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GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. RAVITCH: Thank you. I exercise my prerogative to just offer a comment based on New York City. Our chancellor in New York City thinks that he is the captain of a great ship when in fact he is a harbor master. He has 1,100 little boats in the harbor, but he thinks that if he turns to the right, all of these 1,100 ships will turn to the right and they don't. And our city has turned hyper-regulation into an art form and frequently uses federal regulation as an excuse for what it would be doing anyway. And when the discussion came up a couple of years ago about whether schools might have more authority over different things that had happened in schools, one of the responses from central was, "Oh, the Agriculture Department would never let us decentralize the school lunch program." And the federal Department of Education wouldn't allow this, that, or the other. There is always someone else to blame. But in fact, what the bottom line belief is, the principal should have accountability, but no authority. And this is one of the reasons why so few good people want to be a principal, because it really is a very thankless task when in fact you are going to be held accountable but not allowed to choose your staff, not allowed to control your budget, and not allowed to make significant decisions. At any rate, the comment is great from Lisa Field in New York City where the problems that Paul describes are really probably Ice 9 problem. Anyway, I will open the floor to other comments and discussion either to agree, disagree, or whatever. Yes, Checker?

MR. FINN: Question for Paul about your recommendations. I want to quote you one -- two of your sentences. "Children's beneficiary status should depend on their demographic characteristics, not on their test scores or other school performance. Funding should not be reduced or disadvantaged to students who perform at high levels." As people have been trotting around Capitol Hill talking about this sort of portable Title I idea, two issues have arisen that are tucked away in your two sentences. And I would like to know how you would deal with them because I haven't heard anyone deal with them very well yet. The first is the claim that because not all poor kids need compensatory help, poor kids who don't need compensatory help shouldn't get aid. Your formulation would seem to suggest that they should simply by virtue of being poor. The second point. If it becomes an entitlement and the kid is entitled to the money regardless of test score, where is the accountability lever on the school that the kid attends if the money will continue to flow so long as the kid is there even if the kid doesn't learn anything?

MR. HILL: Well, I am glad to continue a proud tradition of not having good answers to this. But on the first -- well, on the second point. I will start with the second point. If we retain -- if the localities retain a system where pupils are assigned to schools, the money follows them, and parents have no choice about it, then the incentive for schools to do better are not -- to do well with disadvantaged children are not very good. And I avoided trying to write into my prescription something I favor, this principle of not doing that, but I do think that parental choice is a necessity -- necessary to accommodate to this proposal. If a student who is worth extra money has the ability to leave the school in which he is not learning well, then that creates incentive for schools. However, I shied away from saying this should be a part of the federal portfolio because it is a perfect example of something. I think it is cool, but needs some debate.

And rather than have it worked out at the federal level, I think it should be left alone. The second question. I made the proposal -- the first part of the question. I made the proposal for demographically-based entitlement simply because I thought it was terribly important for the federal government to be able to know who its beneficiaries were. Now there is no federal program beneficiary who can be identified except through all kinds of local decision-making processes. You know, even Title I students -- there is no such thing as a Title I students. It is all contingent on what district the student is in and what school the student is in. And so if you were going to have any kind of student-based funding, you had to have identifiable students. That is what led me to this. It does raise the issue should the federal government be subsidizing students who, by their demographic characteristics, are disadvantaged, but otherwise they are doing well. And I think that you could make an argument that that is a better option than putting the federal government in the position of drawing money away from schools just as soon as they start doing well with disadvantaged students. There doesn't seem to be any way out of that dilemma. And I prefer the former way.

MS. RAVITCH: Mike Kirst.

MR. KIRST: Yes. The topic is the renewal of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but one of the things I originally did was read through the whole catalog of federal education programs. Just I was teaching at Oxford and less to do than usual and somebody mailed it to me. I read the whole thing cover to cover. And it seems to me that -- and I am amazed at the number and proliferation of these programs that has gone on in the last eight years to ten years or so. And you have raised the issue, Paul, of a portfolio. I mean, back in the seventies, the ESEA was probably 80 percent of the portfolio. Now I guess it may still -- I don't know what the money proportions are, but there is a tremendous array of programs, and every politician that is running for office is announcing more. I mean, Gore had about eight more in his speech yesterday. So how does the -- I think part of thinking about the federal role in terms as you pose it is how should ESEA fit into this broader melange of programs and how relevant are they and what does that tell us about what we should be doing with ESEA because it is very vast, very complex and ESEA is just part of this and in some ways is being surpassed in complexity by the proliferation of programs.

MR. HILL: I will give what Chris has already identified as a naive response, which is that there is no solution for solving it, no alternative to solve it. And the only way to do that, I think, is to consolidate these programs and then create one program. And that may be very difficult politically to do; however, one fact is that most of the programs in that catalog you looked at were sponsored by individual people who wanted to make that their legislative achievement. And they are not around anymore. I think the possibility of a dramatic consolidation of programs, if the decision were taken that that was the only thing to be done, is high. But my recommendation would be that all those programs should be consolidated into one, which is a student-based subsidy. Now would that be permanent? Of course not. If we don't get a President Gore, we, you know, we might get some other Democratic president in the future who would come in with another aid program. But for now, the best we can do is to consolidate and start over.

MR. KIRST: So you wouldn't put them in clumps like staff development.

MR. HILL: No.

MR. KIRST: Or you would put them all into one.

MR. HILL: No. My own view is things like federal aid to staff development or federal aid for reducing class size, and those things, which are all good at one level. I mean, who can be against either of those things except considering the needs of individual localities. An individual locality may need to do a lot more to attract a different class of people to its teaching course then to retrain the people it has got. An individual locality may be forced to hire totally unsuitable teachers if it comes under political pressure to reduce class size this year. And the idea that a federal category would force people to spend money in particular ways, I think is very wasteful and probably counterproductive. So my own view was that those separate categories of initiative would not be -- would not survive.

MS. RAVITCH: George Farkas.

MR. FARKAS: I would like to challenge your Ice 9 analogy. California's test scores dropped to second to last and third to last in the country and the guy who presided over that, Bill Hoenig, said it was because whole language took over so completely. I have been in the room with the chief of reading for the Houston school district, and she was speaking to a hundred -- two hundred and twenty elementary school principals. And she said, "You all know that because of the takeover of whole language in the ed schools you don't have any teachers prepared to do proper reading instruction." And they all agreed with her. Federal government was not part of the problem in California, there was no Ice 9 that caused the problem for Houston teachers, but there is something useful that the federal government can do, and at least some people in the Department are trying to do it. Reading Recovery is the shock troops of whole language. They are in more than 6,000 districts. They have lived off Title I funding. The district is -- the Department is in a perfect position to pressure them to start doing some phonics instruction and in fact has and you can see some changes. I was at the presentations to the states over the Reading Excellence Act. And a Reading Recovery teacher and -- who was a technical expert answered her own question, "What should you do if a child can't sound out a word?" And she gave four answers that were about guessing, which is the whole language answer, and one about chunking out the word. And then she started teaching Magic E, except she said, "We don't call it Magic E, we call it Policeman E." All of this seems to be the result of some federal pressures which came through the National Academy of Science's report, but which the Department is putting some muscle behind, at least sometimes. So point one, a lot of the problems are not the Department's making. Point two, the Department can play a role in fixing these things. So how do you respond to that? There is no Ice 9, but there is something else, and the Department could help fix that something else.

MR. HILL: I did not mean by using the Ice 9 metaphor to explain everything about American education. I wanted to explain certain attributes that has taken on what reflects how the federal government does its business, and I hold to that. There are other things that have happened that cannot be good that are not -- obviously are not mandated by the federal government, although they are the products of the ideas that schools can be the vector sum of rules made. And in this case, it was at the state level and there were rules made that were -- that tried to turn all schools in California in a particular direction to disastrous consequences. And I see an analogy between that and the two things I just talked about a minute ago, mandating a particular amount of staff development or mandating class size. Mandates of that kind created from afar are almost, by definition, going to be seriously mismatched with large numbers of schools. And you have given an excellent example of this. I am neither for or against Reading Recovery. I do believe in all likelihood that some schools may be able to use that very effectively. But if all school are required to do it, some of them will make a hash of it and some schools should probably use

something quite different. And the last thing I want to do is to create a situation where no school could choose what happens to work best for it. So my view is it is a very good idea for the Department to create -- to provide information about the inadequacies of Reading Recovery, about which I know only what you told me. And a good idea for the Department to make it clear that there is nothing in any Title I rule or regulation that requires the use of that program. But then to try to root it out by regulation I think has the same effect as what Hoenig did in the first place. So I go back to the point that you can -- I think you can find all kinds of problems with American education that a properly designed federal mandate done today might help reverse. But I think we have 30 years of experience that shows that those mandates themselves become new problems. And that is why I would not be in favor of using federal regulatory power in the war about reading.

MR. FARKAS: Could I just briefly follow-up, Diane? Is that all right?

MS. RAVITCH: Yes. Let me just say, George, because I don't know if this will affect your follow-up, I think that where I agree with Paul is that what you want from the federal government is good information about performance because that is what -- you wouldn't have known what happened in California without that information.

MR. FARKAS: Right.

MS. RAVITCH: And then let people in California decide how they are going to deal with it. Because if you get a federal mandate saying, "We have the answer," it may not be the answer you like.

MR. FARKAS: Okay. The great danger with the mantra that seems to exist completely in this town about flex and local authority is that unfortunately, there is no technical expertise at the grassroots. And the metaphor, since we are playing with metaphors, is -- I forget whose paper this is from. The metaphor is letting each person respond to a medical emergency in the way that suits their own locality would be called malpractice.

MR. HILL: Sally, you go.

MS. KILGORE: Yes. I am very offended by this. And I guess I will take the opportunity to try to explain two things. When, Paul, you were talking about my notion about school-wide projects, I want to point out that school-wide projects have the very kind of control you are talking about, but it is at the district level. That is to suggest that people who -- professional development funds are often controlled by the District and who is going to be trained in what. The issue is not being resolved by the notions of expertise coming in to teach teachers how to do something. Why is it not? Because it is still compliance driven. You don't have people who respond to rules who also sustain what they have necessarily learned or been told to do. I think of an example in a large urban area where one of the best math projects in this country, Chicago Math, was brought in and imposed upon the school district. It was a wonderful program. Results were very powerful, but its imposition was such that the moment the superintendent who had brought it in left, it was voted out of the district. So you don't sustain change by compliance, rules, regulations. You may get kind of empty shell followings. What you have got to do is build the capacity of teachers or principals or whomever it is to make sound decisions and sustain the practice because it will not be sustained within positions.

MS. RAVITCH: Comments? Tom. Tom Loveless?

MR. LOVELESS: I have a question that I want to press Chris Cross a little bit on his response to Paul's statement about parallel bureaucracies that has been built and the colonization of various levels of government. And you seem to imply in your comments that state capacity, the capacity of state departments have been enhanced by this. Very often when I hear the phrase "increased capacity," it simply means that they have grown in size, that these departments have just taken on more people. And I am wondering if you could tell me in what manner has the state department's capacity been enhanced? The capacity really to do what?

MR. CROSS: Right. For example, in assessment. I think that there has been in many states that I know of -- Maryland is one that I can speak of most clearly -- where the capacity of the state to do assessment is much higher than it was. Now I can't claim that, you know, how this came to be in terms of who was paying for what, but the fact that there was increased federal aid certainly has made the Department a much -- it is much bigger, it is much more bureaucratic, but on the other hand, it has got a lot more capacity than it did earlier. And let me be also clear. I think the silo creation tone is wrong and I think it has led to enormous problems because the tendency is for states and localities to mirror the organization of the federal government. And that -- I think one of the best things that could have been done when this administration came in was to dissolve all of those separate units of elementary and secondary voc eds, special ed and all those and have a unit that dealt with education of students. But it didn't happen. And we are stuck with the silos and the bureaucracy that is there. And trying to get rid of it is going to take a Herculean effort.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, it seems like it is worth pointing out that while this conference is on reauthorization of ESEA, I don't think there is a cabinet department without an education program. I mean, the Justice Department has an enormous education program. So does the Commerce Department, so does, of course, NSF and the endowment. But NASA has an education program. I would have difficulty thinking of any federal agency that doesn't -- couldn't sit around this table and talk about the 800 million or billion or 2 billion that it is spending in education. So it makes lots of opportunities. It also creates opportunities where a grantee can be rejected by one department and go to another who doesn't realize that they are funding a failed program. Linda Roberts?

MS. ROBERTS: I was going to ask the panelists and others as well, it seems to me that the way in which you are approaching some real challenges reflects your experience either in government or in the field or academia. And the world is changing under our feet. I don't think you should be surprised by what I am going to say to you. It seems to me that we have -- I really believe we have some new tools and new ways to connect programs and resources and ideas and schools that are clearly made possible because we have a new kind of technological capacity in this country. d it is really striking to me when I visit with other ministries and other governments around the world that they are thinking about ways to do things differently. And in the proposals that you have made, I didn't get any sense that you might think that technology might be a tool in helping you and helping us. And I wonder if any of you have any thoughts about that.

MR. CROSS: In fact, in my written comments, Linda, I talk about technology, particularly with technical assistance and dissemination. I think that something Paul's paper doesn't address is the mess that is out there now in terms of that at the federal level. And technology has a tremendous potential to reshape that and to make it much more responsive to individual users. On the other hand, one of the things I say is that we have a very unsophisticated audience out there. And one of the things that has to happen is an investment, frankly, by somebody in getting the consumer

much more informed about what to look for and what represents good quality, where to find it, and how to find it.

MR. HILL: Technology is an excellent way to make evidence and options and ideas and even training available to people. I don't think it would solve the problems I sort of address in any way. I mean, the problems are basically political in numbers. And I have the same view about technology as I do about teacher training or class size, that mandating particular use of technology from the federal government down to other localities is only going to create a problem of the following kind. A colleague of mine giving this same kind of opinion was asked by a legislative aide from the State of Ohio, "Then how are we going to explain the $500 million we have just spent on technology?" And his answer was, "I don't know how you are going to explain it." We often have the idea to spend money on technology and its potential uses. To think about how to use it is a good idea, but a lot of -- it is not a replacement for getting rid of regulation.

MS. KILGORE: I would like to add a comment to that because I -- certainly I think that, you know, the kind of capacity-building component of technology is one, but there is actually another one that I think we should pay attention to. We know that in the sixties and seventies one of the ways that the control that these different -- what are you calling those?

MR. HILL: Colonists.

MS. KILGORE: Colonists had was really through information control. They could say, "The feds won't let us do this" and there was no independent source of information. Technology provides, down even at the school level in the classroom, the capacity for people to evaluate the rules and what they are very easily. And so I think that it really can have an effect on this little, what I guess I would call the distribution of authority and power because the access to what really is a federal regulation is certainly changed or could be changed substantially.

MS. RAVITCH: My guess is, Linda, that the demand for technology will be driven by the need for technology. And I think that it is probably close to universally recognized that everyone needs to understand and use technology. I think, though, that that doesn't invalidate the points that Paul is raising and that Chris and Sally are responding to, which is it has been said in the last few years that one way to have perpetual life is to become a federal program. And Mike Kirst referred to this. You look at this list of programs and they are all over the place. And then you have a school system or a district where they have the Title I coordinator, the bilingual coordinator, the special ed coordinator, and each of them has a series of people working for them in the schools, in the district offices. And one child may be the recipient of all these different services. And I am not sure that, you know, just talking technology or buying more technology doesn't change the political problem, which is that the people who get the money for these programs will keep them there forever, even though it might make more sense to serve children in a different way.

MR. HILL: Just I want to pick up on the terminologies you used just to restate a point. When I went out to schools as a fed and started talking to people in the schools, we talked about services. And, you know, this kid used this service, that service, that service. If you go into an independent school or a Catholic school, you don't talk about the services because the school is much more undifferentiated. The school is actually, you know, deal with a kid here and now and the teacher decides to do this or that and the teacher decides to ask for advice from here and there and maybe send the student over to talk to somebody else. But the idea that you have a silo set

of services and basically what the school is a repertoire of predesigned activities to which a student might become assigned in different moments is entirely a product of the federal government. And that wasn't critiquing Diane about that, but that is how the federal government structure has affected the way we think about school.

MR. CROSS: I just want to pick up and say that that is true, but remember it is a consequence of the interest groups frustrating the federal government to create what has been created too.

MR. HILL: That is true.

MS. RAVITCH: Maris?

MR. VINOVSKIS: Paul, let me pick up on your idea of getting rid of the colonization of state and local education agencies, which I think I probably would favor and wonder what the value added has been all these years. But some of the later papers are going to talk about systemic status-based reforms, the emphasis on the role of the states. And one could have real questions about that approach in general. But if one looks at those states and takes your figure of 41 percent of the monies for those state agencies coming from the federal government, as you withdraw those funds from these categorical programs, are the states really then going to have the administrative wherewithal or will they make it possible to continue sort of standards-based systemic reform or will the states say, "Now that it is our own money, you know, we want to spend it on something else or do something else." Which I am not necessarily saying is bad, but what we are basically doing is we are saying we are reinventing government, we are getting rid of a lot of federal people while we are still spending money. You want us to do that now at the state level and at the local level in the sense of getting rid of a large source of those administrative funds. Are we then really getting a system where we are going to spend more and more money on education and have fewer and fewer administrators, which may be a terrific step forward or not.

MR. HILL: I think that is a fundamental question and in some ways the next paper starts to address that. One way to take standard-based reform is state level reform that makes student performance requirements very clear and creates a maximum possible flexibility at the school level. You know, as we are getting closer to it it creates needs for serious accountability systems at the state level and for some kind of service centers or market available for schools that are searching for sources of help. And this is a black hole at the state level. Nobody knows what to do. My own view is that creating a bureaucracy at the state level to handle those things is the worse possible solution to it, but there is a need for investment in order for standard-based reform to work probably of a magnitude much greater than the current federal subsidy administration represents. And this is a state level problem. I defer this to the next issue. I think you have put your finger on the big one. And just as my own gratuitous help to Bob to get started, the issue here is that standard-based reform, we have all agreed on the desirability of clarity of students to achieve and agreed on the desirability of testing and publicization. Well, we really haven't agreed on anything else. And now we are coming right up against the point. Does standards-based reforms have any consequences and is the state going to change the way it does things. And are schools really going to have freedom and if they have freedom, where is it going to get help. And these little questions are unresolved.

MS. RAVITCH: Belle Sawhill.

MS. SAWHILL: Actually, I have a related comment and question. And first of all, let me say --

MS. RAVITCH: Belle, excuse me, could you get to a microphone because we can't pick you up.

MS. SAWHILL: First, let me say that when I was in OMB and my staff and I put together 50, 60 small programs that we wanted to either eliminate or consolidate, the list would come back by those with greater political wisdom than we had and say, "Well, you might be able to get five of those or ten at most." And I think we weren't politically as courageous as we might have been, but it is a very tough uphill battle, as we all know. And that is the background for my comments, which is similar to Chris Cross', which is it would be wonderful to do this, but how do you find the political wherewithal to do it. And that leads me back to where Maris was coming from, which is you mention in the paper welfare reform as a possible analog here. And I also think about what we did in the Workforce Investment Act in which the background was that the GAO wrote all these reports saying we have these hundreds of separate education and -- or rather employment training programs and we really need to consolidate them. And with the help of the governors, we got welfare reform and we got workforce investment reform. Now why shouldn't the governors be playing a similar role in accomplishing where I think you want to go. But it would mean that the money would probably need to go out in a block grant to the states and that has its own set of issues attached to it. However, it does seem to me it aligns with the whole idea of standards-based reform, which is assuming that states are the leaders in all of this, and that furthermore, if you are really still concerned about equity -- and I think there has been a tremendous shift over the last, you know, half decade or so away from equity and towards excellence or standards in federal education policy. If you are still concerned about equity, you should be concerned about what you can do to get the states to spend in a somewhat more equal way and you could make your block grant money be conditional on fiscal effort at the state level, first of all, and secondly, some way of allocating at the substate level that was also there. I mean, you could have an incentive for that built into your block grant if you are really concerned about equity still. And in some way, that would seem to me to be the ideal way to combine these two objectives of, you know, excellence and equity. But comments, please.

MR. HILL: I beat around the idea of political engineering, but this probably needs some political engineering and this is a good idea. I mean, it is worth talking about that the -- one would hope that governors would be motivated to do things because of their inherent responsibilities, but I know that may not -- is not a realistic statement. However, one would think that the kind of proposal I am making fits very well with statewide standards-based reform if, for example, the schools where the highest proportions of low income kids suddenly end up having a great deal more money to spend, the state could then use to buy health and the like. Now one might be able to persuade governors to develop the validity of this even without giving them control of the dollars, but it may be a cost -- may be a price governors would exact. I think the idea of getting governors into it and making it basically an interstate contract where work becomes a federal legislative issue, I think it is a good idea.

MS. RAVITCH: David Kirp.

MR. KIRP: Paul and I share a fondness for small schools, although he is more romantic than I am about the generalizability of his boyhood experiences as a Catholic school lad at American education. But I want to put his comments in historical perspective and really pick up on what Chris was saying and sort of remind us about what it was that led to the state of equity-rooted rules in terms of the what was called exclusion -- excusal that really was the exclusion of handicapped kids. The fact that athletics was a boy only preserve existence of racial segregations, the courts limited to their jurisdictions, as you suggested would be a good policy,

had been entirely unable to address in the deep south. Now that set of rights, none of which I suspect we would argue about, degenerates, corrodes into the kind of legalisms that you are talking about. So, too, as several people, I think including Chris, said state departments of education were pretty jokey places back in the fifties and sixties. And I remember the line of Bob Jeffries running the Title I program in Massachusetts that local control in Massachusetts was the Battle Hymn of the Republic with all of its -- with all of the sort of inequities, consequences that ballad is referring to. And I think as well about what those little communities and public schools were like and conjure up the world we created in Hamilton High. This lovely Jerry Grant book about a 40-year history of the school. Well, that school was a community in Syracuse. That Syracuse high school was a community in the 1950s. But communities are places not only of inclusions -- that certainly was -- they are places of exclusion as well and they leave lots of folks out who have no place to go. They set up pecking orders within and certainly inside and outside. That is both their strength and their weakness. But it was the concern about who was getting left out in the first place that led to the kind of institutionalization of mechanisms that in turn become corroded and reach the point where we do now. My concern is not that we ought not put a thumb on the scale in the favor of smallness and the favor of community and the favor of -- in favor of debureaucratization, it is that we constantly find ourselves swinging back and forth. Sort of the type one error is responded to -- the type two error is responded to or the type one error. And I wonder if you could reflect on what you see is the down side of the recommendations that you offered. If you would project 20 years down the road as to what the least happy scenario might be.

