

The President's proposed budget cuts the heart out of agricultural conservation programs, like the Wetland Reserve Program which is eliminated—cut from \$162 million in fiscal year 2001 to \$0 in fiscal year 2002. This program was first authorized in 1990, during the first Bush administration, to provide long term protection for wetlands.

The President has collected an incredible assortment of cuts in environmental protection—all sources for the tax cut that fails to take into account the priorities of the American people, like conservation and environmental protection. Before deciding on what the “right size” of the tax cut should be, the President should consider the impacts of these cuts. California provides some valuable examples of the conservation benefits we will lose if the President's budget cuts are implemented.

The Wetland Reserve Program in California has helped restore a portion of the 4.5 million acres of wetlands lost to agricultural conversion and development in our State. In addition to providing habitat for migratory birds, other wetlands restoration benefits include improvement of water quality, flood control, sediment abatement and recharge of groundwater. California is the primary path of the “Pacific Flyway”—approximately 20 percent of all waterfowl pass through California's Central Valley. At the present time, the federal Wetland's Reserve Program, zeroed out in the President's budget, is the largest wetland protection program in California.

More than 60,000 acres to date have been protected in this program in California. There are more than 100 applicants on a waiting list to protect and restore their agricultural lands. One of the strongest parts of the program are the partnerships with not-for-profit organizations like California Waterfowl and the Nature Conservancy, as well as the private landowners themselves.

I have a photograph of one of the successful restorations accomplished by a conservation easement under the Wetland Reserve Program. The site is in Colusa County, CA and was enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program in 1992. It is approximately 195 acres of seasonal wetlands that provides both winter and brood habitat for migrating and nesting waterfowl, shorebirds, migratory songbirds, and other wildlife. This easement is part of a 1,000-acre complex of wetlands and upland nesting habitat adjacent to the Sacramento River and lies in the middle of the largest migratory waterfowl corridor in North America. It is owned by the Audubon Society and acts as a sanctuary for wildlife.

Given the value and community support for agriculture conservation programs, I simply cannot see how the President can justify eliminating these kinds of programs to increase his tax cut.

Mr. President, let me sum up. We have a tax cut that was pledged as a

campaign promise 2 years ago because Steve Forbes was in a debate with George Bush and said: I am for this \$1.4 trillion tax cut. Times have changed. The economy has turned around since George Bush has become President. We have problems. People are not optimistic about the future of this country.

What does that mean? It means that a sensible person—this is my view—would sit back and say: I want to do this, and it is on my agenda, but maybe I can't do it all at once. Maybe I will cut it in half. Maybe I am going to invest in the people, invest in children, so that we have an afterschool program for every child, so that we have safe drinking water for every child, so that we know people are not going to get sick from air pollution.

We talk about our kids. Every one of us cares about kids. That is one of the reasons we are Senators. Do you know the leading cause of admissions in hospitals for children is asthma? They miss school. So you have to connect the dots. If you take out massive sums of money that you are going to transfer to the top 1 percent of income earners, forgetting 99 percent—everyone else—really, you have given 43 percent of the tax cut to the people in the highest income, and then you say you do not have any money to enforce the Clean Air Act or the Clean Water Act. You roll back the laws on arsenic. You take away the money to clean up nuclear contamination, while you are calling for more nuclear plants. You bring out an education bill that is so short of money that it is an empty promise and an unfunded mandate for our States. It is an unfunded mandate because we are forcing them to test, and yet we do not have enough to help those children.

Connect the dots. If you build a budget around an unrealistic, dangerous tax cut, it is going to take us back to deficits. You are not going to be able to pay down the debt. You are not going to be able to do the basics for our children. You are not going to be able to clean up the environment. And you have a problem. It is no wonder this economy is a little at sea, because this budget does not add up and it does not make sense.

Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to spend a few moments this afternoon to bring our colleagues up to date on where we are on the Elementary and Secondary Education legislation. Over these past 2 weeks we have had an ongoing exchange of ideas and views with the administration and our colleagues. We have been trying to continue to find common ground and to make important progress.

We are very much aware that this is an issue that is not only a high priority

for the President of the United States, but also that it is a high priority for every family in this country, and certainly among the highest priorities for those of us on this side of the aisle.

We welcome the fact that we have a President who has placed education at the top of his agenda. Eight years ago when the Democrats lost control of the Senate, one of the first actions the Republicans took was to rescind some of the funding of elementary and secondary education. We also fought against attempts by our Republican friends to abolish the Department of Education. But that was then and this is now. We welcome the opportunity to find common ground so we can move ahead and make a difference for the children in this country and for the families across the Nation.

As we start off our debate on this issue, we have to understand the importance of preparing a child to learn, even prior to the time they enroll in elementary school. This is an area of very considerable interest on both sides of the aisle.

Our colleague from Connecticut, Senator DODD, has been a leader on these children's issues. Senator JEFFORDS has made this a special area of concern. And Senator STEVENS has been very involved in early intervention for children. It is enormously important to continue to ensure a national commitment to have the nation's children ready to learn, as we did and as the Governors did in Charlottesville some years ago.

I am hopeful we will be able to do that in a bipartisan way in Congress with solid legislation. We still have a ways to go, but we have made progress. We also have to understand the very serious and significant gap that still exists with regard to preparing children for grades K through 12th.

We are still falling behind. We fund Early Start programs at approximately 10 percent for the earliest types of intervention. And for programs from birth to 3 years of age, we are down to either 2 or 3 percent. This is an area of enormous importance. We are trying to help many children across the nation with this program. Hopefully, it will make a difference.

Unfortunately there are going to be many children who will still fall through the cracks unless we come back to revisit public policy and resources for early intervention programs.

It is all part of a mosaic. We must give our full attention to these efforts which are extremely important in preparing children for elementary school.

