Heininger: This is an interview with Ellen Guiney on March 24, 2008. Why don’t we start at the beginning? Tell me when you first met Kennedy.

Guiney: Let’s see. Like all Massachusetts constituents, I’ve had contact with him now and again. He was a very dear friend of a good friend of ours. In fact, he spoke at this friend’s funeral and then there was a very small gathering afterwards, of the family, and I met him briefly there. But I didn’t really meet him until I went to his office as the final step in going to work for the committee.

Heininger: Really?

Guiney: Yes.

Heininger: How did your name come to him?

Guiney: Nick [Bancroft] Littlefield. I met Nick through a very close mutual friend, Kirk Scharfenberg, who was the editorial page editor of the Globe and was a great friend of Nick’s. Kirk was a big supporter of mine, and Kirk recommended that Nick talk to me, so I had several interviews with Nick before I got to Kennedy.

Heininger: And you had been a teacher before that?

Guiney: Well, way back I had been a high school English teacher, but then I had been a very active parent in the Boston schools. I worked for this grassroots citizens’ organization that was trying to promote peaceful integration at the Boston schools. Then I went to work, again it was through Kirk. Kirk and I became very close friends when I worked for the citizens’ organization, and he used to call me up all the time and say, “What should I write about?” He was also an active parent in the Boston public schools.

Kirk promoted me for my next job, which was with Mayor [Raymond] Flynn. I think Kirk realized that Mayor Flynn was ready to get rid of a very dysfunctional Boston School Committee that had had a tumultuous history, and he thought the mayor needed somebody to make the policy case of why the committee didn’t work, and what the issues were that they weren’t dealing with. He recommended me to the late Ray Dooley, who was the—I don’t know what his title was, but he was one of the two or three big people for Ray Flynn.
So I went to work for the mayor. I didn’t do the politics but I did do the policy work that made the case that this school board had to switch from being an elected board to being one run by the mayor. We had a referendum, which won very narrowly. It was a controversial issue because it was viewed as anti-democratic, taking the vote away from citizens. The African-American community had finally gotten a couple of people elected to the school board, so they viewed this as disenfranchising them. It was very controversial, but it did win narrowly.

After the referendum succeeded, there wasn’t really any role for me anymore, and Kirk knew that I was thinking about other things, so he encouraged Nick to talk to me. Actually, I met Nick at Kirk’s house at a dinner and we talked, but it was really through Kirk. I had a few interviews with Nick, and he went through his usual “call 20 people before he hires somebody” routine. I was astonished, after I got the job, how many people he had talked to, people I hadn’t even considered that he would talk to.

**Heininger:** Extensive vetting.

**Guiney:** Yes, extensive vetting, which Nick did very well. I think that’s why he had such good staff. I didn’t really meet Kennedy until the end of that. I went to the JFK [John F. Kennedy] Building and he was larger than life, as he is. He has a routine that he goes through: He shows you that he can look out his window and he can see where his mother was born, the North End, and where his grandfather was born, East Boston. But this meeting is really just pro forma—he trusts Nick. He also has you meet Barbara Souliotis, whom I’m sure you’ve talked to, just to make sure that Barbara doesn’t have any bad vibes about the person. And that was it. So I didn’t really know him when I went to work for him.

**Heininger:** What year did you come?

**Guiney:** I came in the spring of ’92 and at that time nobody knew that [William] Clinton was going to win. The Democrats controlled the Congress, both the House and the Senate, but [George H.W.] Bush was in the White House. I was there for six months and learned what it was like to work when you don’t control the White House. Then in January, Clinton took office. At first, until Clinton took office, there wasn’t a huge amount of work to do; this worked out very well for me because it gave me time to meet people and to learn the ropes about what the Senate is before there was actual real responsibility. Terry Hartle, an experienced staffer, was there the first six months I was there, but he left shortly after Clinton came in.

**Heininger:** Was there anybody else there working on education?

**Guiney:** There was. There was Suzanne Ramos, who was doing the higher ed stuff. She stayed for a while, but it was hard for anyone else to do higher ed because Terry really knew it inside and out. In fact, I was hired to do K-12, but while Terry was there he still kept his hand in it, and it was really only when Terry left that I got to assume more major responsibilities.

Clayton [Spencer] came at the same time Terry left—there was a vacuum for a little while between Terry’s leaving and Clayton’s coming, but she came in June of the Clinton time, so we were there together for over two years. She did higher ed and I did K-12. I also helped out with national service—it was the beginning of AmeriCorps. [Harris] Wofford was still in the Senate.
and he was spearheading that, but he couldn’t have done it without Kennedy. It was in our committee, so I helped work on that too.

I had lots of interaction with Kennedy. I think when you work for him and you’re from his state, you work more closely, because there’s stuff that you can do here at home, which he started having me set up, to help him do different events to meet teachers. Primarily, I would meet teachers and visit schools with him, which he loved to do and he’s very good at. He’s very natural and would immediately talk to kids and had no trouble interacting with street kids that you wouldn’t think he’d be able to interact with. They always had a vague sense of who he was, but it didn’t matter, he could just relate to them.

Heininger: So you basically focused on K-12?

Guiney: Yes.

Heininger: But had some time under Bush. How would you compare—What would you say was Bush’s philosophy of education? What had he come into office wanting to do, and by the time his tenure was over, what had he managed to accomplish?

Guiney: I think he really did want to establish national standards. He had people, [Chester E.] Checker Finn and Diane Ravitch, who did want to do national standards, which we continue to need. We still don’t have them. I think Kennedy was not philosophically opposed to them, but they were just the third rail for the Senate, for the Democrats and the Republicans, so while we were able to establish state standards in the Goals 2000 and the Improving America’s Schools Act, national standards in various subjects still don’t exist.

The Federal Government has an interesting role in education. Unlike other things, education is explicitly not in the Constitution, but it is in every state Constitution, except for Utah, so it is clearly a responsibility of the states.

Heininger: Utah doesn’t have a state responsibility to education?

Guiney: I may have the state wrong, but one of them does not have it in its Constitution. I forget which one it is.

Heininger: Really? Just one state? Assuming that it’s just localities that are responsible, or maybe nobody?

Guiney: Yes, exactly, the localities, the local districts. In all the other states, though, education is a responsibility of the states. Early in George H.W. Bush’s Presidency, there had been a group called NESIC, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council, and it had called for national standards as a competitiveness measure, because most other industrialized countries in the world have national standards. The U.S. is unique in that it does not. There was a sense that national standards and a national assessment would improve our education system.

I never thoroughly discussed it with the Senator, except to acknowledge that it was a nonstarter for the Congress because there wasn’t Republican leadership. Bush’s people had quietly supported it, but it was not even clear where Bush was on it.
**Heininger:** Were the Congressional Republicans either silent or against?

