

School Reform News

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Utah House Passes Universal Voucher Bill



(inset) Utah State Rep. Steve Urquhart was chief sponsor of the universal voucher bill passed by the House in February.

'Smooth sailing' in Senate expected

By Diane Carol Bast

On February 2, the Utah House of Representatives passed, by a 38-37 vote, a landmark measure that would give Utah the nation's first statewide universal voucher bill.

The Parent Choice in Education Act, H.B. 148, would give all parents

in Utah a voucher valued between \$500 and \$3,000 per school-age child (depending on family income) for use at the school of their choice. State Rep. Steve Urquhart (R-St. George) was the bill's chief sponsor.

"I am proud of the House of Representatives for passing this important piece of legislation," said Greg Curtis (R-Sandy), Speaker of the House. "This historic bill offers the first statewide voucher system for all parents. More importantly, it offers a

choice in education for the students of Utah."

Parents and Children Win

"It was a long, hard fight," said Nancy Pomeroy, communications director for Parents for Choice in Education, which rallied grassroots support for the measure. "But the score is in: Parents and Children 1. Unions and Educators 0."

"Since the vote," Pomeroy continued,

UTAH p. 19

Supreme Court to Rule on School Integration

By Aricka Flowers

On December 4, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in two cases, *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District* and *Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education*. The Court's ruling, which could come as early as this spring, could have a major impact on the cultural makeup of the nation's schools.

The suits involve school districts in Seattle, Washington and Louisville, Kentucky, respectively, that use selective

INTEGRATION p. 4

State Court Won't Take Up Az. Vouchers

By Hilary Masell Oswald

On January 9, the Arizona Supreme Court declined to hear a legal challenge to the state's newest educational voucher programs—one for foster children, the other for special-needs children.

The special-action lawsuit filed on November 14, 2006 by the Arizona chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, People for the American Way, and

ARIZONA p. 8

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Colo. District to License Teachers

By Ben DeGrow

Seeking to fill difficult instructional positions and expose more students to subjects with contemporary relevance, a Colorado school district will train and license its own teachers this year.

On November 9, 2006 the Colorado

State Board of Education voted 7-1 to grant the Douglas County School District waivers from state licensing requirements so its leaders can credential teachers through its own soon-to-be-developed training facility, the Learning Center.

The two-year pilot program is scheduled to start placing teachers in classrooms in the fall of 2007, with the state reserving the right of review twice a year.

COLORADO p. 10

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Democrats Pledge: No Vouchers in NCLB

By Dan Lips

With Democratic majorities taking control of the U.S. Congress, in late January the new chairmen of the committees overseeing federal education programs vowed to block any moves to make voucher programs part of reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which is due for consideration in this Congress.

After meeting with President George W. Bush on January 23—before he delivered the State of the Union Address—Senate Education Committee Chairman Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and House Education and Labor Committee Chairman George Miller (D-CA) called on him to embrace significant funding increases for NCLB.

On January 8, Bush met with congressional leaders to discuss the future of the Department of Education's signature education reform law. While meeting with the new committee chairmen, Bush said the group "agreed to work together to address some of the major concerns that some people have on this piece of legislation, without weakening the essence of the bill, and get a piece of legislation done."

Miller and Kennedy expressed a very different agenda.

"The No Child Left Behind Act has brought important changes to our public education system; for example, by shining a spotlight on the persistent achievement gap that exists among different groups of students in our country," Miller said. "But if we are going to fulfill our original commitment to children and parents, then the law, its implementation, and its funding must be improved."

"[I]n late January the new chairmen of the committees overseeing federal education programs vowed to block any moves to make voucher programs part of reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) ..."

Philosophical Differences

Kennedy outlined his "No Child Left Behind Improvement Act"—legislation not yet introduced at press time—which calls for new funding and new programs, including support for school construction and putting social workers in low-income public schools.

"We have an obligation to revisit the No Child Left Behind Act and ensure that it lives up to its promise," Kennedy said. "We're prepared to work with the president, and as a first step we urged him to send a message in this year's budget that every child counts and deserves the benefits of our liberty. We will continue to fight for the resources we know are needed to fulfill this promise."

Neal McCluskey, an education analyst at the Washington, DC-based Cato

Institute, said increasing federal involvement in education is unlikely to succeed.

"Ever since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was enacted, it's been clear Washington is utterly incapable of improving American education, no matter how much the feds spend or meddle," McCluskey explained.

"Unfortunately, that hasn't changed the winning political formula for education. Politicians get the most mileage out of the schools when they promise to 'do more' to improve them, no matter how impotent Washington has proven in the past," McCluskey continued. "With that in mind, it's hardly a surprise that Democrats want to expand NCLB, and it will be even less of a shock when their 'help' proves worthless."

Democrat Divisions

Matthew Ladner, vice president of research at the Goldwater Institute, a free-market organization in Phoenix, said differing statements from leading Democrats such as Kennedy and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) highlight a potential divide within the party's congressional caucus, which could have political implications throughout the entire Congress.

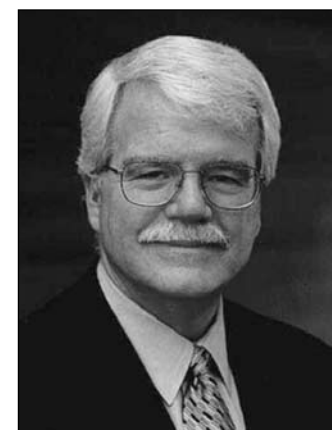
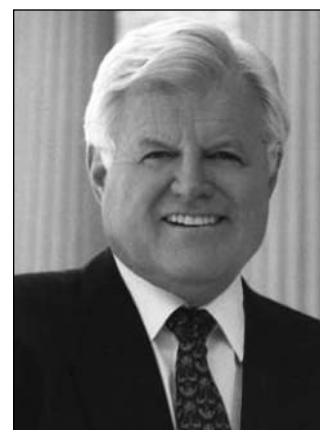
While Kennedy stated his intent to use the existing law as a foundation for future reforms, Reid signaled support for reform that would change the law's accountability requirements, which he called "far too punitive."

"Senator Reid's call to remove the teeth from NCLB while increasing funding would leave the federal government as an undemanding sugar-daddy and leave American school children out in the cold," Ladner said. "Kennedy will have a tricky road ahead as he deals with strong union opposition and tries to avoid awakening sleeping Republican federalist principles, while maintaining any serious reform credibility."

Voucher Proposal

On January 23, Bush announced plans to include expanded school choice options in NCLB, including:

- requiring underperforming schools to offer scholarships to low-income students, to allow them to transfer to the private or out-of-district public schools of their choice;
- providing federal funds for school boards to expand local school choice options for low-income families; and
- using federal funds to make sure schools inform parents about choice options in their communities in a timely manner.



(from left) Sen. Edward Kennedy and Rep. George Miller want increased funding for NCLB, but no vouchers.

Though NCLB contained private school options for students trapped in failing public schools when Bush first proposed it five years ago, the Republican-controlled Congress quickly stripped it out of the bill.

"Ever since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was enacted, it's been clear Washington is utterly incapable of improving American education, no matter how much the feds spend or meddle."

NEAL MCCLUSKEY
EDUCATION ANALYST
CATO INSTITUTE

Determined Opposition

Clint Bolick, president and general counsel of the Alliance for School Choice, a national advocacy group based in Phoenix, praised the Bush initiatives.

"We hope that the bipartisan spirit our new congressional leaders have pledged will encompass efforts like these to rescue children in some of the worst schools in the nation," Bolick said.

But Democrats said that was highly unlikely.

"[Vouchers] didn't pass muster when Republicans controlled the Congress, and it certainly won't pass muster now that Democrats do," Miller told the Associated Press.

Dan Lips (dan.lips@heritage.org) is an education analyst at The Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC.

INTERNET INFO

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Integration

Continued from page 1

admission policies to achieve racial balance in the student population.

"We are in a holding pattern to see what the Court says," said Francisco Negrón, general counsel for the National School Boards Association, which is representing the Seattle and Jefferson County school districts. "The question is whether or not local communities will be able to decide through their school boards how learning institutions can be structured to create a diverse system."

Racial Tiebreakers

In an attempt to keep the racial composition of each of Seattle's 10 high schools within 15 percent of the district's general population figures, the district uses an "integration tiebreaker." The racial tiebreaker is used after other criteria—such as whether a student has siblings at the school and how far the child would have to travel—have been taken into account.

According to a December 3, 2006 *Seattle Times* story, about 60 percent of the school district was nonwhite in 1999, the first year the tiebreaker was used.

Jefferson County, Kentucky maintains racial balance in its district by ensuring each school has at least 15 percent but no more than 50 percent African-American students. According to the

U.S. Census Bureau, Jefferson County is about 20 percent African-American.

Quality Concerns

If integration policies such as the ones in question are deemed unconstitutional, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) says the Court's decision will adversely affect the quality of education for minority students.

"On December 4, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in two cases ... [that] could have a major impact on the cultural make-up of the nation's schools."

"We are having a hard time hiring and retaining qualified teachers in schools that have a high minority population, which then creates academic achievement problems in these schools," explained NAACP National Director Michael Wotorson. "We see this problem even though there are laws that require failing schools [to] hire highly qualified teachers."

Negrón attributes the recruitment problem to the working conditions in high-poverty, high-minority schools.

"Resources in schools directly relate to the socioeconomic status of [their] students," Negrón said. "And it leads to

things like teacher burnout in schools that are highly racially isolated.

"Teachers have to deal with so much more than just curriculum in these schools, like a limitation of resources," Negrón continued. "Teachers want to work in schools where there are sufficient instruction materials and parental involvement. It's not that they don't want to help, but a person can only take so much."

Declining Achievement

The Seattle case was filed by a group of parents after two white students were not accepted into Ballard Biotech Career Academy in 1999, partly because of the racial tiebreaker. Both students are now in college.

The Jefferson County case was filed by a white woman whose son, a kindergartner, was denied a transfer into a school because it needed more African-American students to maintain racial balance.

Most residents in both areas overwhelmingly support the voluntary integration policies of their respective school boards, Negrón said.

"By and large, we have found that Americans support diversity not just in their communities but also in student-assignment policies," Negrón said. "Even the Supreme Court's most touted conservative, Justice Antonin Scalia, expressed in the oral arguments that the residents overwhelmingly supported the student assignment process—not just African-Americans, but

also whites."

A study released in November 2006 by the Center for American Progress found African-Americans and Latinos performed better academically when attending integrated schools.

