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STEVE ADUBATO, host:

Hi, I'm Steve Adubato. Every once in a while you get someone in the world of public policy and the world of government who is in a position to shed light on a very important issue. There is no issue more important than the issue of education, and there is no better person to talk about that issue, particularly in the state of New Jersey, than the commissioner of the Department of Education in New Jersey, Lucille Davy, who is charged with the responsibility of, frankly, taking care of, dealing with the education of 1.4 million children and providing them the tools to succeed in the 21st century.

Commissioner, thank you for joining us.

Ms. LUCILLE E. DAVY (New Jersey Commissioner of Education): Happy to be here, Steve.

ADUBATO: Question, a little bit about you before we get into educational policy. Did you always want to be the commissioner?

Ms. DAVY: No.

ADUBATO: Was that the plan?

Ms. DAVY: No, it definitely wasn't.

ADUBATO: What's your background?

Ms. DAVY: I was a math major in college and became a certified math teacher. Did a little bit of teaching in mathematics. Always really wanted to be a teacher. My dad was a special education teacher and then college professor, and I think, from a very young age, I had a real draw to teaching. He discouraged me, honestly...

ADUBATO: He did?

Ms. DAVY: ...from being a teacher. Yes. Because at the time, you know, he worked four jobs during the year--worked in the summer, worked an extra job during the school year--just to provide for my three younger brothers and my mom and I.

ADUBATO: Are you implying you can't get rich being a teacher?

Ms. DAVY: No, I think back--well, I don't know that I would say anybody can get rich from being a teacher.

ADUBATO: I was just going to say.

Ms. DAVY: But I think back then we didn't recognize...

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: ...that we needed to compensate teachers in a fair way. I think we've changed a lot of that.

ADUBATO: We're not where we need to be, but we're in the right direction.

Ms. DAVY: I think we're definitely in the right direction, yes. But young people today have a lot of other choices when they come out of college as to what they will do. And you know, frankly, I became a certified teacher, did a little bit of teaching, but went to law school and practiced law for awhile, and then got back into education as soon as I had my children, and became very vested.

ADUBATO: Tell everyone who your children are.

Ms. DAVY: Well, I've got two--we've got two college-age sons, and as soon as they were born in the mid-'80s, you get vested in what education is going to be like for them, as I'm sure many parents do. And I became very involved in, you know, their schooling and got involved in the local education organization, then began to do some education policy work, and then went into government early in this decade, and then went over to the department to serve as the commissioner in September of 2005.

ADUBATO: Love your job?

Ms. DAVY: Love it a lot.

ADUBATO: What do you love about it?

Ms. DAVY: I think because I know I can make an impact, I can make a difference, and I take the job very seriously. I really believe that these are our children, collectively, as a state, all of us are responsible for all 1.4 million of them.

ADUBATO: Name some differences that you're really proud of. Be specific.

Ms. DAVY: That I've done since I've been there?

ADUBATO: Yeah, just say to yourself, 'You know what, it's tough sometimes in government, and there are so many obstacles, but I feel really proud of this particular achievement. It's had this impact on these children.'

Ms. DAVY: Well, the first thing I would say is we've implemented a new school funding formula, which means that children, regardless of where they live in New Jersey, will have adequate resources to meet their needs, so particularly, those children who are at risk because of poverty or because they come from families where English is not spoken as the first language in their home. I think that's a very important achievement, and we did that with the governor's help and with the legislature...

ADUBATO: Governor Corzine?

Ms. DAVY: Governor Corzine, absolutely.

ADUBATO: But you're, in fact, tying the dollars spent in a particular school district to the quality of education. I know this is a longstanding Supreme Court debate and issue, and lots of people have different feelings, but are you convinced that you cannot educate children if you do not spend a comparable amount of money in an urban school district as opposed to a wealthier suburban school district?

Ms. DAVY: Well, I think you need a minimum amount of resources, and that's what the funding formula intends to provide. I think that what we see is that a--you know, districts spending different amounts, educating lots of children at risk. In some cases, they're more successful than others, but this is really to ensure that children who come from families in poverty...

ADUBATO: Hm.

Ms. DAVY: ...get those extra resources. The prior court cases really set aside 31 districts that receive the extra resources. Children with those same profiles in terms of poverty or English language learner issues did not receive additional resources anywhere else they lived in the state, so the new funding formula that's been implemented this year provides those resources regardless of which community a child lives in.

