

Chapter 5:

Education and Youth

School Performance

Gore

Bush

School Choice and Higher Education

Gore

Bush

Youth Culture and Family Values

Gore

Bush



IN THEIR OWN WORDS
SOURCEBOOK FOR THE 2000 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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School Performance - Gore

Al Gore

June 27, 2000

TV Ad: "Starts"



[Gore]:

Strengthening education begins with us, not with government.

Parents simply have to get involved and take responsibility to make sure that their children study and learn.

(On Screen: Parental Involvement)

But government has to take responsibility for what it can do. Fix failing schools.

(On Screen: The Gore Plan – Fix Failing Schools)

Reduce the class size.

(On Screen: The Gore Plan – Reduce the Class Size)

Set high standards, for students and for teachers.

(On Screen: The Gore Plan – Higher Standards)

We're in an information age.

We have a responsibility to make sure that our schools are the very best in the entire world.

(On Screen: The Gore Plan – 1-877-leadnow)

(On Screen: Paid by the Democratic National Committee)

Al Gore

La Crosse, Wisconsin

August 18, 2000

Preparing Children for New Workplace

...

We're going to stand up for our families. We're going to stand up for working families.

I'll give you another example. All of a sudden, in this information revolution that's bringing so many changes in the workplace -- no matter what your occupation, all of a sudden there are new kinds of computers and machines that require training, and everything's in a turmoil sometimes when the business says, "Okay, we've got to keep up with the competition. You've got to go and learn how to operate this new technology." Lots of CEOs now say the biggest obstacle they have to expanding and growing and keeping up with this dynamic economy is their inability to find enough people who -- who can get that training to take those new jobs.

Well, isn't that a pretty clear argument for why we need to make our nation's number-one priority bringing revolutionary improvements to our public schools and doing the job right? We need to treat teachers like the professionals that they are and reduce the size of the classes.

We need reforms and new accountability and performance measurement, along with new resources to modernize the schools. And we need universal preschool for every child in every family all across the United States of America.

You are right, and I want to say this to my friends who are working in factories and working in the construction trades. I believe that we have got to remove the barriers that allow men and women in the workplace to

come together and bargain collectively. We have to get rid of the old permanent striker replacement practice, because it's just plain wrong.

...

Al Gore

Parkside Middle School
Manchester, New Hampshire
September 14, 2000

The Comprehensive Education Plan

I can't tell you how great it feels to be back in the Granite State. And I'm so pleased to be here at Parkside Middle School – a model of what's right with American education.

It was here, in New Hampshire, during the first-in-the-nation primary, that I first took this campaign to the people – to the hard-working, middle-class families who have always been the hope and the soul of our country.

It was here in New Hampshire – in classrooms and in living rooms, in high-tech office suites and on factory floors – that I listened and learned from you about the cares and concerns of America's families.

I'm running for President to fight for you. And it is for you and your families that I intend to win this election.

All week long, all across America, I've been talking about an issue that is fundamental to our families and our future – a dramatic new commitment to education, not just for the early years, but for life.

Today, I want to speak very concretely about the choice we face in education, and what it means to families.

For me, it all comes down to this: if we want a strong economy to enrich all our families – then we have to give everyone who wants it the opportunity to learn more and make the most of themselves. We have to make American education the best, most accessible, most affordable in the world.

We've come a long way these past eight years. Everybody knows we

were worse off eight years ago than we are today.

You remember what it was like here in Manchester, in the cold winter of recession. It was practically a nightmare over on Elm Street. It's not that way any more.

But this election is not an award for past performance. I'm not asking you to vote for me on the basis of the economy we have.

I ask for your support on the basis of the better, fairer, more prosperous America we can build together.

Together, let's make sure that our prosperity enriches not just the few, but all our families.

Let's support parents and strengthen families.

Let's invest in education, middle-class tax cuts, and a secure retirement.

We stand at a decisive moment. Will we raise our sights, and broaden our vision? Will we use our prosperity and our record surpluses to help you and your family make a better life?

For all our progress, I am not satisfied.

I've been to the Lillie Evans School in Miami, which was so overcrowded, the students had lunch in shifts – with the first shift starting at 9:30 in the morning.

I've been to Avondale Elementary School in Columbus, Ohio – which was so crowded, children spent recess in the hallways and art and music classes were held in a trailer.

And I'm not satisfied when parents have to worry whether their children are being taught in modern, high-quality schools and classrooms.

I've visited elementary schools – schools where the oldest student isn't even a teenager – yet there are fears of violence and conflict. And I'm not satisfied when a parent's most basic lessons of decency,

discipline, and respect aren't reinforced in the classroom.

I've met with business leaders across this state who can't even fill the good new jobs that are opening up. And I'm not satisfied when hard-working families can't afford college tuition, or a job training course that lifts them to a better future.

Isn't it time to absorb and act upon the single most important lesson that the new economy teaches us about preparing for this 21st Century?

Learning is the key. And that means education must command more of our attention, more of our time, and more of our resources. We have got to open the doors of learning to all.

Make no mistake: education is one of the biggest differences in this election.

I certainly look forward to education being a major topic of the Presidential Commission debates. And I hope we'll reach an agreement on those debates very soon. First of all, on education we have a difference of priority.

Governor Bush and I agree that education is a local responsibility – that parents, teachers, and local schools should make the decisions.

But local control of education is no excuse to pass the buck on education. And I sure don't believe we should spend all the bucks – the entire federal surplus -- on a huge tax cut for the wealthy at the expense of everyone else, which would leave local schools under-funded and too often helpless to solve their problems.

Sure, education is a local responsibility. But education has got to be our number-one national priority.

You deserve a President who will stand up and fight for the reforms and the resources schools need to succeed. You deserve a President who will defend our national commitment to education – and then build on it. And I pledge to you today: I will fight for our children's education.

Now, let me be plain about one more area where Governor Bush and I agree – even if that isn't usual in a campaign. We both support more accountability in our schools – and higher standards. Here's how I want to do it:

Let's test all new teachers, to make sure they're qualified. Let's have more teacher training, so there's a fully qualified teacher in every classroom in America by 2004. Let's treat and reward teachers like the professionals they are. Let's hold states accountable for turning around failing schools and making sure every child meets high standards.

But there is also a difference: my education plan starts with real accountability; it doesn't end there. I'm proposing a much broader commitment – from universal pre-school, all the way to help paying for college tuition and job training.

We have to focus more energy and attention on the classroom – where it really counts.

I met a sixth-grader in Derry last year who told me that classes had become so crowded, students who needed extra help had to stay after school for what felt like detention.

I know we can do better. I know what this school has done to reduce class size from as many as 40 students to about 20. It's time to hire 100,000 new teachers to meet rising demand and reduce class size – so students never have to compete for their teacher's time and attention.

We should help local school districts rebuild and modernize classrooms, all across America – because we can't lift children up in classrooms that are falling down.

We have to emphasize the fundamentals, like reading and math, because they're the basic building blocks of success in life.

We also need to make sure that classrooms are reinforcing the lessons parents teach at home.

We learned this week that a majority of movies, music, and video games rated as clearly inappropriate for kids are being aggressively marketed to kids. That's wrong – and it has to stop.

It's hard enough to raise children today. Parents shouldn't have to battle to protect their kids from a culture that glorifies violence and indecency. If you ask me, some popular culture today has too much meanness – and not enough meaning.

So as we work with industry to demand more restraint and responsibility, let's make a parent's job a little easier by putting safety, discipline, and character first in every classroom.

We need to make every school in this nation drug-free and gun-free.

We need to increase our commitment to after-school -- so children have a place to learn in those afternoon hours when most juvenile crime, alcohol and drug use occur.

I met a woman in Portland, Maine yesterday who told me she is basically the only substance abuse counselor for a school system with 5,000 kids. Our schools need more help.

You've had great success here with a disciplinary system that's widely understood and respected. I believe we should create a School Responsibility Day in every school, at the beginning of every school year – so there's better communication about what standards are appropriate and how they should be enforced.

But laws and programs by themselves will never be enough. All of us, and especially all parents need to take more responsibility.

Tipper and I went out to Columbine High School after the tragedy there, and we embraced the families of the children who were lost. And I will never forget the words of the father who whispered into my ear, "Promise me that these children will not have died in vain."

All of us must join together to make that promise come true. We

need to change our hearts -- and make a commitment to our children and to one another.

Finally, in this fast-moving new economy, the doors of opportunity must stay open long after the last time you walk out of that high school door.

I'm proposing specific steps to raise college attendance to record levels -- with three-quarters of all high school graduates attending college, and half going on to graduate.

Let's make most college tuition tax-deductible. Let's expand student loans and Pell Grants. Let's help families to save for college tax-free and inflation-free.

And then let's make most job training tax deductible. Let's make sure every employee can get tax credits for job training and lifelong learning.

So that's my comprehensive education plan -- to strengthen accountability, and test all new teachers. To make all our classrooms havens of learning, discipline, and respect. To help middle-class families afford college and job training, for a lifetime of greater learning and higher earning.

It all fits within a balanced budget that pays down our national debt every single year -- a budget that also enables us to cut taxes for the middle-class, not just to help with college and job training, but to help pay for health care, child care, and long-term care.

But I want to say this very plainly: I will not go along with a massive tax cut that would comfort the wealthy and shortchange education.

Accountability and local control are essential. But does any parent or teacher really believe that's all we need?

We can't reform education with half an agenda. We can't ask more of local schools without helping them achieve more.

And we can't make education our top priority if huge tax cuts for the wealthy are already the first, second, and third priority. The other side's plan would consume all of the budget surplus, and then some.

And that's really the choice we face. A commitment to education for life – or a set of priorities that could leave us with budget deficits for life.

Today's children will work in jobs and industries that we cannot even imagine today. We may never have a chance like this one – to remake the schools they depend on, and strengthen the foundation of learning and life.

I want to see to it that every hard-working family in this country can open the door to their dreams.

And I need your help and support in the Granite State – to honor the families who have taught me so much here, and to give them the chance to achieve what they want, and reach out for their dreams.

Al Gore

September 19, 2000

TV Ad: "Accountability"



[Gore]:

George Bush and I actually agree on accountability in education.

[Announcer]:

The Gore plan begins with accountability.

[Gore]:

We need smaller classes and better trained teachers.

[Announcer]:

One hundred thousand more teachers to lower class size, increase discipline and learning.

[Gore]:

We need help for middle-class families to pay college tuition by making it tax deductible.

[Announcer]:

A \$10,000 deduction every year for college tuition.

[Gore]:

We are making education the number one priority.

(On screen: www.algore.com; Paid for by the Democratic National Committee and Authorized by Gore/Lieberman, Inc.)

