

cape Council for American Private Education outlook

"Voice of the Nation's Private Schools"

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Council Members: American Montessori Society • Christian Schools International • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • Friends Council on Education • International Christian Accrediting Association • Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod • National Association of Episcopal Schools • National Association of Independent Schools • National Catholic Educational Association • National Society for Hebrew Day Schools • Seventh-day Adventist Board of Education, K-12 • Solomon Schechter Day School Association • Toussaint Institute for Historically Black Independent Schools • U.S. Catholic Conference • Affiliated State Organizations in 31 States



CAPE on Capitol Hill

This year's annual meeting of CAPE board members and state CAPE network representatives included sessions with (top to bottom) Rep. Bill Goodling, Chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee; Rep. Michael Castle, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families, and Rep. Kenny Hulshof, lead sponsor of the Education Savings and School Excellence Act of 1999.

CAPE Goes to Congress

Leaders of various national and state private school associations met last month with some of the top education policymakers in Congress. The meetings, sponsored by CAPE for its board of directors and state CAPE network representatives, conveyed to legislators the impressive diversity of the private education community in the United States as well as its unity on some specific issues of public policy.

Representative Goodling

Rep. William F. Goodling (R-PA), Chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, told the CAPE delegation he expects that any new block grant would not include Title I but would include provisions for the equitable participation of private school youngsters. His preference when it comes to block grants, he said, is to give states and school districts more flexibility to combine some of the smaller federal education programs. Regarding the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in general, Goodling said he does not have any preconceived ideas other than insisting on "quality, quality, quality." Federal education spending, he said, should be used for programs that are proven to be effective and that "improve education for all children."

Goodling, a 13-term veteran of Congress and the chief House policymaker for education, said more members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are starting to agree that Wash-

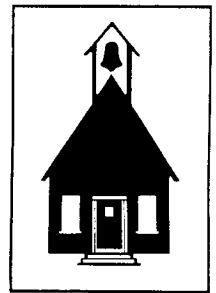
ington does not have all the answers and that one size does not fit all. To his delight, a new watchword in Washington these days is local flexibility.

A Goodling priority that is enjoying some bipartisan support is an increase in federal spending for IDEA. He hopes to add one billion dollars to the program this year as a step toward the goal of eventually having the federal government pay 40 percent of the cost of services mandated under the program.

On another matter, Goodling urged religious groups to "do everything they can to get involved in preschool education." It is of critical importance that children enter school ready to learn, he said, and added that more and more public policy emphasis will be put on preschool experiences.

Concerning school choice, Goodling predicted that "each year we'll be getting closer and closer to more choice." Charter schools and scholarship programs like the one in Wisconsin will drive policy to the point where "the public will demand that their children should not have to attend an inferior school." At the federal level, he sees programs like education savings accounts as a way to help parents send their children to schools of their choice.

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Representative Castle

Rep. Michael Castle (R-DE), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families, conveyed to CAPE his strong support for public education but at the same time said, "I absolutely don't want to do anything that would be harmful to private schools, to home schooling, or to any other good and viable alternative way of educating a young person, be it religiously based or not." He called private education "an extraordinarily important part of the complexity of education in America today," but added there is not enough understanding and recognition of the role of private schools among members of Congress. It is "vitally important," he said, that local private school officials call on their senators and representatives to say, "We're here; we're a resource; you should know about us."

Castle reviewed recent accomplishments of Congress in the area of education, including the Reading Excellence Act and the Ed-Flex legislation, which contains safeguards for students and teachers in private schools. On the horizon, he spoke of Republican interest in increasing IDEA funding as a way of

freeing up state and district dollars for local priorities, and said the Republican goal was to deal with the reauthorization of ESEA before the end of this year.

Representative Hoekstra

Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Chairman Peter Hoekstra (R-MI) conveyed a strong commitment to school choice, saying he would continue to play a pivotal role in driving that issue, fostering the dialogue, and creating an environment conducive to choice. Acknowledging that federal funding for comprehensive school choice is not a realistic short-term goal, Hoekstra said an achievable aim is to see that federal dollars are flexible enough to allow states to experiment with choice without jeopardizing federal support for students who enroll in private schools.