ADUBATO: But how do we assess the performance of those students and whether, in fact, those dollars are, dare I say, paying off, Commissioner?

Ms. DAVY: Well, certainly one of them is our annual statewide assessment that is done in grades three through eight and grade 11 each year. That's one...

ADUBATO: Tests?

Ms. DAVY: ...measure for us. Performance on tests, absolutely.

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: Looking at graduation rates, how many children finish high school after they've been in for four years.

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: Looking at the--how they perform on our--on our statewide monitoring system, which is called New Jersey QSAC, which focuses in on how they spend their dollars, whether they're efficient in their spending or whether there's wasteful spending. Multiple ways of measuring success, but, to a large extent, it is about how well children are learning and whether they're being prepared for the challenges of their next year in school, whether they're in the K-12 system or whether they leave K-12 and go into college or go into the work force.

ADUBATO: Ready to talk about test scores a little bit more?

Ms. DAVY: Sure.

ADUBATO: In partnership with our friends at New Jersey Monthly, we're doing a feature story on--writing a piece on the question of pupil test scores, among other issues. But there's a core issue here that's very interesting. I'm

reading a little bit from the Star-Ledger, John Mooney, our colleague over there, who writes about education.

Ms. DAVY: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: He has interviewed you many times.

Ms. DAVY: Yeah.

ADUBATO: Headline from the following day, if you want more information on it, you can log on to our site, we'll be linked to our friends at newjerseymonthly.com. July 17th, 2008, "New Jersey raises bar for pupil test scores. The state board of education admits change could surprise parents." Basically, what is being said here is that the state board of education approved raising the scores for reading and math tests in grades five through eight, and it said that believe it or not, students scoring low as 33 percent on certain scores were deemed to be proficient. A, what sense does that make, and, B, what has been changed to raise those test score expectations?

Ms. DAVY: Well, first of all, this year, we gave a new test. It's a newly-designed test for grades five through eight, so this is the first time. And every time you give a new test, you set a standard for that test as to what number of points the child has to earn to be deemed proficient.

ADUBATO: But how could 33 percent ever be deemed proficient?

Ms. DAVY: Well, you know, it's done with the--with teachers from throughout the state and also with the test creator, the company that produces the test. And you know, frankly, that's a good question. It certainly...

ADUBATO: I haven't gotten a good answer yet.

Ms. DAVY: ...isn't--well...

ADUBATO: I keep asking around.

Ms. DAVY: It was set--it was set at a--you know, before my time, to some extent, in some of these cases, and...

ADUBATO: Would you have set that number?

Ms. DAVY: Well, you know, it--we don't do it. I don't decide it on my own. It is done with teachers who have taught these grades, and there's--you know, there's sort of a scientific method about it. I can't just say I want to set the bar at 75 percent.

ADUBATO: I understand, but anecdotally, common sense dictates...

Ms. DAVY: Yeah, that's too low. No question about it. And the real concern, which is the reason why we asked the state board to raise the bar for proficiency is that you are telling a child and his parents in a--kind of a false positive way the child is doing well enough.

ADUBATO: Proficient.

Ms. DAVY: Proficient, right. So that you're saying to the parent, 'Don't worry. Your child is doing fine.' When in essence, a child who's only getting

50 percent or 40 percent of the questions right, obviously, there are lots of questions the child did not answer right, and we need to know what are the skills connected to those questions that the child could not answer correctly.

ADUBATO: What was it raised to?

Ms. DAVY: Well, the--at least 50 percent. Some of them are a little bit above 50 percent, so it's an incremental change. Clearly, not as high as we would think...

ADUBATO: Or you would hope.

Ms. DAVY: ...we ought to raise it, or we would hope to raise it going forward. But really, for the most part, New Jersey's standards are high to start with, and we have high expectations in terms of what we want children to learn and what we want them to be able to do. We have had writing prompts and what we call open-ended questions...

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: ...so a child reads a reading passage, does some multiple choice questions, but then is also asked some questions where the child actually has to write the answer out, a couple sentences, you know, a short paragraph. And those are considered, oftentimes, harder than a multiple choice question, which, you know, the child just gets to pick which one is right.

ADUBATO: You have to express yourself.

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely.

ADUBATO: You have to respond, you have to see what kind of critical thinking is going on there, right?

