The Stakeholders Forum convened at 9:30 a.m. in the Barnard Auditorium at US Department of Education Headquarters, 400 Maryland Avenue, Southwest, Washington, DC, Massie Ritsch, Moderator, presiding.

PRESENT:

MASSIE RITSCH, Moderator

ARNE DUNCAN, Secretary of Education

MARGOT ROGERS, Chief of Staff

JOE CONATY, Senior Officer in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

CARMEL MARTIN, Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development

ROBERT SHIREMAN, Deputy Undersecretary
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome, Massie Ritsch 3

Opening Remarks, Arne Duncan 5

Introduction of ED Senior Staff, Margot Rogers 12

ARRA Update, Joseph Conaty 24

ESEA and Listening Tour, Massie Ritsch Carmel Martin 36

Budget and Appropriations Issues, Carmel Martin 51

Higher Ed Update, Robert Shireman 58

Wrap-up Q/A and Future Agenda Items, Massie Ritsch 85

Adjourn 87
MR. RITSCH: Good morning, everybody. Please find a seat, grab a pastry, grab some coffee.

We're very glad you're here. I've been talking to a few folks that feel -- for some of you, a little bit of a reunion here this morning. So glad to have you back.

I'm Massie Ritsch. I'm the Deputy Assistant Secretary for External Affairs and Outreach here at the Department.

Welcome to the first of what we hope will be almost monthly meetings, forums for education stakeholders like yourselves. On the way in, I hope you picked up a copy of our very full agenda for this morning, as well as a roster of our senior staff whom you'll meet today.

We'll have opportunities throughout the forum for your questions and your comments. Remember to speak into the microphones here at either side of the room as
this meeting is being transcribed and recorded and broadcast here at the Department.

I also hope that you picked up an evaluation form that you can leave behind and let us know how we're doing with these meetings so we can plan for the future. And also available at the resource table at the back is the Administration's education agenda summarized and President Obama's cornerstone speech on education as well as Secretary Duncan's recent speeches on the importance of data and common standards and what he's doing to support initiatives in those areas.

On Monday morning, at the Washington Convention Center, the Secretary will be speaking about the urgency of turning around schools where students most desperately need help and we'll be making that speech available as well once he made it.

For the last six weeks, Arne has been traveling the country on his listening and learning tour which we'll talk more about later. He's been meeting with the folks that
you represent in many states. And in his meetings with America's students, they invariably have asked him to very critical questions on their minds. First, how will you help me get the education necessary to realize my dreams and to successfully go where I want to go in life? And two, when you and President Obama play basketball, who wins?

(Laughter.)

This morning we were able to grab him while he's in town to talk with you as he has in recent months on the Recovery Act and the proposed budget for 2010 and other issues. So here he is, ladies and gentlemen, Secretary Arne Duncan.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY DUNCAN: Thanks so much and I just appreciate all of you taking the time to come here together with us and those evaluations that Massie talked about are really important. The last thing you want to do is waste your time. We want to start to get into a rhythm of this, do it basically
every month and let us know what works, what
doesn't, what helps us move forward.

A couple of quick thoughts, first
of all, Margot later is going to introduce a
bunch of our team and I just want to say
publicly I couldn't be more proud of the team
that is coming together. We have an
extraordinarily talented career staff that
sort of continues to amaze folks out in the
field, how quickly we're turning around the
stimulus applications. And lots of people say
this is now how the federal bureaucracy is
supposed to work. You're moving too quick.
And that's the kind of things you like to
hear. And then we're just trying to build
around that team and bring in great folks
around the country from many, many different
walks of life.

And we have folks that are just
extraordinarily smart, tough, committed,
passionate, many making huge financial
personal sacrifices because they're really
mission-driven and see the magnitude of this
opportunity we have before us.

So I want to thank in advance all these folks who have joined the team and it's probably one of the things I'm most proud of so far is being lucky enough to bring in folks of that caliber.

I really see the interaction of you of trying to build a real partnership and I want you to hold us accountable and push us and when you see us make a mistake and doing something that doesn't make sense, absolutely challenge us. That's your role.

I also see us trying to work together. We're going to likewise push you. I see us working very, very hard to drive this reform agenda. I think we're all here because we know how far we have to go and knowing we're good enough as a country where the status quo is good enough and we can just sort of maintain.

And so at every level, every child, K to 12, higher ed., we're trying to get a lot better. We're trying to get a lot better
fast. We all hope for eight years. We sort of have to think in blocks of four. You can't bank on eight, so can we fundamentally change things in this next four years and change things in the next four decades. That's really how we're thinking.

One small example, it has just been fascinating the past week and we've been pushing for more good charter schools, not more charter schools, but more good schools. You see in a state like Tennessee, because we have some resources on the table, where this thing was absolutely dead, Tennessee -- I don't want to get ahead of myself, is basically in the process of reversing themselves because they have called themselves back in legislative session. It has never before happened in the history of the Tennessee legislature supposedly, to think about taking lots of kids off these waiting lists, lots of poor kids off these waiting lists and giving them a chance to go to some of these schools.
It's interesting that the role that we can potentially play using our resources, using the bully pulpit to try and drive change. I think that's what we're all here to do.

There is obviously a tremendous amount of activity going on trying to get the Stimulus money very, very fast and again, our career team has done an unbelievable job of that trying to make sure that we're using that money wisely, starting to think through where we go with NCLB reauthorization. I'm learning a tremendous amount through the listening and learning -- I'll give a summary of where we're at, probably a third of the way through that, but everywhere I go I learn something. It's been inner city Detroit, it's been rural Vermont. It's been an Indian reservation in Montana that was absolutely fascinating, so just a real diversity of experiences that have been great.

I'm starting to think through where we go on that. Obviously, we have Race to the
Top funding coming out. We have the Innovation and What Works funding coming out. So the next couple of months are going to be pretty exciting here. And I just want to work with you to try and get the kind of dramatic fundamental change. All this stuff for me, it's really not about the money -- it's a lot of money. We're thrilled to have it. But this money is going to come and go. Can we leverage these resources to get the kind of fundamental change we need that will last long after the last, when these dollars are spent.

And so the more we can partner, the more you can push us, but I'll also push you to really be working with the states, with the districts, to be thinking about how we use this money creatively and wisely and how we don't just invest in the status quo. And yes, we want to save hundreds of thousands of teachers' jobs, but if that's all we do, we miss this sort of historic, historic opportunity.

So the more we're communicating,
the more we're sharing best practices. I spent Sunday and Monday with about 25 of the nation's Governors, with Jim Hunt in North Carolina, the Hunt Institute. And it was just amazing. It was unbelievably motivating. These Governors, they care, they're passionate, they want to do the right thing, but obviously, they have a million things on their plate. They don't always know what the right thing is and they're hungry for knowledge, they're hungry to learn; many of the state school chiefs there as well. But the more we're sharing what's working, the more pushing out best practices, the more challenging folks if it's happening over here, why can't you think about it, why do we continue to think the way we always did. The more you guys can help us be conduits to really push that message out there, that would be extraordinarily helpful.

So again, thanks for your time. Hopefully, this will be a really good day, but give us again your candid feedback, your
honest feedback and we want to get better and better at this as we get into a rhythm going forward.