I was disappointed that the administration zeroed out a very modest down-payment in the Early Child Development Program that had bipartisan support in the 106th Congress from Senator STEVENS, Senator JEFFORDS, Senator DODD, Senator KERRY, many others on the Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee, and myself.

We have reached some very important agreements on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, however, differences over funding remain. We are in the process of negotiating language for the legislation, and I expect that the earliest we could have this legislation is late Wednesday or Thursday.

Money is not the answer to everything, but it is a pretty good indication of the Nation's priorities.

Under the President's bill, there is a reduction in resources of \$69 billion for the Nation. However, we will only see an extremely modest, somewhat less than \$3 billion, increase in the funding for programs which are targeted on the neediest children in this country. It is that kind of disparity which is of considerable trouble to many of us.

We agree that every child should be tested each year in grades three through eight—not as a punishment, but so parents and educators know where every child stands and what more needs to be done to help them improve and achieve their full potential.

We agree to create tough standards for schools and hold them accountable for improving student achievement.

We agree that where schools fail, bold steps are necessary to turn them around, including requiring alternative governance arrangements.

We agree parents deserve more public school options to ensure their children get a quality education.

We agree that literacy programs should be expanded so every child learns to read well in the early years.

We share these priorities with President Bush and believe these reforms will make a difference in our communities.

We are still working on how to increase the flexibility while maintaining targeting and accountability. It is important that any additional flexibility is tied to strong accountability, and strong targeting to the neediest communities. We want to ensure that States and school districts do not ignore the children who need our help the most.

We are also working hard to increase accountability and support for teachers. States and districts should be held accountable for putting qualified teachers in every classroom, particularly in the neediest schools. They should also have to provide professional development and mentoring support for teachers so that teachers can make these new tough reforms work.

We are also working to ensure that after-school programs are expanded so that more children have the opportunity to catch up with their school-work if they have fallen behind.

We are working to ensure parent involvement and that parent involvement is a cornerstone for all the new reforms.

We are working to ensure schools and districts and States are held accountable to the public through mandatory report cards that include important in-

formation about how well their schools are doing.

We are working to ensure that the Class Size Reduction Program is continued so children can get the individual attention they need to succeed.

We are working to continue the School Renovation Program so communities can ensure children are learning in safe, modern school buildings.

We hope we can address all these issues and come to a bipartisan consensus on them.

We must also know that reforms minus resources equals failure. You cannot say education is your top priority and not put enough resources in the budget to do the job.

We are disappointed in the President's budget. According to OMB, President Bush's budget contains only a \$669 million increase next year for elementary and secondary education programs. That is an increase of one-fifth of one percent of what we are spending on our public schools today at the national, State, and local levels; we are spending \$350 billion a year.

Testing and accountability are important, but they are only the measures of reform, they are not reform themselves.

Investment without accountability is a waste of money, but accountability without investment is a waste of time.

We need the resources to make sure that slick, easy, and quick tests that have mostly multiple choice questions and which cost \$3 or \$4 will not be developed. We want to make sure we have a quality teacher teaching a quality curriculum to a quality test. That takes investment.

It is not just the money, it is the resources to do the job: well-qualified teachers, thoughtful tests, good curriculum, the examination of the tests and reporting back in a timely way.

At the current time, we are meeting only about 20 to 22 percent of the supplementary services that are necessary for children. If we are not going to have a significant increase in resources, we are not going to be able to provide the good quality supplementary services for those children who need them.

We know with a very modest increase—about \$1 billion—we could provide 1.6 million children with quality supplemental after-school academic opportunities. Even if you take what was paid last year and adding about \$850 million this year, we are still only reaching about a third of all latchkey children, ages 8 to 13, who go home alone in the afternoon.

Resources are important because they are translated into substantive issues that make a difference in advancing the quality of education for children.

This chart compares the investments in ESEA programs for fiscal year 2001 to the Administration's 2002 proposal. In 2001, funding for ESEA programs increased by \$3.6 billion or a 24.2 percent. This Administration has requested an

increase of \$669 million, which is only a 3.5 percent increase.

Even with their willingness to go higher, it does not come close to the increases in 2001. This recognizes that we are only reaching one-third of all of the children who are disadvantaged or eligible under the Title I program.

Look at the appropriations for the Department of Education. In 2001 there was an 18.2 percent increase, \$6.5 billion. The Bush budget for all the education, is increased by 5.9 percent or \$2.5 billion.

The Department of Education over the period of the last 5 years shows a 12.8-percent increase in resources. However the proposed budget starts with a 5.9-percent increase in the Department of Education.

This is a time with record surpluses, when we are going to give back \$69 billion in tax reductions. There is a great deal of talk about investing in education, but we are still not putting in the resources.

This chart is the State of Texas education equation. It shows that from 1994 to 2002, school funding went from \$16.9 billion to \$27.5 billion, a 57-percent increase under Governor Bush. Interestingly, we see an alarming increase in student achievement, from 56-percent of the students performing at a proficient level on the State test in 1994 to 80-percent of students performing at a proficient level in 2000—showing you cannot educate on the cheap.

The next chart shows the difference between the proposal the Democrats support and the Bush budget. We know there are 10,000 failing schools that need to be turned around. The best estimate is that it costs \$180,000 to turn around a school. There are 57 different, accepted, scientifically evaluated ways in which schools can be restructured and organized that have been found to have been successful. Taking 10,000 schools and \$180,000—that is, \$1.8 billion—to turn around the schools that we know are in need. With the other proposal, effectively, we are leaving 7,556 schools behind.

We know what needs to be done. We know we have failing schools, and we have ways of turning them around. We know we have unqualified teachers, and we know what needs to be done to make them qualified. We know we have an inadequate curriculum, and we know what needs to be done to strengthen curriculum. We understand what will benefit the children and the teachers and we know how to strengthen their needs with supplementary services.