Al Gore

Florida

October 10, 2000

Accountability & Local Control of Schools

I'm going to start off with some comments myself about the importance of education from pre-K all the way through post-grad, but I'm going to focus on the importance of access to college.

I want to start with pre-K because we know from the new scientific studies that many of you have read about that they have now established beyond a shadow of a doubt that the right kind of educational stimulation for a young child can cause that child's brain to grow smarter and bigger when they're little. And most learning takes place in the first few years of life. So these findings are seen by the educational experts, I'm told, as being especially important and especially persuasive.

And that's why I've proposed a series of ideas to create partnerships with local communities and state governments and the private sector to establish a universal high quality pre-school all over the country for every child and every family, so that every child can then arrive at school ready to learn on day one. It involves expanding and improving Head Start, but going beyond that as well.

When you get to the elementary and secondary schools, where the bulk of education takes place, I think that it's critically important to set our sights high. And instead of being satisfied with just gradual incremental improvements, I think we need to strike out in the direction of major changes in education, to make it a much higher priority. I think it's time to recruit 100,000 new well-trained teachers to -- and start treating teachers like the professionals that they are... and give them lower class sizes.

I think the debate in this election year on education has yielded some useful agreements. I actually agree with Governor Bush on a couple of points. We both are in favor of having new accountability for schools, new performance measurement, new accountability that will enable us to decide as a country when we're heading in the right direction and when we're losing ground.

I also agree with Governor Bush on the importance of maintaining local control of the schools; curricula may differ from one part of the country to another.

But here is the main difference in our approaches: My plan starts with new accountability, but it doesn't end there. By itself, new accountability is not enough. That's why I'm proposing that we recruit 100,000 new well-trained teachers, and why I'm proposing that we extend the idea of accountability farther than my opponent has gone, by requiring teacher testing of all new teachers, including testing in the subjects that they're supposed to be teaching.

Al Gore

October 11, 2000

TV Ad: "Don't"



[Announcer]:

George W. Bush has a plan to bring the policies he's used in Texas to the rest of America. By why would Iowa want them? With Bush as governor, Texas has fallen from 29th to the 48th worst state to raise a child. Iowa ranks as one of the best places to raise a child.

(On screen: Source: Children's Rights Council, 'Top Ten States to Raise a Child,' 1999)

Bush talks about education, but under Bush, Texas SAT scores have fallen to 47th, while Iowa ranks second.

(On screen: Source: College Board, 2000 SAT Scores; Dallas Morning News, 8/30/00)

Iowa doesn't need a Texas plan for our children and schools.

(On screen: 1800thefacts.com; Paid for by the Democratic National Committee)

Al Gore

Democratic National Convention 2000

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Improving Public School Education

Democrats know that today, more than ever before, we need the right kinds of investments - in education, lifelong learning, skill development, and research and development - to take advantage of the vast opportunities of the Information Age. We need to make sure Americans have the skills and tools they need to compete and win in the new knowledge-based, global economy.

Democrats understand that ensuring every child the highest quality education is essential if America is to remain strong and competitive in today's economy. That's why Al Gore's very first campaign speech was about education and that's why Al Gore will make education his top domestic priority.

Nine out of every ten children in this country attend a public school. Public education already allows the United States to have one of the highest standards of living in the world, providing equality of opportunity for all regardless of socioeconomic status.

The success stories coming from public schools are greater than at any time in their history: higher graduation rates, increasing test scores, and higher student achievement - with especially substantial gains among our neediest students. We must continue to build on this record of success that Democrats have compiled in the last eight years. We have helped states and communities set high academic standards for students and called for an end to social promotion. We have started hiring 100,000 qualified teachers. We have increased accountability. We have opened the gates of college to millions of Americans.

Now we must do more. Democrats understand that America will not long remain first in the world economically unless we become first in the world educationally. We cannot continue to generate a fifth of the world's economic output if a third of our students do not meet basic reading standards. We cannot stay number one in high technology jobs if we remain last in the percentage of degrees awarded in science. In today's knowledge-based economy, it's just that simple. Education leads to the future success and security of our country and citizenry.

Americans have been told they must choose between investing in education and demanding accountability. This is the type of false choice that drives our government into stalemate and drives Americans up the wall. Americans believe that we need to invest more in our children's educations - and they're right. Americans also believe that we should not be pouring more money into a system that is producing bad results - and they're right about that too. We should do more of what we're doing right and less of what we're doing wrong.

Al Gore and the Democratic Party know that investments without accountability are a waste of money and that accountability without investments are a waste of time. George W. Bush and the Republican Party offer neither real accountability nor reasonable investment. What they do offer are soothing sound-bites and bite-sized solutions. They refuse to invest in America's crumbling schools and crowded classrooms - spending 100 times more on tax cuts than on education. They don't help pay teachers like professionals nor do they insist on higher standards for teachers. They propose blank check block grants without accountability. Their version of accountability relies on private school vouchers that would offer too few dollars to too few children to escape their failing schools. These vouchers would pass the buck on accountability while pulling bucks out of the schools that need them

most. When it comes to education, Democrats want to invest more and aim higher, the Republicans invest too little and aim too low.

We cannot afford - materially or morally - to let another generation of American children pass through inadequate schools before we make needed changes that will save them from a lifetime of frustration and limited horizons. The time for action is now.

By the end of the next presidential term, we should have a fully qualified, well trained teacher in every classroom in every school in every part of this country - and every teacher should pass a rigorous test to get there.

By the end of the next presidential term, every failing school in America should be turned around - or shut down and reopened under new public leadership.

By the end of the next presidential term, we should ensure that no high school student graduates unless they have mastered the basics of reading and math - so that the diploma they receive really means something.

By the end of the next presidential term, parents across the nation ought to be able to choose the best public school for their children.

By the end of the next presidential term, every eighth grader in America should be computer literate.

By the end of the next presidential term, high-quality, affordable preschool should be fully available to every family, for every child, in every community in America.

By the end of the next presidential term, every child should learn in a safe, modern classroom with the most up-to-date technology.

By the end of the next presidential term, the achievement gap between students of color and the rest of America's students should be eliminated.

All this we pledge - and more. The time for tinkering around the edges has long passed. We need revolutionary improvements in our public schools. This requires a major national investment; a demand of accountability from all; a genuine expansion of public school choice; and a renewed focus on discipline, character, and safety in our schools.

Strict Accountability for Results, Strong Incentives for Success

Democrats believe that everyone involved in the education system should be held accountable. Accountability means we will no longer tolerate mediocrity and no longer allow failure. Accountability applies to states, school districts, schools, teachers, students, and parents. Everyone must do their part. Nobody can shirk their responsibility.

Consistently bad schools should be shut down. No excuses. No exceptions. Every state and school district should identify failing schools and turn them around with all necessary measures and all necessary resources. Students in those schools should get first priority in transferring to a better-performing public school in the district and getting intensive after-school academic help to make sure they are not left behind while their school is being turned around. Failing schools that do not improve should be quickly shut down and reopened with a new principal and new teachers.

States should be held accountable for reducing dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, and raising student achievement. Working together with teachers, school principals should be able to hire on the basis of qualifications and fit, not just on the basis of seniority.

Teachers should be answerable for what goes on in their classroom. New teachers who answer the call to join this honorable profession should get the mentors and professional support they need to make the transition into teaching - and then should have to pass a rigorous and fair test before they step foot into a classroom.

Teaching is no easy job and we should not expect that everyone is able to make it in the classroom. New teachers should receive ongoing support and mentoring from their more experienced colleagues. Current teachers should receive continuing quality professional development to ensure that their skills and knowledge reflect the most up-to-date information and research.

Those teachers who do not meet the highest quality standards should not be allowed to sully the reputation of the teaching profession. That's why teachers who are not teaching well should receive help in getting up to standards. At its best, teaching is the job of a lifetime. But teaching contracts and licenses should not be an automatic lifetime job guarantee. That's why we need regular evaluations to determine whether a teacher's license should be renewed. Democrats urge faster but fair ways, with due process, to identify, help - and when necessary - speedily remove low performing teachers.

Every student must be given the opportunity to learn. But students have to take responsibility and be accountable for their own educations, as well. We need measurements to make sure students are getting the preparation they require - including voluntary national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math. Democrats insist that no student should graduate with a diploma they cannot read.

The federal government needs to be held accountable, too. In states that do not make progress in improving student performance, the federal government should redirect money from state bureaucrats and transfer it directly to schools that need it. States that do succeed in raising student success should receive bonuses - and schools that are making a positive difference should receive bonuses, as well. In addition, teachers who earn a National Board Certification should be especially rewarded.

Investing in Our Schools

We cannot expect our children to learn all that they need to know in classrooms that are overcrowded, with teachers that are overburdened, and with textbooks and technology that are out-of-date. We need to invest in our schools and our children's' futures.

High-quality preschool should no longer be a luxury. Research - and the experience of path breaking states such as North Carolina and Georgia - shows that giving kids a smart start can lead to higher reading and achievement levels, higher graduation rates, and greater success in the workplace.

We need an aggressive national campaign to put one million new well-trained teachers in our classrooms. We must start reducing class size by finishing the job of hiring 100,000 new qualified teachers. In addition, Al Gore has proposed the creation of a new 21st Century Teacher Corps - open to talented people around the country who agree to teach in a school that needs their help. In return, they would get help paying their college tuition, assistance in paying off their student loans, or a hiring bonus for those willing to switch careers. And we need alternative certification so that those who choose to switch into teaching don't have to start their education all over again.

Far too many teachers are overstressed and overworked, underpaid and under appreciated. We need to treat teachers like professionals - pay them like professionals and hold them to professional standards. All qualified teachers should get a raise and master teachers should get the biggest raise. We need to provide professional development, training, and support so that all teachers can succeed.

We should rebuild and modernize our school buildings to assure students can attend schools that are modern, safe, and well-equipped for learning. And we need to construct more new schools to meet the needs of the largest generation of students in American history. We cannot

convince our children to value education when they are packed into cramped classrooms like sardines in a can and when their facilities are falling down. Al Gore and the Democrats believe we need smaller classes, smaller schools, and "schools within schools" so that impressionable children do not get lost in the shuffle.

We must ensure that children with disabilities are not blocked from having access to free, appropriate education and that the doors to our public schools are not closed to children with special needs. We must, finally, live up to the Federal government's promise to communities to help them defray the expenses of educating children with special needs.

We must assure that schools have the resources to meet the challenges of an increasingly diverse student population with programs for English language learners, including bilingual education, to close the achievement gap. We oppose language-based discrimination in all its forms, including in the provision of education services, and encourage so-called English-plus initiatives because multilingualism is increasingly valuable in the global economy.

