

REMARK OF GOVERNOR THOMAS H. KEAN
NJEA'S ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL CONFERENCE
CAPITOL PLAZA
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1984

GOOD AFTERNOON, AND WELCOME TO TRENTON.

THE LAST TIME MANY OF YOU SAW ME IN PERSON WAS AT YOUR CONVENTION THIS FALL. I DIDN'T HAVE THE CHANCE TO SPEAK TO MANY OF YOU THEN, SO I'M GLAD TO HAVE THIS CHANCE TODAY.

I ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO MEET WITH EDITHE FULTON BEFORE TODAY'S CONFERENCE, BUT I HAD TO GIVE HER AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. HER SKIING ACCIDENT FORCED US TO POSTPONE THE MEETING. THE MAKE-UP SESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT WEEK, THOUGH. EVEN WITHOUT THAT MEETING, I HAVE A LOT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.

I'M SURE ALL OF YOU KNOW ABOUT MY PROPOSED REFORMS FOR NEW JERSEY'S SCHOOLS. I WONDER HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE ACTUALLY READ THE PROPOSAL, MY SPEECH TO THE LEGISLATURE, OR THE EXPLANATIONS OF ITS DETAILS? TO BE HONEST, I HAVE BEEN SURPRISED BY THE LEVEL OF OPPOSITION FROM THIS ORGANIZATION --- BECAUSE MY REFORMS ARE DESIGNED TO HELP YOU AND TO MAKE THE PUBLIC MUCH MORE ALERT TO THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR JOB. THIS IS ALSO COMMISSIONER ROSENBERG'S PURPOSE, AND I SUPPORT HIM FULLY.

I WILL RUN THROUGH THE PROPOSAL BRIEFLY. THERE ARE THREE MAIN PARTS.

ONE IS THE ALTERNATE CERTIFICATION ROUTE. BEFORE I SAY ANYTHING ELSE, I WILL EMPHASIZE AGAIN THAT THIS WILL BE AN ALTERNATIVE. IT WILL OFFER A SECOND WAY TO BECOME A TEACHER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS --- NOT THE ONLY WAY. THE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS, TIGHTENED UP AND MADE STRICTER, WILL CONTINUE.

THE ALTERNATE ROUTE WILL REQUIRE A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE IN THE WOULD-BE TEACHER'S SUBJECT MATTER; PROVEN COMPETENCY, TO BE SHOWN ON AN APPROVED STATEWIDE TEST; AND COMPLETION OF A YEAR-LONG, RIGOROUS SUPERVISED INTERSHIP, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF AN EXPERIENCED TEACHER.

THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY SEVERAL OF OUR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS, INCLUDING HAROLD EICKHOFF OF TRENTON STATE, BILL MAXWELL OF JERSEY CITY STATE, GEORGE PRUITT OF THOMAS EDISON COLLEGE, AND ED BLOUSTEIN OF RUTGERS. IT ALSO HAS THE BLESSING OF CHANCELLOR HOLLANDER, WHO HAS MADE SEVERAL VALUABLE SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO REFINE IT. IT HAS RECEIVED PUBLIC ACCLAIM FROM UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF EDUCATION TERREL BELL. I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SECOND ROUTE FOR TALENTED PEOPLE WHO WANT TO TEACH --- A SECOND ROUTE, WHICH IS WHY THIS ALTERNATIVE WILL NOT SUPPLANT THE TEACHER COLLEGES. I WANT TO OPEN POSSIBILITIES, NOT CLOSE THEM.

FRANKLY, I THINK THAT MANY DISTRICTS WILL PREFER TO HIRE TEACHERS FROM THE COLLEGES, AS A MATTER OF ROUTINE, RATHER THAN THROUGH THE ALTERNATE ROUTE. BUT THE ALTERNATE WILL GIVE THEM A CHOICE --- AND IT WILL OPEN THE PROFESSION OF TEACHING TO MANY TALENTED PEOPLE WHO MIGHT DECIDE AFTER THEIR COLLEGE YEARS THAT THEY WANT TO TEACH.

