000, President Bush's sweeping strategy to transform America's schools by the year 2000. To assess public support for this part of AMERICA 2000 and as a resource for people involved in the school choice issue, the Center for Choice in Education has compiled the results of public opinion surveys from 1991 and earlier years.

The Center for Choice in Education's Issue Brief, "Public Opinion on Choice in Education," shows that support for school choice is strong, especially with minorities, young adults, and inner-city residents, and that it is growing.

- Support for public school choice continues to be strong, with Gallup/PDK reporting levels of 62 percent for 1991 and 1990. Support for interdistrict choice ranges as high as 75 percent among inner-city Detroit residents (Detroit Metropolitan Area Public Policy Survey).
- Support for vouchers has grown. The 1991 Gallup/PDK figure of 50 percent is 6 points higher than the last time it asked the voucher question in 1987, and significantly higher than in 1971 (38 percent) and 1970 (43 percent). Other 1991 polls show support at 56 percent (NBC/Wall Street Journal poll of voters) and 57 percent (National Association of Independent Schools).
- Support for choice is significantly higher among minorities, young adults, inner-city residents and (in most surveys) low-income Americans.

As with other issues, the wording of the questions influences the results. When the issue is presented ambiguously or negatively, as in one Gallup/PDK question and the Tarrance/Greenberg-Lake poll, support for choice will appear lower.

CENTER FOR CHOICE IN EDUCATION

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5. LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY (April 1991)	8
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• Tuition tax credits for private and parochial schools	
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13. TIMES MIRROR SURVEY/GALLUP POLL (May 1988)	14
• Likelihood of voter support for a Presidential candidate who favors vouchers.	
14. GALLUP/PHI DELTA KAPPA POLLS (1970-91)	15
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1991 GALLUP/PHI DELTA KAPPA POLL

Conducted May 1991 - Published September 1991

The 1991 Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Poll found that support for public school choice continues to be strong. 62 percent of Americans--70 percent of blacks, 70 percent of inner-city dwellers, and 71 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds--support choice among public schools.

Support for vouchers rose to 50 percent, 6 points since last time Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa asked a similar question in 1987 (see p. 15). The voucher plan finds its strongest support among blacks (57 percent), inner-city dwellers (57 percent), people with children under 18 (58 percent), and public and nonpublic school parents (56 and 66 percent).

When asked whether they favored allowing choice of "a private school to attend at public expense," however, 26 percent of the public favored the idea, and 68 percent opposed it.

QUESTION (Public school choice): "Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose which public schools in this community the students attend, regardless of where they live?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	INNERCITY	SUBURBS	AGE		
						18-29	30-49	50+
FAVOR	62%	60%	70%	70%	57%	71%	66%	50%
OPPOSE	33%	35%	24%	24%	38%	26%	30%	42%
DON'T KNOW	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	3%	4%	8%

	PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS	NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS	NO CHILDREN	PARTY AFFILIATION		
				REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT
FAVOR	66%	72%	59%	57%	64%	63%
OPPOSE	31%	28%	34%	39%	31%	33%
DON'T KNOW	3%	-	7%	4%	5%	4%

QUESTION (Voucher system): "In some nations, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child's education. The parents can then send the child to any public, parochial, or private school they choose. This is called the 'voucher system.' Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	INNERCITY	SUBURBS	AGE		
						18-29	30-49	50+
FAVOR	50%	49%	57%	57%	50%	60%	56%	39%
OPPOSE	39%	40%	33%	30%	40%	31%	36%	47%
DON'T KNOW	11%	11%	10%	13%	10%	9%	8%	14%

	PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS	NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS	NO CHILDREN	PARTY AFFILIATION		
				REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT
FAVOR	56%	66%	47%	48%	52%	53%
OPPOSE	35%	24%	41%	43%	37%	37%
DON'T KNOW	9%	10%	12%	9%	11%	10%

QUESTION: ""Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	INNERCITY DWELLERS	SUBURBS DWELLERS	CHILDREN IN SCHOOL		
						PARENTS		NONE
						PUBLIC SCHOOL	NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL	
FAVOR	26%	24%	41%	33%	25%	32%	49%	23%
OPPOSE	68%	70%	54%	59%	70%	63%	41%	70%
DON'T KNOW	6%	6%	5%	8%	5%	5%	10%	7%

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
Conducted January 23-February 11, 1991 — Released July 23, 1991

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) survey found that 57 of the public—71 percent of people aged 18 to 29—support vouchers that could be applied toward public, private or parochial schools.

QUESTION (Vouchers): "Some people have suggested giving parents vouchers equal to the amount of money their public school district spends on each child. Parents could then use the voucher either to send the child to public school, or to pay for some or all of the cost of sending the child to a private or a parochial school. Do you think this sounds like a good idea or a bad idea?"

	AGE				
	TOTAL	18-29	30-39	40-59	60 +
VOUCHERS ARE A GOOD IDEA	57%	71%	62%	52%	45%
VOUCHERS ARE A BAD IDEA	38%	27%	33%	44%	47%
DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	5%	2%	4%	4%	9%

NBC NEWS/WALL STREET JOURNAL SURVEY
Conducted May 10-14 - Released May 17, 1991

Most registered voters (56 percent) support giving parents tax credits or vouchers for tuition at the public or private schools of their choice. Support for tax credits or vouchers is particularly strong among black voters (59 percent), young voters, ages 18-34 (68 percent), and blue-collar voters (63 percent).

QUESTION (Tax credits or vouchers): "Would you favor or oppose giving parents education tax credits or vouchers to pay for their children's tuition at the public or private schools of their choice?"

	TOTAL			AGE			BLUE COLLAR
	VOTERS	WHITE	BLACK	18-34	35-49	50 +	
FAVOR	56%	55%	59%	68%	60%	44%	63%
OPPOSE	36%	37%	33%	25%	34%	46%	29%
DON'T KNOW /REFUSED	8%	8%	8%	7%	6%	10%	8%

GALLUP POLL

Conducted April 25-28 - Published May 1, 1991

A majority of Americans support key components of the President's AMERICA 2000 strategy: voluntary national testing; teacher incentives; creation of "new schools"; and *parental choice of schools*.

Public support among Americans 18 years and older for a school choice program allowing parents to use state and local tax dollars to send their children to any school of their choice is 51 percent, up from 44 percent when Gallup last asked a similar question on school vouchers in 1987.

Almost two-thirds of the public (63 percent — 69 percent of blacks and 70 percent of other minorities) think that if this step were taken it would improve the quality of education "a great deal" or "somewhat."

QUESTION: "Would you favor or oppose a program which would allow parents to send their children to the public, parochial or private school of their choice and use state and local tax dollars to pay for all or part of it?"

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	WHITE	BLACK	OTHER MINORITIES
FAVOR	51%	48%	53%	50%	52%	61%
OPPOSE	45%	49%	41%	46%	43%	30%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	5%	4%	6%	5%	6%	10%

QUESTION: "And if this step were taken, how much if at all would it improve the quality of education children receive in this country? Would it improve it. . . ?"

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	WHITE	BLACK	OTHER MINORITIES
A GREAT DEAL	29%	28%	30%	28%	41%	33%
SOMEWHAT	34%	34%	33%	34%	28%	37%
NOT TOO MUCH	17%	17%	17%	17%	14%	10%
NOT AT ALL	14%	16%	12%	14%	12%	5%
DON'T KNOW / REFUSED	7%	5%	8%	7%	5%	5%

LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SURVEY

Conducted March 13-24 - Published April 8, 1991

A 1991 Louisiana Association of Business and Industry poll found that a strong majority of registered voters in Louisiana (59 percent) support the voucher system.

Support for choice has grown since LABI asked the same question in September 1986, when it found that 56 percent of Louisiana voters supported vouchers.

Support for vouchers is particularly high among black voters (64 percent), voters under 34 years of age (68 percent), and poor voters with incomes under \$15,000 (67 percent).

QUESTION (Vouchers): "In some places, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child for his education. The parents can then send the child to any public, parochial or private school they choose. This is called the 'VOUCHER SYSTEM.' Do you favor such a system in Louisiana?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	AGE			
				18-25	25-34	35-44	45 +
YES	59%	57%	64%	68%	68%	57%	55%
NO	32%	33%	29%	26%	24%	34%	35%
DON'T KNOW/WON'T SAY	9%	10%	7%	6%	8%	9%	10%

	PARTY		UNION HOUSEHOLD		INCOME				
	REP.	DEM.	YES	NO	-\$15K	\$15-30K	\$30-45K	\$45-60K	\$60K +
YES	59%	58%	58%	59%	67%	60%	55%	58%	52%
NO	33%	32%	35%	32%	25%	31%	36%	34%	38%
DON'T KNOW/WON'T SAY	8%	9%	7%	9%	9%	10%	9%	8%	9%

1991 DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA PUBLIC POLICY SURVEY
CENTER FOR URBAN STUDIES, WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
Conducted February/March 1991 - Published April 1991

A majority of residents of the Detroit metropolitan area—56 percent of urban residents—support tax credits for parents who send their children to private schools.

A strong majority of metropolitan Detroit residents — 82 percent of urban residents — support intradistrict choice. And most people in the Detroit metropolitan area — 75 percent of urban residents — support interdistrict choice.

The survey also found that urban parents would be twice as likely (70 percent) to consider sending their children to a school in another district as suburban parents (31 percent), if state law allowed interdistrict choice.

QUESTION (Tuition tax credits): "Would you support a state law providing tax credits for parents who send their children to private or parochial schools?"

	DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA			RACE	
	TOTAL	URBAN	SUBURBAN	WHITE	BLACK
YES	52%	56%	50%	52%	53%
NO	42%	38%	44%	43%	39%
DON'T KNOW	6%	6%	6%	5%	7%

QUESTION (Intradistrict): "Parents should be allowed to send their children to any public school in their own district."

QUESTION (Interdistrict): "Parents should be allowed to send their children to public schools in other school districts that agree to admit those children."

	METROPOLITAN AREA (Intradistrict)		
	TOTAL	URBAN	SUBURBAN
AGREE	77%	82%	75%
DISAGREE	14%	8%	16%
NEUTRAL	9%	10%	9%

	METROPOLITAN AREA (Interdistrict)		
	TOTAL	URBAN	SUBURBAN
AGREE	61%	75%	56%
DISAGREE	29%	13%	35%
NEUTRAL	10%	12%	9%

QUESTION: "If state law allowed, would you consider sending any of your children to a school in another school district?"

	METROPOLITAN AREA		
	TOTAL	URBAN	SUBURBAN
YES	42%	70%	31%
NO	55%	28%	65%
DON'T KNOW	3%	2%	4%

Some other findings of the survey (from the survey's Executive Summary) were as follows:

- "Support for choice plans is greater among those who give lower ratings to the quality of their public schools."
- "Blacks are more supportive than whites of schools of choice, regardless of the specific option. The main reason is that blacks give lower ratings to the quality of their public schools and are more likely to support reforms that might improve them."
- "Among parents, 42% would consider sending their children to school in another school district. A much higher percentage of black parents (67%) than white parents (32%) would consider it."

TARRANCE AND ASSOCIATES/GREENBERG-LAKE POLL

Conducted June 21-23 - Released July 19, 1991

The Tarrance and Associates/Greenberg-Lake Poll shows—like the third Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Poll question above—that, when the choice issue is phrased ambiguously or negatively, support for choice may appear to be lower.

QUESTION: "As you may know, there is a proposal before Congress to let parents choose the school that their children will attend anywhere in the community. With this proposal in mind, please consider the following —

- "Some people say that for too long, government has kept parents from being able to improve their own childrens' education, and that by choosing the school their children attend, parents can work directly with teachers to improve the quality of their childrens' education.
- "Other people say that the idea of parents choosing their childrens' education sounds good, but it would dramatically undermine the universal public school system and neighborhood schools. The real answer is to work for quality education everywhere.

"Which of these views comes closer to your own?"

First statement : 34%

Second statement: 60%

Unsure : 7%

1990 ILLINOIS POLICY SURVEY

CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL STUDIES, NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Conducted September/October - Released November 1990

A 1990 Illinois Policy Survey, conducted by the Center for Government Studies, Northern Illinois University, found that 62 percent of Chicago residents favored public school choice. Statewide, 49 percent of respondents favored public school choice, with significantly higher rates of support among blacks (65 percent), Hispanics (69 percent), and the poor (62 percent).

56 percent of Chicago respondents supported school choice that includes vouchers that parents could apply to private schools. Statewide, 45 percent of respondents favored a choice plan including vouchers, with higher support among blacks (58 percent), Hispanics (63 percent), and the poor (51 percent).

QUESTION (Public school choice): "Allowing parents to choose which public school their children will attend, regardless of where they live. State funding would go to the school a student attends--do you favor or oppose this, or do you have no opinion?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	CHICAGO	INCOME UNDER \$14,000
FAVOR	49%	44%	65%	69%	62%	62%
OPPOSE	40%	44%	25%	29%	29%	25%
NO OPINION	11%	12%	10%	3%	9%	14%

1990 GALLUP/PHI DELTA KAPPA POLL

Conducted April/May 1990 - Published September 1990

The 1990 Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa "Survey of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools" found that support for public school choice was 62 percent--72 percent of blacks and 60 percent of whites. A high proportion of young adults, aged 18-29 (72 percent), and Americans with incomes between \$20,000 and \$30,000 (67 percent) also favored choice.

QUESTION (Public school choice): "Do you favor or oppose allowing students and their parents to choose which public schools in this community the students attend, regardless of where they live?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	AGE			INCOME
				18-29	30-49	50+	\$20-30K
FAVOR	62%	60%	72%	72%	63%	54%	67%
OPPOSE	31%	34%	18%	23%	31%	38%	27%
DON'T KNOW	7%	6%	10%	5%	6%	8%	6%

QUESTION (Vouchers): "Would you favor or oppose extending this type of school choice to include private schools as well, with the state providing vouchers to cover its share of the cost?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	CHICAGO	INCOME UNDER \$14,000
FAVOR	45%	42%	58%	63%	56%	51%
OPPOSE	42%	45%	29%	29%	33%	31%
NO OPINION	13%	13%	13%	8%	10%	18%

MINNESOTA EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP SURVEY
Conducted December 1989 - Released February 5, 1990

A 1989 Minnesota Educational Association (MEA) membership survey found strong support among teachers for school choice. Six in 10 (61 percent) of the MEA members surveyed favored students' having a choice of which public school district they attend. More than 6 in 10 (64 percent) of the teachers surveyed approved of students being able to attend college or university classes while they are still in their junior or senior year of high school.

QUESTION (Interdistrict choice): "Should students have a choice of which school district they attend?"

	TOTAL MEA MEMBERS
YES	61
NO	32
DON'T KNOW	7

QUESTION (Postsecondary options): "Should students be able to attend college classes while juniors/seniors in high school?"

