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FOIA Number: 2006-0613-F

Scope and Content Note:

The materials in FOIA 2006-0613-F are a selective, not necessarily all inclusive, body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. FOIA 2006-0613-F contains materials related to George Bush's commitment to education reform while serving as Vice President and President. Under direction from President Reagan, the Department of Education and the Office of Policy Development organized a White House workshop in support of choice in education. Vice President Bush, along with other governmental leaders, addressed the group. Panels 2006-0613-F 2 composed of students, teachers, scholars, principals and other education specialists contributed their expertise during this workshop held in Washington, DC. During Bush's presidency, a cooperative effort between the U.S. Department of Education and the White House Office of Policy Development created the National Education Goals Panel which, in turn, authorized the creation of the National Education Standards and Assessments Council. This entity established national education content and performance standards in addition to a voluntary system of assessments of those standards. Additionally, five regional strategy meetings on choice in education were held across the country to serve as a think tank for government officials. Using information gained from those sources, Bush proposed the G.I. Bill for Children which he based on the original G.I. Bill which gave scholarships to veterans to use at any public or private college of their choice. The purpose of this bill was to empower parents by allowing them, not the government, to decide where to educate their children. President Bush proposed that \$1,000 annual scholarships should be given to each child of middle- and low-income families which would enable them to send their children to any lawfully operating school be it public, private or religious. The goal was for the scholarships to help defray the expenses for the parents, thus allowing school choice. Any state or locality could apply for federal funds to award the scholarships to qualifying families. Each state and locality would establish its own definition of "middle- and low-income" parameters to determine eligibility. Many types of documents comprise the Bush Presidential portion of this FOIA. There are government forms which include property pass forms documenting borrowed equipment from the Executive Office of the President, fax cover sheets which transmitted information about meetings, and White House Staff memoranda which requested and documented actions on the transmitted information. Many letters are present, including those from Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander and President Bush to members of Congress regarding the president's education reform proposals as outlined in the G.I. Bill for Children. There are numerous memos between staffers discussing budgets, logistical arrangements, and staffing assignments for meetings of the National Education Goals Panel as well as issues related to the education reform bill. Reports to Congress on the status of the national education goals are present. Multiple lists address panel meetings and contact information for private elementary and secondary school organizations, summaries of President Bush's accomplishments in education, and his events related to education. There are texts of remarks made by President Bush at several venues on choice in education. Numerous drafts and final versions of papers are present and include the Bush Administration's education reform agenda, the legislative proposal for the G.I. Bill for Children, a section-by-section analysis of the legislative proposal, talking points on the proposal, forms of school choice, comparisons of neighborhood school's improvement bills, several states' proposals on parental choice in education initiatives; private funding for parental choice, business and parental involvement in education, and state-by-state summaries of education programs and initiatives. Other topics include national student testing, parameters and descriptions of measuring tools for evaluation of program effectiveness and curriculum standards, and early childhood assessment and school readiness, including an analysis of Head Start's effectiveness. Copies of The Federal Reporter newsletter list federal court decisions on educational choice, and the Congressional Record contains a conference report on S. 2 (the Neighborhood Schools Improvement Act). Notable publications in these holdings include The National Education Goals Panel's Handbook for Local Goals Reports: Building a Nation of Learners; National Education Goals: Options For Measuring Student Achievement; The National Education Goals: A Report to the Nation's Governors Executive Summary; National Education Goals Panel: Public Response to the 1991 Goals Report; 1990 Annual Report for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and the National Education Goals Panel's Handbook for Local Goals Reports. Multiple news releases are present and cover national goals for education, proposed federal grants for state and local G.I. bills for children legislation, President Bush's speech during the announcement ceremony for the education legislation, and multiple education- based topics. Various newspaper clippings and magazine articles report similar topics. Lastly, briefing books used during meetings of the National Education Goals Panel and National Assessment Governing Board are included in these holdings. These briefing books contain agendas, lists of panel members and representatives who attended the meetings, calendars of scheduled activities and major events, topic papers, progress reports, descriptions of outreach activities, and lists of federal programs addressing the national education goals. 2006-0613-F 3 Bush's Vice Presidential records are comprised of letters, an agenda, budget, papers, lists, speech cards, news releases, and president-elect remarks. They are all related to the White House Workshop on Choice in Education which was held in Washington, DC. A large segment of this FOIA is held in Rae Nelson's and Doreen Torgerson's Staff and Office files of Bush Presidential Records. Nelson served eight years on the White House Policy Development staff, including the position of Associate Director for Education Policy. Torgerson served as a policy analyst under Nelson. Nelson's holdings contain primarily government forms, letters, memos, lists, presidential remarks, papers, newsletters, publications, news releases, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, and briefing books. The primary focus of Ms. Nelson's holdings relate to the National Education Goals Panel which was established by President Bush and the nation's governors in July 1990. Panel members were charged with overseeing the development and implementation of a national education progress reporting system. Torgerson's holdings largely mirror those of Ms. Nelson and also include a huge volume of handwritten notes - primarily taken at meetings of the National Education Goals Panel. Significant records in the Quayle Vice Presidential portion of this FOIA include a major speech he delivered at the Richmond, California regional strategy meeting and a list of education reform measures he accomplished while serving in the Senate. The Federal records documents are mainly related to the Richmond, California regional strategy meeting. Present are pamphlets, schedules, memos, diagrams, a paper, an excerpt from The Federal Register, a draft and final versions of a speech, and some publications for parents and students.

Processed by: Staff Archivists, December 2010. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.