We should create new Opportunity Academies around the nation between high school and college where disadvantaged students can get the intensive academic preparation in math, reading, writing, and study skills that will improve their likelihood for success in college and beyond.

Al Gore

Democratic National Convention 2000

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Bridging the Digital Divide

Democrats believe that every American - regardless of income, geography, race, or disability - should be able to reach across a computer keyboard, and reach the vast new worlds of knowledge, commerce, and communication that are available at the touch of a fingertip.

That is why Democrats fought for the e-rate to wire every classroom and library to the Internet. In the next four years, we must finish connecting the job and then go further.

We must launch a new crusade - calling on the resources of government, employers, the high-tech industry, community organizations, and unions - to move toward full Internet access in every home, for every family, all across the United States. We must make sure that no family or community is left out. We must not rest until Internet access is universal.

We must also launch a new national effort to provide basic skills in the newest technology. Al Gore has proposed a major initiative to set and achieve a national goal of computer literacy for every child by the time they finish the eighth grade. He has also called for expanded technology training for workers, and supports incentives for employers to provide home computers and Internet access to their workers. And we must do more than merely teaching technology in the classroom and the workplace. We must dramatically expand teacher training in how to use the power of the Internet. We should also use our AmeriCorps national service corps members to teach and promote the Internet in the schools, libraries, and technology centers that need them the most. America was

the pioneer of universal education; now America must become the pioneer of universal computer literacy.

School Performance - Bush

George W. Bush

July 18, 2000

TV Ad: "Expect More"



[Bush]:

If we really want to make sure no child gets left behind in America, we need the courage to raise standards in our schools. We need more accountability and more discipline. And we need to stop promoting failing children to the next grade and giving up on them.

[Announcer]:

George Bush raised standards. Tests scores soared. Texas leads the country in academic improvement.

[Bush]:

It's easy just to spend more. Let's start by expecting more.

[Announcer]:

Learn more about the Bush Blueprint for accountability, high standards and local control.

(On screen: www.EducationBlueprint.com; Paid for by the Republican National Committee)

George W. Bush

Ohio

July 31, 2000

Reducing the Education Gap

...

I also want to talk about education, because it is my number one priority. And it needs to be our nation's number one priority. The great challenge facing this country's good heart is the fact there are some who wonder whether or not the American dream is meant for them. There are people who struggle to get ahead and say, hey, this experience isn't meant for me.

The best way to make sure that we close the gap of hope, the best way we make sure the great American dream touches every willing heart, is to make sure every child in America gets educated and no child, I mean no child, is left behind. I am so optimistic.

I'm so optimistic at what can happen in our public schools. I've seen it with my own eyes what happens when leadership challenges the status quo. It starts with setting high hopes and high expectations, challenging what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations.

Oftentimes in the public education system, it's so much easier just to shuffle a kid through. It's so much easier to say, how old are you? Oh, if you're 10, we'll put you here. And if you're 12, you belong here and if you're 16, you belong there.

Now, I want to make it clear to you all, I don't want to be the federal superintendent of schools. I don't believe in the federalization of education. I believe we ought to trust local people to make the right decision for the children of Ohio.

But I am going to work with states and local authorities to develop

strong accountability measures. Because when we measure, we'll be able to start asking the question, what do you know? And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do early, before it's too late. And guess what can happen when you've got the right kind of leadership? Our children are going to learn.

We know. In Texas, our test scores are up dramatically, particularly amongst African-American students and Latino students.

There's no second-rate citizens, as far as I'm concerned. There are no second-rate students. There are no second-rate dreams. Give me a chance to elevate standards, and the children of America will learn.

...

George W. Bush

August 21, 2000

TV Ad: "Education Agenda"



[Bush]:

Seven of 10 fourth graders in our highest poverty schools cannot read a simple children's book.

Millions are trapped in schools where violence is common and learning is rare.

[Announcer]:

The Bush Education agenda:

(On screen: www.georgewbush.com http://www.georgewbush.com)

Reform Head Start. Focus on reading. Restore local control. Triple funding for character education. Hold schools accountable for results.

(On screen: Paid for by Bush-Cheney 2000, Inc.; Bush-2000-Cheney logo)

[Bush]

Now is the time to teach all our children to read and renew the promise of America's public school.

Monday, Aug. 21, 2000

George W. Bush

Harrison Primary School

Peoria, Illinois

August 22, 2000

Raising Expectations about the School System

...

This nation of our must challenge what I like to call the soft bigotry of low expectations. We have got to recognize that when you lower standards and sights and lower expectations, children are going to be left behind, and that is unacceptable in America.

It is unacceptable for a lot of reasons. It is unacceptable because, as the economy changes, the danger is we can have a two- society America, and that is really unacceptable. It's unacceptable because our education system holds out such promise and hope, and yet low expectations diminishes that promise and hope.

One of the reason we picked this school, it is a school of children that, in some people's minds, are children who are supposed to fail, after all they don't come from the best neighborhoods, and housing conditions aren't perfect. Mom is working as hard as she possibly can to get ahead. I can't wait for you to hear Tiffany's story.

We believe something differently, the principal and I, and I hope everybody else in this community of Peoria understands, every child can learn, every child can learn.

It starts with raising people's sights, and raising expectations, and refusing to yield, refusing to accept a curriculum that won't work. One of the important points that will come out of this discussion is that there are some things that works when a teach -- comes to teaching to read and some that doesn't. And our society must focus on those curriculum

that work, phonics works, phonetic awareness is incredibly important to making sure children learn to read. It is a fact.

And one of my hopes, should I be fortunate enough to become the president is to have a national reading program, \$5 billion program, \$1 billion a year to encourage reading, but starting with making sure that schools use the right kind of curriculum.

Secondly, teacher training is incredibly important. If a teacher does not have the skills and a curriculum that works, it is going to make it awfully difficult for the teacher to impart her love and knowledge at the same time. So teacher training should be a part of a good reading program component.

It is so important to have good diagnostic tools available, particularly for youngsters, K through 2 students, so that -- and a simple tool that any teacher can use to be able to determine whether or not a child is short on different components necessary to become a good reader. Because if you do not diagnose, you cannot cure.

...

George W. Bush

Moore Middle School

Portland, Maine

August 29, 2000

Recognizing the Achievement Gap & Accountability System

...

...to us that's too exclusionary. It means us and not you. We have a system we call English plus. English is important, to be able to read and write, plus we respect your heritage and your background and history. Now, before I go on, I also want to recognize somebody you allowed to slip across the border.

...

Just a couple of thoughts about my drive for educational excellence for every child. I can remember walking through schools in Texas where it became quite evident, by implication, that certain children can't learn, and therefore it was justifiable just to move them through. And it broke my heart to think that there -- the system was such that people gave up on children, but because of their background, or maybe where and how they were raised, that it was acceptable practice to move kids through the system without asking fundamental questions, starting with: What do you know? And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do early before it's too late.

One of the responsibilities of a leader is to set clear and understandable goals.

When I was elected there were over, like, 30 goals in the public school system. I used to tell people there's so many goals, there were no goals. I mean, maybe you could achieve 20 of the 30, but one of the 10 might be teaching children to read, and that wasn't achieved in this

whole system we created. So we set four goals in Texas; easy to understand, and more importantly, easy to manage it, and easy to measure. And this was proficiency in English, math, science and social science. Excellence for every child. Secondly, we believe in local control of schools. That is an important tenet, not only in the state of Texas. I believe it's an important tenet in the country; one size does not fit all.

I assure you, the schools in the district where Norma is really different from the schools in Caribou, Maine, Senator. I mean they were different. The goals may be the same, but there's different issues. And therefore, we got to trust local people to chart the path to excellence. I want to empower the Rod Pages of America.

This, kind of, prescriptive nature of the federal government, you know, with all kinds of paperwork and requirements saying, "We will give you money, but you -- you got to tap dance to our tune," has got to end if we encourage educational excellence for every child.

But let me tell you what we really learned. We've learned that if you measure, you enhance excellence. And when you hold people up to standards and free them, and say, "Give us the results, show us," and not only that, but make sure the results are available for everybody to see, and that they're disaggregated, which is a fancy education word for breaking them down by race and income level, that it's a process -- it's a start of making sure that no child gets left behind.

And some people say, "Well, if that's the case, how does it relate to the federal government?" Well, here's how it relates to the federal government: If you receive money from the federal government, we expect you to measure and we expect you to show the nation whether or not you're meeting standards.

You see, I believe that measurement is the cornerstone to reform and measurement is the cornerstone to making sure children learn. And I'm

going to ask the Congress to pass a bill that says, in return for receipt of federal money, and in return for flexibility, for the federal dollars you receive, you must show us, you must show the nation, you must show the people in your area whether or not children can read, write, add and subtract. If they can, there'll be rewards. If they can't, there must be a final moment of consequence in order for the accountability systems to mean anything.

In order for accountability to be worth its salt, there has to be a moment, and that moment is instead of continuing to subsidize mediocrity, after a reasonable period of time, the parents will have a different choice with the federal money.

Now, this stands in stark contrast to the status quo. And I want to tell you, point blank, the status quo is unacceptable in America. The achievement gap that John talked about must be closed, if this country is going to -- if this country's great dream is going to hold its promise for everybody.

It's unacceptable to me that there is an achievement gap in America. It should be unacceptable to the voters that over the past seven years nothing has changed.

In order to change the achievement gap, we must hold people accountable. We must have a different set of reforms and the contrast is stark. It just is. It's the difference between a campaign that wants to hold people accountable and a campaign that has got the illusion of accountability.

And my opponent, he's a good fellow, he cares about education, but he doesn't want to hold people accountable. Maybe it's because of the constituencies he's -- behind him as such, but he believes that the accountability is that you can test if you so feel like it, in fourth and eighth grade.

But my question is, what happens in the third grade and fifth grade and sixth grade and seventh grade matters just as much as what happens in the fourth grade and eighth.

We have an achievement gap in America. And for those good citizens who are concerned about closing that achievement gap, my argument is, and you're going to hear it today, we need to think differently in America. And we have got a record to back it up.

...

George W. Bush

September 11, 2000

TV Ad: "Let's See"



(Shot of Al Gore on TV in kitchen)

[Announcer]:

Al Gore's promising campaign finance reform. Can I believe him? Because of Gore's last fundraising campaign, 22 people have been indicted, 12 convicted, 70 took the Fifth Amendment, and 18 witnesses fled the country.

(On screen: Source: NBC News 12/19/1999)

Now Al Gore is promising more accountability in our schools. And that sounds good -- until you find out he doesn't require any real testing. And no testing means no accountability. Just more politics from Al Gore.

