

# The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly:



Will President Obama's School Reform Bring the Change Kids Need?



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## **Executive Summary**

Barack Obama aspires to be an education president, but what kind of education president will he be? As a candidate, Obama has taken conflicting positions. Both the anti-reform National Education Association and the reformist Democrats for Education Reform claim him as their own. An analysis of candidate Obama's education platform reveals elements of the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.

### ***The Good***

Obama provides praiseworthy symbolic leadership in urging parents to "turn off the television set, and put the video games away, and instill a sense of excellence in our children." The following Obama education promises also give hope:

- Offering greater compensation to teachers who demonstrate greater effectiveness, or who serve in high-needs areas such as inner cities.
- Seeking ways to expand the supply of teachers.
- Replicating successful charter schools, while closing unsuccessful ones.

### ***The Bad***

There are disturbing indications that an Obama administration will water down *No Child Left Behind*, the law that forces schools to test their students and report results to the

public. Without the objective measures of student learning that NCLB mandates, we cannot tell what works. Ignorance may be bliss, but it also makes it impossible to copy what works, and equally impossible to offer greater compensation to more effective teachers. Without NCLB, schools will be reduced to sort of accountability that Enron made famous: if administrators say their schools are working well, the rest of us will just have to take their word for it.

### ***The Ugly***

Certain Obama promises seem designed not to help children, but rather to provide pork barrel spending for education insiders. These include the following:

- Forcing schools of education to seek accreditation, even though there is no evidence it leads to better preparation of teachers.
- Paying teachers more for increased training, whether or not it actually makes them better teachers.
- Expanding transitional bilingual education rather than more effective English immersion approaches.

In short, President Obama should appoint a Democratic reformer who embraces the good, opposes the bad, and avoids the ugly, to serve as the nation's next Secretary of Education.

## Introduction

America has had a run of education presidents, and Barack Obama aspires to be one. But what kind of education president will Obama be?

As a candidate, Obama has taken conflicting positions on education – some pro-reform, some pro-status quo. Indeed, his positions have been so diverse that both the National

Education Association and the Democrats for Education Reform claim him as their own.

But now the campaign is over, and it is time to govern. As a result, President Obama will have to decide between two conflicting priorities: the desire of parents to have the public schools educate their children, and the desire of bureaucrats and teachers to have guaranteed jobs regardless of how well

they are educating other people's children (if at all). Obama's education policies and appointments should be emphatically aimed at helping children.

## Schools at Cross Purposes

The crucial dilemma for Barack Obama, as for all Presidents, is that public education has four different goals that often contradict each other. As a result, Obama will have to decide what goal should take priority.

*First*, public schools must teach children basic skills such as reading and writing – something that alas, all too many schools fail to do. Without basic skills, young people cannot compete in the U.S. economy, much less the global economy.

*Second*, public education inevitably teaches political values. From the Right, intellectuals such as Lynne Cheney and Chester E. Finn

prefer for schools to inculcate national pride and respect for constitutional values, such as the separation of powers, electoral participation, federalism, limited government, and property rights. From the opposite side of the spectrum, Leftist intellectuals (such as Barack Obama's old acquaintance Bill Ayers, the radical professor who is now a prominent leader in the American Educational Research Association) want public schools to teach economic equality, skepticism about hierarchy and tradition, and outright hostility to capitalism. To a lesser degree, educators like University of Pennsylvania President Amy Gutman also hold this view.

*Third*, as education historians like Jeff Mirel and David Labaree show, a key goal of public schools since the Great Depression has been to keep children out of trouble and off the job market. Cynically, one might say that schools function as subsidized daycare for many families. We are all familiar with the community panic that arises when the schools suddenly close for a snow day or for a teacher conference, not because children miss a crucial day of learning, but because their parents don't know what to do with them during working hours. And as one school superintendent we interviewed some years back put it, "We can't [raise academic standards]. Crime would go up. Unemployment would go up. Parents would be unhappy."