If we don't have the supplementary services, trained teachers, effective tests, modern and safe schools, and smaller class sizes, then we are failing ourselves. We fail ourselves when we fail to provide the resources to ensure the nation's children with a sound education.

Finally, I hope during this debate we have some discussion about the issue of IDEA. Full funding for IDEA will help

immeasurably in allowing special needs children to get additional resources.

I hope we can move ahead with ESEA and get the commitment of essential resources to meet these important needs. In doing the job, we need to give children across the nation the best opportunities which we all understand they deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I ask unanimous consent that Senator CLINTON speak next for 15 minutes and I be allowed to speak after for 10 minutes, and the Republicans then be allowed to have the time they need to respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished colleague from Minnesota. I associate myself with the remarks of the education Senator from Massachusetts who so eloquently laid out our dilemma, the dilemma that will be occupying the Senate as we move forward on this very important debate.

People always talk about important debates, but it is fair to say as we debate, we will set educational policy for our Nation for the next 7 years. There is hardly a subject we can think of that will have more direct impact on our families, on our communities, on our economy, and especially on our children. We are setting the stage for determining how much we as a nation will do to make good on the promise of a quality education for all children, and particularly for our country's neediest children.

I first became involved in education reform back in 1983 with the issuance of the report called "A Nation at Risk," which was issued under President Reagan's watch. Many took that call to action very much to heart that we were a nation at risk. We began looking for ways to improve education, to provide more resources to provide more accountability measures. We have made progress over those last years.

When the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was last reauthorized in 1994, we sent a strong signal that although education was absolutely a matter of local concern, it had to be a national priority; that we all had to recognize we were failing our children by not providing adequate educational resources and by not expecting them to do the very best they could do. We put a high priority on academic standards, and we worked to help teachers and administrators, parents, and communities improve education.

The results of this strong Federal response to local and State educational demands has been heartening. Mr. President, 49 States plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have developed State standards and are working

to implement them. These reforms are producing results.

We often only focus on the negative side of the ledger about how much we still have to do. I give some credit to the children and the young people, our students, and their parents, and especially their teachers, because we have seen progress. Reading and math scores for fourth graders in our highest poverty school districts have improved by nearly a grade level from 1994 to today. SAT scores are on the rise. More students than ever are attending college.

We cannot rest there. We know there is still far more to be done. We have too many children, particularly in our underserved urban and rural districts, who are not reading at grade level. We have too many children being taught by uncertified teachers, in overcrowded classrooms, in crumbling school buildings. We cannot stand by idly while these conditions persist. The issue is, what is the best way to address them? How better can we equip parents, teachers, communities, and our students to meet the tests of the 21st century?

I applaud President Bush for calling for greater accountability. I agree with him on the importance of that. I was among the very first in our Nation, in Arkansas in the early 1980s, to call for the testing of students and the testing of teachers because I believed then we had to know what we didn't know in order to make progress. We couldn't just pretend that everything was fine and engage in social promotion and not face up to the fact that we had children graduating from high school who couldn't read a job application. We had teachers who had been themselves passed through the education system who were unprepared to teach the substance of what it was they were assigned to teach.

Accountability is key, to me. I have been a strong supporter of that. In fact, I welcome the Republicans and I welcome the Bush administration which has gone forward with accountability measures that are like the measures Democrats have proposed for several years. Many on the other side of the aisle resisted such approaches for many years. In fact, they wanted to abolish the Department of Education. So I applaud my colleagues on the Republican side for the progress they have made in moving toward a common recognition that this is a national priority that must be beyond politics and partisanship.

The accountability that is in the bill that is proposed would ask that we test our children every year from third to eighth grade. That is designed to ensure that they are meeting high standards. But here is where the rubber really hits the road. If all we do is order more tests, if we do not combine those tests with the resources that are needed to help the children who have been left behind, then we will have, at best, a hollow victory and I believe, worse than that, we will have committed edu-

cational fraud on our children, our teachers, and our country.

The Bush plan orders more testing while providing only half the funds needed to design and implement these tests. What would this mean to the State of New York, for example? It would mean that of the \$16 million that is estimated to have to be spent to comply with these new Federal requirements, our State would only get \$8 million. So we would have to find 8 million more dollars, take it out of something else—from hard-pressed school districts, from teacher pay, from whatever other important objective we are already trying to meet. We should not be passing on an unfunded mandate to our States.

If it is a national priority, if it is a priority for this administration to order these tests, then the Federal Government ought to pay for these tests and make sure that, as the Senator from Massachusetts pointed out, they are good tests; they are quality tests; they are not just make-work kinds of tests.

Passing tough new accountability standards without the resources to help our schools and students is similar to handing out thermometers in the midst of an epidemic. The thermometers certainly can tell us that there are a lot of sick people, but they do absolutely nothing to help people get better. Unfortunately, the administration's proposal has plenty of thermometers but precious little medicine to help our schools improve. The administration has not even yet committed to providing the Federal funds necessary to marry accountability with student achievement.

We already know that despite the rhetoric, this is not an increase of more than 11 percent; it is only 5.9 percent because the administration tried to count money that had been appropriated last year. We are glad to have that money, but let's have honest accounting about how much more money is going in. A 5.9-percent increase barely keeps up with inflation and population increases.

What also does it mean on the school level? Let's focus and ask ourselves: If we pass this accountability measure, and everybody goes home, pats themselves on the back, there is a big press conference, and a big signing ceremony, what have we really done to help the districts such as the ones I worry about in the State of New York?

In New York City, for example, we are facing a severe teacher shortage. The city will need to hire approximately 40,000—that is right, 40,000—teachers over the next 4 years. In addition, the district is under a court order to place those certified teachers it hires in the lowest performing schools. That makes sense because right now we have uncertified teachers, ill equipped to teach, teaching the children who need the best teachers. So the idea, which is a good idea, is let's put the certified teachers in the schools

where the children need them the most.