**Guiney:** They were very much opposed to it. Oh, they were very much against it.

**Heininger:** As infringement on state responsibility?

**Guiney:** Exactly, and as encroaching federalism into the lives of people. They were pretty much against it. Orrin Hatch was the committee chair and he was certainly against it, and Nancy Kassebaum was the ranking person and she was very opposed to it, even more than Hatch.

**Heininger:** Really?

**Guiney:** Yes. Well, Kansas is a pretty red state. So the work during the first months I was there was getting ready for what we knew would be the next piece of legislation built on the consensus that the way around the opposition was perhaps voluntary standards. The feds would have standards in English and history and science and mathematics, and states could adopt them if they wanted to. All of this was unfinished business from the 1982 report, *A Nation at Risk*. Congress was still trying to figure out how to respond to this landmark report that says, “We’re sinking in a sea of mediocrity in our schools.” Congress was walking a fine line between a response to what was viewed as the poor education system, but not beefing up the national role, and it was very difficult.

What we finally came up with, and there were some Republicans who were willing to work with us on it, was that there would be national goals. Bush had led that. The administration had said, “We’ll have these national goals and by the year 2000—” which is ironic—I forget what the goals were, but there were these lofty—“every child will be reading by the end of third grade,” and, “Everybody will have passed algebra by the end of eighth grade,” and, “There will be robust civics curricula.” I haven’t looked at the national goals in a long time but they were very lofty.

The Bush administration had put them out and the Congress had said, “Well, that’s a good idea. We could be for national goals, but then what are we, as a federal government, going to do to help local school districts and states meet these goals?” Once Clinton was President, work began on the bill that came to be called “Goals 2000.” During my years with the Labor Committee, I commuted. I’d go back and forth every Friday night and come back at 10:00 for Nick’s staff meeting that he had every Monday morning. Often, there would be a “Goals 3000” sign on my door, put there by Clayton Spencer to tease me because it really did take a long time to get enough Republicans’ votes to pass it. There were some strong supporters but—

**Heininger:** But Goals 2000 really started, and the concept of a national goal started under Bush.

**Guiney:** That’s exactly right. Well, I wouldn’t say Goals 2000 started under Bush, but the idea of national goals. In 1989, there had been a national education summit. I forget how many of the Governors came, but many of the Governors. Kennedy didn’t go because it was very much a Republican thing. (I don’t think he went. He might have gone. As I say, I wasn’t there.)

The national summit was dominated by Republicans, but it was bipartisan; I think Jim Hunt from North Carolina attended, but anyway, there were Democratic Governors who went to this national summit, which was a combination of the Governors and big corporate leaders. It was
Phil Condit, who was at the time head of Boeing, and the guy from IBM, Lou Gerstner. They got together and said, “We’re going to have national goals,” and they were the ones who created the national goals, more than the Bush administration, although the Bush administration supported them and staffed the conference, if you will.

**Heininger:** This is a real sea change.

**Guiney:** Very much a sea change. Well, the national goals weren’t so much a sea change, because all they were were goals.

**Heininger:** But even so, getting Governors and business together.

**Guiney:** It was. That was a very big deal.

**Heininger:** This is not the way traditional federal policy had been about education.

**Guiney:** No, no, it was a very big deal, and the summit was sort of the start of the work we did on standards. Even more, the start of it was *A Nation at Risk*. [Ronald] Reagan had appointed an Education Secretary, Terrence Bell, whom he then didn’t support, but Bell had already convened a bunch of people to write a report on the state of education, and they wrote *A Nation at Risk*. That was, I would say, the very first running the flag up and saying there’s something wrong here.

Then the Republicans went back and forth. They were going to have a federal panel, and Bush did support it, especially Checker Finn, who was his Under Secretary of Education. Lamar Alexander was his Secretary of Education but Checker was the guy who pushed. Checker would be an interesting one to interview, very interesting. Anyway, they had a national summit and they did proclaim goals, but then nothing happened because there wasn’t enough support in the Congress to actually have any legislation that would put the federal government behind these goals.

**Heininger:** So you get the warning flag with *A Nation at Risk*. You then get a national summit that brings together Governors and business saying, “We’ve really got a problem here.”

**Guiney:** Right.

**Heininger:** And then the Bush administration is somewhat sympathetic to the concept of lofty goals.

**Guiney:** Yes. And some in his administration were willing to actually—they did try to set up a national goals panel that was to set these standards.

**Heininger:** But you’ve got a Congress not there, even though it’s Democratically controlled.

**Guiney:** Even though it’s Democratically controlled, especially the House. They were very lukewarm about this. The idea of setting standards really got some traction when Clinton came.

**Heininger:** So Clinton comes in with a different view.
Guiney: Yes, and says, “Let’s have legislation to realize these goals.” Governor [Richard] Riley, who had been at the summit, was the Secretary of Education, and his Under Secretary was [Marshall] Mike Smith, who was Dean at Stanford but who was convinced about standards-based reform: have standards, spell out clearly what kids should know and be able to do, and then support states and local districts to achieve them. He was a strong supporter of that, and so was Clinton. Clinton, by the way, had been at the national summit too; he was one of the Democratic Governors and he had been one of the so-called “Education Governors.”

Riley was a big Education Governor. He had done an extensive “A Penny for Education” campaign in South Carolina and raised millions in taxes to improve the schools in South Carolina. He was one of the few Governors who ever put on a tax specifically for education. It all came together once Clinton became President.

Kennedy had been very supportive. Kennedy is very pragmatic. You know, if you can’t get it done one way, well, then I’ll try to get it done another way, rather than being very strictly ideological that this is the way it has to go, that you have to have this NESIC, this National Education Standards Commission, or you have to have national assessments, et cetera. I don’t think he was opposed to them. A problem to getting standards in legislation, though, was that the liberals in the Congress, especially the House, said, “Well, this is fine, but if you’re going to have national standards that all kids have to meet, you also have to have what are called ‘opportunity-to-learn standards,’” which were standards that would say: “For a school to be set up for a poor kid to pass algebra by the eighth grade, what are the conditions you have to have?” “How much money do you have to have?” “What are the inputs that you have to have?” Kennedy was a big supporter of that, but Republicans weren’t.

Heininger: So don’t just set up a standard. You have to fund it and you have to set up a system for implementing it, particularly for the poor schools.

Guiney: That’s right. And this was extreme anathema to the Republicans, because they said it’s another entitlement. It’s a huge commitment to funding forever. The backdrop to all of this is the small federal role in education. I think the first federal legislation that had to do with supporting education was back in 1847 with the Merrill Act, where they gave 40 acres, or whatever it was, to towns that wanted to set themselves up, as long as they had a school. One of the acres would have to have a school on it. I think that was the first federal legislation.