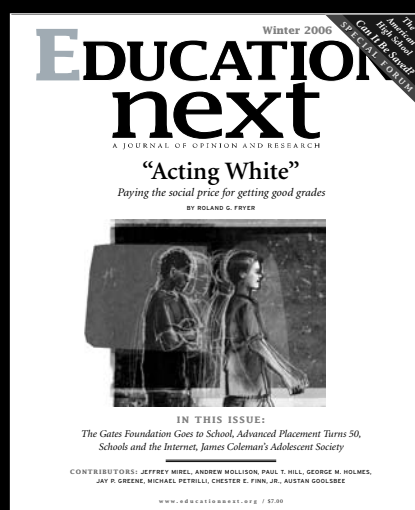
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Illinois Teachers Seek Independence from State Union, Meet Resistance

By Ben DeGrow

A decision by some Illinois teachers to seek independence for their local union has succeeded despite resistance from the state teachers union.

On February 1, the Century Education Association in rural Ullin became the state's first local teachers union to formally sever affiliation with the Illinois Education Association (IEA). Century now will bargain for its own members, who no longer owe dues to IEA or the National Education Association (NEA).

"In November 2006 the Century Education Association in rural Ullin ... notified the Illinois Labor Relations Board of its intention to act as teachers' sole bargaining agent with the school district."

In November 2006 Century notified the Illinois Labor Relations Board of its intention to act as teachers' sole bargaining agent with the school district. Of 40

teachers, 38 signed the petition.

Also in November, Century Education Association teachers voted 24 to 4 to remove a stipulation from the association's bylaws requiring membership in the IEA and NEA.

An IEA official said the union is disappointed but no longer interested in challenging Century's right of action.

"It certainly is up to them, but we believe that the benefits of being an IEA/NEA member are substantial," IEA spokesman Charlie McBarron said. "Clearly there is no comparison in terms of membership, benefits, insurance, and field support. No other organization is offering members a program like that."

Paying for Almost Nothing

Public educators in Ullin don't see it that way.

"The biggest problem, most teachers say, is that they just don't want to pay so much and not get much in return," said Debra Goins, president of the Century Education Association.

Century union members are paying \$542 in combined dues for 2006-07, only \$30 of which goes to the local association. Members who opt to join the non-union Association of American Educators (AAE) instead will pay \$130 a year. AAE offers

liability insurance and free or low-cost professional development workshops, but does not bargain with school districts.

Goins said the savings will help teachers in the high-poverty region of southern Illinois cover rising health insurance premiums. She said some members are also concerned about how IEA and NEA use some of their dollars.

"They don't do anything on the state level but get involved in issues that don't seem to affect us directly, social issues that we might or might not agree with," Goins said.

Denying Political Involvement

McBarron dismissed that concern.

"The IEA is a mainstream organization that has more than 125,000 members," McBarron said. "We reflect diversity but also mainstream values. We always have. We don't take positions on issues outside of education."

The National Education Association has been widely criticized by members and outside groups for its controversial stances on issues ranging from abortion to gun control.

"I feel like they [the Illinois Education Association] haven't been helping us, that they've been punishing us for trying to get out of the association."

DEBRA GOINS

PRESIDENT

CENTURY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Discovering Alternatives

Though they've expressed their dissatisfaction with the NEA to each other for years, Goins said she and her fellow teachers did not seriously consider breaking away until she learned about AAE. Members of Century Education Association authorized her to contact AAE on their behalf.

The experience was enlightening, Goins said.

"I saw that there were other options," Goins said. "We've always been led to believe that without IEA you can't bargain with the school district, and they're still telling us that."

LaRae Munk, AAE's director of legal services, gave the local union president a different understanding. She explained that Illinois labor law prevents teachers from disaffiliating with their bargaining representative for the first three years after a negotiated contract takes effect.

The prohibition is called a "contract bar." Century's contract bar expired in June 2006, Munk said, even though the agreement remains in effect into 2009.

Goins said Munk has been an invaluable legal resource. The local union president's previous inquiries for legal assistance from IEA were filtered through

the regional Uniserv director. Uniserv is a national advocacy group for which the NEA pays approximately \$50 million annually.

"They call the attorney for you," Goins said. "It's kind of a gatekeeper."

Munk said AAE has worked with 15 or 20 local teacher associations nationwide—including groups in California, Michigan, Ohio, and Washington—on cases involving disaffiliating from the NEA.

Resisting Threats

But Century's situation stands out.

"It's the arrogance of IEA representatives to refuse to accept the will of their own members to disaffiliate," Munk said. "You'd think an organization representing professionals would show professionalism, but it hasn't been the case."

A December 7 letter from the regional IEA Uniserv office told Century union members that the terms of their membership allowed them to opt out of IEA and NEA dues only during a two-month window between July 15 and September 15. Goins said she and other members were told they could not terminate the affiliation, and IEA would sue if they tried.

At press time, IEA had made no attempt to force payment or take other formal legal action against the Ullin teachers.

The IEA Uniserv letter also said IEA would not cover the costs of a local member's arbitrated grievance case if Century ceased to be "a dues-paying affiliate," regardless of the teacher's individual membership. Munk offered to step in if the union wouldn't represent a local member.

Some Century teachers received phone calls at home, which Munk described as harassment and intimidation.

'Punishing Us'

McBarron disagreed with that assessment.

"I think we wanted to make sure," McBarron said of the phone calls and letters. "We have an obligation to make sure they understand the value of their membership."

Goins was surprised by the treatment she and her fellow teachers received from IEA.

"I feel like they haven't been helping us, that they've been punishing us for trying to get out of the association," Goins said.

"If teachers vote and that's what they want to do, I'd think the teachers union would be there to support them," Goins continued. "I'm just appalled at the fact that they don't seem helpful at all, unless it's to their benefit."

Ben DeGrow (ben@i2i.org) is a policy analyst for the Independence Institute, a free-market think tank in Golden, Colorado.



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School Board Member: 'We Betrayed the Public Trust'

Resigns over superintendent's salary demands

By Erin Calandriello

Elgin, Illinois School District U46 board member Daniel Rich resigned January 22, citing what he considered outrageous salary demands from U46 Superintendent Connie Neale and a generous response by the U46 board.

Rich cited "professional" reasons at the district's board meeting in announcing his resignation, but was more expansive in an exclusive interview earlier in the day.

Rich told *The Courier News* that the board held a closed meeting with Neale concerning her evaluation. That meeting typically is held in early January to trade observations about her performance and set the stage for salary negotiations with the superintendent.

Rich said that after receiving a "reasonable evaluation," Neale demanded a hefty raise and bonus, saying she had networked with colleagues across the state and nation and believed she could easily be hired at another district for more money because of what she accomplished in U46.

Making Demands

Rich said Neale handed the board a letter seeking a "10 to 20 percent tax-free bonus and a \$30,000 to \$50,000 raise on top of her current \$242,000 salary." Rich said she cited the elimination of the district's huge deficit and the fact that "40 elementary schools made their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals (under the No Child Left Behind Act)."

Rich said the board on Saturday "reluctantly agreed" to give Neale "a \$20,000 salary realignment and a 10 percent tax-free bonus." This means Neale will be making "around \$400,000 next year," Rich said. The final vote on her contract has not been taken, so that action is not official.

Rich said he felt Neale's request constituted bargaining "with a gun to our heads." He also said, "\$242,000 is just her (Neale's) salary. But the whole package, including benefits and other items, is over \$350,000."

Neale receives items such as a cell phone, a car, disability insurance, medical benefits, a contribution to the teachers retirement fund, and other benefits.

Looking Elsewhere

Rich said the superintendent told the board "she had done a terrific job and commonly superintendents are rewarded by their performance, and that because of her networking in the state and across

the nation, it occurred to her that she's worth a considerable amount more of money. And if the board didn't meet her 'considerations,' she would leave (U46) and look for employment elsewhere."

By a tax-free bonus, Neale means that she would receive a 10 to 20 percent bonus of her base salary and the district would pay all her taxes associated with that amount. A \$24,200 bonus would cost the district about \$35,000.

"I should have been a better steward. ... It's not [the] right thing for constituents and it's not right for the community. I feel bad about it."

DANIEL RICH

FORMER BOARD MEMBER
ELGIN, ILLINOIS SCHOOL DISTRICT U46

Rich said putting the board in such a difficult position prompted him to act.

"It completely lacks professionalism to hold a governing board and community hostage by threatening to leave if the demands were not met," said Rich. "The demands were less than reasonable, and I think it's irresponsible on behalf of her (Neale)."

'Money We Don't Have'

After the closed meeting, Rich said he told his former fellow board members, "Through this decision we have kicked the barn doors open and they're never going to close. What if both the middle schools and elementary schools make AYP? We'll be right back in the same boat."

But more importantly Rich said he and the school district failed to represent the community and its constituents.

"I'm mad at myself. I should have been a better steward. I should not have let any of this happen. I have to take one-seventh of the blame," said Rich. "It's not [the] right thing for constituents and it's not right for the community. I feel bad about it."

"After I accepted it (Neale's contract), I was no longer a part of the answer, I was a part of the institution, which makes me a part of the problem, and I can't be a part of that," Rich continued. "We betrayed the public trust and we're ready to spend money we don't have in areas that don't do a lot to enhance the quality of the child's education."

Erin Calandriello (ecalandriello@scn1.com) is a staff writer at *The Courier News in Elgin, Illinois*, which ran an earlier version of this article on January 23. Reprinted with permission.

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Parents: School District Should Spend on Classrooms

By Erin Calandriello

Some parents are livid over Superintendent Connie Neale's proposed administrative pay raises in Elgin [Illinois] School District U46, saying the money should be spent on their children, not the overhead.

"Excuse me, how can you afford to cut programs and give the superintendent and her staff six-figure salaries? It irks me, I just don't understand it," said Maryjane Comstock, the parent of a deaf child in U46. She said she was floored by the district's decision earlier this month to end its contract with the Northwestern Illinois Association, which provides U46's hearing-impaired services.

"How can they be so plastic and mean, totally the opposite of what they're saying? They don't empathize with us," Comstock continued. "Our kids are left in the dark and don't know what's going on. And while (students) are blowing in the wind, we're raising their salaries? It's true they don't give a hoot about these kids. They only care about money."

"Some parents are livid over Superintendent Connie Neale's proposed administrative pay raises in Elgin [Illinois] School District U46, saying the money should be spent on their children, not the overhead."

Resigning Member

Comstock's reaction comes after the January 20 resignation of U46 school board member Daniel Rich, who stepped down citing what he considered outrageous salary demands by Neale and a generous response by board members. [On January 26 another area newspaper, the *Daily Herald*, reported the U46 board also agreed to pay Neale more than \$1 million in benefits after she retires, extending several benefits, such as complete medical, dental, and long-term care insurance, for the rest of her life. Her current contract also pays for them, but only until her retirement. The board informally approved the new contract on January 20; final approval was pending at press time. *ed.*]

Rich provided *The Courier News* with a letter Neale gave school board members at a closed meeting on January 20. The letter sought a tax-free 10 percent to 20 percent bonus and a \$30,000 to \$50,000 raise on top of her \$242,000 salary.