Thanks so much. It's now my honor to introduce my Chief of Staff, Margot Rogers.

Margot?

(Applause.)

MS. ROGERS: So I have the privilege of introducing our political team. Before I do that, I want to acknowledge the people that I'm not introducing, so I'm not here to introduce all the leaders in the organization and Arne alluded to the fact that we have a tremendous group of career service folks who have been working their hearts out over the last 22, 23 weeks and for some, the last 20 years. But as we've adopted an ambitious agenda and are moving forward on many, many fronts, we have people who are working extraordinarily hard and we're very, very grateful.

I want to call particular attention to two folks who helped put today together.
I'm hoping that you know these people: Karen Stratman-Krusemark, sitting over here to my left, to most of your right, and Anya Smith, and we're grateful for the work they did to put together this day.

(Applause.)

As Arne said, we're committed to do this roughly every month. Keep us posted on what's working and what's not working, particular topics you're interested in hearing about, we will hypothesize from our side what those are, but if there are special ones, let us know, we'll work to put together a program that meets your needs.

But I do get the real honor of introducing the political team, the sort of senior leadership of our political team that we're building and as Arne said, we feel lucky every single day to be working with such a talented and special group of folks. So these are alphabetical. We're missing a few people who are traveling. We have pictures of most of them so that you can keep track of who they
are. But we'll start with Russlynn Ali. I'm going to ask people to stand.

Russlynn is our Assistant Secretary in the Office of Civil Rights. She has held senior positions at the Education Trust, Children's Defense Fund, and has worked at the Broad Foundation. We're thrilled to have Russlynn with us.

Next, Jo Anderson who is a Senior Advisor to the Secretary. Jo is the former Executive Director of the Illinois Education Association. He is responsible on our team for lots of issues involving teachers and leaders, and as you know, those are front and center. Thanks, Jo.

Glenn Cummings, who I believe is in Jordan today leading a bilateral conversation on community colleges. He's the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education, the former Speaker of the House for Maine, and also a former employee at Southern Maine Community College.

Peter Cunningham. Peter is our
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Outreach. He previously served as Arne's Communication Director in Chicago.

Greg Darnieder. Greg is a Special Advisor to Arne as well. He is playing point on college access issues and issues around multiple pathways to graduation for all students.

John Easton. John is our Director of the Institute for Education Sciences. Many of you know John's work as the Director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research. He also did a stint some time back in Chicago public schools. He has deep assessment and evaluation experience.

Gabby Gomez. I know Gabby was coming from another meeting and we don't have a picture of her, so maybe she'll pop in. Many of you probably know Gabby. She's been in D.C. for a while. She's the Assistant Secretary for Legislation and Congressional Affairs. She was previously the lead policy advisor on higher education for the Committee
on Education and Labor for George Miller. She also spent some time at AFT and many of you have probably crossed paths with Gabby over the years.

Peter Groff. Peter is our Director for the Center on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Peter is the former president of the Colorado Senate and has been a legislator in Colorado for some time.

David Hoff. David is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Communications Development in the Office of Communications and Outreach. You probably have read David's work over the years, spent a number of years at EdWeek and has written for many educational-related and other publications on education issues.

Lloyd Horwich. Lloyd is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation and Congressional Affairs. He has both Senate-side and House experience, most recently as the Education Counsel and Policy Advisor to the Health Committee on Education and Labor
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education.

Stacey Jordan. Stacey is our Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, working with state chiefs, superintendents, state and local elected officials. Stacey comes to us directly from the ed sector, but has also spent time at the New York City Public Schools and as the education advisor to the Mayor in Providence, Rhode Island.

Carmel Martin. Carmel is up here.

Carmel is the Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, otherwise known as OPEPD. Say that ten times fast. She has extensive Hill background, as you all probably know, most recently as the general counsel and chief education advisor to Senator Ted Kennedy.

Melanie Muenzer. Melanie is our White House liaison. The White House liaison is responsible for political appointees in the Department. She's also responsible for filling all of our boards and commissions. So
she's probably talked to lots of you over the last 20 weeks. Thanks, Melanie.

Sam Myers. Sam is our Director of Scheduling and Advance. He's essentially appointed scheduling for all events and appearances for Arne.

Diane Piche. Diane is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Enforcement in the Office of Civil Rights. She hails most recently from the Citizens Commission on Civil Rights, is a recognized expert on civil rights issues and also issues connected to both title I and ESEA, more broadly.

Massie Ritsch, from whom you heard earlier. Massie is our Deputy Assistant Secretary for External Affairs and Outreach. He will focus on external outreach to people like you, various associations, think tanks, and corporations and most recently was at the Center for Responsive Government.

Steve Robinson. Steve Robinson is a Special Advisor to the Secretary focused on STEM issues. Steve most recently was
President Obama's Education Advisor when he was in the Senate.

Charlie Rose. Charlie is our general counsel, previously advised Illinois' leading education and business organizations on matters of education reform and legislation. Has worked with many school districts in Illinois. He brings vast experience on that front.

Juan Sepulveda. Juan is the Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. Most recently came from the Common Enterprise which he founded in 1995. It's an organization that's committed to kind of fundamental community development and building partnerships to ensure successful communities, including lots of education work. Thanks, Juan.

Jim Shelton. Jim is the Assistant Deputy Secretary for the Office of Innovation and Improvement. As such, he comes to us from the Gates Foundation. As such, he serves as
our lead for ARRA, What Works in Innovation Fund and in addition, as you probably know his shop has a wide-ranging set of programs around charter schools and many others. Thanks, Jim.

Bob Shireman who is up on stage is the Deputy Undersecretary. Bob will be working on higher education issues, has a long history including being in Washington during the Clinton Administration and back in California working on post-secondary education issues, financial aid and access.

Mike Smith who needs no introduction to most of you, I think. Mike is a Senior Counselor to the Secretary running point on a range of policy matters, largely K-12 and is also serving as a connecting point for our Office of International Programs.

Joanne Weiss. Joanne is the Director of the Race to the Top. She most recently served as the partner and COO for the New Schools Venture Fund based on California.

Ann Whalen. Wave your hand, Ann. Ann is a Special Assistant to the Secretary
focused mostly of late on a range of K-12 policy issues including the ARRA metrics and turnaround strategies.

John White. Behind the column for me. John is the press secretary. Most recently served as the Chief Communications Officer for the Prince George's County Public Schools.

Judy Wurtzel is back for another stint at the Department, this time as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. She's working on a range of ARRA-related issues including technical assistance and is also working on many K-12 policy issues.

Matt Yale, who is not here today. I actually don't think we have a picture of him either. Matt is the Deputy Chief of Staff. He was previously with Chicago's Ariel Capital Management. Was very instrumental in the transition process of Arne's moving from Chicago to here and runs point on many, many things I'm sure many of you have seen Matt out
and about in Washington.

We have four people we wanted to flag who are on their way to the Department, one of whom is here in a different capacity. Kevin Jennings is our Assistant Deputy Secretary for Safe and Drug-free Schools. He is the founder and former Executive Director of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

Martha Kanter, our nominee for Under Secretary is the current Chancellor of the Foothill De-Anza Community College District which is one of the largest community college districts in the country, obviously in California.

