

# OUTLOOK

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**A report from the Council for American Private Education, Washington, D.C.**

**January, 1976**

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VOUCHER PROGRAM NOW BEING  
CONSIDERED IN E. HARTFORD  
INCLUDES PRIVATE SCHOOLS

If the Board of Education in East Hartford, Conn., votes in late January to implement "Parents' Choice," it could be the first educational system in the U.S. to have a voucher program which allows parents to choose among public and private schools for their children. The Alum Rock, Cal., voucher program, the only one now operating in the country, includes no private schools. "We are keenly interested in widening the range of alternatives available to parents for the education of their children," said East Hartford's Superintendent of Schools, Eugene A. Diggs.

An open enrollment program has been in effect in East Hartford public schools since 1969, allowing parents to continue their children in their present schools or to transfer them to another anywhere in the city if space is available. Transportation costs are the only ones borne by parents. The National Institute of Education (NIE) funded the open enrollment project, aiming to determine if increased parental control over the allocation of education funds produces improvements in the quality of education and greater public satisfaction with it. The project was based on an educational voucher model developed by the Center for the Study of Public Policy, an independent research organization, in Cambridge, Mass. Andrew Esposito, Coordinator of the Parents' Choice Staff, says "Our experience with the open enrollment program has laid the groundwork for 'Parents' Choice.' Parents and administrators understand better how to deal with the added freedom and flexibility."

East Hartford, a city of some 57,000 people, is located in central Connecticut. It is one of the main employment centers in the state, with 110 manufacturing firms. "Parents' Choice," an extension of the open enrollment concept, would give parents, through distribution of vouchers covering full educational costs and transportation, a choice among 22 public schools, 2 Catholic schools, and, it is hoped, at least 1 nonsectarian private school. If the East Hartford Board of Education approves "Parents' Choice," it will submit a grant proposal to NIE requesting funding for the voucher demonstration project, including the establishment of an independent school. Denis Doyle, of NIE, said the fund request probably would be granted. He expects a "modest amount" would be available to help groups interested in private schools with site acquisition, initial planning, and basic equipment.

Because there is no nonsectarian private school in the city, a feasibility study is underway to see if there are enough interested parents to support one; the type of school they wish; and the availability of school facilities, faculty and staff personnel, and support services. Investigators are determining the practicality of establishing an independent school given existing local and state laws and regulations; the financial support required to assure the operational viability of the school; and possible attitudes or other special community conditions which might work against its success.

Robert Lamborn, Executive Director, Council for American Private Education (CAPE) directs the feasibility study, assisted by Joseph dePeyster, School Effectiveness Project, National Association of Independent Schools; Nelson Farquhar, Staff Associate, Connecticut Association of Independent Schools; and The Rev. David Kern, Executive Director, SPHERE.

IRS SAYS PRIVATE SCHOOLS  
CAN LOSE TAX EXEMPTION IF  
RACIALLY DISCRIMINATORY

All private schools, in order to receive or maintain tax exempt status, must adhere to new Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations requiring racially nondiscriminatory policies toward students. To comply with new guidelines and recordkeeping requirements, effective Jan. 1, 1976, each school must show that it has racially nondiscriminatory policies toward students, that it makes them known to the general public, and that it adheres to them.

Regulations state that each private school must include in its charter, bylaws, or other governing instrument, or in a resolution of its governing body, a nondiscriminatory admissions policy, which must be published or broadcast to all segments of the school community during the period of the year when the school solicits students. Religious schools drawing 75% of their students from the sponsoring religious denomination are exempted from this requirement; they must, however, publish their nondiscriminatory policy in their denominational newspapers. IRS will not charge schools with discriminatory practices if they select students on the basis of membership in a religious denomination, providing membership in the denomination is open to all on a racially nondiscriminatory basis. Similarly free will be schools "favoring" racial minorities with respect to admissions, facilities, programs, and financial assistance, providing their policies serve, in effect, to reduce societal discrimination against these groups.

School facilities and programs, including scholarship and loan programs, must be operated in racially nondiscriminatory ways. IRS uses a school's employment practices toward its faculty and staff as a further indicator of whether or not the school adheres to a racially nondiscriminatory policy toward its students. Certification of the required policies must be made to IRS by an authorized individual at each school annually, and extensive records must be kept for three years for use by IRS upon request.

STEVENS, NEW U.S. SUPREME  
COURT JUSTICE, ONE OF BEST  
PEOPLE AVAILABLE, SAYS BAR

Private school educators and researchers interested in the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court and especially in its newest justice, John Paul Stevens, are pleased with reports of Stevens' scholarship, discipline, open-mindedness, and studied effort to do justice to all parties within the framework of the law. His opinions, written as judge of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago, were "of consistently high quality," reported an American Bar Association committee during Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on the Stevens nomination. They were "highly analytical, closely researched, and meticulously prepared," the report stated.

All four Stevens children have attended Christ the King Catholic School in Chicago, where both Judge and Mrs. Stevens were very active in school activities.

OE HONORS SIX STATE  
COORDINATORS OF NON-  
PUBLIC SCHOOL SERVICES

Six state officials were honored Dec. 18 for their valuable consultative services to the Commissioner of Education on private elementary and secondary school matters. Special Assistant to the Commissioner Robert Weatherford presented the Office of Education's (OE) Certificate of Appreciation, in Recognition of Significant Contributions to the Progress of Education in the United States of America to the following state nonpublic school services coordinators: Calvin Criner, North Carolina; Thomas Heath, New York; Walter McCarthy, New Jersey; Vincent McCoola, Pennsylvania; Adolphus Spain, Maryland; and Frand Vittetow, Kentucky.

