

cape Council for American Private Education outlook

"Voice of the Nation's Private Schools"

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Education Reform Debate Focuses on "Choice"

As states, local school districts, scholars, and government leaders debate strategies for education reform, more discussion is centering on the issue of "parental choice".

Tremendous media attention was directed to Wisconsin this summer when a voucher program to allow disadvantaged children to go to non-religious, private Milwaukee schools was upheld by a State Circuit Court judge. The controversial plan was pushed through the Wisconsin legislature by Democratic State Representative Annette "Polly" Williams who represents Milwaukee's inner city district.

Under the voucher program, participating schools receive \$2,500 per child. It is expected the plan will enable up to 1000 children to switch from the beleaguered inner city system to private schools.

Currently, Minnesota statute allows a virtual unrestricted right of parents to choose or transfer to any public school district. Two other states, Idaho and Utah, saw their legislatures act to duplicate the Minnesota model. Colorado similarly approved a law to allow the right of parents to transfer schools on an intra-district basis, space permitting.

Oregon Initiative

A sweeping "choice" initiative has been brewing this fall in Oregon where voters defeated a ballot initiative creating

CAPE Board Makes "Choice" Statement

At its October meeting in Washington, D.C., the CAPE Board of Directors formulated a unanimous policy statement on the controversial and widely debated topic of educational choice.

The Board issued a paper calling for "national and state legislation which will provide all parents the opportunity to exercise fully their right to choose their child's school; religious, private, or public."

The Board specified the "strong statements of mission", sense of "community and common goals", and the ultimate accountability to the "parents who continue to choose" private schools as the ingredients which make them "models of success."

The statement further referenced the 1925 landmark Supreme Court decision, *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, as guaranteeing "the right of existence to non-public schools and therefore the right of parents to choose a school which reflects their values." In that original Oregon case, the Court struck down a state law which required all children to attend public schools.

A copy of the full "choice" statement is available from the CAPE office.

a \$2,500 tuition tax credit for private school parents. With partial balloting results at press time, it appears that Measure 11 will fail by a 2 to 1 margin.

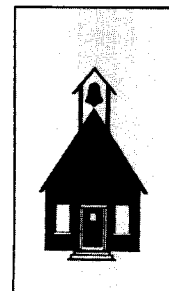
Measure 11, pushed by a group called "Oregonians For Educational Choice," was originally placed on the ballot after 127,000 signatures were gathered. A state court dropped the referendum from the ballot when a technical challenge dealing with a required fiscal impact statement was brought forward by opponents, as reported in *Outlook* in October. The State Supreme Court, however, acted to put the referendum back on the November 6 ballot.

Had the measure passed, opponents promised to test its Constitutionality in a continuing church-state battle.

Need for "An Entirely New System"

Prominent scholars have likewise entered the fray on "choice". A recently published book by the Brookings Institute, *Politics, Markets, and American Schools*, makes observations about "effective and ineffective" schools and concludes with compelling arguments for a "choice" plan.

Authors Terry M. Moe of Stanford University and Brookings Senior Fellow Dr. John E. Chubb argue for creating "an entirely new system of pub-



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lic education - one based squarely on parental choice."

Dr. Chubb, speaking to the October meeting of the CAPE Board of Directors and State Affiliates, asserted that the nation "can't just require academic performance," but instead must help create "an environment that fosters it." He explained the analysis of over 500 public and private schools revealed no relationship between money, class size, or other typical factors in predicting good schools versus poor schools. Rather, Chubb contends there are three essential indicators which distinguish effective schools from ineffective schools.

First, Chubb claims that the school must have a "clear sense of purpose", with consensus as to the goals and mission of the school. Further, the study showed that effective schools had principals who "took on the role of leader" instead of a mere "manager". Chubb explained that top administrators of unsuccessful schools typically took that job because they "didn't like teaching" anymore or because they "wanted to advance their career". The more effective leaders were those who had a "vision" for the school and who wanted to effect change and advancement.

Chubb found that the third essential ingredient for a successful school was to treat "teachers like professionals." The schools with the best performance and success with students were most always those with principals who worked with a professional team of teachers toward a common purpose.

Autonomy Gives Greatest Accountability

Moe and Chubb state as their guiding principle that "public authority must be put to use in creating a system that is almost entirely beyond the reach of public authority." Once this autonomy is established, schools will be more directly accountable to those they serve - parents and students.

They endorse a prescription that would make states responsible for setting a minimum criteria for schools which would be "chartered" as "public schools". These school would then be eligible for public funding. Private schools would be among those eligible to participate. The authors' preference would be to allow religious

schools to participate as well, so long as their religious functions could be kept clearly separate from their education functions.

Public schools would then have a minimum of government and "bureaucratic" involvement, allowing each to make decisions locally and generally be responsive to the parents and students served by the school.

Rejecting any charge that he is a "neo-classical economist", Chubb voiced surprise at the intensity of the "public educational establishment's" opposition to his book's findings and recommendations.