Thelma Melendez, our nominee for Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, she's the current Superintendent of the Pomona Unified School District.

And Tony Miller, who is in the back, is an advisor, serving as an advisor to the Secretary. He is our Deputy Secretary
nominee and he has a great deal of experience as a manager and a strategist for many companies around the world and comes with having done much work with the L.A. Unified School District as well.

So that's the team. Thanks, everybody.

(Applause.)

Yes, so we have selected somebody who is working his way through the vetting process right now.

So if there's an office that a name doesn't show up here, a senior-level person, it either means, one, we're working through the vetting process, and I assure you there are a number of people who are in that stage right now, or it means that we haven't yet filled the position.

So at this point I want to introduce somebody who I suspect needs no introduction, Joe Conaty, who is our Senior Officer in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. Joe knows more about
things at the Department than probably most people in the room combined and I mean that with all respect to Joe and no disrespect to anyone else.

Joe, thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CONATY: Good morning, everyone. Before I start, I wanted to say a few words to create a conceptual framework that the Administration has been working under because in some settings like this where you get updated on a lot of things, it's quite easy to lose the coherence that underlies all of the separate initiatives.

And the Secretary in our meetings with us has been very clear. What we're trying to do is to use this unique opportunity to improve education for children, particularly those who haven't had a fair shake, who come from challenging circumstances, challenging economic conditions, difficult community situations, anything that in some ways can hold a child
What the Secretary has said is we have to use this unique historic opportunity to change the lot of all children, but particularly for these children in those circumstances.

And we've been focusing on essentially four strategies that really are directed toward that common goal of improving achievement. The strategies were articulated in an April 1st or March 31st letter from the Secretary. But basically, it's easy to remember them. If you think about what goes on in the classroom and in the school, the basic content of instruction, content standards, performance standards, opportunity to learn standards, diagnostic assessments, formative assessments, outcome assessments, all of the standards and assessments really are designed to improve the quality of instruction.

What's next? The next is you need an effective teacher. You need a teacher who
knows the subject matter, knows good pedagogy. Importantly, to reach the first goal, those quality teachers, effective teachers, have to be equitably distributed across districts and schools. So you've got the content, you've got the teacher. Then you've got the context.

The Secretary has been very clear that what we have to do is focus our efforts on turning around struggling schools, those schools that for the better part of our lifetimes haven't shown real gain, haven't shown real improvement, are in fact, located sometimes in rural areas, sometimes in inner cities, sometimes in suburbs, they're all over, that haven't done a good job of educating children, and really create a national focus on turning around those schools.

How do we know how we're doing? That's the fourth priority. Transparency around data, transparency about keeping high-quality records that link across the life course of the child so that we really know how
kids are doing as they progress through the education system.

So what I'm going to talk about are particular programs, but all of them we've tried to leverage, guided by two things, supporting what works from research and also fostering and encouraging innovative practices, things that we know work, but also have shown promise of producing great gains for these children.

So let me start with the Stabilization Fund. Right now, 41 of the states have applied for the Stabilization Fund. Those 41 states, not all of them have been announced yet, but we expect to receive the remaining applications by the July 1st deadline. To characterize those very broadly, what you see is about a 4 to 1 ratio of the dollars. About $4 in elementary and secondary education for every $1 in higher education. That basically echoes what you see in state budgets around the country.

One of the things we've heard quite
consistently in our phone conversations with states are the challenging circumstances. State budgets tend to be lagging indicator of economic hardship, so we're getting a lot of calls now about FY 10, how do they revise their applications, and so on. All of the applications that we've funded and have been announced are up on our web page and I would encourage you to look at them.

There's also within that Stabilization Fund a category called Government Services. If there are general trends in that category, they're spending quite a bit on public safety. They're also spending quite a bit on education and I would guess about a quarter of it is undetermined. They're going to decide what to do with it as they see their out-year needs.

I don't suspect we'll have any trouble with the remaining applications. The process has gone quite smoothly.

Now let me turn to the second phase of the stabilization program. As you know, we
announced that we were going to develop
metrics and have states apply for the second
phase of the money, approximately a third,
based on assurances about the metrics. The
basic outline of that strategy are the four
things I articulated earlier. We have been
working quite diligently to develop a notice
for public comment around the details of these
metrics. If I have one piece of advice, if I
can leave you with one message this morning,
stay in touch with our web page. There's
going to be an awful lot in the next month.
If you don't have the time, have somebody on
your staff -- I would not let two days go by
without checking it.

The amount that's in the queue, and
that's geared to come out over the next few
weeks is quite startling. But I would say to
you is in terms of the second phase, as part
of the Secretary and the Administration's
commitment to transparency, we are going to
whenever possible to take public comment, get
public input, so that these investments are
guided with public involvement and your involvement. That's why I encourage you to stay in touch with the web page. It's not just so that you are informed, it's so that you participate in a meaningful way in these activities.

Let me just run through some of the things that are coming through. One doesn't have anything to do with the money, but it is the waiver guidance on Title I. That's an important thing we've been asked about, what kind of waivers the Department would allow, given this sort of unprecedented run up in the Title I IDEA funding.

The next things -- and these are in no particular order -- are the school improvement grants. As you know, we've got a substantial increase, $3 billion, and we've been working to try and target those monies because of the dramatic increase in those fundings. The ordinary way of expanding those fundings won't work to the advantage of the education community, so we've tried to develop
some guidelines that will target those monies and have it be focused on struggling schools, but still allow sufficient local flexibility to meet local needs. And that notice for public comment will be out shortly.

Also, the second phase of the stabilization, those metrics will be out shortly. Now I've got to check the list.

The next big thing that's going to happen in terms of the money is, of course, all of the title programs get their July 1 allocations. Title I, IDEA, after school programs, Title II, all of those monies are scheduled to go out on time and we will meet the ordinary July 1 deadline.

Right now, open on the street are the Teacher Quality Partnership competition that Jim Shelton and his colleagues are running from that office.

The State Longitudinal Data System competition will be out shortly. What else?

Why don't I stop. I'm sure you have questions. Why don't we have some
questions and then we'll stop and we'll let others speak about the coming.

Hi, Jim.

PARTICIPANT: Hi, Joe. And congratulations to all of you for holding this stakeholders' meeting. It's really important.

On the School Improvement Fund that you're getting ready to send guidance out for, are there provisions for evaluating or trying to gather more data in a systematic way about how those funds will be used and how we might learn from the use because it's such a significant piece in turning around low-performing schools.

MR. CONATY: I think in all -- you have to distinguish between the proposed priorities and the actual applications. Frequently, in the proposed priorities won't mention those things, but there will actually be a requirement in the application. But the answer is yes.

I think all of the people, if you haven't guessed, I'm not one of the
politicals. I'm one of the career and it's been a pleasure to work with this group. And really what they've been very clear about is learning lessons and sharing and disseminating those lessons. Judy and her colleagues put out an early document about the uses of the title funds and how they could be leverage for change. We'll continue to work on such documents, but yes, we're going to try and capture as many lessons as we can.

Inherent in all of this is an attempt to learn and to share it and to use technology. Jim Shelton has been very clear about his desire to spread what works, what's promising through electronic means.