MR. HILL: Well, first I think your capsule of history is very useful and very true. However, I am worried about the maintenance of legal procedures and standards to solve problems that run away anyway. And I am not sure they have gone all the way. But we now have a very well established pattern of sex equity in sports. We now have a very well established pattern of services to the handicapped and being intolerable to exclude students and all kinds of other things. And I am not sure they have gone all the way with it, but we now have a very well established pattern of sex equity in sports. We now have a very well established pattern of services for the handicapped and being intolerable to exclude students. And all kinds of other things that are founded in legal processing and rules, but now are actually accepted by the society. And that doesn't mean in my mind that there won't be backsliders in some cases, there won't be abuses in some cases, as of course there are now. You know, one of my problems with equity is that it is almost like Sacramento purity. I mean, once you set procedures in motion, you have got equity even if all kinds of kids are still being screwed. And it isn't clear to me we have got a very equitable situation at the moment. But that being said, I think the possibility of some backsliding with respect to access to the handicapped, in particular, is possible. I don't think that even I have the hubris to suggest we eliminate the fourteenth amendment. There may be some remedies to this. My view is the worse that could come from what I am proposing is isolated incidences of return of segregation. And I think that those instances are probably with respect to the handicapped much more than they are with respect to race. But that could happen. And whether that needs -- whether the avoidance of that problem justifies the maintenance of the current structure, I very much doubt. But I do think that any kind of situation of the kind I described or even some much more radical proposal like vouchers would lead to litigation and lead to kind of reconstruction of some legal principles. So I think that we would have that. And here I know we are at a deeper issue, but what is going to happen on race desegregation as a result of elimination of federal oversight or increasing reliance on schools as individual organizations, I don't think we know the answer. And if you, as I know you do, read the literature on charter schools, I don't think anybody knows the answer. I mean, right now one thing is for sure is that charter schools are segregated in the same proportions as other schools.

There are some that are quite segregated and some that are not. And they are actually reflecting the social society-wide commitment in many cases to desegregation so that as we get to much more school level freedom and initiative, there is a real chance that we will get to a situation with respect to race segregation that is no worse and possibly better. If it is worse, then we will have a fourteenth amendment issue and we will go back to other problems. But I don't think that the chance of avoiding those bad outcomes in small numbers of places justifies keeping all we have got.

MR. KIRP: I don't think that was the choice, but I wouldn't disagree with anything you said except we have some data. We know that charter schools -- the one thing we know about charter schools, they don't educate handicapped kids. The disproportionately small number of handicapped kids in charter schools is clear nationwide. We also know this about charter schools and that is that they have it -- nationally they seem to reflect racial distribution. In fact, they do a better job of educating minorities. But if you look school by school, they tend to be somewhat more segregated. And you would expect this as well because they are serving much more niche markets and niches are relying on the data that we both know --

MR. HILL: You are basically right. I just want to say two things about that. One of them is on the segregation issue, the problem is, as far as the measurements, are so great. And to hold charter schools to the requirement that they reflect the racial distribution of a given locality is to hold them to a standard that public education does not.

MR. KIRP: No-no. Let me just make -- the point that we are struggling with is how does one introduce the modicum of basic rights, maintain the modicum of basic rights, without this becoming the, you know, the beast of -- you know, the Ice 9 in the story. That, it seems to me, is the design challenge that Washington faces not only here with respect to the old ESEA, but more generally.

MR. HILL: One more comment I want to make about charter schools. Again, David knows this better than I do, but one of the big issues on charter schools is that some of them are regarded by law as school districts. And so they become obligated to deliver all services to handicapped children the same as school districts do. The problem is, they don't have the advantage of large numbers. So a charter school that has a $40,000 student is bankrupt. And so there is every reason, under that kind of law, for a charter school to try to avoid serving that student. That doesn't have to be the only way we do it. In a situation in which school districts were maintaining in their responsibility for handicapped students separately from charter schools would take away that incentive among charter schools to have as a matter of survival. But long story.

MS. RAVITCH: I would say, David, that you paint a very accurate picture of the bad old days. And then contrasted to that is the status quo. But it would seem to me that the alternative to the status quo is not to go back to the bad old days, but can we do better than we are doing now.

MR. KIRP: Right, but nobody is -- I wasn't -- again, that it seems to me, is -- that is the false choice that I described Paul is making, what you are doing as well. I see this as a dynamic. And my concern about Paul's point is that he -- and yours just now is that you are taking a static moment. And the process is going to change. Different -- each of these -- each of the goods has its bad element. There is a down side to each of these phenomenon. The question is, how do you -- in this case, how do you maintain the modicums, is the word that I used, not how do you maintain the status quo. How do you maintain a modicum of protections so that we don't keep

swinging back and forth, as predictably we will. In a generation down the road in this room, we are talking about, you know, what has happened to the distribution of students. What has happened to the equity issues. We have got to go back to a kind of regulation we should never have given up.

MS. RAVITCH: The problem that Belle Sawhill raised and I think Chris earlier raised is that the forces to keep things exactly as they are enormous. And the chances of actually changing anything in ESEA are very small. So the question is, where can you push to get something better for kids. Sally? A last comment and then we will move on to the next session.

MS. KILGORE: I wanted to make an interest -- I don't know that it would be interesting, but it is interesting to me. One of the variables you are omitting here is the fact that the interests vary at the state and local level over time so that the interests -- you might not need to have the state active in protecting certain rights because of the interest of the states. And I am thinking in particular the interest in achievement of all students is dramatically different now than it was 20 years ago where now it has such an economic consequence that states have much better investment in that initiative than they would otherwise. So it seems to me it is not just a pendulum, but the environment that has changed.

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MR. VINOVSKIS: Well, in fact, I was going to have him help me with that paper. First of all, I think you both have done an excellent paper. It really puts in a nice, historical, broad perspective about a lot of things that have been going on. And I find it very sort of interesting and troubling to sort of see the discussions today about the reauthorization, which your paper fits into very much. And the reason is this, and I think it gets to Michael's point forward, the need for more discussion on the systemic reform. People are going around and saying we should stay the course. An awful lot of people are telling us that. And I am all for that. I mean, why change? And I think they have a lot of good points because we haven't had time to implement things and check things off. That is all great. But I just want to figure out what is this course I am on. And no one is willing to help us with that. So for example, on the independent review panel, which Chris Cross and I are on, we have met 16 times over the last 4 years. We can not ever get a discussion on what is systemic reform, what are the basic assumptions because systemic reform is a plausible, interesting hypothesis invariably unproven. But people don't discuss the assumptions as we stay the course. It is like if it works, that is fine. But the evidence that is being cited is silly. I mean, the NAEP scores, things like that, aren't going to really address it. So one of the problems then is, what is underneath systemic reform. If you look back to the Smith/O'Day writings, there are very strong assumptions about what should happen, what will happen. And yet when Mike last week, Thursday evening, would ask and say, "Given the writings on systemic reform and five years later, how would you conceptually change that?" He says, "Too complicated to discuss." Well, I can understand that. But I don't feel good that that is the, you know, the soul of the reform that I am asked to continue. So the funny part is, is this going to be a reform that you are either going to stay or not stay, but we will never discuss the assumptions of systemic reform? I mean, it may be something we have to declare, like you say, a victory. It is a short thing, it doesn't have much effect, and then we ought to get on with the business of saying, "What are we really going to do about education?" In any case, this is a long way of saying what do you think about Smith/O'Day's approach to systemic reform? In light of the five years, have we learned anything. And would you stay the course conceptually with what we have? I know that is an easy question.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I mean, for me -- I mean, the core of this reform strategy is this relatively simple-minded straightforward notion of first saying, "Let's at least identify what it is that we expect kids to know and be able to do and let's then try to align all of the other key elements of the system to support that. Professional development, teacher preparation, testing programs, Herculean design, et cetera." If the question is, are we to stay the course around this kind of standards assessment, accountability strategy, I would argue yes. And I would argue that we have some, at least, preliminary evidence that this makes sense, but we also have the evidence of the fact that this is what -- not most other countries, but most other countries that have higher performing systems than we do, this is their basic strategy. As I said earlier and as, you know, David pointed out, I mean, this is -- we are asking people to do things that are -- not only represent very major changes in the way we have traditionally done business, but at its best, at least, the standards rule provides very ambitious, challenging set of notions about what student learning ought to be and ought to look like. And the requirements for providing access to expertise for schools is something that we are barely in a position, so far at least, to be able to

respond to. I don't know any other answer, but to say yes, we should stay the course. I should quickly say also, though, at least in my view, although we have -- we sometimes behave as if systemic reform or standards-based reform and more choice charters' market-driven strategies are inherently in competition with one another, my own view is that these two movements, in fact, need to be -- we need to figure out a way to actually marry the strengths of both. And in suggesting, as we do at the outset, that standards-based reform really is the de facto policy, at least if you look at how the states are moving or have moved over the last five years, it is also important to point out that a lot of the states that are furthest down the road, if you will, around the standards-based strategy also see no obvious contradiction in supporting the development of much more diverse strategies for delivery, including the use of charters and choice.

MS. RAVITCH: Checker?

MR. FINN: One quick comment and then two issues I wish you would address. A quick comment is to note that I think the authors have, perhaps, unwittingly done a small good deed for the Lamar Alexander campaign with your -- which probably needed a good deed -- with your line about how Goals 2000 represented a fundamentally different vision of reform than America 2000. Poor Lamar has been dogged for at least seven years by allegations that there is no real difference between the much hated Goals 2000 program and the America 2000 program that he developed. And you have finally laid that issue to rest by saying that they are fundamentally different from each other.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I hope you will give that paragraph wide-spread publicity.

MR. FINN: I think media are ravening for it, actually. One of the very interesting points in your paper, and you go on at some length about it, is the national, but not federal, distinction. And in your case study of NESIC, you give a pretty vivid example of what happens to national. And anybody who has been following the voluntary national test story has another pretty vivid example of what happens to federal. And then you suggest that we are developing a kind of de facto collection of national but not federal organizations, basically, that are functioning as kind of national brokers, mediators, I am not even sure quite what the right noun is. And but then when you list them, they are mostly sort of organizations of the profession. They are mostly organizations that consist of educators. The Council of Teachers of Math, the Professional Teaching Standards Board, things like that. I wonder --

MR. SCHWARTZ: But I also mentioned the roundtable of ACHIEVE, as Richard --

MR. FINN: Oh ACHIEVE. I forgot ACHIEVE. Sorry. I found myself wondering if we are better off as a country empowering national professional organizations to be our national, but not federal than we are with more politically accountable national entities that actually are under more directly the thumb of the government. It is also probably worth noting that an awful lot of these national, but not federal organizations end up surviving on federal dollars, which they get sooner or later one way or another because they can't afford to do what they do unless there is a federal subsidy sooner or later. So we may end up with a kind of URZADS federal structure or at least federally funded, but nominally non-governmental national structure for doing these things that the federal government directly can't do. I am not sure we are well off when this comes up as the sort of de facto alternative. I would welcome a comment on that. I will just stop. Comment on that.

MR. SCHWARTZ: No, I think that is the real dilemma here. We haven't -- I mean, I wish I could -- we could cite examples of federally created entities, at least in education, that were set up with enough insulation and enough -- and at arm's length enough relationship to the government to be able to be protected from this federal school board charge. But NESIC, you know, was obviously a flawed example of that. You might well -- maybe the National Assessment Governing Board fits that definition, although there are others here who could comment on whether or not that is sufficiently independent to play the kind of role that I think we are, you know, we are accounting for here.

MS. RAVITCH: Mike.

MR. KIRST: Just I can't resist to comment on what I am working on. In almost all the conversations in the United States about standards and national organizations that are working with them, compared to abroad, particularly England just was, it is -- higher education is left out. There is national standards out there called the SAT, the AP, the ACT. And the whole dialogue about evolving national standards largely takes place in America as if there is no -- it is Botswana and almost nobody goes on to higher education. And so, you know, what I am trying to do in my own work is to take a look at the higher education standards and the lower education standards and the powerful role of some of the interstate higher education organizations in standards. At some point we are going to have get them in this game. And some of those are governmental, some of those are non-governmental, but they are part of the mix here that is just often ignored.

MS. RAVITCH: In our first conference here as part of this series, Mike, we had a paper by Dave Brennaman on remediation in the higher education looking at what relationship it might have to the whole standards conversation. And at least there were some of the commentators of that session who felt that the ease of access to higher education, the lack of any standards, if you will, encouraged the lack of standards in the schools because kids know that it doesn't matter if you work or you don't work, you will go to college.

MR. KIRST: You know, I would say 80 to 90 percent of our students are admitted without having a writing test because SAT I is multiple choice without writing and so is ACT. Then they give them a writing test when they enter and low and behold there is some problems. So there is a really big issue here that I think is part of the discussion and fits into these national groups.

MS. RAVITCH: Carl?

MR. KAESTLE: I think Dave Kirp's comment that systemic reform isn't coherent enough to be called the strategy and then Maris pressing you on what is it we are staying the course on, let me give you kind of a simplistic history of it in 25 words if I can do it. And you can educate me as to what is wrong with this. It came from the states, it went up to the federal level. And through a quite partisan, gaudy political process, it went back to the states. Now it is actually in its Smith/O'Day form, possibly capable of being quite coherent, quite coercive and quite systemic. And in the states that are most aggressive about it, we are now being able to see accountability for kids, accountability for systems and some alignment and so forth. So I think your answer about what we are supposed to stay the course on was, if not coherent, at least it means something. It is a program and it has several pieces that fit together. When I heard your summary, I thought it sounded very bland, you know, that Mr. Riley dreamed up this kind of RAND program for the states, but only after the piece, which is very clearly detailed in your paper, about the 1994's by election. So I suppose if you want to put a rosy picture on it, it could

be that there is an invisible hand that says partisan politics is great in this instance as it winds up getting the feds back to what they should have been doing and return this level of systematic control to the states, which would throw into it more legitimacy doing it. Now it has also expanded that at the state level, I realize.

MR. SCHWARTZ: My jumping off point here is that this is, essentially, a state movement. I mean, I confess coming -- I have spent more time here than, in some ways than I like, but I basically don't live in D.C. and the debate about federal policies, somebody else said this earlier, maybe Sally, when you are out in the states and working in localities, somehow this really recedes in importance. At the '96 National Education Summit where, again, after the congressional sort of change overhead had occurred, what was striking and what was really important politically about that event was it provided an opportunity for the leaders of states buttressed by CEOs basically to say, "This really is about state responsibility." And for a whole bunch of newly elected governors who were not part of the earlier sort of eighties wave of sort of governors coming together in a bipartisan fashion, for them to get socialized into the notion that it was perfectly okay even for newly elected Republicans to buy into the notion that standards-based reform was really the most credible, plausible strategy for states to adopt. And what has happened, I would argue, at least since '96, is that they has again, even in an increasingly partisan environment in this town, once you get out of here and out into the states, the -- some static on either end of the political spectrum has somewhat diminished when you see states where they are now pretty aggressively moving ahead to actually try to implement this very complicated set of reforms in the schools. And one of the things that struck me in this last conversation, that is, the first conversation, is we have a hard time letting go of the idea that with federal dollars ought to come pretty tight compliance kind of constraints. Goals 2000, as Mike said, I mean, it really is vulnerable to -- 90 percent of the dollars, as Mike says, you know, went out to localities. And no doubt, lots of them did not make use of those dollars in ways that we might think were most appropriate. And I think one could -- at least I would argue that perhaps a different -- that is, thinking about having federal -- more of the federal dollars actually focused on states and less on some pass through to localities might in fact make more sense for the sort of next generation of programs. But if you buy the notion that this set of reforms really are state-based and straight state-driven, it does seem to me that the federal role ought to be designed in such a way as to reinforce and support state responsibility and state discretion and that we have to kind of accept along with that the fact that people may wind up making decisions that we don't particularly like or approve of. The bottom line has to be, however, focused, again, as others have suggested, focused on results. Results here being defined in terms of student reform. Again, Sally made the point that rather than trying to advance federal strategies for holding states and locals accountable for performance, accept the fact that and try to support the fact that it really is the states that are now engaged in building accountability structures and don't try to superimpose new ones attached to new federal dollars.

MS. RAVITCH: Tom Loveless.

MR. LOVELESS: I enjoyed reading the paper. I think one area that could be developed a little further is the role of the national standards documents themselves. We have national standards in every subject area. People talked about them a lot five or six years ago. You don't hear people talking about them very much anymore. And one interesting thing, George Farkas talked about the California story and reading being second off the bottom. Well, California is only one off the bottom in math. They are in worse shape in that, according to NAEP scores, and California is the one state that religiously followed NCTM, the national standards. The irony of that is if we had sat in a room like this five or six years ago and asked people what is the model

national standards document, most people would have said NCTM. And yet the one state that went out and followed it it didn't seem to do any good and it may have done harm, although causality is difficult to show there. My question is this. Do you see a future role for national standards documents and what might that be?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Yes. First, I think this -- I think it really is an interesting question to see, in fact, what role has those national standards documents played in states and localities. A general observation, I would think, is that one reason that we need to stay the course and adopt a kind of continuous improvement mode here, it seems to me, is that by and large, the standards documents in the states, I think, in many, many ways are very unrealistic in terms of -- that is, because of the way they developed, first at the national level and then, unfortunately, in most states with each subject being developed independently with people not being forced to make hard choices about what is really -- what is most important with no serious constraint around time, around manageability in terms of the way schools, in fact, are structured. You have got documents that are, you know, that look like this, not documents that look like this. I am not sure what the long-term role for the national standards documents really are. I mean, to me an interesting question is whether or not we can, in fact, as Checker and colleagues have suggested and as we are trying to do in our own work at ACHIEVE, is whether or not we can find the best examples, mostly of state-based documents, but also be willing to look outside our own borders internationally, and try to use those as benchmarks against which to help states really take a hard look at the quality of their own standards. As I suggested earlier, I think ultimately, if we are going to get to national standards, it is going to be much more by a process of consensus building across states around what constitutes the best available such work. But I don't have any feel personally for the role -- I mean, we know a couple of issues. We know that the NCTE standards were kind of dead on arrival and I assume they are not having much, if any, effect on the work of states and localities.

MS. RAVITCH: They are written into virtually every state's standards document in English language even though the national standard was so awful.

MR. SCHWARTZ: But the question was how are those actually being used. But I just don't know personally because I am not close enough to these states and localities. What use -- you know, which of those national standards documents are in fact, still in serious play. Maybe others here do know.

MS. RAVITCH: I would say that we probably have a huge disadvantage as a country by the short time lines that we use and the life of any experimental data whatsoever. So we have these kind of rushed out national standards documents and not an example of any school, school district, or state that has used any of them ever and can say, "If you use this, something better will happen. Therefore, this should be the national standard because look at the results we have gotten." In no case do any of these standards have behind them empirical data. So to call them standards is really like a national wish list document. The other thing I think that I would just mention to you is about Community School District 2. First of all, it is not a local school district, and I think yours is not the only paper that holds up Tony Avarado's heroic efforts at a mini-district in New York City. There are 31 other school districts. And not one of the school districts is doing what Tony Avarado did. Now he is gone and we will have to wait five years to see whether his personal personality was what was holding the school improvement activities there. But in any event, whatever happened there is not the district. The district is New York City. And New York City is the last place you would go for any kind of professional development activities. You would get bad advice guaranteed. Tom Glennan. You had a --

MR. GLENNAN: I guess I am -- I just want to put on the table a question to -- it is actually both to Bob and to Paul. It seems to me all these proposals, Paul's proposal or the strong systemic reform proposal really assumes something about the capacities of schools and perhaps of school districts. And I guess the question I have is do you -- would you care to venture a guess as to what the proportion of the schools in this country are, particularly in the areas where these reforms are aimed, what the proportions of the schools are that possess the capacity to respond to the standards. I mean, it goes back to the point that George Farkas made, I think, in the context of Texas. And secondly, and this relates to the district capacity, I would have thought that in the stronger states or the states where the assessment regimes, which almost nobody has talked about yet, by the way, they have just talked about standards. And it seems to me standards have nearly as much impact, probably, as the assessments do. But in places where states have strong assessment regimes, that one of the things you might have expected to emerge was that school districts would say, "Hey, we didn't set the standards, those were set by the state. You schools that are performing poorly, you have got to meet those standards. Let us band together to see how we can do that. We will help you to meet that." Instead, in fact, the districts seemed to take the -- those assessments as blights upon their record and to go merrily on their way mandating the kinds of changes they think will make those schools do what is right. So there is some serious capacity problems here that it seems to me if one does not address at the same time that you are addressing the standards, you are in big trouble.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I am in total agreement with that. And I think the big question at this basis is how do you deal with the capacity at the school level to actually do this work. And we will talk about professional development later in this conference, presumably. That is only one piece of it because there is kind of organizational change as well as the how do you address the subject matter, knowledge of current teachers and prospective teachers and the pedagogical skills as well. Again, I come back to District 2 as virtually the only place I have seen where we have a pretty good sense, at least, of what it is actually going to take at a district level. And I understand technically the point you made, Diane, but it is also important to point out that each of those New York City districts, at least the last time I looked, they were 32 of the 35 or 36 largest school districts in the State of New York. So they are -- these are 25, 27,000 students. The kind of on the ground assistance, expertise available in schools to teachers built into the ordinary routines of the school day and school year is what is so striking in that district. And that is the recognition that unless you deal with the learning needs of the adults in a serious way on the ground, you are unlikely to get to the kinds of changes the student achieved that we all hope for from this movement. That is what it is ultimately going to take. And, as Diane suggested, there is a very real question as to whether or not in District 2 and a few other places around the country, whether this is -- these are kind of aberrations totally dependent on this genius of individual leaders like an Avarado, or whether or not there are ways to actually change the way we think about the responsibilities of districts and the way that districts are, in fact, managed. Because that is what the District 2 experience offers is a very different strategy for managing the district. Just one final comment on that, Tom. The District 2 happened to have one school on the State's --

MS. RAVITCH: -- SUR list.

MR. SCHWARTZ: SUR list, yes.

MS. RAVITCH: Schools under registration review.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Yes. These are schools on the death watch, basically. Low performance schools. And the response of the District, rather than this kind of piling on, was a failing school is the sheer responsibility -- it is a reflection of the District as much as it is of the school. And the District really, you know, in fact, changed its relationship to that school in order to help that school quickly get better and get off the list, which it succeeded in doing in a pretty dramatic fashion.

MS. RAVITCH: David Kirp.

MR. KIRP: Yes. I wanted to sort of pick up on this point of sort of relating capacity building and accountability and offer a kind of romantic reminisce of the old English HM inspectorate system. Horribly named. It would need -- it was horribly named there. It is certainly horribly named here. But this was a cadre of experienced teachers based in central government, but also spending most of its time in the field with a dual function. One of the functions was to provide this kind of training held expertise to sit in on classrooms to talk to teachers who trusted these folks because they had been there. Its other function was to report back to the central ministry about problems that seemed to be intractable. Now that -- to be able to trust the coach -- in fact, what these folks are, the coach and judge, was a hard thing to manage. And I have looked. There aren't very much by way of data that tells you what actually happened. There is more myth than data. But as a model of combining those two activities and using those individuals in that capacity, it is an interesting one. Now the one state that I know that comes closest to doing this is Maryland, which cycles through the State Department of Education senior teachers who get paid at the higher local levels when they are working in the state, take on state responsibilities and programs for two or three years, and go back to the schools in which they are at because there are a handful of school districts in Maryland, as it happens. They actually can have personal relations with real, not just districts, but principals and teachers. And by all accounts that I can gather when I was spending time there, it works as a strategy. So there may be examples out there that suggest ways of combining those two functions.

MS. RAVITCH: All right. George Farkas.

