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NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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June 17, 2002

The Honorable Roderick R. Paige
Secretary of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

You and your colleagues are to be commended on the ambitious and laudatory effort you have launched to transform the Education Department. As with the new Strategic Plan, the Management Improvement Team, and the Culture of Accountability report, the teams working on human capital/restructuring/sourcing have done an outstanding job laying the framework for a successful "One ED".

The process used to develop the plan was effective, particularly in view of the short time frames. It assured that the Department was developing a cadre of career and political leaders who understood the requirements of the President's Management Agenda. It also assured that this cadre of leaders have the knowledge to assist in the execution of the recommendations. The breadth of activities planned for the next five years is extremely ambitious. They will require a high level of commitment on the part of all leaders and individual staff members. We are confident you and your leadership team will take every step necessary to ensure that this level of commitment is achieved.

Any undertaking of this magnitude has a number of critical aspects. Essential to success are:

- Your personal commitment and continuing development;
- Executive staff commitment and involvement;
- Ongoing communications to all employees about the plan and the strategic reasons for its implementation;
- An abiding commitment to engaging employees in the change process;
- Having in place a reliable system of performance measurements; and,
- Linkage of individual and organizational performance to strategic goals and outcomes.

We believe the Department's approach to transformation through the strategic investment process and the suggestions of the Academy panel have a greater chance to produce meaningful results than the previous efforts at reorganization.

Both the academy of Fellows and the study team were impressed with the dedication of Department employees to the organization's mission and to improving the Department's leadership and managerial capabilities to implement transformation. This dedication provides a powerful instrument for constructive change.

The National Academy of Public Administration and its partner, the Private Sector Council, appreciate the opportunity to assist in the transformation effort you initiated. We stand ready to assist in whatever additional ways may be helpful in this very ambitious undertaking.

Sincerely,
Robert J. O'Neill, Jr.
President