On the issue of responsibility for results in education, the congressman said the "greatest accountability" is when a school is answerable to parents who can enroll their children someplace else when the school doesn't perform.

Representative Hulshof

The lead Republican sponsor of H.R. 7, the Education Savings and School Excellence Act of 1999, talked enthusiastically about this bicameral, bipartisan showcase education proposal for the 106th Congress. Rep. Kenny C. Hulshof (R-MO) met with CAPE officials in the House Speaker's Conference Room to review the bill and rouse support. The legislation would expand existing college education savings accounts by increasing the maximum allowable annual contribution from \$500 to \$2,000, and by allowing the accounts to be used not only for college costs, but also for expenses associated with K-12 education in public, private, religious, or home schools.

Court Watch

Clint Chats with CAPE

"If you have a school choice program, you have a lawyer." Clint Bolick told CAPE board members and state CAPE representatives last month that he and his colleagues at the Institute for



Clint Bolick

Justice live by that maxim. And the long list of school choice cases they have litigated in recent years certainly shows they mean it. Just off of two big wins in Wisconsin and Arizona, the IJ team is currently advocating for parents in various other states, including Ohio, Vermont, and Maine, and is also providing advice to policymakers across the country on how to shield prospective legislation from constitutional assault.

New Political Dynamic

Bolick, litigation director for the Institute, described for CAPE the "new political dynamic" that drove the school choice movement in Wisconsin in the early 90's and is fueling it elsewhere today. Conservative Republicans are uniting with minority Democrats in common cause to address, through free enterprise and competition, the needs of a population "poorly served by the status quo."

The right of parents to choose their children's schools is a breakthrough issue for Bolick. He called the trailblazing Milwaukee voucher program the first brick in the Berlin Wall of monopoly education. "For the first time," he said, "power over basic educational decisions was transferred from bureaucrats to parents." Low income parents, who never had choice before, were free to leave failing schools. Once that first brick was removed, he said, the question was not if, but when, school choice would be expanded to other jurisdictions.



Teacher-Student Reunion



At a meeting with CAPE officials last month, Rep. Peter Hoekstra (R-MI) had a chance to teach a civics lesson to his former high school teacher. Dan Vander Ark (left), executive director of Christian Schools International and a member of CAPE's board of directors, was Peter's English teacher during senior year at Holland Christian High School in Holland, Michigan, the city that Hoekstra calls home. Apparently, the Congressman is pleased with the education he received; his children currently attend the Holland Christian Schools.

IDEA Regs Issued

The federal government last month published the long-awaited final regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997. The new regs contain important provisions relating to services for special education students in private schools.

When it was reauthorized in 1997, the IDEA made clear that school districts are not obligated to provide private school students who have disabilities the same services they provide public school students. However, they are required to provide children in private schools with services "equal to a proportionate amount" of the federal special education funds the district receives each year. Although districts and states are free to furnish additional services using state and local funds, under federal law they need not do so. The new regulations make this point clear.

Who Receives Services?

The proportionate expenditure requirement relates to the district's disabled private school population in the aggregate. Thus, the regulations require public school officials to engage in timely and meaningful consultation with representatives of private schools in order to determine what children will receive services, what services will be provided, how and where those services will be provided, and how the services will be evaluated.

Thorough Knowledge Essential

The regulations contain other key provisions concerning children in private schools, including beefed-up requirements relating to locating, identifying, and evaluating those children. A thorough knowledge of the regulations is essential if private school officials are to assist parents in securing the services to which their children are entitled.

For a PDF file of the section of IDEA regulations that relates to children with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private schools, send a one-word e-mail to cape@impresso.com. The one word is "IDEA."

Coulson Book Stirs Reform Debate

History Shows Market Works Best, He Says

There is nothing subtle about the message Andrew Coulson delivers in his new book *Market Education: The Unknown History*.



Andrew Coulson

He argues straightforwardly that the best way to achieve the ideals of public education is not through a state-run system of public schools but through a competitive market school system.

The book, quite predictably, is raising more than its share of eyebrows and is getting a lot of attention to boot.

