

1 STATEMENT OF ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN
2 FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, WASHINGTON, D.C.

3 Mr. Shanker. Mr. Chairman, Senator Stafford, thank you
4 very much for this opportunity. I wish to thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman, for your concerned interest in pursuit of this
6 matter, which is so important.

7 Who would have thought a few years ago that the two
8 organizations ^[AFT & NEA] representing about 95 percent of America's
9 teachers would be willing to accept the concept that you can
10 create a ~~distinction among teachers~~ ^{differentiated teaching forces} that some ^{teachers} are certified
11 and some are ^{licensed but} not certified? And that ~~that~~ ^{this} distinction might
12 be used in such a way ~~in schools~~ ^{as to reorganize those}
13 schools, create different roles for teachers, create different
14 incentives, create different systems of compensation,
15 depending upon the willingness of the parties at the local
16 and State level? ^{This concept, & the possibility for its realization, is} truly a revolution and an opportunity that
17 needs to be seized, especially at this time.

18 ^{& Let me emphasize the issue of time, of haste even,}
19 We have followed the teacher demographics, and we know
20 what is happening. In the next six or seven years, about
21 one-half of the teachers of this country will either be
22 retiring or leaving for other reasons. That is about 1.2
23 million that will be leaving. We will need about 23 percent
24 of all the college graduates, each and every year, to enter
~~this field.~~ ^{teaching.}

A few years ago, at the time of the beginning of the

education reform

1 various reports, there were only about four percent of the
 2 students in college who said they were heading ^{into teaching} ~~our way~~. A
 3 few years later, it went up to six ^{percent}. Now, it's about 10
 4 percent, which is an indication that the demonstrations of
 5 concern by governors, by various task forces, and, indeed, by
 6 Federal officials also has ^{we} brought more people into the line
 7 eager and willing to become teachers. We are still, though,
 8 only about halfway there in terms of needs ^{More important,} ~~and we are not~~
 9 ~~talking~~ in these numbers ^(don't tell us anything) about the quality of those who are
 10 lined up ^{to enter teaching}. Are we getting our fair share of the best and
 11 brightest [?] ~~that come into our institutions?~~

12 The development of an ^{assessment for teacher} ~~instrument~~ of certification is the
 13 most important point of leverage that we have at the current
 14 ^{for securing the necessary quantity + quality of teachers.} ~~time~~. It will say to large numbers of youngsters who are
 15 thinking of coming our way that teaching will no longer be a
 16 flat profession, where you have achieved everything the
 17 minute you walked in, ^{of where} ~~that there is no place to go, that~~ the
 18 only way you can advance is to get out of it and do something
 19 else--whether it is school administration or school super-
 20 vision or out of education altogether. It will be a message
 21 to people who could be top-notch in any field that they can
 22 be top-notch and recognized in ^(teaching) ~~this one~~, that they need not
 23 go to other fields because there are opportunities for
 24 recognition and advancement ^(in this one) ~~whereas, there are not in this~~
 25 ~~one.~~

Board-Certification for teachers

1 ← In other words, ~~it~~ has the potential to alter the
2 demographic problems that we are facing in ^{our} ~~this~~ very important
3 field.

4 I think it is also important to say that, at this time
5 when ~~in a very short period of time~~ ^{starting} we are ~~actually going~~ to
6 ~~be~~ ^{filling} about half the ^{teaching} ~~positions~~ ^{in this nation,} ~~that~~ it make a tremendous
7 difference whether those positions get filled by people who
8 are in the bottom quartile of all college graduates, or
9 whether they are filled by people who are in the first,
10 second and third ^{quartiles} in terms of a decent spread of talents and
11 abilities.

12 We will be living with this ^{not-too-distant} teacher work force for quite
13 a long period in the future. I think even if this Board were
14 ~~able to raise~~ ^{all its own research & development} the money and raise it quickly, there is good
15 reason for the Federal Government to be a partner. I think
16 the message that it ^{would} ~~sends~~ to those who are in college ^{about} ~~as to~~
17 the national concern ^{for} and the importance ^{of teaching would be electrifying.} ~~phrase that we~~
18 ~~hear so often~~ ^g when different people are asked, "What do you
19 do, " ~~and what do you do?"~~ ^{most} And ^{most} people are very proud of ^{their} ~~what~~
20 ~~they do.~~ ^{answer, but teachers almost always answer,} ~~But the phrase that comes over and over again that~~
21 ~~we hear is~~ "Well, I am only a teacher." ^{Teachers must} ~~If somehow we could~~
22 get a different feeling ~~teachers would have~~ ^g about themselves
23 and about their profession ^g and this Federal commitment and
24 Federal involvement ^{would be a} ~~is~~ a very important step in that direc-
25 tion.

