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Cosby Says Black Parents Failing Kids With School

SAN JOSE, CA--Bill Cosby blamed parents for the shortcomings of students during speeches to educators at Stanford University, continuing a theme the comedian touched on when he linked the behavior of some low-income blacks parents with the community's school dropout rate.

"We need to stop fooling around," Cosby told a gathering of about 1,700 people at Stanford's Memorial Auditorium. "The mother and the father born here didn't learn to speak standard English -- or math."

Many parents are not doing their job, he said, "I don't know where we lost it, or how we lost it, but people are not parenting."

Cosby, 66, also said students are falling short because their diets are not healthy, class sizes are too large and teachers lack resources.

"These people are not parenting. They are buying things for kids -- \$500 sneakers for what? And won't spend \$200 for 'Hooked on Phonics.'" Cosby told the New York Times that he

had made the comments out of concern and because of his belief that fighting racial injustice must also include accepting personal responsibility.

The remarks came after Cosby stirred controversy at a Washington, D.C., gala commemorating the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision to desegregate public schools. Cosby reportedly said "lower-economic people are not holding up their end in this deal." [Complete Cosby remarks can be found at www.projectappleseed.org](http://www.projectappleseed.org).

Education funding separates Bush, Kerry

By JESSICA WEHRMAN
Scripps Howard News Service

WASHINGTON D.C. Funding levels for education and the No Child Left Behind Act have become the key distinctions between President Bush and Sen. John Kerry's education proposals.

In many ways, it comes down to money: While the Bush administration has increased education funding to historic levels, Kerry said he would spend even more. The Democratic presidential candidate wants to increase education funding by eliminating tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans.

"Kerry-Edwards will fund (No Child Left Behind)," Kerry spokeswoman Allison Dobson said. "Period."

But Kerry, who voted for the 2002 legislation, also said he would seek increased flexibility on the law, which aims to beef up teacher qualifications, expand testing and publicly report how major groups of students perform on standardized tests.

Dobson said the Bush administration is managing the law for show, rather than for reform. She said Kerry would focus on decreasing the dropout rate, continuing standardized tests, recruiting 500,000 more teachers and providing a little more flexibility when it comes to penalties. Continued on page 2



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Under the law, schools that do not pass standardized tests can be punished. Reprimands include allowing students to transfer to better-performing schools and closing struggling schools. Dobson said that the law punished schools instead of giving them more money to help improve.

"Schools do not have the opportunity to do better," she said.

Terry Holt, a Bush campaign spokesman, said the Bush administration still is working on successfully implementing the 2002 law.

"This is a long-term commitment," he said. "It's something the president talks about in most of his campaign speeches, and we have already run national advertising on education issues."

During campaign appearances, Bush also has stressed beefing up math and science education.

"The Democratic party's focus on education has been more influenced by special interests in the education field," Holt said. "They've focused on teacher pay and construction issues and other things. I think those issues are lost on most families."

Justin Torres of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, which studies education issues, said Bush has focused more on global affairs than on education in this campaign because of 9/11 and the war in Iraq.

"Education is not the central theme of his campaign as it was four years ago," Torres said.

But that won't hurt Bush, Torres said. Many voters consider education important for local elections but not national elections.

Diane Shust of the National Education Association said the group endorsed Kerry because he and the union are largely simpatico on how to fix and fund No Child Left Behind. Kerry also opposes vouchers, she said, and has supported fully funding special education programs.

"Our concern has always been that No Child Left Behind is overly prescriptive in terms of one size fits all," she said.



Andy Rotherham of the Progressive Policy Institute says the candidates differ on far more than money.

"Kerry is putting forward a series of ideas on graduation rates, teacher quality initiatives - he's putting forward a set of ideas on how to make No Child Left Behind work. Bush is behaving in many ways as if the hard work of No Child Left Behind is in the past," Rotherham said. "But with any major law, implementation is crucial."

Take the Pledge

Leave No Parent Behind

Celebrate!
National Parental Involvement Day

November 18, 2004

www.projectappleseed.org



The end of the Bake \$ale

Project Appleseed Seeks To Redefine and Raise the Bar In School Fund Raising

The era of the bake sale is nearly over. The last decade has seen traditional forms of school fund raising usurped by more aggressive models. Rather than bake sales, schools are raising millions of dollars from wealthy and not-so-wealthy alumni. Public schools are no longer content with the small dollars that traditional school fund raising brings, they are finding new ways to get adequate funding for their long-term needs.



At this time of tight education budgets, it's more important than ever for public schools to develop comprehensive fund-raising efforts. Philanthropy has enormous potential: More and more individuals and organizations are interested in helping our nation's schools succeed. They want to give billions in cash and noncash gifts that will make a real difference in public schools. Look at what alumni fund raising has done for public and private colleges and universities.