The other competition I just want to briefly mention is the teacher incentive grant competition. We've been working with Carmel, with Jo Anderson, with others in the Department. That competition, we've run it twice, but because we have to now take public comment to run it again, we have again tried to structure it in such a way to foster
innovation, to learn from those innovations and not to just say we know how to do performance pay well, but to fund a variety of different methodologies in performance pay so we can compare and contrast which of them appear to be most effective.

I think my time may be up, but I'd be happy to take another question. Please.

PARTICIPANT: Good morning, and thank you again for meeting and convening.

I had a question on points. I believe it was four that you said if they committed a transparency and because that doesn't necessarily equal accountability, can you speak to how the funds specifically for our schools and even improvements, how those funds are going to be not just transparent and made known, but how you're going to hold schools and teachers accountable for the output.

MR. CONATY: Let me repeat the questions if you didn't hear it. Basically, transparency alone is not sufficient. In
addition to transparency you need some mechanisms in place that help people realize that they're going to be held accountable for the results of these investments.

For the school improvement money, we do have reporting requirements. We will have monitoring teams. It will be a district and state responsibility and for all of the Recovery Act funds, as you know, there are special and unique reporting requirements that have to be shared and publicly disseminated on recovery.gov.

I guess that's the other thing to mention, will be coming out shortly. OMB is developing the reporting guidelines. For those who track this closely, they went through a public comment period. They received public comment. They're in the process of revising those reporting requirements. They've shared them with us. We've given feedback, by us, I mean all of the federal agencies, so I suspect that we'll see something from them within a month or so about
the reporting requirements. There will be some sub, at least I believe, they will come out in a such a way that there will be some sub-grantee reporting requirements. It won't be just at the level of the initial grant recipient.

Anything else?

Thank you all again, I encourage you to stay in touch with the web page. All of this will be posted as soon as we can, as soon as we make the next few Stabilization awards, we'll put both the original and final applications up on the web so that people can analyze and review them.

Thank you all.

(Applause.)

MR. RITSCH: Thank you, Joe. Joe really embodies what Arne was talking about earlier, the huge depth, the wealth of knowledge, the expertise of the career staff here that we're so grateful for.

So let's move on to talk about the listening tour and ESEA reauthorization. Arne
is all about extending learning into the summertime, so we are not letting him rest at all this summer. He is on the road weekly as part of the listening and learning tour which kicked off six weeks ago. The stops so far have been extraordinarily informative and enlightening and as he said very different in their own way.

Just to take you through them and summarize, we kicked things off in West Virginia in early May. Arne visited a community college, an elementary school. He also ate lunch in a middle school cafeteria. I can tell you that the less than appetizing cheese steak and onion rings that he ate, alongside those students reinforced his conviction that we must feed healthier food to our kids at school and encourage those healthy habits at home. So there will be more that we're doing on that.

Then on to Detroit, this was just days after a special election there for the new mayor and we listed to a city that was,
that showed us, that told us they were ready
to transform their schools from a national
disgrace into a national model.

And then we went to a very
different place, to rural Vermont, but in a
conversation with teachers that Arne had at a
coffeehouse, we heard very similar concerns
about the need to attract and support good
teachers, especially in areas where they're
not in abundance. We also visited a school
where the kids eat food grown by local farmers
and I can tell you that Arne actually cleaned
his plate that day.

He has been to Montana where he
visited the northern Cheyenne reservation and
met with education and school officials,
students, and parents in a style similar to
the traditional tribal talking circle.

Yesterday, the Department announced a number
of grants, millions of dollars to help
American Indian children in a number of states
succeed in schools and to recruit American
Indian teachers and administrators.
Most recently, the tour has been to Newark, New Jersey. Arne visited a charter school there that has set the bar high for its students by instituting a challenging curriculum, offering a longer school day, and extended school year, equipping the classrooms with highly-qualified staff and using innovative practices. As a result, students there have made some tremendous academic strides. You, of course, heard him talking a lot, highlighting charter schools recently.

He'll be speaking Monday to the National Conference, and about the contribution that he believes they're making in terms of innovative approaches to teaching and to learning. He's talked about the caps that some states put on charters and how doing so may impede those states' applications in the upcoming Race to the Top competition.

Speaking of Race to the Top, we plan to talk more about that at the July forum which I hope you'll attend.

On the Listening and Learning Tour
stops currently be planned will take Arne to California, Indiana, Florida, Tennessee, and Alaska, among other places. The schedule is really being set as we go. I'm getting lots of questions of can we get the calendar. I wish I had one. We are really putting it together sort of organically as opportunities arise and we're trying to get to as many places as possible, both with him and with other folks here at the Department. Some of the senior staff you met today will be traveling to other states and cities and towns to extend the listening in those areas.

Many of you asked how your association's membership can be involved. I hope you're hearing from members that they are involved. Everywhere we go at each stop we're meeting with teachers, school principals, other administrators, school board members. We talk with parents and students, elected officials, business and community leaders. The conversations have really been great. And by design, they're mostly intimate
conversations. These are not usually town halls. They're certainly not simply photo ops. These are events where Arne can really listen and engage. And you can tell he's already listening. The speech he mentioned Sunday, his visit to the National Governor's Education Symposium, he quoted from comments that we've gone through our on-line listening tour which you can see at ed.gov.

In planning the tour around the country, we have come to a number of your organizations along the way to help us plug in with your members in these cities and towns and we thank you very much for that help and hope we can continue to call on you as a resource in this way.

So now to answer a Frequently Asked Question among this crowd, when will you get your chance to listened to here within the beltway? We'd like to think you have a lot of opportunities already just by being close, here today being among them. Arne's met with dozens of stakeholder groups in the last few
months. Staff have held many, many more meetings and those meetings of course will continue. He's spoken and staff have spoken, are scheduled to speak at conferences and we welcome those invitations, so feel free to send them in through my office.

We're also planning a special listening event just for you and we're currently thinking it will be in September, mindful that a lot of you will be on vacation in August. We will get you back refreshed when school starts up again and we'll have more details on that. But rest assured, you will have that opportunity, among many others.

One major reason that Arne is out on the road is because we want to hear from those on the ground about what works and what doesn't, about the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We're among friends, so I will refer to it as No Child Left Behind also.

So this morning, Carmel Martin, our Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, Policy and Development, OPEPD, will now give
you an overview of our hopes for the reauthorization process and how you can provide some feedback on that.

Carmel?

MS. MARTIN: Thank you, everyone.

Thank you, Massie.

I'm going to shorten the name of that organization that I'm in charge of any day now.

So as Massie said, we are in a listening mode right now with respect to the reauthorization. It is our hope that we will complete reauthorization in this Congress. Many of you have probably heard me say that before in other hats, but I really mean it this time.

(Laughter.)

And we will be working very closely, folks working on policy development are going to be working very closely with Massie and the other folks in our Communications Division to make sure that we take the input that Arne's been getting on his
listening tour and that informs the policy development process. As Massie said, we'll have a listening tour event here in D.C. that we hope you'll all be able to participate in, but that won't be your only opportunity for providing input.

We are going to form working groups within the Department on key issue areas. We're really going to try to do that in a way that is not -- doesn't create silos around particular programs and in a way that allows us to bring together the vast amount of expertise in this Agency around various issues, so ensuring that the Office of Civil Rights plays a role in the policy development process.

