

# The Blumenfeld Education Letter

"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce those risks.

"Without vision, the people perish."

## Why Education Reform Has Failed

On May 3, 1989, Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos released the Education Department's sixth annual report card on U.S. schools. The news was grim:

The high-school dropout rate is going up again.

The education reform movement "has lost its momentum."

SAT and ACT scores have leveled off and are still far below their 1960s peak.

Education spending, adjusted for inflation, is up 26 percent since 1982. "We're spending more and getting less for our dollar," said Cavazos.

The dropout rate in Washington, D.C., Cavazos's own backyard, is the nation's highest: 44.5%.

We are still wallowing in a "tide of mediocrity."

"We're standing still," said Cavazos. "The situation scares me and I hope it scares you."

NEA president Mary Futrell put much of the blame on the government: "It's no mystery that after eight years of eroding federal support for education . . . we find little progress in the achievement of our students."

Yet, according to Secretary Cavazos, the U.S. will invest more than \$199-billion in precollegiate education this year. He said:

"We are already spending more money per student than our major foreign competitors, Japan and Germany. And yet our students consistently fall behind the competition in comparative testing. Looking at virtually every qualitative measure -- college entrance exams, graduation rates, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and international assessments -- we see our students performing minimally, lacking the advanced skills needed to succeed. This deplorable fact further underscores my belief that money alone is not the answer to our education deficit. Since 1982, we've seen per pupil spending rise from \$3,165 to \$3,977, a 26 percent increase. And that is in real terms, adjusted for inflation."

Concerning dropouts, Cavazos said: "It is not acceptable to lose the 600,000 to 700,000 students who drop out each year. . . . This is a national tragedy."

"We must do better or perish as the nation we know today," he said.

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