*Fourth*, if the first three goals at least tangentially address kids, the last one addresses the importance of the public school system for the grownups. Today, the K-12 public educational-industrial complex employs well over six million Americans, a ratio of one employee for every eight school children. If the 1945 trend line continues, a one-to-one ratio will be reached by 2060. Those figures do not include the army of contractors and college

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professors who make their living from certifying teachers, certifying schools, and from mandatory but mostly ineffective professional development.

The job-creating function of schools is most important in inner cities and many rural regions. In these low-income areas, the public school system is often the single most important source of good jobs. Political scientist Wilbur Rick wrote in *Black Mayors and Schools Politics* that “the school pie feeds many families, and slicing it is a major event in the local economy.” As a long-time Chicago resident, President-elect Obama knows this scene. In big cities where middle class whites and blacks long ago left the public schools, school politics often pit middle-income African-Americans and whites – who see schools as sources of jobs and contracts – against poor African-Americans who want their kids to learn in safety. Teachers unions, which funnel hundreds of millions of dollars into electoral politics, typically (and reasonably, since their objective is to represent the teachers) favor the jobs approach to public education. At least implicitly, so do prominent public intellectuals like Stanford Education School Dean Linda Darling Hammond, rumored to be on the short list of President-elect Obama’s Secretary of Education choices.

These four goals of the public school system often contradict one another. For example, a focus on high standards might also lead to a short-term drop in the graduation rate. Most importantly, a focus on children’s well-being and academic achievement might lead officials to consider firing bad teachers or abolishing well-entrenched education programs, thus destroying the job security that many adults have come to expect. These are tough decisions, and President Obama’s early choices will signal the extent to which he is willing to admit we can do better, to threaten

the status quo, and to make changes that definitely will make some adults unhappy but potentially will improve the lot of many students.

### Education Presidents Past

Recent presidents have lamented the under-performance of our nation’s schools, and have embraced the primacy of academic achievement. Most famously, President Ronald Reagan highlighted the nation’s educational deficits in the 1983 *Nation at Risk* report. The first President Bush held an education summit for all 50 governors (including then-Governor Bill Clinton), which stimulated a decade of state-level school reform. As President, Clinton’s Goals 2000 law forced state governments for the first time to develop standards for what children should learn during their 13 years in school.

Belying his current reputation as a hardcore conservative, President George W. Bush extended Clinton’s policies, in that the *No Child Left Behind* law forced states to develop tests based on state standards. Under Bush’s approach, schools must report test results broken down by race, special education status, and poverty. A school can be labeled as failing if substantial numbers of students *in any group* fall behind.

NCLB respects federalism in that the law does not tell states how to improve their schools, so much as push states taking federal funds to develop measures of student learning and report those measures to the public and to policy-makers. The theory then is that state policymakers and citizens can use that data to make sensible decisions about how (and whether) to reform their public schools. In effect, NCLB

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is about transparency. As noted below, too many public schools are no more transparent about student learning than Enron was about profits and losses. In pushing public schools to embrace more honest accounting systems, NCLB is starting to change that reality.

The result is an increasing culture of accountability, with public school administrators asking not whether paperwork is done properly, but instead whether children can actually read the report cards they are getting. As a superintendent from an affluent, well-regarded Pennsylvania school district said, “the biggest requirement of NCLB was to

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report data by group. 80% of our kids achieve well, but when we disaggregate data by poverty and race the data doesn't look too good. . . . We're going to put more effort into teaching minority kids.”<sup>1</sup> An analysis of state accountability schemes even before the enactment of NCLB uncovered similar stories. A Florida policymaker in 2002 reported that the statewide accountability program made it unacceptable for schools to tolerate poor performance simply because of the composition of the student body. In North Carolina, a teacher in 2001 similarly noted, “I think people recognize you've got to make sure that you put more time and resources into some students than we may have done in the past.”<sup>2</sup>

State education officials confirm the belief that NCLB has pressured local school districts to improve. A 2004 survey of state education officials from all over the country, found a six-to-one margin agreeing that NCLB would improve education. Two-thirds of officials agreed NCLB “motivated districts to improve low-performing schools more quickly.”<sup>3</sup> Recent studies show that

under NCLB, the stubborn gaps between white and minority academic achievement are beginning to narrow, though not by much.