The letter cited the elimination of the district's huge deficit and that "all elementary schools [made] adequate yearly progress goals [under the federal No Child Left Behind Act] in the fall of 2006."

Rich said the board on January 20 "reluctantly agreed" to give Neale "a \$20,000 salary realignment and a 10



percent tax-free bonus." This means Neale will be making "around \$400,000 next year," Rich said.

The \$400,000 salary estimate includes not only Neale's base salary, but also items such as a cell phone, a car, disability insurance, medical benefits, a contribution to the teachers retirement fund, and other benefits, according to the documents handed over by Rich.

'Not Enough'

But some U46 parents say spend the money on the teachers.

"Not enough credit is given to the teachers who are doing the true work in the classroom. The real challenge is getting these schools off of academic warning lists. Give them [teachers] the bonuses," said Kristine Porter, a parent whose three children attend Nature Ridge Elementary School in Bartlett. "We're giving these teachers 30 little kids and they have to work second jobs and they can't even live in the district they teach in because they can't afford it."

Salary and benefits for a U46 teacher range from \$35,473 for a first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree to \$74,889 for a teacher with a master's degree who has been employed by the district for 30 years, according to district data.

Porter says administrators need raises, too, but the money ultimately should be spent in the classroom.

"Not that the superintendent doesn't deserve a raise when her contract is up, but let's look at it then and then decide if we can afford it," Porter continued. "We're always talking about fiscal responsibility, but money should not first be applied to administrators' salaries. It should start in our classrooms with our

kids and our teachers."

Members of Neale's cabinet make anywhere from \$130,386 to \$175,925, which includes their pensions, according to a board document provided by Rich.

"[M]oney should not first be applied to administrators' salaries. It should start in our classrooms with our kids and our teachers."

KRISTINE PORTER
PARENT

Smaller Classes

U46 is proposing to spend more money on lowering class sizes.

Neale says there's only a "finite pot of money" for the district to spend on staffing levels.

Even so, John Prince, the district's chief financial officer, says the district probably will dish out the money to cut class sizes.

"I believe we will be good enough to make these moves (lowering class sizes) forward and the district will be able to absorb them" financially, said Prince.

Thirteen of the district's 40 elementary schools are dealing with large classroom sizes ranging from 30 to 32 pupils without any additional teaching support, according to the district's data. The ratio of pupils to teachers is 30 to 1 in kindergarten through second grade. And 32 pupils is the threshold at which the district will bring a teachers aide into the classroom.

The district proposed to change this

on January 22. The plan would cut the pupil-teacher ratio to just 28 to 1. However, the district did not propose to reduce the 32-pupil cap.

Reason for Optimism

But U46 parents pointed out that even if the district reduces its pupil-teacher ratio to an average of 28 to 1, individual class sizes still could hit 32 children or more.

Porter said she believes lowering the ratio could be constructive if the district indeed could budget it.

"If we can afford to do it then it might possibly work," said Porter, whose fourth-grade child at Nature Trail is in a classroom of 29. "Right now schools are battling for resources and are ultimately making sacrifices, and the district cannot just pick only certain schools they think need it the most."

"If they're [U46] willing to make it a priority, they can make a difference" in the classrooms, Porter continued. "But right now it seems like the tax dollars are not going toward the teacher or the classroom, it's going toward the" administration.

In any case, one U46 parent says the money should follow the children into the classroom.

"I feel like I'm in a really bad nightmare and I'm just hoping I wake up soon and U46 puts the money where it's needed" on students and teachers, Comstock said.

Erin Calandriello (ecalandriello@scn1.com) is a staff writer at *The Courier News in Elgin, Illinois*, which ran an earlier version of this article on January 26. Reprinted with permission.

Poll Shows Statewide Support for Choice in Arizona

By Hilary Masell Oswald

A strong majority of Arizonans support school choice, according to a poll released in early January on the eve of the state supreme court's decision not to hear the case against Arizona's newest educational voucher programs.

Commissioned by the nonprofit Alliance for School Choice and conducted by The Polling Company, a private research corporation based in Washington, DC, the survey of 503 adults statewide revealed 62 percent of Arizonans like the idea of school vouchers.

Additionally, a majority of residents said they support the two newest voucher programs, passed by a Republican-led legislature and signed into law last year by Democratic Gov. Janet Napolitano:

- Seventy-six percent said parents of disabled children should be allowed to use state-funded scholarships to send children to the schools of their choice, public or private.
- Sixty-four percent said foster parents should also have that opportunity.

Lack of Awareness

The poll also revealed the average Arizonan's lack of knowledge about the state's school tuition tax credit programs, which allow individuals and corporations to make tax-deductible donations to organizations that distribute private school scholarships. Annual deductions are limited to \$500 per individual and \$5 million per corporation.

The individual tax credit alone generated \$42 million last year for scholarships, enough to send about 22,000 kids to the schools of their choice. But

according to the survey, only about 25 percent of Arizonans know about the tax credit.

"There is no culture of choice on the ground," explained Robert Teegarden, director of state projects at the Alliance for School Choice. "Parents of five-year-old kids don't immediately say, 'We have three choices for our kids—public school, private school, and homeschool.' We want to change that."

Warning About Bureaucracy

Teegarden said he would like to see a simple piece of legislation requiring the Department of Revenue to print a list of deductions and credits for which a taxpayer might be eligible, and include it in all memos to taxpayers.

Teegarden acknowledged parents in Arizona have more choices than other states, but he warned legislators to be careful when writing new laws expanding choice.

"Any public policy you write must be very clear about how the state should implement the policy," Teegarden said. "Remember the bureaucracy—the foundation of the school monopoly—will be empowered [by the legislation] to implement the program it didn't want."

Hilary Masell Oswald (hilary_oswald@comcast.net) writes from Illinois.

INTERNET INFO

The Arizona School Choice Survey,
<http://azschoolchoice.com/polling.htm>



Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano last year signed two new voucher programs, one for disabled children and another for children in foster homes.

Arizona Voter Attitudes

- When asked which groups of students most deserve scholarships to attend private schools in Arizona, 55 percent of respondents chose "all students in Arizona."
- Thirty-five percent of respondents—the largest group responding to this question—said they consider newspapers and magazines their primary source of information about educational issues.
- Only 10 percent of respondents said schools are their primary source of information about educational issues.
- After immigration, education is the most important issue facing Arizona right now, according to respondents.

Arizona

Continued from page 1

three Arizona residents contended the programs violate the state constitution's provision against using public funds for religious and sectarian schools.

The programs provide state-funded scholarships for foster children and disabled children to attend the schools of their families' choosing, public or private.

"We consider [the court's decision] a first-round victory," said Tim Keller, executive director of the Arizona chapter of the Institute for Justice, which represented parents who want to use the state-funded scholarships for their children's education.

Lower-Court Challenge

The challengers asked the Arizona Supreme Court to accept the case directly, thereby bypassing the trial court system. The high court's ruling means school choice opponents can file again, this time in the lower courts.

Keller said he expects a legal challenge to come soon. A new filing would

"allow school choice supporters to build a record that will demonstrate the benefits of school choice," he said.

"I think it will be a good thing if we get to put school choice on trial," Keller added.

"On January 9, the Arizona Supreme Court declined to hear a legal challenge to the state's newest educational voucher programs—one for foster children, the other for special-needs children."

Don Peters, the plaintiffs' attorney, confirmed Keller's expectations: His clients will file their complaint in trial court, though he didn't say when.

Peters said he and his clients were "surprised and disappointed" by the state supreme court's ruling.

"I think it's important for everyone to know [whether vouchers are legal in Arizona] because these are the first

voucher statutes enacted in Arizona," Peters said. "The legislature needs to know one way or another."

Established Precedent

Just before the state supreme court's ruling, the Institute for Justice released a report showing Arizona already has six different educational voucher programs. The total annual cost is \$22 million—more than four times the cost of the programs for foster children and disabled children helping more than 22,000 Arizona students annually to attend the schools of their choice.

"If the voucher programs described in this report are constitutional and sound policy (as school choice opponents tacitly admit by failing to challenge them legally or in the court of public opinion)," the report states, "why aren't publicly funded scholarships for foster and disabled students?"

For example, the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) program gives qualifying college students grants to spend at any postsecondary institution of their choice, public or private. Established in 1976, the program awarded 4,131 grants worth \$2.8 million in the 2005-06 academic

year.

The Institute for Justice has long maintained that these programs, like the two newest programs, do not favor religious instruction.

"It can't be said that the state is in any way supporting religion over non-religion," Keller insisted. "The programs on their face are completely neutral and allow parents to make the choice."

Hilary Masell Oswald (hilary_oswald@comcast.net) writes from Illinois.

INTERNET INFO

"Private Choice in Public Programs: How private institutions secure social services for Arizonans," by Dick M. Carpenter II, Ph.D. and Sara Peterson, published in January 2007 by the Institute for Justice, is available through PolicyBot™, The Heartland Institute's free online research database. Point your Web browser to <http://www.policybot.org> and search for document #20600.

Arizona Continues Reform Efforts

By State Rep. Mark Anderson

For many years in Arizona, policy-makers have been working to find the best way to expand school choice options to reach out to the neediest children and turn their lives around.

Ever since passing the nation's first tuition tax credit law in 1997, Arizona has been a leader in offering parents choice. Lawmakers have acknowledged that a system relying solely on public schools loses out on numerous opportunities to improve.

With a legislature committed to school choice, holding the concept that competition raises the bar for all schools, public and private, the challenge in recent years has been to overcome the special interests dedicated to maintaining the status quo. The perseverance legislators exhibited during tense budget negotiations with the executive branch last year paid off for the children of Arizona.

In the 2006 legislative session Arizona took dramatic steps to improve choice for parents by creating a new tax credit for businesses. For years, individuals have been able to take a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for donations made to student tuition organizations, up to \$1,000 for a married couple. Legislation passed last session opened the way for businesses

to take the same dollar-for-dollar tax credit.

The program is capped at \$10 million but open to any business. Within five months, more than 70 businesses had sought to donate nearly \$4.5 million to student tuition organizations. That money can be used only for low- and moderate-income families to send their children to private and religious schools.

"Ever since passing the nation's first tuition tax credit law in 1997, Arizona has been a leader in offering parents choice."

Moving to Vouchers

Additionally, for the first time, Arizona took a major step toward expanding school choice by using vouchers. Two pieces of legislation were passed and signed by Gov. Janet Napolitano (D), offering hope to two groups of children that often have difficulty in public schools.

One voucher is aimed at special-needs children and the other targets foster children, allowing them to choose any school and have the money follow them to their school of choice.

The state has also led the way in charter school expansion.

Arizona has more charter schools per capita than any other state. Charter schools (public schools that are operated privately) have shown they offer an excellent educational setting at lower cost than their regular public school counterparts. They also encourage public schools to improve to fend off competition and retain students.

