

Propositions

Chapter 1: Schools

- ▶ The landscape of elementary and secondary school enrollment in public and private schools is changing. 7
- ▶ Public education is becoming increasingly consolidated, which means less parental involvement. 13
- ▶ Smaller schools can make a difference. 22
- ▶ High rates of student mobility are one reason for the persistent gap between disadvantaged and nondisadvantaged students. 27
- ▶ Students in the United States spend more hours per year in the classroom than their peers in other developed countries. 33
- ▶ School environment matters. 42
- ▶ School violence is on the decline. 52

Chapter 2: Teachers

- ▶ There is no real teacher shortage. 73
- ▶ Across-the-board teacher salary increases may not stand alone as an education reform solution. 76
- ▶ Teacher certification does not necessarily guarantee teacher quality, and for some interested in teaching, it is a deterrent. 84
- ▶ Teachers' education levels have increased; students' achievement has not. 89
- ▶ Some are concerned that children in public schools are receiving less individualized attention; the numbers tell a different story. 94

- ▶ Secondary public school teachers are spending more time performing their teaching duties, yet they are teaching fewer students. 101
- ▶ Teachers' unions provide more than collective bargaining for teachers. 106
- ▶ The nation's largest teachers' unions invest heavily in the political process, yet their contributions do not reflect the political views of a large segment of their membership. 110

Chapter 3: Achievement

- ▶ Goals 2000 called for ambitious change; we are still awaiting delivery. 127
- ▶ Secondary students' mathematics and English test scores are not commensurate to the time spent on these subjects. 137
- ▶ The shortcomings of our K–12 education system have long-term consequences. 144
- ▶ Homework provides clear results for all students and compelling results for high school students. 149
- ▶ Television viewing is a home-based habit that affects educational achievement. 155
- ▶ The SAT I, although important, is no longer an accurate barometer for historic comparisons. 164
- ▶ Remedial education at postsecondary institutions is evidence that the K–12 education system is falling short. 174
- ▶ The emphasis on community service in K–12 education has clearly increased; its impact is more difficult to measure. 177

Chapter 4: Expenditures

- ▶ Public schools at one time were locally controlled; this is changing. Funding provides one piece of evidence. 193
- ▶ Increased per-pupil expenditures have not been matched by improved student performance. 197
- ▶ Expenditures may not matter as much as allocation. 204
- ▶ Special education is an expenditure, staffing, and classroom conundrum. 211

- ▶ When it comes to achievement, the largest source of federal aid to elementary and secondary schools has not made a bit of difference. 219

Chapter 5: School Reform

- ▶ Critics of school choice fear that the most disadvantaged students will be left behind; preliminary data contradict this assumption. 240
- ▶ Vouchers are becoming more popular by the day, and they are not a solution solely supported by the rich. 255
- ▶ Catholic schools provide high marks at low costs. 260
- ▶ Home education is the fastest-growing alternative to public schooling, and a good one at that. 266
- ▶ The push for increased accountability is apparent, but better schools are still to come. 272
- ▶ Summer school provides evidence that accountability is changing the way we educate. 279
- ▶ California’s class size reduction appears to be an education reform initiative gone bad. 283

Chapter 6: Students and Their Families

- ▶ When it comes to a good education, family may matter most. 297
- ▶ A positive home environment is related to high academic performance. 301
- ▶ Parents are well able to determine the difference between high-performing schools and low-performing schools. 303
- ▶ Despite legislative limitations, parents still exercise choice when it comes to their child’s education. 306