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT PEOPLE MAKE CAREER CHANGES AS ADULTS. MOST CAREER CHANGES DO NOT REQUIRE GOING BACK TO SCHOOL FOR SEVERAL METHODS COURSES WHOSE VALUE IS QUESTIONED AND WHOSE SUBJECT CONTENT VARIES SO ENORMOUSLY FROM COLLEGE TO COLLEGE. YOU ALSO KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT THIS ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION WILL NOT ALLOW ANYONE OFF THE STREETS TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN. ANYONE OFF THE STREETS DOES NOT HAVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE, WILL NOT PASS A SUBJECT TEST, AND WOULD NOT SUBMIT TO A RIGOROUS YEAR-LONG TRAINING PERIOD. AND HE OR SHE WOULD NOT BE HIRED BY A PRINCIPAL OR SUPERINTENDENT OR SCHOOL BOARD IN THE FIRST PLACE.

THE CLOSEST THING WE HAVE NOW TO HIRING JUST ANYONE OFF THE STREETS IS EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION, WHICH IS ALMOST COMPLETELY UNSTRUCTURED OR UNSUPERVISED. MY ALTERNATIVE ROUTE WOULD ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION, AND WOULD GIVEN PARENTS AND FELLOW TEACHERS A MUCH GREATER ASSURANCE THAT INCOMING TEACHERS ARE QUALIFIED TO BE IN THE SCHOOLS.

OUR NATIONALLY KNOWN PANEL LED BY DR. ERNEST BOYER, WILL REPORT BY THE END OF FEBRUARY. DR. BOYER, WHO HEADS THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING, AND RECENTLY PUBLISHED THE BOOK HIGH SCHOOL, KINDLY AGREED TO LEAD THE GROUP'S RESEARCH INTO HOW AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER BECOMES EFFECTIVE.

ONCE THEY REPORT THEIR FINDINGS, I WILL NAME A STATEWIDE PANEL TO DESIGN THE INTERNSHIP, USING DR. BOYER'S REPORT. WE ARE MOVING AHEAD RIGHT ON SCHEDULE --- CAREFULLY AND THOUGHTFULLY.

THE SECOND PART OF MY PROPOSAL IS TO RAISE STARTING SALARIES TO \$18,500, STARTING SEPTEMBER OF 1985. I HAVE HEARD COMPLAINTS THAT THE FUNDS WERE NOT SET ASIDE IN MY BUDGET. WHEN THE ENTIRE PROGRAM IS IN PLACE, THE FUNDS WILL BE IN THE BUDGET --- AND NOT BEFORE. THIS MEANS NEXT YEAR. THE PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN YOU TEACH HAVE SHOWN THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR GOOD EDUCATION, ONCE THEY ARE PERSUADED THAT GOOD EDUCATION IS WHAT THEY WILL GET FOR THEIR MONEY. THE NEW STARTING SALARY WILL BE LINKED TO PASSING THE TESTS. OTHERWISE I CANNOT APPROVE IT.

I AM TRYING VERY HARD TO INCREASE PUBLIC RECOGNITION AND
ESTEEM FOR YOUR PROFESSION. . . MOST PROFESSIONS HAVE SOME KIND OF
ENTRANCE EXAM. . . MOST INVOLVE YEARS ⁼ OF SCHOOL BEYOND THE
UNDERGRADUATE YEARS. THE TEACHING PROFESSION DOES NOT, ALTHOUGH
I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU HAVE GRADUATE DEGREES --- AND THEY CAN
ADD A LOT TO YOUR EFFECTIVENESS. . I DO NOT THINK IT IS
UNREASONABLE TO ASK WOULD-BE TEACHERS TO PASS A TEST IN THE
SUBJECT THEY PLAN TO TEACH. PROVING A KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT
MATTER IS SO MUCH A PART OF EDUCATION THAT IT IS ONLY SENSIBLE TO
ASK ITS NEW PRACTITIONERS TO PROVE THEIRS.

REMEMBER THAT I AM TALKING ABOUT TESTING NEW TEACHERS, NOT
TEACHERS ALREADY IN THE SCHOOLS.

