

CAPE Council for American Private Education outlook

"Voice of the Nation's Private Schools"

February 1995 Number 207

Council Members: American Montessori Society • Association of American Military Colleges and Schools of the U.S. • Christian Schools International • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • Friends Council on Education • Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod • National Association of Episcopal Schools • National Association of Independent Schools • National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children • National Catholic Educational Association • National Society for Hebrew Day Schools • Seventh-day Adventist Board of Education, K-12 • Solomon Schechter Day School Association • U.S. Catholic Conference • **Affiliated state organizations in:** Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin

Legislative Issues Emerge For CAPE

The 104th Congress was fast out of the gates when it convened January 4th. With a self-imposed 100-day deadline for action on its 10-point "Contract With America," the new Republican majority is moving legislation quickly through the committee process to consideration by the full House and Senate. Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) claimed that the lawmakers are off to their quickest peacetime start since the Great Depression when President Clinton signed the first bill passed by Congress on January 23.

The new majority on Capitol Hill is dedicated to slashing the Federal deficit by "block granting" — the process by which funding for a number of programs is consolidated and sent to the states with few strings attached. Block grant advocates argue that states and localities are closer to the needs of the nation's citizens and can better serve them. This "empowerment" — another frequently heard buzzword — is designed to promote personal responsibility and end what Gingrich calls the "nanny state."

CAPE Active on Issues

As previously reported in *Outlook*, abolition of the U.S. Department of Education and the repeal of a number of programs affecting children top the target lists of many of these reformers. While legislation to shut down the Department has yet to be introduced, budget-cutting legislation with potentially drastic consequences for some Federal education programs is moving rapidly through Congress.

Funding and Block Granting

Intestimony before the House Economic and Educational Opportunity Committee's Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee on January 26, former U.S. Education Secretaries Lamar Alexander and William Bennett again called for the abolition of the Department they once headed.

"The Congress should take every single activity currently housed in the Department of Education and do one of three things with it: send it home to the states and communities; entrust it to another federal agency that is suited to conduct it in harmony with related activities; or abolish it on the grounds that the Federal government can no longer afford to spend money on programs that have outlived their usefulness or that can be

CAPE Conference next month

Don't forget CAPE's 5th Annual Legislative Conference March 14 and 15! It's not too late to register for briefings at the White House and on Capitol Hill — and for the Education Leadership Award Dinner at which Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, will be honored. If you did not receive a registration form, call CAPE at 202-659-0016 for more information. If you haven't yet sent in your registration, send it in!

handled satisfactorily by others," the two write in submitted remarks.

They recommend that "virtually all ma-
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Private Schools Generally Fare Well In Budget

Private schools and programs of importance to CAPE generally fare well in President Clinton's proposed budget for fiscal year 1996 released February 6. One significant exception is the capital expenses program for private school children which is reduced in next year's budget by \$21.4 million.

The capital program assists local education agencies in providing equitable services to children enrolled in private schools by reimbursing them for the costs of providing portable vans and for the remodeling of space for such services. According to materials provided by the Department, "the proposed reduction reflects the recent decline in the

number of states that use their full allocations from the program, since many of the start-up costs of providing instructional space have now been completed, and the further decline anticipated under the new law."

The National Diffusion Network, for which CAPE is the Private School Facilitator, is held at the Fiscal Year 1995 level of \$14.48 million. While it is still rumored that the NDN is a possible target for cut-back or even elimination

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for programs assisting elementary/secondary education" should be combined into a block grant and returned to the states — although they do not advocate this be done completely without accountability.

Two weeks before, Education Secretary William Riley succinctly stated the importance of education. In remarks before the full House Economic and Educational Opportunity Committee, Riley said: "Education is a national priority but a state responsibility under local control. I believe strongly in state and local decision making. I have been a governor. At the same time, I believe education must be part of our national purpose. Our economic prosperity, our national security, and our nation's civic life have never been more linked to education than they are today as we enter the Information Age of the 21st Century."

