

cape Council for American Private Education outlook

"Voice of the Nation's Private Schools"

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CAPE Board Issues Statement on Teacher Shortage Calls for Equity for Private School Teachers in Federal Programs

It is spring, the peak period for teacher contract renewals, and this spring a larger-than-usual share of school administrators are anxious about being able to recruit enough qualified teachers for fall. A swell in the school-age population and a flood of teacher retirements are requiring principals to search longer and harder for talented educators.

More troublesome, the scarcity in the teacher supply could continue awhile. A report released recently by the U.S. Department of Education predicts the nation will need about 3 million new teachers through 2008, including 568,000 in private schools.

Responding to the challenge,

policymakers across the country have proposed various initiatives designed to entice people to become and remain teachers. The lineup of new proposals includes everything from loan forgiveness programs to teacher tax credits. And the issue even seems destined to become a big one in the presidential campaign, with Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore both pushing high-priced plans to recruit and train teachers.

Equitable Benefits for All

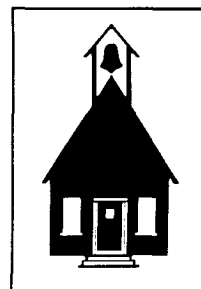
With private schools and public schools facing the same teacher shortage, CAPE's board of directors last

month approved an issue paper calling for government policies that "promote more vigorously the recruitment, retention, and development of quality teachers for all our children, regardless of the type of school they attend." The board said addressing the teacher shortage "must become one of the our nation's highest public policy priorities."

Private school officials have become increasingly concerned about the potential negative impact of government recruitment incentives that require recipients to teach only in public schools. Their worries are understandable. After all, what would be the odds of a private school recruiting a teacher who could receive, say, a \$5,000 tax credit and a hefty payoff of college loans, but only by teaching in a public school? Recognizing that government programs that encourage potential teachers to work only in one sector put the other at a distinct disadvantage, CAPE's new issue paper calls for programs "that provide for the equitable participation of all teachers, whether they teach in public or private schools."

Affirming that children are the "ultimate beneficiaries of the help given to teachers," the paper says "teacher benefits

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Majority Leader Says He'll Help



House Majority Leader Dick Armey at a meeting last month with a delegation from CAPE.

Last month, representatives of CAPE's board and its state affiliates held a series of meetings on Capitol Hill to discuss concerns about the national teacher shortage. The group pushed for equitable opportunities for private school teachers in certain government programs geared toward recruiting teachers

At one of the meetings, House Majority Leader Dick Armey, a strong supporter of parent rights in education, had some good news for the CAPE delegation. He said he agreed that benefits such as tax breaks and college loan forgiveness should go to individual teachers and should be available regardless of where they decide to teach. He pledged to "take personal responsibility to fight for equal treatment for public and private school teachers."

CAPE Issue Paper: Addressing the Teacher Shortage

Every elementary and secondary school in the United States is facing a threat that could undermine the quality education of all children. The U. S. Department of Education projects that the nation's schools will need 3 million new teachers by 2008. *The New York Times* recently noted (7 January 2000) that the shortage of qualified teachers has led to a competition for teachers that creates problems for all schools and drives up the costs of education across the country. Public and private schools work together to educate the country's children. The challenge of the growing teacher shortage threatens the whole education community. The welfare of all our children calls for federal policies to attract new teachers into the profession in a way that benefits all students....

...The Council for American Private Education believes that addressing the growing shortage of quality teachers must become one of our nation's highest public policy priorities. We call on all members of Congress and the Administration to come together in a bipartisan effort to craft policies that promote more vigorously the recruitment, retention, and development of quality teachers for all our children, regardless of the type of school they attend.

Teacher benefits are child benefits

Federal education policy has long recognized that children are the ultimate beneficiaries of the help given to teachers. Teachers move back and forth between public and private schools during the course of their careers, bringing their knowledge and experience to all students. As a result of the national commitment to improving the education of all children, various provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Higher Education Act that are designed to promote improvement in teacher quality already include teachers from all types of schools.... Future federal programs to encourage and promote teaching as a profession should likewise be constructed to benefit the teacher as an educator and not to benefit the school as an institution, in order to avoid inappropriate institutional regulation. Only this approach can guarantee the equitable participation of all teachers in a way that meets the distinctive needs of teachers in all circumstances, ensuring that the benefits of quality teachers will extend to all students.