1 But the other part of that step, very closely related to
 2 it, as many others have said today, is the notion that it is
 3 time that others stopped setting down the rules and regula-
 4 tions ^{for teachers} from above. That is part of a problem that we have in
 5 industry; it is a problem that we have in ^{yet} government. ^{And}
 6 almost all the books we get today about excellence and how to
 7 become competitive deals ^g with the issue of how ^{to} do you get
 8 people to participate, to buy in, to feel part of something,
 9 to give more of themselves than one gives in a bureaucracy or
 10 in most institutions.

11 That is why it is so important that these standards be
 12 developed and set by a ^B board that is made up of a majority of
 13 people within the ^(K-12 teaching) profession. You do not want something that
 14 where ^(Lanses) three or five or seven years from now, the overwhelming
 15 majority of ^(American teachers) ~~people out there~~ ^{to} say, "Well, who developed that?
 16 Who came up with it?" ^g ~~The notion that,~~ [≡] once again, someone
 17 else is doing it to us. ⁾⁾ We would like to be able to go out
 18 and say: ^(this was developed by) ~~These were teachers,~~ ^{(There were others on the board, but}
 19 ~~there were others.~~ ^(practicing teachers) ^{school administrators and} ~~There were~~ ^g ~~governors, and there were~~
 20 business people and others representing the public, but this
 21 whole thing was put together and developed by the ^{teaching} profession
 22 itself. It is something you can and should be proud of, and
 23 it is something that you can support. It is a parallel
 24 development to what historically took place in other profes-
 sions. ⁾⁾ ^g Now I would like to address an
 issue that has been implicitly raised here +
 that may be on your minds. That question is, is there

anything new in this endeavor, don't we already know what works in education, don't we already have fine standards + assessment instruments? First, I would like to ask,

1 ~~Now, as to how much we know~~ if we know as much as ~~some people have asserted~~ ^{120 A}

2 ~~have heard~~ that we know, then the question comes why are ~~the~~ ^{student} results so bad? And they, indeed, are very bad. We ^{do} know

3 the results so bad? And they, indeed, are very bad. We ^{do} know

4 more than we are using, so it is important that we get ~~what is~~ ^{known more widely used}

5 ~~started~~ But there is an awful lot that we do not know, ~~I and~~ ^{it is time for us to face up to this fact in education} ~~think the important issue here is that there is no current~~ ^{Second}

6 ~~there is currently no~~ instrument that is nationally available that makes any sense

7 instrument that is nationally available that makes any sense

8 in terms of either ^{the} employment of teachers or ^{the} certification of ~~of~~

9 ~~teachers~~ or licensing ^{of} teachers. The ^{assessment} instruments that are

10 around now that are nationally available are basically

11 literacy exams ^{or} minimal competence ^{exam} and licensing standards,

12 which will continue to be State ^{-set} standards, are largely

13 governed by supply and demand. There is not a single

14 classroom in America that is ever empty, ^{because States + districts} you always go out

15 and hire the ^{most} ~~best~~ available person, ^S no matter what ^{their} qualifica-

16 tions or lack of qualifications. And given the fact that our

17 schools are ~~both educational and custodial~~ ^{(custodial, as well as) institutions,} that will ^{likely}

18 continue to be the case.

19 So we need something that is separate from ^{(licensing +} the hiring

20 standards, ~~and something that is separate from the licensing~~

21 ~~standards~~, and we need an instrument that is not just a

22 ~~minimum competency examination on reading or arithmetic~~ ^(or simple or simplistically derived teaching skills) We

23 need something which ~~does deal~~ ^{deals} with ⁱⁿ depth ^{with} in a number of

24 academic areas and not mere minimum competence. We need

25 something which ~~shows an~~ ^(assesses teachers') understanding of children and their

1 ~~psychology~~ ^{Development} and the materials ^{or} the tools of ~~the trade~~ ^{teaching}, the
 2 grouping of youngsters, ^{-- in short,} the ^{complex} pedagogical aspects of education.
 3 Then, ^{of course,} basically ^{teaching} this is a performing profes-
 4 sion. You can get your Ph.D. in Shakespeare, but you may not
 5 be a very good actor or actress. ^{A central part of the assessment, then, will be} ~~And part of this is~~ how
 6 does a person put ^{Knowledge + Skills} this together in terms of performance?

7 I would like to conclude by saying that there is an
 8 ~~awful lot of excitement out there,~~ ^{among teachers + much of the public about the mission of the Board} There is a willingness to
 9 buy in. That will not last forever. If this thing gets
 10 dragged out because we are out there raising a lot of money,
 11 and if it takes 10 years or 15 years to do, people are going
 12 to start yawning. They will not believe in it any more.

13 We need to go quickly but not so quickly that we put
 14 something out that nobody believes in. So it ~~has got to be~~ ^{must}
 15 done right, and it ~~has got to be~~ ^{must} done right the first time.
 16 But we should not be missing this opportunity, this excite-
 17 ment, this willingness on the part of a massive number of
 18 teachers to accept some radical and revolutionary changes.
 19 We need your help on that.

10 20 [The prepared statement of Mr. Shanker follows:]