

Education

Upcoming Battle Over Education Issues

As Students, teachers, and administrators return to schools all over the country, I want to remind you of a critical battle that will take place this fall in Washington over the issue of education. To put it bluntly, our educators, students, and parents need to be aware that our nation's investments in education -- in our children's future -- are under direct attack by the Republican majority in the House.

The President is firmly committed to a comprehensive economic policy based on balancing the budget, reducing trade barriers worldwide, and creating jobs here at home. But he is convinced that to strengthen families, expand our economy, and raise the living standards for the American people, nothing is more critical to our nation's future than ensuring that all Americans have the education and skills they need.

Education has become the fundamental fault-line in the standard of living for American families. Many Americans have seen their incomes stagnate over the last 15 years; the real income of the typical family has actually declined. Yet those with the most education and training have bucked the trend. Today, the typical college graduate earns 74 percent more than a worker with only a high school degree. Studies also show that for every year of training a person gets after high school, his or her earnings rise by 6 to 12 percent. Education is the key to growth in our economy, in wages, and in our standard of living.

To allow individuals to make the most of their lives, and to provide every American the chance to realize the American Dream, the President has been fighting for better education and training, by investing in

Head Start and Safe and Drug-Free Schools, by providing resources to train teachers and raise school standards, and by improving the student loan program. During the last Congress, Republicans and Democrats together enacted a historic series of initiatives to assist families, communities, schools and colleges to expand educational opportunity in America.

President Clinton has proposed to balance the budget over the next ten years. He would do so by cutting wasteful spending, streamlining programs, and ending unneeded subsidies. Yet he would preserve and increase investment in education by \$40 billion over the next seven years; protect Medicaid, Medicare and the environment; and provide for a targeted tax cut that would help middle-income Americans raise their children, save for the future and pay for

post-secondary education.

By contrast, there are proposals in congress threatening to cut \$36 billion from education and training to help them balance the budget in seven years and provide a huge tax cut to those who need it least. They have proposed: slashing investments in Head Start; abolishing the Goals 2000 school reforms; cutting crucial assistance to students from disadvantaged backgrounds; abolishing the Technology Learning Challenge, which leverages private money for technology in schools and communities; cutting funding for apprenticeship training in half; abolishing AmeriCorps - the heart of the President's National Service program; raising students' costs of loans by \$10 billion over seven years; halting progress on the President's Direct Lending program; and denying Pell Grants to 360,000 students in 1996

alone.

These latter cuts would be particularly devastating for access to post-secondary education and training. By slashing grants and loans, we would turn back the clock on recent successes in expanding access, forcing some students to drop out and denying others the opportunity to begin their education. To achieve the level of savings they are proposing, Congress would have to raise the costs of college education by as much as \$3,100 for undergraduates and as much as \$9,400 for graduate students. They would not only eliminate any interest subsidy for graduate and professional students, but also hit college students with substantially higher fees--for example, eliminating the six-month grace period for interest after college or raising the origination fee that every student must pay to obtain their loans. There are

also proposals to reduce and possibly eliminate the Direct Lending program, preventing more schools from participating in this initiative, which is already saving taxpayers \$6.8 billion, lowering interest rates for students, and allowing borrowers to choose flexible repayment arrangements.

If firmly believe that the American people want to balance the budget and continue to increase investments in education. The President has shown that it is possible. Nevertheless, there are those in Congress who are determined to go forward with these extreme cuts. The debate over this issue will be one of the most significant in the coming months, if not years. The future of this great nation is at stake.

Sincerely,
Leon E. Panetta
Chief of Staff

Bank Invests In Education

The putting greens are closed and the results have been tallied. Putters of all ages helped raise more than \$96,000 during Washington Mutual's third annual Putt for Education contest.

As many as 260 superintendents and principals from schools in the Portland area are expected to pick up their school's share of the money during a special awards dinner Wednesday, Sept. 20. Portland City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury will deliver the keynote address.

WHAT: An awards dinner to celebrate the distribution of more than \$96,000 to local schools by Washington Mutual. More than \$40,000 will be distributed at the

dinner to 261 Portland-area schools. In total 665 schools will receive checks.

The event marks the end of Washington Mutual's Putt for Education contest, part of the company's sponsorship of the Pro-Am at the Fred Meyer Challenge golf tournament.

Earlier this summer, members of the general public were invited to attempt to sink three out of three putts on one of the company's traveling putting greens. Those who were successful won a \$50 donation to the school of their choice.

WHEN: 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Reception 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Dinner and program

WHERE: Lloyd Center Red Lion 1000 N. E. Multnomah Portland

WHY: Putt for Education is a program of Washington Mutual CAN!

WHO: Committed Active Neighbors, the company's community involvement program.

For decades, Washington Mutual and its employees have been actively involved in helping make our communities better places to live and work.