Then during the first World War, vocational education came in, but as very much a response to training people for munitions factories and that kind of stuff, because we were so unprepared for that war. I think the Vocational Education Act was 1916 [1917]. Then, post-Sputnik, there was the NDEA, the National Defense Education Act that really was a lot of money for teacher training to learn science and math. It’s always a response, sort of, to some outside—

Heininger: External stimulus.

Guiney: The real education legislation came in under LBJ [Lyndon B. Johnson] in 1965 as part of the War on Poverty. That’s when the major federal pieces of legislation came that continue to this day, beginning with the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act, ESEA, and its first part, Title I, that gives money to poor kids. The thinking behind it is that you can’t erase poverty, but
you can try to give resources that will enable a poor kid to have the same opportunity that a middle-class kid has. Now Title I must be up to about $10 billion a year. It’s a lot, and it goes on, a very complicated formula about who gets what. And since it’s the Senate, you have things like a small-state minimum, where Vermont gets huge amounts of Title I even though it has small numbers of poor kids.

**Heininger:** Not proportional, necessarily, to need.

**Guiney:** Exactly, or to the number of kids. Vermont doesn’t even have 100,000 school kids. New York City, Chicago, and L.A., each by itself, has more poor kids than 37 of the states. But that’s the Senate. Every five or six years the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the ESEA, which was first passed in 1965, gets tinkered with, especially the formulas get tinkered with, and then there’s a conference with the House where more negotiating takes place.

So with Johnson there was a lot of federal legislation. After him, there would be small acts—well, not small either. The Pell grants came in under the Higher Education Act, but others are better able to talk about higher ed than I can.

When I came, they knew that ESEA would get reauthorized in 1994. It was slated to, but they said, “Let’s see if we can get another bill passed beforehand that would set the stage for having standards-based reform.” As I said, standards-based reform is just a concept. If you define what kids could know and be able to do, then that will help state school districts, schools and teachers to organize their year so that’s what the kids do in that year.

I don’t know who hit on the idea of a bill just on standards. (Terry would probably know because actually the talk did start before I got there.) There had been a bill that was introduced, and it wasn’t called Goals 2000. I think it was called something like the National Education Goals Act. It was introduced, and I think they had hearings but it never went anywhere.

**Heininger:** Backed by the Bush administration, or not?

**Guiney:** Yes, I think so, but again, Terry can talk better about that. I read all about it when I came, but it’s one thing, as you know, to do it, so I’m a little shaky on some of what happened before I came.

Anyway, Kennedy very much wanted to get started. We worked very closely with Under Secretary Mike Smith and Assistant Secretary Tom Payzant. Mike, Tom, Jack Jennings, and I worked with many, including some Republicans. [James] Jeffords was very supportive. David [Evans], who worked for Claiborne Pell, who was head of the subcommittee, also played a major role. By this time, though, Pell was aging and was starting to really fade, so more work fell to Kennedy. Pell was there, and his staff was active, but he wasn’t charging the way Kennedy did. Anyway, our whole goal was to get this bill passed.

**Heininger:** Did Clinton propose a bill?

**Guiney:** Yes.

**Heininger:** He sent up legislation?
Guiney: Yes.

Heininger: And what did Clinton want to get out of this?

Guiney: He wanted to get started. The essence of this bill accepted that we’re not going to have national standards, but we will pass a bill that will require every state to set its own standards in core academic areas.

Heininger: So you’re beyond the voluntary standards.

Guiney: Beyond the voluntary standards.

Heininger: But below nationwide—

Guiney: But below national, because if 50 states set their standards, you’re going to get what you’re going to get, and that’s what we’ve got. It was abandoning national standards but not the concept of standards. There would be standards but each state would set its own.

Heininger: And Clinton came in knowing that he was going to have to abandon national standards? Or did he come in saying, “I want national standards”?

Guiney: He came in knowing he was going to have to abandon them, yes.

Heininger: He was pragmatic, too.

Guiney: Yes, very pragmatic, and maybe he had always been against national standards. I actually don’t know, but he sure came in with this as a high priority, because we knew we would be reauthorizing ESEA in 1994, and we could really do something then because that bill is funded. With Goals 2000, we knew we’d have to get an appropriation after it passed; it wasn’t like ESEA. So we knew the real action was going to be ESEA, but we wanted to see if we could build an agreement before ESEA, so that when we did ESEA, it would be there, this idea of standards-based reform.

Heininger: And this actually is fairly revolutionary, for the federal government to require states to set standards.

Guiney: It really was, and Goals 2000 was very difficult to pass, very difficult to pass. A lot of people said, “Let’s just wait for ESEA.” But Kennedy had a very sure instinct that, “No, I want to have the fight now and get over that hump.” He pushed very hard for it, but it was a hard sell. There was a lot of history that people didn’t want to do it. Then came the healthcare debacle that took up everybody’s time.

Heininger: And that was also the same committee.

Guiney: That’s what I mean. So nobody was paying any attention to education, none. I have to say that, then, Kennedy was more focused on healthcare than he was on education. He cared about it but he really saw health care as the looming national problem, and here was the chance
to solve it. When that blew up, Kennedy worked very intensively on trying to get support for this bill. We worked really hard on it.

When Clinton came in, I forget exactly when it happened, but at some point Orrin Hatch switched over and decided to be ranking on Judiciary instead of Labor. At that time it was the Labor and Human Resources Committee. It’s now Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. Nancy Kassebaum became the ranking member, and she was very cool to Goals 2000. She didn’t see any need for it. If a state wanted to set standards, that was fine, but she was not a big supporter of them. She was always cordial and always pleasant. Her office was down the hall from Kennedy’s, and he would trot down there periodically to take her temperature and see where it was on the issue, and she was always cold to it. She was cordial and polite and respectful, but she was never for the bill.

We had to work with whom we could work with, so we did. As I said, we had a lot of help from Jeffords, and from Mark Hatfield from Oregon, and [Arlen] Specter from Pennsylvania. There were some moderate Republicans who were willing to keep it alive, and we finally did get a committee vote. It was very divided. I’m trying to remember if we got any Republican votes at the committee.

Heininger: Really?

Guiney: I’d have to go remember. We probably did. I’d have to go back and look. Yes we did. We got Specter’s; he was on the committee then, and we got Jeffords, of course. So we got a couple of votes. Then it was hard to get it out to the floor but we finally did. Kennedy never wanted to bring anything to the floor until he—

Heininger: He’s got the votes to pass it.

Guiney: That’s right. That’s what took so long. We finally got really close, so [George] Mitchell scheduled a vote. The House had already passed it.

Heininger: The House, which was even more opposed to standards, had actually passed it?

Guiney: Yes, they had. I don’t know why. I’ll have to ask Jack.

Heininger: Was Clinton actively working the issue?

Guiney: Yes, very actively working the issue, especially Mike Smith.

Heininger: Was it emerging as an issue for the public?