	TOTAL MEA MEMBERS
YES	64
NO	31
DONT KNOW	4

ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION POLL

Conducted September 24, 1989 - October 1, 1989

QUESTION (Intradistrict choice): "Some people say that instead of assigning students to a particular school, parents should be able to send their children to any public school within their school district. Do you favor or oppose this idea?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	HAVE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL	
				YES	NO
FAVOR	60%	59%	69%	67%	58%
OPPOSE	28%	30%	20%	27%	28%

1989 GALLUP/PHI DELTA KAPPA POLL

Released September 1989

By a 2-to-1 margin, the public favored allowing students and their parents to choose among public schools in their communities.

QUESTION (Public school choice): "Do you favor or oppose allowing students their parents to choose which public schools in this community the students attend, regardless of where they live?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	NONWHITE	AGE			INCOME \$20-30K
				18-25	25-34	35-44	
YES	60%	59%	67%	67%	64%	51%	59%
NO	31%	33%	22%	24%	29%	38%	33%
DON'T KNOW	9%	8%	11%	9%	7%	11%	8%

TIMES MIRROR SURVEY/GALLUP POLL

Conducted January 1988 - Published May 1988

In a 1988 Times Mirror survey, voters indicated by a 2-to-1 ratio that they would be more likely to vote for a presidential candidate if he favored vouchers. Blacks were over 2-to-1, and Hispanics over 3-to-1, more likely to vote for such a candidate.

According to Times Mirror, "support for vouchers is strongest among groups at opposite ends of the political spectrum. Socially conservative 'Moralist' Republicans and the militantly Democratic, pro-social spending 'Partisan Poor' both support the idea by large margins. Politics does create strange bedfellows."

QUESTION: Voters were asked how much more likely they would be to vote for a presidential candidate if he "supports giving parents more choice in the schools their children attend via payment vouchers used in private/public schools?"

	TOTAL	WHITE	NONWHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
MORE LIKELY	49%	48%	53%	52%	60%
LESS LIKELY	27%	28%	24%	23%	19%
NO EFFECT	16%	16%	17%	18%	10%
DON'T KNOW	7%	7%	7%	8%	11%

	MALE	FEMALE	AGE BY SEX					
			UNDER 30			30-39		
			TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
MORE LIKELY	47%	51%	59%	51%	67%	50%	47%	52%
LESS LIKELY	30%	25%	21%	28%	14%	28%	30%	27%
NO EFFECT	18%	15%	15%	17%	13%	16%	18%	13%
DON'T KNOW	6%	9%	5%	4%	6%	6%	5%	8%

	AGE		YOUNG SINGLES		YOUNG MARRIEDS		UNION HOUSEHOLD	
	18-24	25-29	W/O KIDS	W/KIDS	W/O KIDS	W/KIDS	YES	NO
MORE LIKELY	63%	55%	47%	65%	46%	59%	48%	49%
LESS LIKELY	19%	24%	27%	21%	35%	20%	26%	28%
NO EFFECT	15%	15%	18%	9%	14%	16%	18%	16%
DON'T KNOW	4%	6%	7%	5%	5%	5%	7%	7%

GALLUP/PHI DELTA KAPPA POLLS ON CHOICE 1970-91

Gallup surveys over the past twenty years indicate how significantly support for school choice has increased in the past few years. The 1991 Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Poll shows that 50 percent of the public support vouchers. Another Gallup survey released in May 1991, asking a similar (but not identical) question, found that 51 percent of the public want to allow parents to choose public or nonpublic schools with public funding (see p. *).

This year's result on the voucher question shows public support for a voucher system is up 6 points from when Gallup last asked the voucher question on school vouchers in 1987 (44 percent favored the policy). Support was generally in the low-to-mid 40s from 1970 to 1987, except for 1971, when support registered 38 percent, and 1983, when it was 51 percent.

Gallup surveys over the past twenty years indicate how significant support for school choice has increased in the past few years. (A new Gallup survey in 1991 [not Gallup/PDK] shows that 51 percent of the public wants to allow parents to choose public or nonpublic schools with public funding.)

QUESTION: "In some nations, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child's education. The parents can then send the child to any public, parochial, or private school they choose. This is called the 'voucher system.' Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?"

	1991	1987	1986	1985	1983	1981	1971	1970
YES	50%	44%	46%	45%	51%	43%	38%	43%
NO	39%	41%	41%	40%	38%	41%	44%	46%
DON'T KNOW	11%	15%	13%	15%	11%	16%	18%	11%

For further information, please contact: The Center for Choice in Education, Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs, U.S. Department of Education, 1-800-442-PICK (1-800-442-7425) or 202-401-1341.

Communities trying to help children should be able to offer single-sex classes when comparable opportunities are offered for both boys and girls, when there is a strong educational purpose supporting these classes, and when the parent chooses this opportunity for the child. The United States Constitution in Title IX of the Federal Civil Rights Law permit such single-sex educational opportunities. The Department of Education regulations ought to as well.

Statement by the Secretary of Education

For the last seven months the Department has conducted a public review of whether federal civil rights laws prohibit race-exclusive scholarships, those for which persons of only a designated race may apply.

Our conclusion is: this should not be a problem on any campus where the college president has a warm heart and a minimum amount of good legal advice.

What we have found is this:

1. Most campuses use financial aid to create diversity on campus. The diversity in America itself encourages this, and federal law does not prevent it.

2. There are literally millions of scholarships for disadvantaged minorities -- and for other disadvantaged Americans -- that are not race-exclusive, and the number is growing.

3. There are relatively few race-exclusive scholarships. In fact, over 96% of America's minority students attending college do not have race-exclusive scholarships.

4. Some race-exclusive scholarships may be permissible under federal law: to remedy proven discrimination, when

Congress specifically creates them, as a part of "need-blind" financial aid when it is equally available to all students, or when a private donor gives the money.

5. Otherwise, Congress has prohibited race-exclusive scholarships. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 says: "No persons . . . shall on the ground of race, color or national origin . . . be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

6. It would be hard to imagine any student with a prohibited race-exclusive scholarship who would not be eligible for some other scholarship that is clearly permissible under federal law.

7. No student who now has a scholarship will lose that scholarship because of this review.

8. There will be a four-year transition period for institutions that may wish to adjust their financial aid programs based upon this review. The Department will help schools achieve their legitimate aims without violating Title VI and will not take enforcement action that requires institutions to rescind any previously committed race-exclusive scholarships.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Proposed Policy Guidance

AGENCY: Department of Education

ACTION: Notice of Proposed Policy Guidance, Request for Comment

SUMMARY: The Department of Education issues proposed policy guidance on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations. The proposed policy guidance discusses the applicability of the statute's and regulations' nondiscrimination requirement to student financial aid that is awarded, at least in part, on the basis of race or national origin. The Department solicits from all interested parties written comments on the proposed policy guidance.

DATES: Written comments should be sent to the Department of Education on or before _____.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Michael Williams, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeanette Lim, Office for Civil Rights, Telephone (202) 732-1635 (TDD: (202) 732-1663).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: About eight million of America's 18.5 million college students receive scholarships or loans to help pay the cost of their education. According to the American

Council on Education, less than 4.0 percent -- about 45,000 -- of all minority college students receive "race-exclusive scholarships", that is, scholarships for which students of only one race or national origin may compete. ACE reports that colleges most often offer race-exclusive scholarships in order to increase the diversity of their student populations. (Note: For purposes of this guidance "college" means any postsecondary institution, and "scholarship" means any financial aid, including loans and graduate fellowship programs.)

The purpose of this proposed guidance is to answer the following question: Under what circumstances may colleges offer such race-exclusive scholarships, or other scholarships designed to create diversity, without violating federal law, specifically, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states: "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"?

Since its founding in 1980, the U.S. Department of Education has received less than a dozen complaints that have addressed the permissibility of race-exclusive scholarships. The Department's few statements have been inconsistent. There has never been a full policy review and clear set of principles announced upon

which colleges might rely in planning and administering student aid programs in which race or national origin may be a factor.

The U.S. Department of Education has now conducted such a review of policy, beginning with its request for public comment published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on May 30, 1991. It has conducted this review because Congress has given the Department two assignments which, when race-exclusive scholarships are involved, sometimes seem to compete: (1) to promote scholarship and loan programs that help disadvantaged Americans afford college, and (2) to enforce laws that say that colleges receiving federal funds may not discriminate based upon race, color or national origin.

Today the Department is publishing for comment in the FEDERAL REGISTER a set of principles that constitute the proposed conclusion of this review. These principles are designed to assist colleges that may wish to use scholarships, among other reasons, for the purpose of increasing the diversity of intellectual experiences available within a student population without running afoul of the anti-discrimination provisions of Title VI.

After a 90 day period for comment, the Department will publish its set of final principles and then use these in reviewing all complaints of discrimination concerning race-

exclusive college financial aid. The Department will also offer technical advice to those colleges that may wish to adjust their financial aid programs based upon these principles.

The Department does not want any student now attending college on a race-exclusive scholarship to lose that scholarship as a result of the formulation of these principles. Therefore, where these principles require the adjustment of any college financial aid program, there will be a four-year transition period during which the Department will work with colleges to bring them into compliance without harming any student under scholarship.

Principles to Help Colleges and Universities
Use Scholarships to Enhance Opportunities and
Create Diversity Without Violating Title VI

1. RACE-NEUTRAL AID FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS -- Colleges may make awards to disadvantaged students without regard to race, even if that means that such awards go disproportionately to minority students.

A "disadvantaged" student is one who, despite facing significant obstacles, has prepared himself or herself for a college education. These may be students from low income families. For example, almost one of two full-time undergraduate

students has a federal grant or loan, virtually all of which are based upon financial need. These may be students from school districts with high drop-out rates, students from single-parent families or from families in which few or no members have attended college. None of these or other race-neutral ways of identifying and providing aid to disadvantaged students would present Title VI discrimination problems.

2. RACE-EXCLUSIVE AID TO REMEDY DISCRIMINATION -- A college may award race-exclusive scholarships when that is necessary to overcome that college's past discrimination.

The implementing regulations for Title VI require a recipient of Federal financial assistance that has been found in violation of the regulations not only to end its discriminatory practices, but also to take affirmative action to overcome the effects of past discrimination. 34 C.F.R. 100.3(b)(6)(i). A finding of past discrimination may be made by a court or by an administrative agency -- such as the Department's Office for Civil Rights. It may be made by a state or local legislative body, as long as the legislature has a strong basis in evidence identifying discrimination within its jurisdiction for which such remedial action is required.

3. FEDERAL RACE-EXCLUSIVE SCHOLARSHIPS -- Congress wrote Title VI, and Congress (within the limits of the U.S.

Constitution) may create exceptions to Title VI. Therefore, to the extent federal race-exclusive scholarships -- for example, the Patricia Roberts Harris Fellowship program, which helps minorities pursue graduate and professional studies -- seem to conflict with Title VI, the Department will consider Congress' specific legislative action to create an exception to the more general provisions of Title VI.

4. SCHOLARSHIPS TO CREATE DIVERSITY -- A college may consider race as one factor among several when awarding scholarships designed to help create the kind of campus educational environment that results from having a student population with diverse experiences, opinions, backgrounds, and cultures.

America is unique because it has forged one nation from many people of a remarkable number of different backgrounds. Many colleges seek to create on campus an intellectual environment that reflects that diversity. A college should have substantial discretion to weigh many factors -- including race -- in its efforts to attract and retain a student population of many different experiences, opinions, backgrounds, and cultures -- provided that race is not, in effect, a condition of eligibility for the scholarship.

The Title VI regulations permit a recipient to take this type of voluntary affirmative action to overcome the effects of conditions that have resulted in limited participation by persons of a particular race or national origin. 34 C.F.R.

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5. RACE-EXCLUSIVE SCHOLARSHIPS THAT DO NOT LIMIT AID OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANY STUDENT -- A college may award a race-exclusive scholarship when no other student has his or her opportunity for financial assistance limited by the scholarship.

A college may take voluntary affirmative action that includes the use of race-exclusive scholarships in accordance with the terms of 34 C.F.R. 100.3(b)(6)(ii) where that aid does not limit the financial aid opportunities of any student. Two examples of when this use of race-exclusive scholarships does not limit opportunities to any student are:

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not. The principle is, since all are helped in an equivalent way within the overall program, a race-exclusive scholarship for one student does not take opportunity from another student.

(b) Private donors -- A second example would be when a private donor contributes funds for a scholarship and imposes a race-exclusive requirement. For example, a corporation might contribute engineering scholarships for which only Hispanic students may compete. Since this contribution only increases the amount of financial aid available to all students, no one is hurt.

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The Department has outlined these permissible circumstances to create more certainty in an area where competing responsibilities have created some uncertainty.

Aside from the circumstances contained in these principles, the Department would expect to disallow scholarships for which students of only one race or national origin might compete. Congress expressly prohibited such financial aid by the terms of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: "No person in the United States shall on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits

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PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000d.

Dated:

Lamar Alexander
Secretary

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PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000d.

Dated:

Lamar Alexander
Secretary

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

(George Bush Library)

Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
02. Memo	From Lamar Alexander to John Sununu Re: Meeting w/Senator Kennedy (2 pp.)	11/12/91	P 5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Chief of Staff to the President, Office of the
Series: Sununu, John, Files
Subseries: Cabinet Agencies Files
WHORM Cat.:
File Location: Alexander
 (Education) (1991) [1]

Open on Expiration of PRA
 (Document Follows)
 By gf (NLGB) on 10/28/05

Date Closed:	12/29/2004	OA/ID Number:	29185-007
FOIA/SYS Case #:	1998-0004-F[2]	Appeal Case #:	
Re-review Case #:	2005-0426-S	Appeal Disposition:	
P-2/P-5 Review Case #:		Disposition Date:	
AR Case #:		MR Case #:	
AR Disposition:		MR Disposition:	
AR Disposition Date:		MR Disposition Date:	

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
 P-2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
 P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
 P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
 P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
 P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

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(b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
 (b)(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
 (b)(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
 (b)(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
 (b)(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
 (b)(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
 (b)(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
 (b)(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

November 12, 1991

has seen
THE CHIEF of STAFF6
MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SUNUNUFROM: Lamar Alexander *LA*

SUBJECT: Your meeting with Senator Kennedy

Some background for your meeting with Senator Kennedy on S.2, "The Neighborhood Schools Improvement Act," which will be marked up tomorrow (Wednesday) by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee:

- o Today, I am sending the Committee the attached letter stating that I will recommend the President disapprove the bill because S.2:
 - A. fails to allow private schools to participate in their choice program;
 - B. Includes no AMERICA 2000 priorities and authorizes activities so broad as to include "bureaucratic restructuring" that will be of little real educational benefit;
 - C. gives the Secretary little authority to disapprove any education plan that does not effect true education reform;
 - D. fails to provide a substantial role for the Governors;
 - E. and, creates another national education goals panel which would compete with the existing panel; (you should know that in previous discussions with Senators Kennedy, Bingaman, and Hatch we have offered to allow the Members of Congress who are ex-officio members of the existing panel to serve as full, voting members)
- o The Administration and Senate Republicans -- including the Ranking Member of the full Committee (Hatch) and Subcommittee (Kassebaum) -- were excluded from all discussions on the bill.
- o All Committee Republicans are expected to vote "no" on the bill. Republicans are unlikely to offer any amendments at the mark-up to protest the process. S.2 is not on Senate Majority Leader Mitchell's must do list, so it will likely not come up on the floor before Thanksgiving.