Obviously, the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education will be key to the reauthorization process, but other offices as well, OSERS, and really trying to bring together rich groups of folks to give our internal process in depth, but we'll also be reaching out to you to get your ideas in terms
of reauthorization.

I think Arne is committed to -- he often says that he feels there's been some positive impacts of No Child Left Behind, but he feels like the goals were too loose and the definition of how to get there was too tight, so we're really going to be taking that concept seriously in seeing how we can help states develop really high goals, but provide more flexibility in terms of how to get there. We're looking to raise the bar and close the gap at the same time so that's sort of the over-arching theme for our work.

In terms of the issues that we'll be focusing on, they're probably apparent to you based on Joe's presentation with respect to the Recovery Act implementation, those same areas will be critical to our work on the reauthorization. We're really seeing the work around the metrics for Stabilization translating into focus -- the Race to the Top funding and then hoping to carry through that work into the reauthorization.
So once the Recovery Act money is spent, there's still a continuing focus on those key reform areas and supports for states to carry them forward. So we'll focus like in the Recovery Act context on issues that Joe mentioned including getting international benchmarks, career and college ready standards in all of our schools, ensuring transparency of information so teachers get that information to improve and create environments of continuous improvement, but also parents get that information so they can hold school systems accountable for what's happening with their students.

We'll also focus on rewarding excellence in teaching and looking to really re-envision the teaching profession so that it is truly the profession that it's meant to be, helping to provide supports for teachers, again, to continuously improve their practice and then also carrying through the focus on school turnaround in the context of taking a fresh look at the accountability system in
ESEA and looking at how we can carry through some of the principles around school turnaround that will be supported in both Race to the Top and our Stabilization metrics, into that context, and really trying to look fresh at the accountability proposals, the state-of-the-art, state of technology has changed since 2001 and we really want to be able to say well, given the state of play right now, what's the best way to ensure accountability for all kids, but in a way that's most productive for improving schools.

Another key theme that we'll carry throughout our work on ESEA will be ensuring that there's high quality assessments, particularly for English language learners and students with disabilities, and the focus on innovation, Jim's work on What Works Innovation Fund. We're also going to be looking to translate that into the Elementary and Secondary Education Act throughout the programs funded in that law; and then looking at how we can better support parent and
community engagement.

And finally, I'd say we will be looking to see how we can have a stronger focus on high school graduation, so that we can align the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with the President's overarching goal for us as a Department to ensure that we become first in the world in terms of college completion and obviously a key component to that will be ensuring that kids are graduating from high school college ready, so that will be a big focus as well.

So those are just some of the highlights. We really haven't delved into these issues deeply because we really are in a listening mode and want to hear from people out at the local level about what they think our focus should be and what things they think are working and not working. But we will be engaging with you all as we start to move forward in terms of the policy development around the bill and looking forward to your help.
I think with that I'll pause for
some questions before I move on to the budget.

MR. GRANT: My name is Robert
Grant. I'm from Washington, D.C. Hopefully,
actively involved in education and my good
friend and neighbor in my community found out
today. It seems that the listening tour
that's been held in West Virginia, Michigan,
Vermont, some of the other places was designed
to hear from local people, teachers, students,
local education groups about education at
their level.

From what I'm hearing, the plan in
the press release, there was one plan for
Washington, D.C. Now it appears it's being
changed to include national organizations that
are in Washington to give a perspective on
education at a broader level, rather than to
hear from local individuals and organizations
dealing with District of Columbia public
school education. And I think from a local
perspective I find that to be a difference in
attention.
I think that it would be helpful to
the -- because of the unique relationship
between the Department of Education and the
District of Columbia and DCPS, it would be
valuable for the Secretary to have a listening
tour with District of Columbia teachers,
parents, and local education groups such as
the various Ward Education Councils to give a
comment on District education, a perspective
other than Chancellor Rhee and Mayor Fenty.

MR. RITSCH: Thank you. And Mr.
Grant, we'll be continuing our own listening
tour in the Bloomingdale and LeDroit
neighborhood regularly.

But yes, as we talked about, for
one thing because of the proximity the
Secretary is out quite a bit in D.C. schools,
but we can certainly have more conversations
and we'll think about how we can do that
because as you point out there is a unique
situation. I said all the stops we're making
are different in their own way and I think a
good conversation could be had here around
particular local issues.

Next question.

MS. SMITH-LEE: Hi, I'm Stephanie Smith-Lee with the National Down Syndrome Society and I'd like to thank you for this opportunity for the update and to meet all of you today. It's very helpful.

I wanted to share with you something that we've been hearing from our parents of children with Down Syndrome from around the country. We've been hearing from many of them that they are very concerned about some of the comments that are being publicized in the paper that have been made in these listening tours about the education of students with cognitive disabilities and significant cognitive disabilities and criticisms of the testing of these children. And they're asking us how they can share their very positive views about the importance of accountability for students with disabilities and having high standards and appropriate assessments for children who are in the one
percent. And they don't want to have that weakened. They want to be able to have good assessments and your comments about improving those assessments is very much appreciated.

So hold the line on that. Thank you very much.

MS. MARTIN: Thank you, yes. That will be something that we'll be prioritizing as we look at the issues of assessments and accountability. We understand the complexities there and we want to make sure that those groups are not discounted in any way, any changes in the accountability system.

Anybody else?

Well, I've also been tasked to talk to your about our budget for FY 2010. I think we've already held a session that many of you probably attended, so I won't go too far into the weeds with that, just briefly go over the highlights and then see if you have any questions about that.

Our budget proposal, I think, also follows through on the themes that Joe talked
about when he was talking about the Recovery Act and the themes I talked about in terms of reauthorization. Given the tremendous investment that we've received through the Recovery Act, $100 billion, about twice our discretionary budget, our 2010 budget proposal was relatively flat because the funding from the Recovery Act, we believe a large portion of that will be spent in the FY 2010 school year. But we did include key increases in investments around some of our priority areas.

The first, I would say is in the area of ensuring that we've got the building blocks for success for students to be successful in college, successful in Elementary and Secondary Education Act and you see that in our call for major new investments in early learning.

We've got $500 million for school, Title I school districts to expand early learning opportunities for their students, and $300 million for an Early Learning Challenge Fund which is designed to be a competitive
program, goes to states so that they could build really state-of-the-art, first class, early learning systems and bring together the early childhood programs across settings, so Head Start, child care, as well as school-based programs around a common set of standards, both for the programs themselves, for the educators in those programs, and in terms of what kinds of outcome measures we want to be using to ensure that students are arriving at school ready to be successful.

We also have included in a new program for elementary grades in literacy. The budget has substantial increases for the Early Reading First Program and the Striving Readers Program so we can also tackle literacy with respect to the early childhood arena and adolescent literacy, but the budget, as you know, did not contain funding last year for an elementary school literacy program. So we are re-establishing that. Again, seeing that as really a foundational issue for students to be successful.
We also have substantial increased investment in teachers, again, looking to reward excellence in teaching. We are more than doubling the Teacher Incentive Fund and asking Congress to increase funding for that program to $500 million.