National Press Club Launch

On March 11, the same day USA TODAY printed, by its standards, a lengthy interview with the author, Coulson launched his book with a luncheon address at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. The former software engineer for Microsoft and current senior research associate for the Social Philosophy and Policy Center said people have "lost sight of the difference between the ideals of public education and the institution of public schooling." Public education is not buildings, he said, but the notion that children, regardless of family income, should have access to good schools that prepare them for productive lives and that contribute to "cohesive communities" and a strong democracy. He asserted in his talk that the history of education from classical Greece to present day America shows that government schools are not "the one and only means" of advancing public education, but just "one among many approaches," and at that, not the best.

System Is Problem

Improving American education, said Coulson, is not merely a matter of adjusting details like pedagogy, class size, curriculum, or teacher training. The problem is deeper than that, "embedded

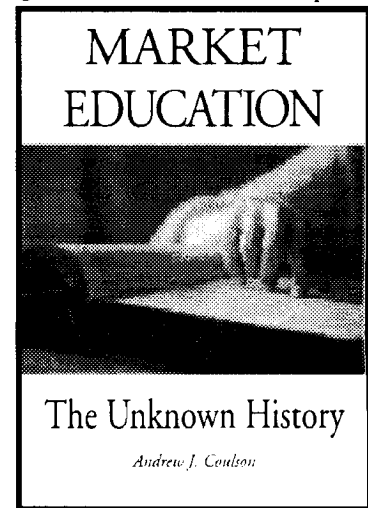
in the system itself," he said. Four factors are needed for quality education and have been "consistently associated

"Coulson didn't really want to go where the facts seemed to be dragging him. But facts are facts...."

William Raspberry
The Washington Post, 8/17/98

with educational excellence" throughout history: choice and financial responsibility for parents, and freedom and market incentives for educators. The "path to educational excellence," he said, is to empower parents to "take control of their children's education."

The 31-year-old author ended his remarks at the NPC with a sobering observation: "Markets have always helped schools to do their best to serve the public, and I think that we continue to ignore this at our children's peril."



Market Education: The Unknown History is available at bookstores and through Internet services such as amazon.com. Mr. Coulson edits and maintains *School Choices*, a Web site (www.schoolchoices.org) "intended to foster informed public debate on education reform." The Social Philosophy and Policy Center is located at Ohio's Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403.

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COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN PRIVATE EDUCATION
13017 Wisteria Drive, #457
Germantown, MD 20874



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• The CAPE family grew in size and diversity last month with the addition of two new members: the International Christian Accrediting Association and the Toussaint Institute for Historically Black Independent Schools. ICAA helps schools associated with the Christian



ICAA

charismatic/pentecostal movement to improve the "performance, integrity, and quality" of their programs. The Toussaint Institute is the country's "premier advocate" for historically black independent schools. Its founder and president, Dr. Gail Foster, is coauthor of the landmark study *High Schools with Character*,

Toussaint institute

which The Rand Corporation published in 1990. CAPE welcomes its newest members and looks forward to additional growth in the months ahead.

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• Last fall Congress passed and the President signed nine major new education initiatives, and many of them included provisions that affect private schools. To help the private school community understand the opportunities for students and teachers presented by these new programs, the Office of Non-Public Education at the U.S. Department of Education has posted a background paper on its Web site at www.ed.gov/offices/OIEA/NonPublic/resources.html.

The document covers the following programs: Class Size Reduction, Reading Excellence Act (REA), 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Bilingual Education Professional Development, GEAR UP, Teacher Quality Enhancement Programs, and Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnerships. Additional information on the details of these programs is available at: <http://www.ed.gov/inits/FY99/>.

• Be sure to check out CAPE's redesigned Web site at www.capenet.org. The new Legislative Action Center, accessible from our "Public Policy" page, provides visitors an easy way to keep up with, and express views on, legislation of interest to the private school community.

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Visit CAPE's Legislative Action Center

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Council for American Private Education
13017 Wisteria Drive, #457
Germantown, MD 20874
301-916-8460 (tel); 301-916-8485 (fax)
cape@impresso.com

SEND US MAIL

COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN PRIVATE EDUCATION • 13017 Wisteria Drive, #457 • Germantown, MD 20874
Tel: 301-916-8460 • Fax: 301-916-8485 • Email: cape@impresso.com • Web: www.capenet.org
a coalition of national associations serving private schools K-12

Executive Director: Joe McTigue
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