### **But Who Is the Education Obama?**

Thus, the key question is whether President Obama will continue the focus on academic achievement – even at the expense of job security for adults – or whether he will fall in line with traditional Democratic interest groups that tend to oppose accountability. Whether Obama mostly wants schools to focus on grownups or on student learning depends on to whom you listen, and ultimately, to whom he will listen. There is a lot in President-elect Obama's education platform, and some of it should draw cheers from school reformers no matter their party.

### **The Good**

Let's start with the good news. Every recent president has had one notable educational innovation. For Barack Obama, the reform of teacher compensation seems to fit the bill. To be sure, any sort of differentiated pay plan, much less one that attempts to pay teachers based on measured effectiveness, will bring strong opposition from teachers unions, to whom Obama may well feel indebted. Nonetheless, it is possible that a President Obama will use his considerable political capital and powers of persuasion to co-opt, convince, or confront these groups and argue for common-sense reforms that may help students, particularly students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Indeed, Obama has already broken with the teacher unions to some extent, by arguing that “if teachers are teaching in rural schools, where it's harder to find teachers, or inner city schools, where it's harder to teach, or if they've got particular specialties in math or science or certain other areas where it's

harder to fill, I want to pay them more.”<sup>4</sup> The goal would be to enable inner-city schools to offer salaries above those of suburban counterparts, thus encouraging talented teachers to relocate to where they are needed most.

Because this particular reform has not been attempted on a large scale, not enough strong empirical evidence exists to show that higher pay in inner cities will definitely improve education. Nonetheless, the argument for differential teacher pay is sound and sits on a solid evidentiary base. As an initial matter, there is solid evidence (and we all intuitively recognize) that teacher quality makes a difference. But particularly in math and science, the lowest-achieving students are often taught by teachers who by any standard are barely qualified to do so. University of Pennsylvania education professor Richard Ingersoll, among others, has found that many low-quality rural schools and inner-city schools that serve large numbers of minority students end up hiring teachers who are untrained in the subject matter they are assigned to teach.<sup>5</sup> It makes intuitive sense that these students would be better served if their schools were able to afford qualified math or science teachers. On this issue, a Democratic president and Congress may well come together.

Obama has also hinted at a break with his party’s interest groups in contemplating that more effective teachers could be paid more.<sup>6</sup> To be sure, Obama’s hint at support for merit pay is almost entirely eviscerated by his January 2008 statement that “I don’t support merit pay for teachers as it’s commonly understood,” and that “if teachers agree and have some ownership in terms of how they’re being assessed, and they want to reward, in negotiations with the school board, teachers who are doing a great job,

that’s fine. But I won’t do it without the approval of the teachers.”<sup>7</sup> This statement suggests that Obama supported merit pay only in the sense that he did not intend to override local school board-union negotiations, a meaningless concession, as one would not expect a president to interfere with such negotiations in the first place.

Nonetheless, education reformers have speculated that Obama may have moderated his views over the course of the campaign, and that he may be more willing to consider merit pay for teachers.<sup>8</sup> Obama would do well to give serious consideration to such support: a few districts across the country have implemented pay-for-performance plans, and early evaluations suggest that such plans can increase student learning. If he intends to make merit pay a priority, President Obama will have to spend considerable time and attention on this issue to bring the unions around, much in the same way that President Clinton did initially for charter schools. The good news, of course, is that Obama would not have to act alone. In fact, he could find moral and political support in Michelle Rhee, the reformer superintendent of the Washington, D.C., public school system. Rhee is pushing ahead with an aggressive alternative pay plan that will offer salaries up to \$130,000 to effective teachers. In short, a push from the presidential “bully pulpit,” along with resources to further such plans, could make a real difference in how teachers are compensated today, and likely result in a higher quality teaching force tomorrow.