Looking Ahead

In addition to last session's school choice victories, the Arizona Legislature is looking to address the problem of high school failure. Too many children drop out or fail to reach the minimum academic standards to be prepared for college or the workforce. This session, a comprehensive high school reform package will be introduced that will involve making the high school curriculum more relevant and rigorous.

As schools provide courses that offer the skills needed to succeed in life, students will respond with greater interest



Mark Anderson
State Representative
Mesa, Arizona

in school. In addition, schools will be asked to find ways to personalize education for each student and use technology to improve the quality of teaching for all kids.

This year promises to be one with a major focus on improving educational outcomes for the children of Arizona. With parental choice firmly in place, our focus will be on the vast majority of children still struggling in public schools held back by the inertia of special interests and bureaucracy.

State Rep. Mark Anderson (R-Mesa) (manderson@azleg.gov) chairs the Arizona House K-12 Education Committee.



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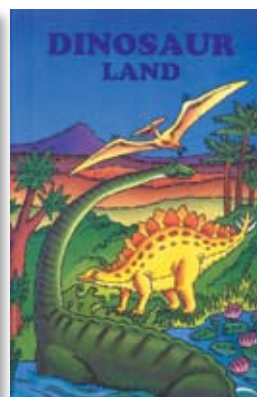
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Schools Succeed With Nontraditional Teachers

Douglas County, Colorado's nontraditional teacher preparation program has blossomed with the new Castle View High School in Castle Rock. Opened in late 2006, the school consists of four themed academies: visual and performing arts; electronic and business media; world languages; and math, science, and engineering.

"I'd be surprised if you can find any one school in America like Castle View," said principal Dr. Lisle Gates. "It includes the meshing of many good thoughts."

Community Interest

Gates got the idea to license outside specialists from an aeronautical engineer who works at nearby Lockheed-Martin. The engineer, who served as a consultant to develop Castle View's program, expressed a strong desire to teach a nine-week course at the school. Yet when he learned of the commitment needed to meet the state's licensure requirements, he was frustrated that he wouldn't be able to get into the classroom, Gates said.

Gates since has received calls from

certified public accountants, a bank manager, a manufacturing engineer, and others who have said they would like to

"Gates ... has received calls from certified public accountants, a bank manager, a manufacturing engineer, and others who have said they would like to teach at Castle View part-time."

teach at Castle View part-time.

The high school plans to expand its world language offerings to eight next year, including Arabic and Russian.

"Our intent for this program is that we ferret out good, quality people, mentor them, nurture them, and make them effective teachers in the classroom," Gates said.

The Professionals in Residence (PIR) enrollees will not work toward achiev-

ing a state-recognized license. However, they will receive intensive "boot camp" training in classroom management and other instructional basics, along with ongoing support.

County Partnerships

A key to getting the alternative licensure program afloat has been Douglas County's close working relationships with other players.

"It's an effort that involves every stakeholder in the district," said Gates, who found nearly universal enthusiastic support from parents and students in 40 neighborhood meetings. In addition, the district is cooperating with local colleges and universities, which are helping to develop the program and have offered to share the services of adjunct instructors.

Pat McGraw, chief of staff for Douglas County School District, identified the connection between the district and the Douglas County Federation of Teachers (DCFT) as vital to the process.

"The union is involved. They're partnering with us," McGraw said.

Union Support

Through its affiliation with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the local union "can provide staff development course[s] to teachers" in many different areas, said DCFT President Brenda Smith.

"A big positive piece is teachers training teachers," Smith said.

In 2004, AFT approved support for alternative licensure programs that have rigorous screening processes and high performance standards, are field-based, and include relevant coursework and an emphasis on mentorship.

Smith said AFT's counterpart—the National Education Association, which has staunchly opposed alternative licensing—would be well-advised to follow AFT's lead in this area.

"By saying they can't support alternative licensure for teachers, it's just a way of avoiding the problem," Smith said. "If they don't step forward and help [solve] the problem, then they're blocking something that could have a lot of potential."

— Ben DeGrow

Colorado

Continued from page 1

"I was impressed that they took a good hard look at their needs and what to do about their problems, and came up with a good, solid proposal," said Randy DeHoff, a state board of education member whose district includes Douglas County.

Two Tracks

The program is designed to operate on two tracks.

It will prepare certified teaching applicants to fill high-demand specialties, such as special education, and will equip passionate professionals with basic classroom tools to instruct in areas not common to most curricula, including engineering software use, agronomy, and foreign languages such as Chinese and Arabic.

"To do that requires us to be unbundled from some of the regulations we get from the state level," said Pat McGraw, Douglas County School District chief of staff. He said the district will be strengthened by the increased ability to recruit candidates while tailoring the program to be more convenient for and affordable to its teachers.

New Course

In 2006, the Colorado Senate Education Committee rejected a legislative proposal that would have enabled Douglas County to put its program into effect. Lawmakers counseled district leaders to take their case to the state board of education, which heard the proposal at its May 2006 meeting. Six months later, the Board greenlighted the program.

"Douglas County is already a high-

performing district with motivated kids," McGraw said. "We wanted to show we can maintain high performance while doing this."

The district's inability to fill teaching positions in certain specialties has held it back. Learning Center Director Mike Lynch said Douglas County typically attracts 5,000 applicants for 500 openings, but still had 23 special education vacancies 10 days after the 2006-07 school year began.

Quality Applicants

Lynch said the district will be able to draw from the many "qualified, quality applicants" not hired for the positions to which they originally applied—for example, teaching fourth grade or high school English—and redirect them into a needed field. The Learning Center will provide mentorship and support as teachers earn special education endorsements by learning simultaneously through formal classwork and on-the-job training.

"We want to be not only a part of the conversation to help [put] the brightest and best in front of our kids, but also to be part of the solution instead of just complaining all the time about shortages," Lynch said. "We have a faster way to train to give you competencies in an area."

McGraw said the Learning Center will focus on the demands faced by each school. "This isn't going to be centrally run," he said. "It'll be driven by site needs."

Relevant Connections

Douglas County's other imminent innovation is the Professionals in Residence (PIR) program, which will bring outside experts into the classroom to impart specialized knowledge to students.

"Why not?" said Lynch. "As long as



Carol Kaness - Douglas County School District

they're under the same scrutiny that our own teachers are, as long as they're not a threat to the property rights of those teachers who have gone through the licensure process."

Douglas County, a suburban area south of Denver, is one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation. The business and technological sectors are thriving in the region, but district officials said many students are missing the connection between their current coursework and future career opportunities.

"If we allow kids the chance early on to see what these jobs are about, we'll have them better prepared for college and what lies ahead," McGraw said.

Potential Adaptability

Lynch said the Learning Center's efforts could be reproduced by other school district leaders in more urban or rural settings.

"We hope with our successes that other people can learn from us," Lynch said.

DeHoff agreed.

"I think it's something that could be tailored to other school district needs," DeHoff said. "Others can say, 'We've got a teacher shortage, we've got qualified people, and here's a way to do it.'"

For Lynch, the hard work of getting Douglas County's Learning Center established and operational is guided by a sense of urgency.

"We have to do something differently, or we're going to get the same results, and those results are shortages in specialized, hard-to-fill areas," Lynch said.

Ben DeGrow (ben@i2i.org) is a policy analyst for the Independence Institute, a free-market think tank in Golden, Colorado.

Iowa Ponders Allowing Outside Experts to Teach

By Robert Holland

School reform advocates are increasingly calling for schools to allow people with stellar experience and knowledge in fields such as math and science to teach in public schools without education degrees.

It's an idea that makes many in control of government schooling nervous, if not grouchy. Iowa's Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE), the state's teacher licensing authority, is no exception.

The minutes of an October 6, 2006 BOEE meeting note a "significant discussion" occurred when staff suggested creating a Distinguished Fellow License for nontraditional teachers in Iowa. The license would allow people with a bachelor's degree plus outstanding credentials in the working world to teach in public schools for up to a year before taking teaching-methods courses.

According to the minutes, "Board members expressed interest, but also concern, and they urged caution. This may be a good question to explore with constituent groups and public stakeholders."

Experience

In an October 30 *Des Moines Register* story, reporter Lynn Campbell discussed a 30-year engineer for a jet-engine



maker who now teaches physics, chemistry, calculus, and pre-calculus at the private Iowa Christian Academy. "He was a good fit for a school that wanted to offer students upper-level courses in

math and science," she wrote.

Under current state regulations, however, the engineer couldn't do that at a public school without taking 12 credit hours of college teacher preparation

courses beforehand, having a district mentor, and taking another 12 credit hours of teacher-prep classes the following summer.

The BOEE members who saw some merit in a Distinguished Fellow avenue focused on helping public school districts fill a gap in the absence of a regularly licensed teacher.

BOEE Executive Director George Maurer told the *Register*, "This would allow a school district hard-pressed to find someone, to get someone into the class, especially in math and science. Part of me understands any reluctance to deal with this because it's putting someone in the classroom that has no preparation whatsoever. But on the flip side, you have a district in stress."

In an interview for this story, Maurer confirmed the *Register* quote "expressed his opinion," but he said the board would have to meet with constituent groups before the concept could become a motion for BOEE action. He didn't give a date as to when that might happen.

Reservations

At the October meeting, a representative of the 32,000-member Iowa State Education Association, the state chapter of the National Education Association, adamantly opposed the Distinguished Fellow idea, saying it would lower teaching standards.

Since then, Judy Jeffrey—chairperson of the BOEE and director of the Iowa Department of Education—has come to believe the issue is moot. At press time it appeared unlikely the state would adopt Distinguished Fellow licensing.

"We already have a program for teacher interns [which] allows an individual with a B.A. in a secondary subject area such as mathematics to become a teacher," Jeffrey explained. "Thus, my reservations as printed in the paper were not for the concept, but rather that there was already another avenue with an approved program available."

"There really was never a proposal before the Board—it was a discussion item brought forward from a request the director had received," Jeffrey said. "The Board didn't believe it held merit, especially since there was already an avenue available."

Robert Holland (holland@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for education policy at The Heartland Institute.

Expert Outlines Keys to Success in Alternative Certification

By Robert Holland

During the past 15 years, most states have created alternate pathways to K-12 teaching that do not oblige would-be teachers to have an undergraduate degree in education. Approximately one-third of new teachers each year in U.S. public schools now come with degrees and often, successful careers in fields other than education.

The question is whether a would-be career-switcher ought to have to take 24 college credit hours or more of professional education courses in order for high school students to benefit from his or her deep knowledge of a subject.

No less an authority than Arthur E. Levine, former president of the Teachers College at Columbia University, noted in an Education Schools Project study published last September that most teachers come from academically weak schools of education.