But what has happened? Last week we learned from the chancellor of the New York City schools that the certified teachers turned down the jobs in the hard-to-teach schools. Why? Because those are the schools that are already overcrowded; those are the schools that are crumbling; those are the schools that hardly have a book in the library; those are the schools without the computers connected by the cables they need to be able to be functional, let alone to be accessible to the Internet.

We cannot in good conscience demand that school districts hire certified teachers without providing the resources to help these hard-pressed districts recruit and retain these teachers. And we have to do more to make these schools attractive to certified teachers.

Answer me, why you would go into a very difficult school to teach children who are under lots of stress at home and in their neighborhoods if the school is not well equipped to give you the resources you need to try to do a good job with those children?

I will be working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to introduce a bipartisan teacher recruitment amendment. We all know if we do not place the recruitment of our teachers at the top of our national agenda we will have school districts that are barely able to open their doors in the next couple of years. We will be asking people literally to come off the streets and start teaching because we will not have the teachers we need. I meet people all the time who want to be teachers, but they will not, they cannot, and they should not work under the conditions under which many of our teachers are asked to function.

I am also concerned about the proposal the President includes called Straight A's. This is a demonstration project that would give 7 States and 25 school districts the chance to block grant Federal dollars. People are often talking about how important it is to give authority back to the States, and I agree with that in most instances. But we know from years of education research that block granting funds—which means taking the Federal dollars and sending them to the State capitol—means that those dollars do not get to the students and the schools that need them the most in the amount that they should. They get siphoned off in the bureaucracy of the State capitol. They get sent to other places that do not need them but, for political purposes, have the influence to get them. We should be targeting those hard-earned Federal dollars to those school districts and those students who are so far behind.

Right now in New York we know, because of a court decision, that the children in New York City do not get their fair share of education funding. So we should do everything possible to get

the dollars to the students who need them the most in the schools where the teachers have a chance to try to help them.

We also know from research that smaller class sizes make a huge difference, and the Class Size Reduction Initiative has worked wonders. We now have teachers in New York who are federally funded who are helping to lower class size. We have already seen positive results from the school achievement scores.

We also know that construction funding to help schools repair their buildings and modernize them and even construct the buildings they need is very necessary. These two important programs, class size reduction and school construction, are eliminated for all purposes in the Bush administration proposal. I say this is a mistake, and I ask the administration, with all respect, to please reconsider this decision.

The administration says that reducing class size with Federal dollars and helping to construct and repair schools are not Federal responsibilities. I know they are not totally Federal responsibilities, but I do not think in today's world they are also solely local responsibilities. The districts that need the help the most are not the districts like the one I live in where, with very high property taxes from affluent people, the children have everything they could possibly dream of. But in so many districts, suburban taxpayers cannot pay another penny to fix their schools and do what is necessary to have up-to-date labs. In many rural districts they do not have the tax base to do that, and in many urban districts they don't have the dollars because they don't get their fair allocation from the State, and they cannot tax themselves to be able to meet the needs of children for whom English is not their first language, who come to school with undiagnosed mental illnesses, who live in a system of deprivation and violence and who cannot perform at the same level as the children in my district.

Let's have a shared responsibility. That was the whole idea behind the Class Size Reduction Initiative and School Construction Initiative. If education is to be a national priority, let's invest in what we know works—and we know reducing class size and providing good facilities actually works—to make for better education.

I hope we will continue in the spirit that we began in the education committee as we marked up this bill, in the negotiations that are currently ongoing with the administration. But I am very concerned that this particular proposal falls way short of what we need to be doing. It falls short for a very simple reason. The administration would rather invest in a large, fiscally irresponsible tax cut than in the education of our children and particularly those who are most needy in rural and urban districts.

I hope this will be reconsidered because this failure to properly fund education, to me, is disappointing at a time when we have surpluses, when we do not have to squander these surpluses on large tax cuts that will go disproportionately to the already wealthy whose children already attend schools that have all the computers, all the bells and whistles, all the extra help they could possibly have.

Let's, instead, take a moment and step back. I hear a lot about the greatest generation. My parents were part of the greatest generation, the World War II generation. I think they probably have to take a second seat to the greatest generation being the Founders of our Country. But there is no argument that those who survived the Depression, won World War II, and set the stage for winning the cold war, were among the greatest if they were not the greatest generation our country has ever seen.

We have been living off the investments and sacrifices of our parents and our grandparents for more than 50 years. My father, who is a rock-ribbed Republican, voted for higher school taxes because he knew the education of his children depended upon good schools. We invested in the Interstate Highway System. We set a goal to send a man to the Moon. We had big dreams, and we worked to fulfill those dreams.

Today, at the beginning of this new century, it is up to us to make the decisions, the hard decisions to invest in our children's education. And shame on us if we do not make the right decisions. We can pass a bill that is filled with testing and sounds good but 10 years from now we will still have children in overcrowded classrooms and crumbling buildings who are being deprived of certified, qualified teachers, and we will wonder what went wrong.

Let's instead be sensible about the best practices that we know work. We have research. We have practical experience. We know what needs to be done. The issue is, do we have the political will to make those decisions?

I support working hand in hand with the administration in a bipartisan way, with the parents and teachers and community leaders of our country, to make education a real national priority. But I cannot—I could not—support a bill that is a hollow, empty promise.

Let's do both. Let's increase accountability so we get better results by making sure we have the resources to hold our children and our teachers accountable. If we do that, then we will be setting the stage to leave no child behind. If we do any less, then I think we have missed a historic opportunity.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, could I ask the Senator one or two quick questions?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I have been very moved by what she said. On the question of accountability and then the whole issue of unfunded mandates, one

argument I heard the Senator make was we have to provide the funding for the actual tests to make sure these are high quality, which means we should not confuse accountability, testing, and standardized tests as being one and the same thing; is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, it is.

