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Illegal Aliens Strain Education Budgets

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As a presidential candidate, Barack Obama vowed to champion education and lift schools out of the Bush doldrums. As president, Obama has failed.

His administration and his news media support team place the blame on former President George W. Bush. The remedy, they say, is fast cash for public education of the nation's children, including those who enter the country illegally.

Public education has cost U.S. taxpayers an estimated \$2 trillion since 1980 when President Jimmy Carter rewarded his supporters in the National Education Association (NEA), the teachers union, by creating the U.S. Department of Education.

In the intervening years, federal control over local school districts has lowered performance levels of public-school students. A recent study found that 47 percent of adults in Detroit, many of them high school graduates, are functional illiterates.

Detroit is spending \$15, 945 for each public school student, yet 77 percent of 8th graders perform below skill levels. Nationwide, student performance in engineering, mathematics, and science has fallen to Third-World levels.

Part of the problem is illegal border crossers, whose families drain education resources. Legal immigrants are not the problem. Increasingly U.S. businesses look to legal immigrants to perform the 21st century work that many U.S. public school graduates are unprepared to do.

The Washington Post on June 25, 2011, reported the resignation of a young public school principal, who found the D.C. school system dysfunctional.

The Post followed with a report on June 28, 2011, that the Maryland version of the DREAM Act which awards college tuition benefits to illegal aliens was in peril of repeal due to the frustration of Marylanders with illegal immigration.

Major support for repeal is coming from Baltimore and Prince George's counties, the bluest parts of a very blue (Democratic) state. As of July 6, 2011, required signatures to place repeal on the ballot had been surpassed.

According to The Philadelphia Inquirer on Sept. 20, 2010, black and Hispanic high school dropout rates track the national averages, 46 and 44 percent, respectively.

Liberals blame a too-strict discipline policy. Meanwhile the Chicago Urban League reported at its 2011 Summit meeting that "well-known deficiencies in the public education system play a role in the blocking of African-American access to the higher wage, fast growth job lane." The League noted that black children are performing below basic skill levels. The same can be said of Hispanic students.

The Boston Globe reported on July 5, 2011, that Boston public schools are in turmoil, with the superintendent playing musical chairs in moving under-performing teachers and principals to better performing schools and vice versa. One under-performing teacher complained that much of her time was spent helping students to speak English.

In Georgia, where the illegal alien population is among the highest in the nation, a state investigation found rampant cheating on test scores in Atlanta's "long troubled schools." The cheating was not by students but by teachers and principals.

In California, low graduation rates and school dropouts occur among students who speak little or no English. To address the problem, the politically correct town of Ukiah in Mendocino County has a number of subjects, including math, taught only in Spanish. California has the largest number of failing schools in the nation.

Meanwhile Illinois is dropping writing from the high school core curriculum, and Indiana no longer requires the teaching of cursive penmanship.

Although the 2011 budget for President Obama's Race to the Top (RTTT) education program is \$4.35 billion, one state official notes that RTTT provides little or no real services.

It merely gives billions to school administrators who are able to employ good grant writers. The Chronicle of Higher Education, May 25, 2010, reported that an Obama Department of Education official observed that some high schools are "dropout factories," and many who graduate have to take remedial courses in college.

A 2011 poll indicates that people are losing faith in the public education system. As Andrew Coulson of the Cato Institute observed, "People will see the president's budget as a definition of insanity, doing the same thing over and over that has failed, and \$2 trillion of federal spending has failed America's children."

The reason could be that the influx of undocumented foreign nationals is integral to the re-distribution of wealth by means of class warfare permeating the Obama re-election rhetoric.

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