And then continuing our efforts around school turnaround and dropout prevention. We've asked for a substantial increase in the School Improvement Fund, $1.5 billion. Forty percent of that funding would be targeted on secondary schools that are either dropout factories or feeder schools for dropout factories and there we're really looking to take on the issue of school turnaround, continuing on the work that will be done with the $3 billion for that purpose in the Recovery Act funding.

And then finally, we have a strong focus in our budget proposal around college access and completion. I think Bob will talk in more detail about that, but we have unprecedented resources for student aid, need-
based student aid, as well as expansion of low-cost student loans through our Perkins proposal and then a focus on college completion through the College Access and Completion Fund that we've called for in our budget.

We're working very closely with the leadership in the House and the Senate to try to move forward on these budget initiatives with the authorizing committee on our college proposals, both authorizing committees, and then also working closely with the Appropriations Committee on the discretionary side. Arne testified last week or the week before, before both Subcommittees. We followed up with a series of meetings with our staff and we're hopeful that as they move forward with their process over the summer, that our initiatives will be included in their bills because we do feel like these are the critical areas for continued investment and really what we need to continue on the path towards raising the bar and closing the gap.
So with that I'll stop and see if you have any questions about the budget.

If not, I will turn it over to my colleague.

MS. VONGRASSAMY: Hi, this -- my name is Soumary Vongrassamy with Southeast Asia Resource Action Center. You touched upon dropout prevention. If you can speak a little bit about dropout recovery. There's about 1.2 million students that drop out already, so if you could speak a little bit about that with the reauthorization as well as the budget.

MS. MARTIN: Yes. So we are looking -- the school improvement money since it is directed at turning around low-performing schools is more focused on dropout prevention. But we have also included in our budget proposal a $50 million fund for high school graduation initiatives and in that context really looking at both dropout prevention and dropout recovery.

We've also been working closely with our colleagues at the Department of Labor
in looking at the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act and the youth funding stream in that bill which has a strong focus on dropout recovery so that is a side of the issue that we'll be pursuing as well.

MR. LIPPINCOTT: I am Robert Lippincott with PBS. In the FY 10 budget one of the significant changes in reduction in particular for support for Ready to Teach or online teacher professional development which our experience has been that it's one of the key leverage points and really something that it's not only innovative, it actually does work.

I was wondering if there's a provision of some kind which would take that place, take the place of that fund?

MS. MARTIN: There is a provision in our proposal for the fund for the improvement of education which contemplates, sets aside funding for competitive process to do the type of work that was being done with respect to ready to teach. It doesn't
specifically designated the money for PBS, but it does contemplate a competition around that initiative.

So I'll turn it over to my colleague, Bob.

(Applause.)

MR. SHIREMAN: Good morning. Of course, you all have heard the big goal in higher education is to return our nation to number one in the world in terms of the proportion of adults with degrees beyond, degree certificates, other credentials beyond high school. The President laid this goal out in his speech before the joint session of Congress.

And it's important to remember that while that is a higher education goal in a sense, that much if not all of what we are proposing around pre-K and K-12 education is about preparing for college and career and helping to reach that goal. In fact, every elementary and middle school and high school should be a college preparation program of
sorts. So while I'll talk about our higher education investments, preparation for college is key to achieving that bold goal that the President has set for the nation.

In addition to preparation, we need to make sure that families have access to college, they are able to enter and in many cases re-enter. We will not reach that goal if we simply do a better job getting people graduating from high school, going to college, and completing college. We need people who are out there in the workforce now or possibly unemployed and wanting to be more in the workforce, to go back to school, complete a degree that they may be started on at some point or maybe go to college for the first time in their 30s, 40s, or maybe even their 50s and beyond.

And so access to college is critical. Around that, we have committed substantial resources in the recovery legislation and in the FY 10 budget around expansion of the higher education tax credits
and which of course is not a Department of Education program, but also at the Department of Education really the big, the major goal here is to secure, to make sure that grants and loans are reliably available, not just next year, but into the future. We can tell a young person in middle school that these programs are there, will be there, and will be funded at levels that you will be able to pay for college.

We've proposed taking the stimulus level of the Pell grants at $5,550 and guaranteeing an increase each year of the Consumer Price Index plus one percent. We have proposed making all student loans directly. You may have seen the news yesterday about the servicing contractors that will be servicing the loans that we are purchasing as part of the current efforts to keep the guarantee program running, but that program is not reliable.

What happens in a credit market, threatens every day, creates questions every
day about whether loans are going to be made tomorrow in the guaranteed student loan program. We need to make sure that those loans are reliably available, making them directly as the way to accomplish that and also saves billions of dollars that can be plowed back into the Pell Grant Program and other investments.

We are also mindful that we have to improve the rates at which we get folks completing their degrees once they enter higher education and job training programs and there we need a lot of innovation and learning. We need to try new and different things and also test the question of whether some of the things we are doing now in our colleges are as effective as they can be. So we're proposing access and completion fund that is about innovation for states and colleges to innovate, evaluate, learn, share those learnings and help their peer institutions to do a much better job, whether it's preparing, getting students who are in
developmental courses, who aren't quite up at
the level of taking college credit courses,
and getting them to the point where they can
actually enter those college-level courses and
get through or helping students stay in a math
and science course track. We have a lot of
students who start there, and then divert in
other directions. And so we want states to be
working with us toward those broad goals.

The overarching goals of improving
college completion, but also doing some
targeting in terms of what are the areas where
we need to do better, and of course, the stem
areas are a key part of that.

With our completion fund and other
efforts and the pending reauthorization of the
Workforce Investment Act, we are taking every
opportunity to identify ways that we can
bolster community colleges and the role that
they particularly play in that returning
college student, returning worker who may need
some additional training. We did this
recently working with the Department of Labor,
looking for ways how can we tell, how can we help someone who has lost their job go back to college and get some additional training.

So working with the Department of Labor and state unemployment insurance offices around the country will be, they will be contacting all of the recipients of unemployment insurance and letting them know that they can go to a financial aid office and the financial aid office will set their income at zero rather than the regular financial aid process has them looking back at the year before when they were employed, when they obviously had a bigger income. So making it easier for them to go in and get that change to zero income so that they're much more likely to qualify for a Pell Grant.

And so we are looking for those kinds of ideas for ways that we can reach out. They don't have to be legislative. There are ways that we can reach out and encourage folks to return to school and to take advantage of the programs that we have now.
In that regard, we are also spending a lot of time and effort on looking at the financial aid application process itself. Those of you in K-12, of course, have to grapple with that as much as or more than those in the higher education area. We will soon be making an announcement around that and the general outline, the general outlines are that we are -- most people fill out the web-based form.

We are taking advantage of technology to do a much better job helping people through the process on the web-based forum in an interactive kind of way and skipping irrelevant questions. So we really went through with a fine-tooth comb and figured out well, if we ask this question earlier, can't we eliminate these other four questions that don't matter if you answer a certain way on that question.

So things like that that the step logic that can make it a much, much better experience will dramatically improve the on-
line application. We're also looking at and will have a partnership with the IRS to be able to give people the option of pulling down their 1040 information that can be inserted into their FAFSA so they don't have to go find their tax form, so we will be piloting those kinds of efforts.

And then we're also looking at whether there are some items that even after doing that just don't make sense to be on the -- to be part of the formula and perhaps asking Congress to eliminate some of those items.

