

# RAND

Jess Cook

Director  
Public Information

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William Raspberry  
The Washington Post  
1150 15th St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20071

Dear Bill:

Your column last Friday on "The Brighter Side of American Schools" was right on target. Although you'd never know it from the rhetoric of the doomsayers and panacea pushers, not all of our schools or even school districts are broke and in need of a fix. And no single mantra -- be it choice, decentralization, national standards and tests or whatever -- is going to help the poorest students and schools in the absence of additional resources.

You might consider following up with another piece on the enclosed RAND study/proposal for pumping new money into the poorest schools by shaking up and beefing up Chapter I. The 1965 act is currently up for reauthorization.

We released this report, by Iris Rotberg, on the day Secretary Riley appeared before the House Education and Labor Committee in late September to present the Administration's Chapter I proposal (see our enclosed news release for a rundown on some of the key differences between Iris's suggestions and his). He had praise for the study but was noncommittal about her call for a 50 to 100 percent funding increase.

Iris, like Bracey, has attacked the notion that our better students and schools aren't cutting the mustard in comparison with their counterparts in other countries. She goes even farther, however, in questioning the validity of those international test scores, not to mention many of our domestic benchmarks. I've enclosed several of her pieces on the use and misuse of tests and scores.

Iris can be reached at our Washington office (296-5000).

Sincerely,



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bcc: Iris Rotberg