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely. And one of the things that we've built into the new test system in grades five through eight is also what we call "higher order" thinking skills.

ADUBATO: Higher order thinking skills.

Ms. DAVY: Right.

ADUBATO: What does that mean?

Ms. DAVY: Where the child has to apply the knowledge. So, in other words, a question on the old test might have said, 'How did Johnny solve the problem that was presented to him in the story that you read?' That's the old form. The child has to go back, and go back, read the passage again, and can find out how Johnny solved the problem, and then just write it for us. Now, the question might be, 'Give an example of someone you know, or another story that you've read, or another situation you know about where a child faced a problem like Johnny's. How did the child address that problem, or how did the child handle that problem?'

ADUBATO: That's a higher order?

Ms. DAVY: It is, because the child can't just go back and look at what was written and spit something back to you.

ADUBATO: That's not memorization.

Ms. DAVY: The child has to apply--no, because the child has now got to think, what was Johnny's problem, and analyze that, and then the child has to say, 'Now, where do I know of a problem like that?' And then the child has to communicate in written word about that problem, how it was similar and how it was solved.

ADUBATO: Connecting dots.

Ms. DAVY: That's just an--that's just an example.

ADUBATO: But, Commissioner, here's what's interesting to me, is that this article and others, as it relates to these test scores being changed, the expectations, the proficiency level...

Ms. DAVY: Right.

ADUBATO: ...being changed, it said that a lot of parents are going to be disappointed.

Ms. DAVY: I think from the perspective...

ADUBATO: I mean, they're going to be surprised.

Ms. DAVY: Well...

ADUBATO: When the state comes back and says, 'Your kid's now not proficient...

Ms. DAVY: Right.

ADUBATO: ...because it's a different number that we're going to be using to define proficiency.'

Ms. DAVY: Right.

ADUBATO: How you going to deal with that?

Ms. DAVY: Well, the question is making sure that parents understand what that really means. First of all...

ADUBATO: Yeah, what happens to the kid if the kid gets 44 and the number is supposed to be 50, he or she has a 44 on a test, he would have passed before, or he would have been deemed...

Ms. DAVY: Proficient.

ADUBATO: ...proficient before. Now he would not be at 44, what happens to that student?

Ms. DAVY: Well, there's nothing punitive.

ADUBATO: Nothing.

Ms. DAVY: There's nothing horrible. No, nothing bad happens to the child.

What happens is the school says, 'Oh, this child is partially proficient, that's not good enough.' We've got to work with that child and address the skills that have not been developed so that we fill in those gaps. The worst thing that we can do is continue to push children through the system and get them into high school with weak skills or skills that just aren't strong enough to allow them to take the kind of rigorous courses that are demanded of them in the 21st century in order to compete in a global economy.

ADUBATO: Good stuff.

We are speaking to the commissioner of the Department of Education in the state of New Jersey. It doesn't matter which state you're watching us in right now. Education, in many people's minds, is the number one issue. We'll continue discussing education, not just in New Jersey, but nationally with the commissioner right after this. Stay with us. We'll be right back.

Announcer: If you would like more information on this program or if you would like to express an opinion, e-mail us at info@caucusnj.org, and visit us online at caucusnj.org.

ADUBATO: You are looking at Lucille Davy, who is the commissioner of education in the state of New Jersey.

Let me try this one. Big discussion is about preparing--as you were saying before we got up to the break--for the 21st century, job force, you know, changing jobs. What does that really mean?

Ms. DAVY: Well, in plain English, we look at the world around us and how much things have changed. The kind of jobs that were available 20 and 30 years ago are vastly different today. Think about in your own life, driving on the toll roads. We use Easy Pass now. We have far fewer toll collectors than we ever used to have. You go to the doctor's office. Everything--all of your records now are done by computer.

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: You go for a medical exam, a lot of that medical examination work that's done is all computerized.

ADUBATO: What does that mean, jobs are gone, but new jobs are created?

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely. New jobs are created, but they're jobs that require a much higher level of skill.

ADUBATO: What kind of skills are we talking about?

Ms. DAVY: We're talking about critical thinking, problem solving, being able to work in a group to solve a problem together, so a lot of it is technology-based and technology-infused. In other words, computers and technology are changing the way we do everything in our lives. You know, 10 years ago, how many people had cell phones, right? Today, people have cell phones, they have BlackBerrys, they stay in constant communication with one another. You have to know how to use the technology. And the way that companies today are advancing themselves is incorporating that technology to make themselves more efficient and to deliver a better product.