MR. FARKAS: There is an issue that is connected to this capacity building. And I guess my question to you is why isn't this issue sort of discussed in terms of standards. And the issue is what happens in the ed schools. And to put a finer point on it, at risk of offending people, as I looked at the kind of expertise that exists, I have been just struck by these generalities. One of them is that there is actually 40 years of serious research in reading instruction. It is not a kind of questionable issue. There is this enormous professional field. And it pretty much exists in departments of psychology. And those people don't really disagree and never have really disagreed, and you could call what they do phonics. And then if you go in the C&I departments in the same event schools in the same universities, you find --

MS. RAVITCH: Would you describe C&I as curriculum and instruction?

MR. FARKAS: Curriculum and instruction in the ed schools of the same universities, you would find 60 percent perhaps doing whole language. So it is completely incompatible with what they are doing in the psychology department. I guess I wonder why standards aren't addressing this and what you have to say about it. One final little anecdote, in Dallas when a new superintendent came in with a big reform agenda about four or five years ago, everybody had great hopes for him. And he appointed, as director of curriculum and instruction, a woman who was a friend of his who had been principal of the whitest high school in the district. She

had been a high school principal for 25 years. She knew nothing about curriculum and instruction certainly on a global scale. And in many of the districts I have been in, that is very common practice. There is no technical demands for this appointment. It blows your mind.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Mike Kirst alluded to -- this is a piece of this larger question about how to seriously engage the higher education institutions. Not just schools of education, but the larger higher education community in this whole reform movement. I think back to a meeting in the early nineties that I was involved in when a group of us came to California to -- which was the one place back in the late eighties, early nineties where you could actually see in place the curriculum frameworks documents, including the one that Diane was heavily involved in, the history and social sciences there. And somebody in our group asked before we went out to California, "What do we know about the degree to which teacher preparation programs in the higher ed institutions are in fact beginning to prepare people to teach to these curriculums?" And we had a couple of graduate students do a survey of the Cal State University institutions, which is the major preparers of teachers, and maybe no great surprise, but virtually no recognition that there were these new state frameworks in place. And this is -- I mean, I assume that what lies behind your question is if in fact this really is a state-based movement and governors are in some position to influence state boards of higher education as well as the K-12 governance mechanisms, why hasn't there been more attention to this? Then I would argue that there are at least a few places where this is beginning to happen. But by and large I agree, ed schools have been essentially left out of this movement. And that obviously has to change if in fact we are going to cut into the long-term problem about the quality of the next generation of teachers coming in or even the more immediate problem of how to get technical expertise quickly into the hands of people currently in the field.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, this really goes to the very issue of what your paper is about, which is systemic reform. Systemic reform is not just standards and tests.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Right.

MS. RAVITCH: It also suggests that the teachers would learn, and Julia Koppich is going to talk about this tomorrow, that teachers will learn the material -- what the kids are going to be tested on, and that they will teach that material to the children so that the children have equal opportunity to learn. But the ed schools are the missing piece. And I think about the survey the public agenda brought out last year called Different Drummers. And on specifically on questions related to standards, the public and the ed schools were in completely different positions about how important standards are. The ed schools saying, "This is not what we are interested in," and the public saying, "We want our kids to be able to pass these tests the states are now mandating." Sally?

MS. KILGORE: A question for any of the gentlemen up there. I have the impression that the ability to align the standards that they have developed in the states with tests is a very extensive, arduous, time consuming process and probably not feasible on a state by state basis. Yet we know we have eliminated, to some degree, the national test movement. And the question is, is there a way -- first of all, am I correct, but secondly, is there a way that the federal role might be facilitated in kind of adjudicating this problem?

MR. SCHWARTZ: There is a small comment at the end of our paper, lightly touched because it is organizationally self-serving, but proposing that in fact one of the things the feds might do is give, or at least allow, states to use federal dollars to avail themselves of existing or what would

be newly created mechanisms to begin to get at that problem. Matt Gandle, my colleague from ACHIEVE across the table from you, has organized an effort. This summer we are bringing together teams from four states to essentially help these states not only to give the states access to what we think would be a fairly tough-minded critique of this alignment or lack thereof between their tests and their standards, but also to help build the capacity of the state people to do this kind of work themselves. But it is arduous, time consuming, and technically difficult.

MS. RAVITCH: I am going to leave the last comment before our break to Mike Kirst.

MR. KIRST: Well, I don't know whether this is a spreading trend, but, you know, as you said, California is an exception, but I have talked to a few other states. The problem I see with that is that the content standards are so long that to make a test that would meet the content standards is huge. California now tests second graders for 420 minutes in language, arts, and math. They take a 65 minute timed sit down one thing test in math, for example. And Harcourt Brace is saying, that made the test, that the California test doesn't cover the standards by a long shot, and it is -- so we have got to go beyond 420 minutes. So when we did the standards, we compromised it out by including everybody's thing in the standards. And now people are -- contractors are saying, "Match the test to the standards." Massachusetts, Tom said, went on for 11 days at one point.

MR. LOVELESS: Sixteen hours.

MR. KIRST: Yes.

MR. LOVELESS: Sixteen hours.

MR. KIRST: Sixteen hours. And then so this is an interesting thing and a trend to watch, it seems to me, because some states are now serious about matching tests and standards, and that is what we are getting into. And Checker said the standards were glutinous and that would -- I would agree with that.

A PARTICIPANT: The prior question is are the standards worth aligning to.

MR. KIRST: Yes.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. RAVITCH: I want to, before I throw it open, to say that -- how Gary got here, which is through the Internet. Gary got here through the Internet because someone forwarded his article, about not throwing out -- away all the textbooks and not having all the kids carry a laptop, to me. And then I communicated with him through his web site. And I found this guy who had this incredible technology background. And he said, "No, I can't do this. I don't know anything about education." And I said, "But this is the kind of fresh, independent thinking that we need to have." And one of the things I guess that I have always looked for in people who come to this conference is to get away from the usual inside the beltway crowd. Because when I was working in Washington, I found that every conference I went to had a rotating group of the same people. It was the same people. It was nice to see the same people again and again, but not to hear them again and again. So I am really happy that Gary came. And also, obviously, he knows a great deal about the use -- of the application of technology at the school level and has worked with school districts and teachers. So with that, let me throw it open to you and I hope you will ask him and our discussants some tough questions. Questions or comments? Yes. Bill Rukeyser. Introduce yourself.

MR. RUKEYSER: Bill Rukeyser from Learning in the Real World, Woodland, California. One of the issues that I would like to see spent some time with is the question of whether this whole issue hasn't been distorted or at least public attitudes towards it by the reckless oversell that we have seen in the last eight or ten years, references made to some of the data from the Milken exchange on public opinion data which may or may not be distorted by the survey instrument that produced it. It brought to mind some other data, as reported by Gruenwald and Associates, from Palo Alto, which has shown that the less that parents know about how to work a computer and the less the level -- the lower the level of parental education, the more faith they have in the ability of the Internet to actually educate their kids, which I think is interesting data. And the other thing Gary Chapman touched on this, but it would be nice to have it presented in a more roundly comprehensive manner, is something which K-12 districts are just beginning to come to grips with, which is the question of total ownership costs of education technology. Not parceling it out, but looking at what it means to get equipment and get in that work and keep it from going obsolete over a period of three or five or seven years, whatever is appropriate. And those numbers are out there and they are beginning to be talked about within the industry.

MS. RAVITCH: Isn't Michael Milken also in the technology business? Doesn't he sell technology to schools? Isn't there a suggestion of self-dealing there?

MR. RUKEYSER: Well, there is that question of the, at least, appearance of perhaps a community of interests between the Milken educational exchange and the very modestly named knowledge universe.

MS. ROBERTS: There have been some really good studies done about what it takes to invest in technology. Not just in education, but in every sector of the economy that I can think of. I have to tell you that what is really striking to me is that education is the only sector where the costs are

deemed to be simply out of reach. And Tom Glennan and the RAND Corporation I think did a really very, very thoughtful analysis of the cost for everything and the continuing costs. And I think it is very important for anybody to -- you know, who is investing in technology to pay attention to it. But I think one of the real fundamental problems for education is that technology is still viewed as something that would be nice to have, but it is on the periphery, rather than it is related to how you do your business. I don't know of any hospital, you know, major hospital that simply says they can't have technology. I mean, it is very much a part of everything that they do in the nature of their work. So I think that your questions are important, but I think they have to be put in the context of where are you trying to go and what are you trying to do. And I will tell you that it really -- we are at the beginning of understanding the full range of what these resources bring to schools. And I know your work is, I think, really helping to achieve a more balanced view in the long run. And I think Gary's paper does a wonderful job in really presenting the balancing points of data and questions that people are raising on both sides.

MR. LOVELESS: I think that is right. Larry Cuban made the point really in his book on teaching and machines. This idea that these new technologies are always oversold. Movies were oversold, televisions in the 1950s was supposed to be the greatest thing ever in the classroom in terms of instruction, and they are oversold. The Net is a terrific research tool, but it actually on its own doesn't do anything in regards to instruction or providing an education for a student. It is very much like buying a very fancy set of encyclopedias for a classroom. You wouldn't expect test scores to go up by putting new dictionaries or encyclopedias in the classroom. Are they needed? Of course they are needed just as pencils are needed. But we do need to dampen some of the enthusiasm and explain better to the public exactly what the probable role of computers is.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, I would hope that the panel would focus a little bit on performance because I think that, as I understand it, we have much more investment in technology and many more computers for a student than any of the countries that regularly have much, much higher performance than we do. Why do we have so little to show for the vast technology investment that we do have as compared to these other countries?

MR. LOVELESS: Well, the studies in the -- actually, the studies in the eighties of the impact of computer -- of CAI on achievement are positive. If you look at the Coolick and Coolick meta-analysis, it does appear that computers can have an effect in math, in reading, in language arts in a number of areas. However, what is weird about that is almost -- in almost all of those studies, the kind of instruction that went on was didactic old fashioned teacher memorization -- teacher centered memorization kind of instruction. And in all the federal policy documents, that is precisely the kind of instructional regiment that is rejected.

MS. RAVITCH: Okay. But what kinds of sites are kids visiting on the Internet? When they have freedom to visit, they go and look at photographs of Michael Jordan, they go to pornography, and they go to all sorts of other wonderful sites that are not necessarily improving their educational performance.

MS. ROBERTS: Well, Diane, I think what you are pointing out is that the technology by in and of itself, adds no value. It is clear to me when I visit classrooms around the country that the teachers -- that teachers coaching, that teachers instruction, that teachers use of this technology with their students is watt is absolutely the most critical factor. I want to go back, though, to a question you just raised about what about those other countries whose students are performing better than ours. While it is pretty striking to me that in every one of the major European countries now and in Singapore -- I just came back from Singapore -- in Hong Kong, the actual

investment in technology that is now underway for, you know, bringing computers and connections to the classroom is on the order much greater than ours. They are doing it nationally, they are not, you know, building it up from the grassroots. In Singapore, just to give you one example, every single classroom has a high speed broad band connection and every teacher has a computer or will have a computer or a laptop in every -- there will be enough computers so that there will be one for every two students in -- you know, in Singapore. And when I asked, "Why are you doing this when, you know, your students are performing so well?" Their response was really quite interesting. It was that "We believe that our students need to be critical, intelligent users of technology. They need to be thinkers and problem solvers. And these resources can help us do it better than any text that we have available." And, you know, they really view the information age as a new basic -- information technology as a new basic for their curriculum overall. And, in fact, what they are doing, which is fascinating to me, is dropping subjects in the curriculum that have been there for ages that they no longer feel are relevant. We never do that, by the way, in the United States. We just simply add on more and more and more.

MR. CHAPMAN: We were in Singapore together.

MS. ROBERTS: We were in Singapore together.

MR. CHAPMAN: And I spent a lot of time talking to teachers there and to students. I took a tour of elementary and middle schools in Singapore. I discovered they were doing amazing things with computers, but there was also a lot of skepticism on the part of the teachers that this was a new big advance for them. And what was clear in the Singapore case, and this is sort of a segue to my answer to your question, is that the cultural environment of the Singapore schools was so dramatically different than you find in a United States school, it is almost as if we felt like we were on another planet. You know, when you walk into an elementary school classroom and all the students jump to their feet at attention and there is a brief pause and then they all say, "Good morning, sir," and bow without any prompting from the teacher, you think to yourself you have left earth. Now the response that I have, and this again is a completely uneducated response but one that comes from a person who teaches in a university, is that my students -- it is very, very rare for me to run into a student at a university -- admittedly, I teach in a graduate school. But it is rare for me to run into a student who is totally incompetent with computers. They usually know how to use a computer and a word processor and stuff like that. Somewhere along the line, they have picked that up. But it is unfortunately not rare for me to run into students who can't write, who can't speak well, who don't know how to spell, who have huge and alarming gaps in their knowledge about current events or a basic knowledge. And somewhere along the line they weren't getting that. And I don't think that computers are going to solve that problem. I am constantly amazed by how much my students know about popular culture. You know, they know everything there is to know about singers and music and sports and entertainment and things like that, but not, you know, what century the Spanish civil war was in or what country it was in. So they are learning. They are learning. But they are not learning the things that we associate with being an educated person. And so I think in the United States the cultural environment is such that popular entertainment, consumer culture is just swamping education. And the Internet is part of that. Because of the commercial nature of the technology, most kids think of the Internet and computers as an entertainment and sort of cultural kind of conduit, a window on popular culture, not as a tool of education. And I think that that is quite different in other countries, at least in my experience.

MS. RAVITCH: David.

MR. KIRP: Let me begin with a sort of just playing off that notion. My sense of students at Berkeley, undergraduates and graduates, is that they will use the Internet for research on papers because they know this tool, but they have not learned how to discriminate in the uses. So there is this awful democracy of information and the sort of belief that if it is a web site, one web site -- you know, all web sites are created equal. I mean, that is basically the sort of view of how that universe works. The notion that teachers who themselves -- public school teachers, who themselves are not demonstratively good at critical thinking generally and for whom that is not the trained skill or the background, are going to be able to teach this new skill, critical thinking with respect to, essentially, unlimited information to students is to me a dreamy notion. I want to ask a different kind of question because I want to go back to the -- we can sort of chat about computer policy for a while. I think my views haven't changed much since that book from the 1960s called Run Computer Run. You know, the technology has changed, but my skepticism hasn't changed a lot. But my question really is about the digital divide and about the federal role, which all the panel seems to agree is a good thing. And it is -- I wonder what the adjective is doing there. That is we had -- Belle Sawhill earlier talked about the disinterest in equity questions. There is a divide. Why is it that we feel that the digital divide matters more than a whole host of other divides. The size of classroom divide, the salary divide, the capital available to poor family -- to families on the basis of race divide. The many other kinds of divides that exist. Why do we look at this. And so clearly the social investment is important not only to increase expenditures, but to do so in an equity rooted way whereas we don't seem to have this view with respect to any other contemporary American public policy, the education policy. Maybe it is because Al Gore invented the Internet. I am not sure.

MR. CHAPMAN: I hear that argument a lot, especially working in poorer communities. Every now and then, you know, I will have somebody come and say, you know, "Computers and the Internet are the last thing this community needs." Right? Actually, I don't believe that because I think that there is so much of the economy moving towards this technology that it is very, very important for these communities to have it embedded in the community itself. Now we need a total package. And when you invest a lot of money in technology, you hope that the other kinds of things that will make that technology, will come with it. Like teacher training or give more attention to students or smaller class sizes or things like that. You hope that you can make the argument that these things are all necessarily tied together. And we hope that we don't have any public policy makers who are bone headed enough to still believe that dumping technology inside the four walls of an institution without all the other things is going to make a difference. So to a certain extent, because there is so much public interest in the digital divide and in computers, they are kind of a way to get those other things in there and to get more attention to those communities. When I go to, you know, rich communities in Austin and I say, you know, "There is only 8 percent or 7 percent home personal computer ownership in east Austin," they get upset about that. If I told them that there is a median annual income of $6,000 a year, that doesn't mean anything to them. So they will go over there to east Austin and help people learn computers. They won't go over there for any other reason. And that is what we need. So it is a kind of, I don't know what you call it, a siphon or something like that of interest and of resources and all kinds of other things that is a political tool.

MR. LOVELESS: One interesting thing about the digital divide is there actually is evidence that in the eighties there was no -- either no digital divide or the divide was much smaller than it is today. And it is because poor schools were using their Title I monies to buy computers and again, to use them for drill and practice. I would leave that decision up to schools. I was not

meaning to argue that this should be the federal role. My point was I can see it being in the federal tradition.

MS. RAVITCH: Larry Sherman?

MS. ROBERTS: Could I just add a short comment?

MS. RAVITCH: Yes.

MS. ROBERTS: I think your question is really, really important. And in no school that I have ever visited have I ever seen technology working just because it is technology. It has always been, rich or poor schools, where there have been very, very strong leaders in the schools, well trained teachers. Not in technology, but well trained teachers. And it is very interesting. An investment from the community in the school. So I think to reinforce what Gary is saying, which is very interesting, is that this is where people are right now. And it is a way to bring them into the schools and bring them into the communities that you don't have otherwise. That seems to me to be something that is very important that the sociologists in this room might want to look at that more.

MR. SHERMAN: I want to ask if there is any relationship between the research on directed instruction, which I hadn't heard of before a week ago, but which George Farkas says is good pretty good evidence and Lynn Cheney was advocating in the Wall Street Journal last week. What is the relationship between that and the CAI research? Is it possible that we would do something about this digital divide in a way that would address the general divide if we were in fact afflicted so that there would be one computer for every student in poor schools as there is in fact in Union, New Jersey where there is a lot of evidence that once you get the kids wrapped into essentially learning through directed instruction on computers, that they get really excited about the reinforcing aspects of getting things right and moving up to the next level. And it becomes like a computer game with the fun overtones as opposed to the drudgery and drill and kill overtones. But then they also get their parents involved. And they bring their parents in at night and the whole community kind of gets involved in learning things not by using the Internet, but by using what we started out in this session being in opposition to, which is CD-ROMS, in effect, or programmed instruction. And is this something we know something about or something that we might learn something about if we could experiment with flooding the under funded schools with computers on a directed instruction coached by the side rather than sage on the stage total school approach to using technology for rogue learning.

MS. RAVITCH: Bob, do you want to deal with --

MR. LOVELESS: Well, again, the federal role thus far has -- the leaders of the federal government's technologies thus far, with the exception of Linda, really have pressed for something else, for something other than direct instruction, for something other than using computers to shore up basic skills. The documents that I have read and the policies that I have read have pressed for higher order thinking skills for non-drill. Using computers for things other than drill.

MR. SHERMAN: But do we know it will work if we do it? Is there any evidence?

MR. LOVELESS: There is evidence, again, from the eighties in terms that there was massive numbers of studies and apparently there is -- the effect size looks fairly robust. There are some gains in basic skills when computers are used for drill.

MR. GLENNAN: The way this gets phrased just really is kind of irritating because if you go into a school that has had technology for a while and where the teachers feel somewhat comfortable with it, they, in fact, use drill and kill for some things and they use the Internet for other things. And it is a tool for Pete's sake. Why is it the doctrine that somehow just people seem to think is being laid up. It is nothing but a tool. It can help in some places and it hurts in others. It is going to take a long time to work out. Diane, one of the things that I think is important as sort of looked back on is the business world. The business world has been trying to computerize for 30 years now. And for 15 to 20 years of that time, maybe more than that, what came out was no evidence of improved productivity. What also came out was totally different ways of doing things. And one of the reasons people now think there is no evidence of increased productivity is because the measures were old fashioned measures. They dealt with a world of the past. So that this idea of framing these things as sort of stark alternatives as opposed to a set of tools that can be used, which probably many people don't know how to use -- I mean, I don't quarrel with that -- seems to me to set the thing up in the wrong way.

MS. RAVITCH: I was actually just thinking of TIMSS and how poorly U.S. students performed on the TIMSS, which had nothing to do with computers. It was just a measurement of -- particularly the eighth and twelfth grade performance was very bad.

MR. CHAPMAN: Can I respond to this thing about the productivity issue? This is something I have actually investigated pretty thoroughly. And by the way, there is a great book on this subject. The best book I have read on computers in the last 10 years by Tom Landauer called the Trouble with Computers. And my impression is that it is not that productivity studies are using inappropriate data. It is in fact that we weren't getting productivity gains out of computers. And there are lots of reasons for that. We are starting to see productivity gains now because of mostly E-Commerce and the abilities to use E-Commerce techniques. So it did take 20 years for us to figure out how to do this well. And most businesses are still using computers in a way that has not improved their productivity. In fact, the industries that invested most heavily in information technologies have the lowest productivity gains and some even have negative numbers. Schools are likely to repeat that performance until we find some model. So I think what we are all advocating is a certain amount of experimentation. The problem is that if you do some model like this laptops thing, especially in poor schools, you need sustainability for what works. And a lot of poor schools find that very difficult. We seem to understand that one time bog issues or grants are not going to work because the federal data show that one of the reasons why the digital divide is still with us, even after the eighties, is that the schools that were poor Title I schools in the eighties and had lots of computer penetration couldn't sustain it over the long run. So if you get a model that works, then you have to figure out how to pay for it. And that is a really tough problem.

MS. RAVITCH: Sally.

MS. KILGORE: I would like to expand the discussion on technology. Looking at it simply from the instructional, what shall I say, benefits when in point of fact communication, which you allude to, but we have not elaborated on, could be as profound in the sense that we have such isolated histories of teachers as professionals. We have developed because of families working inability to communicate between home and school. And it seems like if you look at that in not

just the computer, but other technology, it will become important, especially in other areas like telephones that teachers might have. And then the other thing would be management. The ability to diagnose and to monitor student progress in a more individualized way that other countries might be able to do because teachers have more time and less teaching to do, but might allow for those kinds of things. Do you have studies or any information?

MS. ROBERTS: Well, there is some very interesting work underway that -- in districts where there has been a very concentrated effort in building a partnership with the home, in building a connection with homes, particularly in poor communities. And you have to find a way, by the way, to reach the parents. I mean, if they don't have the technology at home, you have got to find another way they can get to the technology. And particularly in remote communities the connection to the home and the ability to bring resources back into the school turns out to be absolutely critical. I think we are only, I will be very honest, at the very beginning stages in understanding this phenomenon of teachers and the impact on teachers. There are times when I think that is much more important than any kind of impact on students. So I think that is really important. No major school districts anymore can operate without technology because they are like any business. I mean, they are just -- everybody takes the administrative attendance taking, grades -- assigning grades, scheduling. All of those kinds of things are just -- you know, they are kind of given in terms of the use of technology.

MS. RAVITCH: Mike Kirst, if you will please -- you know, I have to say I think it is funny that for years and years and years teachers haven't even had a telephone. And that is a pretty useful tool. And that hasn't been in the classrooms. But Mike Kirst, if you would make the comment and then we will get up and stretch and go to lunch.

MR. KIRST: Well, I want to come back to Tom Loveless' question and I guess ask Linda about the federal role. If you -- I read the state or the state messages of the governors. And they have been pouring money on technology. And a lot of them have woken up to the need for technology training. And now that we have ramped up computers in a lot of state localities, what is the remaining federal role and what can you do that the states can't do or are there things that you could do that would leverage state money. In the good old days, we used to have matching grants where, you know, if we gave you some money from the federal level, it had to tie in and reinforce the state level. Now these things go this way and that way. So what is the future of the federal role and on what rationale would you base it given all that we have talked about?

