

JACOB

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middle and upper income parents, school prayer won't improve math scores and abolishing the Education Department would just put the seal on the government's abdication from its educational leadership responsibilities.

But even beyond the Administration's lack of response to the urgency of those reports is the question of whether educational reforms will benefit minority and poor children.

Tougher standards, stiffer courses and all the rest make a lot of sense as medicine for a system that pushes out so many kids and fails to bring so many others up to minimum levels of literacy.

But only if all students get the attention and assistance they need to excel. Otherwise, the medicine prescribed could turn out to be poison.

All the calls for excellence could boomerang, helping to create a two-tier system of education in which an elite are prepared for the

complex world of computerized economy while the rest are taught only enough to read the directions for sweeping floors.

Improving the schools will take a lot more dollars, and federal ones at that. It will take changes in the institutional rigidity that keeps school systems from demanding - and getting - the maximum results from all students and teachers.

What all those reports - and the Administration - fail to highlight is the fact that children from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds are filling a higher proportion of classroom seats.

Without a massive effort to upgrade their schools and their learning experiences, without enrolling the community to help motivate and guide them, and without making full use of the human resources they represent, educational reform is doomed to failure.

The pursuit of excellence must go hand-in-hand with the pursuit of equity.

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Annual salaries for state legislators in the 50 states range from \$100 in New Hampshire to \$31,000 in Michigan. Here's a look at what each state pays, not including expenses:

Ala. \$10/day*	Mont. \$48.42/day*
Alaska \$18,766/year	Neb. \$4,800/year
Ark. \$15,000/year	Nev. \$104/day*
Ariz. \$7,500/year	N.H. \$100/year
Calif. \$28,119/year	N.J. \$18,000/year
Colo. \$14,000/year	N.M. \$75/day*
Conn. \$9,500/year	N.Y. \$25,000/year
Del. \$11,400/year	N.C. \$6,936/year
Fla. \$12,000/year	N.D. \$100/year
Ga. \$7,200/year	Ohio \$22,500/year
Hawaii \$13,850/year	Ore. \$8,400/year
Idaho \$4,200/year	Pa. \$25,000/year
Ill. \$26,000/year	R.I. \$5/day*
Ind. \$9,600/year	S.C. \$19,000/year
Iowa \$19,700/year	S.D. \$3,200/year
Kan. \$45/day*	Tenn. \$100/year
La. \$16,800/year	Texas \$7,200/year
Maine \$4,000/year	Vt. \$7,600/year
Md. \$21,000/year	Va. \$10,000/year
Mass. \$19,000/year	Wash. \$11,200/year
Mich. \$31,000/year	Wis. \$22,638/year
Miss. \$8,100/year	Wyo. \$100/year

* while in session

Source: Council of State Governments, 1982

By Heidi Ehrlich, USA TODAY

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