IT IS CLEAR THAT STARTING SALARIES FOR TEACHERS HAVE FALLEN SO FAR BELOW THOSE IN OTHER FIELDS THAT WE ARE AUTOMATICALLY TURNING AWAY TALENTED PEOPLE. MORE THAN THAT --- WE HAVE DEVALUED THE PROFESSION ITSELF. RAISING THE STARTING SALARY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF MY PROGRAM FOR THE SCHOOLS, AND I AM VERY SURPRISED THAT THE NJEA HAS NOT FULLY ENDORSED IT --- ESPECIALLY SINCE I MADE IT CLEAR THAT I WOULD SUPPORT GIVING TEACHERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO EARN AT LEAST THE \$18,500 DOLLARS I PROPOSED FOR NEW TEACHERS, BY TAKING THE COMPETENCY EXAM. AS I SAID TO THE LEGISLATURE: WE MUST NOT PENALIZE THOSE WHO ARE NOW IN OUR SCHOOLS, TEACHING OUR CHILDREN. ANY TEACHER WHOSE SALARY IS BELOW \$18,500 WHEN THE PROGRAM STARTS NEXT YEAR WILL HAVE THE DIFFERENCE MADE UP --- AS LONG AS HE OR SHE PASSES THE SAME SUBJECT MATTER TEST.

AND WHILE WE TALK ABOUT HOW TO REVERSE THE DECLINE OF THE
PROFESSION, IT IS TIME TO DISCUSS THE THIRD PART OF MY PROPOSAL.
THIS IS TO PROVIDE EXPERIENCED TEACHERS WITH CONTINUING
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT --- THE KIND OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT THAT
ALL PROFESSIONALS WELCOME. I HAVE PROPOSED TO SET UP AN ACADEMY
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND MANAGEMENT, FOR BOTH TEACHERS
AND ADMINISTRATORS. THE MONEY FOR IT IS IN THE BUDGET WHICH I
HAVE JUST PRESENTED TO THE LEGISLATURE. I ALSO PROPOSE A PILOT
MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM, TO EXPLORE HOW WE CAN IMPROVE THE
PRESTIGE AND SALARIES OF OUTSTANDING TEACHERS. EDITHE FULTON
SITS ON THE PANEL CHOSEN TO DEVELOP THE PILOT. THE GROUP IS
SCHEDULED TO REPORT AT THE END OF THIS MONTH.

THESE ARE MY PROPOSALS FOR REFORM. THE LEADERS OF THIS ORGANIZATION HAVE OFTEN CRITICIZED AND OPPOSED THEM --- WITHOUT OFFERING ANY ALTERNATIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE TROUBLES WHICH WE SEE IN OUR SCHOOLS. I BELIEVE THAT WE DO HAVE SOME TROUBLE. THE STATUS QUO IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

THERE ARE MANY NEW JERSEY STUDENTS WHO COULD LEARN MORE THAN THEY ARE LEARNING. THERE ARE MANY EXCELLENT TEACHERS IN NEW JERSEY, BUT THERE ARE ALSO SOME TEACHERS WHO COULD TEACH BETTER THAN THEY ARE NOW TEACHING. AND THERE ARE MANY STUDENTS NOW STUDYING TO BECOME TEACHERS WHO HAVE SERIOUS ACADEMIC DEFICIENCIES.

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO DEPEND ON FUTURE COLLEAGUES WHO MAY BE VERY NICE PEOPLE --- BUT WHO DON'T KNOW THEIR SUBJECTS AND CAN'T TEACH THEM? DO YOU WANT THEM TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN? AS A PARENT I ASK YOU: DO YOU WANT TO STAKE YOUR CHILDREN'S FUTURES ON THE WAY SCHOOLS ARE RUN NOW? REMEMBER THAT MANY OF YOUR PRESENT COLLEAGUES WILL RETIRE OR LEAVE IN THIS DECADE, AND IT IS CRITICAL THAT WE REPLACE THEM WITH THE FINEST PEOPLE POSSIBLE.

