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No longer “A Nation at Risk;” now a nation way behind

Documentary Two Million Minutes addresses the issue of U.S. falling behind other nations in education and economic opportunity

(Seattle; San Francisco; Boston; Indianapolis – April 28, 2008) The April 1983 government report “**A Nation at Risk***” warned us that if we didn’t improve math and science education in the U.S. we would be at risk of falling behind our global competitors. Having reached the twenty-fifth anniversary of the report, a provocative new documentary film, ***Two Million Minutes***, vividly reveals that American students are no longer “at risk” of falling behind -- they are now clearly behind even Third World students in India and China, in addition to being in 24th place among developed countries.

“Despite the billions of dollars being spent on ‘education reform’ since 1983, the U.S. has implemented none of the meaningful recommendations of the 1983 report and as a result has seen no real improvements to our math or science education system,” said Robert Compton, creator and executive producer of the documentary *Two Million Minutes*.

A partner of the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s ED in ‘08 campaign**, the film follows two students in India, China and the U.S. during their senior years of high school. By comparing how these students prioritize their time (approximately four years or “two million minutes” of high school), the film demonstrates that the typical student in the U.S. spends much less time on his/her education and gives less thought to future career opportunities than his/her global peers in India and China. The documentary discusses the implications for the U.S. economy of having its students lose ground in education compared to those students around the globe.

Compton had film crews record high school seniors in the U.S., India and China in 2005 and 2006. “What we saw and what the film portrays is that our culture has a highly developed athletic and extracurricular system but a deteriorating core academic system,” said Compton. “In 25 years, America has gone simply from being ‘A Nation at Risk’ to a nation way behind its largest future economic competitors – India and China.”

“How is your high school student allocating his/her two million minutes?” asked Compton. “That’s a question every parent should ask him or herself. It’s one I even had to ask myself.”

To view a trailer of the film or to purchase a copy of the documentary, visit www.2mminutes.com. To join a discussion about the issue, visit Compton's blog at <http://www.2mm.typepad.com/>.

The next screenings of the film will take place at **Seattle University on May 12**, in **San Francisco on May 13**, and in **Boston on May 30**. For more information on these screenings or others, please visit our website.

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About Two Million Minutes

Titled *Two Million Minutes*, this documentary film takes an in-depth look at how students in the United States allocate their high school years (approximately four years or two million minutes) compared with India and China. It examines the implications this may have on the U.S. position in the global economy during the 21st century. *Two Million Minutes* is currently screening across the country. For more information, please visit www.2mminutes.com.

***"A Nation at Risk"** was presented by the National Commission on Excellence in Education to Secretary of Education, the Honorable T. H. Bell. Its purpose was to "help define the problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions." The results of the report found the U.S. to be a "nation at risk" as "our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world... Our society *and* its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling and of the high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain them."