(On screen: GoreWillSayAnything.com; Paid for by the Michigan Republican State Committee)

George W. Bush

Santa Ana, California

September 14, 2000

***Holding People Accountable & Trusting Local Government with
Improving Education System***

...

Because if you don't measure, you don't know. See, if you don't hold people accountable, if you don't say, are you learning, it is very difficult to change. It's very difficult to address problems. Maybe this has happened to some of your classmates, but sometimes in our systems, people just get moved through, they just get shuffled through the system, whether or not they can read and write and add and subtract. That's not right and that is not fair.

I think another important think is to trust local people, trust school board members, trust principals to chart the path to excellence. Not have a system so dominated by the centralized authority that it provides convenient excuses for failures.

What I am telling you is there's a strategy. I have got a strategy to make sure the public education system fulfills its promise.

In our state of Texas, I'm proud to report, as a result of looking at results, we lead the nation. We are in the top 10 in every single category.

...

George W. Bush

San Diego, California

September 15, 2000

Measuring Academic Performance & Local Control

...

I -- first of all, let me just say to you, I don't think education is political. I think good education is important public policy that transcends political party. I know I'm seeking office, but I'm here to really share with you a vision that dovetails with this school, a vision that starts with understanding every child can learn. Now, that sounds like a simple statement, but unfortunately oftentimes in public education, I know I found it in our schools in Texas, some believe if you're got the at-risk label by your name that you can't learn.

And the easiest thing to do is just to shuffle children through the system. The easiest thing to do is ask the question, How old are you? Oh, if you're 10 we're just going to put you here and if you're 12 you go here and if you're 14 we're just going to put you there; as opposed to asking the fundamental question, What do you know? And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we're going to make sure you do early before it's too late.

One of the reasons this school is successful, and one of the reasons many schools in my own state have become successful, is because we started asking the fundamental question to our children: What do you know? What do you know? Which means that there has to be a sense of accountability in the public school system.

I know you subscribe to that, Alan. I do, too.

One of the cornerstones of reform in my state of Texas -- by the way, reform that has been embraced by both Republicans and Democrats -- is

to measure, is to say we want to know. But the accountability systems are not meant for punishment, they're meant as diagnostic tools, they're meant as ways of determining how our children are doing.

The third component for success is not only high standards -- and by the way, one of my favorite phrases in the campaign is, Our nation must challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. I happen to believe...

Thank you.

If we lower the bars and expect, you know, low -- bad results, mediocrity will be pervasive, and that's not acceptable. I know it's not acceptable to anybody in this room.

Secondly is to measure. Now, I don't believe we ought to have a national test, because what I'm about to tell you is a national test will undermine the third principle for success, which is local control of schools.

...

George W. Bush

California Republican Party Convention via Satellite

Austin, Texas

September 16, 2000

Education: Gore Plan vs. Mine

...

On education, we have a plan to ensure that every school has high standards, every parent has real options, and no child is left behind.

We will give schools new freedom to excel in exchange for proven results. When a school district receives federal funds to teach poor children, we expect those children to learn. And if they don't, parents should get the money to make a different choice. That is real accountability.

This Vice President says he is for more accountability. But he opposes an annual testing requirement that would tell parents which schools do better and which do worse. And without information, there is no true accountability, no pressure for change.

Al Gore gives speeches about "revolutionary" changes in the schools. Most Americans would settle for high standards, accountability, discipline, local control and a choice in the matter. That is all the revolution we need. And Mr. Gore is on the wrong side of it.

On these issues, Mr. Gore and I will debate. On these issues, the American people will decide.

And that decision is not just between two candidates, it is between two visions.

...

George W. Bush

September 26, 2000

TV Ad: "Education Recession"



[Announcer]:

America's having a recession -- an education recession that's hurting our children. Our students rank last in the world in math and physics...

(On screen: U.S. Dept. of Education, '98; Al Gore, Meet the Press, 12/99)

...and most fourth graders in our cities can't read.

(On screen: Education Week, 01/08/98)

The Clinton-Gore education recession: It's failing our kids. But in Texas, George Bush raised standards, and test scores soared. Now Texas leads the nation in academic improvement.

Learn more about the Bush Blueprint for accountability, high standards and local control.

(On screen: www.EducationBlueprint.com; Paid for by Republican National Committee)

George W. Bush

September 26, 2000

TV Ad: "58 Percent"



[Announcer]:

Fifty-eight percent of fourth grade kids in our low-income schools can't read. There's an education recession in America. Governor Bush has a plan. Require strict accountability and measurements that Al Gore opposes. Propose a teacher protection act that Gore won't support.

[Bush]:

If we really want to make sure no child gets left behind in America, we need the courage to raise standards in our schools. We need more accountability and more discipline. It's easy just to spend more. Let's start by expecting more.

(On screen: Paid for by Bush-Cheney 2000, Inc. and Republican National Committee)

George W. Bush

Republican National Convention 2000

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Party Platform: Education & Opportunity – Leave No American Behind

A Responsibility Era

Sometimes it's important to state the obvious. This is one of those times. America is a great country. There are many reasons for this, foremost among them our long tradition of personal responsibility, the demand for high standards and clear values, and the central importance of family in social and economic progress.

In recent years, America seemed to move away from some of the qualities that make her great, but we are now relearning some important lessons. The key is to acknowledge the mistakes, fix them, learn from them, and move on.

We're coming to understand that a good and civil society cannot be packaged into government programs but must originate in our homes, in our neighborhoods, and in the private institutions that bring us together, in all our diversity, for the works of mercy and labors of love.

This section of our platform deals with some of America's most enduring, and seemingly intractable, challenges. We approach these challenges with compassionate conservatism, a concept that is as old as the pioneers heading West in wagon trains, in which everyone had responsibility to follow the rules, but no one would be left behind.

Real Education Reform: Strengthening Accountability and Empowering Parents

"No child in America should be segregated by low expectations . . . imprisoned by illiteracy . . . abandoned to frustration and the darkness

of self-doubt."— George W. Bush

The question is "Are our schools better off now than they were eight years ago?" At a time of remarkable economic growth, when a world of opportunity awaits students who are prepared for it, American colleges and universities are offering remedial courses and American businesses are unable to find enough qualified or trainable workers to meet the demand. Worst of all, so many of our children, America's most precious asset, are headed toward failure in school, and that will hold them back throughout their lives. Republicans desire a better result. We believe that every child in this land should have access to a high quality, indeed, a world-class education, and we're determined to meet that goal.

It's long past time to debate what works in education. The verdict is in, and our Republican governors provided the key testimony: strong parental involvement, excellent teachers, safe and orderly classrooms, high academic standards, and a commitment to teaching the basics — from an early start in phonics to mastery of computer technology. Federal programs that fail to support these fundamental principles are sadly out of date and, under the next president, out of time. For dramatic and swift improvement, we endorse the principles of Governor Bush's education reforms, which will:

Raise academic standards through increased local control and accountability to parents, shrinking a multitude of federal programs into five flexible grants in exchange for real, measured progress in student achievement.

Assist states in closing the achievement gap and empower needy families to escape persistently failing schools by allowing federal dollars to follow their children to the school of their choice.

Expand parental choice and encourage competition by providing parents with information on their child's school, increasing the number

of charter schools, and expanding education savings accounts for use from kindergarten through college.

Help states ensure school safety by letting children in dangerous schools transfer to schools that are safe for learning and by forcefully prosecuting youths who carry or use guns and the adults who provide them.

Ensure that all children learn to read by reforming Head Start and by facilitating state reading initiatives that focus on scientifically based reading research, including phonics.

Nothing is more important than literacy, and yet many children have trouble reading. This problem must be addressed at all grade levels. And as is so often the case in education, the solution is parent and child working together with teachers to help break a cycle of illiteracy that may have extended from generation to generation. We want to replace that pattern with the rich legacy of reading.

We recognize that under the American constitutional system, education is a state, local, and family responsibility, not a federal obligation. Since over 90 percent of public school funding is state and local, not federal, it is obvious that state and local governments must assume most of the responsibility to improve the schools, and the role of the federal government must be progressively limited as we return control to parents, teachers, and local school boards. Programs beginning the process by congressional Republicans to return power to the people, such as "Straight As" legislation and "Dollars to the Classroom" are a good step to reach this goal. The Republican Congress rightly opposed attempts by the Department of Education to establish federal testing that would set the stage for a national curriculum. We believe it's time to test the Department, and each of its programs, instead.

Over thirty years ago, the federal government assumed a special financial responsibility to advance the education of disadvantaged children through the Title I program. Today, \$120 billion later, the achievement gap between those youngsters and their peers has only widened. The fiscal loss is not a good thing, but the human loss is tragic. We cannot allow another generation of kids to be written off. For dramatic and swift improvement, we endorse Governor Bush's principles of local control, with accountability, parental choice, and meaningful student achievement as essential to education reform.

Qualified teachers are the vanguard of education reform. With mastery of their subjects, a contagious enthusiasm for learning, and a heartfelt commitment to their students, they can make any school great. That is why we advocate merit pay for them and expanded opportunities for professional development. Today, however, many teachers face danger and disrespect in the classroom, and their efforts to maintain order are hampered by the threat of litigation. We propose special legal protection for teachers to shield them from meritless lawsuits. We advocate a zero-tolerance policy toward all students who disrupt the classroom and we reaffirm that school officials must have the right and responsibility to appropriately discipline all students, including students with disabilities, who are disruptive or violent. Toward the same end, we will encourage faith-based and community organizations to take leading roles in after-school programs that build character and improve behavior. We propose to improve teacher training and recruiting by expanding the Troops-to-Teachers program, which places retired military personnel in the classroom, and by rewarding states that enact a system for teacher accountability. We will expand teacher loan-forgiveness to encourage qualified candidates to serve in high-need schools. As a matter of fairness, we will establish a teacher tax deduction to help defray the out-

of-pocket teaching expenses so many good home, private, and public school teachers make to benefit their students.

Local responsibility for neighborhood schools has been the key to successful education since the days of the little red schoolhouse. We salute congressional Republicans for their continuing efforts, through Ed-Flex and other initiatives, to shift decision-making away from the federal bureaucracy and back to localities. We strongly endorse Governor Bush's proposal to consolidate cumbersome categorical programs into flexible performance grants, targeting resources to the classroom and tying them directly to student achievement. That is real reform.

In the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Congress required that every community in the country provide a free and appropriate education for all students with special needs and fund their schooling at higher levels. In return, the federal government promised to pay 40 percent of the average per pupil expenditure to cover the excess costs. During all the years the Democrats controlled Congress that was not done. It was congressional Republicans who took the first real strides toward fulfillment of the IDEA promise. We applaud them for recognizing that federal mandates must include federal funding. We will strive to promote the early diagnosis of learning deficiencies. Preventive efforts in early childhood should reduce the demand for special education and help many youngsters move beyond the need for IDEA's protections.