Guiney: Yes. It was in the local papers but it wasn’t as high on people’s radar screens as it should have been. Toward the end it was, when it was clear that it might pass.

Heininger: Where were the lobbyists on it?
Guiney: The Democratic lobbyists were all for it. They thought it would get more money for education. The commercial lobbyists, the book publishers and the test makers and those people, obviously were for it because—

Heininger: They’d make money from it.

Guiney: They’d make money from it.

Heininger: What about the Teachers Union?

Guiney: The AFT [American Federation of Teachers] and the NEA [National Education Association]. The AFT was very strongly in favor of it. Al [Albert] Shanker had been a leader in the national standards movement and I think he was one of the leaders at the national summit. He was a very early advocate of national standards and national tests. Shanker was a fantastic guy. I came to have a huge admiration for Shanker. He was for it. You should talk to some of the union people.

Heininger: They’re on a list.

Guiney: They’re all dying left and right.

Heininger: The ones who have been around for a long time, who really did the overview, are aging, to say the least.

Guiney: That’s right. Eugenia Kemble is still there. She’s at the Albert Shanker Institute. Eugenia Kemble and Shelley Rosenberg.

Heininger: Where was the NEA?

Guiney: The NEA was for it, not strongly, but they were for it. They thought there would be more money, too. The real driver was the Education Trust and the civil rights community. The Chief State School Officers were very much for it.

One of the interesting things about the standards reform movement was that, in 1990, Bob Schwartz, who was at the Pew Charitable Trust, had been one of the architects of the national summit, working at the time for [Michael] Dukakis as his education person, and Dukakis had gone to the summit. Bob then became head of the education program for the Pew Charitable Trust, and had a lot of money to give out. He and his college roommate, Mike Smith, who was at the time Dean at Stanford, said, “There are other ways to get at this thing than just national education, so let’s have a forum that meets three or four times a year and studies and promotes standards-based reform. Let’s create a think tank.”

The think tank was an extraordinary group of people, now that I think back on it. It was Mike Smith, who was the chair of it, Albert Shanker, Checker Finn, Tom Payzant, Tony Alvarado, Gordon Ambach, who at the time was head of the Chief State School Officers, Kati Haycock from Education Trust, Jack Jennings, and Terry Hartle, and some researchers whose names you won’t know, but who were among the foremost education researchers in the country. When I went to work for Kennedy, I went on it as well.
It met three times a year. It would go to a city and visit schools. It would pick an issue, like, let’s say, labor negotiations, to focus on: What is the effect of a union contract on educational improvement? I couldn’t always go because when you worked for the Congress, it is hard to get away, but I went to quite a few of them. We went to the Saturn plant in Tennessee, where the workers owned the plant, as the model potentially for a school district, and for a different kind of labor relations than the adversarial ones that we have now with the teachers unions, by and large.

This forum met for five years, from 1990 to 1995, and all the key players had developed close relationships with each other. We could all call on each other to come in and help when we needed to, or to set up hearings, or to bring people in. The ironic thing was, after Bob created this think tank a whole bunch of people got into positions of greater power because of Clinton’s winning. Mike Smith was Under Secretary of Education. Tom Payzant Assistant Secretary, and Gordon was head of the chiefs. Checker was out of power, but he was still a strong conservative voice and he favored standards. We would have these wonderful discussions between Al Shanker and Checker Finn. It was extraordinary to sit and listen to it; it was really fun.

So the Pew Forum had a lot to do with—and Kati Haycock—I don’t know if you’re going to interview her, but you should. She’s such a force in education, and she worked with Kennedy all the time. Her group, the Education Trust, has roots in the civil rights community and their view is that education really should be a civil right. It is a civil right that poor kids should have a chance to learn.

**Heininger:** So you have everything coming together.

**Guiney:** Right. It really did.

**Heininger:** You have a lead-up period of time of a talented group of people who are all thinking about these issues. You get a President who comes in and makes it a high priority. These people, who had been working together for a long time, migrate into positions where they actually have the power to do something. And you have, at least for a few years, a Democratic control of Congress, and Kennedy in the leadership role.

**Guiney:** Right, and it was great.

**Heininger:** It’s a very unusual constellation.

**Guiney:** A very unusual constellation, and that’s why we had the intellectual capital to craft the legislation. Mike Smith could call up Checker and say, “Do you think this will fly if we word it this way?” And you had Gordon, who was the head of the chiefs, and was very skilled. He had been the Chief State School Officer in New York state, so he really understood what was going to get through the states and what they were going to be able to handle, and how to set it up to try to get them to do something. Mike Cohen, who had been working at the National Governors Association and at the time of the summit, went to work for Clinton. So you had a lot of things coming together, stuff that started in ’82, and now in 1994 the planets lining up, or “the perfect storm,” or whatever you want to call it.

But we still had a hard time. We barely got that bill through the Senate. We had the votes, we finally got the votes. I remember being on the phone with Mark Hatfield, whom you must have
dealt with. He finally said, after we included language about charter schools that he wanted, “I’m in.” We had to get 60 votes, of course. We finally thought we had 60 votes, so Mitchell scheduled the vote. It was Wednesday before Good Friday that it was supposed to be voted on, and Good Friday and Passover were the same day.

Heininger: Was this in ’94?

Guiney: This was in ’94.

Heininger: So this is as the healthcare stuff is really fading away.

Guiney: Fading away, right.

Heininger: But negotiations on the Hill were really intensifying at that point.

Guiney: Right. To stall the bill with the hope of killing it, the Republicans—Orrin Hatch and Nancy Kassebaum, but Hatch was the main person—call for the bill to be read, both the first reading and second reading. This is a step very rarely taken in this age where everyone has a printed copy, but any member can ask that it be done. By this time this bill is huge, because once we thought it was going to pass—one of the wonderful things that you’d learn from Kennedy was if something’s going to go, put other stuff on it that you haven’t been able to get passed. One of the things we had not been able to get passed was the education research bill. Everything was just stuck with healthcare, it really was.

OERI, as it was called, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement—and everybody was waiting, especially the higher ed institutions in Massachusetts were just going crazy because this wasn’t passed, and they wanted it. Everybody had to essentially agree to what was going to be in it, but we just couldn’t ever get it on the floor and get the votes lined up for it. So we put OERI on Goals 2000 when we thought it was going to go, and that made it even longer. I forget how long the bill was, but it was several hundred pages. As you know, these bills can go on and on. They had to read it, and not only do they have to read it—

Heininger: First and second reading.

Guiney: First and second reading, but you have to mind the floor all the time, because if they pop out of the Republican coatroom and call for the vote, everything falls—you’ve got to assemble everybody, and by this time everybody’s out here and there. So you have to mind it, you know, you have to object. I remember minding the floor, and it was painful. You have to call up all the Senators’ staffs and say, “[Jeff] Bingaman has got to be there from 1:00 to 1:30,” and all the other junior Senators. I remember Dianne Feinstein’s staff giving us such a hard time. “Why do I have to do this?” We said, “Well, because these are the rules. When the floor has to be covered, we start with the junior members.” She had just been elected. “This is your appointment.” “Well, I want to talk to the Senator.” She’d get on the phone herself. She was unpleasant.