Delia Stafford-Johnson, a pioneer in alternative teacher certification and president of the National Center for Alternative Teacher Certification Information, believes getting high-caliber teachers into classrooms is about more than

"During the past 15 years, most states have created alternate pathways to K-12 teaching that do not oblige would-be teachers to have an undergraduate degree in education."

accumulating education credits in universities. She said it's also about more than simply knowing the subject matter.

"Content and pedagogy are very important," Stafford-Johnson said. "However, if the novice can't relate to children, it does not matter how much content the individual brings."

Training Is Essential

While college courses are not necessary for a teacher to be successful, Stafford-Johnson said a well-crafted training program run by the local school district is paramount. For more than a decade, she operated such a program in Houston, and she received White House awards for her innovative ways of discovering

good teachers for at-risk children.

The objective is to find talented novices who will dedicate themselves to staying in teaching, Stafford-Johnson said. A one-year distinguished fellow appointment (as was proposed recently in Iowa) "could do more harm than good to both an aspiring teacher [and] the students."

Ideally, Stafford-Johnson said, career-switchers or other novices should begin preparing eight months before starting work in a classroom. Other key elements, she said, include a full background check; review of transcripts in the academic discipline; weekly evening classes led by master teachers and principals; a week of classroom observation in May; and intensive training and practice teaching in August.

Robert Holland (holland@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for education policy at The Heartland Institute.

INTERNET INFO

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INTERNET INFO

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Kansas School Offers Classical Catholic Education

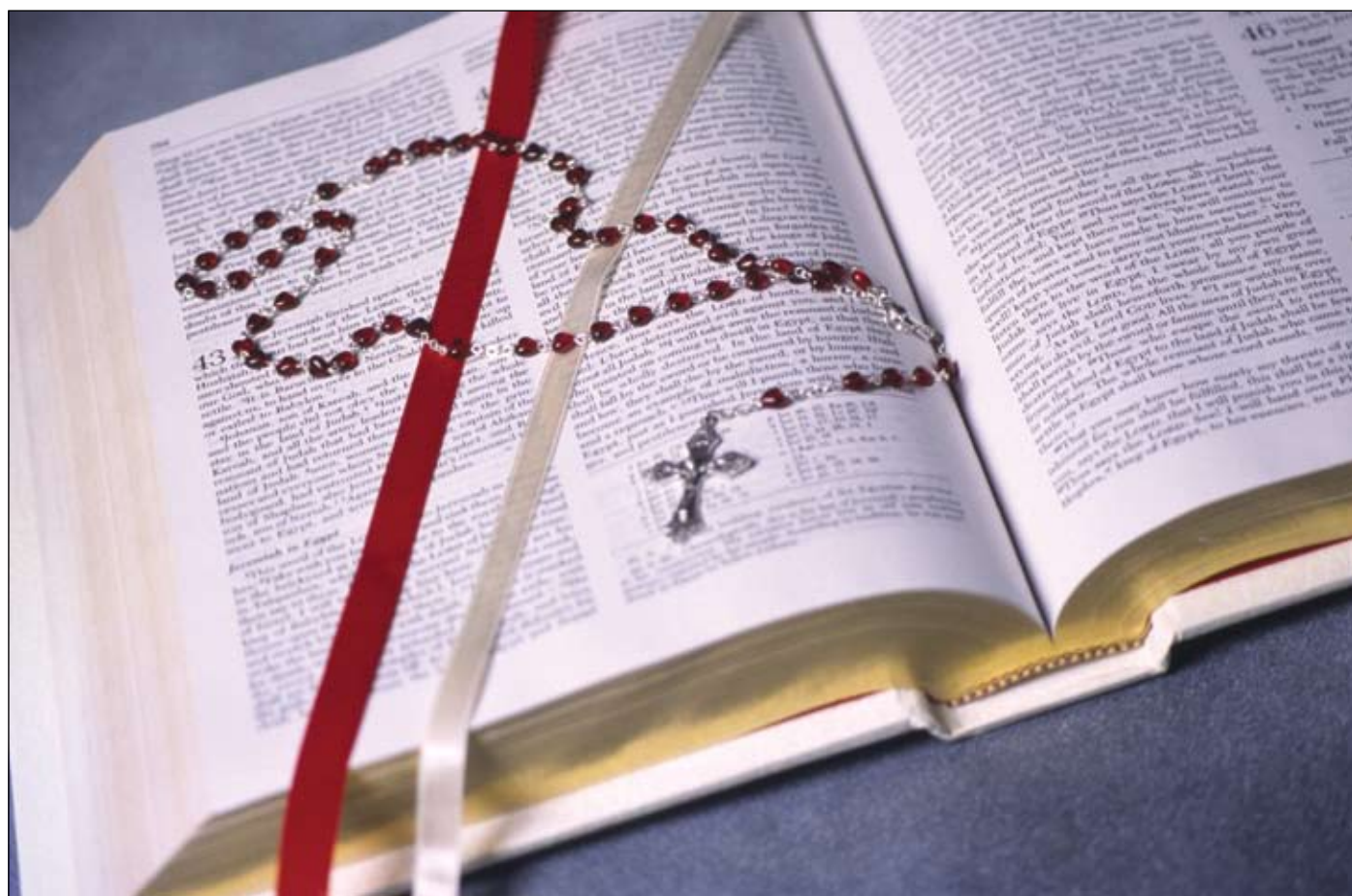
By Kate McGreevy

At Padre Pio Academy in Shawnee, Kansas, Catholic education is being redefined. Students in kindergarten through ninth grade are taking Latin and advanced mathematics, and the school community prays together thrice daily.

Founded in 1999 by a handful of parents who had been homeschooling their children, the Padre Pio Academy now serves about 40 students in kindergarten through ninth grade with five full-time and three part-time teachers.

Kay O'Connor, a former Republican state senator, has been teaching a variety of subjects, including Latin, grammar, and reading, at the school for four years. Known in Kansas legislative circles as "the voucher lady" because of her strong support for school choice, O'Connor finds her work at Padre Pio rewarding.

"I love teaching, and I love teaching Latin," O'Connor said, "and I love that our school requires this, and it's one of the steps we are taking to having a truly classical curriculum."



"At Padre Pio Academy ... [s]tudents in kindergarten through ninth grade are taking Latin and advanced mathematics, and the school community prays together thrice daily."

Classical Education

Padre Pio Academy is slowly evolving to a fully classical curriculum, said Principal Kevin McNeill, who emphasized the changes are incremental. Classical educational programs are each unique, but typically feature languages like Greek or Latin, coupled with a strong grammar program, logic and rhetoric instruction, and an interdisciplinary focus on the canon of the Western tradition.

"As far as academics go, we share a lot with other schools in terms of typical math, reading, and history," McNeill noted, "but we are also striving to implement the classical curriculum, and one step with that is starting to teach Latin. We teach students prayers in Latin, as well. We also have an art program. At Padre Pio, we are trying to create an overall academic experience, both intellectual and cultural."

Because of the school's small size, students are grouped together with their peers in grade blocks—for example sixth, seventh, and eighth grades together. McNeill and O'Connor agree that one benefit of this arrangement is the flexibility to allow students to work and advance at their own pace.

"Sometimes new students need some assistance catching up," O'Connor said. "They can work as fast as they want,

and get themselves up to grade level. When they arrive they take a diagnostic, and we place them. We have to give them the proper foundation so that they are competent. Failure is not the goal."

Proven Methods

Though O'Connor herself has only a high school education, she believes importing some of the rigor and discipline of her 1950s schooling is essential to a strong educational program. A self-proclaimed grammar stickler, she teaches students the "lost art" of diagramming sentences.

"The diagramming of sentences, when I went to school in the 1950s, was something we did from about the sixth grade through probably the twelfth grade," O'Connor explained. "Diagramming teaches so much about precision in communications, whether reading, writing, or speaking. It teaches you not to be ambiguous, and to avoid errors."

Teaching students to think creatively and earnestly about history, literature, and religion, McNeill said, is also an emphasis, particularly for students preparing for high school.

Modern Catholicism

Padre Pio Academy takes its name and inspiration from the recently canonized Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, a Roman Catholic priest from Italy who lived from 1887 to 1968. Padre Pio was known for his humility and his commitment toward helping the suffering.

The school is not affiliated with any Catholic order, but it is officially recognized by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, the

Reverend Joseph F. Naumann. The school follows the authority of the Church, respecting its hierarchy and trusting its requirements. Practicing Catholicism daily is a priority.

"Elsewhere, prayer life has been lost," McNeill lamented. "But here, prayer is emphasized."

"At the time [that Padre Pio Academy was founded], there was a strong connection with the Fraternity of St. Peter," McNeill continued. "They acted as a chaplain, saying Mass, for a few years. But since then, the priests have gotten so busy, our ties are not really there any more. There is no official connection with the diocese."

"As far as academics go, we share a lot with other schools in terms of typical math, reading, and history, but we are also striving to implement the classical curriculum, and one step with that is starting to teach Latin."

KEVIN MCNEILL

PRINCIPAL

PADRE PIO ACADEMY

Independent Support

Because the school operates independently, it is fully funded by tuition and donations. McNeill charged O'Connor, eager to share her ample political and social connections with Padre

Pio Academy, with spearheading the school's scholarship fundraising efforts.

"As a former legislator, I have a lot of connections with people sympathetic to conservative ideas about schooling," O'Connor explained. "The entire school taking Latin, grace every day and in Latin, and students working a full grade level ahead of the norm in many subjects is appealing."

Unique Features

In addition to providing a strong educational program infused with the Roman Catholic faith, Padre Pio also serves a large number of formerly homeschooled students. Many of those, O'Connor and McNeill both said, arrive well prepared for the rigorous curriculum.

McNeill suggested the school's size and small classes benefit all new students.

"We look at new students and say, 'What is he or she capable of?' and we assess each student," McNeill explained. "We tailor the academics such that kids can go at their own pace, as fast as they can, and that helps a lot. The ones who need more work can get that, and the ones who want to move faster can, particularly at the lower grades."

Kate McGreevy (mcgreevy@gmail.com) writes from Washington, DC.

INTERNET INFO

Padre Pio Academy, <http://www.padrepioacademy.org>

Report: Texas Needs More Effective Teachers, Better Tests

By Connie Sadowski

In early January the Texas Governor's Business Council (GBC)—100 Texas business leaders who provide advice on education, transportation, and economic development—released a plan to “bolster teacher effectiveness” in its report on “Excellence in the Classroom.”

If implemented, the council's recommendations will better outfit schools “with the best tools to increase teacher effectiveness and foster true excellence in the classroom,” said lead author Sandy Kress.

“Teachers matter,” Kress wrote. If a student has an effective teacher as opposed to an average teacher for five consecutive years, studies show the increased learning would close the gap between low- and middle-income students.

Recommending Improvements

According to the GBC report, current Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards are too murky to be effective.