In the final analysis, education remains a parental right and responsibility. We advocate choice in education, not as an abstract theory, but as the surest way for families, especially low-income families, to free their youngsters from failing or dangerous schools and put them onto the road to opportunity and success. By the same token, we defend the option for home schooling and call for vigilant enforcement of laws

designed to protect family rights and privacy in education. Children should not be compelled to answer offensive or intrusive questionnaires. We will continue to work for the return of voluntary school prayer to our schools and will strongly enforce the Republican legislation that guarantees equal access to school facilities by student religious groups. We strongly support voluntary student-initiated prayer in school without governmental interference. We strongly disagree with the Supreme Court's recent ruling, backed by the current administration, against student-initiated prayer.

School Choice and Higher Education - Gore

Al Gore

American Federation of Teachers

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

July 5, 2000

Recruitment of Teachers, Private School Vouchers

...

I say to you today: I have a fundamental commitment—the very first proposal I made as a candidate for President—to bring revolutionary improvements to public education. To invest more. To demand more. And to treat teachers like the professionals you are.

The AFT has always been a leader when it comes to high standards; you've supported tough entry-level tests for teachers for decades now.

I believe we need both more investment and more accountability. And neither will matter if we don't lift up the teaching profession, help teachers meet high standards of excellence, and reward them for the hard work they do.

Here is my commitment to you: as President, I'll put a highly-qualified teacher in every classroom in this nation. We'll recruit one million new teachers, and attract the most talented Americans to careers in the classroom. We'll raise standards, raise teacher salaries, and give you all the training and support you need to do your best in the classroom.

And here is what I will never do: I will never support private school vouchers, which would drain public money away from public education. It's common sense. It's as clear as A,B,C. You cannot save the public schools of America by destroying public schools in America.

I'll oppose vouchers as President. But we have to understand that the issue is also in the hands of our courts. The next President may appoint as many as three or four Supreme Court justices. And one of the great issues that hangs in the balance is the Constitutionality of vouchers. And that's another reason we need to win this fight. We are committed to save and safeguard public education - just as we are committed to save and safeguard a woman's right to choose.

...

Al Gore

NAACP 91st Annual Convention

Baltimore, Maryland

July 12, 2000

Investing in Public Schools

...

And I'm against draining money away in the form of vouchers that offer a false promise because they don't pay the tuition, they just give the illusion, and they actually divert money from the public schools.

And why in the world won't the Congress pass the legislation with bipartisan support, again, to give local communities help in modernizing the facilities? These school buildings in many places are falling down around the students and the teachers.

I have been to schools where there are no playgrounds anymore because the playground has been covered up with trailers. I've been to schools where the facilities are so overcrowded they have to feed lunch in shifts, with first shift in some cases starting at 9:30 in the morning. I've been to schools where the desks have to be rearranged to avoid the ceiling tiles falling on the heads of the students, as they sit at their desks trying to study. I've been at schools where teachers are burdened with 35 students in the classroom.

You know, here we are in an information age when 60 percent of the businesses in America have good jobs that pay good money. And they can't fill them because they can't find the people with the education and the skills that are necessary to fill those jobs. Here we have a debate every single year in America now about whether or not we are going to bust out of the limits on immigration. And I'm for immigration—don't get me wrong. We are a nation of immigrants. But it ought to be an alarm

bell when we have the employers with the best jobs in this country coming every single year, year after year, saying, “We have to go halfway around the world to find people with a college education who can come in and take these good jobs.” We need to educate our own people with the skills needed to seize the jobs of the future and build the future of this country.

Welcome immigrants, yes, but educate our own people and make the investments. Don't just put all the attention on a tax break for the wealthy when our people need good schools and well-trained teachers.

We hear all these people talking about how one way to control crime is to fix up the neighborhoods because it changes attitudes. And yes, that's right, broken windows need to be fixed so they don't convey a message of disorder and tolerance of evil-doing. But if that theory works on crime, why doesn't it work on schools? What message do we send these young people if they walk into a school that's falling down and in disrepair? We need to tell them, not just with words, but with our actions that education is important, and that public education is going to get a commitment and investment.

But this Congress is not only blocking that legislation, they actually tried to repeal our plan to hire 100,000 new teachers. Well, they get an “F” for effort on education, as far as I'm concerned.

...

Al Gore

The University of Maryland

College Park, Maryland

August 24, 2000

Tax Break for Higher Education

...

Now I want to talk about education. Education is the key to our future. We're now in a time when two-thirds of the business leaders in America have said that the number-one obstacle they encounter, when they try to expand and grow, is the shortage of well-trained and well-educated job applicants. They're now trying all kinds of different techniques to remedy that problem, but the main remedy is one that can only be brought about by all of us, as Americans, making a decision that it is time to make the largest investment in education since the GI Bill and make our schools the number-one priority for America's future. That's my objective.

I'll work to open the doors of opportunity for all Americans, with better schools.

I think it's time to start treating our teachers like the professionals that they are. I think it's time to reduce the class size, so there's more one-on-one time modernize the school buildings, have universal preschool for every child in every family expand Head Start.

Now we need to recognize that the kind of education required of teachers, if taken to almost any other profession, now commands a higher salary. If you have a -- if you have a college degree and the extra instruction that is equivalent to the amount of time you need extra, after college graduation, to be certified as a teacher, you look at all of the other professions that require that same amount of education and training,

and all of them earn higher salaries than are paid to teachers.

Now money alone is not the answer. We need new ideas as well as new resources. We need new accountability, new performance measurement; as I said, smaller class size and modern schools and more training and professional development and better approaches.

But we can't solve the problem without new resources, and that's we have got to make it the top priority, because, you know, unlocking the potential of a young mind is something that is really the key to our future.

And education, both secondary and elementary and pre-school, is the start of the process. But then we have got to go on and make it possible for all families to send their kids to college and open the door to higher education to all Americans. I want to make most college tuition tax deductible. I want more student loans and more Pell grants. I want to have middle-class tax cuts to help families put their kids through college. I believe we should have tax-free and inflation-free savings for college tuition.

And when young, hard-working Americans are priced out of the skills they need, we need to address that. You know, there's more computing power today in a Palm Pilot than in the spaceship that took Neil Armstrong to the Moon. I don't care what job or profession you are in, you are seeing new computers, new technologies of all kinds, a new requirement for training. And in fact, that process of change is speeding up, is accelerating, because the amount of human knowledge is now doubling every five years. Now more than ever, for our economy to grow and for our nation to be strong, we need to make sure that everyone has a chance to learn new skills.

I have proposed not only a national tuition savings plan, but also new 401(j) accounts, which would operate like 401(k)s except instead of

being targeted on retirement, they'll be targeted and usable for job training and life-long learning for you personally throughout your life, throughout your career. And you can save it tax free and inflation free to continue your education.

These are the kinds of tax cuts that I pledge to support, tax cuts that create opportunity and strengthen families, tax cuts that make it easier to live out your dreams; affordable, targeted, going to the middle class. But I'll tell you what I will not do. I will not support a giant tax cut for the wealthy at the expense of everyone else, that wrecks our economy in the process. That's wrong! And I will not allow that to happen.

Under the tax plan the other side has proposed -- you may know these figures -- for every \$10 that goes to the wealthiest 1 percent, middle-class families would get one dime, lower-income families would get one penny. If you add it all up, the average family under their plan would get about enough money to buy one extra Diet Coke a day, about 62 cents in change. That's not the kind of change that I'm working for or that you want to see in America.

I'll fight for middle-class tax cuts that go to you and your families, that go to the people who have the hardest time paying the taxes who most need the help, who most need the attention and the priority placed on them, to help them get the skills and learning that they need and the health care they need and the secure retirement they deserve.

So if you really believe that the tax cuts ought to go to the people who really need them, then I need your help. If you believe we ought to make it a little easier for all of our people across the generations to claim a part of the American Dream, then I want your support. I ask for your vote, your enthusiasm. And I also pledge to you that, first, I understand if you entrust me with the presidency, I won't always be the most exciting politician, but I will work hard for you every day and I will never let you

down. I will fight for you!

I know one thing about the job of president; the job of president is the only job in the Constitution that's filled by someone with the responsibility to fight not just for one state or one district, not just for the wealthy and the powerful, but for all of the people, especially those who most need a champion!

Especially those who need someone you can count on. Now, in closing, I want to ask you for one final thing, and I say this especially to all the young people who are here today. When I ask for your support and your vote and your enthusiasm, that's really extremely important because the stakes are high in this election. We need, for example, a president who understands that with three to four appointments coming on the Supreme Court, we need a Supreme Court that reflects our values in this country.

I support a woman's right to choose. We need a president who is inclusive. I support passage of a hate crimes law and strict enforcement of the civil rights law. We need to promote public safety by getting guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them the children, the criminals. But now I want to close by asking you for one more thing, and this is something that's hard for you to give; it's something that's hardly ever given anymore. I want to ask you to open your hearts and allow yourselves to really believe, without reservation, that we can do the right thing in America and be the better for it; push past any fear of disappointment or disillusionment because our nation has always depended on young people in every generation, from our founding forward, with the courage and fortitude to push past the fear that they're going to feel let down, and instead, to take the future in their own hands. That's what you need to do in this year 2000. I will not let you down. But I need your help. I need your help, and I need you to really believe. I want

to fight for you. I want to fight for you families. I want to fight for your future. Together let's make the American Dream real for all of our people.

Al Gore

Columbus, Ohio

September 5, 2000,

Providing Financial Resources for Education

...

Secondly, we're going to be able to take on challenges like that one and the environment and job training and education and all the rest if we keep the economy strong. And keeping the new economy a strong and vital part of America's growing economy is one of the key ways to do that. That's why I'm unveiling tomorrow this comprehensive plan that will be accompanied by a comprehensive budget to show how all of the pieces fit together, to not overshoot the mark with a tax cut for the wealthy that completely overwhelms the surplus, but to give middle class tax cuts.

For example, I want to make most college tuition tax deductible, so that families can afford to send all of the young people in this country to college. I think that we ought to recognize the education is the number one priority for the 21st century.

Not too long ago, I visited a great school here in this area and spent the night at the home of a great teacher, and learned a lot in the process. It was very interesting.

But you know, we have more children in public schools today than ever in history, more than at the height of the baby boom. And 60 percent of all the CEOs in America say their number one challenge that they have to overcome in order to have growth and expansion is to find well-educated, well-trained job applicants. Now, that's the main limiting factor that we have today.

And if you look at how we're stacking up against other countries around the world, it's pretty obvious that we need to do a much better

job.