ADUBATO: But how are schools changing to respond to the description--or

respond to the needs you just described? I mean, what are they actually doing?

Ms. DAVY: Well, to one extent, they are using technology differently, so they are having children write essays on the computer and do research on the Web as opposed to, you know, when you and I went to school, we used to go to the library and pull 10 books off the shelf and copy a couple of articles and do our...

ADUBATO: Are you referring to the Dewey Decimal System?

Ms. DAVY: Yes, I am. Indeed, I am. You know, today young people, you know, go to Google and they do their search, and, of course, the challenge is not to find the information, because information is all around them.

ADUBATO: What are you going to do with it?

Ms. DAVY: It's what are you going to do with it, and how do you know if what you've accessed really answers the question that you've been asked, and if it's someone's opinion or if it's really fact-based. And so you've got to teach children those kinds of skills, which are different that assuming that `because it's in a book...

ADUBATO: Hm.

Ms. DAVY: ...I know it's true, and I can use it to support my paper.' It's very different.

ADUBATO: Let's do this. Let's talk about some outside the box educational initiatives. Can we talk charter schools?

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely.

ADUBATO: OK. I happen to know--I don't know if this is a conflict of interest or not, I'm not sure it is, but my father happens to run a fairly successful charter school called the Robert Tree Academy, and...

Ms. DAVY: Very successful charter school.

ADUBATO: No, I did not have to hear you say that. It's not a conflict, because I don't work there, I don't get paid there. I'm just a big advocate and supporter of what they're doing. They're in the city of Newark and the community I was born and raised in. I happen to know that for every kid who gets into that charter school, many, many kids are denied access. There is, in fact, a lottery to get in. Charter schools are not the answer, though.

Ms. DAVY: Well, we can't send every child to a charter school.

ADUBATO: That's why they're not the answer.

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely not. They are not. You can't do it with charter schools alone, and it's great that we do have...

ADUBATO: What role do they play?

Ms. DAVY: Well, I think they can help us see how you can do teaching and learning differently in a different setting. We can certainly have other

schools learn from it. We can have...

ADUBATO: What--OK, let's play this out a little bit.

Ms. DAVY: ...partnerships.

ADUBATO: OK, play this out. Sorry for interrupting. I happen to know at the Robert Tree Academy, the kids wear uniforms. Relevant or not?

Ms. DAVY: Many people would say it is. I mean, I--and I would agree with that.

ADUBATO: Longer school year.

Ms. DAVY: Longer school year.

ADUBATO: Longer hours.

Ms. DAVY: More focus on the stuff that really matters and the material that counts, yes.

ADUBATO: They're in Newark, though, and the test scores for those kids are higher. Many would say, 'Wait a minute. You're cherry-picking those kids,' to play devil's advocate. 'You're getting the kids whose parents are motivated to the point where they would want them to go into a charter school.' What about all those kids who can't get in or parents who don't even try to get them into a charter school? And I'm not demeaning the Newark public school system. I mean, I'm a product of it--good, bad, or indifferent, I'm a product of it. Can you--can a kid succeed in an urban--be it Jersey City, Paterson, you know, doesn't matter, Camden, Atlantic City. Can an urban kid succeed in a public school system?

Ms. DAVY: Yes, and we have examples of that. There are schools right here in the city of Newark where children are doing extremely well. The question is, how do we make sure that we replicate that success in every school building, and...

ADUBATO: What are the keys to that success?

Ms. DAVY: Well, part of it is a really capable school leader. So a principal who's an education leader who's focused on the education of the children, who looks at the data, looks at how children are doing, finds out where they have deficiencies in terms of whether it's reading or writing or mathematics or science, and then zeroes the teachers in on making the educational change in the classroom that will--that will have different impacts. And also, of course, capable teachers. And really, all of them working together.

ADUBATO: Talk about these. Who's going into teaching? Who's going into teaching?

Ms. DAVY: Today?

ADUBATO: Yeah.

Ms. DAVY: Well, you know what? Young people have lots of--lots of choices. And, to some extent, you know, it's people who decided from a very young age,

'I want to make a difference in the world,' and they--and they've enjoyed school enough that they want to do that for other people. It may be they think that's the easiest way to get a job. I mean, there's a--there's a whole gamut. We're also looking to bring in second career people into teaching. So...

