



NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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Executive Office

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Sean O'Keefe
NASA Administrator
300 E St., SW
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dear Mr. O'Keefe:

This month marks the 18th Anniversary of the Teacher in Space Program, initiated by the launch of the Challenger where Christa McAuliffe, along with the entire Challenger crew, died in the tragic explosion of the spacecraft.

The plan to continue the Teacher in Space program was to send another teacher, namely Barbara Morgan, who was McAuliffe's backup for the first mission, at a later date. I understand you have awarded great attention to sending civilians into space since the Challenger. As a result, in 1998, NASA decided not to revive the Teacher in Space program in its former format, but rather to expand the regular astronaut corps to include educators and others. Morgan is the first educator to become a member of this corps.

I also realize that the events of September 11 have made NASA even more cautious about sending persons into space at this time. However, we are aware that a British businessman has traveled into space and a South African civilian is now in the training corps and will be traveling into space soon on a special mission. Morgan has been in the training corps since 1994. She has been in the regular mission specialists' training for the past three years, with no indication that she will be included on any of the upcoming missions into space.

We believe that the time is now. Time to fulfil NASA's long-standing commitment to Barbara Morgan to be the teacher in space. We encourage you to seriously consider her as part of the next space flight team. The documentation of her experience will provide a valuable education tool for use in mathematics, science, and technology classes.

Sincerely,

Bob Chase
President

cc: Kathy Phelan