
Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7018 of September 8, 1997****The President****America Goes Back to School, 1997****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

Americans want the best for our children. We want them to live out their dreams, empowered with the tools they need to make the most of their lives and to build a future where America remains the world's beacon of hope and freedom and opportunity. To do this, we must all make improving the quality of education in America one of our highest priorities.

In my State of the Union Address earlier this year, I issued a call to action for American education to prepare our Nation for the 21st century. Working together, we must make our schools strong and safe, with clear standards of achievement and discipline and talented, dedicated teachers in every classroom. Every school and every State should adopt rigorous national standards, with national tests in 4th-grade reading and 8th-grade math to make sure our children master the basics. We must ensure that every student can read independently and well by the end of the 3rd grade. We must connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and help all students become technologically literate. We must modernize school buildings and expand school choice and accountability in public education. And we must encourage lifelong learning for all our citizens, from expanding Head Start programs to helping adults improve their education and skills.

These goals are ambitious, but they are crucial if we are to prepare for the challenges and possibilities of life in the 21st century. With the 1997 balanced budget agreement, we will begin to meet these goals by providing new resources to help children learn to read, the means to help connect every school to the Internet, and tens of billions of dollars in tax cuts to help families pay for college.

I urge all Americans to become actively involved in their local schools and colleges and to make a real commitment to support education improvement and give our children the kind of support they need to succeed. The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education is setting a powerful example in this endeavor. These partners—including the Department of Education and more than 3,000 schools, families, colleges and universities, community, cultural, and religious groups, businesses, elected officials and policymakers, and the men and women of our Armed Forces—have pledged their support for our initiative, “America Goes Back to School: Answering the President’s Call to Action.” Through their dedication to our children, they are helping America’s young people grow into responsible and productive citizens. They are proving that when communities unite, every student can achieve.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 8 through September 14, 1997, as a time when America Goes Back to School. I encourage parents, schools, community and State leaders, businesses, civic and religious organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities expressing support for high academic standards and meaningful involvement in schools and colleges and the students and families they serve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "C".

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