MS. ROBERTS: Well, first of all, it is to continue the leveraging of the states. The states invest on the order of about 10 to 1 if you look at the federal money versus the state and local monies. Where we have found that there is still an important need is to -- I think the most important area is in the area of evaluation and research. We have hardly -- that is what the PCASS report pointed to. I agree with it absolutely. We have hardly invested sufficient amounts in understanding what is happening, more importantly how to engineer what we could do better in the future. And the last area, even though there has been a growing recognition of the importance of teacher training and professional development, our evidence is that our money, for the most part, is supporting that greater than one would expect. And most of the states have told me that they can find money for the infrastructure. So our money is not being used for that at all, you know, except in the E-Rate, which is strictly infrastructure and it is not our money. Well, it is, but indirectly. But the professional development part of it and, quite frankly, the new program we have just started this year, I couldn't have imagined the kind of response we have gotten, is the focus on preparing tomorrow's teachers. And I think that is a place where we can

hopefully get people thinking about not just technology, but thinking about how they might want to change teacher education overall. So, you know, those are the three things I would do.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. ROSSELL: I have two points I would like to make. First of all, it seems to be kind of a given or an assumption that federal priorities affect local values. But it seems to me that it is just as likely that local values cause federal priorities. In the policy areas that I am aware of and that I do research in, it seems to me that there is this huge congruity between local values and federal values and that in most cases, the local values came first. In the field of bilingual education, bilingual education was being promoted and implemented in the sixties before the 1968 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. And the impression I get is that this is kind of a nationwide phenomenon in which people in the federal government talk to people at local school districts and vice-a-versa. I don't know that you can establish causal direction. That is one point I would like to make. The second I would like to make is you asked the question can all students be reading at grade level. And you didn't answer it. And the answer is no. Only half the students can be reading at grade level because grade level is simply the average for a grade. And in your paper you criticize education because it is a field of fads. Skinny ties this year, fat ties next year, short hands, long hands. I submit that one of the reasons why it may be a field of fads is because these unrealistic standards are imposed on school districts. They are told that every kid must be in first place, that all children must be at grade level even though only 50 percent nationally can be at grade level. And therefore they just learn to do what seems to work in the classroom because these standards just don't have any meaning for what they are doing and what is happening.

MR. FARKAS: Are those directed to me?

MS. ROSSELL: Yes.

MR. FARKAS: Christine, we have actually talked about this before in Dallas last year.

MS. ROSSELL: Right.

MR. FARKAS: The second issue first. The fact that the late woebegone effect, there will be a distribution and half of the kids will be below the average is just a complete red herring. It has nothing to do with what we are talking about. What we are talking about is the systematic fact of Doug's scatter plot that as you go to low income kids, the whole curve shifts to the left and everybody is doing badly.

MS. ROSSELL: But that is --

MR. FARKAS: Let me just finish. Let me just finish. The simple point is that NAEP has a category called, in absolute terms, called below basic. And 75 percent of the kids in fourth grade in the D.C. schools read below basic. What that means is they just can't read. They just can't make anything of these books. It would be technically possible to take everybody and move them out of that below basic category. And the next time you gave the NAEP, nobody would fall into below basic. That could happen. That is what we would like to happen. Forget that language about grade level. It is just a semantic problem.

MS. ROSSELL: No, it isn't. It is more than a semantic problem. How do we establish these criterion norms, these standards?

MR. FARKAS: We are talking about being able to read a little book, Christine.

MS. ROSSELL: All right. But I am just telling you that school districts have had these standards in which people say, "All our kids must be reading at grade level when in fact only half can." Now what is the basic proficiency level on NAEP?

MR. FARKAS: Remember the $8 billion is for the lowest performing of low income kids. We are talking about kids who are going to drop out who are reading three, four, five grade levels below grade level. The boy I was working with was in eighth grade. He had 500 pages of American History. He couldn't pronounce the word "abolition." We are talking about 2.1 million kids in grades one, two, and three who are like that. We don't have to get worried about semantics.

MS. ROSSELL: Let me make another point because we have gotten off on not the point I raised. Is it possible to have -- to eliminate class differences on test scores? Yes. Is it -- I mean, theoretically. It is mathematically possible. Is it possible to eliminate racial differences in test scores? Yes. Is it possible to have all children reading at grade level? No. Only half can be reading at grade level. Now you say to yourself, "Okay. Well, why don't I just set a standard that every kid could meet." And it seems to me in a world in which the schools explain maybe 20, 25 percent of the variation in academic performance, that what you would have to do to come up with a realistic standard, a standard that is both challenging and realistic, would be something that was somehow referenced to the problems that these kids come to school with. But the point I was making was not whether or not you can eliminate the low achievement of poor kids, but in fact why it is that you complain in your paper about the fact that there is no sort of set best practices, there is no pedagogy law. And I would submit that part of the problem is these unrealistic standards in which kids are assumed to all be in first place, that they must be all in first place, they must all be at grade level when, in fact, only half the kids can be --

MR. FARKAS: No, it has nothing to do with that. What it looks like is you go into this all black school and you go into this first grade class and the first grade teacher is supposed to have them reading by Christmas. And there is all these kids in the room and they don't know the letters. That is what it is for. They are just way behind. Their life is being ruined right then and there. There is nothing theoretical about this. This is what it is like to be failing first grade and getting the daily experience that you can't do it. And it is -- there is a very effective set of actions to take with those kids. And it is about seeing a world in which 90 percent of the teachers don't actually know what those actions are. That is really what it is. I go in into the school, we started having them do something that had never occurred to anybody, which was to teach reading in kindergarten. You teach them to sound out sounds, you teach them to parse out sounds, you give them these little books, you teach them to sound it out. And suddenly you have these little kids and they are all reading by the end of kindergarten. Then you go into another school with the same little kids and they are in first grade and they can't do a thing and they are all running around being crazy. That is what it is about.

MS. RAVITCH: Okay. Enough. Let's move on. Maris.

MR. VINOVSKIS: Well, this picks up on some of this in a way. I mean, there was a part after Checker when I was ready to march to walk off my lunch. And it all sounds great. And it really is good because there are real problems with the current Title I. There are things that we need to do. But I am nervous because you guys seem to know more, because that is why we are listening to you, about what these scientifically validated curriculum instruction programs are. And we have a bigger deal of success than I suspect we might. If we look back really at even some of the so-called best programs that have been evaluated, Success for All, which is problematic in terms of evaluation, Parent Pre-School, which doesn't really close a gap, all these, we have a whole series of studies of analyses that purport to be among the best and we have problems with them. And the question is, do you really have the data and the things that are developing across things, so we don't go through, like, with follow-through works of wonders. What another set of people do, it doesn't. I mean, that are really going to close that gap?

MR. FARKAS: Okay. I always seem to offend people and so I know I am at risk of doing it again, but I can't help myself.

MS. RAVITCH: Go ahead.

MR. FARKAS: Okay. I come into this field from the general field of sociology and I have spent 10 years there. And I am just flabbergasted at the way people operate. And one thing I am flabbergasted about is that I am guessing almost nobody in this room who is interested in this issue and have careers of interest in this issue has bothered to find out the answer to your question. The answer to your question, as near as I can see, and I am a self-taught expert in this, not a real expert, the answer is there is 30, 40 years of research by psychologists who do learning disability, reading disability. There are journals, Reading Research Quarterly, there are all these developmental psych journals. They go back 30, 40 years. And there is this enormous literature about exactly what practices to do. There are people like Joe Torgisson at Florida State, like Keith Stanovich, like the Becks. We have got Reed Lyon with his hundred millions of dollars of funding these people. There is really -- there is like this literature is like this. And essentially, it shows the same stuff over and over. And the stuff it shows meets the laugh face validity test because it is common sense. And if you work with the kids, you can see it work. You literally need to know to parse out the sounds, you need to make a one to one match, it goes on and on and on. It is not a big deal.

MR. VINOVSKIS: But let me just pursue that a little further and this is not my area of expertise and I am glad to find out that we know these things and that would be terrific. But my nervousness is, there is a difference between knowing some of these individual parts and being able to implement a program in different settings, particularly when you think that you can take these Title I aides, which I have more doubts about, and retrain them to be able to do these things. Before I would want to redo the whole program, and I am ready to redo the program, I would want some assurances that people have tried to take these 40 years of experiences, implement them in different areas, show us that they actually work because otherwise, we are going to substitute one enthusiasm for another one.

MR. FARKAS: I understand. Let me just give a very brief response. I agree with you that what we should be doing is taking this knowledge that sort of quasi exists, exists in research settings, has been tried in interventions in one way or another, and work with it to see if we can get the kind of effects and replicability and all that stuff. In fact, I just applied for $2.8 million to OERI and the NSF to see if they will allow me to do a random assignment experiment on my own program. But the point is that there is quite a lot of experience in doing this. It tends to be in the

learning disabilities area. But if you are in one of our major cities and you have got a learning disabled child and you go to Scottish Rite Hospital, they will give you one of these people who is trained in alpha phonics, one of these programs that comes from the fifties and sixties from Cambridge, Massachusetts. And they will give you a one to one tutor to do this stuff. And what they take are biologically impaired kids and they make a pretty good jump with them. And this has been done one to one by all the learning disabilities people for 20, 30 years. So there is a lot of experience of this sort to work on. The issue, could you implement it on a larger style, could you manage it, et cetera. Those are certainly worth studying. But the idea that there is this enormous body of knowledge and experience and it is sort of completely untapped just is what I am talking about.

MS. RAVITCH: Yes.

MR. KAHLENBERG: Rick Kahlenberg with the Century Foundation. George Farkas had mentioned the Coleman report and he found, as you all know, not only that the poor kids have one strike against them being born in a poor family, but then to go to a high poverty school is a second strike. As Title I is currently structured, it would seem to provide some incentive, at least on the margin, to keep a school, a high poverty school, particularly the school-wide program with the 50 percent requirement. There was a school district in Tennessee where they were considering integrating the schools by economic status. And one of the principals at a high poverty school said he didn't want that because he was worried about losing the Title I funding. The portability idea is attractive to me as a possible way of addressing that issue and, in fact, reversing the incentives. And I guess I have two questions. One, would you all advocate portability within -- or accept the idea of doing it within the public schools alone as something that would be much more feasible than -- politically feasible than extending at the private schools. And number two, at what level of funding would Title I actually provide an incentive for middle class schools to take poor kids. That is to say, to offset the extra cost of providing education to poor kids.

MR. FINN: Well, I don't think there is any way to know at what level the funding, given a middle class school, will find the marginal poor kid economically attractive. It will vary by kid and by school and by circumstance. If there is an empty seat in a third grade classroom and there is no marginal cost to taking that child and he brings with him additional dollars, he is probably going to be pretty attractive. The range of choice that should be available under a portability scheme is of course a potential topic of a two-day conference all by itself. And I think different people will give you different answers. My answer is the states should call that one. That the portability should match however portable a state lets its own money be. That might just be within public schools, it might include charter schools, it might include after school providers of remedial services, in one or two places it might include private schools. That it should be the federal dollars should follow the state dollars basically. Now to me that is the most transparent, most neutral stance for the federal policy to take. Obviously, others will say it should be up to the state except that. Under no circumstance may it include private schools.

MR. FARKAS: You know, there is a curious thing about this, we don't yet know enough stuff. Middle class parents have the experience all the time of having their kid start to be like some of these kids we have been talking about. It happens all the time that middle class kids, their school comes to them and says, "You know, your kid is having trouble reading." There is one thing they do, they get a tutor. Always. And they do it very intensively. I have a friend, John Kane in the congress at my university. And he used to tell me how he was agnostic on this, we didn't have enough evidence, how did I know about all this reading stuff it really worked. His

granddaughter who goes to a fancy private school was diagnosed as learning disabled. He went -- and she is getting one to one instruction in alpha phonics right now. It is good enough for the middle class.

MS. RAVITCH: I just want to get back to Richard's question for a moment. I was in Houston two weeks ago. I met with the superintendent and he said there is a threshold for Title I -- the threshold for Title I schools in Houston is 75 percent, which means that if your school is only 70 percent poor, you are not a Title I school. That is a lot of poor kids in Houston and in Philadelphia and in New York and in Washington, D.C. who receive no Title I services whatever. Question? Yes, Sally?

MS. KILGORE: I feel obliged, in looking over the attendance here, to pretend that I am a cognitive psychologist and try to take on George for some short brief moment in his accounting of, what shall I say, the instructional qualities and the research that has proceeded and that this is simple and so on and so forth. In particular, the research you have cited, I think, is limited in several respects. It is directed toward children being able to decode words. It is not directed toward conceptual understanding of stories and things of this nature. And it is in the field, in the old tradition, of cognitive psychology where this issue of what is it to understand, as it were, concepts, stories, whatever it is, that the challenge remains. We have done marvelous work in respect to helping children decode. It is the next step where we have the most substantial problems. I will admit to two problems here. One of them is endemic to education and it may be endemic to all translations of research and to practice. But there is an incredible level of distortion, whether it be from the learning disabilities research or the cognitive psychologist research down into practice. And one of them might be the one where we say constructivists don't think that people should use practice as a way of learning. Well, in point of fact the research traditions from which that comes says that practice is a very powerful and very effective way of learning. It just so happens that we can't do it for everything. It is not feasible that we use that method for all that we want to know. And because of that, we have to think of other ways to improve the way children understand and recall things using different instructional strategies. So I think that the problem is not simply in the research traditions, but it is one, not paying attention to multiple research traditions. And secondly, the problem of translation. To suggest that when we get down to the street and we are practicing this stuff, we distort what the research is. And maybe that is not peculiar to education.

MR. FARKAS: I am afraid you don't seem to know the literature. There are many studies that show that word decoding is the single most powerful predictor of reading comprehension where reading comprehension is a standard reading comprehension test. Read a paragraph and answer some questions about it. The research on this is just enormous. I mean, it shouldn't require me to tell you go read Marilyn Adams or Bill Hoenig's summary of the literature or the stuff in that book that Barbara Foreman is in now. But this is just cut and dried stuff. People have been regressing reading comprehension on decoding skill and phonological processing for 10, 20 years. And they always get the same answer. The single best predictor -- in fact, Barbara Foreman has a single, which was put out by Reed Lyon and was testified before Congress and it was part of the National Academy of Science's book on this subject. Basically Barbara Foreman has a two-pager, "What you should know about reading instruction." In fact, Maris, that is the thing to look at, Barbara Foreman's two-pager. And what Barbara Foreman's two-pager says, among other things, is that the single most powerful predictor of reading comprehension is word decoding. And it is word decoding, decoding words in isolation. Good readers are powerful decoders. That just turns out to be the way it is because it frees your mind to think about the meaning.

MS. KILGORE: Just one phrase is necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the population.

MR. FINN: And what I learned from Bill Hoenig's book is that explicit word decoding in a well run school stops -- no longer has to be done after about the first half of first grade, says Hoenig, it becomes automated. And the teacher and kids are no longer focusing on it, they have gone beyond it. They have internalized it.

MS. RAVITCH: Okay. Jean Shaw in 1967, Marilyn Adams in 1990, the National Research council in 1997 all said it is necessary but not sufficient. So we agree. Paul Hill.

MR. HILL: I hate to get off this topic. George, I followed you way far in the argument, but I start to get a little uncertain about where I am going at a particular spot. You draw the conclusion that add-on services are necessary. And yet, most of the argument, and a lot of the evidence and then some of the evidence that Doug provided, suggests that low achievement and low reading is sort of endemic in certain kinds of low income schools, that the schools themselves aren't working. And therefore to me the idea of add-on services seems to be a strange conclusion to draw in contrast to the possibility that maybe we ought to just make let them make the school work. And maybe it is a semantic difference.

MR. FARKAS: No-no, it isn't. It isn't at all.

MR. HILL: Fine.

MR. FARKAS: The research shows that the powerful predictor is the family, not the school. There is no question about that. It has been replicated over and over again and PUMA, you know, redid it one more time with the prospects data that was just on low income kids, just on Title I type kids. If you go into these schools and sit there and watch the five kids who can't do anything and then you talk to the people that say, "Oh, yes, you know, their parents are on this and they are on that." If it were your kid, if it were my kid and the kid was having this great problem, you would give them add-on services.

MR. HILL: Well, that seems to be a wonderful argument for special education.

MR. FARKAS: Unfortunately, special education doesn't turn out to be very effective.

MR. HILL: But in that -- you also talked about these same classrooms where the level of teaching, the level of understanding on the part of the teacher, the learning process, the level of attention to the fundamentals or reading as compared to, you know, thinking about, you know, how getting three people in the presence of text will let them read. All kinds of deficiencies in the basic approaches of those classrooms that may have a lot to do with the abilities of the teachers, it may have a lot to do with whether the school itself has an area of instruction that makes sense. And, you know, that is a separate issue I tell you.

MR. FARKAS: Okay. I will try to be very brief. When we start talking about theories of instruction, et cetera, I get nervous. Let me tell you what it looks like. You get these kids, they can't sit still, they don't know their letters. You are in the room with a brilliant teacher. I am telling you this woman -- I love this woman. And you watch this woman trying to hold the attention of this class, sweating after an hour. I am exhausted. I want to leave the room because I am getting so tired watching her work trying to hold the five lowest kids in the corner so that

they don't disturb what is going on, trying to move the rest of them forward even though they are so far behind what the curriculum says. Some of them know 80 percent of their letters, some of them know 60 percent of their letters, some of them want to talk to their neighbor. What you see is a system that is inadequate to cope with the very great difficulties that are being brought to it. It is as though a gunshot wound was brought to a medical treatment center from another century that couldn't cope with it. So you have got the worst of everything. Now there is no need to set up artificial dichotomies between well, then, you know, what is the implication of this, what is the implication of that. If we could start the kids higher, it would be an easier task for the teacher. If the teacher was better supported and used the most effective techniques, she would get further with the kids. If we could do all of that, we would have a hope of solving this enormously difficult problem. This problem has existed for all history. It exists across all countries now. The idea that we are going to solve it is hard to believe. It is because it is difficult. But what we are doing right now is we are not doing much to help the intrinsic problem that the family brings to the school and we are not doing much to have the school be effective in doing it. And what we are getting is what we see.

MR. HILL: George, I just want to make one point with you which is that your analysis can lead to the conclusion that the school needs general improvement and it needs some add-on services, and the belief that you have for add-on services, which don't regard a large part of the problem you are implying.

MR. FARKAS: Oh, I am sorry. Maybe I haven't been clear. I am in favor of the school improvement. The paper talks about the principal needing and there be needing a discipline system, et cetera, et cetera. What I am really saying is, if you go into these low income neighborhoods, they are losing almost all these kids. Remember those eighth grade kids reading at a fifth grade level. Now if you were to improve the school, you could save the top half of those kids, let's say. You know, just approximate. But if you want to save the lowest kids in that school, then you are going to need to improve the school and then you are going to have to do the add-on services because those kids are in a really bad way.

MS. RAVITCH: Bob Schwartz.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I will stay and hold it with Paul's line and try to keep focusing on the federal --

MS. RAVITCH: Talk into the microphone.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Keep focusing on the federal policy questions. First, I have to say, I always enjoy Checker's performance, but I don't remember any conversation this morning about Title I or anybody here particularly defending it in its current format.

MR. FINN: The administration was not well represented.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I am perhaps being overly sensitive since I am the person who used the stay on the course phrase that was in the context of suggesting that states --

MR. FINN: They were quoting Mike Smith at a conference two weeks ago where he used it.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I didn't.

MR. FINN: Okay.

MS. RAVITCH: Bob, the reason Checker said that, I was here on April 14th and there was congressional testimony and the administration said, "Stay the course." Mike Smith spoke at Checker's conference the day before and said -- I mean, this in fact he wasn't speaking about what you said he was responding to --

MR. SCHWARTZ: I just wanted to see if we can't, you know, in fact figure out some way to act on what I -- what to me is a compelling set of findings here that connects more effectively with where a lot of states are now going. Texas -- the Texas example has really started to spread here. And I guess the question is whether or not one might think about a federal strategy that supported the work of those states that are saying, "All kids reading at grade level by the end of third grade." Or in the Ohio case, Ohio now has this fourth grade reading guarantee. But where the states are designing a strategy often in the same context with kind of school-wide reform, but with much more direct one on one interventions, that would make more sense. I mean, the problem, and I assume this is in part what you were alluding to, Checker. I hear you saying on the one hand we have lots and lots of kids you aren't being reached by Title I. On the other hand, I hear you saying what we need is a much, much more targeted strategy. If, in fact, we targeted only on the sort of kids in grades one through three, the bottom fifth, we might be able to, in fact, get at the -- more effectively at the root of the problem. There seems to be, at least as I see it, some contradiction between, you know, between these two observations. I guess what I am driving at here is that a strategy that helps states target the bottom fifth kids, particularly in those first three grades, that created incentives for states that weren't already developing these early reading intervention programs to do so, but did not try to shift this huge Title I program, which for political reasons that you understand, at least as well as I do, is going to be very hard to move just because in effect to try to really get much, much more targeting on the far fewer and the most needy kids, has turned out to be a non-starter every time it has been proposed in the past, and I suspect we won't see anymore likelihood of making it happen this time either.

MR. FINN: Well, you are right about the contradiction between the portable entitlement idea and the greater targeting idea. It is not a total contradiction because each would avoid the current school-wide dilution of Title I aid to lots of kids who are not poor and may or may not be in educational trouble. But otherwise, yes, there is a strategic choice here between a heavily targeted program that goes after kids who specifically need help now and a broader notion of all poor kids should be aided by this program. And I could -- I personally could go either way. Right now we are going neither of those ways with present law and with the stay the course philosophy, which to repeat, I was quoting the acting deputy secretary, not you.

MS. RAVITCH: Mike Kirst?

MR. KIRST: Yes. George, I would like to hear you talk a little bit more about your preschool strategy. And I think that is an important area because of the heavy press on academic gains now in the first grade and kindergarten. Have you looked at the Head Start program? What do you see there? And what beyond Head Start? The last time I was at Head Start in California, it was a program run during the day for mothers who didn't work. And if you worked, you weren't in Head Start because it ran during the hours most people work. So it is not a total solution to the early childhood program. So it seems to me we need a bigger strategy that encompasses Head Start, other early childhood. But my main question is what do you think about Head Start and why don't they have what you want?

MR. FARKAS: They don't have it for the same reason kindergarten and first grade doesn't have it. It is not in the culture of the administrators and workers in the program to teach the material that the kids need. One reason for that is a logic of "developmental readiness." The kids are not developmentally ready.

MR. KIRST: Right.

MR. FARKAS: Texas Instruments has a big shared program with Head Start in Dallas. They fund a special center downtown. And they asked me to study this. We found that it had no effect. And so they went and they looked at it. And they discovered the kids weren't being taught anything. And when they were asked about this, the people in charge of it, the people with the masters' degrees who were in charge of instruction said, "Well, you know, these kids have really terrible home lives. And they are under all this stress from these terrible home lives. And we didn't want to increase their stress by asking them to learn anything." This is very common. There was a program called Miescolita, which was run by the Catholic church. And they then got Head Start funding. And I went to see them and I saw they had all these charts up on the wall that translated Spanish to English and I thought I could use them in my tutoring program. And I asked them about it. And they said, "Oh, we have to take them all down. Now that we have got Head Start money, the Head Start reading specialist and instructional specialist came and said that the kids weren't developmentally ready to be learning this stuff. And so we would be damaging them by doing it." The emphasis in my paper on Reading Recovery and these different programs in this culture of the profession is not because I wanted to do a sociological RIF, it is because I think it is at the core of why our practices are the way they are. What we should actually do is really simple. We should teach this phonological awareness, we should teach letters and sounds, we should teach less the names of the letters and more the sounds they make. There are all kinds of materials and games about sounding out these things. There is nothing unknown or controversial about this within a certain narrow set of people who do developmental psychology. We could easily train even these Title I aides, who have about an eighth grade reading level. They are high school graduates if you are lucky. We could easily teach them to do this with the children. It is simply the culture of our profession and of the people who run these things. The greatest enemy of all of this, I believe, are the people running around with masters' degrees who are learning specialists.

