

Nation's Edu-Reformers Plunge off the Facile Cliff

Giving up the pretense that their superficial, unproven policy ideas are in the least bit grounded in evidence, the nation's education reformers have collectively jumped off the facile cliff. Their plunge was originally scheduled for 2010, was postponed until 2011, and was again put off until January 1st of 2013.

"Ultimately, we decided to embrace the inevitable," said reformer Arne Duncan. "We've thought long and hard about this." Smiling and winking, he then added, "which is more than we've done with regard to these wacky policies we impose on the nation's schools!"

The decision to plummet off the facile cliff comes only after years of fruitless negotiations with facts, evidence, and common sense. But the reformers immediately expressed relief at the move. "It was getting more and more difficult to argue with a straight face that our ideas have any basis in reality," explained Michelle Rhee.

"It was exhausting," agreed Joel Klein. "Now we can simply tell people we don't give a flying fig about evidence. We just want to test, privatize, and make loads of money for ourselves and our friends. Right, Rupert?"

US Department of Education Awards \$3 Million to Bob

During a news conference at the Department of Education yesterday, Bob gave repeated thanks to US taxpayers for their generosity. Struggling to hold up an oversized novelty check announcing a grant of \$3 million, Bob acknowledged the economic downturn that has put a financial squeeze on ordinary Americans, "At a time when most of my fellow citizens are struggling, I can't help but be amazed by how bighearted [Education Secretary] Arne Duncan is with their money."

Bob's grant is the latest of tens of millions handed over by the US Department of Education to Duncan's friends and allies. Asked how he ended up as the newest beneficiary, Bob told reporters how Duncan started chatting with him at a Northern Virginia IHOP. "At first I thought it was strange, this guy just out of the blue asking if I had any thoughts about the school system, but he seemed like a nice fellow."

"So I says to him, 'We need to make schools more modern. No more of this old stuff. We've gotta break down union resistance. They're always against change and protecting the status quo and all like that. And we should assign numbers and grades to teachers. Numbers don't lie. And parents should have lots of choices. It doesn't matter what they're choosing, but they

need a whole lot of those choices. I showed Mr. Duncan all the syrups we could get for our pancakes and asked how he'd feel if he only had maple syrup. And I could see that he really understood my point. So then I told him that we should finally hold schools and educrats accountable. Oh, and how come we don't unleash the awesome power of competition and the free market? We've gotta do that, too. Cut through lots of red tape. And technology, I really like technology. But what I'm really about is new ideas that inspire!"

"So as I'm talking Mr. Duncan takes out his iPad and jots down all sorts of notes. He's nodding and smiling and then when I'm finished he says, 'You're a reformer, young man. And I want to give you \$3 million dollars.' I thought he was kidding at first, but I looked it up. He does this all the time. There are charter school corporations like KIPP, Rocketship, Uncommon Schools, IDEA, and Harmony. And there are groups like Teach for America and TNTP. So why not me?"

"We were truly moved by Bob's unique brand of zesty and innovative zeal, and we are looking forward to Bob bringing his vision to classrooms across the country," said Secretary Duncan in making the award announcement.