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There is also good news regarding Obama’s promises to bring more mid-career professionals into teaching through scholarships and alternative certification programs.

Unlike many on the Left and Right, Obama realizes that expanding the pool of potential teachers is essential to improving the quality of those who actually do end up in the classroom. If Obama breaks with traditional teacher certification programs, he could truly become a post-ideological leader. Obama himself attended Hawaii's Punahou School<sup>9</sup> and his daughters attend Chicago's famous Laboratory ("Lab") School<sup>10</sup> — private schools which do not as a rule hire certified teachers. When asked whether she hires certified teachers, the Lab School's personnel director

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said, "We do not look at that; it doesn't make any difference."<sup>11</sup> A real push for alternative certification could build a new generation of talented teachers, a cohort that public schools desperately need.

While not in his official platform, Senator Obama has called for helping ineffective teachers find alternative careers. Of course, translating this idea into action would take no small effort, requiring a direct challenge to the job protection and tenure provisions strongly supported by teacher unions. As Senator, Obama has not demonstrated that kind of toughness against his allies, but perhaps as president he will.

President-elect Obama promises more money for effective charter schools — autonomous public schools that parents choose for their children. Obama also wants to push states to close ineffective charter schools, and use their cash flows to expand more successful charters. (Interestingly, this is the only part of the Obama education platform that calls for ending ineffective programs rather than giving them more money.) This is a good idea, and long overdue. Whether it is implemented will depend on whether "effective" is defined as teaching students to read and

write, as opposed to just keeping them in school or teaching them skepticism of "Eurocentric" values (but not other values). We are confident that an Obama administration will choose wisely.

Such tough-mindedness also should inform Obama's support for expanding preschool. Though very expensive and an employment agency for many grownups, preschool has some potential to improve schooling. Yet all too many preschool programs have failed to raise the academic skills of disadvantaged students. To get it right, an Obama administration should borrow some conservative and neoliberal ideas, such as allowing state-level experimentation, and show some ruthlessness about closing programs that do not work. Ideally, the administration would also allow parents a wide range of options, including faith-based preschools (Obama has pledged to continue President Bush's faith-based initiative). Otherwise, there simply will not be a sufficient supply of quality preschool programs.

Finally, President Obama can have a symbolic impact on schooling. In highlighting the need for parents to "turn off the television set, and put the video games away, and instill a sense of excellence in our children," Obama sent a powerful cultural message. Further, Obama's very ascendance to power could convince at least a few alienated African-Americans their nation will embrace anyone of talent and ambition. In and of itself, this influence should have some impact on reducing the longstanding black-white test score gap by undermining the oppositional culture painting academic achievement as "acting white," as legal scholar Stuart Buck's forthcoming book of that name describes.

### ***The Bad***

The worst part of Barack Obama's platform deals with *No Child Left Behind*. To paraphrase Winnie the Pooh, Obama is fully supportive of school accountability, except for the accountability part.<sup>12</sup> As Obama said to the National Education Association, "We know that high standards and accountability, *in the abstract*, are right." He then continued, "Don't tell us that the only way to teach a child is to spend two months of a year preparing him to fill out a few bubbles in a standardized test. We know that's not true. You didn't devote your lives to testing. You devoted it to teaching." Elsewhere, Obama said too much time is spent "preparing students for tests that do not provide any valuable, timely feedback on how to improve a student's learning. Creativity has been drained from classrooms as too many teachers are forced to teach fill-in-the-bubble tests."<sup>13</sup>