It is reported that U.S. Sen. Dan Coats (R-IN) is preparing legislation to carry out the recommendations of Alexander and Bennett. Meanwhile, the Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate are currently working on legislation to scale back funding already appropriated for the current fiscal year, with every line item in the budget being scrutinized. Targets for cuts — or complete elimination — include programs previously slated for elimination by the President but still funded by Congress last year, including the National Diffusion Network. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which funds the Public Broadcasting System and National Public Radio, is a top target.

Another target of the move toward block grants are all Federal nutrition programs, including the school breakfast and lunch programs which feed an estimated 25 million children per day. The "Personal Responsibility Act," a part of the "Contract With America," repeals these two school programs in addition to feeding programs authorized under the Older Americans Act; the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, the Child Nutrition Act, and others. Funds saved by repealing these programs would be lumped together, cut by a certain percentage, and given to the states with few requirements on how they should be used.

CAPE sent a letter to targeted members of the House of Representatives on January 31 opposing efforts to create this nutrition block grant: "According to the U.S. Depart-

ment of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), 93,313 U.S. schools — including 6,272 private schools — participated in the Federal school lunch program as of October 1993," the letter reads. "Likewise, a total of 60,499 U.S. schools — including 1,945 private schools — participated in the Federal breakfast program as of October 1993, the latest date for which data are available. By block granting these programs, the Food Research and Action Council estimates that 30,000 to 40,000 of the 93,000 participating schools would drop the breakfast and lunch programs, leaving as many as 10 million children unserved."

Taxes

Tax reform with the goal of reinforcing the American family is a major priority for the new Republican majority. A number of proposals — part of and separate from the "Contract With America" — have been introduced to achieve their goals.

Capital gains tax cut. Of interest to many private schools is a provision of H.R. 9, the "Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act," that would exclude from taxes 50 percent of capital gains — the profits from the sale of assets such as stocks, bonds, real estate, art, and rare coins, for example. Furthermore, this part of the Contract would also reduce the capital gains tax by indexing capital gains income for inflation occurring while the asset is held. The measure was introduced by Rep. Bill Archer (R-TX), the new chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee

Middle class tax relief. The "American Dream Restoration Act," H.R. 6 introduced by Rep. Philip Crane (R-IL), includes a \$500 per child (up to age 18) tax credit for families with annual incomes up to \$200,000, with a partial credit available to families with incomes between \$200,000 and \$250,000. According to its advocates, this measure will benefit approximately 50 million families, 90 percent of which earn less than \$75,000 per year.

President Clinton responded with his own proposals for middle class tax relief, offering what he called his "Middle Class Bill of Rights." Clinton proposes for families earning up to \$60,000 annually a \$500 tax credit for dependent children under age 13, with the credit phased-out for families with incomes between \$60,000 and \$75,000.

Tax incentives for educational pur-

poses. H.R. 6 also would reform the current marriage penalty and allow for tax free deductions from "American Dream Savings Accounts" for educational expenses at post-secondary institutions. Likewise, the President's "Bill of Rights" would also expand Individual Retirement Accounts and allow for penalty-free withdrawals to pay for higher education costs, first-time home purchases, long-term unemployment, and catastrophic medical costs.

Representative Gerald Solomon (R-NY) has introduced legislation that would offer a \$1,000 tax credit to offset tuition payments for higher education, vocational school, or accredited private elementary or secondary schools. Clinton's "Bill of Rights" includes a call for a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 for post-secondary education and training, as well as a voucher program worth up to \$3,000 per year for two years to empower workers with the ability to get skills training as needed.

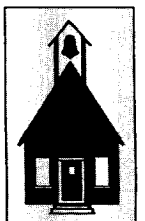
Another tax issue of interest to CAPE includes reauthorization of a tax provision that expired last year allowing for the deduction of full market value of gifts of publicly traded stock to private foundations.

