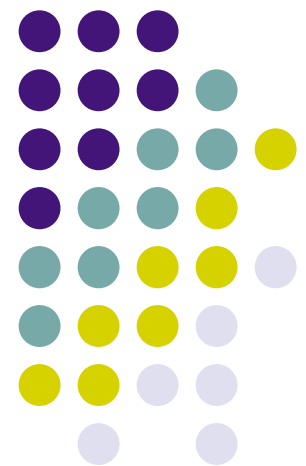


# Some Observations on the SOE's Task Force on Higher Ed

---





## About ED

- Overview
- Contacts
- Offices
- Boards & Commissions**
  - Boards & Commissions
- Initiatives
- Publications
- ED Performance & Accountability
- Jobs

### BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

## A National Dialogue: The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education

[Home](#) | [Commission](#) | [Public Comment](#) | [Meetings](#) | [Reports](#)

- **About the Commission** — background, commissioners, staff, charter, announcements
- **Public Comment** — questions, comments, innovative models
- **Meetings** — public hearings, remarks, webcasts, transcripts, meeting materials
- **Reports** — reports written by or for the commission

#### FEATURES

**Fifth Meeting -- Washington, D.C. (May 18-19, 2006)**

**Issue Papers**

Printable view Share this page

Last Modified: 05/10/2006

#### Quick Click

Select a Topic

#### Search ED.gov

GO >>

• [Advanced Search](#)

#### About ED

- [Offices](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Budget](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Contacts](#)

### Features



- No Child Left Behind
- American Competitiveness
- Summer Workshops for Teachers
- Pandemic Flu Preparedness

#### Related Topics:

• **No Related Topics Found**

#### Get More!

Receive [ED newsletters](#).  
View [teaching resources](#).  
Get [answers to questions](#).  
Find [online services](#).  
Take our [online survey](#).




**Nicholas Donofrio**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Executive Vice President, Innovation and Technology  
IBM Corporation


**James J. Duderstadt**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President Emeritus  
University Professor of Science and Engineering  
Director, The Millennium Project  
University of Michigan

**Gerri Elliott**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Corporate Vice President  
Worldwide Public Sector  
Microsoft Corporation

**Jonathan Grayer**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Chairman and CEO  
Kaplan, Inc.


**Kati Haycock**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Director  
The Education Trust

**James B. Hunt, Jr.**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Chairman, Hunt Institute for Educational Policy and Leadership  
Former Governor of North Carolina

**Arturo Madrid**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Murchison Distinguished Professor of Humanities  
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures  
Trinity University

**Robert Mendenhall**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President  
Western Governors University

**Charles Miller**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Private Investor  
Former Chairman of the Board of Regents, University of Texas System

**Charlene R. Nunley**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President  
Montgomery College

**Catherine B. Reynolds**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Chairman and CEO  
Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation  
EduCap Inc.

**Arthur J. Rothkopf**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Senior Vice President and Counselor to the President  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
President Emeritus, Lafayette College

**Richard (Rick) Stephens**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Senior Vice President, Human Resources and Administration  
The Boeing Company

**Louis W. Sullivan**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President Emeritus, Morehouse School of Medicine  
Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**Sara Martinez Tucker**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President and CEO  
Hispanic Scholarship Fund

**Richard Vedder**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Adjunct Scholar, American Enterprise Institute  
Distinguished Professor of Economics Ohio University

**Charles M. Vest**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President Emeritus  
Professor of Mechanical Engineering  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**David Ward**  [PDF Bio](#)  
President  
American Council on Education

**Robert M. Zemsky**  [PDF Bio](#)  
Chair and Professor  
The Learning Alliance for Higher Education  
University of Pennsylvania











RUSSELL MILLER

MARGARET SPELLINGS

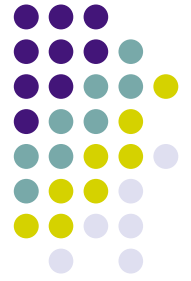
CHERYL DORMAN





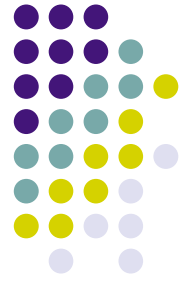


# Charge



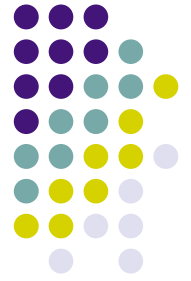
- To determine the higher education needs of the nation both for today and in the future.
- To assess the degree to which the current U.S. higher education enterprise is capable of meeting these needs.
- To suggest implementation strategies for better aligning higher education with the needs of the nation.