- o When the bill does reach the Senate floor, our strategy will be: (1) to create an explicit authority for New American schools; and, (2) to provide for a public/private school choice demonstration program through floor amendments.
- o A substitute bill may be offered on the Senate floor along the lines of an improved Kildee/Goodling bill.
- o Kennedy's public line is that he produced his own bill because the Administration refused to negotiate. As you know, the many staff and Senator meetings prove this is not correct.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Chairman
Committee on Labor and Human Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to express my views on the Neighborhood Schools Improvement Act, the pending substitute for S. 2, dated November 6, 1991. This bill is seriously flawed and is a major disappointment. The President has called for fundamental reforms in our educational system, which our Nation urgently needs. Unfortunately, S. 2 promises only more of the same old approach. If it were presented to the President in its current form, I would recommend that he disapprove it.

In April of this year, the President announced AMERICA 2000, a bold, complex, and long-range plan to move every community in America toward the National Education Goals adopted almost two years ago by the President and the Nation's Governors. Already, 31 States and hundreds of communities have announced or will soon announce their participation in AMERICA 2000. Numerous Governors, educators, businessmen, and other concerned citizens, both Republicans and Democrats, are working to carry out this far-reaching reform strategy.

As part of that strategy, the President submitted to the Congress his AMERICA 2000 Excellence in Education Act, introduced in the Senate as S. 1141. The bill called for a new generation of American schools, new world class standards in core subjects, more choices for parents of the schools their children attend, and creation of a national examination system. The President and I are pleased that the Congress has already enacted, or is seriously considering, some important components of that plan: the National Education Commission on Time and Learning, new literacy initiatives, alternative certification of teachers and principals, and teacher and school leader academies. Much, however, remains to be done, including authorization of a program of New American Schools that will break the mold of American education and help our students and communities to reach our ambitious goals.

In light of the progress we have made so far, I was optimistic that S. 2 would be a bipartisan vehicle for the remainder of our agenda, particularly after the many meetings and extensive

Page 2 - Honorable Edward M. Kennedy

negotiations in which the Administration participated over the past several months. I am disappointed, therefore, that the new version of the bill includes none of the President's proposals and promises so little in the way of real educational reform.

National Academic Report Card and National Education Goals

Part B of Title I of the bill would authorize the establishment of an independent National Council on Educational Goals, composed of members appointed by the President, the Chairperson of the National Governors' Association, and the congressional leadership, to analyze educational achievement of the Nation's students and to issue an annual National Report Card on our progress toward achieving the National Education Goals adopted by the President and the Governors last year. I strongly oppose this portion of the bill because a similar group, the National Education Goals Panel, already exists and has been carrying out these very activities for nearly two years. Just last month, for example, that bipartisan panel, established by the President and the Governors, issued its first comprehensive report on where we are in meeting our goals and what we need to know as we continue to assess our progress. That report was candid and objective in describing the tremendous problems and challenges that confront us, and I expect the Panel's future reports to be equally enlightening. Creation of another education advisory panel at this point would serve no useful purpose and could only undermine the current Panel's outstanding work.

Moreover, while I am pleased that Part A of Title I of the bill would adopt each of the six National Education Goals, the accompanying policy statements of what the Federal Government will do to help achieve each goal represent a pledge of excessive and unrealistic expansions of Federal funding for a wide array of programs.

Neighborhood Schools Improvement

Under Title II of the pending substitute, the Department of Education would provide substantial financial assistance over a period of five years to help States and local school districts restructure their systems of elementary and secondary education and to improve education for all students. This "restructuring," however, is unlikely to lead to significant and lasting reform because it does not promote the kind of innovative steps, such as the creation of New American Schools, that are essential to real reform. Substantial revisions are needed.

First, the provisions on educational choice in S. 2 do not ensure that choice programs will actually be implemented anywhere, and do not provide at all for choice programs involving private schools. If we want the benefits of educational reform and innovation to reach all of our children, we must give parents far

Page 3 - Honorable Edward M. Kennedy

greater choice than they now enjoy in deciding where their children will go to school, and the bill should be amended to promote that result with more certainty. I strongly urge that the committee adopt those measures advanced by the President, such as an incentive fund, a demonstration authority, or "follow-the-child" amendments to Chapter 1. At the very least, the bill should include a carefully-tailored demonstration program, involving choice among both public and private schools, so that we can increase our knowledge about the effects and benefits of educational choice.

I also believe that the bill ought to assign a central role to each State's Governor, particularly in selecting the State panel; in developing, approving, and submitting the State's application for funding; and in determining how the State will use its funds. The Governor, advised by an educational reform body separate from (but including) the State educational agency, should apply to the Secretary of Education for the State's money on the basis of a proposed plan to implement one or more of a defined list of allowable activities.

The allowable activities should be limited to the specific kinds of activities that are the focus of the President's AMERICA 2000 Education Strategy: public and private school choice, New American Schools, Merit Schools, Teacher and School Leader Academies, and alternative certification of teachers and principals, each substantially as defined in S. 1141. (If Teacher Academies, School Leader Academies, and alternative certification are included as program authorities under Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as part of the pending HEA reauthorization, there would, of course, be no need to include them under this statute.) Governors could also apply to use the funds for other purposes, if they could demonstrate to the Secretary's satisfaction that they have a new reform proposal that would significantly contribute to educational achievement and that is not on the list. A more focused and specific list of permissible activities is needed because, as drafted, Title II does not ensure that real reform will ever occur. The activities authorized by the bill, at both the State and local levels, are so broadly defined as to constitute general aid, covering virtually any education-related activity, including bureaucratic "restructuring" that may never be of real educational benefit to anyone.

I strongly object to the requirement, in section 205 of the bill, to establish an "independent, third party panel" at the Federal level to review each State's plan. The responsibility to review and approve a State's plan should rest directly with the Secretary, as it does under other programs administered by the Department. Moreover, the Secretary should have discretion to ensure that State plans effect substantial reform and to disapprove those that do not.

Page 4 - Honorable Edward M. Kennedy

Finally, funds that "flow through" to the local level should be available to a wide range of local agencies and organizations, not just to local educational agencies and public schools. Innovation and reform in education result most beneficially from partnerships that include a variety of groups, not just the traditional State-LEA system. This approach would be consistent with a number of reform efforts under way today that encourage a wide variety of agencies, institutions, and organizations to become involved in educational reform.

Our educational system is in urgent need of fundamental reform. Meeting the National Education Goals is a great challenge for us all. The President's AMERICA 2000 Education Strategy aims to transform American education and to get the Nation to move itself in the direction of achieving those Goals. I assure you of my commitment to work with you and the Congress to develop legislation acceptable to the Administration that will help the Nation meet these vital objectives. If the pending version of S. 2 were presented to the President, however, I would recommend that he disapprove it.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that enactment of the pending substitute for S. 2 would not be in accord with the President's program.

Sincerely,

Lamar Alexander

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 16, 1991

Dear Bill,

As we discussed on the phone earlier today, I am writing to assure you of our willingness to accept the parental choice provision in H.R. 3320, as introduced by you, and Representatives Ford and Kildee. I have talked with Secretary Alexander and he too supports this position.

While we continue to support the choice provisions contained in AMERICA 2000, it is our understanding that H.R. 3320 will provide, at State and local discretion, the opportunity for the full range of choice options. This current framework, if not weakened, is acceptable.

For the purposes of House consideration of H.R. 3320, the Administration will support efforts to preserve the specific language now contained in the subcommittee mark and oppose other related amendments on the House floor.

I must also, however, emphasize we are still concerned that other parts of the bill are not yet structured to produce real educational reform. We encourage you to consider the views of the Administration concerning the remainder of the bill as outlined in Secretary Alexander's bill report submitted to the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. Sununu", with a stylized, cursive script.

John H. Sununu
Chief of Staff

The Honorable William F. Goodling
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 16, 1991

Dear Bill,

As we discussed on the phone earlier today, I am writing to assure you of our willingness to accept the parental choice provision in H.R. 3320, as introduced by you, and Representatives Ford and Kildee. I have talked with Secretary Alexander and he too supports this position.

While we continue to support the choice provisions contained in AMERICA 2000, it is our understanding that H.R. 3320 will provide, at State and local discretion, the opportunity for the full range of choice options. This current framework, if not weakened, is acceptable.

For the purposes of House consideration of H.R. 3320, the Administration will support efforts to preserve the specific language now contained in the subcommittee mark and oppose other related amendments on the House floor.

I must also, however, emphasize we are still concerned that other parts of the bill are not yet structured to produce real educational reform. We encourage you to consider the views of the Administration concerning the remainder of the bill as outlined in Secretary Alexander's bill report submitted to the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John H. Sununu
Chief of Staff

The Honorable William F. Goodling
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

(George Bush Library)

Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
03. Memo	From Lamar Alexander to John Sununu Re: Suggested Presidential Meeting w/Members of Congress (3 pp.)	10/7/91	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Chief of Staff to the President, Office of the
Series: Sununu, John, Files
Subseries: Cabinet Agencies Files
WHORM Cat.:
File Location: Alexander
(Education) (1991) [1]

Open on Expiration of PRA
(Document Follows)
By JP (NLGB) on 10/28/05

Date Closed: 12/29/2004	OA/ID Number: 29185-007
FOIA/SYS Case #: 1998-0004-F[2]	Appeal Case #:
Re-review Case #: 2005-0426-S	Appeal Disposition:
P-2/P-5 Review Case #:	Disposition Date:
AR Case #:	MR Case #:
AR Disposition:	MR Disposition:
AR Disposition Date:	MR Disposition Date:

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

THE CHIEF of STAFF
has seen

October 7, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SUNUNU

FROM: Lamar Alexander *LA*

SUBJECT: Suggested Presidential Meeting with Members of Congress

I would like to request that a meeting be arranged with the President and key Members of Congress to discuss AMERICA 2000 authorization and appropriations currently before the Congress.

Background

Prospects for passage of an acceptable bill containing the President's AMERICA 2000 education strategy have dimmed considerably since Congress has returned from its August recess. Both House Education Chairman Bill Ford (D-MI) and Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chairman Ted Kennedy (D-MA) assured us that they would give the President's AMERICA 2000 bill a fair hearing, but this no longer appears to be the case.

In the Senate, AMERICA 2000 was introduced by request by Senators Kennedy (D-MA), Pell (D-RI), Hatch (R-UT), and Kassebaum (R-KS), and in the early stages it appeared as if it would be possible to produce a bipartisan education bill containing much of AMERICA 2000. However, after months of negotiations between the Administration and bipartisan Committee staff, we have been told that at the direction of Senate Majority Leader Mitchell, Committee Democrats have been instructed to remove all references to AMERICA 2000, including our choice proposals, from the current bill draft. The bill is scheduled to be marked up in the next two weeks. In addition, we have heard discussion that Senator Kennedy's bill to make Head Start an entitlement will be added to their omnibus bill (S.2), which already contains numerous other objectionable provisions. It is likely the President would have to veto this package.

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SUNUNU

Page 2

In the House, Congressmen Ford (D-MI), Kildee (D-MI), and Goodling (R-PA), introduced their alternative to our AMERICA 2000 legislation which was marked-up two weeks ago in subcommittee. Despite the advice of Committee Ranking Republican Bill Goodling that this bill is probably the best the President can hope to get, I sent a letter to the subcommittee stating we may be able to work with the framework of the bill to develop legislation we could support, but the bill is not acceptable in its present form. The subcommittee passed the bill on a voice vote, and the full Education and Labor Committee is likely to mark it up in the next two weeks. A number of killer amendments will be offered -- including one which would strike any references to choice from the bill -- that may well be accepted by the Committee. In that case, the specter of a Presidential veto may again have to be raised.

Further developments in the House indicate the level of partisanship is on the rise. I have been told that the House Democratic Leadership has made it clear to Congressmen Ford and Kildee personally that the President must not be allowed to seize the agenda on education and that the Committee must get on with developing its own alternative to AMERICA 2000. Secondly, as a result of the recent Washington Post article describing how the Department contributed to production costs for the broadcast of a recent Presidential speech directly to school children, Chairman Ford has announced (he confirmed this to me by phone) that he will discontinue Committee consideration of AMERICA 2000 until the Committee hears an explanation of the Department's actions in this case. He sent me a letter requesting that I testify on this subject before his Committee.

Finally, Congressman Steny Hoyer, in a letter to me, has threatened our appropriations until the Department's role in the speech is clarified. This could have important consequences for our ongoing activities, state by state.

REASONS FOR A MEETING

As a result of the above developments, I suggest that a meeting be arranged for the following reasons:

- o To show once again the President's personal interest in this issue;
- o To make one last effort to encourage bipartisan support of AMERICA 2000 and to indicate the Administration's willingness to work with Congress on this issue;

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SUNUNU

Page 3

- o To make it clear that any bill that does not contain key elements will not be acceptable to the Administration. These include: public and private school choice; increasing local community involvement in education; developing a nationwide system of voluntary testing; authorizing Teacher and School Leader Academies; and creating New American Schools;
- o To prevent serious restrictions on Department appropriations which are critical for ongoing America 2000 activities;
- o If, after this meeting, Congress still refuses to pass an acceptable bill, then this meeting could become the most important item of the now lengthy list of the Administration's attempts to pass a bipartisan bill.

Suggested Congressional Participants

I would suggest that the following Members be invited to the meeting: key Members of the House and Senate Majority and Minority Leadership, the House Education and Labor Committee and Subcommittee Chairmen and Ranking Members, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee and Subcommittee Chairmen and Ranking Members, and possibly the House and Senate Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Appropriations Committees.

Perhaps we can meet with the President, in advance, to review our strategy in greater detail.

Thank you for your assistance. I am looking forward to discussing this further with you by phone.

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
04. Memo	From Lamar Alexander to POTUS Re: September 30th Release of the National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Leaders (2 pp.)	9/27/91	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Chief of Staff to the President, Office of the
Series: Sununu, John, Files
Subseries: Cabinet Agencies Files
WHORM Cat.:
File Location: Alexander
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

September 27, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: LAMAR ALEXANDER *Lamar*

SUBJECT: September 30th Release of the National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners

The first annual National Education Goals report will be issued on Monday, September 30, 1991. This report represents the latest in a series of actions resulting from the historic process set in motion two years ago at your Education Summit with the Governors in Charlottesville.

The report points to progress that the Nation is making in some areas:

- o High school completion has reached an all-time high: 83 percent of our 19- and 20-year-olds have finished high school or its equivalent.
- o Drug use in American schools is down.
- o Math and reading scores in the South and among black students improved steadily during the 1980s.

The report also shows that today's children read about as well and know about as much math and science as their parents did in 1970 (Chart 1). But this is not nearly as much as they need to know and be able to do in today's world. It would be like trying to fight Desert Storm with 1970 equipment and training; the Iraqis tried it and lost. Judged by today's standard in mathematics, for example, only 1 in 6 American students is competent in that subject area (Chart 2).