AS PARENTS YOURSELVES, YOU MUST ASK IF YOU REALLY THINK YOUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IN SCHOOL CANNOT OR SHOULD NOT IMPROVE. REMEMBER THAT YOUR OWN CHILDREN HAVE THE BENEFIT OF A TEACHER AT HOME, AFTER SCHOOL: YOU. MOST OTHER NEW JERSEY CHILDREN DEPEND COMPLETELY ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR INTELLECTUAL, ACADEMIC CHALLENGE, AS THEIR ONLY SOURCE OF QUALITY EDUCATION.

THE HEART OF ALL OUR QUESTIONS ABOUT EDUCATION IS THE FUTURE. THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS TOO COMPLACENT ABOUT ITS PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND COMFORT. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE VICTIMS OF THAT COMPLACENCY.

WE CANNOT DENY THAT WE NEED CHANGES IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. BY REFUSING TO CHANGE, WE CHEAT OUR CHILDREN. WE CRIPPLE THEM. BY DENYING THE NEED FOR CHANGE, WE DENY ^{THE} OVERRIDING VALUE OF EDUCATION IN A CHANGING WORLD. BY REFUSING TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, WE ESPECIALLY SHORTCHANGE CHILDREN WHO CANNOT GET ENOUGH LEARNING AT HOME, AMONG THEIR FAMILIES. IF THE PUBLIC WASTES YOUR TIME WITH STUDENTS, ON TRIVIAL TASKS, WE THROW AWAY THEIR YEARS IN SCHOOL. IF WE WASTE THEIR TIME IN SCHOOL, WE THROW AWAY THEIR MOST PRECIOUS, VALUABLE POSSESSION: THEIR MINDS. AND A MIND IS A TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE.

WE HAVE TO STOP HOLDING BACK OUR FASTEST STUDENTS AND HUSTLING OUT OUR SLOWER STUDENTS. WE HAVE TO REASSERT THAT A NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA MEANS SOMETHING MORE THAN TWELVE YEARS SPENT IN A PUBLIC BUILDING. IT SHOULD MEAN THAT A STUDENT IS ABLE TO USE CERTAIN ACADEMIC SKILLS, AND KNOWS CERTAIN ACADEMIC SUBJECTS.

TO ME, THE WORST --- THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE --- TREND IN PUBLIC EDUCATION IS THAT WHICH SHUFFLES CHILDREN THROUGH THE SYSTEM --- WHETHER OR NOT THEY COME OUT KNOWING ANYTHING. GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS AND GESTURES OF EDUCATION IS NOT ENOUGH. TURNING CHILDREN LOOSE INTO A COMPETITIVE WORLD WITHOUT ANY SKILLS IS A CRIME.

IN AN EVER CHANGING WORLD, THE ONLY WAY TO EQUIP CHILDREN FOR AN UNKNOWN FUTURE IS THIS: TO GIVE THEM THE BEST OF OUR PRESENT KNOWLEDGE, AND THE ABILITY TO QUESTION OUR ANSWERS. MY MOST IMPORTANT TASK AS GOVERNOR IS TO REAFFIRM THIS AS THE MISSION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

AS TEACHERS YOU HOLD ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT AND INFLUENTIAL JOBS IN OUR SOCIETY. AND YOU HAVE A DIFFICULT, DEMANDING, SOMETIMES WHIMSICAL AND ALWAYS CRITICAL BOSS: THE AMERICAN PUBLIC. YOU HAVE A BOSS WHO DOES NOT FULLY RECOGNIZE JUST HOW IMPORTANT YOU ARE. YOUR BOSS DOES NOT FULLY RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF YOUR WORK. IN THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, YOU OFTEN HAVE A BOSS WHO ASSIGNS YOU TOO MANY RESPONSIBILITIES, DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE TOOLS TO CARRY THEM OUT, DOESN'T THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORK, AND NEVER SHOWS UP IN THE WORKPLACE --- THE SCHOOLS. JUST PAYING THE BILLS IS NOT ENOUGH.

