

Our Federal system, our laboratories of democracy, are great at inventing new ideas and testing them out. At least in the area of education, we're not so good at spreading the best of those ideas around in a comprehensive and timely fashion. It took over 100 years for laws mandating compulsory, free elementary education to spread from few States to the whole Nation. That pace of change might have been all right in the 19th century; it won't do for the 21st. We don't have the luxury of waiting and continuing to subsidize failure.

Now, let me just give one example of that, and then I'll turn it over to your chairman. In 1986, the NGA issued a report called "Time For Results," with task forces chaired by Lamar Alexander, Tom Keane, Dick Riley, and me, urging the Governors to intervene in low-performing schools and school districts and to take over or close down academically bankrupt schools—1986. In 1987, nine States had the authority to do that. In 1990, the NGA issued a report, "Educating America: State Strategies for Achieving National Education Goals." In 1988, 18 States offered assistance or intervention in low-performance schools. In 1998, NGA policy supported State focus on schools and reiterated the 1988 policy that States should have the responsibility for enforcing accountability,

including establishing clear penalties in cases of sustained failures to improve student performance. In 1999, 19 States have procedures for intervening in failing schools, 16 for replacing school staff or closing down the school.

This is tough politics. I don't know that I could have passed this through my legislature. I do know that if we have the reauthorization of the Federal law this year and we're sending this out, and all we do is to say we ought to do what the NGA said we should do 13 years ago, that will accelerate the pace of reform in education, and I think it's a worthy thing.

I hope we can pass it. I want to work with you. And it is not inconsistent with our shared commitment to better flexibility in education.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Governors Jeb Bush of Florida, James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina, Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, Gray Davis of California, John Engler of Michigan, and NGA Chairman Thomas R. Carper of Delaware; Jacalyn Leavitt, wife of NGA Vice Chairman Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah; and Sharon Kitzhaber, wife of Gov. John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon.

Statement on Industry and Education Leaders' Recommendations on Technology in the Classroom

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I am delighted that the CEO Forum on Education and Technology, a group of leaders from industry and education, has developed a strong set of recommendations to ensure that teachers can effectively use technology in the classroom. If technology is to realize its potential as a powerful new tool to help students achieve high academic standards, teachers must be as comfortable with a computer as they are with a chalkboard.

That is why my \$800 million budget for educational technology includes over \$100 million to give both new and current teachers the training they need to integrate technology into the curriculum. I look forward to working with the CEO forum and other leaders in industry and education to give every child and teacher in America access to these high-tech tools for learning.