Minority students' gains over the last 20 years pale in light of this new standard. Only 4 percent of Black eighth graders and 6 percent of Hispanic eighth graders have achieved competence in mathematics, for instance, compared to 39 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander eighth graders (Chart 3).

Even though the data in the report have been around for awhile, this is the first time they've been linked to the National Education Goals. And we have found significant gaps in data needed to measure America's progress toward the goals.

Contrary to what some believe, Federal support for education services and activities related to the goals has increased 13

percent after inflation from 1989-91. Spending on the preschool years rose 41 percent; on elementary and secondary schools, it rose 11 percent; and on postsecondary education, it increased 3 percent.

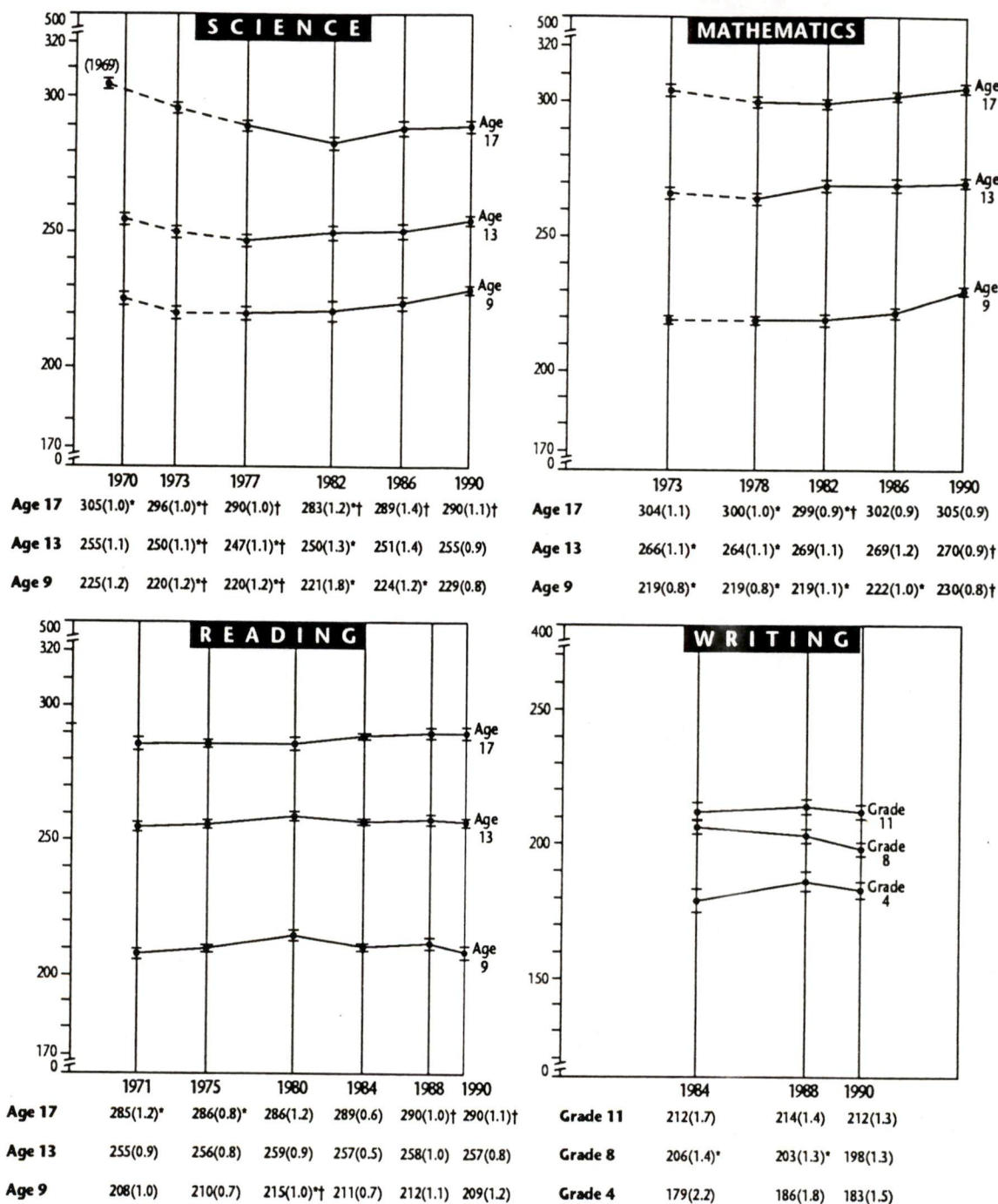
Recommendations:

1. On September 30, the day the report is released, you should issue a statement commenting on the findings and significance of the report.
2. In your talk to American students on October 1, you should refer to the report to make the point that students must work harder, study more, and learn more in order to be prepared to live and work in today's world.

Attachments

FIGURE 1

National Trends in Average Achievement in Science, Mathematics, Reading, and Writing

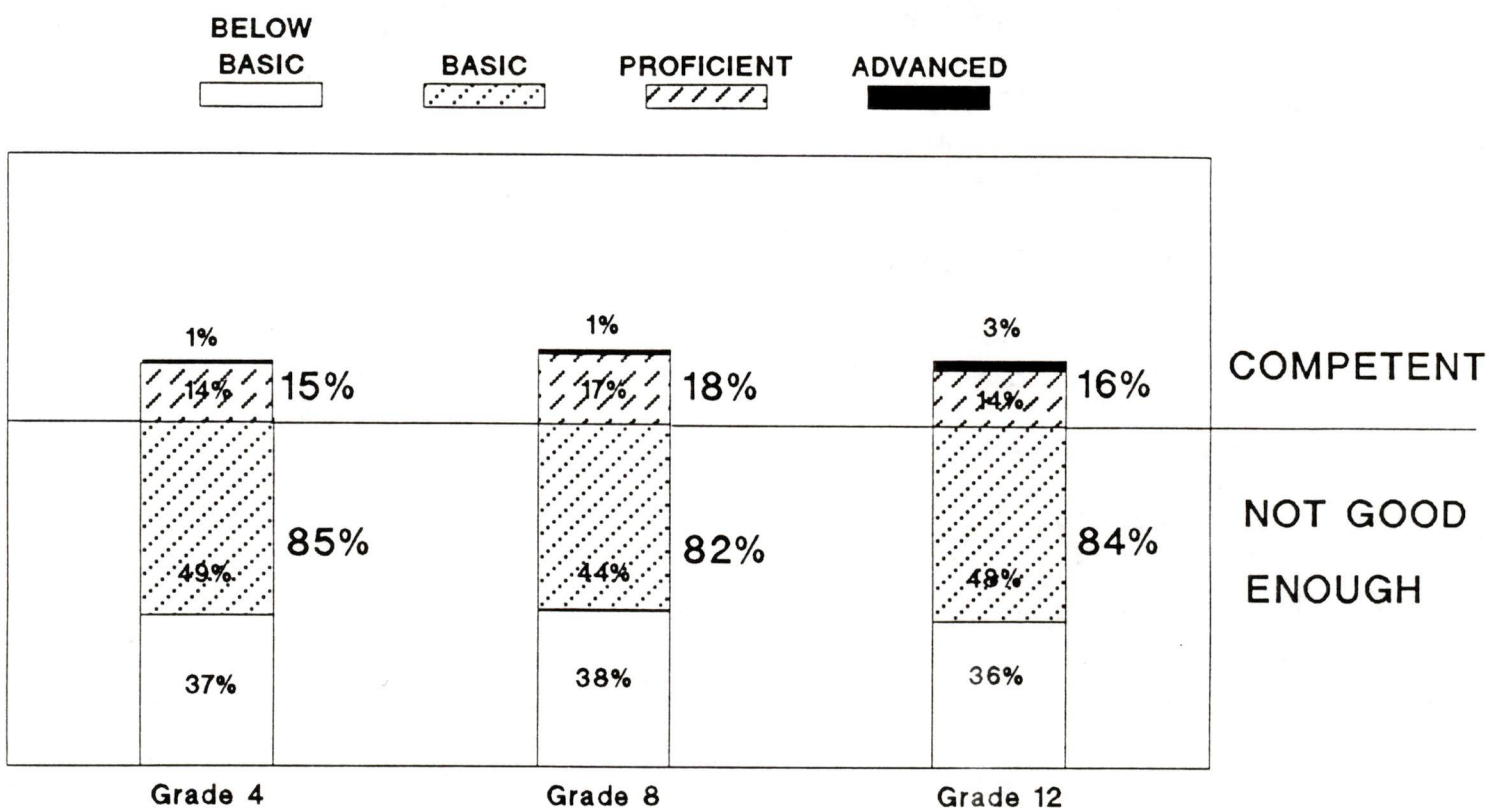


— 95 percent confidence interval. [---] Extrapolated from previous NAEP analyses.

* Statistically significant difference from 1990 and † statistically significant difference from 1969–70 for science, 1973 for mathematics, and 1971 for reading, as determined by an application of the Bonferroni procedure, where alpha equals .05 per set of comparisons. The standard errors of the estimated proficiencies appear in parentheses. It can be said with 95 percent certainty that for each population of interest, the value for the whole population is within plus or minus two standard errors of the estimate for the sample.

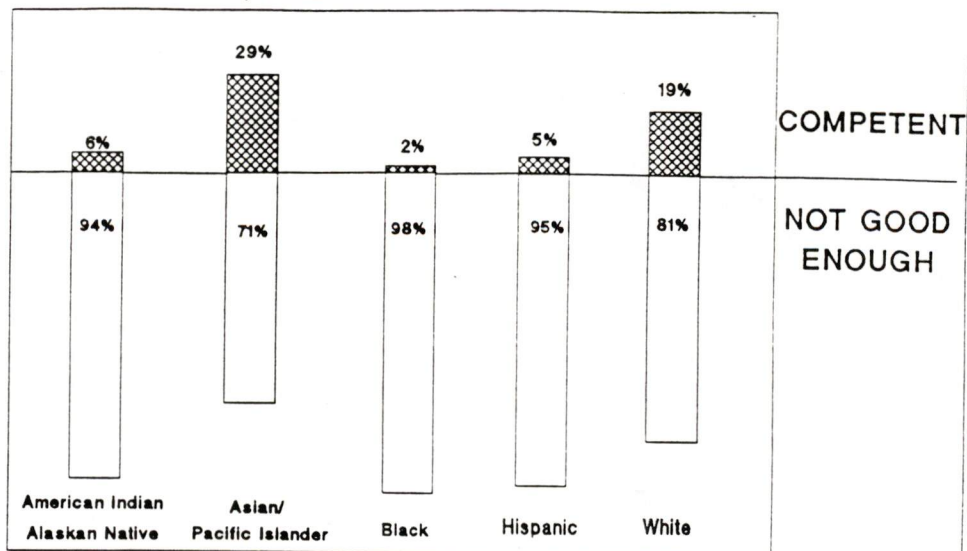
Competency in Mathematics

Percent of 4th, 8th, and 12th graders by Achievement Levels, 1990

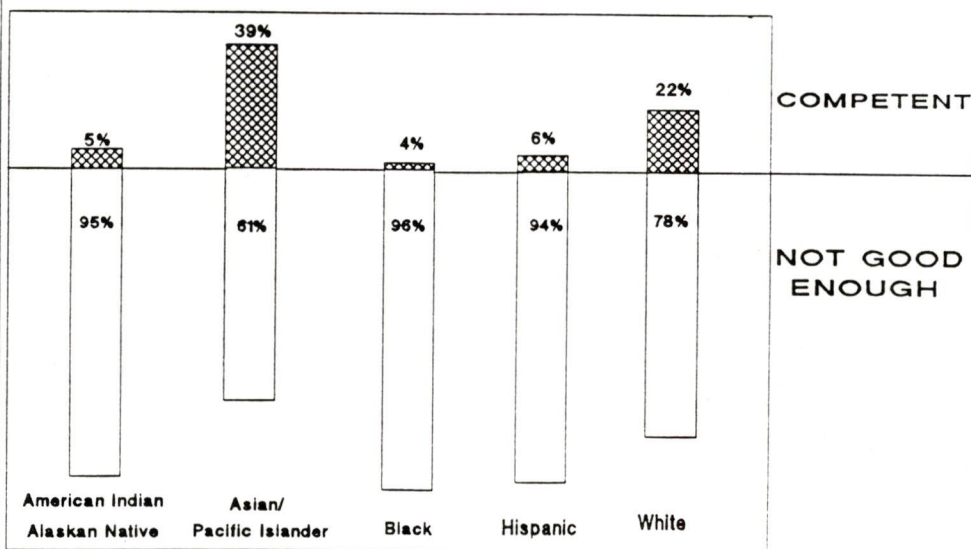


Note: Percentages may total more than 100% due to rounding.

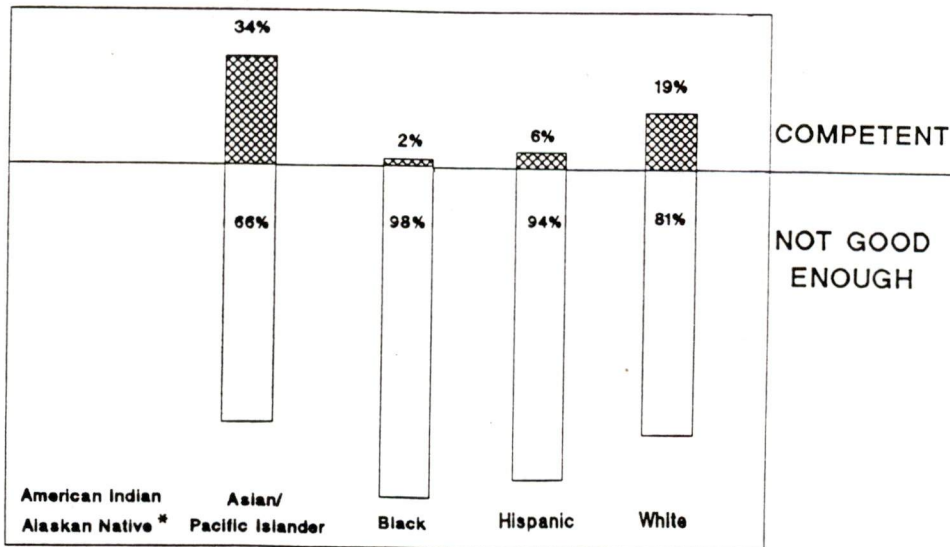
Competency in Mathematics
Percent of 4th graders who are competent in mathematics, 1990



Competency in Mathematics
Percent of 8th graders who are competent in mathematics, 1990



Competency in Mathematics
Percent of 12th graders who are competent in mathematics, 1990



*Sample size is insufficient to permit reliable estimate.

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Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
05. Memo	From Lamar Alexander to POTUS Re: Single-Sex, Single-Race Schools and School Programs (3 pp.)	9/13/91	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
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Series: Sununu, John, Files
Subseries: Cabinet Agencies Files
WHORM Cat.:
File Location: Alexander
(Education) (1991) [1]

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By JP (NLGB) on 4/21/08

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

September 13, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: LAMAR ALEXANDER *Lamar Alexander*

SUBJECT: SINGLE-SEX, SINGLE-RACE SCHOOLS
AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- BOTTOM LINE:
1. Your answers to date are fine, within the law.
 2. Education Department regulations prohibit some single-sex activities that constitutional law would probably permit, so we should change our regulations (after Clarence Thomas) to make it no more or less strict than the Constitution.
 3. The Solicitor General and I should brief the Domestic Policy Council; no need for DPC action or Presidential decision. After that, we can move to amend our regulations.