Anyway, so that was part of it, and I had to sit down there that whole time. That’s when I got to know Byrd, the main time I got to know him because he was always there because he’d wander in from Appropriations. Jim English, his chief of staff, would also pop his head in. At any rate,
by this time it’s Friday, and if we didn’t get the vote by sundown, we knew we were going to lose [Joseph] Lieberman, who was one of our votes, and we would be back to having 59 votes. It was just awful, because the sun set and we didn’t have Lieberman, and also, other people had gone away for the Easter break.

It was all going to fall apart, and that’s when Kennedy’s personal staff really kicked in in an amazing way. They went into logistics in a big way and found out where every vote was. One of our votes was in Vermont making a speech. Maybe it was Specter? And Al Gore was in Rhode Island at a fundraiser—not for Pell; it must have been for Chafee. Anyway, we located everybody, even to the point of—if the taxpayers ever knew this—I guess Al Gore started in Vermont with [Patrick] Leahy, and then his plane stopped and picked up one of our Republican votes who was in Providence. His plane went from Vermont to Providence and he picked up whoever it was.

Heininger: Is this John Chafee?

Guiney: Chafee, that’s who it was he picked up. Chafee was one of our Republican votes. There was someone who wasn’t our vote, [Pete] Domenici, and they gave him a ride back, too, because he just wanted to go back to Washington. They picked him up and they talked him into voting for it. So we got back—

Heininger: Back up to 60 without leaving—

Guiney: The vote took place about 11 o’clock. We had to get it done before midnight because there’s a time period after which, if you don’t get it passed, you have to start all over again. Everybody was twisting arms and flying people around the country and dragging people in and out of restaurants. I had to get Kennedy to call [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan because Moynihan said he wasn’t coming back in. I was on the other line. Kennedy gets Moynihan, who has had a few drinks, (and Kennedy and Dodd had had as well), and Moynihan is saying, “I don’t want to come back. I don’t agree with it anyway.” He came in though after Kennedy pleaded with him.

And then Byrd comes out and says, “I’m not going to vote for it because of the school prayer.” We hadn’t put the school prayer amendment in. Kennedy used me to talk to Senator Byrd, Kennedy was there, but I could say, “Senator, you know, we’ll have another shot at the school prayer amendment.” Kennedy was bitterly opposed to the school prayer amendment because of the anti-sectarian—and I didn’t want to work at all with Byrd on it. So we almost lost Byrd, but he said in the end, “I’ll vote with the chair.”

There was a point where we thought we were going to need Kassebaum, so I said, “Senator, you’d better call her up.” He did, and she said, “Ted, I’m not going to commit. Let’s just see how it goes.” We took that to mean that if we needed her, she probably would vote, and she was the last Senator to vote. She was the very last one, and she voted against it, but by that time we had 60 votes so she didn’t need to.

This all ended at midnight. It was just an amazing experience. One wonderful memory is that the clerks read the bills, and in the OERI bill there is a phrase that’s in there maybe a hundred times that says, “research and dissemination.” It’s just everywhere, maybe not a hundred times but
probably fifty times, and the first clerk who read it called it “research and desiccation.” So everybody else kept calling it—

**Heininger:** It’s better than “research and insemination.”

**Guiney:** Well, that’s true. But, “research and desiccation,” you know, we’re all punch-drunk by this time, so we thought it was hilarious. I had been sitting on the floor since noontime and had hardly left. At any rate, the bill passed. Nobody thought it was as important as I did that it passed except for the Senator.

**Heininger:** I think the administration did, though.

**Guiney:** The administration definitely did. Oh, they were thrilled. Riley was thrilled. He came over and gave me the signed bill himself, he was so pleased, and he wrote on it. He was thrilled, and so was Mike Smith. And Clinton was, too. We had a bill-signing. By this time it was Easter recess and Kennedy wanted it, as always, on the front page of the *Boston Globe*. Clinton was off wherever he went to for the Easter recess, and he didn’t want to come. Kennedy’s staff was just so good. They said to me, “Find a school….” It was Easter. The kids had school the week after Easter. It wasn’t the school vacation week. We came up here and I called up a fantastic friend who was superintendent in Milton, because Barbara Souliotis had said, “Ellen, find a school. It’s got to be ten minutes from the expressway because he’s heading to the Cape.”

You had all of these different demands on you all the time, and you just did it because that was the expectation, that you could pull it off. I got my friend and she had a wonderful setting of kids and there’s a great picture on the front page of the *Boston Globe* of Kennedy on the telephone surrounded by kids, talking to Clinton. “Mr. President, we thank you for signing the bill.” It was really a great victory. I think it was more fun than most people get to have, because he loved it and he was so engaged in it and you saw him getting votes. One of the bad things about it was that it took so long to—I forget how many amendments there were, but that was a way of people killing it, putting all their amendments up.

**Heininger:** Filling the tree.

**Guiney:** We just had to dispense with every single one of them one at a time, and I saw him—“All right, I’ll take care of that one. You make that one go away. You go talk to the staff.” The big ones he would take care of himself. I just learned how he worked. We saw a legislator at his very best, getting something done. Not the most important bill, but I certainly learned more on that bill than on other things.

**Heininger:** This was a bill he really cared about.

**Guiney:** He really did. He always wanted anything that he believed in to pass and to go, but this one, he really thought, *Now we’re going to move on*—and we did. Then the next bill was ESEA in 1995. The foundation for standards, which has led to No Child Left Behind, now, was there.

The amazing thing to me was that the Republicans just did a flip when they took over. Once George W. Bush came in, everything was fine. They didn’t worry about federal intrusion into education. Education was—he was going to be the Education President. So, stuff we couldn’t
have gotten passed on Goals 2000, or on the Improving America School Act, which was the predecessor to No Child Left Behind, now became viable.

I have very mixed feelings about No Child Left Behind. It is the result of what we started, or what the national education summit started, of setting a goal that by year 2014 all children are going to be proficient in reading and math. That’s the basis of No Child Left Behind, but it set these arbitrary increments that schools have to meet, and it sanctions a public sort of shaming if a school doesn’t, without a real underpinning of what it takes to deliver on something like that.

**Heininger:** Meaning, Where’s the money?

**Guiney:** Where is the money, but also, the things the law tells you you have to spend the money on. If you are a parent of a child in a school that doesn’t make its adequate yearly progress, AYP, you have a right to go to another school at the district’s expense. Well, that’s one of the most wrong-handed things on earth, because there are usually no seats in the schools that are performing better. All you do is you send the parents a letter and say, “Your child’s in a failing school. Do you want them to go—?” And then the parent shows up and there’s no place for them to go, so they stay in the failing school, or what they’ve been told is the failing school.