Policies to help recruit and retain quality teachers

Members of all political parties understand that promoting a quality education is one of the best contributions that they can make to the future of our nation. The Council for American Private Education strongly recommends that members of Congress and the Administration work together to develop innovative new policies and expand some existing programs to

promote the recruitment, retention, and development of quality teachers. Our recommendations include the following:

- Expand current student loan forgiveness programs (i.e., the Stafford and Perkins programs for teachers in low-income public or private schools) to allow for loan forgiveness for all teachers. Teachers in schools serving high-need communities should be forgiven loans at an accelerated pace.
- Establish special teacher scholarships to encourage teachers to become qualified in those subject areas where the need for expert teachers is especially critical.
- Provide special tax incentives (e.g. tuition tax credits or special tax credits for teachers) for those entering the teaching profession.
- Increase the number of visas available to teachers recruited from abroad.



- Broaden the current Teacher Next Door program to include additional communities and create other housing incentives for teachers....

- The Troops-To-Teachers program and other future initiatives designed to train and place mid-career professionals in schools should allow for placement of candidates in private as well as public schools.

- The teacher scholarship program under Title II (Section 204) of the Higher Education Act should be expanded to include the equitable participation of teachers serving in private schools.

- Universities receiving federal funds should be required to allow and to recognize practice teaching in private as well as public schools.

- Congress should streamline the conflicting standards and regulations governing the participation of private and religious school teachers in federally-funded professional development programs to produce one clear set of standards that ensures the equitable participation of all teachers....

Conclusion

The Council for American Private Education strongly recommends that the Congress and the Administration work together to propose and enact federal legislation that addresses the critical shortage of quality teachers for all our nation's schools and that respects the autonomy and independence of private schools. Only inclusive and nondiscriminatory solutions that provide for the equitable participation of all teachers, whether they teach in public or private schools, will prove to be a sound investment in our nation's future and will improve the education of all our children.

The above text is excerpted from CAPE's issue paper Addressing the Teacher Shortage. The full document is available on the Web at www.capenet.org/pubpol.html.

Duo Defends School Choice at Harvard Debate

With names like Finn and Fuller, they could be the headline act in a Vegas magic show. But although Chester Finn and Howard Fuller put on an impressive performance last month, it was as debaters, not magicians, and at Harvard, not Vegas. The two teamed up to speak

against the resolution "School Choice Will Ruin American Education" at a debate on March 9 at the J.F. Kennedy School of Government. The event was part of a conference on charter

schools, vouchers, and public education, sponsored by Harvard's Program on Education Policy and Governance, and by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.

Finn, an assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Education from 1985-88 and now the John M. Olin Fellow at the Manhattan Institute, argued that school choice would bring about the renewal, rather than the ruination, of public education. He defined public education as the "education of all the children of the next generation," drawing a sharp distinction between the education of the public and the operation of a network of government schools. Just as the health of the public need not be maintained in municipal hospitals,

the education of the public need not take place in government-operated schools. A host of tax-supported alternatives to public schools, he said, would provide a "boon to millions of youngsters who are ill served by the present arrangements."

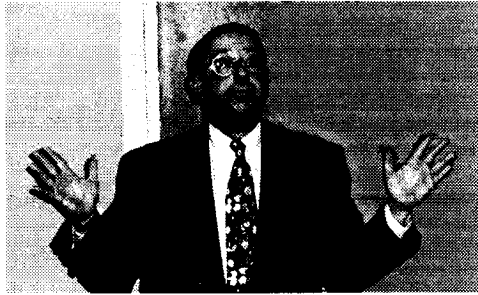
In any presentation by Chester (aka Checker) Finn, witty one-liners are standard fare. He reminded the audience that government operated public schools come to us neither from Madison nor from Moses, which is to say,

neither from the Constitution nor from the 10 Commandments. They are public policy inventions of the 19th century. "contemporaries of the steam locomotive." In a country accustomed to tax-supported choice in areas like childcare, healthcare, and higher education, it is inconsistent to require everyone to use the K-12 locomotive when alternative—and for some, more desirable—ways of traveling are available.