Obama's rhetoric here is drawn from the many broadsides against NCLB by the likes of teachers unions, and from Leftists such as Bill Ayers, Alfie Kohn, Jonathan Kozol, and Monty Neil. While they never openly deny that all children should learn to read, write, and do basic math, NCLB opponents argue that objective testing makes children and teachers unhappy and pushes schools to spend too much time preparing for tests. Indeed, in a New Hampshire speech, Obama said we should "help our teachers and principals develop assessments that teach our kids to become more than just good test-takers," and then praised New Hampshire for developing "innovative assessments, including digital portfolios," adding that "there's no reason we can't start replicating this all across the country."<sup>14</sup> Although the Obama campaign clumsily tried to backtrack later,<sup>15</sup> Obama's education spokesperson Melody Barnes, recently appointed as the

President-elect's Domestic Policy Council Director, suggested in October that "not every child learns the same way, not every child can be tested the same way, we can't ensure student achievement across the board in the same way. So we have to use different kinds of assessments, portfolios for example, and other forms of assessments."<sup>16</sup>

The anti-NCLB argument has three problems. First, the claim that children spend too much time being tested has no basis in fact. For example, in Arkansas public schools, the most tested students—those in grades 5 and 7—spend only 1 percent of total instructional time being tested, probably less time than spent in class parties or on field trips.<sup>17</sup>

Second, without objective testing, we have no way to tell which schools are actually teaching children, as opposed to merely keeping them off the streets (one of the adult-centered goals of schooling). As former Bush administration education official Michael Petrilli put it:

Instead of those nasty standardized tests on which the performance of students and schools can actually be tracked and compared in ways that parents, policymakers, and educators can understand, we'll use individualized portfolios, performances, and demonstrations which cannot be reliably scored or compared by anybody.<sup>18</sup>

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It is difficult to imagine a portfolio scheme that would be less time-consuming, less expensive, and as transparent (i.e., as difficult to game) as objective testing. Indeed, the two states that experimented with portfolios, Vermont and Kentucky, abandoned them for just these reasons.

In the end, a portfolio scheme would simply erode objective accountability, thereby ending the pressure for schools to improve. We cannot have accountability without being able to measure objectively which programs work and which fail. Without testing, we are reduced to sort of accountability that Enron made famous: if administrators say their schools are working well, other stakeholders will simply have to take their word for it. In such a postmodern era, successful programs would not be “advantaged” over unsuccessful ones. This scenario would seem comforting to grownups who fail to teach kids, but not to the kids, their parents, and those working in schools that succeed.

Third, in a speech to the National Education Association, Obama received huge applause when he vehemently said, “But don’t come up with this law called No Child Left Behind, and then leave the money behind.”<sup>19</sup> Yet this clever slogan has little basis in fact: NCLB

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raised federal funding for public schools by more than 50 percent. As former Massachusetts Board of Education chairman James Peyser and economist Robert Costrell show in the best financial analysis of the matter, the extra funding covers the extra costs, at least in the short term.<sup>20</sup> And anyway, as a host of studies by Stanford University’s Eric Hanushek,<sup>21</sup> Penn State

University’s Steve Peterson,<sup>22</sup> and others suggest, it is not clear that more funding for failing schools will tempt those schools to do a better job teaching kids. Such findings, alas, directly contradict Obama’s claims that NCLB should provide more money rather than more accountability for failing schools.

A more weighty argument against NCLB is that it is unfair to judge schools merely because their students do badly, given that

some students arrive at school with severe socio-economic disadvantages. Some kids, particularly English as a Second Language (ESL) students, do in fact start school well behind others. For that reason critics like Robert Linn urge that NCLB be revised to include a “value added” component. In such schemes, schools would be judged less based on where their students end up than on how much their skills improved. Obama has already signaled that he would support such reforms, saying that “if a child comes in and they’re two grades behind, and at the end of the year, they’re only one year behind, that school has done a good job. But right now, the way No Child Left Behind is structured, that school would be deemed a failure. Now that doesn’t make sense. So you’ve got to track the growth, the progress that that child is making during the course of the year.”<sup>23</sup>

Some critics from the Right oppose NCLB because they reject any role for the federal government in education. In spite of these and other thoughtful criticisms of NCLB, most education reformers agree that the law’s increased data from objective assessments have encouraged state and local education reform. Efforts to defang NCLB would make any meaningful school reform impossible, since no one could tell whether or not a reform succeeded. Congress and President Obama would be wise to kill efforts to water down NCLB accountability, and to embrace value-added measures instead.