The awards were presented during two days of OE-sponsored meetings called to discuss current national and state developments bearing on the welfare of private schools. Representatives from the staffs of OE regional offices and state education agencies attended.

GREATER ERIC UTILIZATION  
GOAL OF NIE-CAPE EFFORTS

A year-long study of ways to make the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) of the National Institute of Education (NIE) more responsive to the needs of those interested in private school data is producing results. CAPE Directors agree that ERIC should become a major national repository for such information; ERIC and CAPE are mounting major efforts to identify documents related to private education to stimulate the movement of such material into the ERIC data base, and to encourage researchers and practitioners to capitalize upon the potential usefulness of this data for both private and public education.

ERIC is a centralized computer facility which provides access to educational literature of both a research and a descriptive nature. Clearinghouses—there are 16 located across the country in universities and other organizations having specialized expertise—catalogue, index, and abstract documents in their subject matter areas. Data from the clearinghouses is sent to ERIC, forming a central data base from which publications and indexes are produced. ERIC publishes a monthly abstract journal of about 1,300 documents, Resources in Education (RIE). It covers all aspects of education, and achieves bibliographic control over "fugitive" literature, unpublished pieces of limited distribution. Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE), a companion publication to RIE, covers periodical literature. Documents, reasonably priced, are available from ERIC on microfiche or in paper copy form.

Charles W. Hoover, Branch Chief, ERIC, in a letter to all clearinghouse directors, urges them to "intensify" their efforts to obtain acquisitions from the private education community. The Scholars Advisory Committee to CAPE works to expedite the systematic identification of relevant research materials, their flow into the ERIC system, and their use by the research community. CAPE Directors are urging parallel efforts by private school practitioners with regard to descriptive documents and in their graduate study. "Private Elementary and Secondary Education: A Bibliographic Guide," to be published by CAPE this winter, is another effort to identify and consolidate existing literature. Journals published by national private school organizations have been added to the list of those being routinely processed by ERIC.

NIE and CAPE representatives agree that private education provides a virtually untapped data base which may well provide insights having at least as much significance for public as for private education.

SEARCH FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS  
LOCATES 20,250 NATIONWIDE

U.S. private elementary and secondary schools number about 20,250. Half are Catholic. The other half includes church-related schools and independent schools with no church affiliation. Among the church schools are Amish, Episcopal, Hebrew, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker, and Seventh-day Adventist schools.

Although they operate throughout the country, private schools, clustering around churches which support them, are found mainly in areas of heavy church population of varying faiths and in areas of heavy national population. The five states having the most private schools are California (2,025), New York (1,999), Pennsylvania (1,551), Illinois (1,264), and Michigan (859). Basis for these figures is a recently developed universe list of private schools prepared by the Council for American Private Education under contract with the National Center for Education Statistics.

According to August, 1975, data from the Office of Education, private schools enroll some 4.6 million children as compared with 44.7 million in the public schools—over 10% of all children. They enroll more than twice as many as all degree-granting private jr. colleges, colleges, and universities, and half as many as all degree-granting institutions of higher education, public and private.

DAVITT TO SERVE ON TITLE I  
NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

J. Alan Davitt, Executive Director, New York State Council of Catholic School Superintendents, and CAPE State Representative for New York, has been appointed to serve as a member of the National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children. The Council, consisting of 15 members appointed by the President for 3-year terms, reviews and evaluates the administration and operation of ESEA Title I activities. "With Davitt's appointment," says Rabbi Bernard Goldenberg, Associate Director of the New York based National Society for Hebrew Day Schools and CAPE Vice President, "we can be certain that the voices of the many disadvantaged children in Catholic, Hebrew, Lutheran, and other non-public schools will now be heard."

WASHINGTON PRIVATE SCHOOL  
GROUP, FACING RESTRICTIVE  
CONSTITUTION, PLANS FUTURE

Frustrated at the polls in efforts to achieve state and national parity on constitutional matters affecting private education, the Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS) is now regrouping and setting new goals, says Roger L. Van Dyken, Federation executive. The proposed amendment, passed by "overwhelming margins" in both houses of the legislature and then unexpectedly defeated in the November elections, would have permitted all services to Washington's private school students which are allowed under the U.S. constitution.

WFIS, formed in 1970 by representatives of Catholic, Christian, Episcopal, independent, Hebrew, and Lutheran schools and representing 253 schools enrolling 44,000 students, has mounted three major thrusts. It strives to achieve broader understanding of and support for private education in the state legislature, to improve the lot of private education by developing constructive working relationships with the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), and to represent the interests of private schools with a broad range of professional and lay organizations and government agencies.

In spite of the state's restraining constitution, WFIS has had marked success. It saw through passage of the Needy and Disadvantaged Student Act (which provided a \$300 scholarship to needy families whose children attended private schools) and the Shared Time and Ancillary Services Act (under which private school students are able to share in services offered at the local public schools) and the establishment of the Office of Non-Public Schools within the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office. While the first of these has been struck down under the terms of the Washington constitution and the latter two are under threat of suit, their passage and establishment reflect substantial legislative and governmental support for the cause of private education.

Private school representatives are now participating on boards administering various federal title programs, a close relationship exists between WFIS and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and WFIS is working with SPI to rewrite teacher certification standards, graduation requirements, and school approval regulations related to private schools.

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