The report concluded TEKS standards should be better defined, more measurable, and more specific to each grade level. That would give “teachers clear direction on exactly what specific skills and knowledge and in what progression students should be taught,” Kress

wrote.

TEKS standards should be revised and then implemented throughout the state within two years, the council recommended. The standards should be systematically taught, increasing in difficulty and complexity from one grade level to the next, and each level should be completed in a nine-month school year, the report recommended.

“In early January the Texas Governor's Business Council ... released a plan to ‘bolster teacher effectiveness’ in its report on ‘Excellence in the Classroom.’”

Overhauling Tests

The tests that evaluate student achievement on the standards need revision because “the present standards emphasize the process more than the right answer,” explained Donna Garner, a retired public school teacher and education consultant in Waco. “They are project-based, emphasizing group-think instead of independent learning, [and they] encourage students to express



their feelings, beliefs, and opinions more than expecting them to learn deep content knowledge.”

Current TEKS tests cannot be completed in a year, Garner added.

Because English, language arts, and reading “form the foundation for students’ success in all other courses,” that test must be rewritten first, said Garner. “Only then should other subject area standard revisions begin, followed by revision of assessment tools.”

According to the report, Texas should widely distribute specifically outlined TEKS standards to teachers and parents to explain what students should know academically at each grade level.

“The council is on the right track to recommend that TEKS, adopted in 1997, be revised so that they are academic, knowledge-based, measurable, explicit, and grade-level-specific,” Garner said.

Overhauling Teacher Assessment

In an effort to help teachers improve student learning, better teacher evaluation mechanisms are needed, Kress said.

Current teacher evaluation practices in Texas rely more on teacher efforts than on measured student achievement results, she wrote in the GBC report. To be useful, evaluations must be based “primarily on academic growth rates their students achieve over time,” the report said.

Since teachers do not have total control over student achievement, and several teachers contribute to a student's learning, a portion of the evaluation must include principal and peer review, according to the report.

Disagreeing Over Means

Holly Eaton, spokesperson for the Texas

Classroom Teachers Association, said teachers don't need more consequences from testing.

“Student performance is already a small but appropriate component of the current appraisal system,” Eaton said, adding that current law already requires “new teachers [to] undergo a two- to three-year probationary period during which schools have the opportunity to scrutinize them heavily and easily remove them if necessary.”

That's not enough, according to Kress. “Helping teachers succeed requires a far better means of evaluating teachers,” Kress said. “Teacher evaluations must be based on student achievement and be more objective and more thorough.”

Connie Sadowski (connie@ceoatx.org) directs the Education Options Resource Center at the Austin CEO Foundation.

Energize Your School Choice Campaign!

LET'S PUT PARENTS BACK IN CHARGE!

by Joseph L. Bast & Herbert J. Walberg, Ph.D.

Let's Put Parents Back in Charge! — a groundbreaking bilingual (English/Spanish) tool for the school choice movement — is available free of charge (in quantities of 50 to 500) to grassroots school choice efforts, charter schools, parent groups, elected officials, and others.

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To energize your school choice effort with *Let's Put Parents Back in Charge!* contact Michael Van Winkle, The Heartland Institute's legislative specialist for education policy, at 312/377-4000, email vanwinkle@heartland.org.

Individual copies can be ordered for \$5.95 in The Heartland Institute's online store at <http://www.heartland.org>.



INTERNET INFO

“Excellence in the Classroom,” issued by the Governor's Business Council in December 2006, is available through PolicyBot™, The Heartland Institute's free online research database. Point your Web browser to <http://www.policybot.org> and search for document #20592.

“Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Learning Standards for Texas Children: A Summary for Parents” is also available through PolicyBot™. Search for document #20593.

Ohio Passes Scholarship Bill, Scuttles Another

By Michael Coulter

In the closing hours of the 2005-2006 session of the Ohio General Assembly, more students in poorly performing schools gained access to expanded educational choices. A scholarship program for disabled students, however, failed to reach the floor for a vote.

More Students Eligible

On December 19, the Ohio House of Representatives approved H.B. 79, changing eligibility requirements for participation in the two-year-old Ohio Educational Choice Scholarship Program. The state Senate also passed the bill, which was signed into law by Gov. Robert Taft (R) before he left office January 8.

When first enacted in 2005, the Ohio EdChoice Program gave scholarships to students enrolled in schools that for three consecutive years have been on "academic watch" or in "academic emergency," allowing those students to attend another public or private school of their choice. Under the new law, the scholarships will be available to students whose schools are on watch or in emergency for two of any three consecutive years.

Since 2005, elementary school students have received scholarships of \$4,250 apiece; high school students have received \$5,000 scholarships.

Last summer, the Ohio Department of Education identified 99 schools whose students would be eligible for the scholarships. Approximately 2,600 students, of the 14,000 eligible, currently are using the scholarships.

David Hansen, president of the Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions, a nonpartisan policy research organization based in Columbus, Ohio, said students at 200 schools will now be able to use the scholarships.

"In the closing hours of the 2005-2006 session of the Ohio General Assembly, more students in poorly performing schools gained access to expanded educational choices."

Disabled Students Left Waiting

On December 6, the Ohio House's Education Committee passed H.B. 431, a bill to create a Special Education Scholarship Program to give disabled students access to alternative public or private educational programs. A floor vote was not scheduled before the end of

the session on December 22, effectively scuttling the bill.

"I support school choice in general, but I believe it has particular use for the special-education committee," said state Assemblyman Jon Peterson (R-Delaware), the bill's primary sponsor.

Peterson, who led the way in creating the state's four-year-old Autism Scholarship Program—a voucher program for autistic children statewide—said representatives of the disabled community asked him to expand it to students with other disabilities. Scholarship programs for disabled students, Peterson said, have already proven successful in Florida and Utah.

Support Was There

Peterson said H.B. 431 would have passed the entire House if given a vote.

"It was late in the lame duck session to consider the measure," Peterson said, who also noted making law is "an incremental process." He said he was pleased with this first attempt.

Hansen had a different perspective.

"The bill ran into resistance from teacher-controlled Republican senators, and so Speaker Jon Husted, a strong supporter of school choice, pulled the measure," Hansen said.

Vicki Murray, a Buckeye Institute visiting scholar who explained the provisions



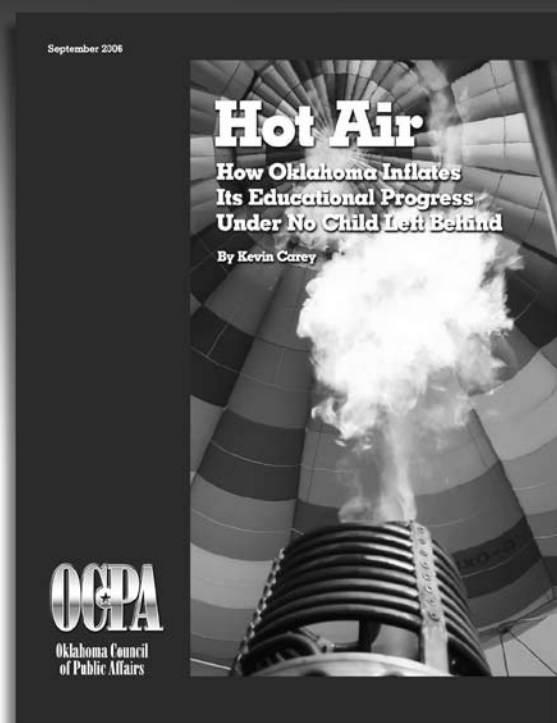
Robert Taft
Governor - Ohio

of the bill to several Ohio legislators, said it "would have built on the proven success of Ohio's landmark autism scholarship program" by expanding "options for thousands of students and strengthening existing special education services."

"Not adopting the scholarship program was a real missed opportunity for families in the Buckeye State," Murray said.

Michael Coulter (coulter@heartland.org) writes from Pennsylvania.

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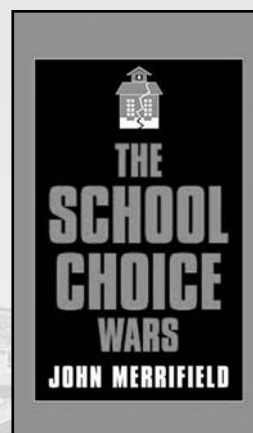
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THE SCHOOL CHOICE WARS

John Merrifield



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School Choice Alliance Appoints New Leader

By Megan Rudebeck

The Alliance for School Choice and Advocates for School Choice will experience their first leadership transition in April, when President and General Counsel Clint Bolick will be replaced by Charles Hokanson, Jr.

At that time, the organization will move its headquarters from Phoenix to Washington, DC.

The Alliance and Advocates were launched three years ago to help coordinate national efforts to promote private school choice options for disadvantaged children. In their first two years, the groups and their allies helped create or expand 19 school choice programs nationwide.

New Leadership

Hokanson currently is chief of staff in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. He has served in the department's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, as a professional staff member to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce, and as a research fellow at the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation and Manhattan Institute for Public Policy Solutions.

A Harvard Law School graduate, Hokanson also holds a master's degree

in public policy from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and graduate and undergraduate degrees from Stanford University. A long-time supporter of school choice expansion, Hokanson is a past co-chair of the Federalist Society's national school choice subcommittee.

"The Alliance for School Choice and Advocates for School Choice will experience their first leadership transition in April, when President and General Counsel Clint Bolick will be replaced by Charles Hokanson, Jr."

"I am excited to be joining the Alliance and Advocates at this critical time for the school choice movement," Hokanson said. "We still have much to accomplish on behalf of low-income students who currently have limited options of quality schools they can choose to attend."

Educational Opportunities

William Oberndorf, the groups' board



(from left) In April, Clint Bolick will step down as president and general counsel of the Alliance for School Choice and Advocates for School Choice. Charles Hokanson, Jr. will take the reins at both organizations.



chairman, said, "Charles brings to the Alliance and Advocates an excellent blend of policy, legal, and management experience, and a keen intellect—all critical skills. He also brings the requisite passion for systemically improving K-12 education by empowering parents to choose the education they determine is best for their children."

Bolick announced his intent to resign in May 2006, citing a desire to spend more time in Arizona with his young children and to return to litigation.

"I am enormously proud of our track record over the first three years at the Alliance for School Choice in helping

create tens of thousands of educational opportunities for children who desperately need them," Bolick said. "I'm eager to start suing bureaucrats again. I'm leaving but won't be far away."

Bolick will spend May as a research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University before helping the Goldwater Institute, a free-market group in Phoenix, open a new Center for Constitutional Litigation in June.

Megan Rudebeck (mrudebeck@allianceforschoolchoice.org) is the Alliance for School Choice's media relations officer.

THE NEW INDIVIDUALIST. A MAGAZINE FOR THOSE WHO THINK.