### *The Ugly*

A final and technical set of Obama education plans seems more designed to protect or provide jobs for grownups than to increase student learning. For example, the Obama platform proposes that all schools of education must be accredited. In theory, it sounds desirable for schools of education to be re-

viewed by outside authorities for quality control. But there is simply no body of significant evidence that institutions certified by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) produce stronger teachers. In fact, research suggests the opposite – that weaker, not stronger, institutions seek and receive NCATE accreditation. (Of course, if NCLB is amended to water down objective accountability, we will never have the data to gauge whether teachers coming from NCATE-accredited institutions are more or less effective than others.)

The reason is because NCATE’s standards for accreditation emphasize pedagogy and process over content and subject knowledge. Education school faculty, not faculty in the arts and sciences, do the peer review evaluation for accreditation, which is rather like having the external consultant foxes advising the internal foxes on how well they have designed the lock on the chicken coop.

When candidate Obama’s education advisers wrote this provision, they seem to have been thinking more about pork for their friends than help for teachers and kids. Essentially, accreditation is a sneaky way for an ineffective certification body to expand its lucrative domain and for education schools to receive a blessing that the public thinks signifies professional quality.

Similarly, Obama has said that he wants to “pay teachers more money across the board,” as well as for “getting more professional training,” such as “if they study to be national board certified teachers,” or if they “are willing to get additional advanced degrees.”<sup>24</sup> These proposals are good for adults, not children: Paying teachers more across the board rewards bad teachers and provides them with no incentive to improve. Moreover, as several studies have shown,

there is surprisingly little evidence that certified teachers, board-certified teachers or teachers with masters degrees do any better in the classroom.<sup>25</sup> Such “professional training” merely serves to provide jobs to the adults who conduct such programs.

Candidate Obama’s platform also proposes support for transitional bilingual education, an increasingly discredited idea for ESL students. Research suggests that learning *in* English is typically more effective than is learning in the native tongue. Although bilingual education has enjoyed enormous support by many well-intentioned educators, many change their minds after seeing the successful implementation of sheltered English immersion in California, Arizona, Massachusetts and elsewhere.<sup>26</sup> For example, limited-English students in Oregon are funded at one and one-half times the amount for regular students. But from 2005 to 2007, among 8<sup>th</sup> graders learning English, only 15 percent passed the writing test and 36 percent passed the math test – unacceptable results. A return to traditional bilingual programs will ensure that many English language learners never learn enough English to handle advanced high school coursework in mathematics and science, and on to higher education. Despite their failings, bilingual programs have found support because they guarantee school-based employment to adults from diverse immigrant communities who do not speak very much English. So once again, President Obama will have to choose between programs that benefit children and programs that benefit adults.

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### **Reforms Kids Need**

Senator Obama was elected to fix an ailing economy and divisive foreign policy – not to

remake schooling. Unlike in the Bush administration, education reform will not be a first-year Obama priority. As a result, Obama will be tempted to simply farm out the education issue to the interest group with the most money: the teachers unions. Yet President-elect Obama's background suggests an interest in education. While candidate Obama has never confronted parts of public education that do not work, his campaign rhetoric and his very centrist presidential transition so far suggest a pragmatic willingness to support what does work, at least incrementally.

President Obama should appoint a Secretary of Education who will not weaken NCLB's objective test-based accountability. Reforms

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should focus on adding "value added" provisions to the law, to make it fairer and more data-driven.