* * * * *

YOUR COMMENTS: I would suggest: "Some children -- especially in our big cities -- are growing up without enough family support, without good role models. They'll never be ready for living, or for learning, unless someone in the community steps in to help, tries something different, even radically different. I want to encourage that kind of help, not get in the way of it. Of course, when these programs are for girls only, or boys only, and especially if children become separated by race, our laws say there has to be a very persuasive governmental or educational reason for it."

THE LAW: I've talked this over with Solicitor General Ken Starr. There must be a solid governmental purpose for any discrimination using public funds. If discrimination is based on gender, the purpose must be "very persuasive" (although offering the other sex separate but equal programs helps). There must be an even more persuasive governmental purpose if discrimination is based on race. Still, single-sex, even single-race, school programs are not absolutely prohibited. The law can change (either way) as the Supreme Court changes.

The Honorable George Bush
Page Two
September 13, 1991

CAUTION: You may wish to avoid discrimination based on race. It is much harder to justify and may seem inconsistent with your other positions (minority scholarships, Clarence Thomas, affirmative action). There is an important history in America that should make us think twice about any race discrimination.

Also, race was not an issue in the Detroit all-male school. Because of housing patterns, only blacks go to that school. For the same reason, all-male, big city programs will naturally be all (or mostly all) black.

ACTION NEEDED: None by the President. The Department of Justice is helping us write an amendment that will make our Department of Education Title IX of the Civil Rights Act (gender discrimination) regulations no more or less strict than the laws. Changing these Title IX regulations will provoke criticism from some women's groups.

DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL: Solicitor General Starr and I could brief DPC. Then, the Department of Education can move to change the Title IX regulation. No DPC action is needed.

POWER TO POOR PEOPLE: You are now on the side of vouchers for the poor for school choice, home ownership in housing projects, more and larger college grants for poor families and school programs to help poor black boys in big cities. Most Democrats oppose all of this.

BOY SCOUTS ARE OK: Education Department regulations specifically exempt Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts from the effect of Title IX.

AMERICA 2000: I thought you would enjoy the attached Garden City, Kansas editorial asking why Kansas leaders haven't jumped on the AMERICA 2000 bandwagon.

Governor Carlson kicked off Minnesota 2000 Thursday with strong support of business and the Minnesota NEA chapter. Today, Farmington, Minnesota jointly kicks off Farmington 2000 and becomes a Cities in Schools community.

Next week: Delaware 2000, Vermont 2000.

Enclosure

Kansas, 9/5/91
No page number given

10

EDITORIALS

Kansas 2000

Bush's school plan is strategy for this state

Since the Kansas State Board of Education refuses to listen to many teachers, many legislators and most Kansans concerned with quality schooling, perhaps it will listen to President Bush.

"We ask too little of our students. We shy away from demanding excellence and accountability," Mr. Bush said in his back-to-school message Tuesday.

Although his speech was delivered in Maine, the president could have been talking directly to the Kansas school board.

In the eight years following the 1983 "A Nation at Risk" report, the state board has steadfastly resisted major school reform efforts. While other states were adopting such improvements as alternative certification of teachers, tough high school graduation requirements and tests for academic competency, the Kansas board has dithered and dawdled, apparently bewildered by what the fuss was all about.

Indeed, it could be argued that no state has lower expectations for its students than Kansas. This state has no statewide student assessment program and no statewide academic standards. Its high school graduation requirements are pathetically inadequate. To top it off, Kansas has an open admissions policy that guarantees all high school graduates a spot in a state university.

Not surprisingly, many young Kansans have the idea that there are no consequences for scholastic mediocrity. The state board has no lofty expectations of them, nor do most local school boards. As a result, thousands of young Kansans leave school without the skills to compete in the job market or to do well in college.

Fortunately, many legislators understand the problem and are working this fall on school reform issues. Given the State Board of Education's poor track record, the Legis-

lature is the main hope that Kansas will have the world-class school system needed to prepare its children for the 21st century.

The best thing the Legislature could do would be to declare Kansas an "America 2000" state. Named after Mr. Bush's education plan, America 2000 states commit themselves to the president's six national school goals, which include boosting reading and math abilities, develop a strategy to meet those goals and design a report card to measure progress.

Mr. Bush will be in Maryland and Nebraska today to help those states launch their America 2000 programs. The fact that Kansas has no similar plan is another indication that this state is falling behind the rest of the country in school reform.

In his school speech Tuesday, the president noted that "every day brings new evidence of crisis" in American education. To most Americans, Mr. Bush's comment is indisputable, as shown most recently by the drastic decline in SAT scores.

Remarkably, the Kansas State Board of Education and some powerful educators in this state are about the only people in the United States who don't recognize the crisis. Until they do, Kansas won't be ready for America in the year 2000.

WHAT: AN AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK HOMECOMING
(NOVEMBER 18-22)

OPPORTUNITY:

- Momentum: Last Major Education Push in 1991
- Cooperative Effort with NEA, Other Education Groups
- Celebrity Mobilization
- Emphasis on Communities: "Schools and Communities: Partners for a Strong America."

CENTERPIECE: Homecoming Day, Thursday, November 21

- Celebrities and Other Administration Officials (Congress?) Visit Their Hometown Schools
- Presidential Address*
- Town Meetings in Schools
- Presidential Proclamations/Homecoming Day

SUPPORTING EVENTS:

- White House Celebrity Event/Briefing Sunday, 11/17/91*
- AMERICA 2000 Kick-Offs (3): Cabinet, First Lady
- Teacher Recognition Event*
- Major Policy Announcement*

*Presidential Involvement

WHAT: THE AMERICA 2000 COALITION, A NATION-WIDE ALLIANCE OF ORGANIZATIONS COMMITTED TO ADVANCING THE PRESIDENT'S EDUCATION STRATEGY.

OPPORTUNITY:

- Expand President's Team
- Commit Community Change Agents
- Support America 2000 Organizational Efforts
- Defuse Perceived Competition for Charitable \$
- Channel for Bandwagon Joiners

CHALLENGE:

- Adopt Goals
- Identify One or More specific goals for community focus
- Design Communications Plan
- Commit Local Affiliates to A-2000 Communities
- Report Card

REWARD:

- Public Identification with National Crusade
- Use of Logo
- Presidential Recognition

The *AMERICA 2000 Coalition*

The *AMERICA 2000 Coalition* is a nationwide alliance of organizations committed to the President's AMERICA 2000 education strategy. These organizations will work nationally and through their local affiliates to help America move itself, community by community, toward the six National Education Goals. Adopted by the President and the governors at Charlottesville, Virginia in 1989, these goals state that by year 2000:

- 1) All children will start school ready to learn.
- 2) The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
- 3) Students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.
- 4) Students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.
- 5) Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- 6) Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

Each *Coalition* organization will be required to do five things:

- 1) Adopt the six National Education Goals.
- 2) Develop a strategy for reaching the goal(s) that organization is best equipped to help communities achieve.
- 3) Enlist local affiliates in community efforts to achieve the National Education Goals.
- 4) Develop a Report Card that will measure the organization's progress in implementing its strategy.
- 5) Design a plan to communicate regularly with its members concerning its AMERICA 2000 activities.

All members of the AMERICA 2000 Coalition would meet once a year to share information on the work of the Coalition. At that time they would be recognized by the President and the Secretary for the activities they have supported.

The Department can support the work of the Coalition in several ways. It can make available to member organizations video and print materials (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, etc.) on the AMERICA 2000 Strategy. These can be modified to allow for special inserts specific to the organization. The Department also can make available Department staff for presentations and various types of assistance at local, regional, and national gatherings of the Coalition affiliates. In addition, the Department will add key names provided by Coalition members to the general AMERICA 2000 mailing list.

What next?

- An individual is needed to organize the Coalition.
- A White House event needs to be planned to launch the work of the Coalition.
- A pamphlet needs to be developed describing the Coalition.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 17, 1991

THE CHIEF of STAFF
has seen

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR SUNUNU

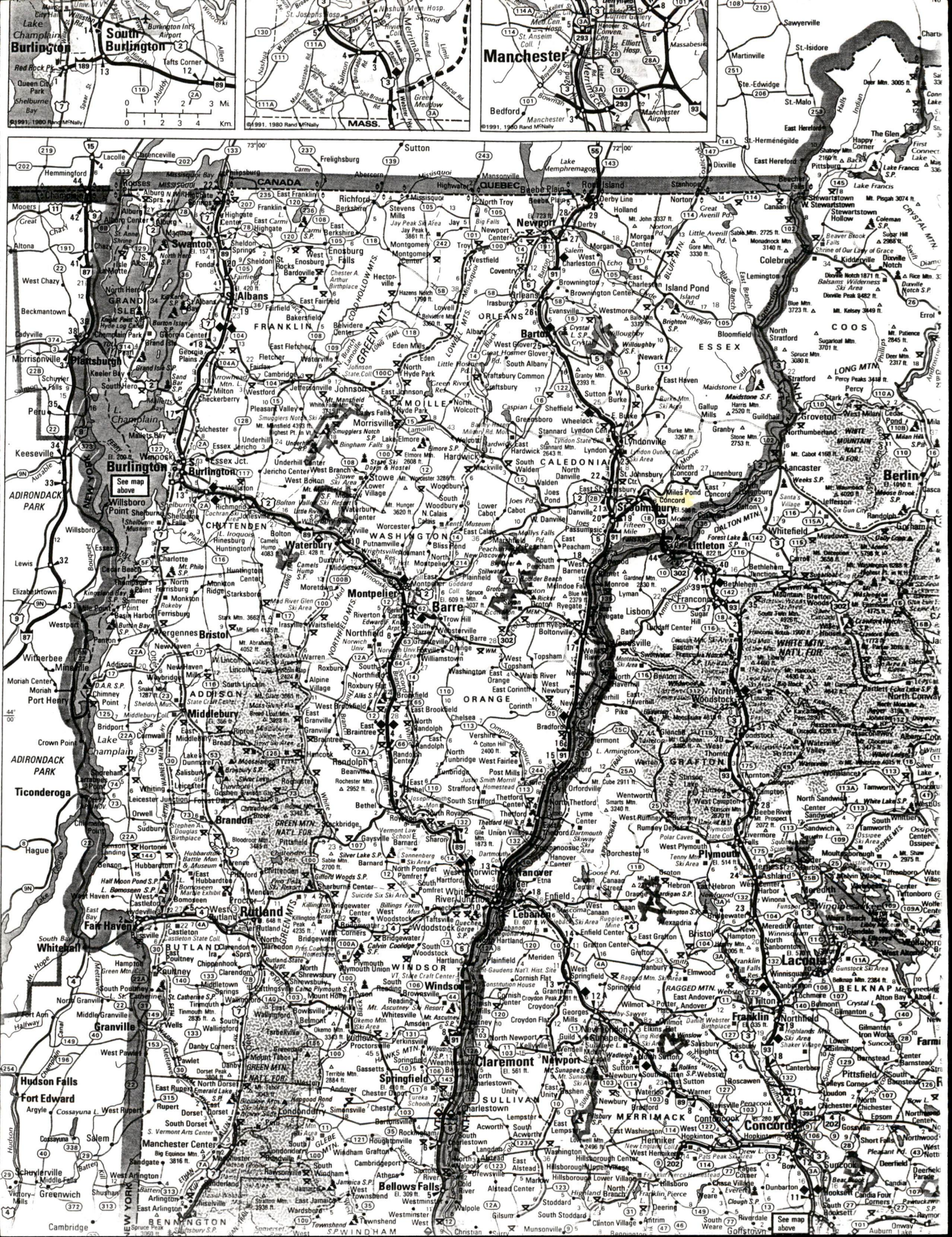
FROM: EDE HOLIDAY *[Signature]*

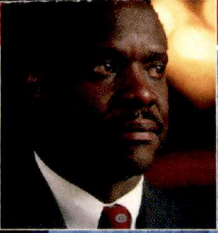
SUBJECT: Concord, Vermont

Concord, Vermont (pop. 353) lies 6 miles east of St. Johnsbury on the Moose River in the northeast part of the state (see attached map). The town's significance in American history is owed largely to the achievements of educator Samuel Read Hall, the first teacher in the United States to use blackboards. Although a native of New Hampshire, Hall made efforts to familiarize himself with other parts of New England, finding teaching positions in Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont. In 1823, he founded the Concord Academy in Concord, Vermont, the first teacher-training school in the United States.

With so rich an educational history, it seems only fitting that the site for Secretary Alexander's September 20th speech to the Caledonia Republican Dinner is Concord, Vermont -- as reported (accurately) in this week's Cabinet Report.

Attachment





CLARENCE THOMAS: The Pain of Being Black

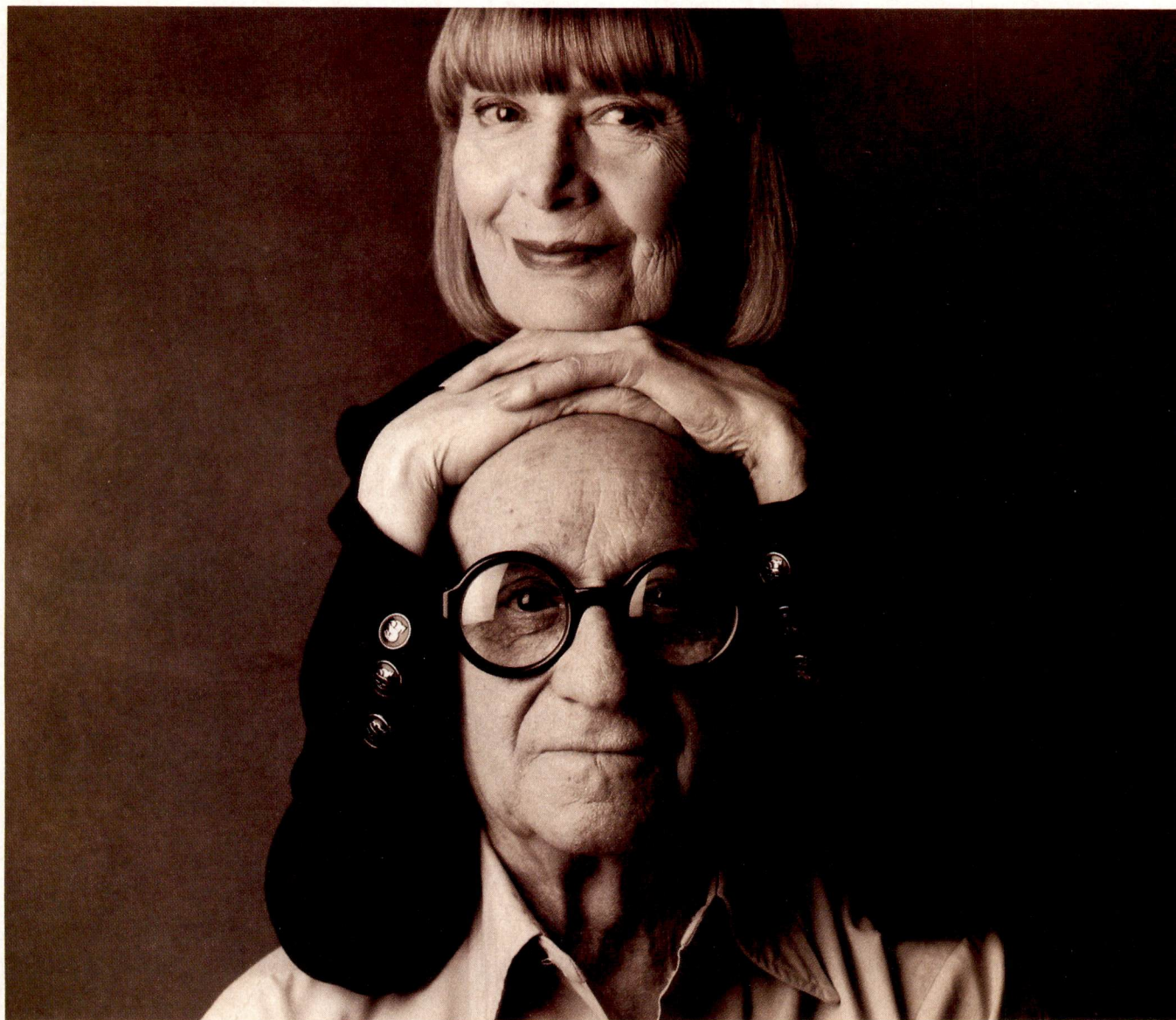
TIME

Can This Man Save Our Schools?