And since we have an aging population, the average age is now higher than ever in American history, and the voting population is dominated by Americans whose children have already left the schools and others who are too young to have kids in the schools, it's harder for local communities to pass bond issues to finance the schools.

And so there's this financing crisis around the country. That's why I think it ought to be a national priority. I think we ought to look at it the way the World War II veterans did when they passed the GI bill and provided for the baby boomers. We need new educational and job training investments comparable in scale to the GI bill.

We ought to make it the number one priority and start treating teachers like the professionals that they are, and reduce class size, and modernize schools, and have universal preschool for every child, in every family, in every community, all across the United States.

...

Al Gore

October 11, 2000

TV Ad: "College"



[Announcer]:

Big corporations get a tax write-off for education or training for their high-paid executives. But for hard-working, middle-class families, you don't get enough help to afford your kids' college tuition.

Al Gore understands middle-class families need help. \$10,000 of college tuition tax deductible every year to help middle-class families send their kids to college.

[Gore]:

We need help for middle-class families to pay college tuition by making it tax deductible. I'm for a lifelong commitment to education.

(On screen: Al Gore for President; www.algore.com; Paid for by Gore/Lieberman, Inc.)

Al Gore

Democratic National Convention 2000

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Supporting Schools That Innovate

In order to create a world-class educational system for all our students, we must allow experimentation in our public schools to find out what works. The Democratic Party supports expansion of charter schools, magnet schools, site-based schools, year-round schools, and other nontraditional public school options.

Charter schools and other nontraditional public school options can free school leaders, teachers, parents, and community leaders to use their creativity and innovation to help all students meet the highest academic standards. The Democratic Party will triple the number of charter schools in the nation. And, we will ensure that these charter schools are fully accountable - financially and academically - to students and the communities they serve, and that they are indeed making progress in maximizing student achievement. All public schools should have the freedom to design their curriculum within high standards and all public schools should compete for students - and we should start by bringing universal public school choice and competition to our lowest-performing public schools.

Let there be no mistake: what America needs are public schools that compete with one another and are held accountable for results, not private school vouchers that drain resources from public schools and hand over the public's hard-earned tax dollars to private schools with no accountability.

School Choice and Higher Education - Bush

George W. Bush

Bartlett, Tennessee

August 18, 2000

Education Savings Account to Parents & School Choice

...

I hope after that convention, you all got a sense about our priorities in life. Our priorities are our -- is our faith. Our priorities are our families.

Our priorities is a country we love more than anything, the greatest land on the face of this Earth, the great land called America!

Well, the conventions are over and the battle lines are clearly drawn. The voters have a clear choice. They've got one candidate who wants four more years of finger-pointing and politicizing and blaming a candidate who will pit one group of people against another; a candidate who wants to wage class warfare to get ahead.

I've got a different purpose. I've got a different vision of leadership. A leadership is somebody who brings people together. A leader is somebody who finds common ground.

Last night we heard a laundry list of new promises, which I thought was an attempt to cover up old failures.

A long list of promises without priorities. A list of promises without purpose or vision. As much as he tried to separate himself from the squandered opportunities of his own administration, the vice president's speech reminded us of the fundamental choice in this election: Will we prolong four more years of Clinton-Gore, or will we give America a fresh start? And I think this rally today should say loud and clear to the good

folks in Tennessee, and anybody else paying attention, the verdict's in. The people of Shelby County don't want four more years, they want a fresh start for this great country.

You can tell a lot about a candidate by his priorities. My number one priority is improving education in America. Last night my opponent said his first legislative proposal would be for campaign funding reform. And that's fine, although he's a little short on credibility on the issue.

We need to reform our laws. I've got a good vision to do so, and I look forward to working with my close supporter and friend, John McCain, to do so. But my first legislative priority, my first priority will be the education of our children.

I'm running because I want the great American dream to touch every willing heart. I don't want people left behind. I want to assure you all; I want you all to hear me. I'm not running to become the federal superintendent of schools. I don't want to be the national principal. This campaign is rooted on the principle that we trust the good folks of Tennessee to manage the schools in Tennessee.

My legislative priority will be to pass power out of Washington, D.C., with maximum flexibility and authority. My legislative priority will be to convert Head Start into a reading program based upon a curriculum that works, like phonics. My legislative priority will be to give education savings accounts to parents, so parents have got different choices where schools fail. My legislative priority would be what I call to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations, a system that oftentimes just shuffles children through the system without asking whether they know what they're supposed to know -- know. Our priorities are straight. Our priorities are right. And the education of our children will make America the hopeful the country we all want it to be.

...

George W. Bush

Austin, Texas

August 28, 2000

Raising the Education Standards & Giving Choices to Parents

...

It also means Vice President Gore could be president for four years without parents ever knowing how their students were doing on his watch.

Without comprehensive, regular testing, without knowing if children are really learning, accountability is a myth and standards are just slogans. Without real accountability, children will be shuffled through schools. They won't learn how to read and they'll be left behind. And recent studies show us children are being left behind under the Clinton-Gore administration. Without school-by-school report cards containing test data, without giving parents information on student performance, accountability rings hollow.

Secondly, my plan focuses on reading, the most important building block of good education. My goal is to ensure that every single child in America can read by the third grade and continues to read on grade level throughout their entire career.

We will fund reading diagnostic tools for children K-2, and special help for those who need them. We'll fund training for elementary school teachers for reading preparation, and we'll test children to see if they can read 3-8. The states will design the tests, the local jurisdictions will administer the tests.

Seven years in office, my opponent presides over a national tragedy: 70 percent of fourth graders in our highest poverty schools still cannot read, and he's offered little to do anything about it.

Third, my plan gives states and local schools unprecedented flexibility in exchange for measuring results and making them known to parents. My opponent's plan is locked in the old ways: regulation without results, smothering the creativity that will improve American education.

Fourth, my plan reforms Head Start, giving even the youngest children prereading skills. My opponent doesn't support any further reforms in Head Start. He misses an important opportunity to bring our highest hopes to the youngest children. Science proves that children can be learning so much more than they are today, and it proves how critical these early years are.

Fifth, my education plan emphasizes not just the basics of reading and writing, but the basics of character and discipline. We triple the funding for character education and protect teachers when they enforce discipline in the classroom. My opponents offers only vague promises, no specifics and no meaningful requirements for classroom discipline.

Sixth, in my education plan, parents are given real options when schools don't work and won't change. And this gives parents the standing and the clout to make the public school better. A parent with choices is a parent with freedom, a parent with influence to make their children's school better. I also support expanding education savings accounts so parents are encouraged to save for their children's education.

My opponent leaves low-income parents without these choices and is adamantly opposed to the expansion of education savings accounts, something his own running mate supports.

And finally, I have a record of results here in Texas with these ideas in working with both Republicans and Democrats. We've got a good record, achieved the greatest gains in the nation in overall students achievement and in social promotion. African-American fourth graders

and eighth graders rank number-one in the nation in math and writing. Hispanic eighth graders rank number-two in the nation in writing. We've increased funding for public schools by 37 percent per student and increased teacher pay by 33 percent per teacher. We've restored authority to teachers to enforce order in the classrooms.

We're first in the nation for teacher quality. We've authorized the creation of charter schools, which now number 168. We've launched the early reading initiative with reading academies, intensive teacher training, reading diagnostic and reading intervention programs. We made the first Texas investment in Head Start. We made the largest investment in early childhood education in Texas history.

Many have noted Texas's achievement: the Rand Institute, the National Education Goals Panel, the Fordham Foundation and the General Accounting Office.

And my opponent has a record, too. Nationwide, we are spending more on our public school, but the achievement gap between rich and poor, minority and non-minority, has remained the same or grown worse. The most recent NAPE study just released last week is an indictment of the status quo and of the last seven years of neglect for our public schools.

The Education Trust, a nonpartisan organization said -- and I want to quote to you all -- "you might call the '90s the dead-in-the-water decade as far as closing the gap is concerned."

The federal government has turned a blind eye to the gap and to students who most need it by failing to require gap-closing as a condition of the receipt of federal funds.

Vice President Gore offers more of the same, he will not end the status quo because he is the status quo.

...

George W. Bush

Republican National Convention 2000

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Party Platform: Higher Education – Increased Access for All

One of the most profound changes in American society in the last half-century was the opening of post-secondary education to virtually everyone. Competition among institutions has been the key to that success. What began with the GI Bill in the 1940s has now, through student loans and grants, become the best higher education system in the world. Ours is a system in which achievement can count for more than money or social status. Americans are rightly proud of that. Now the challenges we face in the technological revolution and in the global economy require us to continue to expand the extent and excellence of higher education.

That is why both Governor Bush and congressional Republicans have given priority to programs that increase access to higher education for qualified students. The centerpiece of this effort has been education savings accounts — the ideal combination of minimal red tape and maximum consumer choice. Along with that innovation, congressional Republicans passed legislation to allow tax-free distributions from state pre-paid tuition plans, enhance the tax deduction for student loans, and make it more practicable for employers to provide educational assistance to train workers. Unfortunately, that legislation was vetoed. Next year, a Republican president will sign it into law.

Meanwhile, under Republican fiscal discipline, interest rates on federally guaranteed student loans are lower than ever before so student aspirations can reach higher than ever before. Pell Grants, the doorway to learning for millions of low-income families, are greater than ever —

and will become a dynamic force in math, science, and technology when a Republican Congress enacts Governor Bush's proposal to:

Target increased benefits to students taking challenging course in those fields.

Form partnerships with colleges and universities to improve science and math education.

Attract science, math, and engineering grads to low-income schools and areas with shortages of those teachers.

Overall college costs, however, continue to climb, usually far ahead of inflation. Whatever the reasons, these costs squeeze the budgets of the middle class. Many families feel they're on a treadmill, working harder to pay tuition bills that never stop rising. We call upon campus administrators to search for ways to hold down that price spiral; and, in fairness to them, we propose a presidentially directed study on the effect of government regulation and paperwork demands.

At many institutions of higher learning, the ideal of academic freedom is threatened by intolerance. Students should not be compelled to support, through mandatory student fees, anyone's political agenda. The Republican party stands in solidarity with the dedicated faculty who are penalized for their conservatism and also with the courageous students who run independent campus newspapers to confront the powerful with the power of truth. To protect the nation's colleges and universities against intolerance, we will work with independent educators to maintain alternatives to ideological accrediting bodies. We also support a reasonable approach to Title IX that seeks to expand opportunities for women without adversely affecting men's teams.

Youth Culture and Family Values - Gore

Al Gore

July 18, 2000

TV Ad: "Impact"



[Gore]:

Don't ever doubt the impact that fathers have on children.

Children with strong fathers learn trust, that they're wanted, they have value.