HERE IN NEW JERSEY, WE SPEND MORE MONEY ON EDUCATION THAN 47 OTHER STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. AND YET OUR OVERALL, STUDENTS' SCORES AND ACHIEVEMENTS LAG BEHIND MANY OTHER STATES. THIS IS NOT JUST BECAUSE MORE OF OUR STUDENTS TAKE TESTS. THIS ACCOUNTS FOR SOME OF THE GAPS --- BUT CONNECTICUT, OUR NEIGHBOR, WITH MANY SIMILARITIES TO US, SPENDS LESS ON EDUCATION AND GETS BETTER AVERAGE RESULTS. AND MORE OF HER STUDENTS TAKE THE S.A.T. THANK YOU.

RAISING S.A.T. SCORES IS NOT THE ONLY PROBLEM. CLEARLY,
MONEY ALONE IS NOT THE ANSWER. AND EQUALLY CLEARLY --- NO MONEY
IS NO ANSWER. THE PUBLIC IS WILLING TO PAY FOR EXCELLENT
EDUCATION, BUT LIKE ANY CONSUMERS, THEY WANT TO KNOW THAT THEY
WILL GET WHAT THEY PAY FOR.

GOOD EDUCATION DEMANDS SENSE AS WELL AS DOLLARS. I THINK MY
REFORMS ARE SENSIBLE.

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT AMERICAN SCHOOLS --- NEW JERSEY SCHOOLS --- HAVE MANY SERIOUS PROBLEMS. YOU ARE IN THOSE SCHOOLS EVERY DAY. OF ALL PEOPLE, YOU KNOW THE PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOMS AND HALLWAYS: POOR ATTENDANCE, POOR DISCIPLINE, LOW STANDARDS AMONG STUDENTS, AND POOR PERFORMANCE. THESE VARY FROM SCHOOL TO SCHOOL, BUT OVERALL, THERE IS A PERSISTENT AND SERIOUS DROP IN ACHIEVEMENT --- THIS AT A TIME WHEN THE REST OF THE WORLD IS ACCELERATING ITS EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT. IF WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO COMPETE IN THE FUTURE --- TO BE ABLE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES --- WE HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO. ALL OF US. ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS IS THAT SCHOOL-PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN BURDENED ALONE WITH OUR SOCIETY'S COMMON RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ITS YOUNG PEOPLE.

WELL, MANY OF US ARE WORKING NOW TO HELP YOU WITH THAT BURDEN. AND WE'RE DEMANDING THAT PARENTS, STUDENTS, EMPLOYERS AND OFFICIALS WORK HARDER TO FULFILL THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, INSTEAD OF BLAMING FAILURES ON THE TEACHERS ALONE.

THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY IS AFFECTED BY THE PRODUCT OF THE SCHOOLS. THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY MUST PULL TOGETHER TO MAKE THAT PRODUCT EXCELLENT EDUCATION. THOSE WHO ARE BEING EDUCATED NOW WILL BE OUR FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE ADULT COMMUNITY.

YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE MANY GOOD STUDENTS. THERE ARE ALSO MANY WHO DISRUPT THE SCHOOL --- WHO PREVENT EVEN THE BEST STUDENT FROM LEARNING, AND EVEN THE GREATEST TEACHER FROM TEACHING. I AM NOT ONE OF THOSE WHO CITES FIVE-YEAR OLD STATISTICS ON TROUBLE IN THE SCHOOLS. BUT I AM DETERMINED TO SET YOU FREE TO DO YOUR CHOSEN WORK --- WHICH IS TO TEACH, NOT TO POLICE THE CLASSROOM.

I HAVE INCLUDED FUNDS IN THIS YEAR'S BUDGET TO PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION FOR DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS. WE'RE GOING TO TAKE THEM OUT OF THE REGULAR CLASSROOM, WHERE THEY HAVE PROVED THEY CANNOT BEHAVE WELL AND LEARN. I DO NOT WANT TO SEE TEACHERS HINDERED BY IRRESPONSIBLE STUDENTS, AND I DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE EDUCATION OF THE MAJORITY INTERRUPTED BY THE ANTICS OF A FEW.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT MANY KIDS WHO CAUSE TROUBLE IN SCHOOL NEED HELP. SOME ARE JUST PLAIN TROUBLE-MAKERS. WHATEVER THE REASON, THEY ARE NOT LEARNING THEMSELVES AND THEY ARE HOLDING BACK OTHERS. WE PLAN TO PUT THEM IN HIGHLY STRUCTURED PROGRAMS WHICH WILL TRY TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS WITH SCHOOL --- WHILE STOPPING THEIR TROUBLES FROM SPREADING TO OTHER STUDENTS. ACCESS TO EDUCATION IS A BASIC RIGHT. IT IS ALSO A PRIVILEGE AND I DON'T WANT DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS TO ABUSE IT --- OR TO DEPRIVE OTHER CHILDREN OF THEIR RIGHTS.