To Kevin Walker, President & Founder of Project Appleseed, the end of the bake sale has arrived none too soon. Walker is leading an effort to raise \$15 million in private funds from alumni to build a recreation center for his children's neighborhood public high school in University City, Missouri. [Project details can be found at www.projectappleseed.org](http://www.projectappleseed.org).

"Our long-term goal is to become the leader not only in parental involvement, but in school fund raising as well. Alumni are an enormous untapped resource for public schools and we intend to help parents and educators tap this market," said Michael Donovan, Project Appleseed Cofounder and President of the American Fund Raising Group in New Hampshire.



Leading public high schools throughout the United States are raising private funds for their schools:

Boston Latin School in Boston, MA, \$100 million capital campaign. The nation's oldest high school launched the \$50 million, Boston Latin School Association, Pons Privatus campaign, the first fund-raising campaign in its history. The campaign, announced simultaneously with an additional \$50 million bequests goal, is the largest ever undertaken on behalf of a public high school.

A \$50 million capital campaign for a public secondary school is a ground-breaking venture, but one befitting Boston Latin's role as a ground-breaking institution. By bridging a one-of-a-kind public school with essential private support, Boston Latin School and its supporters are creating a unique public/private partnership. This partnership will ensure a future for Boston Latin School that is as great as its heritage.

The Pons Privatus campaign is national in scope and has three major components: Excellence in Teaching & Learning, Scholarship Support and Unrestricted Funding.

Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, OH, a \$12 million capital campaign. "The new Arts and Science Center is a tangible demonstration of the tremendous affection of alumni and friends for our school. We have reached \$11 million of our \$12 million goal because of the enthusiasm of our alumni and friends. The **Walnut Hills Alumni Foundation** has set a new standard nationally in fundraising. We hope that our leadership will continue to spark interest from coast to coast."

How Is Your School Doing? Use the Parental Involvement Checklist! @ projectappleseed.org



- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning At Home
- Decision Making
- Community Involvement

No Junk Food' the Rule in Connecticut District

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (AP) - Principal Kim Johnsky walks the maze of lunch tables at her designated "junk food-free school," one of the early stages of a districtwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of childhood obesity.

By next fall, New Haven administrators plan to give every school a taste of what it's like to be junk-food free when they strip vending machines of salty, greasy and sugary food and drink.

"There isn't a candy bar in this school," says Johnsky, except for the ones in her desk. Those were the ones that were seized.

The school cafeteria has become a place where third-graders munch on salads if they don't like the main course, and seventh-grade girls take pilates after school.

The menu: Hamburgers, tater tots, fruit, milk.

For the student with a sweet tooth, the vending machines offer no help: They're stocked with water, juice, and milk. Soda will be replaced by water, juice and milk. Baked chips will replace fried. Granola will replace cookies. Most cafeterias will roll out baked versions of chicken nuggets and french fries.

The program doesn't stop in the cafeteria.

The district is offering cooking classes for parents and infusing nutrition lessons into regular science classes. Building renovations include designs for larger gyms to encourage physical activity.

Even the bake sale, a traditional source of fund-raising for classes and parent organizations, is being discouraged in favor of plant sales and penny drives.

Reginald Mayo, the district's superintendent, has volunteered to lose 30 pounds by doing the same things he's trying to teach his students - exercise, eat a healthier diet, and drink more water during the day.

It won't be easy, he said. Three weeks into his diet he's gained two pounds. But he concedes that he's going to have to cut back on some of his longtime breakfast favorites: ham, home fries, eggs and bacon.

"I'm going to look pretty hypocritical if I'm talking about healthy eating to kids and parents, and I'm walking around at 217 pounds," he said.

New Haven, an urban district on Connecticut's shoreline, doesn't have hard data on how many students are obese. But officials do know that nearly 3,000 children suffer from asthma, and many have juvenile diabetes.

Nationally, about 15 percent of children and adolescents between the ages 6-19 are obese, and that figure has grown steadily over time, according to 2000 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Dr. Stephen Updegrave, a medical adviser for New Haven Schools and one of the primary architects of the district's policy, said one of the goals is to create a "ripple effect" from the school to community.

"Schools are a major area where kids spend a lot of time, a lot of structured time, and that's a real opportunity to model good behaviors," Updegrave said.

But the program has met some resistance, particularly among school officials who fear that the program will trade healthy budgets for healthy eating.

The junk food- and soda-stocked vending machines pull in up to \$10,000 in extra income for some of the high schools each year, said Robin Golden, executive director of business operations for New Haven schools. "That's considerable, considerable dollars," Mayo said.

When it's gone, there is some fear that healthy alternatives won't turn as big of a profit. That money is often used for field trips, awards programs, special events and other extras. Mayo said he is reviewing his budgets to see if there are ways to fill the revenue gap.

Schools across the country have made similar moves. California has passed legislation to ban junk food from vending machines, and New York City has cut out hard candy, doughnuts, soda and salty chips. Hawaii's Board of Education also recently put strict limits on machine contents.