MS. RAVITCH: The National Association for Education of Young Children has always opposed teaching what he is describing to young children. Meanwhile my grandchildren who live in Hong Kong will start school already reading because they have learned it at home. So they have gotten this kind of instruction already. But I have read the Head Start curriculum. There are standards in Head Start. There are standards for nutrition, there are standards for all sorts of social services. There are zero educational standards. There is no expectation of teaching kids in Head Start anything. David?

MR. KIRP: I want to take us back to the politics of this story. Let's stipulate that it really is simple, which I think is a wonderful rhetorical strategy. It is the big truth, right, borrowed from Checker's comment. But it certainly sounds -- it makes us feel better. And I actually would love to be taught how to teach phonics. But in another corner of your approach, you detail your adventures in Dallas land. And what happens when a great big successful program runs up against the political buzz saw of that system. This is one place with one established expert in the field with a track record. But I try to move from that story to trying to imagine how it is that you can move this behemoth in any way. And I listen to 'shoulds' and 'coulds' and perhaps even from

Checker who I think of as the sort of -- as the master craftsman of political strategy. I don't hear much beyond Paul Hill's call for vouchers this morning. That is --

MS. RAVITCH: A call vouchers without having changed --

MR. KIRP: Exactly. That is what I was -- that is right. And I don't hear much that suggests that there is anything like the prerequisites for change. I am wondering if from other non-incremental moments in politics, the welfare reform bill, for example, there is anything to be learned that suggests that the kind of tinkering that is going on might be replaced by some other more radical politics and not just at the federal because in this case, as well at the state and local level.

MR. FARKAS: I will give a short answer and maybe somebody who knows more about politics can give a better answer. The problem -- what I haven't heard anybody pick up on is my discussion of Reading Recovery. It is really politically incorrect to attack Reading Recovery by name. A very risky thing to do. It is a very powerful organizations. It is hard for you and for me to believe that in all these school districts the Title I money is controlled by a small group of networked people who have all learned the same stuff from a networked organization that exists nationally, that there are in 6,000 school districts, that they are in all these schools of education. But I have -- there are more stories.

MR. KIRP: So this is the Stepford Wives.

MR. FARKAS: Right.

MR. KIRP: The question is how does one --

MR. FARKAS: Right.

MR. KIRP: How does one replace the Stepford Wife.

MR. FARKAS: I defer to Checker.

MR. FINN: Well, we have two certified Senate aides sitting right here. And I think --

MR. FARKAS: This is called 'el copout', I think, in Spanish, right?

MR. FINN: Certified. Maybe even certifiable. I think they should answer your question. I just want to say one thing on the welfare point. The way we got the national welfare reform was we first allowed states to do it different. We first allowed some states to do it differently so that states that thought they had a better strategy and were fed up with the way the national program wasn't working went through this whole period of kind of mega-waivers in which they were able to sort of rest permission from the feds to do it differently at the state level. Just a handful of states big time tried it differently. And enough was learned from that experience that it turned into a national reform. I think that is the model, actually, for education. But I would love --

MR. KIRP: Do you see states out there --

MR. FINN: Yes.

MR. KIRP: Do you see a Tommy Thompson for this program?

MR. FINN: I see -- I think I could name you five states that would in a heartbeat do their Title I program radically differently if they could. But let's hear from the certifiable Senate aides.

MS. LANGE: I am Townsend Lange with Senator Greg who is on the Senate Labor Committee. And I think that there is momentum for change on the Hill. The problem is what paralyzes the Hill faster than anything else is when they hear from their school districts that they are going to lose money. And so immediately, all the forces rise up and say, "We can't let you lose money because then kids will be even worse off." Well, I can't see how we can be much worse off than we are now. And what is so frustrating is that we get lost in the theory and then these guys on the Hill never hear really -- well, they hear that kids are failing, but they are hearing that from letters. But what they don't hear is how it can be fixed. And so we are trying to do our best to listen to Diane and Checker's comments about some ways for us to reformat Title I, but what would be great would be for there to be a call to arms and for people to actually, like Checker was saying, to march on Capitol Hill.

MR. FINN: Come on, Maris, get your heel back. March.

MS. LANGE: We need this. It seems like if they hear passionately from people in the field, they do change their minds. When they start to lose it is when they are -- when they have heard too much and they get sick of it and they start to sense that it is not going to be a real political winning point. And I think we can capitalize, but it needs to happen soon. And we need to hear very loudly from those of you that care that this is serious because right now the Republicans are a little beat down and they are willing to say, "Oh, we better give the '94 reauth some more time." And, you know, so we waste another generation. So I beseech you, please come to Capitol Hill and speak some sense to us.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. RAVITCH: But Larry, the problem is that we have the example now of since 1965 since the regional educational act, it has received I guess about $1.6 billion. And there is no evidence that the work at the laboratory gets approval for schools. And they are exactly the extension they -- that you are talking about here. So, you know, there is no reason you should know about this. But they do exist. They have been evaluated. The merit school evaluates things like this and have found they have very little money because they spend all their money on dissemination and very little of their money on actual R&D in establishing what the best practices are. And this is sort of the basic problem that I think we should overcome. I am getting -- I don't think the idea here is to bash schools of education, per se, but just to say that the -- as a number of the speakers have said today, the research base for education is not what it should be. To be able to -- if you direct a hundred million dollars to pay people to go out and tell schools what to do, that will become symbolic pork too. It will be pork for the universities. And we have lots of examples throughout the federal budget of the universities, not just on educational research, but in many, many areas of research in getting out an entitlement to money, which they hold onto forever.

A PARTICIPANT: But we are in favor of pork for the universities.

MS. RAVITCH: Tom?

MR. LOVELESS: First, I just wanted to reassure Larry that I believe in the scientific method and an evidence-based, research-based policy. But let me pose again the question that I posed this morning, and that is why is the federal government the appropriate governmental level to be designing and implementing policy to get safe schools?

MR. SHERMAN: I think for the same reasons that you could argue with George Farkas or supporting George Farkas that if the federal governments can be spending the money, it ought to be spending it on things that work. Now I, as I said repeatedly, I don't think the federal government should be spending money on a problem that A, doesn't exist with respect to violence except in a handful of schools where it can be dealt with at the community level, including the schools. And B, we have, you know, not clear evidence that if we fix drugs in schools that we are going to fix the drug problem at all in terms of those kids using the drugs. So the whole program is not based on an evidence analysis of need. The whole thing is stupid, but it can't die. So what do you do with it? And I haven't heard anybody give me any better suggestion than, you know, maybe I will have to set up these two straw men, the FDA model and the extension agent. But neither of those are going to work because they told me that at Brookings. And I believe them. And now the question is what do we do.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, I think the question that you have to answer begins at the beginning by saying should it be the locals or should it be the federal government. And it seems to me, based on what you have laid out very dramatically, this program is A, not addressing the real need, which is violence in the community, and B, is not effective. And so it seems to me the logical

answer is this money should be targeted to where it is needed and not to where it is not needed, right?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, yes. And we said that to the Congress in a report they commissioned and then proceeded to ignore, even though the British government adopted all the recommendations.

A PARTICIPANT: If it so much better, why don't you go live over there.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I would be less likely to be killed in school.

MS. RAVITCH: Paul Hill, did I see --

MR. HILL: Yes. Just one. This is actually a question that Catherine raised. You made the statement a couple of times about the more democratic teacher attitudes toward parents and student control, the higher proportion -- the higher probability of violence in the school. And I think you used that statement most recently in the way of rejecting Bruno Manno's proposal that more coherent schools are in part what -- a means towards reducing student violence. And so I am really curious because almost all the other attributes you list on page 12 are consistent with this proposition. The democratic one is inconsistent with it. And I want to know what do you mean by it?

MR. SHERMAN: I take your point about coherence. I heard other dimensions and a kind of multi-dimensional assertion of the good school that may or may not be evidence-based with respect to learning outcomes, is not evidence-based with respect to violence outcomes. And part of the problem with this paper is that you are all thinking in terms of learning outcomes. And I am thinking in terms of violence and drug abuse. But I was trying to make a larger point that this ought to be testable with respect to violence and drug abuse and that to simply assert it in the absence of testing is no better than my asserting an extension agent program in the absence of testing, which in fact, would turn out to be totally wasted money as well.

MR. HILL: What I think I am trying to say is that in fact the list of attributes of schools low in violence is not at all what we were just talking about for attributes of schools tie in to academic achievement with the exception of this one factor. And my question to you is how do you measure that, the teacher attitudes for parent and student control. What does it mean and why would it be -- what would it be so important in this?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, the way it was measured was by doing interviews with teachers and principals and other people involved in the school. It didn't have, you know, parental measures, but in fact, it is all correlational. And so it may simply be that the kind of schools that have less violence are wealthier schools where parents tend to be involved anyway. So it could be a spurious link. I think what is more important and really on your point is that in experimental research where the attempt is made to get the school better organized and to make it a more coherent place, and probably the kind of place that Bruno is talking about, in fact that does succeed in preventing crime. But not necessarily with the parental involvement piece of it as much as it is making sure the school starts on time, people know when lunch begins and when it ends, and that there is connection between the whole school and each classroom on maintaining discipline and otherwise having order at the school.

MS. RAVITCH: Is there any research on a relationship between school size and violence and drug abuse or just violence?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes. It is not strong research. I asked Denise Gottfredson to try to emphasize that in her testimony last week, and I will probably bring it up again on Thursday for the next hearings on school violence. There is enough research to make it clearly possible that there is a strong connection between size of high school and the rate of violence per student. But it is correlational research, it is not experimental. And it is a very expensive policy to implement. But if we were to try to get back to a 500 student high school or a 400 student high school where every teacher knew the name of every kid in the school, it is entirely possible that you might be able to prevent the kind of gnomic environment where -- kind of like the prisons. You know, the strongest people run the school except they are called athletes. And all of those problems appear to be worse with the bigger schools than with the smaller ones. And again, it is worth testing. If we had some support for doing research on how to reduce violence in schools, it is one of the first hypothesis I think we should test.

A PARTICIPANT: Well, indeed, we do have hundreds upon hundreds of alternative high schools that have been set up in cities to deal with disruptive kids and which are very small scaled. So in a sense --

MR. SHERMAN: But you have got a selection of those. You have got compositional --

A PARTICIPANT: But also many urban high schools now have schools within schools, which you mention in your paper, which again would be an example we could look at. There have been a number of dissipations of the kinds of things which do make up a school like that.

MR. SHERMAN: There is both theory and data to support it, but I would say it is still weak. It is not as strong as the teacher wants.

MS. RAVITCH: Michael Kirst.

MR. KIRST: Yes. I think the paper somewhat falls into the trap that the whole program does of assuming that you can solve safety drugs and other things with use from schools. And so I think the conditions are often out of school and out of school linkages that might be crucial. So that this money could be used not to say we are going to solve this through a schooling intervention within a school, but to link the other community-based activities and would bridge activities between the school and youth clubs and out of school activities and things of that sort. In other words, it is part of the -- it would be glue money to glue together the various kinds of private and public services for youth, which might be more effective in that your vision -- one of your options might be to expand this to include other community-based and social services. And this money is what links the schools to those, reinforces those in some way, and gets at some of the writing Liz Shore has made.

MR. SHERMAN: I am really sorry you said that because I thought the paper tried to say that I am not assuming that the schools can have a big effect, which the program does, I am actually citing the evidence that say that schools can have a very modest effect, but an effect nonetheless. So if you are going to do something in school, you can build on a moderately strong body of research that says do it this way and not that way. So I take the word "assumption" with a great deal of pain, since I am not trying to assume those things. In terms of building the connections to these other community institutions, because the program is wide open, they can do that

already. And there is lots of community things that are effective in reducing crime and drug abuse. Big Brothers and Big Sisters, for example. But there is not really a good practical way for a school to build those kinds of programs up. Although it is actually a very intriguing idea. You could broaden the list of what works so you include programs outside school that the school might take the initiative in providing for its students.

MR. KIRST: Yes, exactly.

MS. RAVITCH: Houston saw what they call a dramatic drop in crime at schools when they opened alternative schools for disruptive students, most of whom they found had never been taught to read or were so far behind that they were disruptive because they couldn't do -- keep up with the other kids. But they did what you have discussed in other parts of criminology, which is to identify the kids who were causing the most problems and put them in a different environment, which left the rest of the school community much safer. Bill?

MR. RUKEYSER: I think the large question that this paper raises is really a question about democracy and a question about the relationship between knowledge and public policy and what that means for the design of institutions. And I think that is a terrifically important question that we ought to be thinking about because there is a distinction between the question what can or do we know. Very important question. We have spent a lot of times at meetings like this arguing about that. And the second question, namely, what can we hope to do in practice with what we know when we think we know something. And this paper is at least as much a reflection on that second question as it is on the first. Now if I can focus on that second question for a minute, the cynical view is that our democracy either always has been or is now so hopelessly corrupt that the relationship between knowledge and public policy is either random or perverse. If that is the case, we ought to shut up in conferences like this because their premise is that there is a non-random affirmative relationship between solid knowledge on the one hand and sound public policy on the other. So if you take the non-cynical view, which is the view I take and it is an evidence-based view, then the question becomes what is the difference between those areas of public policy where knowledge does, in fact, have a demonstrably affirmative effect and the less successful areas of public policy where it doesn't. Or, you know, to put it, you know, to put the question that George Farkas posed earlier today, what is the difference between medicine and education and why is the FDA a reasonably, but not perfectly effective application of knowledge for medicine and there is no such mechanism for education and what can we do about it. That is the question you are raising. Can you say more about this? What is the difference between medicine and education.

MR. SHERMAN: I mean, the answer you are pointing to, Bill, is that if there is a regulatory power that is controlled based upon professionally or even better scientifically objectified and criticizable kind of evidence, then you have democracy, but you also have a single decision point. That is what makes FDA work. If FDA were giving out regulatory authority to a hundred and nine thousand schools and fourteen thousand some local education agencies, I don't think you would get the same result with the same research that FDA requires to be done before Thalidomide can be put on the market or anything else. So I am afraid -- I don't answer the question, but maybe I should. I think that the evidence-based policy tends to work better in national communities of people who police each other with respect to the quality and accuracy of their research because that policing doesn't happen at the local level. People get away with saying things based upon the fact that they have a Ph.D. even though they are only asserting a theory or even an ideology, but they are dressing it up in the math and the science. You can't get away with that at the National Academy of Sciences or at Food and Drug Administration. And

that, in a very complex world, is, I think, a problem. Another effective area for evidence-based policy is in the design of automobiles, which has demonstrably reduced the death rate for driving. And I know we lose 15 to 75 people a year from air bags, but we are also saving 2,500. And we wouldn't have had the air bags if we hadn't had the research. We wouldn't have had the air bags if we hadn't had a single, national, federal take the gun and shoot the teacher by enemy student federal policy. It wouldn't have happened if we let every one of the 14,000 police departments in the United States decide whether or not air bags should be required in their communities. And that is really, I think, part of the problem, that it appears to be undemocratic to make a policy in Washington when in fact what we may have is some of the virtues of definian democracy in the sense of communities where -- and this is very unfashionable -- where the people who spend their full time on those issues get involved in a fight, police each other, and somehow, and this is really the hard part, to connect to a broader audience of citizenship throughout the country. So that people can have opinions on air bags, people can have opinions on whether or not there should be randomized trials before drugs could be approved, which the Wall Street Journal has been trying to change for 20 years. That still gets held up, I think, in part because it validimied some public memory about the virtues of those things. But I think you are right, that is what I was really trying to do in the paper. Perhaps in the rewrite I will try to sharpen that aspect of it as opposed to necessarily having any immediate solution to this particular law because it is a far more general problem.

MS. RAVITCH: I just want to raise an issue, this question of knowledge of democracy. Last fall I got very sick and I went to the emergency room in a hospital two blocks from where I live and within a few hours they told me that I had pulmonary embolisms and they knew exactly what to do. And I could have walked into any hospital in the United States and gotten exactly the same diagnosis and exactly the same treatment because every pulmonary specialist, every vascular specialist, even the people in the emergency room knew exactly what the treatment was. But if I were to take my child or grandchild and walk into a school, the quality and the type and the kind in every dimension you want to describe of education will differ depending on which school I go into and which teacher he gets assigned to. And at this point, I would have to say there is nothing in education comparable to the FDA and I suspect that many of the people in this room and in almost any room where you have got 20 randomly assigned educators would say, "I wouldn't trust a federal FDA to make decisions about what my child's education should be."

MR. SHERMAN: Well, there is two points there. One is that there is an estimated 300 to 400,000 people a year who die from medical mistakes in hospitals. That is not three to four, that is three hundred to four hundred thousand. So when we are talking about people dying in the school massacres as opposed to people turning on the wrong chemical when you are getting anesthetized, I think the level of error in that is still very high. So I don't think we should portray this as a perfect system by any means, including misdiagnosis when you do walk into various hospitals. Just in terms of coronary bypass deaths, when New York State started evidence-based medicine on that operation, they found the average death rate on the operating table was 2 percent. Some doctors were as high as 80 percent. Some hospitals were 20 percent.

MS. RAVITCH: They could identify --

MR. SHERMAN: But they used accountability as a system. And so when my father had the operation last summer, the first question he asked the doctor, he said, "Well, you can look it up on my web," no, "on the Pennsylvania State web page," because they post every doctor's death rate. Now these kind of accountability measurements have a lot to do with democracy especially with the web and making people aware of these kinds of measures. But if we go to this question

of how you create at least the knowledge about how to do it right in education, one of the things I have learned today is I don't think you have anything like the Decochran collection, which is what the British Medical Research Council has, paying to translate medical trials from all over the world and to create this huge computerized database on the effectiveness of various medical practices. If we had such an effort that people would trust somehow in education and could move in that direction, as opposed to the mushier direction of extension agents that is telling people what such a collection would say, then maybe you open up some more possibilities.

MS. RAVITCH: Helen Ladd.

MS. LADD: At the end of the previous session the whole topic of welfare reform came up and the point was made that the federal government was funding welfare efforts and then allowing the states to have waivers. There was a key point that wasn't mentioned in that discussion that I think is very relevant here. And that is, whenever the federal government gave those waivers, there also was a required evaluation component done by an outside unit, MDRC. And it seems to me that that would be useful for the sorts of discussions we are having here. So if we are talking about Title I, we have got a federal program, the states could have waivers, but we could condition that there is a full-fledged evaluation by reputable people and we could learn over time. And it might work in this area that we are talking about as well. So you end up not necessarily having the federal government making the decision to what works, but we end up with the sorts of research that over time may help us at all levels to make better decisions.

MS. RAVITCH: George?

MR. FARKAS: I would like to third this point. Sometimes we get discouraged and the talk kind of gets wilder about how nothing can be done. But in fact, we are staring in the face a very unusual event in education. When the National Academy of Sciences had this reading panel and they came out with a balanced approach, which the practical effect was really a way of saying, "Let's do some phonics for beginning readers" because everybody had basically been doing whole language, and then they put out more recently a kind of applied paperback book about that and then the Department of Education waived those books at people when they were telling the states how to apply for 250 million of Reading Excellence Act. And I asked Joe Conaty, "Why are you doing that? It is great you are doing it, but I am surprised to see you doing it." And he said, "Well, the Republicans put it into law that it has to be scientifically validated reading instruction and it is our job to enforce the law." We actually saw right there an event in which a very politically volatile, very polarized Democrat/Republican issue got handled in a way that sort of the right more scientific approach was put in. And what we are really talking about is repairing a profession that doesn't have these professional monitoring mechanisms that work in any kind of decent way that you were talking about. And I think the most useful job for people like us at meetings like this is to stay the course on the modest improvements of that sort and to understand that sometimes there are good things like that happening. And in fact, to my utter amazement, I think I said this, the Reading Recovery teacher that the Department of Education had as a reading expert told the assembled multitude that here are five things you do when a kid can't read a word. And four of them were guess the word in some way. But the fifth one was sound it out. And it included a discussion of Magic E, which he said is Policeman E, it is not Magic E. That was amazing movement by this group. And I sort of had discussions with people in the Department about how they were actually hoping to get more movement of that sort and why they thought that was, in fact, very doable. I think our being in love with disinterested market mechanisms can forget the fact that what we are talking about is most easily understood as a culture of a profession phenomenon. And the question is, can we shore up this profession

that has historically had such a weak scientific culture. And the answer is yes, we can. And on the 30 year history, there has been more movement on this front in the last 2 years than in the previous 28. Not that it is anywhere that optimistic yet, but I think that is really our job. And that is what I hear this whole conversation saying.

MR. SHERMAN: Just on this point of a legislative approach or mandate for an evidence-based policy, I think it is very important to note that none of the legislation I have seen has defined what a scientific standard is. I know it hasn't happened in the justice legislation. Maybe it has happened in this Reading Excellence. But I think that the Supreme Court definition of the scientific method in the 1993 case of Dalbert v. Meryl Dow, which is the defining case on what expert witness testimony can be admitted on causation in federal court, is something that could easily be incorporated into legislation. And it is follows standard preparian falsifiability kinds of definitions of the scientific method. It doesn't have to be much more elaborate than that, but it would at least prevent the Department of Education from including in the definition implied of research as not having any control.

MS. RAVITCH: Larry, let me just ask you if you were in charge of this issue, either in the Congress or at the Department of Education, and you were told you had $600 million to spend to reduce crime that affected children, would you put it into this act in any form or would you use it in some other fashion?

MR. SHERMAN: I would use it in another way.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, I think that is -- I mean, it struck me that you made the case that there is not a need for it, that school is the safest place for children to be. So I would think that you would look -- you would come up with a different conclusion. Not a different way of delivering the money, but a different place to put the money. Maris?

MR. VINOVSKIS: Let me just add a little bit on the evaluation. There was a conference last week, American Academy of Arts and Sciences looking at evaluation in government in general, and particularly at the Department of Education and educational evaluation. And many of the same points are coming up. That is what we are lacking. We are lacking the scientifically sound work that we need. And I just want to make a couple of observations we will talk a little bit about tomorrow. One, some of the congressional language action isn't bad. The '94 legislation actually had some legislative language that was actually very good. The question is, why is it missing in practice? Why is it that when we take these things from the legislature, which says, you know, we want these evaluations to be done more rigorously, the main result off it isn't anything like that. The second thing I think you need to think about, and if you get an opportunity, take a look by -- a paper that was done at the conference by Thomas Cook from Northwestern talking about the culture of ed schools in terms of their attitudes toward experimental research. It is a culture that is lost in many ways. It is a culture that is alive and well in other social sciences. And that is a problem in the sense that many of the people who do the evaluations, support the work in the government and elsewhere come out of that culture. So I think there are reasons to be optimistic in a sense that people see these things. On the other hand, and we probably won't have a full time to discuss it tomorrow is, you can point at 30 years when people have also recognized this problem. And so why aren't we doing it? It isn't lack of knowledge in a way, it is a question of who has control, who has, then, the decision on what is good and what is bad. Because there are differences within the field which seem, as you said, you know, there are different ways of approaching evaluation. I agree with you. I like the

approach that you take. That is not an approach that is necessarily predominant, to put it mildly, in education.