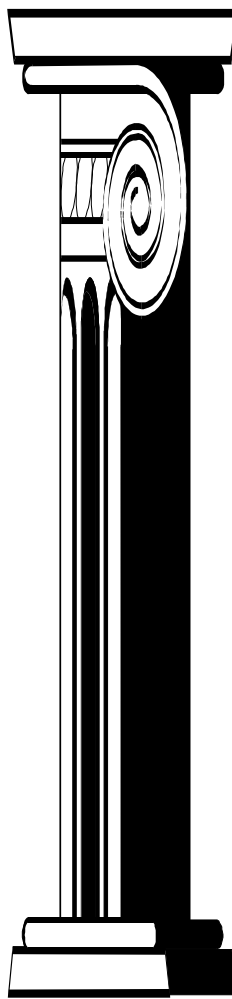
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INSTITUTE

New California Teacher-Transfer Law Has Benefits, But Ambiguities as Well

By Michael Blacher

Teachers unions and school administrators might agree that nothing affects students' achievement more than the quality of their teachers. Yet unions and administrators widely disagree on which teachers are most qualified and which ones should be given priority when applying for a position in the classroom.

Unionized teachers at public schools are permitted by law to negotiate, through their unions, the wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of their employment. As a result, nearly every collective bargaining agreement between a teachers union and a public school covers voluntary transfers.

Under these agreements, teachers seeking voluntary transfers are often given preference based on seniority. Consequently, schools may bypass less senior but otherwise qualified teachers.

A new California state law, S.B. 1655, which took effect on January 1, limits schools' ability to favor teachers based solely on seniority in voluntary transfers. It also allows principals of low-performing schools to reject teachers seeking transfers.

S.B. 1655 prohibits school districts from giving priority over other qualified applicants to senior teachers who request to be transferred after April 15 in the school year preceding that in which the transfer would take place. It also allows principals of schools ranked 1-3 (on a scale of 1-10) on the Academic Performance Index to reject the voluntary transfer of individual teachers into their school.

Level Field

State Sen. Jack Scott (D-Pasadena) introduced the bill, explaining in a November 15, 2006 *Education Week* commentary that it was not meant "to cheapen the value placed on teacher's experience," but that teachers should not be selected "on the basis of a blind

calculation of seniority, but on the basis of their unique skills and knowledge."

The California Teachers Association (CTA) opposed the bill, saying the measure would make it more difficult for low-achieving schools to attract and keep highly qualified teachers.

The law does not restrict teacher retention, and supporters note that limitations on a teacher's ability to transfer voluntarily should help, not hurt, a school's ability to keep experienced, highly qualified teachers.

Nor should the measure keep them from applying for voluntary transfers, the law's supporters note. Experienced teachers may be given preference before April 15 of each school year, regardless of their qualifications. After April 15, experienced teachers will not be disadvantaged when applying for voluntary transfers. They will simply have to compete against "other qualified applicants" without receiving preferential treatment.

Principals' Authority

CTA also said the bill would give "administrators the authority to block the transfers of teachers wishing to work in schools with high percentages of low-income and minority students." Supporters counter that allowing principals in low-performing schools to reject teachers seeking voluntary transfers allows principals to consider the students' needs, not just the teacher's seniority.

In the case of a teacher seeking a voluntary transfer to a school that is not low-performing, seniority may be a determining factor prior to April 15 of each school year. After that, state law, not an administrator, forbids basing a decision solely on seniority.

Despite opposition from the teachers unions, the bill passed with support from a coalition of organizations representing low-income and minority communities. The new law took effect on January 1,

but it allows clauses in existing contracts that conflict with it to remain in effect until the contract expires.

Blunted Impact

The new law applies only to teachers seeking to move from one school to another. It will have no effect on a teacher's ability to seek reassignment within a school.

In addition, the statute applies only to public schools. If a private or independent school has more than one campus, the law would not prevent seniority from being the sole factor when considering a transfer.

The new law is not entirely clear on whether seniority can be a factor at all after April 15. It prohibits a contract

"[U]nions and administrators widely disagree on which teachers are most qualified and which ones should be given priority when applying for a position in the classroom."

from giving "priority over other qualified applicants" to a teacher based on seniority after April 15—leaving administrators to wonder whether "priority" means seniority cannot be the sole factor or cannot be considered at all.

Michael Blacher (think@heartland.org) is an associate with Liebert Cassidy Whitmore, a California-based law firm that represents public and private schools.

Studies Prompted Policy Change

Two reports issued by the New Teacher Project (NTP)—a national nonprofit group working to increase the number of highly qualified people entering the teaching field—served as the genesis of California S.B. 1655, according to state Sen. Jack Scott (D-Pasadena), who introduced the bill.

The reports' authors concluded teachers should retain their right to seek voluntary transfers but should not have a right to a particular placement or to exclude a school's ability to hire a less-senior teacher. They suggested "schools give preferential review to voluntary transfer applicants" until April 1. By April 15, the authors suggested, schools should be free to begin new teacher hiring and placement and to consider internal and external hires equally.

— Michael Blacher

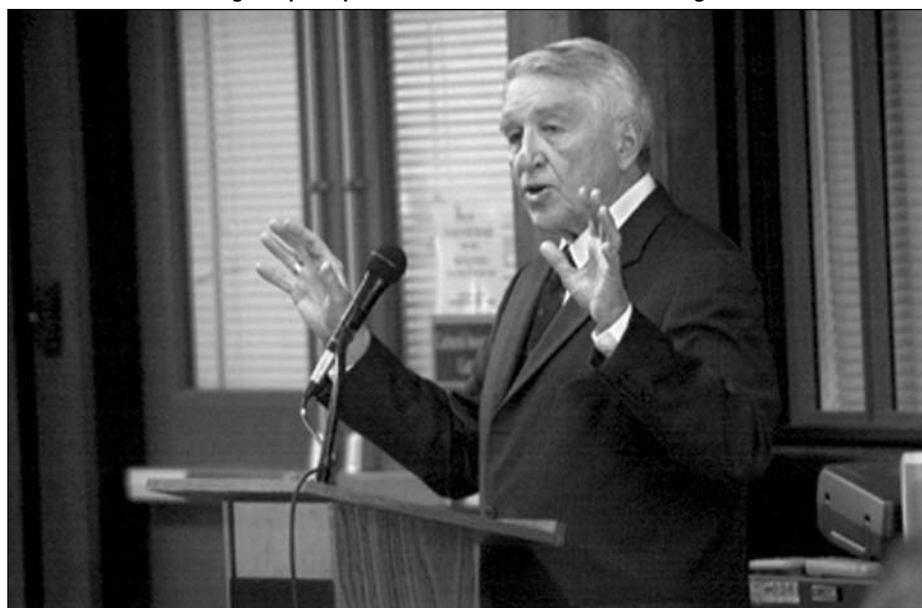
INTERNET INFO

"Missed Opportunities: How We Keep High-Quality Teachers Out of the Urban Classrooms," by Jessica Levin and Meredith Quinn, published in 2003 by the New Teacher Project, is available through *PolicyBot™*, The Heartland Institute's free online research database. Point your Web browser to <http://www.policybot.org> and search for document #20594.

"Unintended Consequences: The Case for Reforming the Staffing Rules in Urban Teachers Union Contracts," by Jessica Levin, Jennifer Mulhern, and Joan Schunck, published by the New Teacher Project in 2005, is also available through *PolicyBot™*. Search for document #20595.

"Common Sense in Teacher Hiring," by Jack Scott and Michelle Rhee, *Education Week*, November 15, 2006, <http://www2.edweek.org/agentk-12/employer-resources/2006/11/15/12rhee.h26.html>

California state Sen. Jack Scott spearheaded the state law that reforms voluntary teacher transfer rules. The measure gives principals more control over teacher hiring for their schools.



Court-Ordered Funding Increases Are No Remedy for Ailing Schools

By Matt Warner

State courts have taken an increasingly active role in addressing the failures of America's public schools—a role education reformers say is not best for students.

In December, New York Supreme Court Justice Leland DeGrasse ordered the state legislature to increase education funding by \$2 billion. According to a November 22, 2006 *New York Times* editorial, “the dollar figure was a disappointment to teachers who wanted more than twice that amount.”

“State courts have taken an increasingly active role in addressing the failures of America's public schools—a role education reformers say is not best for students.”

The plaintiff, the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE), was likewise hoping for more money—closer to \$6 billion. New York already spends almost \$14,000 per student, making it the third-biggest

spender nationwide. Education reformers cite that fact when explaining why court-mandated funding increases are the wrong approach to improving educational opportunities for K-12 students.

“One of the underlying problems with the New York legal battle is money may not be the answer to the achievement problems we face,” said Andrew LeFevre, executive director of REACH Foundation, a nonprofit organization in Pennsylvania that promotes school choice reforms.

No Returns

LeFevre is the author of a report published last November by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the nation's largest nonpartisan group of state legislators, examining the effect of funding increases on student achievement. The *2006 Report Card on American Education* concludes, “despite substantial increases in resources being spent on primary and secondary education over the past two decades—per-pupil expenditures have increased by 77.4 percent (after adjusting for inflation)—student performance has improved only slightly.”

CFE says Americans need to shell out

billions more than the nearly \$500 billion currently spent, to reduce class sizes and raise teacher salaries. But classrooms nationwide have been shrinking over the past two decades. On average, today's classes are close to 11 percent smaller than they were in 1983, the year the Reagan administration issued its education report *A Nation at Risk*, calling for serious education reform.

Since then, every state has increased its education spending, with Georgia, Maine, and South Carolina topping the charts for largest increases. According to the *2006 Report Card's* state academic achievement rankings, these three states were not in the top 10 for test scores.

Only Maine ranked in the top 20, at 18, while South Carolina and Georgia ranked 40 and 45, respectively. Of the 10 states that increased their spending the most, only two were ranked in the top 10 in academic achievement, and three ranked among the worst 10.

The December report from the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, *Tough Choices or Tough Times*, also casts doubt on the usefulness of funding increases. The report calls for a major overhaul of the way public schools are managed and funded. It warns, “There is not enough money available at any level of our intergovernmental system to fix th[e] problem by spending more on the system we have. We can get where we must go only by changing the system itself.”

Bypassing Lawmakers

The CFE lawsuit is the latest in a stream of adequacy suits—appeals for courts to step in to remedy schools' inadequate performance.

In “Courtroom Alchemy,” a feature article in the winter 2007 issue of *Education Next*, authors James Guthrie and Matthew Springer write, “plaintiffs have filed more than 125 court cases questioning the constitutionality of school district and school spending levels. In 2005 alone, high court decisions were handed down in eight states.”

Opponents of court-ordered funding increases also point out that tackling student achievement deficiencies is a public policy matter best reserved for state legislatures' deliberation.