# Concerns



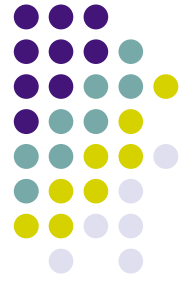
- Changing national needs
- Access
- Affordability
- Accountability

# The Changing Needs of the Nation



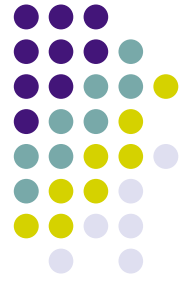
*“The flattening of the world is moving ahead apace, and nothing is going to stop it. What can happen is a decline in our standard of living if more Americans are not empowered and educated to participate in a world where all the knowledge centers are being connection. We have within our society all the ingredients for American individuals to thrive in such a world, but if we squander these ingredients, we will stagnate.” (Thomas Friedman, 2005)*

# Access



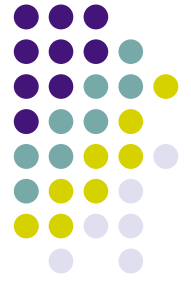
- There is evidence that both the access to and the distribution of students within American higher education are becoming alarmingly stratified based upon economic status, race, and ethnicity.
- Only 8% of the bottom quartile will graduate from a four-year institution, compared to 75% of the top quartile.
- While there are important actions that can be taken both by colleges and universities and by their patrons (state and federal government, private support) to improve access at the margin, major gains are not likely without a sustained improvement in secondary education.

# Affordability



- The rapid increase in the price of a college education, driven in part by cost shifting from tax support to tuition in public institutions, by inefficiency and stagnant productivity gains, and by unbridled competition for the best students, faculty, resources, and reputations, is undermining public confidence in higher education.
- Do current financial aid programs conducted by the federal government, the states, and individual institutions adequately address the goals of increased access by those students with need, increased retention or graduation, and reduced debt burdens that might otherwise prevent lower-income students from pursuing low-paying and socially beneficial areas?

# Accountability



- The inadequate performance of much of the higher education enterprise as measured by graduation rates, time to degree, learning outcomes, and even literacy.
- The limited capacity of postsecondary education to innovate and adapt to changing needs and conditions.
- The lack of transparency in providing public information about costs, prices, and value.
- The reluctance of many higher education institutions to recognize their public purpose and respond to the changing needs of the nation.





# Possible Draft

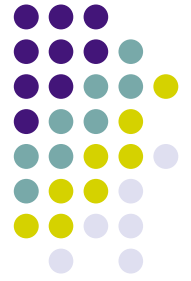
- Title: "Raising the Bar: America's Challenge to Higher Education"
- Context:
  - Acknowledge leadership of U.S. higher ed
  - Yet a changing nation (demographics) and a changing world (global, knowledge economy) requires much more

# Goals



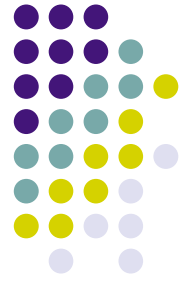
- The United States must demand and be prepared to support a world-class system of higher education at all levels capable of meeting the changing educational, research, and service needs of the nation.
- American higher education must re-establish through its quality, nimbleness, innovation, efficiency, and responsiveness its accountability and public purpose.
- The nation must address and correct those factors that have created a strong dependence of access to and success in higher education upon socioeconomic status.

# Goals (continued)



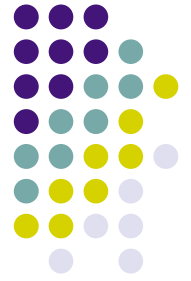
- The nation must sustain and enhance the world's leading system of research universities, capable of educating and attracting world-class scientists, engineers, and other knowledge professionals while providing and applying the new knowledge necessary for national prosperity and security through basic research, development, and innovation.
- The nation should embrace and achieve the objective of providing all of its citizens with universal access to lifelong learning opportunities at the post-secondary level.

# Premises



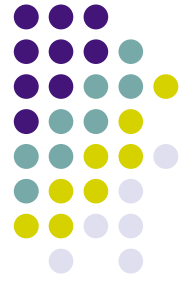
- The likelihood that the private sector will be the primary source of additional resources to meet the growing higher education needs of the nation, coupled with the highly decentralized and competitive nature of the postsecondary education enterprise, suggest that market forces will be more effective than public policy and regulation in stimulating and enabling higher education to respond to the needs of the nation. Moreover, market pressure and competition should drive not only quality and productivity but also stimulate innovation and responsiveness.