Washington Mutual is a diversified consumer financial services company that focuses on families and individuals. The company operates 72 financial centers in Oregon.

150,000 Awarded To 15 NW Schools

GTE Telephone Operations has awarded \$150,000 in education technology grants to 15 school districts in its Northwest operating area.

Supported by technical assistance from GTE, the technology grants are for projects in the current academic year that link network technology and education in creative and innovative ways. The individual grants have been awarded to public school districts serving K-12 students located in GTE service areas in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

"The projects funded by GTE emphasize creative ways of using new technology to enhance the learning process," said Linda Gainer, GTE public affairs director. "They show telecommunications as a means of linking students, teachers, administrators and community members. They also demonstrate how telecommunications networks can improve curriculum development, program delivery, staff development, administrative services and community outreach."

Washington grant winners are Edmonds School District, Everett

School District, North Central Education Services District, Kennewick School District, Otteson High School at Lake Washington Technical College, Mukilteo School District, Nooksack Valley School District, Snohomish School District and Wenatchee Valley Community College.

Oregon grant winners are Bandon High School, Cove School District, Dayton School District and Hillsboro School District.

Idaho grant winners are Moscow Junior High School and Lakeside High School of Plummer.

"Interactivity is the key word," Gainer said. "These grants will provide schools with new resources and offer a long-term impact on the educational process."

GTE Foundation contributions to Northwest educational institutions have totaled more than \$600,000 during 1994-95.

GTE is the largest U.S.-based local telephone company, serving about 1.3 million business and residential customer access lines in the Northwest. The company provides

voice, video and data products and services through more than 22 million access lines in portions of the United States, Canada, South America, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

In Washington, GTE serves more than 700,000 customer access lines, primarily in northeast King County, all of Snohomish and Skagit counties, parts of Island and Whatcom counties, Wenatchee, Richland, Kennewick and Pullman.

In Oregon, GTE serves about 400,000 access lines, most of them in the Portland area. Primary service territories include Washington County, Yamhill County, Gresham/Sandy, the southern Oregon coast from Reedsport to Brookings, and the La Grande/Enterprise area in northeastern Oregon.

In Idaho, GTE serves more than 110,000 access lines. Primary service territories include the Coeur d'Alene, Sandpoint and Moscow area, as well as Kellogg, St. Maries and Orofino. On the Idaho-Washington border, the company's service territories include Pullman and Newport.

Taking Tougher Courses Pays Off

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proposing deep cuts in education funding to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy.

"They want to eliminate assistance to schools to improve the basics, raise standards, get technology into the classrooms and make college more accessible. That's wrong for students and wrong for our nation's future."

Riley advises parents to urge their children to take tougher courses if they want to score higher on tests and be better prepared for college and the future.

"This was the key recommendation in 'A Nation at Risk,' the report that sounded the education alarm bell in 1983," he says. "Parents should check with the school and make sure your children are signed up for classes in core subjects and advanced studies." Core subjects generally are defined as English, math, science and social studies.

Barnwell, the guidance director

at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, VA, agrees. "I've found that when students take harder courses, their aspirations rise and they view their career goals more seriously. Consequently, they can envision more tangible results from a rigorous academic challenge."

Riley applauds community and state efforts to provide more challenging college preparatory courses and "tech-prep courses" that help students get ready for careers and one to two years of community college.

He also notes a big improvement in the percentage of students taking substantial course work in core subjects over the past ten years -- up from 13 percent to 47 percent.

As a result of higher expectations in math and science, student achievement in these subjects, as measured in national assessments, also went up over this ten-year period.

Still, almost half of America's students don't take a rigorous course

load throughout their secondary school years. "That needs to be corrected, because all students need to be challenged academically," Riley says.

Studies by the Education department's National Center for Education Statistics indicate that taking more challenging courses pays off for students. For example, students who have taken higher level math courses show greater gains in math achievement during high school than those who have not taken these courses.

Riley and Barnwell also note that tough courses are weighted heavily by those reviewing college entrance applications. Furthermore, taking the tough courses better prepares students for any endeavor they may pursue.

"Whether they're going into the military, the job market or more formal education," Barnwell says, "young people will fare better if they set higher standards for themselves now."

GTE Northwest Award Winners

Bandon School District;
\$9,724

Bandon's project will use an Internet Access Server to provide connectivity for students and faculty at the high school and middle school. They used a grant from the Ford Foundation to network the computers at the school sites and the GTE funding will allow them to connect the sites to the Internet. They create a local dial-in service for community members to subsidize their development. They have organized a consortium of school districts in rural Oregon to take advantage of this system.

Cove School District; \$6,500

Cove School District will receive funds to update its telecommunications infrastructure in rural Oregon. The school is positioned as the hub of this small rural community and will provide new resources to the community.