But the measures of which are the good schools and which are not are extremely arbitrary, and some very good schools get on the list frequently because the measures are so fine-grained. You have to make a certain amount for every subgroup of your kids: for the students with disabilities, or for the English language learners, and for the kids eligible for free lunch. It’s totally arbitrary how much progress they have to make. They basically just said, “OK, if you’re here, and you’re going to get here by 2014,” they just divide by ten years or however much is left. It’s totally arbitrary and it’s a lack of understanding of how schools work.

Danica [Petroshius] came here when she was working on the bill with the Republicans, and I was very negative. I said, “Danica, now that I’m back working really closely with a district, I don’t think it’s the right way to do this. I think it’s a mistake.” I told the Senator, too, when I’d bump into him.

There is another point about working with the Senator: you not only bump into him if he wants you to do something, he still calls you up, and you do it, and you’re happy to do it. I remember about a year or two years after I had left, I was on Martha’s Vineyard on the 4th of July, a Friday afternoon. It was about one o’clock on the 4th of July weekend and I got a call. “Ellen? The Senator here. I’m going down to the Cape. I’m giving a speech to the AFL-CIO,” or whoever it was he was giving a speech to—the Building Trades Union—“and I need to know the total—” If there’s a needs assessment of the total building costs, the total dollars needed to bring all Boston public schools up to standard. “What’s the figure, and how many schools?” And you don’t make it up, because you’d be letting him down if you ever made it up and it was wrong. So he said, “I’ll call you back in an hour.” He’s on his boat, and I’m in my house with guests arriving for dinner. So I spent the next two hours on the phone, and I finally found the answer. I knew where the figure was, interestingly enough, because having worked at City Hall, I knew where the Capitol Building budget stuff is kept. I thought, If I could just find somebody, I know it’s a blue book and I can tell them where it is and I can ask them to go find it.
Heininger: On the 4th of July?

Guiney: On the 4th of July.

Heininger: When these buildings are closed.

Guiney: Of course. But I found somebody whom I had worked with when I was at City Hall, and she said, “All right, I’ll go look and see if the book is there.” And she went and she found it, and she gave me the figures. He called me back and I gave them to him—“Thanks, Ellen.” Click. It was as if, Well, that was easy, without realizing what I had had to go through. And not that he was unappreciative, because he wasn’t, but he just gets you to a high level of performance. He just expects it and then you do it. It was amazing.

But he is appreciative. When I was in Washington I lived with my sister because I didn’t want to set up a whole apartment. She had been married to Marty Nolan, who was Kirk’s predecessor as the editorial page editor of the Boston Globe, and he had been bureau chief when the Globe had a Washington bureau, so Peggy used to go with Marty to events and things where Kennedy was, and she knew him slightly.

After Goals 2000 passed, that night Peggy got a phone call. I wasn’t even home yet. He was just calling to thank me and he said, “Hi, is Ellen there? It’s the Senator here.” He woke Peggy up and Peggy said, “Senator who? What’s going on?” Then he said, “No, really, it’s the Senator,” and she realized it was. He would always call you up after a victory. Even after a good hearing, he’d call you up and thank you. He’s very attentive to expressing appreciation, but I think sometimes he doesn’t realize what it took to pull stuff off, such as Goals 2000.

The next bill I worked on, which was my second bill, ESEA, was also fraught with difficulties, but in this process one could see how good the Senator is as a Senator. Interestingly enough, because we had fought so many of the education issues in Goals 2000, it was easier to craft a good bill and to get some of the things we wanted in ESEA. In Goals 2000, we required every state that got Title I funds (which is all of them) to have standards and to have assessments that aligned with those standards. When it came to ESEA, we could begin to try to craft more shifting of its dollars toward things that we know matter—especially the quality of teaching, because that’s what all education is about, the quality of the teacher, and we knew that. It’s not about rules and regulations and annual progress. It is investing in the people who teach the kids, and making sure they can do what you’re asking them to do. In urban districts teacher effectiveness is the problem: so many of them can teach regular kids but they can’t teach kids who come to school totally unprepared and without much support. You’ve really got to have just superb teaching, so we tried to shape the language so that there was much more of an investment in teaching, so that they couldn’t just use the money for anything.

From the first ESEA in 1965 under Johnson, up until Goals 2000, there had been a lot of back and forth about the use of the federal dollars. Under Reagan the dollars had turned into block grants. Under Johnson, the first years of ESEA had had all the difficulties inherent in doing something new and you don’t really know how to get the money to people and how to set it up so that they use it properly. There were a lot of missteps. Under Reagan—he just gave people a blank check, “Here’s the money,” and people started using it for anything and everything.
There’s a clause in the bill, *Supplement, not supplant*, but it hadn’t been much enforced. In order to get the first bill passed, the money was getting diffused to almost everybody. It still is the case that if you have any poor kids you get some money, so that means about 90 percent of the districts in the country get some money, but how much they get got caught in the legislative process. Goals 2000, and then Improving America’s Schools Act, did help bring a focus on poor kids back, and it also started something else I thought was a good thing, but under No Child Left Behind, that thing has become sort of a nightmare.

The new thing was that we started saying, “We’ve got to focus on results.” You’ve got to report how much kids are learning and you’ve got to think about what to do if they’re not. A focus on results is a good thing as long as you don’t have arbitrary benchmarks that aren’t based on anything. So there was an increasing focus on results that I think is healthy and is really starting to trickle down into districts and schools now. But if you don’t have teachers who can teach all 25 kids in the class and not just 18 of them, then you’re not going to get there. We had started to really shape that, and we did a lot more of it under Improving America’s Schools Act.

Again seeing Kennedy in the legislature in the passing of the 1995 act was wonderful to see; the fights ended up being about sex, guns and prayer. That’s what we spent almost all our time on. There were endless arguments, interestingly enough, with [Charles] Grassley, with [Larry] Craig, a hypocrite. Craig was one of the main ones who wanted wording that you can’t get Title I if you do sex education. Some school districts have to do sex education, a lot of them. It’s bad enough that even with sex education there is a high teenage pregnancy rate. In the African-American community in Boston there are so many kids—and in the Latino community it’s starting, too—so many kids who haven’t graduated yet, who fall in the national statistics. One in four teenagers—it’s unbelievable.

Anyway, they just wouldn’t give on it. And then Byrd and others raise the school prayer issue. You can’t get money if you don’t require prayer. And then the guns, oh my Lord, the NRA [National Rifle Association] wanted—there was a clause in it where it’s a felony if you carry a gun within 100 yards of a school, just to try to keep, in violent neighborhoods, the guns—to make the penalty more severe if those guns are around school. We had to do so much horse trading to keep that in. Interestingly enough, that’s what all the attention was on in the reauthorization bill, not the instruction issues.