MS. RAVITCH: Paul Hill?

MR. HILL: Just a quick comment. Without disagreeing with anything that has been said so far, a big difference between our field and the field of medicine, for example, can be captured in two words, markets and malpractice. Getting it right really matters. And I don't think that is acceptable to a regulatory solution, unless we have some kind of competitive situation of education, the drive for getting the right answer to people.

MS. RAVITCH: Larry, are there any last comments you want to make before we let everybody get a chance to walk around?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I guess the question is is it really useful for me to say, as so many have before me, kill this program, here is lots of other ways to spend the money. I could certainly say that just to make it clear that if you wanted to do something about violence and drugs, you would focus on comprehensive community-based efforts in the highest crime communities. I can say that, but then go on -- I think I have to say this program is not going to go away. The money is going to be spent. So the most useful proposal would be some way to make it less wasteful.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, maybe what you will have to do is to present two alternatives. If in fact it is not possible to kill this program, here is a way to make it better, but my recommendation would be to invest in the high crime communities because that is where kids are most at risk. I mean, the object here is not to figure out how to pump up an ineffectual program, but how to solve the problem, which is that the kids are subject to violence and drug abuse. And what is the best way to attack that issue. But if you think it is best to do it, I would suggest you pose these as two alternatives. One with and one without.

MR. SHERMAN: That part is easy. The problem of democracy and knowledge is a little harder.

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GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. RAVITCH: Okay. Thank you. I want to just make a couple of comments but then we will throw it open for discussion. When I was assistant secretary at OERI, I found one of the programs and the rather extensive portfolio of the research agency was the Eisenhower National Program. And I invited Eve Bither, who is here, to come run the program because she was not only state superintendent of Maine and knew how to work with school people, but had been a high school physics teacher. Now the point of my saying this is that the Eisenhower Program, at that time, was a math/science program. And there was some pressure to expand it to other subjects. And what I was concerned about, and I think rightly so based on what I heard from Julie, is that if it lost it's focus on math/science, it would become anything and everything. It would become a grab bag program like so many others. And there would be pressures to make it available for training teachers to teach home economics and vocational skills and whatever. I guess that this could become a segue to the next session which is: "Why is a research agency running school improvement programs?" And I always had that question. And it can be: "The research agency continues to run a variety of grab bag programs." Another point I wanted to make was that I think Julie makes an important point about trying to combine different professional development programs. As long as the federal government is going to run them, there ought to be some coherence. When there was a reauthorization of higher education act last year, the number that I heard for professional development that was in that reauthorization was $2 billion. So when we talk about the Eisenhower program, it is within the context of what is a kind of a crazy quilt of professional development that is taking place in many other agencies, and not just in the Department of Education. I think the Energy Department also runs professional development programs. Probably the State Department does, too. I mean, again, it is one of these crazy quilt things where every federal cabinet agency seems to have a hand into some piece of this. And last I think is a point of pretty good -- I would reinforce, which is the last study from the Department of Education showed that only 38 percent of teachers have an academic degree in anything. Which suggest the problem lies even deeper than the discussion we're having. With that, I would invite you to comment on the colloquy this morning, which I found very interesting. Sally?

MS. KILGORE: I'm obliged --

A PARTICIPANT: Could you use a microphone?

MS. KILGORE: Pardon?

A PARTICIPANT: Could you use a microphone?

MS. RAVITCH: Use a microphone.

MS. KILGORE: In memory of James Hoban, I do have to call to everyone's attention in the 1960s on the quality of educational opportunity, teacher quality was a very important part of his finding. And, in fact, Jim later regretted that he did not give that more attention. He did, instead, give greater attention to the student composition variable, as we all know. The other thing -- it has been some years since I have tried the applied methodologist, but I do vaguely remember the terms exogenous and endogenous. And I think that -- are you pointing to me?

MS. RAVITCH: He can't hear you.

MS. KILGORE: Oh. I remember the terms endogenous and exogenous. And endogenous referring to those things within the system and that such as family background is exogenous. And I really don't think it is quite fair to have any school variable stand up and compete with family background. We have never found something that could, in some sense, be of equal accountability in terms of variance. I do think variables that we do -- the effects of family background within the system are important. But I think teacher quality may, in fact, be one of those. Thank you. No question.

A PARTICIPANT: May I respond on that?

MS. RAVITCH: Yes.

A PARTICIPANT: You know, I agree with what you are saying, but one finds, in a number of context, and I hate to keep coming back to the national commission, the statement that -- and I had my own chair of the state board of education in Missouri state that teachers are more important than parents in a public gathering. Now the research doesn't support that. And you agree with me on that. Now that doesn't mean we can't do anything, but I think we have to be realistic about understanding what contributes to student achievement. And one, teachers do. There are some teacher characteristics matter. And we are finding the tests of verbal ability in the Coleman study, ACT scores in Alabama, the Brewer and Goldhaver had some -- degrees in math and science on mass scores and so on. But an awful lot of what matters about teachers is unexplained. In other words, there are teacher effects and, you know, those are much larger than the measured ones. Which I think is an argument for things like performance based pay and moving away from the traditional salary base.

MS. RAVITCH: Doug Carnine?

MR. CARNINE: I think I might not have been clear yesterday in the statement about professional development. But I was trying to make the point is that there are two types of professional development. And those are also in the paper. One has to do with content area knowledge, which I think we can make a legitimate case for supporting. And I think the Pennsylvania example is an excellent one, where you are targeting accountability on the immediate consequences of professional development that targets content knowledge. My point about reading was on the other kind of professional development. And that is the target's pedagogy. And there I think we are on fairly shaky ground in terms of where we invest dollars. And one area where we have some professional consensus is in beginning reading. And I commend the paper for it linking student achievement to professional development, but let me give a California example, I think, that might give pause. The -- a lot of the math in professional development as I understand it, around frameworks has to do with pedagogy. Because frameworks are primarily pedagogy. And that professional development was done at a time where you have NAPE scores in California showing students scoring at a very, very low level.

So if you use student results as a tenuous link to the quality and contribution of professional development, that would not support the professional development that was going on in California at that time. Now because it is such a tenuous link, I'm not making that as a strong playing, but I'm pointing out that that is an issue that doesn't support the more process oriented evaluations that are raised in the paper.

MS. KOPPICH: I think that, first of all I'm glad that you have clarified what you said about reading, and I agree now with your point. There is almost no professional development going on in California now around math. Teachers have told -- been told we do reading. But when there was professional development around math, you are right, some of it was around pedagogy, using manipulatives, that sort of thing. But a fair amount of it, for some period of time, maybe not long enough to show up in test scores or maybe not effective enough, was around equipping particularly elementary teachers with actual subject matter knowledge in mathematics. You are right, it is problematic to make the link. We need better data and a longer study. And we need a state that stops switching around the test it uses. But we don't have those conditions right now.

MS. RAVITCH: Tom?

MR. LOVELESS: As I mentioned yesterday, I was a teacher in the 1980s and I was professionally developed probably 70 times in a decade. That would be my guess. And I was talking to Bill Hunnard last week and I told him that I really resent that he made me do that all those times. I hated it. It was like going to the dentist. And here is basically my question. Who are these professional developers? I have never read a study that has looked at the people who are doing the professional development and looked at their qualifications. I know many times I would go up and ask them, you know, why are you doing this instead of being in the classroom teaching. And they said, well, I couldn't handle the kids.

(Laughter.)

MR. LOVELESS: And I suppose the question to the panel is this. Does any -- has anyone read a study or anyone in the room read a study of who are these professional developers? What are their qualifications? What do they know? Do they have content knowledge?

MR. TOCH: They obviously vary, excuse me, widely. I mean professional development, because it is a -- there is a lot of money in the field, attracts a lot of entrepreneurs on the one hand, who are more interested in making the money than conveying valuable information to teachers. On the other end of the spectrum, one could argue that the senior Yale faculty, who know a lot about their subjects, are also professional developers. And one would -- one is, based on what I have seen in the program, reassured about their qualifications and their motivations. Julia, in her paper, also pointed to a collaborative program between a county education system and a community college in the San Jaoquin Valley that has brought in 24 or 25 former scientists to serve as, if you will, curriculum consultants in the area elementary schools. Now whether those ex-scientists have good pedagogical skills is unclear, but they have a lot of motivation because they are retired and they have made the effort to go back into schools. They know their subjects and can be very helpful. And I would be reassured by that sort of contribution as well.

MS. RAVITCH: I just want to point out in response to Tom's comment, I was at St. John's University School of Education in Queens, New York, which is one of the major producers of teachers last Fall. And someone pointed me to a couple, one of whom is on the faculty, and they -- and said these are the most successful professional developers in America today. And I said

who are they, and they gave me their names and I have forgotten them. But it is a husband and wife team who are making a million dollars a year and they have something called, I think it is paramediated tutoring, of which they are the gurus. And they go from conference to conference. And they are, as you said, very successful entrepreneurs. And I just realized there was a whole world out there that none of us know anything about. And which I recommend for a study.

MR. TOCH: Can I just follow up on Tom's comment? I agree with you, those programs sound good. And if the objective is to get content knowledge, why not just create some kind of voucher that teachers can use to go take college courses? That seems to me a much more efficient way of teachers getting content knowledge. Not every teacher is going to have access to a Yale faculty member, but they may have access to a college in their own community. And if they need -- if they don't know math, they can go take a math course. They don't need to have professional development for that.

MS. RAVITCH: Bob Maranto?

MR. MARANTO: As a political scientist, it strikes me that I think the interests that are dominating this are the ed schools. Right? Is my sense. Now the only way to beat an interest group is to have a counter interest group. And I have always wondered why an organization like my own professional association, the American Political Science Association, horned in on some of this. We political scientists constantly complain that people come out of twelfth grade, come to college and know nothing of the government. And we never do a damn thing about it. And it is always seemed to me it was a source of both potential public service and revenue. And I have never been able to persuade my colleagues of this. Have any professional associations like that of subject matter into this game?

A PARTICIPANT: The political scientists do advance placement training. There are some instances where some of the college faculty teach advance placements to -- in government. We do it.

MR. MARANTO: Really? Of teachers? Interesting.

MS. RAVITCH: Catherine Snow, did you have a comment?

MS. SNOW: Yes. I guess I need the mic. I just wanted to say that I'm -- what I'm missing in this whole conversation about professional development and who should be doing it, and whether it should be done by Yale faculty or by people from schools of education. Is any sense of teachers as people with a developmental pathway that they need to traverse. And the sense that they need quite different kinds of supports and professional development at different stages of their careers. Somebody who doesn't know how to keep a bunch of middle school kids under control, might learn a lot from going to a course on Shakespeare at Yale, but that isn't going to reflect, be reflected immediately in better classroom practice. Somebody who is already very good at the day-to-day details of classroom practice needs to think of him or herself as a scholar and then might benefit. But this sense that there is a one size fits all professional development model is completely ridiculous.

MR. PODGURSKY: Well, may I say, see this reminds me of the discussion yesterday about computers. So here we have -- we know it is easy to do it wrong. And there is probably right ways to do it and probably spectacular ways to do it, and a lot of wrong ways to do it. And I -- here we have another example where it there are some very good examples out there and some

very bad ones. Now in that kind of a situation, is -- this goes back to the level of government argument. Is this the right place to have the federal government subsidizing a program then? If it is so hard to determine what is the right way to do something, is it likely the federal Department of Education is going to make the right decision on that?

MS. SNOW: I don't think it is so hard to determine, just nobody has thought about it seriously who is deeply involved.

MS. KOPPICH: I think you make a good point about teachers having different developmental levels. And I'll try and work that into the next version of the paper. This paper was only about federally funded professional development, not professional development at large. But your point was brought home to me again, I'm doing, actually for OERI, a study of teacher peer review programs. And many of those programs, as some of you probably know, provide intensive mentoring for first year teachers and then sometimes beyond. And in every city I have visited that has had these programs, you say to the mentors, well what do the beginning teachers need at the very beginning of their careers. And everybody says the same thing. They have to know how to manage the classroom because nobody teaches them how to do that. And they have got to do that before they can pay really good attention to pedagogy. So that is a very good point.

MS. RAVITCH: Checker?

MR. FINN: I'm willing to stipulate that some teachers need some development, but the question is, what is going to cause it to happen. Julia, you seem to take for granted that the main thing that will cause it to happen is a categorical program that provides money for this and only this. Because otherwise it won't happen unless somebody comes in from essentially outside the school or the district and says here is money that can only be used for professional development of teachers in math or teachers in whatever. Is this actually the only or the best way to cause professional development to occur, assuming that it is needed? Might it not be better to consider, essentially on an accountability strategy where the teacher, students, need to demonstrate that they have learned something about a subject? And then have essentially flexible money that the school or district can deploy in order to meet the learning needs of their students, which might well include professional development for the teachers of those students, but might alternatively include something else that the students need, like tutoring or something, in whatever subject they are deficient in? Why assume the categorical funding approach to professional development, rather than a kind of a outcomes accountability approach?

MS. KOPPICH: Might I take it you don't like categorical funding?

MR. FINN: I adore it. We are in Washington. It proliferates. It metastasizes every -- every week there are 14 new categorical programs. We adore them.

MS. KOPPICH: First of all, I don't for a minute assume that by confining federally funded professional development to a category or confining it to a particular kind of professional development. It will happen in states or in school districts. I don't make that assumption. I make the assumption that given a different kind of professional -- federal incentive that now exists, we will -- we may have the slight prospect of seeing states and districts behave differently. That is -- we are talking about a very slender slice of dollars. We are not talking about all the dollars that are spent on education. Certainly not all the dollars that are spent on improving teaching or improving student learning. I have a great fear, and it is sort of an internal

contradiction. I can argue with great passion that schools ought to have much greater latitude to make decisions. And Paul Hill yesterday mentioned site based management. And I'm often amused when I go around to districts and talk to people. It doesn't matter whether it is an administrator or school board member or teacher, talk about school based management and I say is school based management here yet. Yes, absolutely. And are there any matters about which schools cannot make decisions. Well, yes, there are one or two. What might those be? Budget, curriculum and personnel. So on the one hand I can argue you can't hold schools accountable unless they control -- can control what matters. And on the other hand, I have had -- this is not research based, I have had too much experience in too many districts where I have seen local administrators, principals or school boards or superintendents say we are going to spend money kind of on whatever goes. And teacher quality is kind of whatever goes. Now maybe if there were a better developed accountability system, we would begin to seem more intelligent expenditure of funds. But I don't think we're there yet. So maybe what I'm suggesting is simply a stop gap measure.

MR. TOCH: I think Chuck, there is an analogy to a national curriculum and a national examination system which you support. And that is, that we -- there is so much talk now about a national curriculum and examinations to measure the schools performance on that curriculum, because in the absence of those more centralized dicta, the right things aren't happening in schools.

MR. FINN: There is no analogy at all, Tom. The national exam, which we -- which I thought once was a good idea, but which we are not about to have any time in this lifetime, but nevertheless, that is an outcomes based approach to whether, in fact, the results are produced. It is not an incomes based categorical funding approach at all.

MR. TOCH: Yeah, but if you have got a -- if you have got a curriculum that is built up as a -- a curriculum frameworks that are established upon which the test is based, then you are very directly, it seems to me, encouraging local educators to teach certain things in certain subjects. And, thus, it has the same effect, it seems.

MS. RAVITCH: Jane Hannaway, you had your hand up?

MS. HANNAWAY: Well, yes. There is something about this conversation that bothers me and let me just put it on the table and see where it might take us. But professional development, as we all know, is extraordinarily expensive. Anyone that has put together a research grant and tried to build in professional development, it sort of knocks you off your feet. Or if you talk to any practicing administrator, or if you look at the actual amount of professional development, that the average teacher in the United States gets, it is only about a half a day a year. And that is because of expense. So it is an extremely expensive thing to do. We know very little about it's consequences. And I'm very nervous about sort of pushing for more of it, partly because I think it may be being layered upon an ill structured labor system. And if we don't have a well structured labor system that selects the best people, that weeds out people, and that structures the jobs in ways that I think may make more sense, then professional development seems to me to be a band aid put upon a system that itself is not structured quite right. So we could spend a tremendous amount of money on professional development and spend it very inefficiently unless, I think, we think about the basics into which this investment would be made.

MS. KOPPICH: I think that that is a good point. A point well taken. I think the dilemma we are faced with is that we can't wait for the system to become the system many of us would like to

see. In California right now, as a result of a number of policies, including class size reduction, which in my view was a cynical political move, not anything having to do with education improvement. But as a result of that policy, we have 31,000 teachers, 10 percent of the teaching force who have no teaching licenses. Now I would prefer somebody, a policy maker, the commission on teacher credentialing, the teacher union, somebody to stand up and say stop. We are not going to do that anymore. I don't think that is going to happen. We are always faced with a situation where there is a classroom, there is an adult in it. And so I think that you are right, the professional development is expensive and, in some instances, it appears to be and maybe is a band aid approach. But I don't think that we can afford the luxury of saying let's continue to work to try to fix the system. And maybe sometime down the road it will be fixed. But in the interim we are not going to do anything to help the people who are already there, both the adults and the kids. I think it is a dilemma.

MS. RAVITCH: George Farkas?

MR. FARKAS: I think there is a tremendous commonality among what is being said and we're missing that. I think that -- I think there is a tremendous commonality among what is being said and that we're missing it. And, in particular, a commonality between what Checker said and what Catherine Snow said, if you look at it right. Last night the superintendent of schools for D.C. talked to us. And one of the things she said was how important it was to have principals who were instructional leaders, but how difficult it was to find such people. I'm working very closely with two schools in Dallas that work with low income kids. And one of them is a charter school where they have got a master teacher in charge of the whole thing, but she never comes into the classroom and helps the students, the teachers use the skills that she, in fact, has. The other is a school that produces superb results and I talked to the principal about how she did it. And she said, well, you know, when these teachers are starting they don't know very much, so I am in the classroom with them several days a week for several months. And I sort of team teach with them and I model how to do it. And then if they are not very good, I fire them. The infrastructure, the kind of management system for doing that doesn't happen to be in place. We have got a kind of culture and a management that isn't too good at doing that. That doesn't implement that very successfully very often in our major cities. Although, the people running the major cities know that is needed. In Houston, the head of reading said to all these principals, the ed schools didn't teach your teachers how to do proper reading instruction so you are going to be the instructional leader. I'm now about to train you in that. This issue of having an instructional leader, about having an in-service that is the administrators themselves, some people don't like the medical analogy, but I'm going to keep doing it because it really does it for me. How do they teach these doctors? Answer, they have the teaching fellows, they have the people in the hospital who are the older doctors who are experienced. They have a whole system of interns and residents. Even that elaborate system, which we all know so much about it is on T.V. shows all the time, isn't enough so a couple of years ago Harvard ed school decided it had too much academic training up front. And they reversed their curriculum so that the first year they are all out in the hospitals and they do the more academic training later. That is a profession that really works at this. In education we have the opposite. And so everybody is trying to fix it somehow here. It is perfectly clear that the categorical programs are not the way to fix it. It is perfectly clear we have to do something. It seems to me we need to find a way to encourage the instructional leaders who should be there, the ed schools who should be putting forward a system like this. Like I said before, what you all face is this problem of kind of a professional with an ineffective culture. And everybody keeps inventing crazy non-fixes to it. Anyway, I'll stop there.

MS. KOPPICH: I have just two quick responses. One is, your medical analogy doesn't work the way you suggested. It works in another situation. You notice that doctors aren't trained by the hospital administrator. If there is one beginning teacher and one really good principal, maybe that principal can spend time in that one teacher's classroom. But where you have got schools with lots of new teachers, one person can't do it. I would hearken back, again, to peer review programs, about which I know many of you are skeptical. But I will tell you that in places where you have experienced teachers mentoring new teachers intensively for a year, not only does it work in that those teachers practice gets a lot better, but teachers are not afraid to say you are not going to make it. That is the first comment. The second is Dallas is about to inherit San Francisco's superintendent and I would like to offer my condolences.

(Laughter.)

MR. FARKAS: Our last superintendent just got out of prison. And we'll fix this guy for you, too. From what we have heard, he needs it. But the final line is that I, too, support a whole more elaborate system of master teachers who would work with the other teachers.

MS. RAVITCH: Eve Bither?

MS. BITHER: Well, Diane has already told you about my practical background. So you --

MS. RAVITCH: You will have to speak up into a microphone.

MS. BITHER: Okay. You know that I come from a practical background, so you can take everything that I say, knowing about my bias, and knowing that most of what I have to say really is based on anecdotal evidence. And I want to say something about that, too. Two points that the paper makes that resonate with me, based on many years. Are the fact that teachers really can't teach what they don't know. And many, many teachers, particularly in math and science, don't know enough. I think that is -- I think you have to know a subject really -- at a very deep level in order to make it easy to understand for kids of all ages. I think that the more you know, the better, you can do that. The second point -- and because many of us in our particular state knew about that, we used the Eisenhower funds in a way that, through our college faculty, we had local superintendents who designed their own courses for a number of teachers across districts. And enhanced their knowledge in mathematics and in science. We had -- I, at one time, took one of those NSF institutes for eight weeks. Probably the best professional development that I ever had. And I certainly would want to put in a plug for a recurrence of an opportunities like that. And we had ongoing offerings through the Eisenhower program for our mathematics teachers throughout the year. And I want to believe, although I make no claim of causality, that that has something to do with the fact that Maine students are at the top in the country, the fourth and eighth grade, both in math and science. So for a course aid, I think that is something that really matters. The other important point that you make is the need to link professional development to student achievement, student outcomes. And I would -- I think I'm agreeing with Checker on that. I think we need results that can be linked. It is an incredibly difficult thing to do. And while at -- we funded a project in which we tried to follow a cohort of student teachers and their students, once they started teaching to see whether we could establish a link. It was incredibly difficult. Particularly because of -- it is so difficult to come up with a methodology in which you can track all of the people who are in the course, both teachers and their students. And if there were a research effort in this area that I think we ought to support, it is to have new projects in which we try to establish that link in a better way. I think it is difficult,

but I think that is what needs to happen in order to have us all feel comfortable about teacher professional development. And hopefully it can be done.

MS. RAVITCH: I think Sonny Ladd was talking last night about some of the different programs around the country which have tried to establish that link to develop measures of student learning and to connect it to particular teachers so that it was possible to identify what -- who was doing a good job, who was not, who needed help. Yes, Sonny?

