

The driving force behind Paige's work as Secretary is his shared belief with President Bush that education is a civil right, just like the right to vote or to be treated equally. Paige believes it is wrong to fight discrimination with discrimination. For that reason, he strongly supports the President's vision of affirmative access that promotes diversity in our nation's colleges and universities through race-neutral alternatives.

As a result, the Department received a clean financial audit for the first time in many years and only the second time in the history of the Department. The Department's cleanup also received the highest kudos from the federal Office of Management and Budget. And those responsible for criminal wrongdoing are being held accountable in the courts.

The department-wide implementation of the blueprint streamlined operations, provided strategic direction, and put a halt to corrupt practices that were sapping resources and focus from the Department's central mission: improving America's schools.

Paige rallied the Department to create a Blueprint for Management Excellence to build an organization worthy of the taxpayers' trust and the President's vision – a vision that says good government is one that is not only closer to the people, but also more accountable to the people.

# ROD PAIGE