For Howard Fuller, former superintendent of schools in Milwaukee and current professor at Marquette University, the issue of school choice involves some bedrock concepts: education, freedom, democracy, and power.

With great conviction and passion, he declared a key premise of his argument: "Poor African-American children are precluded from being effective participants in the democracy because we are failing to educate them." He said too many poor children attend schools that do not work for them, and their parents lack the power to improve those schools. As a consequence, education bureaucrats remain unresponsive, in effect repeatedly asking for "five more years to develop another five-year plan."

School choice, said Fuller, is not a "new and untested practice" in America. Wealthy folks have always exercised choice. People with money don't care what a conference at Harvard has to say about school choice, he said, because they're going to take care of their children no matter what. What is new about choice today, he said, is "whether or not poor parents of color will have the same power than many school choice critics have for their children every day."



Chester E. Finn, Jr., defends school choice at Harvard University last month.



Howard Fuller also defends choice at Harvard.

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are child benefits." It maintains that the same public policy rationale that impelled the equitable participation of private school students and teachers in programs like the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) should apply as well to programs designed to address the teacher shortage.

Precedent

There are plenty of precedents for private school parity in teacher-benefit

programs. The current Stafford and Perkins loan forgiveness programs include teachers in low-income private schools. The long-standing professional development components of ESEA treat private school teachers equitably. The new Teacher Next Door program out of the Department of Housing and Urban Development allows public school and private school teachers to purchase certain single-family HUD homes at half price. And in February, the Senate approved, 98-0, a proposal by Susan Collins

(R-ME) to provide tax credits and deductions for elementary and secondary classroom teachers in public and private schools.

Excerpts from CAPE's issue paper on the teacher shortage are provided on page 2. The full document is available at <http://www.capenet.org/pubpol.html>





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• The Senate last month approved S. 1134, a bill that would allow parents to save for a child's elementary, secondary or college education by using special accounts that earn tax-free interest. The 61-37 vote was the widest margin of Senate support ever for education savings accounts.

On the House side, Republican leaders had to postpone a vote on similar legislation that had been scheduled for March 30. The bipartisan bill, H.R. 7, sponsored by **Kenny Hulshof** (R-MO) and **William Lipinski** (D-IL), is now expected to be voted on sometime in May.

The "What's New?" page of CAPE's Web site — <http://www.capenet.org/new.html> — provides lots of information about the bill. The page also includes a link to CAPE's Legislative Action Center, which you can use to send an e-mail message to urge your representative in the House to support H.R. 7.

• "Are efforts to achieve racially integrated public schools legally and

politically doomed?" That's the provocative question law professor **Jeffrey Rosen** asks in the lead article in the "Week in Review" section of the April 2 edition of *The New York Times*. Rosen concludes that because legal and political support for forced integration seems to be declining, "the hope of integrated public schools may soon be a distant memory." Indeed, a related table prepared by staff at the *Times* shows that in the 1990's black students in the United States were being educated in increasingly segregated settings.

Rosen suggests one way to achieve better-integrated schools is to allow "poor parents the same opportunities to escape failing inner city schools as richer parents enjoy." He says there is "growing support among minorities for school vouchers," and he notes that researcher **Jay Greene** has found that in cities that have voucher programs, "the voucher schools tend to be more racially integrated than the public schools."

• CAPE continues to grow. Last month the Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools joined the CAPE family. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that in 1997 there were 105 SBACS schools enrolling nearly 27,000 students. The SBACS mission is to "impact the education of school-aged children toward a biblical worldview by providing information, training, fellowship, and avenues of influence for pastors and educational leaders of the Southern Baptist churches and schools."



John Chandler (left), executive director of SBACS, with Michael Eanes, president of CAPE.

• **Frank Delaney**, former director of CAPE's project to involve private schools in the National Diffusion Network, died of cancer at his home in Washington, DC, on March 29. He is survived by his wife, Carol.

Frank's friends at CAPE remember him fondly for the extraordinary levels of energy and intellect he brought to his work. He had a gift for integrating ideas, getting results, and living life with remarkable vigor.

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