
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: BOYD
SUBJECT: BUSH EDUCATION PLAN CONF. CALL
DATE: 1/25/2001
CC: SIMMONS, RILEY, ZEYT

Members of Sen. Kennedy and Daschle's staff provided commentary about their principal's meetings with Pres. Bush. Kennedy was pleased with Bush's efforts to be sincere and looks forward to the idea that they can work together.

- ❖ Bush's signature in the proposal is the mandatory annual testing in 3rd through 8th grades.
- ❖ Bush told Kennedy that he was "going to take the governors to task on his education proposal."
- ❖ NGA Education policy supports increased Title I and IDEA funding, but does not support vouchers.

Here are the talking points discussed for the Democratic Governors (The idea being that the "Ds" should not take the President on at this time, but allow the "Rs" to distance themselves.):

- ❖ More agreement than disagreement on the Bush proposal;
- ❖ We disagree on some issues (i.e., vouchers), but we hope that the will not serve as roadblocks.

The views from the Senate Caucus are favorable for testing but remain cautious about the details that remain undisclosed. Additionally, the caucus is concerned about the (1) extreme costs of the testing, (2) the focus (or lack thereof) on equity and financial consequences, and (3) how much money will accompany the testing proposal to help low-performing districts.

Ari Flescher, WH Communications Director, has been quoted as saying that the Bush Administration will put \$48 billion in education over the next 5 years. According to Senate staff that would be a devastating cut from the \$20 billion spent annually.

The discussion among Viohl (IN) and Pyke (MD) centered around IDEA not being the top priority in the discussion as it could dominate the discussion and allow other education issues to slip by. The education plan needs to include real investing (\$\$\$) in education not more unfounded mandates.