Second, Obama should propose programs funding new compensation models for teachers, models taking into account market conditions and teacher effectiveness. Combined with efforts to bring more mid-career professionals into teaching through scholarships and alternative certification programs, this reform could begin the hard work of recruiting and retaining a top quality teaching force. Obama will need to expend presidential capital, but over the long term it will prove worthwhile.

Third, Obama should indeed increase funding for charter schools that work, while pushing states to close those which fail. The mantra of doing what works, as shown through objective evidence rather than political muscle, should also guide attempts to expand preschool. Indeed, we have learned

that any program expansion must be incremental, so as not to water down teacher quality.

Fourth, Obama should resist programs that call for new entitlements for school employees, such as his campaign's bilingual education proposal, and should also eschew mandating new sources of income for traditional institutions, such as the proposed requirements for NCATE accreditation. He should instead support programs that demonstrate increased learning for kids.

Finally, candidate Obama declared that "we need to fix and improve our public schools, not throw our hands up and walk away from them," even while sending his own children to private schools, the Lab School in Chicago, and now, Sidwell Friends in Washington.<sup>27</sup> We respect Barack and Michelle Obama's decision to do what is best for their children. Even the best public schools are not the best for all kids. That said, this spring the Washington D.C. opportunity scholarship program comes up for reauthorization, and many will accuse President Obama of rank hypocrisy if he gives in to the demands of special interests and denies school choice to low-income children, while exercising school choice for his own children. Indeed some of the Obama girls' classmates can attend Sidwell Friends only because of the program. As Wisconsin Democratic State Senator Polly Williams put it, "The president shouldn't be the only person who lives in public housing who gets to send his kids to private schools."<sup>28</sup>

In short, if President Obama shows the wisdom and courage to embrace the good, reject the bad, and flee from the ugly, he has the potential to become America's greatest education president. That would be the change our schoolchildren need.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Robert Maranto, "Great Pain, Great Gain," *Hartford Courant*, July 26, 2005, p. A18.

<sup>2</sup> Gary W. Ritter, John W. Murry, and Sean W. Mulvenon, "Overcoming the Obstacles: Implementing State Accountability Programs for Schools." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Dallas, TX, November 8, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Maranto, with April G. Maranto, "Can NCLB Increase Options for Low Income Students? Evidence from Across the States," in *Leaving No Child Left Behind? Options for kids in failing schools*, eds. Frederick Hess and Chester E. Finn (New York: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2004), 63-88.

<sup>4</sup> "Barack Obama's Plan for Education Funding, Merit Pay," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pv3QO-JkDBU&feature=related>

<sup>5</sup> Richard Ingersoll, "The problem of underqualified teachers in American secondary schools," *Educational Researcher* 28 (1999): 26-37.

<sup>6</sup> Domenico Montanaro, "Obama calls for merit pay," MSNBC, July 5, 2007, <http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2007/07/05/259258.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pv3QO-JkDBU&feature=related>

<sup>8</sup> Michael J. Podgursky, and Matthew G. Springer, "Teacher performance pay: A review," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 26 (2007): 909-949. On the Teacher Advancement Program in particular, see Lewis C. Solmon and Kimberly Firetag Agam, "Smaller Classes or Better Teachers," in *A Guide to Charter Schools: Research and Practical Advice for Educators*, eds. Myron S. Kayes and Robert Maranto, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2006), 51-64.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.punahou.edu>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ucls.uchicago.edu/>

<sup>11</sup> Telephone interview with Robert Maranto, July 9, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Winnie the Pooh knew all about babysitting, except for the babysitting part. See Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld, A. A. Milne, Robbin Cuddy, *Roo's New Babysitter*, (New York: Random House Disney, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Eleanor Chute, "Both Clinton and Obama attack No Child Left Behind Act," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, April 9, 2008, <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08100/871524-298.stm>