So a lot of work on the FAFSA and we'll be making some announcements in that regard. Some of what we'll be announcing will be items that will be for this coming year. The form that goes live January which means it will go in the congressional record and be open to comments, so you may see some things where we could go even further than what we are planning.

I'll stop there and open it up for
questions about those items or anything else that's related.

MS. JONES: Good morning. My name is Kimberly Jones. I'm with the Council for Opportunity in Education. This question is actually a hybrid of your topic as well as Carmel's. Let me preface my question by saying I understand that we're in an unprecedented economic turmoil and there are tough choices that have to be made. And I also understand and appreciate the investment that the Department has put into financial aid for low-income students, particularly the Pell investment.

I represent the TRIO programs which serve low-income, first generation students. And just looking at the content of the Recovery Act and then looking at the FY 10 budget, looking at the higher-ed sections, it's hard not to notice that not only TRIO, but other access and retention, success programs like Gear-Up, like programs that are already in place at minority-serving
institutions, like career technical ed are absent or somewhat neglected.

And so my question is going forward, given this goal and objective of having the highest post-secondary rate in the world for the country, what do you see the roles of these programs that have been around for decades that have been proven by studies run by the Department of Education that they're effective and improving retention, what role do you see, again, not just TRIO, but other higher-ed access, retention and success programs that thus far have not played a major role in the Administration's plans?

MR. SHIREMAN: Sure. There's enormous potential for Gear-Up, Upward Bound talent search and other college preparation programs in our overall agenda and I've actually learned a lot from what Chicago has done over the past couple of years of figuring out ways to leverage Gear-Up and the TRIO programs in their overarching, district-wide effort to improve college preparation and
college going.

And so I think we need to be thinking both in our -- and we are -- thinking both in our higher education thinking as well as in our K-12 and high school reform thinking about how we learn from and build on those kinds of programs and efforts and activities. So I think there is enormous potential there.

As you know, many, many programs were flat-funded in our FY 10 budget proposals, so they weren't singled out, but I understand that they also were not singled out for increases and those are the kinds of things that we'll be looking at going forward.

MS. JONES: We look forward to working with you.

MR. SHIREMAN: Great. Thank you very much.

MR. DeWITT: Hi, Steve DeWitt. I'm with the Association for Career and Technical Education. And I'm having deja-vu because I went on after Kim during the budget briefings. My question is about career ready.
First of all, thank you from the Department for talking about both college and career ready. It's something that's been needed for a long time.

I attended a briefing yesterday about the National Governors and Council of Chief State School Officers' work on common core standards. And the question about career readiness and what that means and the answer was from the panel that people have a lot of different ideas about what this means. Some large corporations have one view, smaller companies have a different view or smaller kind of home town businesses.

Does the Department have a particular view of what career ready means and if not, how do we get there in terms of what that means?

MR. SHIREMAN: This is definitely an area that we have been looking at and as you know our programs do fund some career pathway kinds of efforts, our career tech programs that -- and part of what we need to
look at is to get into more detail and the
great thing about those programs is that they
have a clear path to what's the -- what is the
secondary school component, what does that
lead into in terms of the post-secondary and
at least some, maybe all of the components.
There's a -- it aims towards some kind of
credential industry recognized credential.

Exactly how that relates to
standards and what you know and are able to do
that might be developed on the academic side
is I think exactly the kinds of discussions
that we need to have and we welcome input on
that.

MR. DeWITT: Is it only academics
or is it also a lot of those 21st century
skills for lack of a better word?

MR. SHIREMAN: I guess that's why I
said what people, what young graduates know
and are able to do, because I think that is
some of the able to do and what should we be
looking at and critical thinking skills that
are very important to the workforce as well as
being college ready.

So I think -- I certainly and others could use input and advice about how to -- I don't know if it's marrying the two or aligning, that whole question.

Carmel, I don't know if you have any further thoughts on that, but it's an area that we need to be looking into more and welcome input.

MR. DeWITT: And it is a tough question. We'd love to work with you.

MR. SHIREMAN: Great. I really appreciate that.

Yes?

MR. BRANNUM: The question is for Carmel. I want to thank you for holding this. Hopefully my name and email doesn't get expunged from the Department's records, but --

MR. SHIREMAN: I know where you live.

(Laughter.)

MR. BRANNUM: You're welcome any time.
Carmel, the issue of vouchers, what is the Department's position on vouchers nationally as opposed to just within the District of Columbia since people here have voiced an opinion against vouchers, but vouchers have been imposed locally.

Will the Department support vouchers nationally since it caved in to certain interests on Capitol Hill and imposed vouchers in the District of Columbia?

MS. MARTIN: Well, both the President and Arne have been pretty clear that they believe that vouchers is not the answer to improving public education in America and their focus is going to be on public schools. That said, there are many programs run by the Department of Education that provide funding to private schools through the Equitable Participation Program. Most categorical, formula-based programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act do provide a share of those fundings to private schools for
serving low-income and students with disabilities. I think the President and Arne are strongly supportive of that.

With respect to the D.C. program, they both also have been very clear that although they don't support continuing the program. They believe that the children who are currently in those programs should be protected and not have their education disrupted, so we have asked Congress to reverse legislation, statutes that they have passed that prohibit us from using funding after the next school year for additional scholarships for those children in the 2011-12 school year.

So we will be fighting to secure funding in the appropriations process to protect those students and allow them to continue in those schools.

MR. BRANNUM: That, I can understand, but there was an effort to try to do a back-door expansion of that by saying it's to fund siblings of the current students
who are not in the program, but who are now getting ready to go to school while them being a legacy because their older brother and sister was in and now they're getting ready to go to school, so we want them to go. It's that sibling piece that's coming up.

MS. MARTIN: So our focus is on the students who are currently in those schools, because again the idea is not to have their education disrupted. The program did not provide for sibling preference, so just because a student is in the school did not mean that their sibling would be able to go to the school, but at the end of the day, the decision about that will be made by Congress, but our proposal to Congress is to provide us with sufficient funding to continue the education of those currently in those schools.

MS. VENEGAS: Good morning. I'm Kerry Venegas from the National Indian Education Association and I'd like to start just by thanking Secretary Duncan for his recent visit to northern Cheyenne and his
attention to native students.

    I have a question about tribal colleagues and the support for tribal colleges, particularly as they’ve been connected as entry and re-entry points in rural communities, not just for native community members, but for all community members, and also their connection to the professional development grants that actually fund the teacher pipelines in rural communities and on reservations and how you guys are supporting this and what the thinking is around this.

    MR. SHIREMAN: I think we would be supportive of them.

    (Laughter.)

    MS. VENEGAS: That's good.

    MR. SHIREMAN: Yes. We are definitely interested. Community colleges, generally, are an area that we see as currently serving the populations that we have the most potential to get enormous increases and throughput to degrees and certificates.
So your ideas about strategies, ways that we can be helpful in that regard, we welcome that.

MS. VENEGAS: Thank you.

MR. SHIREMAN: Thanks.

Go ahead.

MR. BURNETT: Hi, my name is Patrick Burnett. I'm here on behalf of the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs. Thank you so much for your comments about the higher education plans for the Department.