**EDUCATION SECRETARY
LAMAR ALEXANDER**



724404 1



*We did it.
We're down to one piece of plastic.
Some people wonder how we manage with just one credit card.
We tell them it's a Private Issue.*



Your credit card shouldn't be like everyone else's. Yours should have a credit line of at least \$5,000, interest-free* cash advances, and an automatic 5% rebate on travel charges. And your credit card should pay a special 1.5% Cashback Bonus.**

Your credit card should be a Private Issue.®

*When balance is paid in full each month. Cash transaction fee is 2.5% (\$2 minimum, \$10 maximum). If finance charge applies it is at least 50¢. 19.8% APR except 18% in ME, NC and WI. \$40 Annual Fee. **Up to 1.5% yearly; based on annual level of purchases. ©1991 Greenwood Trust Company, member FDIC.

TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

COVER STORIES

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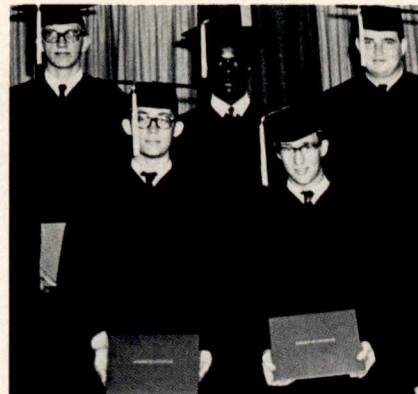
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COVER Photograph for TIME by Gregory Heisler

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JAMES SCHNEPP FOR TIME



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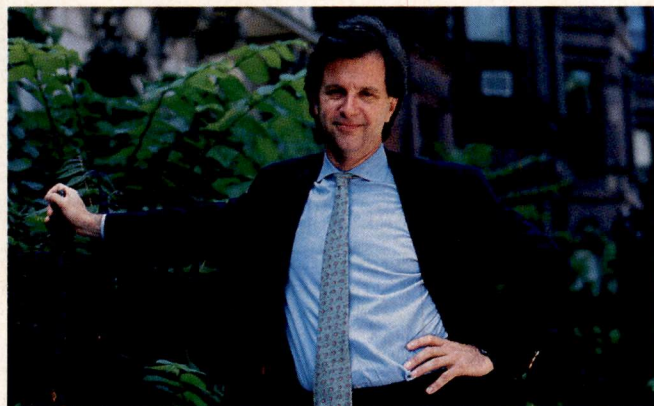
FROM THE PUBLISHER

Some journalists seem fated to write about certain subjects. Sam Allis, who reported on this week's cover, comes from a family with five generations of distinguished careers in the field of education. They range from founder of Haverford College to dean at Harvard to alumni official at Amherst College. Sam's father is a former chairman of the history department at Phillips Academy, which Sam attended before going to Harvard.

Fortunately, Sam brings much more to the table than lineage. He monitors the education of his daughter, Molly, 8, who attends a public school in Brookline, Mass. "If there is one thing I have learned in this beat, it is that parental involvement is the single biggest factor between success and failure for a school," he explains. "One, often two bleary-eyed parents of virtually every child in Molly's class show up at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast to hear and see what their children and teachers are doing. Any school that can command that kind of loyalty is doing something right."

Bleary-eyed loyalty is nothing new to Allis, though. Colleagues know Sam best for his engaging wit and his tendency to immerse himself in a good story. While on the presidential campaign trail with Walter Mondale in 1984, Allis grew a beard, overate on the campaign plane and "became somewhat Orson Wellesian," recalls a comrade. In other phases, he's been lean and mean. "Sam is indefatigable, and his enthusiasms are boundless," observes George Russell, who edited this week's cover package. "He throws himself at things. That's one of the reasons he's so good at what he does."

Allis wrote for the *Wall Street Journal* before coming to TIME in 1981. After stints in Houston, Washington and Rome, he joined the Boston bureau in 1988 and began writing about educa-



Tenacious Sam Allis, on the education beat

"The educational establishment in this country needs to be sandblasted out of its torpor."

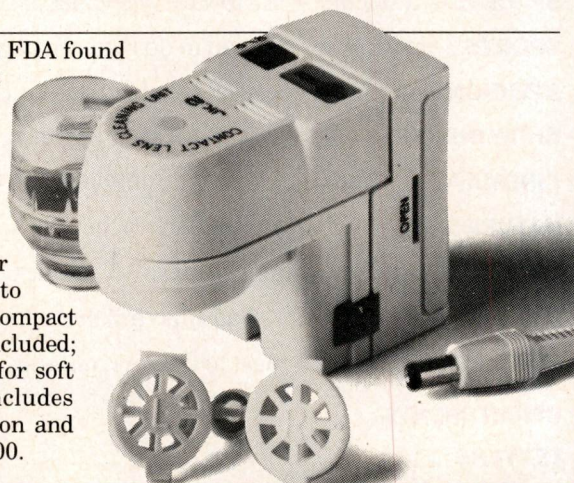
tion. Allis is a firm believer in public schools and is adamant that their problems won't be solved purely by the marketplace mentality toward education that is now in vogue. "Children are not widgets, and the less successful cannot be discarded like failed businesses," he says, not without a trace of anger. "On the other hand, the educational establishment in this country needs to be sandblasted out of its torpor." Sam has never had a high tolerance for torpor, and we like that.

Elizabeth P. Vaek

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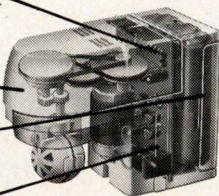


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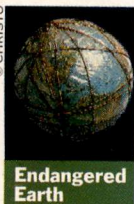
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NO RISK 30-DAY RETURN PRIVILEGE

A Mission Close to Home

Despite complaints about a \$30 billion price tag, NASA launches a vital program to take the planet's pulse

By JEROME CRAMER WASHINGTON



America's space program has spent billions of dollars and years of effort to produce detailed studies of the clouds of Venus and the craters of Mars. But in the future, NASA's researchers will need to pay closer attention to their home planet. As the earth's air, land and seas become ever more threatened by human overpopulation and industrial pollution, measuring the extent of the damage has become one of the most urgent missions of science.

This week the space shuttle *Discovery* is scheduled to deploy the first satellite in the Mission to Planet Earth, an ambitious, long-range program to monitor the planet's pulse. This particular satellite carries four instruments to gather information about the atmosphere's vital ozone layer. The most important goal is to measure how badly this fragile band, which protects the earth from the harmful ultraviolet rays in sunlight, is being depleted by the industrial chemicals known as CFCs.

Much more is on the drawing boards. During the next 15 years, NASA hopes to spend \$30 billion to \$40 billion to launch satellites containing dozens of instruments for the Earth Observing System (EOS), the centerpiece of Mission to Planet Earth. They will study the impact of such forces as global warming, deforestation and desertification. NASA will also use satellites from other nations and ground monitors to develop a baseline of information against which global change can be measured.

Despite its importance, the mission has not escaped criticism. When it was unveiled, detractors complained that, like the controversial space station Freedom, it could turn into a huge, unmanageable boondoggle. "NASA is obsessed with giantism," contends Robert Park, director of the Washington office of the American Physical Society. "They want to accomplish good, solid environmental science," he says, but have proposed to do it with complex, untested hardware. The mammoth

price tag is also a concern. Richard Darman, head of the Office of Management and Budget, reportedly quipped, "I didn't know we needed a \$30 billion thermometer."

NASA's plan called not only for a series of small satellites but also for two large space platforms that would wind up holding the majority of the earth-sensing equipment. These could not be launched before the end of the decade. Scientists objected that locking many of the instruments aboard just two craft would make the program inflexible. If new discoveries were made during the mission, how could the platforms be redesigned to accommodate unplanned research? Moreover, a Hubble-like glitch or catastrophic accident could wipe out a major portion of the project. Says Tom Donahue, a University of Michigan professor of planetary science: "NASA didn't seem to realize that it was putting too many eggs into one basket."

Another question is how to gather, store, translate and distribute the raw data developed during the project. NASA critics contend that the agency now has reams of information from space missions that no one ever examines, and the Earth Observing System could require major new storage facilities consuming about 60% of the mission's budget. "Creating a library is a huge task in itself," says Congressman Bob Traxler of Michigan, in whose district part of the library is to be built.

In response to the criticisms, Congress and the White House have put pressure on

NASA to improve its proposal, perhaps by launching six smaller space platforms instead of two large ones. Admits agency spokesman Gregory Wilson: "There is a lot of heat on NASA to accomplish EOS more quickly using smaller missions." NASA has set up an "engineering review panel" to study suggestions for the mission. It will release its report within the next few weeks, and NASA is expected to go along with any proposed changes. Says Edward Frieman, chairman of the panel: "We found ways to do it faster and make it more flexible, but not cheaper."

Cheaper ways might be found if the project's budget were not partly the product of pork-barrel politics. For example, Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland will track and coordinate a large portion of the project. Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski is chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee handling NASA funding. Major contracts have been spread out among aerospace firms in the politically important states of California, Pennsylvania and New York. NASA has learned a lesson from the Pentagon: a program will fly politically if it involves a popular cause, promises to spread lots of money through key congressional districts and guarantees contracts to companies with strong lobbying clout in Washington.

In this case, NASA appears to have picked a winner. The agency needs to refine its plans, but Congress will eventually come up with \$30 billion or more, if that's what it takes. "It's a small price to pay to help save the planet," says John Logsdon, a space-policy expert at George Washington University. After the disasters with the shuttle program, the Hubble telescope and the Galileo probe to Jupiter, the Mission to Planet Earth gives NASA a chance to take a flight back to respectability. ■

THE FIRST CRAFT ON A MISSION TO PLANET EARTH

Known as the Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite, it contains four instruments that will study the earth's protective ozone layer during the next 18 months. For a few months each year, scientists have found, that layer becomes severely depleted over Antarctica. The satellite will accurately measure the size and dynamics of the ozone "hole" and help researchers gain a better understanding of what causes it.



COVER STORIES

Tough Choice

Lamar Alexander claims to have a cure for the sorry U.S. public-school system. Right or wrong, something must be done.

By **WALTER SHAPIRO**



Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of conditions of men—the balance wheel of the social machinery.

—Horace Mann, 1848

How noble the dream, how ignoble the modern reality. Mann's crowning achievement was the 19th century American common school, a place where children from all backgrounds could nurture democracy through a shared educational experience. Not very long ago, that vision seemed an eternal verity, enshrined in the public-school system. But over the past generation, the balance wheel of the social machinery began to wobble badly. American schools today, as any parent knows, are anything but equal. And education, rather than bringing students together, has become a social dividing line, separating children rich with choices in life from those doomed to have nearly none.

The crisis of the common school, the American public school, is that all too commonly it fails to educate. By almost every measure, the nation's schools are mired in mediocrity—and most Americans know it. Whether it is an inner-city high school with as many security checkpoints as a Third World airport, or a suburban middle school where only "geeks" bother to do their homework, the school too often has become a place in which to serve time rather than to learn. The results are grimly apparent: clerks at fast-food restaurants who need computerized cash registers to show them how to make change; Americans who can drive but cannot read the road signs; a democracy in which an informed voter is a statistical oddity.

Since the 1950s and the era of *Why Johnny Can't Read*, Americans have worried about the quality of their schools. But this time around, the focus of that anxiety, even desperation, is not the teachers, the curriculum or the school budgets. Instead, public education itself, the very notion that government should run the schools, is under attack. Powerful figures, including

President George Bush and his Education Secretary, Lamar Alexander, have begun to assail the public schools as a self-satisfied, self-protective monopoly that needs to feel the hot breath of free-market competition. They pose a radical alternative: rather than one common school for all, many kinds of schools—public and private—competing for students, government funds and excellence, with parents and children of all walks of life free to choose among them.

This evolving movement—an odd amalgam of supply-side conservatives, frustrated educational reformers and a handful of militant black politicians—has begun to take shape on the national stage. Under the banner of "school choice," its adherents are pressing for some form of public financing to cover student tuition at private and even parochial schools. If cost were not a barrier, these schools could then compete with public schools for students.

No issue cuts closer to the core of America's sense of itself than the character of its public schools, for education is the function of government closest to the people. A lack of confidence in the public schools is nothing less than a failure of the state—different in degree, but not kind, from food lines in the communist Soviet Union. And the Bush Administration's impulse to rely on free-market forces in education has strong echoes in the surge to privatize state-owned industry and bureaucracy, not only across the U.S. but also around the world.

But Choice, the latest answer to the education crisis, raises other questions. If the free market is the only anti-

dote to top-heavy school bureaucracies and time-serving teachers, is America fast becoming an Ayn Rand universe in which everything—even the education of the young—is measured only by its price? Can government provide enough money to open the better private schools to all students? Is Choice merely a scheme to perform triage on failing inner-city schools, al-

WISCONSIN

Last September, Milwaukee offered low-income parents the option of using vouchers worth \$2,500 each for enrollment in private, nonsectarian schools. The plan is being challenged in the courts, and only a few students have been involved: 258 of 1,000 who were eligible. Directors of the five small inner-city private schools in the plan claim to be pleased with the newcomers' performances, though the adjustment was difficult: the 101 Choice students at one school, for example, entered the institution behind their peers academically. The Milwaukee experiment is too small to be fully evaluated, but many of the children who were lagging as that year began are now reading at grade level.