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.barackobama.com/2007/11/20/remarks\\_of\\_senator\\_barack\\_obam\\_34.php](http://www.barackobama.com/2007/11/20/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_34.php)

<sup>15</sup> Michele McNeil, "Portfolio confusion and the education advisors' debate," *Education Week Campaign K-12* blog, October 21, 2008, [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2008/10/obama\\_on\\_portfolios\\_does\\_he\\_or.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2008/10/obama_on_portfolios_does_he_or.html)

<sup>16</sup> This statement was made on the Diane Rehm radio show on October 21, 2008, at about 22 minutes: <http://wamu.org/programs/dr/08/10/21.php#23427>

<sup>17</sup> University of Arkansas, Office for Education Policy Brief, "Time Spent on Testing," Volume 5, Issue 3

(April 2008), [http://www.uark.edu/ua/oep/policy\\_briefs/2008/Time\\_Spent\\_on\\_Testing.pdf](http://www.uark.edu/ua/oep/policy_briefs/2008/Time_Spent_on_Testing.pdf); Gary Ritter and Marc Holley, "Time for Testing," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, March 17, 2008,

<http://www2.arkansasonline.com/news/2008/mar/17/guest-writers-time-testing-20080317/>

<sup>18</sup> Michael J. Petrilli, Thomas B. Fordham Institute, Flypaper Web log, "Breaking news: Obama campaign wants to dump NCLB testing, use portfolios instead," October 21, 2008, <http://www.edexcellence.net/flypaper/index.php/2008/10/breaking-news-obama-campaign-wants-to-dump-nclb-testing-use-portfolios-instead/> (accessed November 29, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> "Barack Obama on No Child Left Behind," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4arDPdhE5k&feature=related>

<sup>20</sup> James Peyser and Robert Costrell, "Exploring the Costs of Accountability," *Education Next*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 23-29, [http://media.hoover.org/documents/ednext20042\\_22.pdf](http://media.hoover.org/documents/ednext20042_22.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> See, for example Eric Hanushek, "Spending on Schools," in *A Primer on America's Schools*, ed. Terry M. Moe, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2001), 69-88.

<sup>22</sup> Steve Peterson, "The Political Context of Students' Educational Performance: Does Spending Matter?" (working paper, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> "Barack Obama in Beaumont, TX,"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0L2GEBhd2w>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pv3QO-JkDBU&feature=related>

<sup>25</sup> Andrew J. Wayne and Peter Youngs, "Teacher Characteristics and Student Achievement Gains: A Review," *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 73, No. 1 (2003): 89-122. See also Amy Ashley and Mike Kayes, "Where's the Alternative? Identifying, Training, and Certifying," in *A Guide to Charter Schools: Research and Practical Advice for Educators*, eds. Myron S. Kayes and Robert Maranto, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2006), 69-78.

<sup>26</sup> Christine H. Rossell, "Learning a Second Language through the Second Language," *Educational Leadership* Vol. 62, No. 4 (Dec 2004-Jan 2005): 32-36; —, "Dismantling Bilingual Education, Implementing English Immersion: the California Initiative," (Boston: Boston University, 2002), <http://www.bu.edu/polisci/people/faculty/rossell/papers/DismantlingBilingualEducationJuly2002.pdf>; Valentina Bali, "'Sink or Swim': What Happened to California's Bilingual Students After Proposition 227?" *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (2001): 295-317.

<sup>27</sup> This is very unlike President Jimmy Carter and the late Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, who believed in leading from the front and accordingly send their own children to Washington public schools in the 1970s.

<sup>28</sup> Clint Bolick, "Obama Gets 'H' for Hypocrisy," *Forbes* online, December 1, 2008, [http://www.forbes.com/opinions/2008/11/30/education-obama-vouchers-oped-cx\\_cb\\_1201bolick.html](http://www.forbes.com/opinions/2008/11/30/education-obama-vouchers-oped-cx_cb_1201bolick.html)

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