

From: "Brian R. Besanceney (CN=Brian R. Besanceney/OU=OPD/O=EOP [OPD])"
To: "Sandy Kress (CN=Sandy Kress/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])"; "Margaret M. LaMontagne (CN=Margaret M. LaMontagne/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])"; "Nina Rees (CN=Nina Rees/OU=OVP/O=EOP@EOP [OVP])"; "Sarah E. Youssef (CN=Sarah E. Youssef/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])"
Subject: : RE: e-mail address
Date: Thursday, April 19, 2001 9:03 AM

Begin Original ARMS Header #####
RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)
CREATOR: Brian R. Besanceney (CN=Brian R. Besanceney/OU=OPD/O=EOP [OPD])
CREATION DATE/TIME: 19-APR-2001 08:03:34.00
SUBJECT: : RE: e-mail address
TO: Sandy Kress (CN=Sandy Kress/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])
READ: UNKNOWN
TO: Margaret M. LaMontagne (CN=Margaret M. LaMontagne/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])
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TO: Sarah E. Youssef (CN=Sarah E. Youssef/OU=OPD/O=EOP@EOP [OPD])
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More extensive version of Dept. of Education talking points on TX study.
----- Forwarded by Brian R. Besanceney/OPD/EOP on
04/19/2001 08:01 AM -----

"O'Neill, James" <James.O'Neill@ed.gov>
04/18/2001 07:54:54 PM
Record Type: Record

To: Brian R. Besanceney/OPD/EOP, "Kozberg, Lindsey"
<Lindsey.Kozberg@ed.gov>, Sarah E. Youssef/OPD/EOP, "Walker, Eric"
<Eric.Walker@ed.gov>
cc:
Subject: RE: e-mail address

Revised talking points on "Real Results"

Jim O'Neill
401-0607

-----Original Message-----
From: Brian_R._Besanceney@opd.eop.gov
[mailto:Brian_R._Besanceney@opd.eop.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2001 6:01 PM
To: james.o'neill@ed.gov
Subject: e-mail address

- att1.htm
- Real Results.doc

ATT CREATION TIME/DATE: 0 00:00:00.00
File attachment <P_H35L1004_OPD.TXT_1>

ATT CREATION TIME/DATE: 0 00:00:00.00
File attachment <P_H35L1004_OPD.TXT_2>

**The following document is attachment
P_H35L1004_OPD.TXT_1**

Revised talking points on "Real Results"

Jim O'Neill
401-0607

-----Original Message-----

From: Brian_R._Besanceney@opd.eop.gov
[mailto:Brian_R._Besanceney@opd.eop.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2001 6:01 PM
To: james.o'neill@ed.gov
Subject: e-mail address

**The following document is attachment
P_H35L1004_OPD.TXT_2**

Talking Points on “Real Results, Remaining Challenges: The Story of Texas Education Reform”

[All quotations are from a draft copy of the report, which was commissioned by the Business Roundtable. The final copy will be released Thursday, April 19. The report is embargoed until released]

Reforms in Texas produced real results. White Texans are improving. Black Texans are improving. Hispanic Texans are improving.

- “Poor and minority students have made the most dramatic gains”

This report by the Education Trust confirms what Texans have already discovered. High standards, annual testing, and accountability improve education.

- “The Texas reforms have made a positive difference for students overall, and particularly for low-income and minority children.”
- “Texas has seen dramatic increases in passing rates across all grade levels and subjects on [TAAS], “
- “Texas ranks among the top states on the 1996 NAEP 4th grade math assessment, with Texas students tied for the highest gain in math achievement from 1992 to 1996.
- “the state scored well above the national average on NAEP’s first writing assessment in 1998, with only one state—Connecticut—achieving a score that was statistically higher.”
- “Texas was one of the first states to hold students and education employees accountable for the results of [such] exams.”
- “a unique blend of pragmatism and optimism”

The principles behind President Bush’s No Child Left Behind plan have already produced dramatic results.