In Connecticut, a bill that would require schools to offer healthy things like juices, water and dried fruit and ensure a 20-minute recess awaits action in the Legislature. Similar bills related to childhood +obesity+ have not succeeded in past sessions.

Next year, six schools across the state will pilot a junk food-free vending machine project. Using a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (website - news) , six schools in Canton, Colchester, Southington, Meriden and Danbury will sell only things like nuts, baked chips, and smoothies.

It will test the theory that if only healthy food is around, kids will eat it, said Susan Fiore, a nutrition specialist with the state Department of Education.

It will also measure revenue loss, to determine if schools really do lose thousands of dollars when they make the switch from junk food to healthy food.

"We can't guarantee they won't lose money," Fiore said. "But maybe the payoff is worth it for the schools. There's a lot of research out there that kids who eat better learn better, and that's a pretty easy sell." Copyright 2004 Associated Press





projectappleseed.org
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 A 501 (c) (3) non-profit educational organization

A Johnny Appleseed for the Schools

Olive Chase was surfing the Internet when she stumbled onto Project Appleseed's website and clicked on its Parental Involvement Pledge.

As parents, we are the owners of the public school system," the pledge read. "As owners, we bear a responsibility to participate in the system." The form asked the signer to promise to volunteer a minimum of ten hours in her child's school each year.



Chase, a council member at her son's Cape Cod elementary school, had been trying to get more parents involved. The council passed around the pledge and 200 of the school's 350 families signed on.

"The response was electrifying," she says. "We landscaped a courtyard, dramatically raised our enrichment-program fund-raising, and had thirty different parents who helped in classrooms at any given time. I don't think any of it would have happened without that pledge."

Project Appleseed, created by Kevin Walker, a former political organizer, is a non-profit, Internet-based effort to build an army of public-school parent activists who will do everything from scrubbing school bathrooms to reshaping education policies. Walker a father of four (three teenagers and a 10 year old), runs the organization he founded in 1993 from St. Louis, where he and a small staff maintains the website, distributes pledges (3 million to nearly 2,000 school so far), dispenses on-line advice about how parents can plug in to their schools, and consults with grassroots parent groups around the country.

We're trying to get parents to do a better job of getting involved," he says, "and schools to do a better job of welcoming them." Walker, who spends three to four hours a week working in his own kids' schools, says he ultimately hopes to mobilize a cadre of parents that will not only reenergize local schools, but influence education policies at district, state and even national levels.

"We want to have five million parents taking the pledge by this spring," he says. Like many of Walker's ambitions, that may sound quixotic. But never underestimate the power of an impassioned parent - just ask Olive Chase. - Parenting Magazine March 2000

Get The Parental Involvement Pledge and Toolbox!

THE BASIC PACKAGE! Master Copies of America's Best Parental Involvement Practices! Project Appleseed emails you PDF master copies and snail mails hard copies. Order your toolbox on the reverse side order form. Print and mail to Project Appleseed or order online at projectappleseed.org. The Toolbox provides these effective parental involvement tools:**

Parent Volunteer Recruitment Tools

- A Master Copy of your school's own Parental Involvement Pledge.
- A Master Copy of the Inventory of Volunteer Interests in which parents can choose among
- 37 home and school based volunteer activities.
- A Master Copy of the Parental Involvement Report Card.
- PLUS! The Parental Involvement Pledge Online! Project Appleseed sets up a web page with your school's own Pledge Online.

Staff Support Tools

- A Master Copy Faculty and Staff Parental Involvement Pledge Volunteer Request.
- Live staff support from Project Appleseed's national office.
- Suggestions on How To Run A Successful Pledge Campaign.
- Twenty-Six Ways to Reach Out to Parents. Ideas about how to create parental involvement events and Project Appleseed's National Parental Involvement Day and Public School Volunteer Week.
- Project Appleseed's Newsletter Appleseed Today.
- A Certificate of Recognition for participating school(s) or organization.
- Title I, Parental Involvement Certification for No Child Left Behind Act of 2002.
- Regular e-mail updates on best practices from around the United States!



Does Your School Have Effective Parental Involvement?

Send Our School the Parental Involvement Pledge & Toolbox!



1. Parental Involvement Toolbox* (Annual):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Schools \$250.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Schools (2-4) \$200.00 Each / No. of Schs _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small School Districts (5-10 Schools) \$1000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Medium School Districts (10 - 20 Schools) \$2000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large School Districts (20 - 40 Schools) \$3000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> X-Large School Districts (40 Schools or More) \$5000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> XX-Large School Districts (80-150 Schools) \$10,000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> XXX-Large Districts (150 Schools or more) \$15,000.00 |
- Spanish version of the Parental Involvement Pledge is needed.

2. Special Changes to Pledge

- We need to edit the Parental Involvement Pledge to fit the needs of our school. Add \$50.00

3. Project Appleseed Annual Membership:

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|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Leader \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> School Leader \$100.00 |
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