ADUBATO: What does that mean?

Ms. DAVY: ...people who may have left--well, people who may have left the business world. Maybe they're scientists who, in their mid career, decided they wanted to do something different. Maybe a company like Lucent or Bell Labs...

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: ...downsizes or moves. They decide they don't want to move their family.

ADUBATO: You have a potential science teacher there?

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely. Absolutely.

ADUBATO: Computer lab teacher, right?

Ms. DAVY: Absolutely. Lots of opportunities to bring people who have the knowledge, so the content knowledge. They understand the subject.

ADUBATO: But they may not know how to teach.

Ms. DAVY: Well, and that's why we have a program called alternate route teacher certification so that we help them learn the ins and outs, so to speak, of the classroom.

ADUBATO: Pedagogy?

Ms. DAVY: The pedagogy, how you teach a child, yes. How do you teach them to read, how do you develop their writing skills. But also, then, classroom management. You know, what to do when they act out.

ADUBATO: Is there an art to classroom management?

Ms. DAVY: Well, I think there is. I do think there is.

ADUBATO: Are you saying that students can be a bit of a problem at times?

Ms. DAVY: I think we have examples of that, yes. And also, how to deal with parents. Parents who...

ADUBATO: Are you saying parents can be a problem?

Ms. DAVY: ...are demanding. Parents can definitely be a problem. Parents who are demanding or parents who may not be engaged. You know, we really run the full spectrum, so you've got to know how you engage the parents who don't, you know, ask their children at night, 'Did you do your homework?' You know, 'Did you bring your books home?' As well as the parents who think that no matter what you do as a teacher, you haven't done enough for Suzi, and you need to do something differently. So, you know, learning how to--how to

navigate that aspect of teaching, I think, is important, too.

ADUBATO: I said earlier in the program that we're doing this particular program in cooperation with our friends at New Jersey Monthly.

(Graphic on screen)

www.njmonthly.com

ADUBATO: They actually have--it's got to be one of the most popular editions of the magazine. You are very familiar with the fall edition that talks about--September edition--September--September/October, this is the edition that talks about the best high schools in the state. Everyone looks for that ranking. Now, the department of education's not in any way involved in that, correct?

Ms. DAVY: We are not.

ADUBATO: OK, but it's a popular edition. And one of the issues that we will examine, that we'll be talking about in the future, an ongoing issue, the governor talks about redesigning schools. What is this redesigning schools, how are you involved, and what's it supposed to accomplish?

Ms. DAVY: Well, it's really about secondary schools, and high schools primarily, recognizing that the 21st-century world demands something totally different of children who are exiting high school. They need to be prepared with these higher skills to enter the work force...

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: ...as we talked about earlier, but also, they need to be ready if they want to pursue college. And one of the things we're learning is that more and more young people in the future are going to need a college degree, whether it's a two-year degree or a four-year degree, in order to even enter the work force.

ADUBATO: How do we know that?

Ms. DAVY: Business is telling us. And when we look at the job--when we analyze, you know, job creation going forward and the focus at the Rutgers Heldrich Center have done some of this analysis...

ADUBATO: Right, John Heldrich Center.

Ms. DAVY: ...they're saying to us, the jobs of the future are going to require higher education degrees. There are also jobs that are going to require something beyond high school, so maybe an advanced certificate, a Cisco certificate in computers, where you know how to be a computer programmer. Perhaps a technical program. Even in the trades. Young people in the building trades, going into plumbing today need to understand much higher level math skills than they used to need to understand.

ADUBATO: Well, what does that have to do with the governor's commission?

Ms. DAVY: Because we really want to make sure that high schools are addressing the needs of all students, that we don't let anybody fall through the cracks. We know right now that we have children who are dropping out of

our system, particularly in our urban areas, and we also have children who are leaving our system not prepared for the future. If we look at the--what are called remediation rates at the colleges in New Jersey, many children leave high school, get to college, and find out they're not capable or not ready to go in and take a credit-bearing course. The college says before you can take, you know, college math 101, you need to go back and take techniques of Algebra, and there--and it's a remedial class. It doesn't count towards a degree, so parents basically paying extra for that. Child doesn't get college credit.