- “...dramatic decreases in racial and socioeconomic gaps”
- “The large achievement gaps evident in 1994 have shrunk substantially, from 28 to 17 percentage points for Latino students, from 36 to 21 percentage points for African American students.”
- “The NAEP data are particularly impressive for the state’s African American students, who outscored their counterparts nationally and in every other state on NAEP’s 1996 4th grade math and 1998 8th grade writing assessments. In fact, the state’s African American students matched or outscored White students in seven other states on the 1998 NAEP writing test—a first for NAEP.”
- “Latino students also scored well above the national average, and they outscored their peers in all but one state.”
- “If African-American fourth graders everywhere scored as well as those in Texas, the national achievement gap between White and African American fourth graders in math would shrink by a third.”

- “If African-American fourth graders everywhere wrote as well as their peers in Texas, the national achievement gap between White and African American eighth graders would be cut in half.” (emphasis added)
- “This paper presents compelling evidence that those gains have not come at the cost of higher dropout rates, as some critics claim.”
- “high school completion rates ... are ... above average for African American students” [though below average for white and Hispanic]

Governor Bush and Texas policymakers refused to succumb to the soft-bigotry of low expectations. They held everyone to the same standard, and it paid off.

- “Too many policymakers simply don’t believe poor and minority children can achieve as much as their more privileged counterparts...[Some] have gone so far as to codify those lower expectations into policy, setting lower benchmarks for schools that serve high concentrations of poor students. Education leaders in the Lone Star State have taken a radically different approach.”
- “Until recently, Texas was the only state separately report test scores...for different groups of students, including poor and minority children, while at the same time evaluating schools and districts based on a common test-score target..that must be *met by each group*.” (emphasis in original)
- “Such a policy, which reverses the usual ‘bell curve’ way of thinking about achievement, is nothing short of revolutionary.”
- “Texas...unlike a number of other states, has avoided subsequent pressure to water down its testing system with old-fashioned tests built on bell-curve assumptions about student achievement.”
- “Although Texas had the highest proportion of low-income and minority students among the thirteen participating states, only Michigan achieved a higher average math score. Moreover, Texas had far and away the highest percentage of students reaching both of the upper-performance benchmarks on the TIMSS test.”
- “Texas students are proving, particularly in math and writing, that states with high proportions of poor and minority students need not always score at or near the bottom on such tests as the NAEP and the TIMSS. Indeed, they can achieve at or near the very top.”

Negatives

- “There are still substantial achievements gaps between different groups of students on state tests and NAEP assessments.”
Response: “The good news is that all students in Texas are improving on NAEP.”
- “Too many students—particularly African American and Latino students-- fail to complete high school”
Response: “Completion rates in Texas actually have been increasing... Moreover, that improvement bucks [a] national trend over the same period.”

- Teachers in Texas might teach to the test.

Response: Texas students have also done better on NAEP. It is very hard to teach to NAEP because “each NAEP subject exam covers a very broad range of topics and is administered only to a representative sample of students, which means that teachers anywhere would have difficulty ‘teaching to’ NAEP in objectionably ‘narrow’ ways.”

President Bush said, “Critics of testing contend it distracts from learning. They talk about teaching to the test. But let’s put that logic to the test. If you test a child on basic math and reading skills, and you’re teaching to the test, you’re teaching math and reading. And that’s the whole idea.” (Address to Joint Session of Congress)

Notes: *The Business Roundtable commissioned the Education Trust to examine the results of education reform in Texas. Craig D. Jerald, senior policy analyst of the Education trust, examines results from TAAS, NAEP, TIMSS, and other sources to evaluate the success of reform efforts since 1980. He also takes on, and largely refutes, recent Yankee attacks on Texas results.*

“The Business Roundtable is an association of chief executive officers of leading corporations with a combined workforce of more than 10 million employees in the United States. The chief executives are committed to advocating public policies that foster vigorous economic growth and a dynamic global economy. Improving education performance in the United States is one of the chief executives’ top public policy priorities.”

“The Education Trust was created to promote high academic achievement for all students, at all levels, kindergarten through college. While all schools and colleges could better serve their students, the Education Trust’s work focuses on the schools and colleges most often left behind in efforts to improve education: those serving low-income, Latino, African American, and Native American students.”