I AM ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT TRUANCY. IT MAKES NO SENSE TO PRETEND THAT WE ARE EDUCATING CHILDREN WHO AREN'T IN SCHOOL. BUT TEACHERS ARE NOT TRUANT OFFICERS. I DON'T WANT THIS STATE TO WASTE YOUR TIME IN TRACKING DOWN TRUANTS. IN MY BUDGET, I RECOMMENDED FUNDS FOR AN ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. I HOPE THAT THIS WILL BEGIN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF NINETEEN THOUSAND MORE STUDENTS WHO MAY DROP OUT OF NEW JERSEY SCHOOLS THIS YEAR. NINETEEN THOUSAND DROPPED OUT LAST YEAR.

SOME OF A TEACHER'S EFFORTS TO TRACE ABSENT STUDENTS ARE WORTHY PARTS OF A CONCERNED TEACHER'S JOB. I APPLAUD THE DIRECT, PERSONAL EFFORTS WHICH MANY OF YOU MAKE, AND I ENCOURAGE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART. THAT KIND OF ATTENTION CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO A YOUNGSTER WHO THINKS NOBODY CARES. AND IN MANY SCHOOLS, THIS IS BOTH MANAGEABLE AND THE BEST APPROACH.

BUT SOME OF OUR URBAN SCHOOLS, IN PARTICULAR, HAVE AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE RATES A FULL 20 PERCENT LOWER THAN THE STATE AVERAGE. THERE IS NO WAY FOR TEACHERS IN THOSE SCHOOLS TO TRACE ALMOST A THIRD OF THE SCHOOL'S STUDENTS WHO AREN'T IN CLASS. THE PUBLIC HAS NO RIGHT TO EXPECT IT, AND THE OTHER CHILDREN, WHO ARE IN SCHOOL, MUST NOT BE DEPRIVED OF TEACHERS WHOSE FULL ATTENTION IS ON THEIR LEARNING.

THE PROGRAM WE ENVISION WILL INCLUDE AUTOMATIC CONTACT WITH A PARENT OR GUARDIAN AS SOON AS A STUDENT IS MISSED. IT WILL INVOLVE COUNSELING. I HOPE IT WILL FIND OUT WHY THESE STUDENTS HAVE NO USE FOR SCHOOL, AND HOW THEIR NEEDS CAN BE MET. I ALSO ASK YOU TO JOIN ME IN TELLING THEM THAT THEIR TROUBLES WILL GET WORSE IF THEY DON'T GET AN EDUCATION. HELP ME SHOW THEM THAT THEY JUST HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO READ WRITE, COMPUTE AND ANALYSE --- IF THEY WANT DECENT, SECURE JOBS. PLEASE --- GIVE THEM HOPE FOR THEIR FUTURES, AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

I BELIEVE THAT THE ESSENCE OF ALL EDUCATION IS THE DYNAMIC BOND BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENT. I BELIEVE IN TEACHERS, AND I BELIEVE IN YOUR PROFESSION. EVERY TIME I SPEAK ABOUT EDUCATION, I POINT OUT THAT WE HAVE MANY OUTSTANDING TEACHERS IN NEW JERSEY. MY PROPOSALS ARE MEANT TO MAKE YOUR JOB CLEARER AND MORE REWARDING --- BOTH MENTALLY AND FINANCIALLY. I KNOW MYSELF HOW GREAT THE INTANGIBLE REWARDS CAN BE.