ADUBATO: So what are--give us a concrete, specific example of what this commission--what this changed, what these new expectations are for the 21st century. Give us a concrete example of what change could or should be made.

Ms. DAVY: OK, right now, we specify that a child has to take three years of mathematics to graduate, three years of science, four years of English, but we don't specify what that has to look like. So a child can basically go through high school taking what we would call "watered-down" math classes, middle school math level classes, basically repackaged, take them again in high school and satisfy the three year requirement. We're going to say...

ADUBATO: Real world, that doesn't work.

Ms. DAVY: ...that' not--that's not enough. Absolutely not. And we've worked with the business community in New Jersey, with the labor community, and with the colleges to determine what skills young people need. And it translates into making sure, at least in the beginning, all children are successful in algebra one, and then moving on to add geometry and eventually, over time, adding algebra two or a piece of algebra two to that skill requirement for young people. Same thing in science. We've got classes that are really repackaged middle school science classes that don't have labs, or that don't have higher order skills attached to them, and we will be asking them to take lab classes. Biology, for example. We don't require that children in our state right now take biology...

ADUBATO: Do not require it.

Ms. DAVY: ...and have to pass it. No. We just put a regulation in connection with the school funding formula in place where children in high school now, beginning in September, but to this point, we did not have that requirement. Now, you think about what's going on in the world of medicine and genetics...

ADUBATO: You have to have it.

Ms. DAVY: You absolutely have to.

ADUBATO: What happens if a kid doesn't?

Ms. DAVY: You have to go the doctor.

ADUBATO: What happens if a kid doesn't meet that standard? You said before a lot of things are not punitive as it relates to test scores being changed. Is there anything punitive here?

Ms. DAVY: Well, a decision on what we're going to do for that child--they take the class. The issue is going to be what we will do if they don't pass

the test.

ADUBATO: Do we know?

Ms. DAVY: Will we require them to take it--we are not to that point yet. That's part of what we're working through as we implement these higher standards, and there'll be a conversation and probably a debate around this.

ADUBATO: With whom?

Ms. DAVY: With the state board of education and with parents and the community at large throughout the state.

ADUBATO: Do you think most parents want those standards higher, want you to be redesigning our public schools to prepare young people to compete in the 21st century? Do you really think they want that if, in fact, it means that some of--that their own kid--they usually talk about some other kid, but now you're talking about your kid--may be deemed not to be where he or she needs to be? Do you think most parents are ready for that?

Ms. DAVY: Well, I think that they want that from the perspective of they want to make sure that their child is prepared for the future, and when the child goes to college and you find out the child's not ready, and the child has to take five or six years to get a degree...

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. DAVY: ...that's when the parent is certain that they would have liked something different in high school.

ADUBATO: Too late.

Ms. DAVY: It is too late.

ADUBATO: How is this any different from the No Child Left Behind? Isn't this what the president talked about? Isn't this the whole thing that no child's going to be left behind, different standards, different expectations? How is it any different?

Ms. DAVY: I think the only difference is that under No Child Left Behind, every state is able to set its own standards.

ADUBATO: Yes.

Ms. DAVY: And that I think No Child Left Behind wants you to get every child to a floor. We're talking about something higher than the floor. We want kids reaching for the ceiling. We don't want the low level. We really believe that in order to make sure our children are competitive, and again, globally, because the jobs they will compete for, the children who are in kindergarten now are 15 years away from entering the job market. If we think back 15 years to what jobs were available, many of those jobs that were available 15 years ago...

ADUBATO: So therefore teaching has to be different.

Ms. DAVY: ...are no longer there. It definitely does.

ADUBATO: Schools have to be different.

Ms. DAVY: We have to teach children to be learners, to be problem solvers, and to take in information--lots and lots of information--and determine how they can use that information to answer questions and solve problems.

ADUBATO: You do not lack for any passion for this job.

Ms. DAVY: I care very much about this. I think there's a lot at stake, I really do.

ADUBATO: And you're optimistic.

Ms. DAVY: I'm very optimistic. Absolutely.

ADUBATO: OK. I got to let you out of here. We'll keep our conversation going off the air. Commissioner Lucille Davy of the Department of Education of New Jersey, thank you very much. Good job.

Ms. DAVY: Thank you for having me. Thank you.

Announcer: If you would like more information on this program or if you would like to express an opinion, e-mail us at info@caucusnj.org, and visit us online at caucusnj.org.

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