# Premises (continued)



- The challenge therefore is to enable the postsecondary education market to function efficiently and effectively, by empowering more informed consumers of educational services, eliminating unnecessary market constraints and monopolies, and providing the additional incentives and investments necessary for innovation and change.
- Key in this effort will be the adoption of standards for institutional disclosure and transparency of information such as learning outcomes, student flows (unit record tracking), financial data, and other measures of institutional impact (R&D, public service) aimed at providing both consumer information and evidence of public accountability.

# Possible Recommendations



- Access
- Affordability
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Alignment

# Access



## Preparation

- Establish post-secondary education as a goal for all students\*\*
- Adopt/achieve college prep standards for all schools & students
- Encourage dual enrollment, AP, etc. in 12<sup>th</sup> grade
- Overhaul K-12 teacher preparation
  - E.g., eliminate Ed Sch degrees
  - Alternative routes to teacher certification

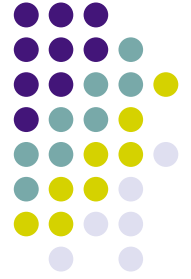
## Incentives

- Learn Grant Accounts (e.g. fed/st/priv “529s” for all students)\*\*\*

## Coordination (articulation) (both K-12 and adults)

- National strategy for K-1, higher ed, and workforce alignment
- Remove barriers to distance learning and adult education\*
- Establish clear paths among levels and institutions

# Affordability



## Need-based Financial Aid

- Increase need-based financial aid (feds, states, institutions)\*\*\*

- Reinvent Federal Financial Aid System\*\*\*

- Demand highest priority for need-based aid (feds, states, inst)\*\*

- Use Pell Grants as primary mechanism for federal aid

- Eliminate unnecessary subsidy of fed loan industry

## Efficiency, productivity, cost-containment

- Provide incentives cost-containment and productivity

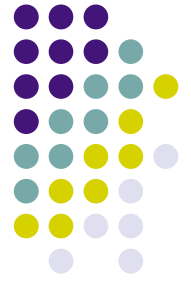
- Provide loans for productivity projects

- Establish nonprofits to provide tiger teams for productivity

- Provide adequate public and private investment (states, philanthropy)



# Accountability



Adoption of goals to achieve world-class standards

- Demand world-class performance in all of higher ed<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

- Set specific goals for increasing college access and success

- Increase 6 year graduation rates to ## percent

Quality assurance

- Demand evidence-based assessment of educational effectiveness<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

- Baldrige Award certification<sup>\*\*</sup>

- Use accreditation to stimulate continuous improvement

Transparency

- Adopt transparency/disclosure practices from capital markets<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

- Establish a national database of useful/user-friendly info<sup>\*\*</sup>

- Establish a national/state student unit record system<sup>\*\*</sup>

- Develop a “consumer reports” approach to transparency<sup>\*\*</sup>

# Innovation



Stimulate innovative culture in higher ed (incentives, remove barriers)

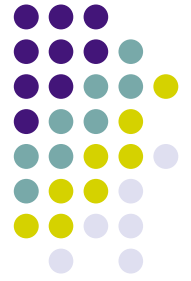
Federal R&D on learning, technology, systems (ED, NSF, NIH, DOD)

Both basic (NSF-NIH) and applied (FIPSE)

Stimulate institutional R&D to support continuous improvement

Encourage bold experiments in different approaches to K-16 education

# Alignment



## Workforce/Lifelong Learning

- National Public/Private Commitment to Lifelong Learning\*\*\*
- Lifelong Learning Accounts

## Endorse and support the recommendations of ACI, RAGS, NII\*\*\*

- Support RAGS “10,000 Teachers, 10,000,000 Minds”
- Sustain/enhance the world’s leading system of research univ\*\*\*

## Immigration Policies

- Encourage foreign students and enable them to stay

## Public Good

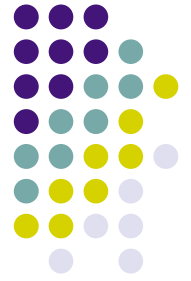
- Challenge higher ed to reestablish itself as a public good with a strong public purpose through quality, efficiency, productivity, nimbleness, and innovation



# Possible Blockbusters...

- Refocus federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs on need-based aid.
- National commitment to lifelong learning
- Disclosure and transparency requirements
- Endorse ACI, RAGS, and NII
- Stimulating more innovation in higher ed
- Learn Grants???

# Unlikely



- Standardized testing a la NCLB
  - (...but may require evidence-based assessment of educational effectiveness)
- Creation of national institution accreditation agency
  - (...but may push accreditation toward assessment of learning value added and continuous improvement)
- Major increase in federal support...