Mr. WELLSTONE. The second point I want to make and I want to be sure we are clear about is that it would also be an unfunded mandate, even if you provided the funding for the administration of the testing, without the investment in our children and our schools to make sure each and every child had the same chance to achieve and do well in these tests. Then I tried to remember what you described it as. You said it was hollow, and you said it would be an educational fraud. That is fairly strong language. I will put the Senator on the spot, but could I ask her why she feels so strongly about this point?

Mrs. CLINTON. Certainly. My feelings go back many years. As the Senator knows, children have been my passion for more than 30 years. I have worked on improving and reforming education for nearly 20 years. I know how difficult it is, today, to try to help many of our children achieve educational competence.

The reason for that is that we are not living in the same world in which the Senator and I grew up. It is harder to teach our children. Our children come to school with more problems and more stress. They are exposed to many more things than we ever faced.

We have to understand that if we don't really provide the resources to reach the children as they are today, not as we wish they would be, not as we thought they were back when I was sitting there with my hands folded and listening to every word, but as they are today with all the other pressures that are on families and children, then we are not going to have the results and the kind of achievement to which the Senator from Minnesota is referring.

But there is no reason we have to make this choice. It is not an either/or choice. We have the resources to assist our local districts so they do not have to reach any deeper. Many of the districts from my State can't afford to raise their property taxes any more.

I was on Long Island last night talking to a group of about 1,000 people. I explained to them, if we have this large Federal income tax cut, and then we have these unfunded mandates for education, where is the rubber going to hit the road? It is going to hit the road in the local property tax levies.

I would rather be, I am sure, part of an administration that gets to take credit for cutting income taxes than the poor souls down at the local level having to vote to raise property taxes in order to meet the mandates they have put on them. I think we should not be raising false hopes. We should be looking at how we help every child be successful.

Mr. WELLSTONE. When I go back to Minnesota, I try to be in the schools

every 2 weeks. For the last 10½ years there has been concern about the testing, especially standardized tests; people have to kind of teach within a straightjacket. But what about the issue? I ask the Senator from New York because this is also, I think, part of her passion and part of her work. I hear a lot about two other things: The IDEA program, which isn't within ESEA, but it seems to me that we have to be very clear with some kind of trigger amount so that testing doesn't take its place unless we fully fund IDEA, because that is really a threat and a strain that a lot of districts feel. The other one is prekindergarten.

With all due respect, I want to get the Senator's opinion. If we start testing kids at age 8, I might argue at age 12 or 13, "Schools, what have you done?" But at age 8, I would argue that much more of what will explain how that child is doing is what happened to the child before kindergarten. Where is the administration, if the administration is going to talk about leaving no child behind? Where is the community in early childhood development to make sure that these children are kindergarten ready? Shouldn't that all fit within what is defined as reform?

Mrs. CLINTON. I think my colleague is absolutely right, because if we are looking at the comprehensive reform, we cannot leave out the funding of IDEA. We can't leave out doing something to help parents understand their obligations to be a child's first teacher and provide quality preschool.

I hear so much about the IDEA program, otherwise known as the special education program. I hear it mostly in suburban districts, interestingly enough, because suburban districts have activist parents and they know the law. The law is that we have to provide an education for every child. And I support that law. It was the first project I ever did for the Children's Defense Fund. I went door to door in communities back in—I hate to say—1973 to find out where the children were because they weren't in school. We found a lot of children with disabilities who were being kept out of school.

I am a 100-percent supporter of mainstreaming our children and giving every child a chance. But we are bankrupting a lot of our suburban school districts. We are saying you have to provide special treatment and education for children who need it and deserve it. If that means you have to shut down the band program or only have one physics session or do away with art, that is the tough choice to make.

The Federal Government said in the 1970s that you have to provide this education. Furthermore, it is not only, as our colleague TOM HARKIN likes to say, a Federal mandate, but it is a constitutional mandate to provide this quality education. The Federal Government is going to tell districts they have to provide special education. Where is the full funding so suburban districts and all other districts can try to keep up with their expenses?

I could not agree more with the second point the Senator made. Those of us who have been parents read to our children. We take them to museums. We get them a library card. We monitor their television. We worry about any kind of childcare arrangements. We know those early years make a difference. Why don't we make a commitment based on the resources we now have about the brain to do more to provide quality preschool opportunities both at home and outside the home so that more children can come to school ready to learn? That might be the very best investment we could make in terms of long-term academic success.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Senator from New York.

In the time I have remaining, I would like to make the point that I think this is truly a matter of values and truly a matter of priorities. Either we are going to be talking about close to \$2 trillion in tax cuts—most of it Robin Hood in reverse. Again, if somebody wants to prove me wrong, about 40 percent of the benefits go to the top 1 percent of the population.

Any day of the year, I would stake my reputation back in Minnesota on being able to say, as opposed to those Robin-Hood-in-reverse tax cuts, that I am going to be a Senator from Minnesota who is going to insist that if we are going to say a piece of education legislation is the best, we had better make it the best for our children. That means there is a commitment to making sure kids are kindergarten ready. That means we live up to our commitment to fully funding the program for children with special needs, which is getting to the 40-percent level and not the 14-percent level. That means we ought to be moving toward fully funding the title I program for kids who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. That means we ought to be funding afterschool programs and we ought to be talking about teacher recruitment. We ought to be talking about how we can provide the supportive services.