Boys learn from their fathers how to be fathers.

I know I did.

(On Screen: The Gore Plan: Promote Responsible Fatherhood)

(On Screen: The Gore plan: Extend Family & Medical Leave)

(On Screen: The Gore Plan: End the Marriage Penalty for working families)

(On Screen: Because home is where America's heart is)

(On Screen: 1-877-leadnow.com, Paid by the Democratic National Committee.)

Al Gore

Bellville, Illinois

September 11, 2000

Entertainment Targeted at Children

...

Joe Lieberman and I are proposing a very large program to help local communities establish, more broadly, high-quality after-school programs so that parents who are working can have a higher level of confidence that their children are not going to get into some mischief or danger and instead will get an enriching experience after school.

I believe we ought to have universal pre-school, expanding Head Start and then going beyond that as well. I think we need more child care. And I think that when parents decide that one of them should stay home longer after a baby is born, it ought to be economically feasible for them to make that choice. We ought to give tax credits for that as well as for child care for working parents.

And in addition, we have to take on the challenge of how the popular culture competes with parents when we try to raise our children. And I bring this up with special emphasis today because today the Federal Trade Commission just released a very troubling report showing that the majority of all underage children are the targets of marketing campaigns by the entertainment industries to persuade them to come and be exposed to mature and adult material that they themselves -- the companies -- have said is not appropriate for children.

We saw, for example, the video game "Doom," that was a source of obsession by the two young men charged with the killing at Columbine High School. We have seen a number of shocking incidents of violence by young people. And in a number of the cases, afterwards they have talked

about their obsession with particularly violent images that they have been exposed to.

Now nobody's for censorship. We have a First Amendment, and we're going to respect and protect the First Amendment. But parents have a right to play a meaningful role in sheltering their children from adult and mature material and explicit violence that their children are not just ready to handle -- are just not ready to handle.

Now here's the essence of the report that came out today.

While these industries have taken some commendable steps to establish policies, such as labeling their material, rating their material, going through the motions of trying to restrict access to children of a certain age, what the study found is that at the same time these industries are establishing these standards and assuring parents that they're going to protect children, the marketing divisions of some of these companies have spelled out in great detail exactly how much money they're spending and how they're going about attracting underage children to come and buy tickets or buy the games or buy the CDs of the very material that the companies themselves have said is inappropriate for children.

In some cases, children as young as 6 are targeted as markets for adult material. In other cases, companies were found to have said in their files, "This is our plan for trying to persuade every 12-year-old in the country to go and see this particular R-rated movie."

Now, if parents are given the assurance by the industry that there's going to be self-restraint and responsible corporate citizenship, and then surreptitiously they're putting ads in teen magazines and advertising on Saturday morning children's programming underneath the parents' radar screen, trying to persuade the kids to get into the -- to see the material or buy the video games or CDs without the parents' knowledge,

that's just plain wrong. And if the retailers are not cooperating with the industry standards, that's wrong, too.

So, Joe Lieberman and I are saying the following three things. Number one, I call on these industries for an immediate cease-fire; stop targeting, advertising for adult material to young children, when you say it's inappropriate for young children.

Secondly, I know that the best solution for this is self-regulation, self-restraint, an industry policy that all of the companies buy into, to stop doing what is clearly wrong. So we're going -- Joe and I are going to establish a six-month period to hold the industry accountable.

If, at the end of that six-month period, there is not yet an acceptable industry response, then we're prepared to go to step three, and that is to evaluate whether additional legislation is needed, not on the content of the material, that's protected by the First Amendment. But false and deceptive advertising is illegal under the current laws, no matter what industry it is.

And if they are saying to parents in one breath, "We're going to work with you and we're going to protect children," and then behind the scenes they're advertising directly to children to attract them to the material they're not ready to handle, that is false and deceptive as an advertising strategy.

...

Al Gore

Democratic National Convention 2000

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Promoting Family Values

Valuing Our Families

Government does not raise children, families do. But government can help make the hardest job in the world - being a parent - a little easier. Today, families come in all different shapes and sizes, but they all face similar challenges. Government should be on the side of parents - making it easier for them to raise their children and pass down their values. With Democrats in the White House, we have passed the Family and Medical Leave law, which has been used by 20 million Americans to care for a newborn baby or a sick loved one. Al Gore led efforts to create the voluntary TV ratings system, to put the V-chip in all new TV sets sold in America so that parents can stop the assault of graphic images in their children's lives, and to insist on a quick and easy way for all Internet users to be able to make offensive web sites off limits to their children.

Balancing Work and Family

If we are to value our families, we have to make much more progress. Strengthening America's families means helping parents make time for their children. We need to find new ways to help parents balance work and family so that they will have time to pass on the right values to their children. Already millions of Americans have benefited from the Family and Medical Leave law, now we need to expand it so that it covers parent-teacher visits and children's routine medical appointments. And we will extend the law to cover more employers so that more working families enjoy this vital protection during times of family and medical

need. We should urge employers to make workplaces more parent-friendly; explore strategies, including voluntary initiatives and policy reforms, that can provide income support for workers during periods of family and medical leave; call on parents to be more involved in their children's learning; and fix the "marriage penalty" so that parents can spend more time at home and less time trying to make ends meet. We should not penalize families by forcing couples to pay more in taxes just because they have made the sacred commitment of marriage to one another. We should also provide grants to community and faith-based organizations to help couples prepare for and strengthen their marriage and relationships, become better parents, and reduce domestic violence.

Al Gore

The Democratic National Convention

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Responsible Entertainment

Parents are struggling to pass on the right values in a culture that sometimes seems to practically scream that chaos and cruelty are cool. Democrats have worked to give parents the tools to have more control over the images their children are exposed to. Parents and the entertainment industry must accept more responsibility. Many parents are not aware of the resources available to them, such as the V-chip technology in television sets and Internet filtering devices, that can help them shield children from violent entertainment. The entertainment industry must accept more responsibility and exercise more self-restraint, by strictly enforcing movie ratings, by taking a close look at violence in its own advertising, and by determining whether the ratings systems are allowing too many children to be exposed to too much violence and cruelty.

Democrats call for the reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine by the Federal Communications Commission. We believe in public support for the arts, including the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Public and private investment in creativity and cultural heritage - the arts and humanities - is an investment in the education of our children, in the well being of our communities, in the strength of our economy, and in spreading the dream of democracy throughout the world.

Al Gore

Democratic National Convention 2000

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Reducing Drug Abuse

Ending the Revolving Door

We have to test prisoners for drugs while they are in jail, treat them for addictions, and break up the drug rings inside our prison system. Drug and alcohol abuse are implicated in the crimes of 80 percent of the criminals behind bars. Al Gore believes we should make prisoners a simple deal: get clean to get out, stay clean to stay out. And this deal should be non-negotiable.

We should do even more to make sure that when criminals leave jail, they leave a life of crime behind. We should impose strict supervision of those who have just been released on parole - and insist that they obey the law and stay off drugs. In return, we should help them make it in the workplace. Al Gore believes that ending the revolving door, in combination with more determined efforts at prevention, will both combat crime and ultimately reduce rates of incarceration that are so tragically high in many communities.

Fighting the Scourge of Drugs and Gangs

We should send a strong message to every American child: drugs are wrong, and drugs can kill you. We need to dry up drug demand, hold up drugs at the border, and break up the drug rings that are spreading poison on our streets. We should open more drug courts, to speed justice for drug-related crimes; double the number of drug hot-spots where we aggressively target our enforcement efforts; expand drug treatment for at-risk youth; and make sure that all of our school zones are drug-free zones - by stiffening the penalties to those who would use children to

peddle drugs, and those who would sell drugs anywhere near our schools. We know that to dry up drug demand, we must provide drug treatment upon demand. To empower communities protect themselves from organized criminal conduct, the Democrats support giving communities relief against gang related crimes. We should be tough on drugs no matter which form they take and should not discriminate in sentencing.

Al Gore

Democratic National Convention 2000

Los Angeles, California

Party Platform: Fighting Drugs and Organized Crime

International drug networks and other organized crime syndicates represent a growing threat to the survival of democratic governance. They breed corruption and lawlessness and they erode the institutions that maintain societal order.

Drug producing nations like Colombia have seen their societies torn apart by the intersection of criminal activity, political discord, and terrorism. And our nation is also afflicted with the violence and hopelessness of drugs. We must continue to combat narco-traffickers, increasing our budget to do so. We must continue to have a strong Drug Czar who can bring together the considerable resources of the U.S. Government in this effort. We must continue to fight those who make the financing of this effort possible such as the money launderers who facilitate the drug trade. We must continue to work with our friends and allies and international organizations to fight the blood money of the drug trade by getting a handle on those nations who turn a blind eye to the financial end of this problem.

We must remember that the drug trade, like other criminal enterprises, fundamentally reflects the economics of hopelessness. Farmers have been drawn to cultivate these crops as a means for economic survival in the absence of other viable alternatives. Al Gore and the Democratic Party understand that no policy of interdiction and prosecution will succeed unless it is combined with robust investment in alternative ways to make a living. We must also build on our efforts to expand the rule of law, fight corruption, and improve democratic

governance.

Youth Culture and Family Values - Bush

George W. Bush

Austin, Texas

June 29, 2000

Marriage Movement

We commend the men and women of The Marriage Movement who have heard the call to strengthen this vital institution. Strengthening marriage will help families and children, build up civil society, boost opportunity, and spread social equality.

Research confirms that marriage benefits spouses, their children, and society. Children, in particular, benefit from being raised in a two-parent family. Through this family structure, children have direct access to the emotional, spiritual, educational, and financial resources of both parents. We are both grateful beneficiaries of strong marriages between and loving and committed parents, and we work every day to try to give the same gift of unconditional love to our daughters.

Today's popular culture - and even government policies - have devalued family and the importance of marriage. Children in single-parent homes are more likely to live in poverty, have problems at school, bear children out of wedlock, and fall victim to the lure of illegal drugs and other risky behavior. These children face tougher challenges in every area of life and at every stage. As a society, we face few greater challenges than to ensure that more of America's children are raised by mothers and fathers in strong, healthy marriages. Being a single parent is one of the toughest jobs in America, and we salute those parents. Ours should be a society that offers them as much support as possible. We must also be a society that prizes marriage, the backbone of the family, and that

helps more marriages succeed.

We believe cultures change one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. Each of us must commit to restoring a pro-marriage culture in America. None of us can be content with merely slowing or stopping the decline in unmarried fatherhood; we must mobilize every sector of society - civic, faith-based, business, education, media, entertainment, health, and others - to reverse it and strengthen marriage. We strongly support the important efforts you are undertaking to strengthen the sacred and vital institution of marriage and to support families.