IDEA Reauthorization

It was previously thought that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act would highlight the education agenda in the 104th Congress, although there is some indication that Congress could postpone action until 1996. The Clinton Administration is expected to send its legislative proposal to Capitol Hill this spring. A draft proposal currently being discussed would replace IDEA's 13 eligibility categories with a single standard similar to that contained in the Americans' with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. Furthermore, the draft includes changes in the funding formula to states and would include IDEA students in the general statewide assessments to the extent possible.

Technology

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) has placed a high priority on technological advancement and has gone so far as to call for providing laptop computers for all. On February 1, Senate Commerce



Committee Chairman Larry Pressler (R-SD) released a discussion draft of legislation he is planning to introduce soon. His legislation, as currently drafted, is designed to limit regulation — including a rollback of regulations included in the 1992 Cable Act — and promote free enterprise competition.

As in the 103rd Congress, CAPE will closely monitor technology legislation with potential benefits for education, and take appropriate actions as needed. Any legislation should enable both public and private schools access to the telecommunications networks at preferential rates. Furthermore, there must be set asides for non-commercial education and information services to ensure that future networks not ignore social and educational needs in favor of purely commercial ones.

CAPEnotes

► **National Gallery of Art Summer Institute for Teachers and Principals announced.** Teachers of all subjects, as well as principals and administrators, are invited to apply for the 1995 Summer Institute offered by the National Gallery of Art. Applications from teams that include both teachers and principals (or administrators) are encouraged and will be given preference.

Two topics are offered: The European Renaissance: 1250-1520 (July 17-22, and July 31-August 5, 1995), and Crosscurrents of American Art: 17th, 18th, and 19th Centuries (July 10-15, July 24-29, and Au-

gust 7-12, 1995). Both programs emphasize the social and cultural context of art and make interdisciplinary connections. Slide lectures, gallery tours, and discussion groups provide the course foundation. Studio techniques are demonstrated and classroom resources are provided to enhance discussion groups on teaching strategies.

Participants can elect to enroll for one hour of graduate credit, awarded by the University of Virginia.

To receive application materials, write to: Teacher Institute, Education Division, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC 20565. Applications must be postmarked no later than April 15. For more information, contact Julie Springer at 202-842-6261.

► **Turn off that TV!** During the last week of April, 1995, thousands of schools, libraries, and literacy groups will join together in a coordinated effort to encourage millions of families and individuals to turn off their televisions for seven days. "National TV-Turnoff Week" is being coordinated by TV-Free American (TVFA), a non-profit organization that encourages Americans to reduce the amount of television they watch, raises awareness about the harmful effects of excessive television watching, and urges Americans to replace TV time with activities that lead to more literate, productive lives and engaged citizenship.

The average American watches more than four hours of television each day. At that rate, by age 65, that person will have

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by the new Republican majority in Congress, the Administration's continuation of the program is encouraging.

Likewise, funding for the school recognition programs — like the Blue Ribbon Schools program which CAPE facilitates for private schools — is continued in the FY 96 budget proposal. There is no specific line-item for the Blue Ribbon Schools program as in past years, but a footnote in the budget proposal states the \$36.75 million allotted to the Fund for the Improvement of Education "includes \$879,000 for Blue Ribbon Schools, which was appropriated separately in 1994."

The "Technology for Education" line item includes a \$43 million increase for FY 96. "All of the increase would be used to support additional challenge grants to expand learning opportunities and create technology-rich, high-performance learning environments for the 21st century," according to the Department.

At a Department briefing on February 6, Secretary Richard Riley again sounded the Administration's commitment to education in the United States.

"President Clinton and I believe education is the key investment in the nation's future," Riley said. "Our economic prosperity, our national security, and our civic life have never been more linked to education than they are today."