I say to Senators, Democrats and Republicans alike, that you will rue the day you voted for a piece of legislation that mandated that every school and every school district in your State every single year had to have tests, starting as young as age 8 and going to age 13, and you did not at the same time vote to provide the resources so that those teachers and those schools and those school districts and, most important of all, the children had the tools so they could succeed and do well.

I will tell you something. I hope my colleagues on the Democratic side will draw the line on this question. It seems to me that before we proceed to this kind of legislation, before we talk about a piece of legislation as being reform, we should say we want to make sure there is a commitment of resources. Before we have this mandate on all of our States and all of our schools, we ought to make sure we have provided the funding. If we can't

do that, then this becomes very hollow. If we can't do that, then this piece of legislation I believe does nothing but set up the schools and the kids and the teachers for failure.

My colleague was saying get it down to the school level. I sometimes think what we have been doing has a sense of unreality to it. If you go down in the trenches, and especially if you go to the schools, a lot of the inner-city neighborhoods and rural areas, you have kids on free or reduced lunch programs. You have homes where sometimes they have to move two or three times a year. You have schools that are crumbling, schools that don't have the resources, schools that don't have the laboratory facilities, and schools that don't have the textbooks. Now what you are saying is you are going to have tests and state with precision the obvious: Guess what. Children who come to school hungry, children who come from families who don't have adequate housing or are even homeless, children who are not kindergarten ready, children who do not receive all of the good stimulation and all of the nurturing that they need to have before kindergarten, those children who come to schools without the facilities, without the best teachers, without the salaries for the teachers, we are going to find out through tests that those children and those schools aren't doing as well as a lot of other schools which have all the resources in the world with which to work.

That is what the test does. Absolutely nothing—not without the resources.

I can say this from the floor of the Senate. It sounds a little jarring. But in a lot of ways I think the best way you can move to vouchers is to design a system where you guarantee over the next 4 or 5 years that many schools are not going to succeed because you don't give them the resources. Then you can state with precision the obvious; that is, the children who come from low- and moderate-income backgrounds with the least amount of help to do well are continuing to do poorly. The schools are continuing to do poorly because they do not have the resources. Then you use that as a reason for an all-out broadside attack on public education.

Some of the harshest critics of these teachers in these schools couldn't last an hour in the classrooms they condemn. I have never met a teacher and I have never met a parent who has said to me what we need is more and more tests, tests, tests.

I have had a lot of people in Minnesota talk to me about the IDEA program, the title I program, afterschool programs, how we can make sure kids are kindergarten ready, and how we can make sure we have the best teachers and get the resources to the teachers and have the support for the teachers and the kids.

We have a budget from the President of the United States of America who

says education is his No. 1 priority, and it is a tin cup budget. How are you going to realize the goal of leaving no child behind on a tin cup budget? At the moment, I agree with Senator CLINTON. I think it is an educational fraud bill. Without the resources to back the rhetoric, it becomes nothing more than symbolic politics with children's lives.

I will oppose it with all of my might until we get resources to invest in our children—all of our children.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we will be turning to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization bill soon. I want to speak a bit about the subject of education.

This will be an interesting debate and one that is very important for our country. All of us come to the Senate from different backgrounds with different interests. I happen to come from a small town of about 300 people in the southwestern corner of North Dakota, down by the Montana and South Dakota border. I graduated in a high school class of nine.

That little high school in Regent, ND, where I went to school, held its last prom this year because the high school is not going to be continuing any longer. In order to have a prom in a school that small, they have to gather a fair number of classes. That is the only way to have a prom in a school that size.

I was saddened to read that, because of the challenges facing rural areas of North Dakota, schools are seeing fewer and fewer students coming into the school system. In my State, we had 16 counties that had fewer than 25 births in a year, and in almost all of those counties they have at least two school systems. Divide up those births 5 or 6 years from now and see how many children are going to enter first grade and see what the challenges are for those schools. They are very significant.

Despite having gone to a small school, I always felt I got a very good education. It was not a fancy school. It was a school with a library no larger than a coat closet, but we had teachers who cared, and it was a school that provided an awfully good education.

Even though all of us have different backgrounds, we also share common goals. All of us want the same thing for our country. We want our country to do well, our children to be well edu-

cated, our country's economy to grow and provide expanded opportunities for people.

In this debate, we are going to talk a lot about what is wrong with education. That, I guess, is the nature of things in this country. We talk about what is wrong and how we will fix it. We almost never catch our breath to talk about what is right. In fact, when you listen to people talk about what is wrong with education in America, you wonder how on Earth this country became what it has become.

Anyone who has done any traveling throughout the world understands there is not any other country like this. Go to Europe, Asia, South America, Africa—just travel and ask yourself: Have I visited a country with the same conditions that exist in the United States? Is there a country quite as free as this, as open as this, with an economy as strong as this, where every young child goes into a school system which allows him or her to become whatever his or her God-given talent allows? That is what our school system provides our children.

This is not true in many other countries in the world. By the eighth grade, often other countries have moved kids into different tracks where only selected children have an opportunity for higher education. A lot of countries do that.

Our country has said for a long while that we believe in universal education. All children in this country, no matter their background, ought to have the opportunity to be whatever their God-given talents allow them to be.

Yet when hearing this debate, one wonders what has allowed this country to be as successful as it has been? This is the country, after all, that has split the atom and spliced genes. We have invented radar and the silicon chip. We have invented plastics. We learned to fly, and then we built airplanes. We flew those airplanes, and then we built rockets. We took those rockets to the Moon and walked on its surface. We cured smallpox and polio. We discovered how to create a telephone and then used it, invented radios, television, computers.

One almost wonders how on Earth this happened in a country like this with an education system that some say has totally failed us.

The reason all of this has happened is the education system has not failed this country at all. There are some significant challenges and some significant problems in certain areas of our education system, but by and large this education system has been the most productive in the world for a long period of time.