George W. Bush

July 20, 2000

TV Ad: "New Americans"



[Announcer]:

A lot of new Americans arrived today. They were neither Republican nor Democrat, but someone held them close and hoped. Be healthy. Learn a lot.

It takes leadership to give everyone a shot at the American dream, to make sure every child learns to read, to strengthen Social Security, to keep America strong, to unite -- not divide -- and let every American look at the White House and be proud.

George W. Bush for president.

George W. Bush

The Fraternal Order of Police

Media, Pennsylvania

September 20, 2000

Reducing Youth Crime

...

But let me tell you what else we know. Let me tell you what else we know -- that an educated child is one less likely to commit a crime; that, on the one hand, we'll be tough, but on the other hand, we will not stop until every child in America is educated and no child is left behind.

The men and women who wear the uniform, the brave souls who wear the uniform in America, understand full well that we've got to get it right when it comes to educating our children. They see the hopelessness that occurs when we do not educate the children of America. They know there's an education gap in America that has stagnated over the last seven years. They have reviewed my record. They know that I've got a vision that says we will educate every child, and no child will be left behind.

...

George W. Bush

Videotaped Remarks to the Christian Coalition Road to Victory Luncheon
September 30, 2000

Differences in Issue Positions between Gore and Myself

The road ahead is a lot shorter since I joined you at last year's convention. These are the final days of the campaign - and the final days of the Clinton-Gore era. You and I know there's a lot at stake in this election. Everywhere I go, I see our message taking hold - a message of change, reform, and integrity.

Americans are not asking for bigger, more intrusive government. But they deserve a government that respects their values, and gives them the tools to dream and build and succeed on their own.

On taxes, here is my plan: If you pay income taxes, you get tax relief. If you are a low or moderate income worker, you get the biggest percentage tax cut of all.

We're going to cut the marriage penalty, and get rid of the death tax. And I believe, as a matter of principle that no one in America should pay more than a third of his or her income to the federal government.

My opponent's theory is that only the "right" people should get tax relief. That's what Al Gore called them at his convention, the "right" people. But there are no right Americans or wrong Americans. Tax relief should be aimed at one big target, so you can't miss: they should be aimed at all Americans who pay income taxes.

On the budget, I've offered a detailed plan that includes tax relief, and leaves three of every four dollars of the surplus for urgent priorities: Social Security, Medicare, and prescription drugs, debt reduction, education, health and rebuilding our military so that we can keep the peace.

My opponent has a plan for the non-Social Security surplus: He would spend it on new programs. He would spend it all - and then some.

After a long career in Washington, my opponent is convinced the surplus is the government's money. But you and I know differently, we know the surplus is the people's money.

On education, I have a plan to ensure that every school has high standards, every parent has real options, and no child is left behind.

We are going to restore discipline and safety - giving authority to the teacher in the classroom and the principal down the hall.

The Vice President talks about "the people versus the powerful." But, in all his plans, who ends up with the power? Who always ends up making the choices? Not the taxpayers, but the tax collectors. Not parents, or even teachers, but some distant central office. He says he wants to help "the people." If only he would trust them.

He is trying to have it both ways. But, as Ronald Reagan said, "You can't be for big government, big bureaucracy, and still be for the little guy." Like Ronald Reagan, I believe that the freedom we cherish ultimately depends on the values our families teach.

We must give our children a spirit of moral courage, because their character is our destiny.

We must tell them, with clarity and confidence, that drugs and alcohol can destroy you, and bigotry disfigures the heart.

Our schools must support the ideals of parents, elevating character and abstinence from afterthoughts to urgent goals.

We must help protect our children, in our schools and streets, by finally and strictly enforcing our nation's gun laws. And we must teach our children the values that defeat violence.

Should I be elected, I will lead our nation toward a culture that values life - the life of the elderly and the sick, the life of the young, and

the life of the unborn.

I know good people disagree on this issue, but surely we can agree on ways to value life by promoting adoption and parental notification. And when Congress sends me a bill against partial-birth abortion, I will sign it into law.

Freedom, responsibility, family - this is my message, and before the campaign is over, I will carry it as far and wide as I can. And I need your help. This may be the closest election in 40 years. That means every day will count. Every vote will count. Everything we do will make a difference.

If we work together, we are on the road to victory. We will give America afresh start after a season of cynicism. And next January, should I be fortunate to become the President, when I put my hand on the Bible, I will swear to not only uphold the laws of our land, I will swear to uphold the honor and dignity of the office to which I have been elected, so help me God.

George W. Bush

Republican National Convention 2000

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Party Platform: Children at Risk

Republicans recognize the importance of having a father and a mother in the home. The two-parent family still provides the best environment of stability, discipline, responsibility, and character. Documentation shows that where the father has deserted his family, children are more likely to commit a crime, drop out of school, become violent, become teen parents, take illegal drugs, become mired in poverty, or have emotional or behavioral problems. We support the courageous efforts of single-parent families to have a stable home.

The participation of faith-based and community groups will be especially important in dealing with the twin problems of non-marital pregnancy and substance abuse. Reducing those behaviors is the surest way to end the cycle of child poverty. After-school programs should be fully open to the community and faith-based groups that know best how to reach out to our children and help them reach their true potential.

We renew our call for replacing "family planning" programs for teens with increased funding for abstinence education, which teaches abstinence until marriage as the responsible and expected standard of behavior. Abstinence from sexual activity is the only protection that is 100 percent effective against out-of-wedlock pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, when transmitted sexually. We oppose school-based clinics that provide referrals, counseling, and related services for contraception and abortion. We urge the states to enforce laws against statutory rape, which accounts for an enormous portion of teen pregnancy. We support the establishment of Second

Chance Maternity Homes, like the ones Governor Bush has proposed, to give young unwed mothers the opportunity to develop parenting skills, finish school, and enter the workforce. Because many youngsters fall into poverty as a result of divorce, we also encourage states to review their divorce laws and to support projects that strengthen marriage, promote successful parenting, bolster the stability of the home, and protect the economic rights of the innocent spouse and children. Finally, because so many social ills plaguing America are fueled by the absence of fathers, we support initiatives that strengthen marriage rates and promote committed fatherhood.

The entire nation has suffered from the administration's virtual surrender in the war against drugs, but children in poor communities have paid the highest price in the threat of addiction and the daily reality of violence. Drug kingpins have turned entire neighborhoods into wastelands and ruined uncounted lives with their poison. The statistics are shocking. Since 1992, among 10th graders, overall drug use has increased 55 percent, marijuana and hashish use has risen 91 percent, heroin use has gone up 92 percent, and cocaine use has soared 133 percent. Not surprisingly, teen attitudes toward drug abuse have veered sharply away from disapproval. With abundant supplies in their deadly arsenal, drug traffickers are targeting younger children, as well as rural kids.

Still, there is no substitute for presidential leadership, whether internationally or here at home, where America's families cry out for safe, drug-free schools. A Republican president will hear those cries and work with parents to protect children. We will bring accountability to anti-drug programs, promote those that work, and cease funding for those that waste resources. Equally important, in a Republican administration the Department of Justice will require all federal prosecutors to aggressively

pursue drug dealers, from the kingpins to the lackeys. We renew our support for capital punishment for drug traffickers who take innocent life.

Illegal drugs and alcohol abuse are closely related to the incidence of child abuse. Government at all levels spends about \$20 billion annually on a confusing array of programs to help either the children or adults in abusive or neglectful families. While the largest federal effort is the open-ended entitlements aimed at foster care and adoption, very little is allotted to preventive and family support services. We must decrease abuse caseloads and increase accountability throughout the child protection system. We propose to restructure that system along the lines of our welfare reform success, by combining the separate and competing funding sources into a Child Protection Block Grant with guaranteed levels of funding. This will empower the states to respond more quickly, more flexibly, and with greater compassion to children in peril. We call for the stringent and effective enforcement of laws against the abuse of children.

For many of those children, adoption may be the only route to a stable and loving home. Government at all levels should work with the charitable and faith-based groups that provide adoption services to remove the obstacles they sometimes encounter in their efforts to unite children in need with families who need them.

We call for state and local efforts to help the more than two million children of prisoners through pre-schools, mentoring, and family rebuilding programs. These children are often the ignored victims of crime. Early intervention in their plight is essential to reduce the cycle of violence and to save a child. We should be tough on criminals but compassionate toward our children.

George W. Bush

Republican National Convention 2000

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Party Platform: Renewing Family and Community

Individual rights — and the responsibilities that go with them — are the foundation of a free society. In protecting those rights, and in asserting those responsibilities, we affirm the common good, and common goals, that should unite all Americans.

We are the party of the open door, determined to strengthen the social, cultural, and political ties that bind us together and make our country the greatest force for good in the world. Steadfast in our commitment to our ideals, we recognize that members of our party can have deeply held and sometimes differing views. This diversity is a source of strength, not a sign of weakness, and so we welcome into our ranks all who may hold differing positions. We commit to resolve our differences with civility, trust, and mutual respect.

The family is society's central core of energy. That is why efforts to strengthen family life are the surest way to improve life for everyone. For this reason, congressional Republicans made adoption easier and enacted the child tax credit — and that is why Governor Bush wants to double that credit to \$1,000 per child and increase the adoption credit. It's why we advocate a family-friendly tax code; why we promote comp-time and flex-time to accommodate family needs; and why we advocate choice in childcare. We support the traditional definition of "marriage" as the legal union of one man and one woman, and we believe that federal judges and bureaucrats should not force states to recognize other living arrangements as marriages. We rely on the home, as did the founders of the American Republic, to instill the virtues that sustain democracy

itself. That belief led Congress to enact the Defense of Marriage Act, which a Republican Department of Justice will energetically defend in the courts. For the same reason, we do not believe sexual preference should be given special legal protection or standing in law.

Just as environmental pollution affects our physical health, so too does the pollution of our culture affect the health of our communities. There is much to celebrate in contemporary culture, but also much to deplore: The glorification of violence, the glamorizing of drugs, the abuse of women and children, whether in music or videos, advertising, or tabloid journalism. Still, there are individuals and organizations using their power as citizens and consumers to advance a cultural renewal in all aspects of American life. We support and applaud them.

Their efforts will be critically important in the Information Age, which, with all its tremendous benefits, brings a major challenge to families. When the FBI reports that porn sites are the most frequently accessed on the Internet, it's time for parents at home — and communities through their public institutions — to take action. We endorse Republican legislation pending in the Congress to require schools and libraries to secure their computers against on-line porn and predators if they accept federal subsidies to connect to the Internet. This is not a question of free speech. Kids in a public library should not be victims of filth, and porn addicts should not use library facilities for their addiction. Therefore, public libraries and schools should secure their computers against on-line pornography.