The original documents are located in Box 8, folder “5/2/75 - National Education Association” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

FRIDAY, MAY 2, 1975
1. N.E.A. HAS BEEN A POWERFUL INFLUENCE IN EDUCATION FOR
   ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN YEARS. I AM TOLD THAT IN 1859 -- TWO
   YEARS AFTER N.E.A.'S FOUNDING -- PRESIDENT BUCHANAN HOSTED THE TOTAL
   MEMBERSHIP IN THE EAST ROOM -- ALL FIFTY-FIVE OF THEM.
BY CONTRAST TODAY YOU HAVE ONE POINT SEVEN MILLION MEMBERS
AND THROUGH THEM REACH FORTY-FIVE MILLION SCHOOL CHILDREN.

THIS IS A RECORD OF GROWTH IN WHICH YOU CAN TAKE GREAT PRIDE.
2. I HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL STEPS TO EXPAND THE DIALOGUE WITH EDUCATORS AND WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ... (NOTE THAT VARIOUS EDUCATION GROUPS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO THE TUESDAY MEETINGS AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND THAT YOU HAVE MET OFTEN WITH H.E.W. SECRETARY WEINBERGER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY TROTTER AND U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION T.H. BELL).
3. I am proud of the fact that the first bill I signed as president was Public Law 93-380... the Education Amendments of 1974. This legislation should further strengthen our educational system -- it renews our commitment to excellence in education.
4. I would like to see classroom teachers have a larger voice in federal policy-making. I would like to see more teachers serving on national advisory councils and commissions, and I will instruct the U.S. Commissioner of Education to obtain some nominees from your organization for these appointments.
I KNOW THAT COMMISSIONER BELL HAS ALREADY DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH YOU. WE HAVE NOT HAD MANY OPENINGS TO THIS POINT, BUT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER WILL BE COMING UP IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.
5. There is a great deal of work to be done in the education field. With the declining school enrollments of the past three years and the projected declines, it will be important for us to turn our attention to what might be done to provide employment opportunities for teachers.
I have strongly supported Bilingual Education and Education of Handicapped Children. Additionally, approximately twenty-five percent of the Revenue Sharing funds sent to State and Local Governments have gone to Education. We are also putting together our proposals for a new Vocational Education bill that should strengthen that aspect of our educational system.
AND, AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZING THE NEED TO BUILD A STRONGER WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND THE WORLD OF WORK. I WAS PLEASED TO SEE A NEW CAREER EDUCATION LAW IN P.L. 93-380 AND WAS PLEASED TO SUPPORT THE FIRST APPROPRIATION FOR THAT PROGRAM.
6. Once we solve the problems of inflation and recession—and get our economy moving ahead— I hope to take some major new initiatives in education on the federal level. For instance, one of the great needs in the country today is to have parents who understand how to help their children grow and develop to their full potential.
MY ADMINISTRATION IS ALREADY SUPPORTING PILOT PROJECTS TO DEVELOP
AND TEST CURRICULUM MATERIALS FOR TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL YOUNGSTERS
HOW TO FOSTER INTELLECTUAL GROWTH AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN
PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN ANTICIPATING THE DAY WHEN THEY WILL BECOME
PARENTS.
SUCH MATERIALS ARE ALSO BEING DEVELOPED FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN. A T.V. PILOT PROGRAM SOON WILL BE DEVELOPED TO FOSTER SUCH SKILLS IN PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN. AS COURSES IN MORE EFFECTIVE PARENTING BECOME WIDESPREAD THIS WILL, OF COURSE, MEAN MORE TEACHING JOBS.
I AM CONCERNED, AS YOU ARE, THAT WE STRENGTHEN OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM THROUGH A BALANCED PROGRAM OF LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING. I WAS PLEASED TO SEE THE EMPHASIS IN THE NEW ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT ON FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHEN STATE SCHOOL FINANCE AND STATE EQUALIZATION PROGRAMS.
I understand that Commissioner Bell is now preparing the guidelines and standards for this program. The new law touches the impact aid formula as well as providing another section to encourage and support studies of school finance formulas in all fifty states.
7. MY RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1976 FOR
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION PURPOSES IS APPROXIMATELY
FIFTY PERCENT HIGHER THAN WAS THE RECOMMENDED BUDGET OF PRESIDENT
JOHNSON IN FISCAL YEAR 1969 (HIS LAST BUDGET WHILE HE WAS PRESIDENT).
8. We want to work with the N.E.A. Your advice and assistance will be welcome. I came here as a first step in establishing closer ties between N.E.A. and my administration.

Let's work together to strengthen and improve American education.

End of text