If one wants to evaluate where the world-class universities are, by far 80 percent of them are in the United States of America. We house the world-class universities in this country.

Let me talk a bit about the status of this country's educational system.

Some say we have an educational recession. The President, during his campaign, said that, among others.

Yet reading achievement is up in this country. The National Assessment for Educational Progress, called NAEP, says that during the last decade, reading achievement has significantly improved in all grades tested.

Are there some challenges in some schools in this country with respect to reading skills? You bet your life there are, and we need to address them.

But on the average, reading skills are up. Mathematics and science achievement is up. NAEP scores in mathematics have improved during the past decade, and in science NAEP reports scores have increased significantly for older children in the last decade.

Students were better prepared for college throughout the 1990s. Scores on both the SAT and ACT climbed steadily. Mathematics SAT scores are at an all-time high. The average SAT math score increased from 509 in 1992 to 514 in 2000. Verbal SAT scores improved over the same period from 500 to 505.

Some say if you compare the SAT scores in the United States to the same scores in other countries, the United States ranks well down the list or that our scores have decreased over time. But those people are not comparing apples and apples. Only the best students in other countries are taking the ACT and SAT, while in our country a majority take them. Thirty years ago, only the top 25 percent of U.S. students would take the SAT tests. Now, perhaps the top 60 or 70 percent of the universe of students take the same tests. Would you perhaps get a lower score on average by taking 70 percent of the universe instead of taking the top 25 percent? Yes.

But compare the top 25 percent now to the top 25 percent 30 years ago? What do you find? Higher test scores. You need to compare like comparisons if you are going to make judgments.

Our students are taking tougher courses. Between 1992 and 1997, the number of high school students taking advanced placement courses in all subjects increased by two-thirds, from 338,000 to 581,000.

It is hard to make the case we are in an educational recession.

I have two children in school. They study hard. They do their homework. They do not necessarily enjoy doing that every night, but they do their homework. They are in a good school with great teachers. The fact is that is true in much of this country.

There is a very simple formula to determine whether education is going to work, and it is true in every neighborhood in every school in this country. To make education work, we need several things: One, a student who is interested in learning; two, a teacher who knows how to teach; and, three, a parent who is going to be involved in that student's education.

When those three elements are present, education works and works

well. When they are absent, we have great difficulties.

I know from firsthand experience that there are some schools with significant challenges. I visited an inner-city school that had significant challenges. I knew that at the front door. I walked through metal detectors, saw security guards, watched teachers try to deal with a series of problems in the class. Those problems were identical to the problems of the neighborhood surrounding that school: poverty, dysfunctional families, a whole series of issues that those children then brought to that school.

Some weeks after I visited that school, I read in the paper there was a shooting at that school. That was a few years ago. Some kid bumped another kid at a water fountain, and the other kid took out a pistol and shot him, despite the fact they had obviously gone through a metal detector as they walked into that school.

If schools are not safe places of learning, they are not going to be good places of learning, so we must deal with that issue.

We need good teachers, students willing to learn, parents involved in education, and a safe environment in which students can learn.

In addition to that, in this debate, we are going to have to understand that we have a responsibility as a country to send children through classroom doors into classrooms of which we can be proud. Children cannot learn in classrooms that are not modern.

I have toured schools, especially Indian schools attended by children for whom the Federal Government has a trust responsibility to educate. This is not an option. Yet these Indian schools where desks are 1 inch apart, classes are so crowded you just cringe when you see them pack these kids into those classrooms. These are schools where you cannot hook up a computer because the facilities are so old they do not have the capability of supporting a computer; schools where you would not want to send your child to school because it is in such disrepair.

Is that a good safe place in which to learn? The answer clearly is no and we need to do better. We need to deal with the issue of school construction. We built schools all over this country just after the Second World War. The GIs came home, they married, had children, and we built schools all over this country. Many of those schools are now 50 and 60 years old and in desperate disrepair.

None is in greater disrepair than the schools on Indian reservations. I talk about that a lot because we have so much to do in those areas. We have a responsibility to deal with these crumbling schools around the country. If we will have a first-class education, it ought to be in a first-rate classroom.

Second, we also know from experience and from research that children learn best in classrooms of 15 to 18 students. I have had children of mine in

classrooms in mobile trailers, the temporary classrooms with 32 and 34 kids. It doesn't work well. We know that. We know a teacher who is teaching 15 to 18 children has much more time to spend individually with those children and does a much better job. We have a responsibility to try to help and do something about that as well.

At the Federal level, we only do niche financing for education. Our schools are financed, by and large, by State and local governments and especially by local school boards. No one is suggesting we change that.

But we ought not brag in this country, as some are wont to do, that we don't have any national objectives for our school system. It is not a source of pride, in my judgment, to brag that we do not have or want national standards or objectives for our children to meet upon their graduation. We ought to aspire to meet certain objectives. Of course we ought to have national objectives we aspire to reach.

In order to do that, some feel strongly we ought to improve our school buildings. This Congress can provide funding to help local school districts meet their construction and repair needs. We ought to reduce classroom size and provide funding to do that. We ought to do it in this legislation, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization.

President Bush is correct when he talks about the need for testing. Many have stood for years on the floor of the Senate saying we need to have some testing. People also need to know what our schools are producing, how our schools are doing. I will offer an amendment dealing with the issue of school report cards. Many States have them. But there are no standards for school report cards and no parent can understand how their school is doing. They know how their child is doing because they get a report card every 6 to 9 weeks. But how is their school doing? Is this school doing a good job of educating that child? How does this school relate or compare to another school? How does our State compare to another State? What are we getting as taxpayers for the investment we are making in these schools? We have a right to know that. We have a right to get report cards on our schools. All parents have that right. All taxpayers have that right. I intend to offer an amendment on that during the consideration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

There is so much to say about education. Let me mention two stories that illustrate the value of education.