MS. LADD: Yes, I would like to clarify that. In fact, I agree that it is very difficult to link particular teachers. And the programs that I was talking about last night were school based accountability programs. Where you look at the performance of the whole school. But I want to reiterate this point. There is a lot of discussion about accountability being the answer here. And I think we need to be cautious about that. And I'm a fan of outcomes based accountability. But it is not easy to do it well and to use the value added -- to develop the value added sorts of measures that I think we ought to be using if we are going to be fair to teachers and fair to schools. So I think we need to do a lot more research on that. Let me just pick up on this link between teacher and particularly teacher professional development and outcomes. There have been a number of references to the Cohen and Hill study. One of the interesting things to me about that study which now gets cited over and over again as the study that shows that the right form of professional development is professional development that is linked with the standards and whatever. Is that there are really two parts of their analysis. One is the link between professional development and the sorts of practices that teachers engaged in. And that part of the Hill and Cohen study, I think, is really quite good. They have a survey of teachers, reasonably big survey of teachers. And they know something about the teacher practices. The second part of the study is the link between those practices and the student achievement. I think there is some real problems at that stage in their analysis because they have started out with a sample of teachers and then the only link to student outcomes is at the school level. And their sample is such that they only have three or four teachers from a school. And they are going from the teacher to this -- to the school level. And I think it is problematic. So I want to reinforce this notion that there is room for a lot more research on sort of the impacts of teachers and teacher professional development outcomes.

MS. BITHER: And if I -- just one comment in response to that. Yes, it is very difficult and probably will take a long time and lots of money. But is not that the function -- should that not be the function of the federal government to support just the most difficult issues, the most difficult problems?

MS. LADD: I think the strongest case for the federal government's involvement is the research focus because of the externalities and the benefits that it would --

MS. BITHER: The other comment that I feel compelled to make is in response to Checker's question. Is a categorical program the answer to this, right? Why a categorical program? Why not let locals decide how to spend their money? And, perhaps, professional development funds might be one of the choices, but perhaps not. From my experience at the local, state and now at the federal level, from where we look at all -- you know, sort of across the county, whenever there are budget decisions to be made, the first thing to be cut are professional development funds. And I have gone through many iterations like that. And as a local superintendent, I stopped asking for it because -- and depended, instead, on Eisenhower money, to at least do something for the math and science teachers. So I would say from, you know, just from -- and I

have been told across the country by other chiefs and by other local superintendents that that is, indeed, their experience as well.

MR. PODGURSKY: Well, let's pursue that point. Is that the wrong decision? Should they have increased class size instead? I mean, where should they have cut the money? If they made the wrong decision cutting professional development.

MS. BITHER: I think that simply to have a line in the local budget that says "professional development" usually dooms it no matter where the other cuts have --

MR. PODGURSKY: But do we know that was the wrong decision?

MS. BITHER: If you look at --

MR. PODGURSKY: Should they have increased class size and taken it out -- I mean, there is trade offs here. And who is in a better position to know the right trade-off here than the local administrators? I mean, no one is saying the money is not going to be there for professional development. That is -- if the money will go down there if they think that is the wisest use, then why don't we give them the flexibility to do that?

MS. RAVITCH: Sally?

MS. KILGORE: Well, I would like to say, let's make very clear who is this local administrator. It is a very big difference between a principal and a school board. The school board has interests, let's say, in its most pernicious form in Texas, in building more of anything, because that is the way they get money through their friends. So that their priorities are not driven by the kinds of things you would think, but rather, other kinds of priorities that they have. I would like to also add that I think that much of this discussion is ignoring what is emerging in the area of professional development. We all have those memories of the '80s and everything where these people came flying in for, you know, an hour and they had this grandstand show and bells and whistles came. And we walked away with them feeling good for about 24 hours, but will have --

MR. LOVELESS: I never felt good.

(Laughter.)

A PARTICIPANT: And it didn't do you much good.

MS. KILGORE: But the emerging model is not to suggest that this would change anybody's position on the front. But I just think it is important for people to have in their minds what alternatives there are. A long term relationship with schools that endeavor to change the entire curriculum and have people work collectively, and most of you are expressing a vision of professional development that is very individualized and very, you know, need-based on particular people. So you at least have to know competing models. Finally, I would suggest that all of you who want to do research in the ways that you think is impossible can begin this research in Texas today. Because the principals of every school get data on an individual teacher basis, attached to every test, and it mentioned other Texas tests on a value-added basis. So there is the student's entering score and exit score in that school in that classroom that year.

MS. RAVITCH: Our last comment. Checker, since a couple of people have responded to you, do you have something to say?

MR. FINN: I cherish Eve Bither almost as much as federal categorical programs. But I want to --

(Laughter.)

A PARTICIPANT: Which would you give up?

(Laughter.)

MR. FINN: That would be a terribly painful choice. I want to challenge, though, the reasoning that both she expressed and Julia expressed and several others have expressed. That the basis for federal policy making ought to be the fear that a local school board will make an unwise decision about it's money. That is a really soft and doubtful basis to create federal categorical programs. Is the mistrust of the wisdom of local decisions about budget priorities. It is unwise for a whole variety of reasons. Including the fact that local decisions vary so from place to place. And that it is awfully difficult to come up with a uniform national policy that effectively second guesses all 15,000 local school board in America. And yet that does become the basis for an awful lot of the sort of the categorical mind-set. Is we must sort of stop them before they kill again at the local level. When there is a constitutional or civil rights violation involved, I think there is a legitimate exercise of federal energy. But the fear of a wrongful spending decision, as Mike Podgursky was saying, the possibility they might decide to raise or lower class sizes or to hire tutors or to do something different than professional development for teachers. And they might get better results with it. And these Texas type tests that Sally just mentioned or the kinds of teacher specific results that Sanders is now tracking in Tennessee might show that they were actually making a very wise decision from the standpoint of their students and their results. Even if it didn't happen to include professional development. So I don't think we should be making federal policy on that basis.

MR. TOCH: Okay, Checker, we'll just -- instead we'll just have the federal government sprinkle fertilizer on teachers.

(Laughter.)

MR. FINN: Someone said that is what they have been doing.

(Laughter.)

GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. RAVITCH: Thank you. Let me mention that some of the people who are here, Emerson Elliot, who led NCES so ably and really turned it, as Carl Kaestle pointed out, into a very significant statistical agency. Also Chris Cross, who was an assistant secretary at OERI and Checker Finn, who was an assistant secretary. So we have a lot of knowledge and experience in this room which I hope we'll draw upon in the discussion. I wanted just to say a couple of things here. That when I got to OERI, I found an agency that had colonized by the grant recipients, borrowing Paul Hill's terms. The staff was literally intimidated by people who get the money. And if they didn't get their money, the would go to the Hill and everybody had a favorite champion on the Hill who would call and scream and say your budget is going to get cut if XYZ doesn't get their money. And XYZ usually was the labs. They were just horrible. And so one of the things I found that I needed very quickly was somebody who wasn't intimidated by the grant recipients. Somebody who hadn't been socialized by the culture of the agency into thinking that there were grant recipients ran the agency and that getting their money out was the most important thing that a research agency could do. And so I wanted to find someone of unimpeachable integrity, who could look at the quality of the research and advise me. Because I didn't have time for that. I was making 18 speeches a day about nothing. So I invited Maris to come and, much to my surprise, I mean, I was absolutely -- I never told him this, I was absolutely astonished when he agreed to come to the -- and work in the agency. And he was an invaluable resource. And one of the main things that he did was report on the centers and the labs. Finding that they -- for whatever money they got, it was a large part of it had no effect whatever. They were not doing good research, they were not doing good R and D in the labs. The labs successfully blocked the publication of his report. I think it is on Eric, but it was never published. So I come to a conference like this and I ask myself as I listen to report after report from people at the table, is the object here to recommend what is politically feasible or to recommend what is right? And I would say that since I'm not a federal employee, and most of you aren't, the object always should be to recommend the right thing, not to recommend to Congress, we know you can't change this, but within the constraints of not being able to do anything, here is a tweak you can do. And as long as you are not a federal employee or working for one of the agencies getting the money, you ought to be able to say what is right. And that is what I told Larry Sherman this morning because he told us yesterday, safe and drug free act isn't need. The schools are the safest place to be for kids. And the money is misspent, but therefore, let's just tweak it a little bit because we can't get rid of it. And I said that is not your job. Your job is to talk about what is right for kids. And what is the best way to approach the problems of violence and drug abuse, whether they may be emanating. How would you spend the money if you -- if there were freedom to do this. And so I look at this issue of research and I ask myself why are the labs sacrosanct? Why are they on the federal dole? And I can't have -- I don't have an answer. And everyone just says, they are sacrosanct, don't touch them. Let's talk about them and we'll go around them. And so I think it is important for people who aren't on their payroll to say that $1.6 billion has been spent and there is precious little to show for it. Now on the issue of structure, I think I have to say when I was assistant secretary, I got sick of the discussion of moving the boxes around because I thought what we needed were people who knew how to

conduct research and people who knew how to evaluate research. And that is the one thing the agency had a great shortage of. And I tried everything in my power to protect NCES from political pressure. But let me tell you my conclusion, based on my little experience there. Is that education is now become the leading domestic policy issue and whoever is elected president, and the people in office now, are going to use the research agency to support their political agenda. And you will not have a credible research agency as long as it is part of the Department of Education. Which is why when I testified before the Senate a few weeks ago, I defied my own stricture about forget about moving the boxes around and said, NCES, the Office of Research and NAPE should be an independent agency. It should not be part of the Department of Education. You should -- as long as you are an assistant secretary, reporting to your secretary, your secretary is there to get that president re-elected. That is his job. Is to go around the country -- or her job -- go around the country and saying the programs are working. What we are doing works. The changes we initiated have shown great progress. And they will turn to the research agency and say demonstrate that we need smaller class size. Demonstrate that the few class size experiments are the most important thing happening in the country. Demonstrate that our priority for choice is the most important priority there is. Show that vouchers work. This is what will happen. And if you want this to happen in the next administration, whoever that president will be, keep saying no structural change. And there will be no credibility. And, frankly, given the small amount of money that is spent on research and the little we have show for it, I can't see a case to go to Congress and say make it a billion dollars because we haven't spent $100 million well. And as long as we continue locked in these do what is politically feasible, rather than do what is right, we shouldn't -- we will never have an adequate research agency. Nor should we have an adequate research budget, because we can't show anything for the $100 million we have got. With that lecture, I will now ask you to disagree with me or any of the panelists.

MR. KIRP: I may be the only person in the room who was not an assistant secretary.

(Laughter.)

MR. FINN: Your turn will come.

(Laughter.)

MR. KIRP: The kindest cut of all here. And I'm relatively new to the world of dealing with the federal government in terms of education research. On a project that shall remain nameless, it is a project that is supposed to be evaluating, in a non-partisan objective way, a program near and dear to the heart of the administration. It comes with a board that represents the Noah's Ark of people who work in domain. It is staffed by people who are self-described advocates of the program. Somehow I was snuck on as a co-principal investigator. And to raise questions as to have me cast as the Darth Vader of educational research. So I come as a -- I really -- I come from that one experience or the point that Diane is making about -- about the difficulties of doing research in a context of -- that is politically charged and where the outcomes are so -- this is advocacy research. And I wouldn't be surprised if what I produce enjoys Maris's fate in terms of document that won't appear. Simply because it approaches this in a dispassionate way. But as an outsider, and an innocent outsider, I sort of asked two kinds of questions. One is why is this agency, given it's history, it's difficulties for many years in attracting first rate minds, and all sorts of reasons for that difficulty. I mean the reasons that suggest why Diane was surprised at attracting Maris. Why would somebody, who has the freedom to do interesting work and who can get it supported by various folks, and who is -- you know, living a civilized life, come into

this particular snake pit? So that is one sort of puzzle as to why one would think one could attract such folks. A second really is to reverse the priorities suggested by the panel. It seems to me that the one kind of work that the federal government has a federal interest in, is evaluating federal programs. And one can go back to Larry's comment about -- and Maris's comment about, you know, they are always changing and therefore how do you evaluate them by saying forget it. This is the kind of -- you know, these changes don't matter. You can have a look at this. If what you are saying is the program has changed, therefore, you can't study it. That is an argument for letting some programs run for some period of time so that at least you can evaluate them. And that maybe the dual job of this new agency ought to be to do that kind of dispassionate research on federal programs. And ought to go back to the comments that several people were making, but that emerged yesterday. To encourage the development of a community of education researchers, substantially outside as well as inside education schools, who are in the business of standard setting, rather like what it is that goes on in medicine. And so the use of federal incentive dollars, conferences, et cetera, to try to bring such people together. And to lure people into the field. Now I realize with Carl, that nothing is new. And with Maris. And that we have been here before in terms of bringing people into the field from outside. With the notion of trying to create some professional standards in this domain. So I don't think it looks like serious peer reviews, that you don't get the kind of array of not very interesting work done by third-rate folks. It seems to be a role that can be played by a handful of very smart folks who are willing to take a chunk of time out to be institutional builders. And then go back to the work they are doing. So that is a puzzle about a very different kind of model from that that I have heard.

MS. RAVITCH: David, let me just say that you raise a very important point about the problem of federally funded research on federal programs. And that is, that -- whether it is the program evaluation service, which is within the Department under the under-secretary's office, that's an advocacy tool for the secretary's office. Whatever comes out of OERI goes to the secretary's office before publication. It is very difficult to have an evaluation of an existing federal program that offends the administration. It is -- I would say it is virtually impossible. What you will get is a critique of something that the previous administration did.

MR. KIRP: Even if that is an independent agency that is doing the evaluation?

MS. RAVITCH: If it is an independent agency, it doesn't go to the secretary. As long as it is --

MR. KIRP: I'm endorsing that model. I'm assuming that structural change to exist. But I'm wondering, assuming that the research that Maris describes as good work, I'm assuming that that work would be done by a serious intellectual educational policy community, which could be nurtured by the Department. And it doesn't need to be, in some sense, sponsored by one of those R and D you are -- you know, regional labs to make that happen. In fact, that sponsorship is -- would often be a kind of -- an impediment to the process. Let me answer a couple of things raised. Continuing this issue of how does one do better studies and especially if they are critical of the administration or some particular point of view. One of the things I think we need to build in more are review panels on major studies. That really say something and that are not used simply as advisory, but actually put their professional reputation on line in terms of saying something about them. So, for example, OERI does not use advisory panels as much as PES does. PES likes to use them. And Alan Ginsberg, I use them effectively to raise questions. But what he doesn't usually use them for is to then raise questions about the study itself. Every so often somebody gets on there by mistake, like me. Then they begin to say something. Let me give an example. I was on the -- I've been on the even start evaluation. This is Representative Goodling's favorite old program on simultaneously doing early childhood education and adult

literacy. The first even start evaluation by AP, and there was some problems. It was actually a nice study. Pretty well pointed out it didn't work. Goodling, of course, buried it in terms of some hearings, and then it was resurrected.

MR. VINOVSKIS: So the next study, I'm not saying it is causal, but it is interesting, the next study had no design almost. It was so poorly done I'm -- I was embarrassing. I was on that review panel. Now having then written these memos, meeting after meeting saying why this is a bad study. Again, people humor you because you are on a panel, but then having an opportunity to be on an independent view panel, I would point out to Alan Ginsberg that when review panels raise questions about his agency's work, nothing seems to happen. That seems to have an effect. And the third panel thing is going to be much better. So one of the things I'm saying, a lot of us in Washington as academics, are on these panels. Why aren't we hearing more from them? Why? Because Alan is not going to invite you back usually. But that is our problem. We have to have a professional reputation. We ought to ask who are on these panels. What are we doing. Or set up these panels in a way that are not just technical advice, but they render this thing. Those are indispensable. And if we had more of that, like you do in other agencies, I think it would help.

MR. GLENNAN: Maris, let me -- I want to talk to this problem David raises and to the point that Diane makes. Diane created a very sharp dichotomy, what is right as opposed to what is feasible. I want to do some things that are right and feasible. And I think there is some things that I, in the abstract, thinking outside -- there are some things I might do probably very similar to what you would do, Diane, but which I think will destroy the feasibility of doing anything else if you do them. So I would just assume take an opportunity to try to begin to create the kind of intellectual community that you are talking about. And to try to bring in study panels, peer review groups, that the best people that you can find in the field into the agency with the -- the peer review responsibility and authority and the independence to begin to create cumulative programs of research. And that ought to be exactly the kinds of people that you have talked about. And I would concentrate on trying to do that in some areas without raising the hackles of everybody and so forth. And these other places which I think need to be changed. I don't disagree with that. I just don't think you can do it all. And I don't think I have got to say that bringing evaluation of -- of very interest group driven programs is a way to create an environment in which you can start to move this activity off into a -- a sustaining quality activity. If you want to take that activity on, I think it needs to be done. But if want to take it on, I think you are just going to end up with another -- a continued political no show.
MR. KIRP: It is possible to use those nurtured academic communities to do your political dirty work for you?

MR. VINOVSKIS: I think -- I think in time it is. You have got to build them first.

MR. KIRP: Right.

MR. VINOVSKIS: And time it is. I mean, my feeling is find the things that you can do that are politically feasible now. That people are concerned about. Build up your credibility in doing those and then turn to the difficult task of taking a fossilized institute -- you know, ingrained, deeply pork barrelish set of institutions and worry about how either to change them or to get rid of them. But to take that on at the very beginning, I find, very difficult.

MS. RAVITCH: Let me just say that academics are just as good at pork barreling as anybody else. Doug?

MR. CARNINE: I think to me the core issue is the quality of the research and the focus. And I think that Maris's point earlier about the '94 legislation, the wording is good, should give us cause for concern. And I think that there are two directions that are not exclusive. One is, as Tom mentioned, the cooperative work with NICHD and National Science Foundation. NICHD has a cumulative record now in reading. It has got a lot of respect in Congress. And one option is, that serious research will devolve totally to these other agencies. I think that is a very political, feasible direction. And it may turn out, if OERI can't do research, that that is good. Because these questions must be addressed. But secondly, the issue of quality, I think, needs to be prescribed in legislation based on what has been accomplished. Because I think the fact that is has not been done with good wording before, doesn't bode well for the future. And let me be specific. I think that there is great common concern about reading and math and school safety. And this is not drug and safety, but just knowledge about discipline. Those could be specified in legislation as priorities, rather than create a whole process to go through and come up with a smorgasbord that is going to be too broad. But the fundamental issue of quality has to do not so much with the review panels, as the initial RFPs that do not call for high quality research. And that entails a definition of quality of research that I think can be modeled, again, stated in legislation, based on the interim report of the National Reading Panel, Chapter Five deals with methodology. It is a group jointly appointed by the Department of Education, and NICHD. So you have a political compromise already in place that has actualized a definition of quality methodology. Again, to allow that decision to go back to some amorphous process where we hope we can get the right people, I don't think there is time for that. And I think it is too risky. The other point is that the notion of priorities and the notion of standards around research that can also then be applied to research syntheses should be applied to the work of the centers and the labs. At a minimum, there should be an attempt for them to be credible organizations. Whether they can be destroyed or not, is a tough political issue. But it should be taken on that they should do credible work. And I don't think, unless we create a foundation where we define operational equality, unfortunately in legislation, I don't think we will even have that starting point. So I think there are some things that can be done. And more than that, if they are not done, then we'll see more of a migration to NICHD. And that would probably be a viable option.

MR. VINOVSKIS: I think you are absolutely right. The quality issue, I think, is central. That if we don't solve that quality issue, that migration is going to take place. And I may not be against it any more than you are. I think working with these other groups, where you suggest, Tom, and others have, is not a bad idea. Because I think that would be -- help the credibility of educational research in the short run. Show us some of the ways that other people are doing it. And -- and work out that kind of a situation. The market here is not a bad idea either. I think when schools of education and others, and they have some excellent people in parts of schools of education, and not in others. But when they see that their livelihood or their research monies could migrate away, I would like to think that that would enter that. Now, the problem is this. Is there a will for quality? And that is what makes me nervous. The '94 legislation, again, you only have to repeat in some ways what you already have in there. The question is, will they put the kind of people in place who will raise these issues. And let me give you a good example on both sides of it. Having spend probably more time than anybody else looking at all the work of the labs and centers, and having a lot of friends in OERI, these secret friends. No, the staff have been terrific. I don't have any problem with the staff. What is interesting, as hard as it is to get reviewers for centers or labs, you see, this is dog work. People don't even like to do it. You go around and think who can you do that. Do you realize in a year since I did the report no one has ever asked me to do a center or lab report. And they are doing big evaluations now. So are they really doing that independent. I know Chris is on the independent review panel for the labs. But this is

interesting. What kind of credibility are we going to have. Now that is one side of it. The other side of it, which is also interesting in Washington, is having written these -- what I think are two mild reports. I mean they are -- Checker is always accusing me of being too nice. I am too nice. But after doing the OERI reports, and doing the board, nag me than have me do a report. Why? They knew it was going to be critical, but they needed some credibility. And now I'm doing the same thing for the goals. So there is a value when people begin to say that there is this issue of credibility. But that is what we have got to work on. How do we get that quality? How do we set up the mechanisms? And I don't think we are that far away from the mechanisms. And then how do we have the political will to do an honest job?

MS. RAVITCH: Catherine?

MS. SNOW: Well, I'm just a little amazed to be hearing Maris defending a notion that research -- funding for educational research should all be allowed to drift over to an organization like NICHD. I'm -- I mean, I would be less personally threatened by that than many people in this room. I have had funding from NICHD. I am a developmental psychologist. I do research on the kinds of things that NICHD is interested in. Most of you are not. And you, Maris, would never get funding from NICHD. Why are you defending this notion?

MR. VINOVSKIS: Basically because of the quality of work. I'm more interested in the quality of work.

MS. SNOW: The quality of work, but what about the topic of the work. There is a whole array of topics that are legitimately within the field of education that NICHD has no expertise and no interest in.

MS. VINOVSKIS: Absolutely. And, again, in the paper I say this is not my preferred solution. The problem is I don't have much excitement about this upward curve of spending on research and real dollars since '89 when I'm not getting anything for it. I'm more interested, and this maybe goes back to David's question, why would anybody want to go to Washington. It doesn't help your career, believe me. I mean, it doesn't hurt you. People go skiing. People do other kinds of things. They are not against it, but they are not for it. It takes time away from something else. What if you feel, as many of use do, for example, generation of the '60s, that we have an obligation to try to help the disadvantaged. You can't do it from academia. Why? You have no power. You have no -- people aren't reading your stuff. You are going to think they are reading it, but they are not. Therefore, these studies are important because we need the accurate information, not necessarily pleasant information. And we need to be in positions to talk to the people who are making decisions. So if I'm not getting that material from the school -- from the OERI, I would go to NICHD because I'm not getting it from OERI.

MS. SNOW: They are not going to give it to you.

MR. VINOVSKIS: No, but for example -- well, for example, Wendy Baldwin's shop on teenage pregnancy, when she ran the workshop there, did much better work than anything OERI has ever done. If Wendy Baldwin were placed in charge of something on education, she could do it. Why can't we do it.

MS. SNOW: This is -- but let me point out, this is basic research. It is not research. It is exactly the kind of research that -- that Carl says shouldn't -- that Carl points to as the bad example of what OERI doesn't do. It is not -- these are not program evaluations. They are understanding the

basic processes of reading development. The basic processes of choice among adolescents. The basic processes of -- I mean, so you are going to -- and it is not research on history. It is not research on policy. It is not research on classroom practice. It is not research on teacher development. It is not research on a whole array of topics that I would argue are -- we wouldn't want to abandon as fundable topics without at least talking about it.

MR. VINOVSKIS: Oh, no, I agree -- both -- a couple of things. First of all, when Wendy Baldwin did that stuff on teenage pregnancy, she funded groups like the Alan Group Market Institute. That was not just basic research. It was much more pragmatic. I think you are narrowing NICHD too narrowly. This is back to the study groups that you are talking about. We need to do that. OERI can do it. But, without that quality, it is all a wash.