February's Festivities for the Private School Facilitator Project

The February calendar is filled with activities for the Private School Facilitator Project, (PSFP) beginning with the National Diffusion Network (NDN) Annual Conference in Washington February 12-15. In conjunction with that conference, an advisory committee to the PSFP consisting of NDN colleagues will meet for an update on new ways the PSFP is working with the private school community to offer NDN programs for staff development with student impact. Also in conjunction with the NDN conference, the National Dissemination Association, the trade group for NDN grantees, will hold a luncheon on Capitol Hill to discuss relevant Congressional issues before its "Valentine's Day informational assault on Capitol Hill."

The month of February illustrates the project's involvement with a variety of private schools using various NDN programs with several with several events planned:

- The Dawn Treader Christian school in Patterson, NJ is hosting a CLIMB workshop for area Christian schools.
- The New Garden Friends school in Greensboro, NC is hosting an institute where Friends, Independent, Catholic and Montessori Schools will choose among four NDN programs.
- Due to an overwhelming response to a Folger Shakespeare Library Education workshop held in January in Philadelphia, PA, for the schools in the Archdiocese, another Folger workshop is scheduled for February

to accommodate the overflow of interested participants.

- The Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington (AISGW) is offering Image Making Within the Writing Process to their schools in the Washington, DC area.
- To round out the month, the Archdiocese of Washington has scheduled a follow-up day for Success Understanding Mathematics and the Archdiocese of Chicago has planned a First Level Mathematics workshop.

Please call Frank Delany or Fay O'Brien at (202) 659-0177 if you have any questions or comments on ways that we can assist your school(s) to utilize NDN programs.

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spent 9 years of life watching television. The average American child sees 20,000 commercials per year.

To learn how to organize a local turnoff in your school or community, contact Elizabeth Barrett at TV-Free American, 1322 18th Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036. TVFA's telephone is 202-887-0436.

▶ The Nation's Attic At Your Fingertips. Often referred to as the "nation's attic," the **Smithsonian Institution** in Washington, DC, is a treasure chest of resources for teachers and students. And if you can't come to the Smithsonian, it is just possible the Smithsonian could come to you. Through its Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Smithsonian provides materials and training that enables teachers and students to use museums — and the primary sources they contain — for hands-on, experiential learning in both classroom and museum settings.

Over the next five years, OESE envisions itself becoming the national leader in museum-school partnerships, with projects in at least one community in each state. The office has already established such partner-

ships in 25 states and the District of Columbia. Already, the Smithsonian offers on-line information and services through Internet, America Online, CompuServe, and GENie. Each year OESE publishes the Smithsonian Resource Guide for Teachers.

For more information about the resources of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the Smithsonian Institution write to the OESE, Arts and Industries Building, 1163/MRC 402, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560 or call 202-357-2425.

STATE CAPEnotes

▶ "Private Schools Appreciation Day" was February 2 in **Oregon** as proclaimed by Gov. John A. Kitzhaber and endorsed by the State Board of Education. The Oregon Federation of Independent Schools, led by State CAPE Representative Mark Siegel, was instrumental in earning the designation. The official proclamation, signed by the Governor and Secretary of State Phil Keisling notes that "private primary, elementary, and secondary schools in the state of Oregon contribute to the educational welfare of the children and youth" in that state. The State

Board of Education also issued a proclamation in support of the designation.

▶ Plans by the **New Jersey** Association of Independent Schools to become an accreditation organization are moving forward with its first site visit scheduled for the 1995-96 school year. The NJAIS Board of Directors voted in October 1993 to become an accreditation organization, and the first school to move through the process is currently at work planning its self-study.

▶ Billie Kops Wimmer, executive director of the **Michigan** Association of Non-Public Schools — and the former State CAPE Representative to the CAPE Board of Directors — has resigned her position to assume responsibilities with newly-elected U.S. Sen. Spencer Abraham (R-MI). After 14 years at MANS, Wimmer begins as the Deputy Chief of Staff in Abraham's office. Abraham is a member of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee which has jurisdiction over education issues. "My decision to leave was not taken lightly, nor was it an easy one," Wimmer writes in a letter to colleagues announcing her departure. "Education issues will still remain important to me." CAPE wishes her well in her new position.

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