Language class at the private Woodlands School in Milwaukee



lowing a few motivated students to escape and leaving the rest to fend for themselves?

With only a handful of educational experiments to point to—and none a valid test of truly free parental Choice—these questions defy clear-cut answers. Still, throughout the country there is a growing movement to make the traditional educational system less arbitrary and to grant parents more choices, often among competing public schools. But in no school district in the nation do parents have an unlimited right to pick any school for their children—that is, of course, unless they are able to pay private-school tuition.

This is the central tenet of the Choice argument: today most parents can select their children's schools, except the poor. Affluent parents exercise choice in the real estate market when they shop around to buy the right house in the right school dis-

HOW BUSH'S CHOICE PLAN WOULD WORK

States would pay for students to attend any school they selected—even private or parochial institutions.

Washington would:

- **Offer \$30 million in grants for states to design school Choice experiments.**
- **Provide \$200 million to help disadvantaged students participate in Choice programs.**
- **Change existing laws so that disadvantaged students would not lose federal aid if they changed schools under Choice programs, a reform worth as much as \$5.5 billion.**

trict. A choice of good schools was the lure as millions of middle-class white families fled the central cities during the past 40 years, leaving behind education systems unalterably segregated by race and class. Urban families that can scrape up tuition have flocked to parochial and other private schools. As Chester Finn Jr., a former Assistant Secretary of Education, puts it, "The only people who can't flee inner-city schools are the residents of the inner city."

True enough, but even with that ineq-

uity in mind, it remains murky how Choice might work in practice. The idea has its roots in the "voucher system," first proposed by conservative economist Milton Friedman in 1955, which would abolish existing school budgets and turn the money into tuition grants that students could use to enroll anywhere. This extreme free-market proposal would literally destroy the public schools in order to save them.

Few advocates of Choice are willing to go that far. Instead, the most plausible idea is a system of tuition grants large enough to enable all parents to afford a wide array of private and perhaps parochial or other religious schools, if that is what they think best for their children's education. Public schools would continue to operate, but each would have to justify its existence by attracting enough students in this new educational free market. This form of Choice gained mainstream re-



JAMES SCHNEPP FOR TIME



MASSACHUSETTS

Since 1981, the 7,700 students of the Cambridge school system have been able to name the three public schools they would prefer to attend; final assignment depends on available space and racial balance. The 14 district schools offer specialties ranging from classes for the academically gifted to remedial-reading groups. High school students can select from nine programs that include teenage parenting and work-study arrangements. During the past four years, reading and math scores have improved district-wide and the dropout rate has decreased. Parents generally laud the system but are concerned that some programs are superior to others.

Climbing high in Cambridge's Robert F. Kennedy School

spectability last year when the Brookings Institution, a liberal Washington think tank, published *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*, by John E. Chubb and Terry M. Moe. The Brookings plan mandates a key role for state and local governments in monitoring school quality, educating parents and creating financial incentives for private schools to enroll disadvantaged students.

Well-intentioned policy proposals are as common a coinage in Washington as unproduced movie scripts are in Hollywood. Star power is what gets an idea off the shelf: a presidential endorsement is the governmental equivalent of a phone call from Kevin Costner. Bush, unveiling his educational strategy in mid-April, included this provocative passage: "It's time parents were free to choose the schools that their children attend. This approach will create the competitive climate that stimulates excellence in our private and parochial schools as well." For the first time, a President has made it a priority to question the monopoly power of America's public schools. In a few years, Choice has moved from the intellectual fringe to the bully pulpit of the White House.

Make no mistake, a major part of the allure of Choice in the frugal '90s is that it promises a radical restructuring of American schools with a minimal investment of federal funds. To buttress the Bush education strategy, the White House has offered legislative proposals that request \$230 million to support state and local Choice experiments. That is only a little more than

the total that the National League charged Miami and Denver groups for their baseball expansion franchises.

Rhetorically, at least, the Bush team is sparing no expense to embrace a far-reaching definition of Choice—including aid to parochial schools, if that will pass the hurdle of the First Amendment. Education Secretary Alexander has called government support of parochial-school students "as American as apple pie." Although the Administration would largely let the states set their own rules for Choice experiments, Alexander hopes eventually to erode the ironclad distinction between public and private education.

Despite the Administration's zeal, there are grave doubts whether Congress or the electorate is eager to enlist under the banners of unfettered Choice. The nation's 2.3 million-member teachers' unions and most other education groups are downright hostile toward aid to private or religious schools. Michael Casserly, a public-school lobbyist in Washington, predicts that Congress will not "turn over public money to private schools when the members believe the Administration is not doing all it can on public schools."

Strong public antipathy to aiding private and sectarian schools complicates the Choice debate. The issue is ready-made for grandstanding, even demagoguery. Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, hypothetically asks, "Do we really want tax dollars supporting Muslim schools that teach their students it is an obligation to assassinate Salman Rush-

die?" These hyperbolic comments from the senior statesman of teachers'-union leaders underline how divisive church-state questions are in education.

But to bar all religious schools from participating in Choice experiments would automatically toss out Roman Catholic parochial schools—the often successful large-scale competitor to troubled inner-city public schools. As political scientist Chubb, one of the authors of the Brookings plan, says, "We would insist that if there is genuine Choice, there has to be genuine competition. If there is competition, there must be alternative providers other than the existing public schools."

With few empty seats in most private and parochial schools, a valid test of Choice requires a dramatic expansion of the supply side. Otherwise, the risk is that Choice will prove to be little more than a government subsidy to parents who already pay private or parochial tuition for their children. Yet the Bush Administration cannot mandate the creation of alternative schools. Washington can goad and coax with the carrot of federal money, but revamping public education is largely beyond the purview of the White House and Congress.

Nonetheless, the traditional structure of public education, where students are assigned to schools by fiat, is under a sustained assault. The Bush plan perhaps should be regarded as a clever White House effort to put its imprimatur on a popular rebellion that was already reshaping educational policy from the grass roots

CALIFORNIA

The Richmond unified school district, northeast of San Francisco, adopted a Choice program in 1988—and it was costly. All 47 schools became specialized. Along with a basic curriculum, elementary- and secondary-school pupils could select from among 250 programs; courses included computer science and video production. Dropout numbers shrank and school-attendance rates improved, but student test scores were mostly unchanged. To hire new teachers and purchase classroom equipment, the district piled up a \$29 million debt. This year Richmond declared itself bankrupt, and students completed the last semester after a court ruled that the state had to keep schools open.

Making videos in a class at Richmond's Adams Middle School



up. Local school bureaucracies are already under siege from a variety of forces—innovative Governors, activist courts, maverick educators and aroused parents.

These potentially explosive changes, all happening beyond the orbit of Washington policymakers, include:

PUBLIC-SCHOOL CHOICE. The alternative-schools movement of the early 1970s gave parents in some cities options beyond sending their children to the neighborhood school. Prodded by desegregation orders from the courts, many urban school districts now practice open enrollment, which permits parents to place their children in any public school with vacant seats as long as racial balance is maintained. Some of these public-school Choice experiments (notably Cambridge, Mass.; St. Paul; and a New York City district in East Harlem) have been praised for encouraging innovation and raising student performance.

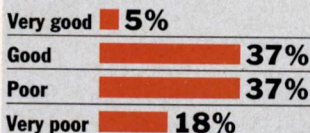
Beginning with Minnesota in 1988, and followed by Arkansas, roughly 15 states have taken the next step and have enacted or are seriously debating legislation to allow children to attend public schools outside their own districts. Again, such cross-district transfers are generally not

permitted if they would undermine racial balance; white students, for example, cannot opt out of schools in Minneapolis or Little Rock. So far, few parents have taken advantage of their newly found freedom; in Minnesota about 1% of the state's students have attended schools outside the districts where they reside. Choice advocates believe that the principle is as important as any numerical test. "People need to know they can walk away from bad schools," argues Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton. "Choice changes the psychology of it."

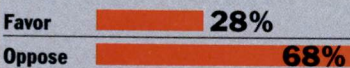
The consensus in Minnesota—the state with the largest open-enrollment plan—is

that public-school Choice works as far as it goes. True, there is some evidence that black and Hispanic parents, in particular, receive limited information about their school options. Transportation costs also could become a public burden if many more students decide to cross district lines. "Open enrollment has been fully in effect for only one year," summarizes Van Mueller, a professor of education policy at the University of Minnesota. "We don't know much, but almost all the participants are pretty happy with it. And most parents made their choice based on academics, not on finding the best soccer coach."

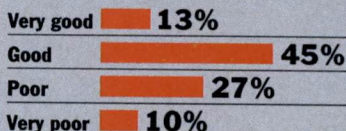
What kind of job are U.S. public schools doing educating children?



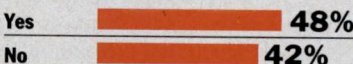
Do you favor or oppose using public-education money to give parents a choice of sending their children to private or religious schools?



What kind of job are public schools in your community doing educating children?



Is it a good idea to give parents more choice over the schools their children attend even if some schools would be nearly all white and others all black?



From a telephone poll of 500 American adults taken for TIME/CNN on May 8 by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman. Sampling error is plus or minus 4.5%. "Not sures" omitted.

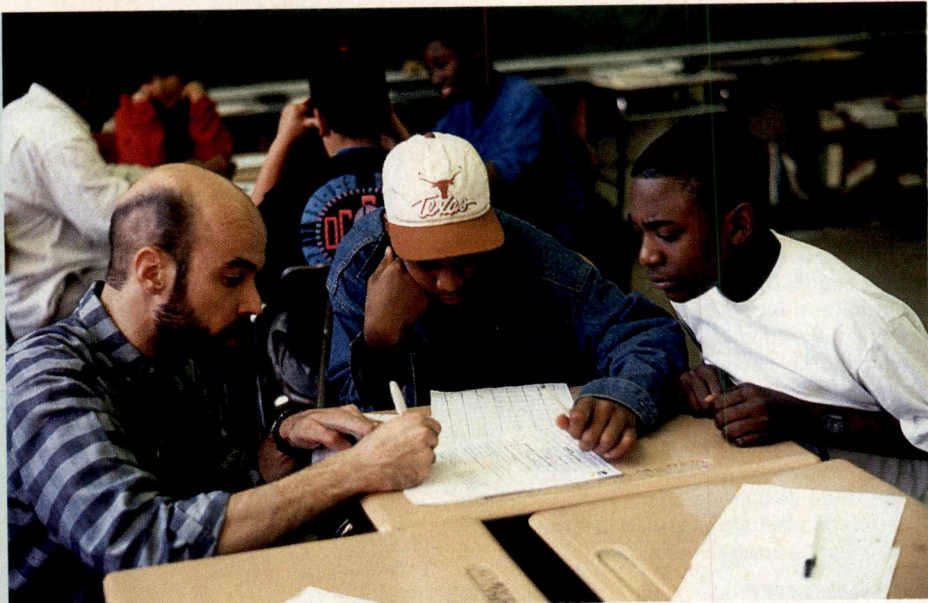
TIME Chart

THE PRIVATE-SCHOOL OPTION. It began as a last-minute 1989 budget compromise in Wisconsin, an odd-couple deal between Tommy Thompson, the conservative Republican Governor, and Polly Williams, a black-separatist Democratic state representative from Milwaukee. The result was a virtually unprecedented school-voucher plan: the state approved legislation that would allow a group of inner-city Milwaukee students to attend private schools with \$2,500 tuition grants. Bitterly opposed by the N.A.A.C.P. and teachers' unions, the program was delayed for a year

NEW YORK

Manhattan's District 4 once had an abysmal attendance rate and the city's lowest reading scores. The East Harlem area's 20 school buildings have been reorganized to contain 52 separately run institutions in order to give children a greater sense of community. Junior high students can choose among 23 schools, some with a traditional curriculum and others with a specific focus. This year the district was No. 2 in reading in Manhattan, and attendance among its 14,000 students stood at 90%.

Delving into science at Central Park East Secondary School in East Harlem



and whittled down in size. "What about the common school?" Williams asks in response to her critics. "How come nobody talked about destroying the system when the whites left? Now they want to block poor kids from leaving."

But what can a 258-student experiment reveal about how a free market in education would work? There are, after all, 97,000 students in the Milwaukee public schools. Without greater funding and many more alternative schools, the voucher plan will remain mostly a symbol of black anger at the quality of public education. Herbert Grover, Wisconsin's superin-

tendent of public instruction and a fierce opponent of the voucher program, argues, "Our preppy President went to Phillips Academy, which costs about \$13,000 a year. But it's O.K. to set a limit of \$2,500 for little black kids."

Polly Williams has inspired free-market visionaries elsewhere in the country. A proposal to provide tuition vouchers for 5,000 students in troubled New York schools was defeated this summer by the State Board of Regents by a surprisingly narrow margin. And a private corporation, the Golden Rule Insurance Co., has pledged to donate \$1.2 million over the

next three years to help 748 inner-city students in Indianapolis attend private schools.

CORPORATE SCHOOLS. Despite the pro-business rhetoric of national life, America has always been wary of mixing the profit motive with education. Private schools are usually run by not-for-profit boards rather than corporations worrying about second-quarter earnings. But in the middle-class suburb of Eagan, Minn., just south of St. Paul, Tesseract is a 200-student private elementary school run as a business by Education Alternatives, a for-profit company

Breaching the Church-State Wall

In proposing a voucher system that would subsidize the tuition of children who choose parochial schools, the Bush Administration is confronting one of the nation's sacrosanct principles: the First Amendment's stricture against "establishment of religion" creates a wall between church and state. That hurdle, while high, may not be impossible to surmount. Over the years the Supreme Court has wrestled with the distinction between direct funding of religious institutions, which is forbidden, and indirect aid that is designed to serve a secular purpose, which may be permissible.

One guiding interpretation is the court's 1947 *Everson v. Board of Education* decision, which said public money could be spent on busing New Jersey parochial school students because it benefited the children. But funds could not go directly to the school involved because tax money could not be used to support any "institution which teaches the tenets and faith of any church." In 1971 the court strengthened that position further when it ruled in *Lemon v. Kurtzman* that the state could

not reimburse private religious schools for the costs of teaching secular subjects. Chief Justice Warren Burger set forth a stiff tripartite test for legitimate government aid. There must be a secular purpose; the principal effect must neither advance nor limit religion; nothing done should foster "an excessive government entanglement with religion."

In recent years the court has been divided on the proper scope of government aid—direct or indirect—to sectarian schools. In 1983, by a 5-to-4 vote, it let stand a Minnesota law that permits parents to deduct parochial school tuition from their state income taxes. Many experts believe there is a

good chance the court would uphold a voucher plan like the one the Administration proposes. "It is exceedingly unlikely that this will be seen as a forbidden form of establishment," says Harvard law professor Laurence Tribe, a leading constitutional scholar. "Given the existing doctrine about the separation of church and state, I do not see a serious First Amendment problem in a reasonably written voucher program." ■

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . ."