**Heininger:** Not on the basic substantive issues.

**Guiney:** Not on the basics. There was one basic issue we had worked really hard on; because of my knowledge of Boston, I wanted the threshold for a school to be allowed to use its Title I flexibility to be lowered from 60%. In the period starting about 1980 to the early ’90s, the rules on use of Title I dollars had tightened. To make sure that your kid and my kid didn’t get any Title I benefit, the rules had urged “pull-out” services for an eligible kid. He or she was taken out of the regular class. This practice was very disruptive.

**Heininger:** Very.

**Guiney:** It was not good for kids. The 1988 or ’89 ESEA had started to change the percentage of Title I eligible kids in a school that would allow you to end this. Schools started to have school-
wide programs. As long as you had 60 percent of your kids eligible in a school, you didn’t have to do any pull-out. I just thought pull-out was harmful; I had seen the effects of it. Kids were losing out on rich instruction to sit and be drilled with somebody.

I worked very hard to lower it further, and got Kennedy’s support. He said, “As long as you can get the votes for it and you’re making a strong case for it, I’ll go along with it.” But the civil rights community didn’t like it. I wanted the percentage to be 25 percent, and I got a lot of pushback from Bill Taylor and all the civil rights community because they said, “That’s going to take money away from poor kids.”

Now that I am back working in a district, I see that people in Washington are too far away to really understand that more individualized attention might not be the right thing for that kid, and pulling him out has such deleterious effects on who he is and how he thinks about himself, and also on the kind of instruction he gets, because it was allowable for him to be with an aide instead of a real teacher. It was not working and we had the evidence to say it was not working. Kennedy was nervous about it because he knew his usual constituency wasn’t going to like it, but he supported me. I showed him the data, and Tom Payzant supported it, and that was helpful too. Kennedy would support you even though you would try to get him to go out on a limb. We got it. We compromised. I think we ended up with 30 percent or 40 percent, but it helped, and then the next reauthorization in No Child Left Behind it got lowered again.

Heininger: On the ESEA, what did Clinton want that he didn’t get, and what did Kennedy want that he didn’t get? I assume that this was the bill that, from Clinton’s standpoint, having gotten the standards through in Goals 2000, that this was the point at which they could now direct the money.

Guiney: Right. And they did.

Heininger: They could direct the money and determine how they wanted to direct the money.

Guiney: Yes. I think they got pretty much everything—I forget what we had to give up on. We got almost everything we wanted, but what Clinton and Mike Smith learned is that it’s one thing to get it and it’s another thing to be able to make states do it. We didn’t understand—I certainly didn’t—that the bureaucracy at the state level also didn’t have the capability to deliver on the things that were in the bill and on the percentages of the money that had to go to professional development, for instance, and the kind of professional development that is proven to be effective. The jargon is “job-embedded.”

In other words, support teachers as they’re doing their work. Don’t just send them off to courses at Fitchburg State or some place, but actually give them opportunities to solve the problems that they face in their school. Give them support for doing that, and bring your support to the school rather than having them go off someplace after they’ve taught all day and are exhausted.

And no one-shot stuff. The commercial companies offer you a day and you get credit for it, 300 people in a room and they lecture you, and then you’re supposed to be a better teacher when you go back. It doesn’t work. We got some of those things, but I think we got less of that than we wanted, but that was because of the House. That was because of Mr. [William] Goodling, whose
wife was a teacher. It’s amazing, and you probably saw this too when you worked there. People come in with one experience.

Heininger: Which they universalize.

Guiney: Yes. He says, “My wife says it’s a waste of time.” I know what we wanted. We wanted—it was that young guy from Indiana, it was his bill, his amendment, and we didn’t get it.

Heininger: Tim Roemer?

Guiney: Yes, it was Tim Roemer. We wanted a teaching corps again that had been part of the War on Poverty, where you really invested money in teacher preparation and made it something people would want to do for five years. There’s a lot of research that says don’t have your kid in a first-year teacher’s class, just don’t. Second year is a little better, but you really hit effectiveness in years three, four, five, six. He wanted a teaching corps, which we strongly supported, where you would really put money into having incentives for people to teach for five years before they went to law school or medical school or someplace else, because that is long enough to make a real contribution to kids.

We’ve got to start thinking about teaching as something you don’t have to do for your whole life. Not Teach for America, because that’s only two years. It’s wonderful people who do Teach for America, but it builds in teacher turnover, and schools lose teachers before they get good, which is very bad. You need five years, as I see it. My organization now is running a teacher program without higher ed, which Kennedy is going to support—he already is—in the next Congress. [Barack] Obama actually has an amendment that Kennedy co-sponsored, which is going to help a different kind of teacher preparation. We wanted that and we didn’t get it. I’m trying to think what else. It was really a great victory. I can’t remember other things that we wanted that we didn’t get.

Heininger: What comes after?

Guiney: Oh, he wanted more technology and that got cut way down.

Heininger: Tell me a little bit about Kennedy’s views on technology in the schools.

Guiney: He was Mr. Technology, which was ironic when I was there, because he couldn’t use the computer. He was the first Senator, however, to get an email address, not because of him, of course, but because of his staff.

Heininger: Does he use it?

Guiney: I don’t know if he uses it. He probably does. I suspect he does, but he was behind Jeff Bingaman. Well, Al Gore was in the Senate when I first got there too. But Kennedy was always intrigued with distance learning. He sponsored all the early education technology amendments.

Heininger: Which is interesting because you would not expect somebody from the state of Massachusetts, with relatively small, relatively compact populations spread out relatively evenly, rather than the distance learning coming from North Dakota.
Guiney: He did. I don’t know where that came from, but he was always high on it. He made very strange bedfellows on it, because some of the rural—I remember Conrad [Burns].

Heininger: Right, he was a big guy.

Guiney: Because he had a rural state and it was very important to him. [Theodore] Stevens in Alaska. Kennedy made some very strange bedfellows on getting education technology amendments passed, but he was very big on it and he really cared about it and was viewed by everybody as Mr. Tech. It was ironic.

Heininger: Was he also for wiring the schools too?

Guiney: Wiring the schools, that’s the other thing.

Heininger: And recognizing relatively early the necessity to wire the schools.

Guiney: Very early, and that was the thing we didn’t get in ESEA was a lot more money for facilities. There was a separate School Buildings Act, but we tried to salt it in to various places and it always came out.

Heininger: Where was he on lifelong learning?

Guiney: He was a supporter of that. He understood that too. He was the hero of the adult education people. He had such an affinity for immigrants that the adult education people really looked to him because their classes were always oversubscribed. It had to do with being poor and he really did believe in education as the vehicle for getting out of poverty. That was always sort of the hook for him. And a lot of the higher ed stuff, but Clayton and people can talk about that.