I toured a refugee camp one day in an area near the border between Guatemala and Honduras. It was some while ago when Honduras was having a lot of terrorism and difficulties. At this refugee camp, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was running a refugee camp and had people living in tents. As I was going around the camp, viewing the conditions, there

was a fellow, probably in his mid-sixties, who could not speak English but he knew I was a visitor to the camp. He beckoned to me and wanted me to come with him. I asked the guide from the United Nations what the fellow wanted and the guide said: I think he wants you to go into the tent area. So we did. He reached under his cot for some of his belongings, which is all he had. He had a cot and a couple of belongings stored under a cot in the refugee camp. He reached under the cot and pulled out a book. It was an education reading primer book in Spanish. It was the Spanish version of the "See Dick Run" book we would have had in first grade. He was, for the first time in his life, in his mid-sixties, being taught to read. He wanted to show me, a visitor, that he could begin to read. He pulled out the book and began to read in halting Spanish, "See Dick Run."

He had a huge smile on his face after he finished the first two lines, looked up at me with only two or three teeth, someone who was living in great difficulty, in a refugee camp, with perhaps not enough to eat, never having had an opportunity for education, and he was so enormously proud of being able to learn.

Education, even at the later stage of his life, was so important to him that he wanted to show a visitor he was learning to read. Think of that.

The second story is one I have told my colleagues about before, but I will tell it again because it also describes how important education is. It is the story of a woman who was a janitor at a tribal college, cleaning the bathrooms and the hallways of a tribal college. Her husband had left her. She had four children and was over 40, with no means of support except this job as a janitor. She wanted to go to the college somehow so she could earn a degree and find a better job. The day I showed up to give a graduation speech at the tribal college, this woman was a graduate of the college. She had pulled herself up by the proverbial bootstraps and gotten an education and was no longer the janitor of the school. She was wearing a cap and a gown and a huge smile because, despite it all, and through it all, with all the adversity in her life, she had become a college graduate. You could read "pride" all over her face. It is something she had done for her own future that no one will ever take away from her. She invested in herself against all the odds.

Education means so much to people at every stage: When they are retired, when they are 40, when they are 20, when they are 10. We are talking about the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. There is not much that is more important for this country than to improve this law for America's kids. There is a lot on which we can agree, some we will disagree on in the coming days, but I hope at the end we can look at this bill and say we did something very important for this country's future.

I will take the floor later in the debate and offer a couple of amendments I have described. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. I commend my colleague from North Dakota for his eloquent statement on education. I come to the floor today to join a number of Democratic Senators who have been here this afternoon to speak about the issue of education which is going to come before the Senate this coming week. I share their passion and their concern as we look at reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

It is critical we understand we all share the same goals. President Bush stated very rightly that no child should be left behind. Everyone in this body wants to make sure that no child is left behind. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act is our opportunity to do that because, as we all know, education is the key to a child's future. If they know how to read, they will make it in this world. If they can do math, they will be able to move on. If they can converse, they will be able to get a job and be successful. That is our goal for every single child.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act that is being worked on now has a number of compromises in it. It is not everything everybody wants, but the one concern that I want to express adamantly to this body before we bring this bill to the floor is the lack of available resources. It is so easy to say we set standards, we set goals that we demand our children and their schools reach. But if we don't provide the dollars for them to be able to reach those goals, we are simply putting out a mandate, an unfunded mandate, to districts which means the kids will fail. There is no doubt that if you want a child to learn to read, you have to provide the resources for a teacher who is capable. You need to make sure the class size is small enough, that the child has enough personal time with the teacher, an expert, to be able to learn to read.

It is not magic. It takes a qualified teacher. We want to make sure all of our kids pass the annual tests. Just giving tests as required in the bill does not assure the students will do better. I fear it means without the backing of the resources behind it, so the children can learn what is required of them to pass the test, the children will fail and drop out of school. And, yes, 5 years from now we may have a higher percentage of kids doing better on tests but nobody will be testing the kids who didn't make it, who dropped out, who failed, who are not in the school system anymore. Those are the kids we cannot leave behind.

Without the resources that are so important for success, and a commitment from this White House to have the resources available, we will have failed America's children if we move this bill forward.

We know what works in public education. Any one of us who has been to a school recently knows what makes a difference. A teacher makes all the difference. A good teacher and a good principal makes an incredible difference. A parent who is involved makes an incredible difference. Unfortunately, that doesn't happen in every school. A lot of classrooms don't have qualified teachers. That is a concern. It doesn't happen just because we mandate it. It happens because we provide the resources to recruit good teachers, to help school districts hire them, and to make sure that every child is in a classroom with a qualified teacher.

We know the facility that a child learns in makes a difference. I have been in classrooms, as I believe several of my colleagues have, where children are wearing coats, where there are buckets catching raindrops, where there is no electrical outlet for the children to even plug in a computer much less have a computer, where there isn't even a restroom facility in the building; they have to go outside across the way to get to one.

How do you expect a child to learn in that kind of environment? It does not happen. Unless we put investments into bringing our buildings up to code and providing a partnership at the Federal level for those districts and schools that need it the most, we cannot expect children to learn. We cannot require that children only pass or move on if they have the best teacher and the best classroom and the best facility. If we do, we will have failed numbers of children in this country, and that is really the wrong policy.

I will have much to say about many of these issues as we move through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in the coming days or weeks. But I just want our colleagues to know that the worst thing we can do is pass an Elementary and Secondary Education Act without adequate funding for the requirements we are making, because several years from now we will have every school district, every school administrator, every school board member, every parent, and every teacher at our door saying you passed an unfunded mandate down to us. Instead of recruiting good teachers and building our classrooms and working hard to teach our kids, we are failing them because the only thing we are doing is providing testing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask consent to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.