



THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

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President George W. Bush stands backstage with Yadira Vieyra, a Georgetown University student, who was among those in attendance Thursday, April 24, 2008, at the White House Summit on Inner-City Children and Faith-Based Schools. The President mentioned Yadira in his remarks to the summit, saying: ".Let me end with a story here about Yadira Vieyra. Yadira says she goes to Georgetown University, and she said -- I was asking if Yadira was going to be here so I could ask her to stand here in a minute, and a fellow told me she's a little worried about missing class. So whoever Yadira's teacher is, please blame it on me, not her." White House photo by Chris Greenberg

[Fact Sheet: White House Summit on Inner-City Children and Faith-Based Schools](#)

"[T]he purpose of the summit is to highlight the lack of educational options facing low-income urban students. And we're going to bring together educators and clergy and philanthropists and business leaders, all aiming to urge there to be reasonable legislation out of

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[President Bush Attends White House Summit on Inner-City Children and Faith-Based Schools](#)

[Fact Sheet: Providing Greater Opportunities for Our Children by Ensuring Access to Faith-Based Schools](#)

April 22, 2008

[Fact Sheet: White House Summit on Inner-City Children and Faith-Based Schools](#)

VIDEO

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Congress and practical solutions to save these schools – and more importantly, to save the children."

Ronald T. Bowes, and Dr. Lawrence D. Weinberg
Transcript for Panel IV

– President George W. Bush, 4/18/08

The White House Summit on inner-city children and faith-based schools will highlight the need to preserve the critically important educational alternatives for underserved students attending chronically underperforming schools. In his 2008 State of the Union Address, President Bush announced this summit as an opportunity to help increase awareness of the challenges faced by low-income students in the inner cities and address the role of non-public schools, including faith-based schools, in meeting the needs of low-income inner city students.

- **Despite their educational successes, urban faith-based schools are disappearing at an alarming rate.** From 2000 to 2006, nearly 1,200 inner city faith-based schools closed, displacing 425,000 students. This is especially troubling for minority students. Since 1970, the minority population at Catholic schools, for example, has increased by 250 percent, and the non-Catholic population in those schools has increased by more than 500 percent. Yet these important institutions are disappearing for financial reasons.

Panel I: Faith-Based Schools And The Common Good

Moderated by Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Karl Zinsmeister, Panel I will highlight the impact faith-based urban schools have had in the education of youth in America's inner cities. For generations, America's faith-based urban schools have served many of this Nation's most disadvantaged students, including the children of recent immigrants and low-income minority families. Relying on contributions from families and donors instead of government aid, these schools have played an important role in the American story of upward mobility, educational opportunity, and civil rights.

- **Panel I Participants:** The Honorable Karl Zinsmeister, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, Moderator
 - Dr. Charles L. Glenn, Dean ad interim, School of Education and Fellow of the University Professors, Boston University
 - Dr. Joseph P. Viteritti, Blanche D. Blank Professor of Public Policy and Director, Graduate Program in Urban Affairs, Hunter College
 - Dr. William Jeynes, Professor of Education, California State University, Long Beach Non-resident Scholar, Baylor University
 - Reverend Dr. Floyd H. Flake, Senior Pastor, Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral of New York, President, Wilberforce University, Former U.S. Congressman

Panel II: Practical Realities On The Ground

Moderated by White House Faith-based and Community Initiatives Director Jay Hein, Panel II will focus on the challenges increasingly facing faith-based urban schools. Faith-based urban schools have changed countless young lives for the better, providing students with the academic skills and moral grounding needed to

succeed throughout life. Their contributions to families and communities are immeasurable. Tragically, however, these schools, due to a wide array of financial challenges, are under mounting pressure, forcing thousands to close their doors with potentially many more to follow suit.

- **Panel II Participants:** The Honorable Jay Hein, Director, Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, The White House, Moderator
 - Ms. Phylcia Lyons, Founder, President and CEO, School Choice Illinois
 - Reverend Joseph M. O'Keefe, S.J., Dean and Professor of Education, Lynch School of Education, Boston College
 - Dr. Vernard T. Gant, Director, Urban School Services, Association of Christian Schools International
 - Ms. Virginia Walden Ford, President, Black Alliance for Educational Options, Washington, D.C. Chapter, Executive Director, D.C. Parents for School Choice

Lunch Plenary: Educational Options And America's Cities

Moderated by Education Secretary Margaret Spellings, the lunch plenary will focus on the positive influence high-quality school choices have had on American communities. In addition to their value to students and families, faith-based schools and other public school alternatives contribute to America's cities more broadly. Safe, academically rigorous schools have a positive influence on community stability, employment, crime, and much more. Protecting such schools is in the interest of the citizens and leaders of neighborhoods, cities, States, and the Nation.

- **Lunch Plenary Participants:** The Honorable Margaret Spellings, Secretary, Department of Education, Moderator
 - The Honorable Stephen Goldsmith, Chairman, Corporation for National and Community Service, Former Mayor, Indianapolis, IN
 - The Honorable Nancy Grasmick, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools
 - The Honorable Roy Bernardi, Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Former Mayor, Syracuse, NY

Panel III: Community Solutions

Moderated by Scott Hamilton, Panel III will focus on community solutions to keep faith-based urban schools strong. Despite the significant challenges it faces, this sector of K-12 education has numerous good-news stories that demonstrate that with energetic leadership, creativity, and commitment, faith-based urban schools can continue to thrive for generations to come.

- **Panel III Participants:** Mr. Scott Hamilton, President, School Risk Management, Moderator
 - Dr. Mary C. McDonald, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Diocese of Memphis

- Mr. Tom Tillapaugh, Founder and Administrator, Denver Street School System, President, National Association of Street Schools
- Mr. B.J. Cassin, Founder and Chairman, Cassin Educational Initiative Foundation
- Reverend Timothy R. Scully, C.S.C., Professor of Political Science and Director and Fellow, Institute for Educational Initiatives, University of Notre Dame
- Mr. David Zwiebel, General Counsel and Executive Vice President of Government and Public Affairs, Agudath Israel of America

Panel IV: Public Policy Options

Moderated by Ray Simon, Panel IV will discuss innovative public policies that help under-served communities. Government leaders have developed public policies that provide educational opportunities to disadvantaged children, including at faith-based schools that follow the Federal Government's and State Governments' constitutional and statutory rules governing the separation of church and state.

- **Panel IV Participants:** The Honorable Ray Simon, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Education
 - Mr. Anthony R. Picarello, Jr., General Counsel, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
 - The Honorable Anthony A. Williams, Chairman, D.C. Children First, Former Mayor, District of Columbia, Chief Executive Officer, Primum Public Realty Trust
 - Dr. Ronald T. Bowes, Assistant Superintendent for Public Policy and Development, Diocese of Pittsburgh
 - Dr. Lawrence D. Weinberg, Author, Religious Charter Schools: Legalities and Practicalities

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