You mentioned or you referenced the anticipated savings from the ending of the guaranteed loan program and switching over to the direct loan program. I had two related questions based on that, actually three, one being the schedule for a legislation that would end FELP.

Second, if there are plans for how any of the anticipated savings would be dedicated towards ACIF, and how --

MR. SHIREMAN: What's which, sorry?
MR. BURNETT: I'm sorry, to the access and completion.

MR. SHIREMAN: Okay.

MR. BURNETT: And third, whether the Department has given any consideration to the impact that the ending of FELP would have on state-operated guaranteed programs where states rely on their payments of FELP as a revenue source for their need-based grants.

MR. SHIREMAN: Sure. So the guaranteed program is ending regardless of whether we act because of the credit markets. And state agencies are now suffering the resulting revenue losses from the inability of the lenders to hold on to loans. And so our proposal is to include in our Access and Completion Incentive Fund dollars for states to provide to these agencies so that they can continue the access and information kinds of activities that have been important to schools in those states, having the people, the materials to provide information about going to college.
So the guaranteed loan program earnings that those entities have had in the past are disappearing now before Congress does anything. We're coming in with a proposal to bolster that so that those activities can continue. We're not doing it in a way where we're giving student loan tasks to those agencies because what we think is important is to have the most efficient student loan program and reliable student loan program that we can have and have state agencies that are getting information about financial aid of all types. They don't need to have a financial interest in a loan program per se. They should be getting information out about Pell Grants, about state grants, about student loan opportunities and so we want to make sure that that information is there.

MR. BURNETT: Thank you very much.

MR. SHIREMAN: Thanks a lot.

MR. BLANK: Good morning, I'm Marty Blank with the Institute for Educational Leadership and the Coalition for Community
Schools.

Joe started by talking about coherence and the four elements and in the course of the morning we've heard about a multiple series of new programs, categoricals that still exist that often continue to function in local communities in silos and as a result we don't leverage those resources and mobilize community support to really get the kind of outcomes we want for kids.

So my question is how are you thinking about trying to embed in these various programs language that will encourage alignment and incentivize partnership across these different programs of the Department as well as they can put it in a broader context with the programs of the Department of Labor or Health and Human Services, all of which in one way or another tend to show up in school or in relationship to school?

MR. SHIREMAN: I think you're already seeing some evidence of our working with Department of Labor, for example, and
certainly in our discussions about the Workforce Investment Act. We're looking for more and more ways to make that happen.

The struggle is always that when you have a silo it's focused on -- there's a focus and we need to be looking for more ways to break through all of that.

I don't know, Carmel, if you want to talk more about the options.

MS. MARTIN: I think that is something we are working very hard to address and starting with at the federal level so in developing our early learning proposals we've been meeting at least twice a week with our colleagues at the Department of HHS so that we're doing that together, not separately. We're not just asking for consultation. It is a joint project and once our programs are developed the intention is for them to be jointly administered.

As Bob said, we have been working closely with our colleagues at the Department of Labor in developing our proposals for the
Workforce Investment Act. They're going to be joint proposals so we're hoping to carry that through again, through the implementation process as well.

I think in terms of what's happening at the state and local level, I mean I think it was not -- it was a very conscious decision to have the Race to the Top funding going to a governor which is, as you know, unusual for federal education program funding, but I think part of the rationale for that was to say this needs to be a comprehensive reform initiative that does take into mind other funding streams that help children and youth to be successful and when Arne met with the governors earlier this week he really called upon them to do just that.

As I mentioned in our efforts towards reauthorization on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, part of my job since I don't sit in any particular pot, but rather looking at policy development across the Agency, part of my job is to make sure that
we're not looking at particular issues. It's not just the people running programs who will be saying how should they be changed for reauthorization, but how can we come together because there's such a breath of expertise across the Agency and how can we make sure that we're not being siloed in how we look at that reauthorization.

So those are just a few examples of how we're trying to address the issue that you're talking about, but I'm sure there's more things.

MR. BLANK: I appreciate that. We are excited about working with you on that because we think that accountability tools can be used to drive this kind of coherence. It's not just about measures of academic success, but other measures that can be used to expect people to be working together and to incentivize the kind of partnerships, alignments and coordination that is so necessary if we're really going to sustain these strategies.
Thank you.

MR. HARRIS: Hi. Bob Harris from the Career College Association. Thank you and the Secretary, the President, for all your support for higher education.

The Chicago Tribune website was reporting this morning that the White House Chief of Staff told the Democratic Leadership Council that the Administration has a new program
that's about to throw a lot of money into job-training programs and specifically to be directed at community colleges.

Realizing that the White House Chief of Staff sometimes gets ahead of the Administration, I wondered whether you could enlighten on that and in particular whether if this is accurate, whether it is really restricted to community colleges or might also be available to high schools, traditional schools, and to career colleges?

MR. SHIREMAN: Well, fortunately, I saw that a few hours ago and I sent an email asking the same question.

(Laughter.)

So the answer is no, I can't enlighten you. I'll let you know when we know.

MR. HARRIS: Thanks.

MR. COLEMAN: Just one last comment on this. Jim Kohlmoos from Knowledge Alliance.

Marty's comment about silos and
trying to break them down through sort of thematic approaches cutting across different programs is a really important one. At the same time, as you see increased accountability measures being put into place, particularly out of OMB and their part process, it actually encourages the silos to continue to exist as people become more focused on accounting for their particular silo.

So I'm not sure how to resolve this, but have you been given any thought to how best to create an accountability system that cuts across the silos, but at the same time accounts for how dollars are being spent in the ways that they were intended?

MS. MARTIN: We have been thinking about that and working with OMB in terms of how part should be revisited and revised. So it is something that we're looking at. The challenge is if you look at performance measures that go across programs, those tend to be more long-term goals. So we need to have both sort of long-term and short-term
goals and short-term can be more directed
towards the piece that the program is meant to
address.

Hopefully, we'll have something on
that soon.

MR. RITSCH: Any other final
questions?

Well, you've heard a lot from us
this morning. We hope it was useful and thank
you for your questions and comments. We
always appreciate the opportunity to hear from
you.

A few just little housekeeping
things. As Joe mentioned, stay tune to
ed.gov. Watch it closely, but we're also
planning to redesign it and so we want to know
your feedback on that and particularly we want
to know what you use the Department's website
for, what are you top tasks. And you can
email directly our web master. His name is
Kirk Winters. It's kirk.winters@ed.gov.

As I mentioned earlier, we're also
looking for your feedback on this forum to
help us plan for future forums. Please leave behind those evaluations.

A transcript and an audio file of today's meeting will be available on our website early next week. Feel free to share it with your members and anyone else you think would be interested.

Please also share those speeches that Secretary Duncan has been making on the core reforms, data, common standards. Monday, we'll be focusing on turnaround schools and teacher quality and support.

The notice for our next Education Stakeholders Forum, date to be determined, will be on ed.gov, so another reason to watch that around the middle of next month.

Feel free to stick around, chat with each other, finish up the breakfast over there and the coffee, come up and say hi. And if you need to get in touch with the Department and you don't know where to start, please come to my office, email and we can put you in touch with the right people.
So thanks for coming over this morning, everyone. We'll see you next time.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, at 11:02 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)