

# Ripon

---

## Profile

**Name:** Michael Steele

**Hometown:** Upper Marlboro, Maryland

**Occupation:** Partner, Dewey & LeBoeuf, LLP and Chairman, GOPAC

**Previous Jobs:** Lt. Governor of Maryland, 2003-2007

**Individual(s) who inspired me as a child:** My mother, Maebell, who was a sharecropper's daughter with only a fifth grade education. As a mother, she raised her children to believe in the American Dream even though much of that dream had been denied to her. She also taught the lesson of legacy and the value of having one.

**Historical figure(s) I would most like to meet:** Abraham Lincoln, because the unfolding of his views on Race, war and the Union are a lesson in self-awareness, political gamesmanship and perseverance.

**Issue facing America that no one is talking about:** Education. It's not so much that we aren't talking about it, we are. It's that we're not doing anything about it! Graduation rates, test scores, school management, teacher training, "teaching to the test" among other issues confront not just school boards and superintendents, but most especially parents and students. While principals must be empowered to manage their schools and teachers empowered to teach their students, it is the parent who must be reengaged in the education of their children. Children need many kinds of support as they mature, but parental support is the most important.

**What the GOP must do to reclaim its congressional majority:** As the party of Lincoln stood with those whose hands and feet were shackled over a century ago, today we must stand with those who are shackled by a poor education, the corrosive effects of addiction and the hopelessness of lost opportunity at the hands of an opportunistic government. For Republicans, the promise of America is the promise of endless possibilities; the promise of limited government so that it never becomes powerful enough to infringe on the rights of the individual and lower taxes so that individuals might keep more of their own money. Through our words and deeds, we must show them we are leaders who are in touch with the values of their community; leaders who will bring us together; leaders who will turn hope into action.