Heininger: What about the transition for the, in essence, vocational training for the kids who are not going. There was the School-to-Work program. Is that his?

Guiney: Yes. He passed the—I didn’t do it, so that’s why I—

Heininger: Who handled that?

Guiney: A guy who subsequently died. The School-to-Work Act. His name was Steve. He got cancer of the eye and he died six months after. He was very brave. He stayed there through the bill but then he died shortly thereafter. That one, I didn’t have as much to do with. It was driven by Secretary [Robert] Reich, because it came out of the Labor Department, and Nick and Steve did it. I helped a little bit. I also helped on the National Service bill that led to AmeriCorps, but again, Nick brought somebody in—Tom [Sander]. I forget all these last names; I haven’t seen these people in so long. So I didn’t do it; I just sort of generally supported it.

But he really accomplished a lot. There was a Washington Post editorial that called the 103rd Congress, which is the one we worked for, the Education Congress. I have that someplace. I think I might even be able to put my hand on a copy for you. I’m going to New York this afternoon, so I’ve got to wind this up, but if you email me questions—
**Heininger:** Well one last question: What happened when [Newton] Gingrich came in?

**Guiney:** I left. It was awful. I mean, I didn’t stay much longer. It was just horrible. It was just misery for everybody. They were so focused on ending government. But they made a terrible mistake: they went after School Lunch. Oh boy, was that insane! Oh my Lord, it was just such a—it was unbelievable.

**Heininger:** So when Congress turned over, what happened to the committee staff?

**Guiney:** Well, we got cut. We went from two thirds to one third of the money. Some people just left. I stayed for a few months but I started looking for another job because it just wasn’t any fun anymore, and also we knew he needed people to go. Nick did a very good job of—I think he said to people, “I’ll give you a couple of months so you’re not on the street.” He came to me and I sat down with him and he said, “Do you want to stay?” And I said, “No, I want to go, but I want a few months.” He said, “Fine.”

So what did we do in that time? Not a lot. It was really agony. It was very hard for Kennedy. Most of his energy did go into keeping School Lunch—and we succeeded, but there wasn’t any—I mean, they so mis-stepped on that. There wasn’t much education stuff going on. The higher ed bill had not passed and so all of the attention shifted. Suzanne had gone and by this time Clayton was, you know—

**Heininger:** So who stayed and handled higher education?

**Guiney:** Clayton stayed through the higher ed bill. I think they also got a couple of people on loan from the White House. That’s how Danica started. She had been in the White House and Mike sent her over. They gave us a couple of people. They gave us interns and stuff to keep it afloat. I had a lot of vacation, so I really left. I officially left in May or June, but I started working three days a week. That’s what I started doing first, to make it easy for them on the budget. I cut back, and then I started interviewing for this job and I knew I was going to get it so I took some time off.

**Heininger:** What interaction have you had with Kennedy in this job?

**Guiney:** Some. I have a lot with Barb’s. If she needs something she’ll call me and if I need something I’ll call her.

**Heininger:** But I take it he’s supportive of the work you’re doing?

**Guiney:** Yes, oh very. I see him sometimes when I go to Washington. I bumped into him when I was down there a couple of months ago, and we talked briefly about No Child Left Behind. He said, “I want you to write me a memo and tell me all this stuff.” You know, because he couldn’t take it all in. He said, “What are the difficulties with it? I don’t think I fully understand,” but he really listened. I was talking to Barb’s a month or so ago and she said, “You really should write that.” I just haven’t had time but I am going to do it. Right now, I don’t think anybody is—nothing is going to happen until the next Congress.

**Heininger:** So you have time.
Guiney: I feel I have time, that’s right. There was a lot of push. You know, Margaret Spellings said she’s going to reauthorize—that’s not going to happen.

Heininger: Do you have a lot of contact with Payzant in this job?

Guiney: A lot. All the time. I had had a lot to do in Washington with him, so I knew him, and we were both on the Pew Forum so we had built up a lot of trust. He and I, we’re just like this, here constantly, weekly interaction. The relationship was very important to me. I was able to help him a lot and he was able to help us a lot, and I think we got a lot done.

Heininger: In those early Clinton years did you have much interaction with the House?

Guiney: Not much, mostly with Jack. I had a fair amount with Jack.

Heininger: Because you also had a longstanding relationship with him?

Guiney: Yes. Jack and I had our troubles at first because he’s been around this community for 27 years, and it was very much a male sort of club. Terry had things he cared about, and as long as Jack gave them to him, he didn’t hassle Jack. Terry is really a higher ed person, so he didn’t hassle Jack about the guts of K-12. I did, on things like lowering the threshold. He was bitterly opposed to that so we had a lot of fights. I remember one meeting we had, a joint meeting of the staff, he walked out, he was so mad at me. He said, “I’m not going to put up with this,” and he left.

But we worked it out, and you’ll see when you interview him. I’m quite fond of Jack. In the end we both won. Our bosses wanted this stuff passed and we knew it. We knew we had to work it out and we did. But they didn’t like it. There was a bunch of them: Pell’s guy David, and Terry, and Jack, and the guy who worked for [George] Miller. None of them had ever really worked in schools so they didn’t really know how things end up on the ground. And none of them had taught. I was a very different creature.

Heininger: It makes a difference.

Guiney: It made a huge difference. I just wanted different things. Senator Kennedy, before he hired me and Nick—we talked endlessly. I talked endlessly with Nick and a little bit, as I said, pro forma with Kennedy. What are we going to get done? In the abstract it was easy for Kennedy to say, “Oh, yes, it is all about teachers.” Anybody can agree to that, but then you have to trade something off to get what you want to improve teaching, because it’s always somebody’s pet little program.

Heininger: Always.

Guiney: But he never—I mean, he’d argue with you about what you were trying to do but he’d finally say, “All right.” Every time, he’d say, “OK, I’m going to go with you.” It was great. It was fabulous. I had so much sway because of him, because he could get it done.

Heininger: And the star schools were already in place?
Guiney: Yes.

Heininger: That was an ’80s program, late ’80s?

Guiney: Yes, it was an ’80s program, which he loved. As I say, he didn’t fully understand it but he loved it. Now technology has all changed, so I don’t know what’s in the federal legislation now, but I suspect he’s kept up. Actually, technology programs were very popular in the Senate. Almost everybody liked them, and it is too bad that they didn’t pour money into it, because I think it would have made a big difference.

Heininger: Yes. Well, this has been excellent.

Guiney: Good. If you have questions, you just email me.
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Reference is to Internal Improvement Act of 1841 empowering states to use the proceeds from the sale of federal lands for internal improvements, which were combined with school lands set aside by 1785 Congressional ordinance as western territory was surveyed and divided into townships with Lot 16 reserved for maintenance of public schools within each township.