In another article in the Winter 2007 issue of *Education Next*, Josh Dunn and Martha Derthick explain why this kind of judicial intervention ought to be left to legislative bodies: “Adequacy lawsuits have proved a serious threat to the right of citizens to have their taxes determined by elected officials who are in a position to weigh competing claims for public support and to judge the relative efficacy of spending for particular purposes.”

Free Interpretation, Fuzzy Math

In addition to those concerns, judicial decisions depend too heavily on interpretation of vague and often brief state

“Of the 10 states that increased their spending the most, only two were ranked in the top 10 in academic achievement, and three ranked among the worst 10.”

constitutional provisions, Dunn and Merthick note, citing DeGrasse's decision.

According to the authors, the judge “without apology explained that in education litigation courts ‘are called on to give content to Education Clauses that are composed of terse generalities,’ which in New York's case is ‘The legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free common schools, wherein all the children of this state may be educated.’ From that clause, DeGrasse determined that the New York City schools were unconstitutional in everything from library expenditures to arts courses.”

Adequacy lawsuits not only ask judges to take license with state constitutions, but once inadequacy is thought to be established, call on the court to determine how much money is necessary to achieve adequacy. For this, spending advocates have produced “costing out” studies that Guthrie and Springer say may represent more guesswork than reliable figures. The two most common approaches for conducting such studies often produce outcomes representing several billion dollars' worth of differences in recommended spending increases.

Matt Warner (mwarner@alec.org) is executive director of the American Legislative Exchange Council's Education Task Force.

INTERNET INFO

“A Nation at Risk,” National Commission on Excellence in Education, April 1983, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/index.html>

The *2006 Report Card on American Education*, written by Andrew T. LeFevre and published in November 2006 by the American Legislative Exchange Council, is available through *PolicyBot™*, The Heartland Institute's free online research database. Point your Web browser to <http://www.policybot.org> and search for document #20596.

The following documents are also available through *PolicyBot™*:

Tough Choices or Tough Times (summary), document #20597

“Courtroom Alchemy,” James W. Guthrie and Matthew G. Springer, *Education Next*, Winter 2007, document #20598

“Judging Money,” Josh Dunn and Martha Derthick, *Education Next*, Winter 2007, document #20599

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Value of Teacher Certification Bonuses Is Questioned Again

By Robert Holland

As the number of teachers winning certification from the privately run National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) continues to grow, so do the doubts of some state government leaders about the program's effectiveness.

The central question is whether the process has enough of a positive impact on student achievement to justify hefty financial awards for National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).

Over the past several years, states and local school districts have paid more than \$300 million in salary bonuses to teachers who have successfully navigated the complex certification process, which entails compiling portfolios of their work, videotaping their classes, and sitting for examinations on their methods and know-how.

With a 7 percent increase in NBCTs in 2007—bringing the total to more than 55,000—the cost of paying those bonuses is expanding briskly.

The NBPTS was founded in 1987 with strong backing from teachers unions and private foundations. On its Web site, the National Education Association (NEA) calls itself NBPTS's "most active supporter." Thirty NEA members sit on the group's national board.

"As the number of teachers winning certification from the privately run National Board for Professional Teaching Standards ... continues to grow, so do the doubts of some state government leaders about the program's effectiveness."

Proposed Phase-Out

The three states with the most NBCTs—North Carolina (11,325), Florida (9,238), and South Carolina (5,077)—all play a role in the latest focus on certification.

In his proposed 2007-08 budget, South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford (R) is seeking to halt the expansion of NBPTS bonuses while honoring the state's existing commitment. The state has promised to pay its NBCTs annual bonuses of \$7,500 for 10 years (at a current cost to taxpayers of \$63 million per year).

Sanford proposes ending such bonuses with teachers who complete the certification process before June 30, 2008.

Thereafter, "rather than expanding the expensive bonus system," Sanford proposes to "invest in raising teacher pay in a manner that has a real impact on student achievement." School dis-

tricts could use the money to develop merit pay plans that take into account improvements in student test scores.

"Plainly, the parents, policymakers, and taxpayers of South Carolina were defrauded," said J.E. Stone, founder of the Education Consumers Clearinghouse, a subscription-based online forum headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. "There was never any credible data demonstrating the effectiveness of NBPTS certification, and as early as 2002 there was ample reason to question its validity."

Florida Dissatisfaction

High-ranking education officials in Florida are considering either grandfathering current NBCT bonuses, which end in 10 years, or adding a student achievement requirement as a condition for receiving the rewards.

In a December 17, 2006 *Orlando Sentinel* article, Florida Education Commissioner John Winn, who will retire effective February 28, noted, "We should probably have some performance measure, if the state is going to invest in these teachers, especially when some folks are looking at whether they are the most effective teachers."

The state gives NBCTs bonuses amounting to 10 percent of their base pay.

In Texas, the *Dallas Morning News* reported on January 15 that area school districts spend \$20 million a year on NBCT bonuses.

Lack of Impact

On its Web site, the NBPTS contends, "research is consistently positive about the impact of National Board Certification on improvements to teacher practice, professional development, and areas of school improvement that are critical to raising student achievement."

As for showing actual student gains, the NBPTS concedes some studies "reveal mixed effects." However, it points to several studies showing small but statistically significant achievement advantages for students of NBCTs.

A 2002 study of Tennessee NBCTs by Stone found otherwise. It was the first of several showing NBCTs do not have a significant impact on student achievement.

A March 2005 study led by William Sanders, the originator of value-added assessment of teaching, reached a similar conclusion after looking at data for grades 4-8 in North Carolina. "Students of NBCTs did not have significantly better rates of academic progress than students of other teachers," the authors wrote.

Further fueling doubts about the value of national certification is the latest of a series of 21 research studies the NBPTS itself commissioned in 2002 in response to criticism of the lack of a demonstrated link to improvement in student achievement.

"Plainly, the parents, policymakers, and taxpayers of South Carolina were defrauded. There was never any credible data demonstrating the effectiveness of NBPTS certification, and ... there was ample reason to question its validity."

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The June 2005 study by SERVE—a group of researchers from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, College of William and Mary, and University of Virginia—looked at the academic achievement of fifth-grade students in three North Carolina school districts.

The researchers found "[N]o clear pattern of effects on student achievement based on whether the teacher was Board certified."

Robert Holland (holland@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for education policy at The Heartland Institute.

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Utah

Continued from page 1

"we've had many middle- and low-income parents tell us that they are so happy, they want to cry. Now their children can get the same education opportunities as children from wealthy families."

"The Utah House vote is an important advance in the fight to provide parents with meaningful education alternatives," noted George Clowes, a senior fellow for education policy at The Heartland Institute. Although the maximum voucher is only half what Utah's public schools spend per student, Clowes said "it will probably be sufficient to spur an expansion of existing private school capacity and the entry of new education providers."

'Smooth Sailing'

The measure "now faces relatively smooth sailing," noted *Wall Street Journal* columnist John Fund on February 4. The state Senate "twice before has voted for a similar program," he wrote, and "Gov. Jon Huntsman, a Republican, won election in 2004 in part by campaigning for school choice."

Pomeroy agreed. "We are confident that H.B. 148 will pass the Senate," she said. "Senate Majority Leader Curt Bramble (R-Provo) has said the Senate, which

is more than two-thirds Republican, is expected to favor the bill."

'A Fitting Tribute'

More than 50 years ago, Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman outlined a vision for universal school choice. With his essay "On the Role of Government in Education," Friedman became the father of the modern school choice movement. He died in November 2006 at the age of 94.

"On February 2, the Utah House of Representatives passed, by a 38-37 vote, a landmark measure that would give Utah the nation's first statewide universal voucher bill."

"Utah is a fitting tribute to Milton Friedman ... and proof that universal school choice can pass a state legislative body," noted Robert Enlow, executive director and COO of the Indianapolis-based Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation.

"Milton Friedman had a dream: that all parents would have an unfettered

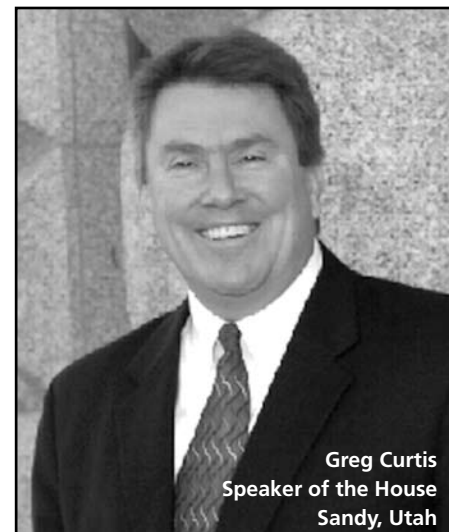
choice of schooling, public or private, for their children," noted Robert Holland, a senior fellow for education policy at The Heartland Institute. "The Utah House's passage of the Parent Choice in Education Act has brought the Friedman dream of universal vouchers closer to realization than ever."

"Over the past quarter-century, school choice has gained momentum with the advent of praiseworthy voucher and tax-credit programs targeted to needy children," said Holland. "Dr. Friedman applauded such initiatives, but his dream was bigger than that. If all families could use public vouchers for schools of their choosing, healthy competition would force public as well as private schools to improve or go out of business. As a result, a community's educational system would flourish."

Model for Others?

Holland suggested the Utah measure might pave the way for dramatic reforms nationwide. "If the Friedman 'Free to Choose' model takes hold in Utah," he said, "it is likely that parents in many other states will come to want the same degree of consumer clout to exercise on behalf of their children."

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Greg Curtis
Speaker of the House
Sandy, Utah

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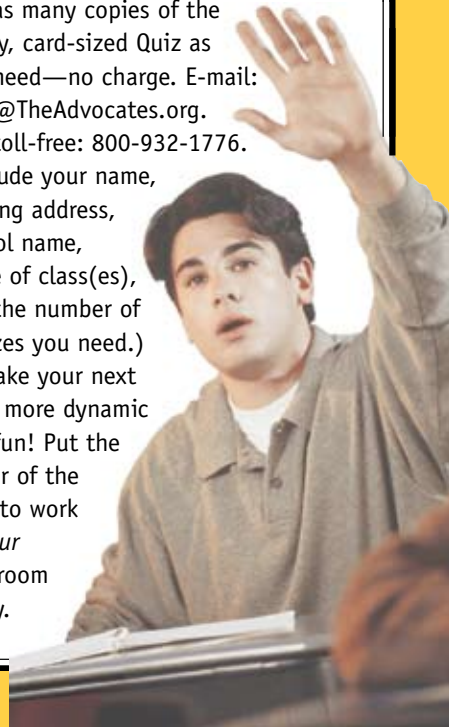


sity, says, "Students usually find it to be an eye-opener." The Woodbury Junior High School Social Studies Department in Minnesota calls it the "world's smartest political quiz."

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