Dayton School District;
\$10,000

Dayton School District serves the rural agricultural area of the Willamette Valley in Oregon. They will use the GTE grant funds to build their basic network system which will connect to the Yamhill frame relay network. This will allow them to access the Internet and other global resources. Dayton has about 925 students, with about 50 percent on the free and reduced lunch program.

Edmonds School District;
\$9,985

Hazelwood Elementary will be using GTE grant funding to update its computer resources for the visually impaired. The new technology will provide text to speech conversion and will allow materials collected from the Internet to be translated into Braille.

Everett School District;
\$10,000

Garfield Elementary School in Everett School District will be using GTE funds for extensive teacher training and a teachers' lab for developing curriculum. The lab will be set up with Internet access so the teachers will be able to feel comfortable with the technology on their own terms, before they have access in the classroom.

North Central ESD; \$10,000

This project will link three elementary schools and North Central ESD for the purpose of integrating the use of technology in the areas of math and science through a study of

weather and climate. Electronic links will be established between the ESD and the schools to share project information as well as to support technical training by the ESD for building staff members.

Hillsboro School District;
\$20,000

This district, which serves over 12,000 students will receive funding to pilot a community-based on-line network in both elementary and junior high schools. The project is a subpart of the Technology Challenge Grant received by the district from the U.S. Department of Education. In partnership with Intel and the Oregon Multimedia Alliance, they will provide access to ICON (Interactive Community On-line Network). This will link schools to the greater Portland area as well as to the Internet. The pilot will be used to evaluate how this service can be developed and implemented in other communities as well.

Kennewick School District;
\$10,000

Kennewick School District will be funded by GTE to provide Internet training to support 22 school sites. Internet trainers from each site would be provided with training materials, hands-on instruction and monthly curriculum ideas. These trainers will work with building staff during, before and after school as well as individually and in small groups to help develop teaching skills using new technology.

Lakeview High School - Plummer/Worley Joint SD;
\$10,000

Lakeview High School, located on the Coeur d'Alene Indian reservation, will use GTE funds to upgrade their library with new multimedia systems. They will connect to Kootenai County Public Libraries and North Idaho College to expand their local access to resources. They are also planning to upgrade the library with on-line cataloging and circulation features. The school district serves about 500 students, 75 percent of which are below the poverty level.

Lake Washington Technical College - Otteson High School; \$10,000

A computer lab will be established at Otteson High School. The project will provide connectivity, global exploration and interactive learning for junior and senior high school students who have chosen an adult college learning environment.

Moscow Jr. High Library;
\$4,000

The Moscow Junior High Library will provide a bulletin board system where students and their families can send and receive electronic mail. Fifty-five staff members will be able to post homework assignments and communicate with parents and students electronically. All groups will be able to access CD ROM-based reference materials.

Mukilteo School District;
\$9,860

Mukilteo School District will be building a World Wide Web page for K-12 curriculum linked with Internet resources. It will help teachers combine Internet access with curriculum objectives and provide tools for integrating technology into the classroom. The information will be available on the Internet for other schools to reference.

Nooksack Valley School District; \$9,752

Nooksack Valley School District will be using the funds provided by GTE to build a MAC-based computer lab with network connections to the Internet and the library. The sites will be networked to share information between schools and the library. They are planning to provide hands-on learning opportunities for parents and community members. The new system will provide access for many low-income, migrant and special-needs students in this rural community.

Snohomish School District;
\$10,000

Totem Falls Elementary in Snohomish School District will use GTE funds to build its "School without Walls." The project will allow the school to connect to other schools in the district as well as the Internet. A schoolwide bulletin board will allow children to submit their homework and get feedback electronically as well as improve communication between parents and teachers.

Wenatchee Valley Community College; \$10,000

Wenatchee Valley Community College will use GTE funds to complete their instructional network which will connect to their Omak campus. This network will link students, faculty and staff with electronic resources, such as the Internet. The project will provide a regional educational resource for educators in Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan rural counties.

Tri-Met's Class Pass Offers Affordable Field Trips

At a time when tight school budgets make field trips a rare treat, Tri-Met's new Class Pass is an economical way for teachers and students to expand their classrooms.

The Class pass goes on sale beginning tomorrow, allowing student groups to ride buses and Max light rail trains at discount. The pass costs \$1 per student and it is good for travel to and from field trip destinations. The pass is available to groups

of 10 or more, ages 18 years old and under. Teachers and group leaders pay regular fares.

The Class Pass is designed for groups conducting field trips between 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. weekdays, or traveling anytime on weekends. At those times, more room is generally available on buses and trains for group travel. Group leaders must schedule the trip at least 14 days in advance to make sure other large groups are not plan-

ning to travel on the same vehicles at the same time. To schedule a field trip, call Tri-Met at 238-RIDE.

Last year, some 25,000 students and teachers took field trips on Tri-Met. Among the most popular destinations are OMSI, the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, Oregon History Center, World Forestry Center, Metro Washington Park Zoo, Portland Art Museum and the Children's Museum.