I ALSO KNOW HOW STRESSFUL THE TEACHING PROFESSION CAN BE. IT IS UNUSUAL AMONG PROFESSIONS IN REQUIRING THAT MOST OF THE WORK DAY BE SPENT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNGSTERS. THIS CAN BE ISOLATING, ESPECIALLY IN A PERIOD WHEN OUR SOCIETY HAS COMPOUNDED THE PROBLEM BY PUSHING CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH INTO SEGREGATION FROM MUCH OF THE ADULT COMMUNITY.

THIS MAKES IT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR THREE THINGS TO HAPPEN:

ONE: THE REST OF SOCIETY MUST STOP HEAVING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES ON TEACHERS. SCHOOLS ARE NOT SUBSTITUTES FOR CHURCHES, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND AGENCIES. TEACHERS CANNOT PERFORM ALL THEIR FUNCTIONS.

TWO: THE ADULT COMMUNITY MUST WORK TOGETHER TO RAISE OUR YOUTH. THIS MEANS PROTECTING THEM --- EVEN FROM THEMSELVES --- TEACHING THEM, AND OPENING OUR DOORS TO THEM AND THEIR TEACHERS. WE NEED MORE CONTACT AND MORE COOPERATION AMONG ALL SECTORS, JUST AS HIGHER EDUCATION AND EDUCATION ARE NOW WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE COLLEGE STANDARDS.

THREE: THE ADULTS IN THE SCHOOLS MUST ESPECIALLY COOPERATE AND RESPECT EACH OTHER. I WAS DISMAYED, IN SOME OF MY VISITS TO SCHOOLS, TO SEE THAT ADMINISTRATORS ARE STILL SOMETIMES SEEN AS SUPERIOR TO TEACHERS. THIS IS WRONG. IT IS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM AND THE ACADEMY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND MANAGEMENT WILL ADDRESS BY RECOGNIZING TEACHERS AS FULL PROFESSIONALS IN THE CLASSROOMS.

WE MUST TURN AROUND OUR SOCIETY'S VIEW OF TEACHERS. FOR TOO LONG, AMERICA HAS NOT REALLY VALUED LEARNING. AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS ADMIRERD THE SELF-MADE MAN. THE WOMAN WHO EDUCATED HERSELF WITH BOOKS, THE MANY PEOPLE WHO TAUGHT THEMSELVES SUCCESS. MANY OF TODAY'S SKILLS CANNOT BE PICKED UP THIS WAY. AND WITH ALL THE MONEY THAT WE SPEND ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, PEOPLE NO LONGER HAVE TO RELY SOLELY ON THEIR OWN RESOURCES. WE CAN GIVE THESE SKILLS TO OUR CHILDREN.

IT IS TIME FOR THIS NATION TO RECOGNIZE THAT ITS FINEST LEADERS ARE THOSE WITH COURAGE, AND DARING, AND THE TRAINED INTELLIGENCE TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS. WE DON'T NEED ONLY AN ELITE FEW OF THEM. WE WILL NEED MILLIONS OF THEM, AND THE WAY TO FOSTER THEM IS THROUGH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

YOU AND I HAVE DISAGREED IN THE PAST. I'M SURE WE WILL DISAGREE AGAIN --- ON HOW TO IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION. WE AGREE ON ONE THING, THOUGH: THAT EDUCATION AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE VITALLY IMPORTANT TO OUR DEMOCRACY AND THE FUTURE OF NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN. AND SO I ASK FOR YOUR FULL AND OPEN INPUT. I WELCOME YOUR IDEAS. I WELCOME YOUR VIEWPOINTS. I WON'T PROMISE THAT I'LL AGREE WITH THEM, BUT I PROMISE I WILL LISTEN. AND I PROMISE TO DO MY BEST FOR THE SCHOOLS OF NEW JERSEY. WHAT I WILL NOT WELCOME IS AN OBDURATE REFUSAL TO ADJUST, WHAT I WILL NOT PROMISE IS TO CHAIN OUR CHILDREN TO THE STATUS QUO.

AS DISRAELI ONCE SAID, "UPON THE EDUCATION OF THIS COUNTRY, THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY DEPENDS."

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY DEPENDS ON US, AND WE MUST ADAPT TO MEET THAT FUTURE.

THANK YOU.