MS. SNOW: Quality is crucial.

MR. VINOVSKIS: And 25 years of lack of quality, or you get some quality every so often by accident, you have got to worry.

MS. RAVITCH: Checker?

MR. FINN: I understand that anthropologist have recently found the ruins of a primitive educational laboratory in Old Divide Gorge. I think it's direct was named Lucy. Very brief anecdote. In three years in that job, I have precisely one contact with the Speaker of the House. I was writing something at home one morning and Tip O'Neill phoned me at home. Because Boston College had applied for an OERI grant. And it was particularly important to him that I know personally, before we decided who was going to get that grant, that he was interested in Boston College's application. Emerson or Sally might even remember this anecdote because they were both around at the time. The -- I guess good news is we -- he was going through the motions and we didn't fund his -- at Boston College. And it was possible to resist this kind of pressure. The bad news is even if we had an independent agency, ala Diane, and I basically agree with her proposal. If we are going to move the boxes around, to move it outside the Department and do it the way she suggested. But even if I had been director of an independent agency, I suspect the Speaker would not have hesitated to try to influence the outcome of a grant decision that was of interest to him. And he might or might not have cared enough to push hard. He, of course, could have if he had wanted to. But he probably would have called anyway, no matter what the structure of the agency. And I -- this gives me great depression actually, for structural solutions. And I actually resonated very clearly with what -- with Doug's comment, just as a reality point, whether it is desirable or not, I think we are seeing education research, just as we are seeing quite a lot of education research, good education research drifting out of ed schools into other institutions in this society. And into other departments and other kinds of organizations. We are similarly seeing funding of education research drifting out of the Department of Education into other federal agencies, state agencies, a wide variety of private funders and others. And I rather suspect that trend is going to continue no matter what we do. With the organizational remnants of OERI.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, Checker, let me say I had calls like that, too, and I ignored them. And one of those ignoring of calls, and which we denied grants to several Senators' districts -- and they were all on the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee -- led to a GAO investigation. But it didn't have any ill effects. We got cleared. That will always happen. But I think that what the critical point that I think there is focusing on is that the assistant secretary is an assistant secretary and there will be a -- the administration will have education policies. And

the research agency will be expected to support those policies. And to produce studies that show that those policies are the right policies. And that is not a -- that is not an independent, honest, integritous research process. You cannot just find people who agree with your point of view. I mean, I would like to think that one of the good things about this conference is people disagree wildly. I mean -- you know, it is the intellectual Jerry Springer Show.

(Laughter.)

MS. RAVITCH: I like that. That is good. That is what we should be doing. We should be arguing out some of the basic premises that we have. There was another -- one more point and then we have to move on to the next panel because we are like -- George?

MR. FARKAS: There is a place and a tradition where some of these problems were solved slightly more successfully. In a previous lifetime, I did program evaluations for the Department of Labor. Now, you know, a lot of this stuff was kicked off when Tobin and Freedman said there should be negative income tax experiments. And this issue of a kind of rising tide of doing things that are new programs, that bring new people in with the excitement of doing this, that is exactly what happened. Some really distinguished labor economists went into ASPER in the early '70s, policy evaluation and research, did a lot of large scale demonstrations. Created manpower demonstration research corporation, MDRC in New York. Created a real competitive environment where excellence mattered that was outside the universities. SRI, the Poverty Institute, APT, Mathematica, Westat, once you have got five of these organizations with strong capacities continually bidding on these things, but, you know, this actually went along with the creation of the policy schools. With APAM. There has been an institution building off of a strong intellectual base within the profession of economics and it's friends that has had it's ups and down. But a lot of it has been built off of forward looking programs. You know, we are going to do another welfare experiment, but it is not an established program yet, off of the notion of large scale experiments which still don't really cost that much versus $100 million. You could do ten of them or five of them. I think there is a history here of institution building that could be repeated here, if there was the will and the expertise.

MS. RAVITCH: Thank you. Maris has one last comment and then we will move on.

MR. VINOVSKIS: Right. Just to pick up on this. Absolutely right. And you could turn to like MDRC and they have done work in a variety of settings that would be very helpful. One of the things that I would pay attention to at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences meeting, which has papers and they are going to, I assume, publish the papers, talks about that larger experience, the randomized experiments. And those of you who are interested in evaluation would do well to look at those. Because we have got to break out of the mold of the kinds of things that we have been doing. And that goes back to that point. Education research doesn't live in isolation from the rest of the social sciences and the rest of the world. And we need to build on that strength and take a few of these items, like Tom says, and let's do a few success stories. And then we will argue about the topics, but if you don't have any success stories, it is awfully hard to go to the Hill.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

MS. RAVITCH: Thank you, Chris. A couple of things. One is that I'm actually very heartened to hear that transfer of training is alive and well. Because those of us who worked in the field of history of education know that it was one of the dogmas of the field for the first 30 or 40 years of this century to say that Thorndike had exploded transfer of training. Therefore, no one need study Latin anymore because they only defense of Latin was that some skills would transfer and children would learn something like self-discipline. And so throw Latin out because there is no transfer of training. And the bilingual field, and I'm very grateful for this, has brought back the idea that transfer of training works. And Thorndike was wrong. So I think this is a very important scientific breakthrough. Clearly we need better research. I would say what is missing from the discussion is some acknowledgment of the politics of education. The politics of the field. The self-preservation. And where I see this in particular in New York is the misuse of the home language survey. And here I would disagree with Chris because people -- kids get misidentified into bilingual programs all the time. I had lunch recently with Alan Hevasee, who is probably going to be the next mayor of New York City. And he had a constituent in Queens who was very upset because the home language survey was administered to an elementary school child who was asked if there was anyone in your home who doesn't speak English. And he said my grandmother speaks Yiddish. And he was placed in a Yiddish bilingual program. The child, of course, didn't speak any Yiddish. So the family was very upset because no one but the grandmother spoke Yiddish. But the home language survey put him there. Similarly, Will Bomo, a very prominent economist at NYU, was complaining recently to me that his nephew, who arrived from China, and who had taken all of his course work in English in China, in Hong Kong, was placed in a Chinese bilingual program simply because he had just arrived from China and had a Chinese surname and was other -- spoke fluent English, but was, nonetheless, placed in a Chinese program where he did not want to be. But was required to be. Our state education department has had new initiatives, one of which recently was that they offered last year, and pulled it back at the last minute, bilingual education for Creole-speaking students who come from English-speaking countries. Creole bilingual education for kids from the Bahamas, from Bermuda -- from all of the Caribbean islands where English is the main language. And yet they would be placed in programs where there are not textbooks. Where there is no written language. And this was withdrawn at the last moment after the actual curriculum of some 80 pages was circulated throughout the state. And this month, for the first time in New York State's history, our regents exams are being given in Haitian and Creole. For which there is also no written language.

MS. SNOW: That's not true. There is a language for Haitian Creoles for 120 years in the schools in Haiti.

MS. RAVITCH: But there are not textbooks. But the language in Haiti is --

MR. GLENN: Until 1983, French was the official language in the schools. After '83 they switched to Creole as the official language.

MS. SNOW: Between 1936 and 1983 -- Creole is the language.

MS. RAVITCH: Isn't French -- of instruction in Haitian schools today?

MS. SNOW: It is. Well, actually, most kids in Haiti don't even get to go to school. But until '83 it was, indeed, the language.

MS. ROSSELL: They don't have textbooks in the Boston public schools. And that is my first clue that they are not teaching in Haitian. I go in and I say do you teach in Haitian and they always say yes. I say show me your textbooks.

MS. SNOW: Discussion method, Christine.

MS. RAVITCH: Oh, comments from the field.

MS. ROSSELL: Well, let me make one point which is the home language survey, as it is currently structured, is too broad. I would revise the home language survey so it is more refined. The next point I want to make is that it doesn't matter if you are wrong in identifying a kid as language minority, if all you are doing is giving the school district extra money to help these kids. And if they are being taught in English. The point I also make about bilingual education is it is very risky. Because, you know, if these kids are improperly identified, they are being taught in a language they don't understand. If they are improperly identified in a -- for an all English program, it is not the end of the world. So they are in a regular classroom. They get pulled out for ESL content instruction for 50 minutes a day because they are improperly identified as language minority. The difference in the education they would otherwise get is pretty small. So that is the second problem with bilingual education is it is risky given how difficult it is to properly identify kids needing it.

MS. SNOW: Why is it so dangerous for English-speaking kids to be taught in a language they don't understand if it is not risky for Spanish speaking kids to be taught in a language they don't understand?

MS. ROSSELL: Here is the problem. You have got this kid who is a low scorer. That is how they got identified. They are in a program in which they are being taught in their language because of a theory that is -- in their so-called native language because a theory that says that they must learn to read and write in that language first. The language they know best. It is dependent on the notion that this is the language they know best. It facilitates cognitive development. And then they transition. But if this is not the language that they know best, then the facilitation theory is --

MS. SNOW: So let's just put all the immigrant kids in classrooms where we know they are learning how to read in a language they don't know best. It does not quite solve the problem. It simply transfers the problem from the native English speakers to the native speakers of other languages.

MR. GLENN: It is interesting that -- I mean -- I'm glad Diane mentioned the political dimension. Last -- it is interesting that a number of our colleagues have left us before getting to the discussion of bilingual education. Because I think bilingual education is the policy issue nobody wants to touch. It is, in effect, a giveaway to -- to satisfy the advocacy block. And, frankly, the mainstream teachers don't particularly want to have language minority kids back in their classrooms. They don't feel competent to teach them. Administrators are quite happily --

principals are quite happy to have the bilingual director worrying about these kids. Not having to deal with those language minority parents. And so you get very few folks who are actually willing to challenge the present Jim Crow segregated system. Last spring, there was a conference held here in Washington in the Russell Building, Senate Office Building, to discuss right before the 227 vote in California, to discuss the issues around language policy in the schools. Christine and I both spoke. I think it is fair to say that nobody came, except the speakers. It was one of these events where you take turns being a speaker and being in the audience. Senate aides were busily, self-importantly, going by the hallway all the time. I would go out there and try to pull them in. None of them wanted to come hear about this very crucial issue, which obviously impassioned hundreds of thousands of voters in California, yet did not appear to be anything that in the policy elites, people were willing to address. And I think that creates a very serious problem for us.

MS. RAVITCH: Let me say that this section -- this session is last because I considered that it would be so controversial that it would hold everyone until the end. Sonny?

MS. LADD: I'm just unclear how much, say, parents have in these programs. If my child were put -- identified as LEP, could I protest that in some way?

MS. RAVITCH: In New York State it would be difficult. You would have to be a knowledgeable, sophisticated person to get your child removed from a bilingual program. You would first have to go to the bilingual coordinator at the school, have the virtues of the program explained to you. And you get the permission of the principal and go through a series of steps which many immigrant parents would be either not willing or fearful of doing.

MR. GLENN: In Massachusetts you must write a letter in your own words. You cannot be asked -- you cannot be offered a form which you can check saying I would like my child mainstreamed. You have got to write it yourself. There are various impediments.

MS. RAVITCH: George?

MR. FARKAS: My work in Texas has given me a lot of experience with bilingual programs. And a number of the things that seem most important to me don't seem to have surfaced in the discussion. So I would actually like to mention a few of those and ask Catherine, in particular, how she would respond to it. The reality -- what I have found is that the theory and the reality, as in so many of these urban districts, are completely disconnected. And since we heard the superintendent of D.C. last night talk about the reality of educating native language African-American children in D.C. and all of the overwhelming problems of doing that. What I have seen in the real world in a district like Dallas, where 50 percent of the kids are Hispanic and a lot of them are recent immigrants, is that those inner city reality problems are then doubled, compounded with the bilingual. And here is what it looks like. What it really looks like is there isn't much of a curriculum, but there is a premium on getting Spanish speakers. There are very few actual bilingual teachers. So what you tend to get are English-dominant or Spanish-dominant. The Spanish-dominant teachers are paid a premium and have a kind of market power as one district buys them from another. The Hispanic-dominant teachers often subscribe to a cultural manifesto about, quote, giving the kids their culture, which makes them aggressive. Which makes everybody in the district afraid of them. Including the principals in the schools and the superintendents who close doors and said to me, well, I know it doesn't work, but we're afraid of them. And that is actually doubled by the fact there is a Hispanic teacher association which fights with the African-American teacher association as to who the superintendent will be.

And it has alternated in Dallas between Black and Hispanic. That is what it looks like on the ground. Now we come in to teach them English. To tutor the lowest performers. And they give us all the African-American students and then the bilingual teachers say in first grade and second grade, we won't give you our students because if you teach them English, you will confuse them. I have not been told that once, I have been told that hundreds of times by bilingual teachers and principals. I have been used by principals in those schools as a kind of pressure to get the bilingual teachers to do a little more English. Or to give us some of their kids. The major outcome of all this, as near as I can see it in very simple terms, is the kids get monolingual Spanish instruction. Eighty percent monolingual Spanish instruction. Until, at some point, for quasi-arbitrary reasons, they start being put into English only classes. At that point, because they haven't had any instruction in English, they are two or three years behind in reading. Now one of the things that we are learning with the African-American and the low income students in general, is the whole trick is to remediate them early and keep them from falling behind. As near as I can see, the main effect of actual bilingual in Texas, has been to ensure the children fall behind. Now when we get them and start teaching them, their biggest problem turns out to be they don't know oral English vocabulary. And as soon as they start to get it, they move pretty fast. They move, in fact, faster than the African-American kids, who by and large come from less in tact families and have other problems that the Hispanic kids don't have as much.

A PARTICIPANT: And they know how to read.

MR. FARKAS: Right. Although -- yeah, that is true. It's true. But, and here is my question and I'll stop -- leave you with this thing. They are -- you get a kid at the beginning of fourth grade. And, in English, they are reading at, you know, 1.5 on various standardized or Woodcock Johnson tests of one kind or another. Their chance of catching up -- what is required for them to catch up is that they have to move sort of twice as fast as the middle class suburban kids on whom these tests are normed. Now I don't want to get into this norming business. I want to make clear the rate of progress these kids from parents whose average educational level is about sixth grade. So they are not getting much home input. And they are supposed to move twice as fast. Just because they know Spanish. I don't think it is possible. And their drop-out rate is well over 50 percent.

MS. SNOW: Okay, well a couple of verities here. If there is a way to screw up urban school districts will find it.

MR. FARKAS: But they have the kids. So we have to do things that will --

MS. SNOW: The problem with these kids is not that they have been taught to read in Spanish. That, if anything, is a strength. The problem is that they have not been taught oral English. How are they going to be taught oral English when they are in a classroom where the teacher is a dominant Spanish speaker? Well, they are not going to be. We need to rethink the classroom configurations. They need to spend some time with English-speaking kids. They need to spend some time with English-speaking teachers. Good bilingual programs pair English teachers and Spanish teachers. And they move the kids around between the classrooms. That is one description of a classroom configuration that ensures access to oral English. These kids would not be better off had they been in all English classrooms because then they wouldn't even be able to read in Spanish.

MS. ROSSELL: That is not what the research shows.

MS. SNOW: It is what the research shows.

MS. ROSSELL: It shows they are better off.

MS. SNOW: The research is very -- first of all, let me say that nobody has talked about bilingual programs for which kids. I would argue bilingual programs are appropriate for kindergarten or first grade kids. That kids -- immigrant kids who come in fifth grade do not need bilingual programs. That a lot of the legislation is totally uninformed by an understanding of language learning. And totally uninformed by an understanding of the different potentials to learn languages quickly of older children. So, yes, that is a waste of time and money. But for these kids, if they haven't figured out what reading is all about, they are in deep, deep trouble. And they are very much less likely. It is the other verity. No program is a total success or a total failure. Kids are resilient. There is a lot of kids who learn how to read in any program. Even in lousy ones. But the incremental risk of learning how to read in a language you do not speak is really a larger risk than we want to impose on these kids.

MS. ROSSELL: But most kids do it. And they do it.

MS. RAVITCH: Let me -- I just want to ask Catherine, should a bilingual program be a two language program or should it be a mono-language program? I mean, I think that is the thing that I stumble over, is so many bilingual programs are not bilingual, they are monolingual.

MS. SNOW: right. I know. A bilingual program should be a program in which -- I would even argue that a very good bilingual program could be a program in which the only thing that goes on in the native language is teaching children how to read. And give -- and supporting reading development in the native language. That would, to me, be an adequate bilingual program with lots of other activities going on in English. If the goal is not bilingualism. If the goal is high levels of English performance, that would be fine. The real danger is the bilingual program that is either all native language or that is all English.

MR. GLENN: But that is almost the only thing out there.

MS. SNOW: Well, then we need to do a better job of it.

MR. GLENN: But meanwhile we are losing hundreds of thousands of kids.

MS. SNOW: We need to do a better job of it.

MS. RAVITCH: Bill Richeiser?

MR. RICHEISER: As a native of a much maligned California, I just wanted to point out a couple of things. And mainly involve the fact that bilingual may be one of the programs -- sorry. Bilingual may be one of the programs in which the students are seen not as clients, but as a cash rich raw material. And so addressing the question of identifying those kids, the kids who are LEP or whatever the term du jour is, would it not make sense to separate the identification process from the delivery process, so that the identifiers don't have any self-interest in over-identifying LEP kids?

MS. ROSSELL: I don't know how you do that.

MR. RICHEISER: Well, you could have separate staffs.

MS. ROSSELL: Separate what?

MR. RICHEISER: A separate staff which would -- or separate experts who would merely do the identifying.

MS. ROSSELL: This is like judges and court cases. It didn't live in the real world, who didn't know that this means more money for a school district if they are also classified as LEP. The problem is they don't do it for an individual child. They do it across the board. They set these standards. They don't care that it is classifying kids who, in fact, are fluent in English. Nor do they care that these kids don't get out. The thing I find odd is that they -- what they don't seem to worry about, and that is why I say that school districts are sometimes their own worst enemies, it is the reclassification rates which are meaningless. You know, Ron Uns puts up this -- he says the 95 percent failure rate for bilingual education. You are going to have similar statistics under Prop 227. Because the exit criterion hasn't changed. You know, for -- it is decided by the school districts. And it varies from the 50th percentile to, you know, down to the 36th percentile, which is the minimum.

MR. RICHEISER: The only thing I disagree with you on is that I think that in some cases they do, in fact, care if some kids are misidentified. And they do care because there is more revenue coming in. The more kids you misidentify.

MS. ROSSELL: We're in agreement on that. That is why there is no -- there is no incentive to clarify this. Because it is a cap -- a source of revenue. But where I have to disagree is people think that this is the case of bilingual education and that is false. Bilingual education -- the funding goes for identifying a kid as LEP. Not for putting them in a bilingual program. Some school districts pay a premium for bilingual teachers, but most do not because the teachers unions fight it tooth and nail. So the incentive is just for LEP identification. The school districts could put them in all English, in fact, most do. I mean it is why, in California, only 30 percent are in bilingual, because there is no incentive to put them in bilingual. There is simply the pedagogical and the ideological.

MR. GLENN: The answer is to provide bilingual services, but not segregate the kids into separate bilingual programs. And I think you can provide bilingual services at the school level in a way that is responsible. And that answers Catherine's concerns.

MS. SNOW: But let's point out that a very large proportion of these kids are actually segregated already. I mean it is not Jim Crow laws that is putting all the Spanish speaking kids into some schools and into some school districts. It is residence patterns.

MS. ROSSELL: Oh, and I had a discussion with the Santa Barbara school district last year when they were fighting the state mandate to teach bilingually. They were asking for a waiver. This was the period before Prop 227. You could get a waiver from the state. And I said, well, what about mixing these kids with non-Hispanic, English only. And they said what, what. You know, I mean they don't exist.

MR. GLENN: But there are Hispanic kids who are fluent in English, with whom they ought to be integrated in those schools. In other words, to segregate kids -- to put them in a separate full-time program solely on the basis of their not being proficient in English, is the worst possible

way to organize instruction for those kids. At the very least, even at 100 percent Hispanic school, you are going to have third generation kids who are fluent in English. And they would be working class levels of English. But at least they are fluent users of the English language. And so it makes much more sense not to segregate them simply on the basis of their language ability.

MS. RAVITCH: Sally Kilgore?

MS. KILGORE: Actually, you have set up my question and may not need to answer, but before this, Charlie, you were the only one that --

MS. RAVITCH: Can you speak into the microphone?

MS. KILGORE: Ah, yes. Charlie, you were the only one that had referenced the role of peers in language acquisition, and I would just like the other two to comment on that because certainly, you know, the common folk wisdom of how children learn a new language was in playing with other children. So what is the evidence? Because you have used -- really used teachers as the primary instrument of language acquisition. What is the evidence on peers as instruments of language acquisition?

MS. ROSSELL: I don't know of any evidence. I mean, let's face it. There just isn't enough research. You have to go by common sense.

MR. GLENN: Billy Wong Filmore to have it specifically.

MS. ROSSELL: In what way? When? What study?

MS. SNOW: I can't give the page numbers of Willie's studies, but I --

MR. GLENN: It is in the Encyclopedia of Research on Teaching.

MS. SNOW: I wouldn't even make the distinction between peers and adults. I would make -- I think the key element here is how much. You need -- you need a certain amount of exposure to a language to learn the language. And one of the failures of bilingual programs is they have not provided sufficient quantity of exposure. Another reason why it is a mistake to produce edicts about the nature of the programs is that the programs operate in different local contexts, so the amount of access to English that a child living in National City, California is going to get outside of school is quite different from the amount of access to English that a child in Chicago will get outside of school. And that is going to have an impact.

MS. KILGORE: Well, I don't -- but I think it is very essential that we know this. I will use my anecdotal San Antonio decided the only way to efficiently do bilingual was to consolidate all the kids that needed LEP into two schools. So they brought all the teachers and all the kids. This is, to me, outrageous because the other context in which children learn.

MS. SNOW: Right, but it -- but that is in the San Antonio context that that is an outrageous thing to do. In, you know, in Des Moines, that would not be such an outrageous thing to do because there is so much more access to English outside the school setting.

MS. ROSSELL: I would like to say also that one of the points that I often say is both an advantage and a disadvantage for the Spanish speakers is Spanish is one language. Chinese, for example, is not one spoken language. So I go into these Chinese bilingual classes, where there are a dozen dialects, the teacher speaks only one. So not only does she speak only in English because she couldn't communicate with most of the kids, but in addition, and here is the critical point, they are forced to speak English to each other. Now on the one hand, I'm sure that means that it is -- there is more anxiety in those early years than in the Spanish bilingual program. On the other hand, they are forced to learn English. And this is true of the entire Asian community. You go into these ethnically segregated schools in San Francisco that are like 90 percent Asian, and -- but there is 60 different Asian language groups. So they are forced to learn English.

MS. RAVITCH: Well, I think that this is probably an appropriate note on which to close because it occurred to me just listening to this discussion that the -- maybe Senator Yarborough was right. And the only group for which we are capable of providing bilingual education, as it is usually defined, are Hispanic children because, in a city like New York, there are over 100 different language groups. And it is impossible to provide adequate bilingual instruction for them all. But I think, you know, the research -- clearly we need better research and more research. And it sort of ties back into what Maris was saying about -- about the inadequacy of the research base we have.

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