One such opponent recently wrote in an Education Week opinion article that the "marketplace choice" movement was merely "emanations from a corporate boardroom regarding what should occur in a classroom." Author Dennis Evans, a public high school principal from Newport Beach, California wrote that for "every success story in the business world, we can also point to an Edsel, an Eastern, or a Lincoln Savings."

Capitol Hill Day & Celebration Planned

The CAPE Board of Directors gave approval to the planning of a Legislative Conference in conjunction with the 20th Anniversary of CAPE for March 19-20, 1991.

As the first such conference sponsored by CAPE, the principle objectives are to promote common interests of CAPE to Congress, to increase awareness of issues of concern among member organizations, and to bring deserved recognition to the Council as it begins its third decade.

The tentative two-day schedule includes an Executive branch briefing, appointments with Members of Congress on the Hill, and a gala reception commemorating the 20th anniversary of CAPE.

In order to have maximum success in this conference, all interested members of CAPE organizations are invited to participate and are encouraged to note the date of the conference.

For more information about the March conference and reception, please write the CAPE office.

Legislative Update

101st Congress Adjourns

After a seemingly endless stalemate over the budget, Congress adjourned for the year in the early morning of October 28. This was the latest pre-Election Day adjournment in over 40 years. The 102nd Congress will convene on January 3, 1991.

Budget Package Passes

A \$492 billion deficit reduction package passed the Congress and was enacted by the President. The delicate bi-partisan measure passed the House October 26 by a 228 to 220 vote followed by Senate approval the next day by a 54 to 45 margin.

The measure, HR 5835, raises various taxes and adjusts spending caps under the Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction law. Most of the savings from appropriations will come from the defense budget which will lose \$170 billion over the next five years.

Charitable Tax Deduction Impact

While the impact of the tax component of the budget agreement could have been more damaging, charitable organizations were somewhat relieved with the final bill.

The legislation will require that those with income over \$100,000 must reduce the amount of allowable deductions by 3%. These deductions are made up of state and local taxes, mortgage interest expense, and charitable giving. Some negotiators proposed lowering the income limit and raising the percentage floor to as high as 8%. This would have had a draconian effect on the ability of schools and other non-profits to raise private funds.

As state and local taxes and mortgage interest make up the largest share of deductions, the 3% level is not expected to have a dire impact.

CAPE joined with Independent Sector, a coalition of over 700 non-profits and charities, in actively opposing proposals which would have had a far greater impact on charitable giving.



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Asbestos Bill Reauthorized

With the clock ticking toward adjournment and the expiration of the Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Act (ASHAA) at hand, the House approved and sent to the President a bill (S 1893) to extend the program of grants and loans to aid schools in removing hazardous asbestos.

The bill increased the funding level from \$125 million to \$200 million annually for the Environmental Protection Agency to help schools pay removal costs.

The ASHAA, first authorized in 1984, was followed by legislation in 1986 to require that schools inspect their buildings for the hazardous material and set out plans to remove it.

Omnibus Education Bill Dies

Despite a promising White House/Congressional compromise to enact a major education bill, last minute Senate wrangling prevented the \$786 million initiative from making it to the President's desk.

The House passed the package (HR 5115) which would have incorporated most of the Bush ideas including the Presidential Merit Schools, Schools of Excellence, and National Science Scholars programs as well as expanded spending for student financial aid and a teacher loan forgiveness program.

Two contentious issues between Congress and the White House have been funding for the independent National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and a new national "report card" panel to assess educational progress. In a breakthrough compromise, Congress agreed to lower its \$22.5 million grant to the NBPTS to \$5 million and drop from the bill establishing a "report card" panel, which the Administration opposed as a duplication of National Governors Association efforts. In return, the White House would support the additional spending and program expansions favored by Congress.

However, opponents, delayed the bill's consideration just hours before adjournment, killing the legislation for the session. Efforts to pass elements of the package will likely be made next year.

Civil Rights Bill Vetoed

Consistent with his promised threat, President Bush vetoed the Civil Rights Bill of 1990. The legislation (S 2104) passed the

Senate and House in an effort to overturn several 1988 Supreme Court decisions dealing with job discrimination.

Claiming the bill would force business entities to adopt hiring quotas to avoid litigation, Bush vetoed and returned it to Congress with his own version of an acceptable bill.

The Senate voted 66 to 34 to overturn the veto on October 24, failing to do so by one vote.

National Service

The House gave final approval to the "National and Community Service Act" (S 1430) by a vote of 235 to 186 on October 24. The bill will authorize \$62 million in 1991 and nearly double the level of funding by fiscal year 1993.

The bill creates the "School Based Community Service" program to provide grants for joint service projects. Funding would be used to provide training and to assist local governments, community agencies and schools with start-up and supervisory costs.

Also a part of the bill is the President's "Points of Light" foundation to help spur community service efforts and administer volunteer programs.

The Senate passed the legislation by a 75 to 21 margin on October 16 after having dropped from the bill a provision to grant student loan deferral and forgiveness in return for voluntary service.

The President supports the bill.