MINNESOTA

Last fall a program went into effect allowing students to enroll in any public school anywhere in the state. There are two restrictions: mandated racial balances in St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth must be maintained, and lack of available space at any school is cause for refusing admission. In the 1990-91 school year, 5,940 of 740,000 students made the switch; although this is a tiny minority—less than 1% of those eligible—state educators think the system will have long-term benefits. Small rural communities, for example, are creating magnet schools to attract new pupils. As a result of the plan, and related choice programs, more Minnesota students say they are satisfied with their schools, more are aiming for college, and some dropouts are returning.

Introduction to learning in St. Paul's Downtown Kindergarten Magnet



spun off in 1986 from multibillion-dollar Control Data. With Spanish lessons in the preschool, dozens of computers in the elementary grades and free-flowing wall-less classrooms, the school appears a success, though the secret seems more a dedicated staff flocking to an educational experiment than the magic elixir of the profit motive.

Education Alternatives originally envisioned running a national chain of for-profit schools. Instead, the company soon realized its primary skills were in teaching and management, not bricks and mortar. Last week, in another intriguing experiment, the company began operating a new public elementary school in an impoverished Hispanic neighborhood in Miami Beach. The firm has a contract from the Dade County school system, which was desperate to try new managerial techniques. "If we succeed with public-school teachers and these children in Dade County," says Kathryn Thomas, who oversees the project for Education Alternatives, "it will be Katie bar the door."

Far more ambitious are the aims of entrepreneur Chris Whittle, whose company, Whittle Communications, is partly owned by Time Warner. (Last week the Manhattan investment firm Forstmann Little & Co. agreed to buy a one-third interest for

\$350 million.) Whittle has announced plans to spend up to \$3 billion to create a coast-to-coast network of for-profit private schools that theoretically could enroll 2 million students by the year 2010. What Whittle—and other corporations that may follow in its wake—adds to the Choice debate is the potential to vastly expand the supply of schools that might compete with the public sector. But the stigma surrounding profitmaking schools makes even the Bush Administration nervous. "We don't see moving in the direction of for-profit public schools," says Assistant Secretary of Education Bruno Manno. "Our plan is more closely along the lines of supporting what's in the not-for-profit sector."

Still, new schools might embrace new social roles as they compete for "customers" by providing a greater array of services. This notion is buttressed by a two-year assessment of U.S. school systems sponsored by the advertising firm of Young & Rubicam. The researchers warned that the schools had become an inadequate receptacle for America's social problems. In response, they called for the creation of new types of schools, especially in the inner cities. Such schools would go beyond their traditional educational role to function as all-day community centers

that would provide social-welfare services, medical clinics and a healthy after-school environment.

Author Nicholas Lemann in *The Promised Land*—his best-selling study of black migration from the South—demonstrates that "community action" became a linchpin of the 1960s War on Poverty, even though few policymakers understood its mischievous implications. Lemann quotes a key Johnson Administration official as saying that community action (mobilizing the poor to pressure the local political establishment) "might lead somewhere, but we didn't know where." What makes this historical point relevant and disconcerting is that the same can be said about current White House support for unrestricted Choice: no one knows what it will produce. For as Bush White House domestic policy adviser Roger Porter puts it, "The Administration is committed to shaking up the system and breaking the mold."

In the end, almost all educational debates in America come down to questions of race and class. So too with Choice: What would it mean for students trapped in the holding-pen schools of the inner city? What are its implications for racial balance in the South, where the very word Choice conjures up white

flight to private academies in the 1960s and '70s? Can the nation offer parents true educational Choice without formally abandoning the ever-elusive goal of school desegregation?

Once again, there is little objective evidence, only personal speculation. David Bennett just stepped down as school superintendent in St. Paul to become president of Education Alternatives, the company that runs the Tesseract schools. It is easy to imagine that Bennett, a proponent of public-school open enrollment, would be a missionary for unrestricted Choice in his private-sector role. Not quite. "No matter how you dress up a voucher system," Bennett says, "the poverty kids will end up with the short end of the stick." In any game of educational musical chairs, someone has to lose. And almost certainly, the last student

stuck in a failing school will come from an impoverished background.

Many Choice proponents, like Chester Finn—whose proposals for reform appear in a new book, *We Must Take Charge*—do not believe school competition will cure all the ills of urban education. Still, Finn asks the blunt question: "Under Choice, would the kids attending inner-city schools be any worse off than they are today?" There is something irredeemably tragic about the question. But equally sad is the difficulty of framing either an affirmative answer or a plausible alternative vision for dramatically uplifting disadvantaged students.

The bitter truth is that American schools have become a reflection of the nation itself: divided by race, class and aspiration—and all too often animated by no higher calling than the selfish preservation

of the status quo. A decade of educational reforms has produced incremental results, laudable but limited. Against this bleak landscape, Choice might—just might—be worth the gamble as a way to radically transform the nation's schools in time to help educate today's children.

Early in the century, Louis Brandeis called state governments the laboratories of democracy. The phrase has become patriotic boilerplate, but in education the truth endures. No social experiment is more worthy than for an entire state—with a significant minority population—to embark on a true test of unrestricted Choice, complete with the participation of private, parochial and for-profit schools. The risks are grave, but so are the consequences of continued educational mediocrity.

—With reporting by

Sam Allis/Little Rock

Britain's Brand of Choice

By JILL SMOLOWE

George Bush's ideas about school choice bear a strong resemblance to portions of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's 1988 Education Reform Act. Under this plan, England's education standards were unified under a national curriculum. District lines within the public system were eased to allow open enrollment at any of the 23,000 primary and secondary schools, and schools are assuming greater control over their own budgets, without interference from district authorities. Most pointedly, the government pledged that state money, an average of \$2,550 per student annually, would follow pupils to their public school of choice.

The Thatcher plan also offers a radical choice for which there is, as yet, no U.S. equivalent. Individual public schools may "opt out" of local school systems and instead receive funding directly from the national government. With this declaration of independence, a school's headmaster and a governing body that includes parents become responsible for most decisions, from hiring teachers to spending priorities. Because opt-outs do not lose a portion of their budgets to district-authority overhead, they often have money for more books, new facilities and additional teachers.

To opt out, a school must first secure the consent of a majority of its students' parents. In the two years since Thatcher's plan went into effect, 102 schools have cut their ties; 11 are on the verge of final action; 88 more await government approval. They are the first patches in a quilt of autonomous schools—which are tax supported and tuition free but in effect can operate as if they were privately run—that the country's Conservative government hopes will blanket the country.

Do opt-outs live up to the Thatcherite vision of efficiency and competitive excellence? Two years ago, Hendon, a public secondary school in north London, faced dissolution and the merger of its dwindling student population into a nearby school. Today, as an institution that opted out, Hendon, with 850 students, gets two applications for every available place. (Students with hearing problems and learning disabilities are given priority.) Since it changed status in 1989, Hendon has doubled spending

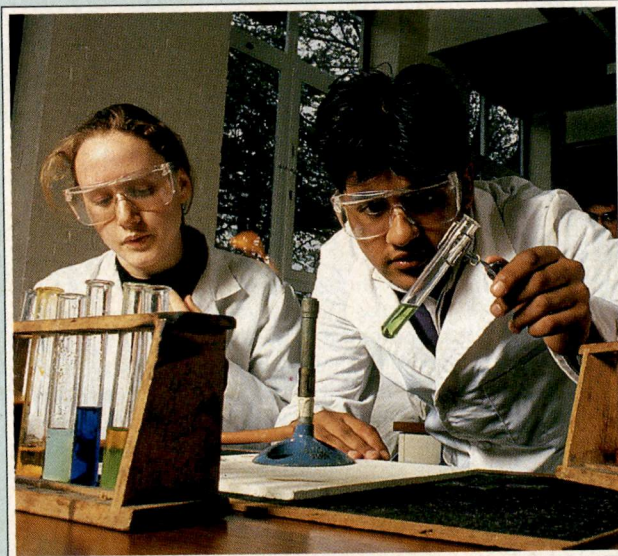
on books and teaching materials and quadrupled its payout for classroom equipment and furniture. Money that once disappeared into bureaucratic coffers has hired more support staff and refurbished a computer lab. Parents have also been galvanized: they are painting the school's walls for free in order to save money for books and other educational tools.

Foes of the program warn that successes like Hendon do not reflect the real impact of the program. Schools that opt out disrupt county planning efforts and drain from districts money that traditionally has been applied to a wide range of services, including the provision of child psychologists, substitute teachers and special-

education instructors. Says Margaret Maden, the chief education officer of Warwickshire: "Opting out takes money from the system as a whole and affects the schools that are left."

Many educators also warn that opting out may mean sliding back into the class-based system of education that divided England into elite schools for the Oxbridge bound and lesser places for everyone else. "Better schools get better; worse schools risk terminal decline," says Tony Edwards, an education professor at the University of Newcastle. But for those who try it, Britain's version of Choice seems to deliver considerable rewards.

—Reported by Anne Constable/London



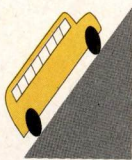
Chemistry class in London: Living up to the Thatcherite vision?

DAVID LEVENSON FOR TIME

George Bush's Point Man

The Education Secretary is putting his political skills—and his ambitions—on the line to sell Choice to Capitol Hill

By **SAMALLIS** WASHINGTON



Author Alex Haley and his friend Lamar Alexander booked passage together in 1988 on a cargo ship from California to Australia, aiming to write books away from the distractions of their Tennessee home base. Every evening the pair would emerge from a day of writing in their cabins to watch the "green flash," which can sometimes be seen just before the sun disappears below the horizon. "He'd talk, and I'd listen," Haley recalls. "Lamar talked night after night about the desperate need to improve American education. It was in his marrow. He felt impotent to do the things that needed to be done."

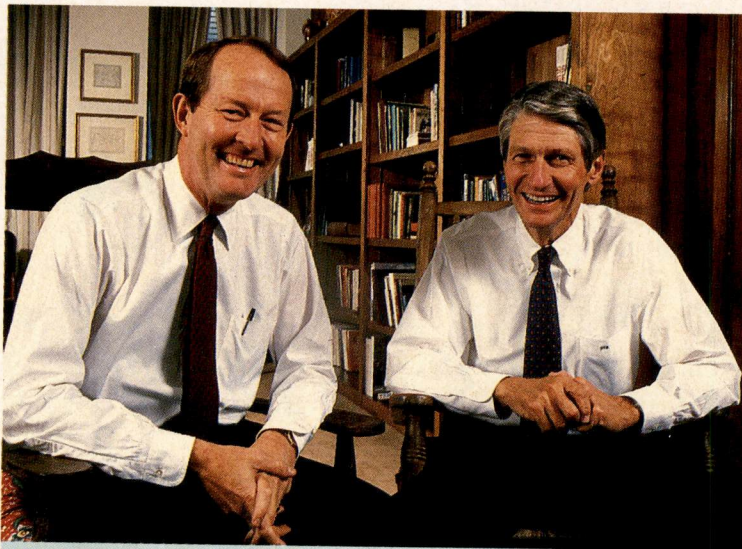
Alexander is frustrated no longer. He is now the point man for George Bush's educational goals, including the idea of school Choice, and he is using his soft-spoken salesmanship to market them to Congress and the American public. The role is the most challenging yet for the man named by Bush as Secretary of Education last December, whose mild and courteous demeanor masks a high-octane ambition. His goal is to transform the Department of Education, which Ronald Reagan once pledged to abolish, from a backwater operation in the shadow of the Air and Space Museum into one of Washington's leading domestic agencies.

Alexander, 51, brings a degree of political acumen to his job that was never seen under predecessors Lauro Cavazos and William Bennett. He learned from masters, serving first as an aide to Tennessee Senator Howard Baker and then in the Nixon White House before emerging in his own right as a two-term Republican Governor (1979-87). This background gives him a big advantage when he travels to Capitol Hill, as he often does, to lobby for his program. He understands compromise. "I can work with a guy like that," says William Ford, the crusty House education committee chairman.

But behind the agreeable exterior is a flinty vision of American public education and its various ills that is sweeping in its condemnation. "The problem is the sys-

tem," he says flatly. Alexander refers to the Supreme Court as "an obstacle" blocking the use of tax dollars for religious schools. He is wound tighter than he looks. His celebrated affability sometimes cracks when challenged—when he is asked, for example, why his younger son William attends a Washington private school rather than a school in the public system. "I chose it because I like it," he snaps.

The boyish-looking, sandy-haired native of the small east Tennessee town of Maryville forgets nothing. "If he ever met you, he'll remember you," says Haley. Alexander is an inveterate notetaker, scribbling reminders about all sorts of ideas and



TEAM PLAYERS Alexander, left, and Deputy Secretary Kearns: seeking to transform a backwater into one of Washington's leading agencies

activities on clipboard pads or handy scraps of paper. On his sea voyage—where he was writing *Six Months Off*, a memoir of stepping out of his professional life—Alexander made a list of things to be accomplished each day and crossed them off each evening. "If he has a fault, it is that he is not much at having a whole helluva lot of fun," says Haley.

The sense of discipline comes from his mother Florence, a no-nonsense woman who ran a nursery school in her backyard, and his late father Andrew, who served briefly as an elementary school principal. Lamar began piano lessons at four and studied diligently through his freshman year at Vanderbilt. Today he can deftly play Chopin or pound out rocket-top country piano, as he did in Bourbon Street watering holes while clerking for Federal Judge John Minor Wisdom after his 1965

graduation from New York University law school.

As Governor, he pushed through a 10-point program to improve public education in Tennessee (including classroom computers and merit pay for teachers) and a 1¢-on-the-dollar sales tax to pay for it. Bush liked what he saw and sought Alexander's counsel periodically on education matters. The two get along well, and Alexander's wife Honey is a friend of Barbara Bush's from Texas. This background leads to speculation that his brand of progressive Republicanism and his Southern political base would make him an attractive alternative to Dan Quayle as a vice-presidential candidate in 1992.

But not everyone is enamored of Alexander's record as an education Governor. "He brought education to the forefront as a topic at everyone's kitchen table," concedes Relzie Payton, president of the Tennessee Education Association, the state

teachers' union. But Alexander was also a tireless self-promoter, she argues, whose follow-through was less impressive than his goals. Alexander's educational efforts in Tennessee have met with mixed success, and, Payton adds, "Choice was mentioned, if at all, in passing while he was Governor."

So far, the new Education Secretary has received high marks for his energy and the caliber of his appointments. Directly under him as Deputy Secretary is David Kearns, 61, former chairman of Xerox Corp. Kearns will be, in Alexander's words, "my chief operating officer" and will spearhead a drive to raise \$150 million from business

for innovative schooling ideas.

Another interesting selection is Diane Ravitch, the incisive conservative thinker and education historian from Columbia University who has defended pluralism on college campuses against the assault of censorious "political correctness." Ravitch is in charge of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement and also serves as counselor to Alexander.

No one has ever accused Lamar Alexander of lacking confidence, either in his ideas or in himself. "Five years from now, Choice will not be an issue," he serenely predicts. Instead, he insists, it will be the foundation for a transformed system of education that has long been his political and personal dream. Whether that is confidence or evidence of a quietly unbending temperament is something only he can prove. ■