Children's Television

The President has allowed a bill to regulate television broadcasts affecting children to become law without his signature. (Legislation can be enacted when Congress is in session if the President does not veto it.) The measure limits the minutes per hour allowed for advertisements directed at children. It further requires broadcasters to air educational programming as a prerequisite for Federal Communications Commission license renewal.

By not signing the bill, Bush signified his "First Amendment" concerns and stated opposition to this re-regulation on broadcasters and television content. However, the bill (HR 1677) had broad support in Congress as concern about the impact of TV on children has intensified.

Capenotes:



► The **Comprehensive School Health Education Program** grants are open for application through the U.S. Department of Education as a way to encourage health education for elementary and secondary school students.

The priorities in the competition are to fund programs that disseminate successful comprehensive school health education models. Further, the funds will be directed to in-service training for teachers and administrators related to the implementation of health programs including personal health and fitness, nutrition, prevention of chronic diseases and accident prevention and safety.

Application deadline for the grants ranging from \$50,000-\$150,000 is December 17. For information contact: Dr. Allen A. Schmieder, U.S. Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave., NW, Room 522, Washington, D. C. 20208-5524 or call (202) 219-1496.

► The **Fall 1990 estimates** by the National Center for Education Statistics show that private school elementary and secondary enrollment now numbers 5,391,000 - up nearly 3% from two years ago. Current enrollment in public schools is 40,801,000, an increase of 1.5%.

The number of private school teachers also increased this year to 384,000 - up 10% from Fall 1988. The number of public school teachers numbers 2,401,000 - an increase of 3.5% from two years earlier.

► The **Free Enterprise Press** announced the pre-publication of a book by Michael Bennett titled The Asbestos Racket. The book is based on Bennett's contention that the Environmental Protection Agency is guilty of "the greatest environmental fraud of our era." He quotes the EPA's own scientific panel which claimed an early asbestos study by professional environmentalists as "unconvincing", "greatly overestimated", and "scientifically unappealing."

Advance subscription orders of the book can be made in bulk only with a minimum of 12 copy order for \$100. Bookstore paperback price will be \$9.95. For

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further information on the publication of the book, you may write to: Ron Arnold, Executive Vice President, The Free Enterprise Press, 12500 NE Tenth Place, Bellevue, Washington 98005, or call (206) 455-5038.

► The publication "Educational Programs That Work" contains abstracts of all the nationally validated programs offered through the National Diffusion Network (NDN). The Network is a body of over 400 educational programs scrutinized by the Department of Education and teaching specialists. Utilized in thousands of classrooms across the country, these programs are proven as effective, cost-efficient, and replicable.

The publication is available for purchase for \$10.95 plus \$2.00 shipping from Sopris West Incorporated, 1140 Boston Avenue, Longmont, Colorado 80501.

For more information on the NDN, contact Dr. Charles Nunley at CAPE-NDN, 1726 "M" Street, NW, Suite 1102, Washington, D.C. 20036 or call (202) 659-0177.

► The Department of Education's Secretary's Initiative to Improve the Education of Disadvantaged Youth invites schools to apply for this year's funding. Any Chapter 1 project or other locally funded program serving disadvantaged children is eligible for nomination.

The Department seeks to identify

projects and programs for national recognition for implementing successful strategies to help these students upgrade their performance in basic and advanced skills.

For information, contact Daisy Greenfield at the Department's Office of Compensatory Education Programs, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, #2043, Washington, D.C. 20202-6132 or call (202) 401-1695.

► The Young Writer's Contest Foundation announced its November 30, 1990 entry deadline for the Grades 1-8 writing contest. The literary categories of competition include poetry, short stories, or essays about America or American Life. Possible subjects include families, friends, growing up, parents, history, wildlife, landscapes, lifestyles, freedoms, responsibilities, heroes, the environment and the future. Schools can submit up to 12 entries with one \$15 registration fee.

Details on the contest can be attained by calling the Foundation at (703) 893-6097.

► The Environmental Protection Agency has just published a new document, Managing Asbestos in Place. This comprehensive guide, the first produced since 1985, provides state-of-the-art instruction to help building operators successfully manage the material in place.

Copies of the manual (GPO Stock

number 055-000-00362-9) can be obtained from the Government Printing Office order desk at (202) 783-3238.

► The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) sponsored a conference on "Learning about the World Democracy Movement: Can It Improve Education for American Citizenship?"

The October 25 forum, held in Washington, D.C., focused on the democracy movement in Eastern Europe and the world and how it could improve citizenship education. The National Assessment of Educational Progress noted weakness in citizenship education composed of history, geography and civics. One study found that 2 of 3 high school seniors could not identify Stalin nor Churchill as figures in 20th century history.

While the conference speakers were mainly educators and institute heads, one participant, a journalist and Polish foreign national spoke of the influence of American democracy on post-World War II Poland. Slawomir Gorecki, co-publisher of Solidarity Weekly, urged the audience to continue to improve citizenship instruction. Gorecki shared a current, popular Polish comparison between democracy and their previous form of "socialized democracy" as being a difference between a "chair and an electric chair."

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a coalition of 14 national associations serving private schools K-12

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