



Freedom's

JOURNAL MAGAZINE

The Political Voice of Conservative Reform

Vol 3 Issue 3



K-12 Education:

The Final Frontier For Civil Rights

Books With A Christian Worldview

A young man with short dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, is looking down at an open book he is holding. He is standing in a library or bookstore, with wooden bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. The lighting is warm and focused on the man and his book.

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“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

Harriet Tubman

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The Political Voice of Conservative Reform



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PUBLISHER'S WELCOME

Welcome to the current issue of Freedom's Journal Magazine. In this May/June 2010 issue we tackle the problem of education. Our journey we look at education as the "Final Frontier" and last obstacle to full emancipation for Blacks, in particular, and society as a whole.

Statistics show that our public schools have fallen short of the mark. And, with less than 50% of High School kids graduating, we're facing certain crisis. Some would even suggest our education system is in need of a total overhaul. Others believe more money is the answer to the low performance of our schools. This issue challenges these ideas and asserts that our schools and education system will only change when competition is part of the equation.

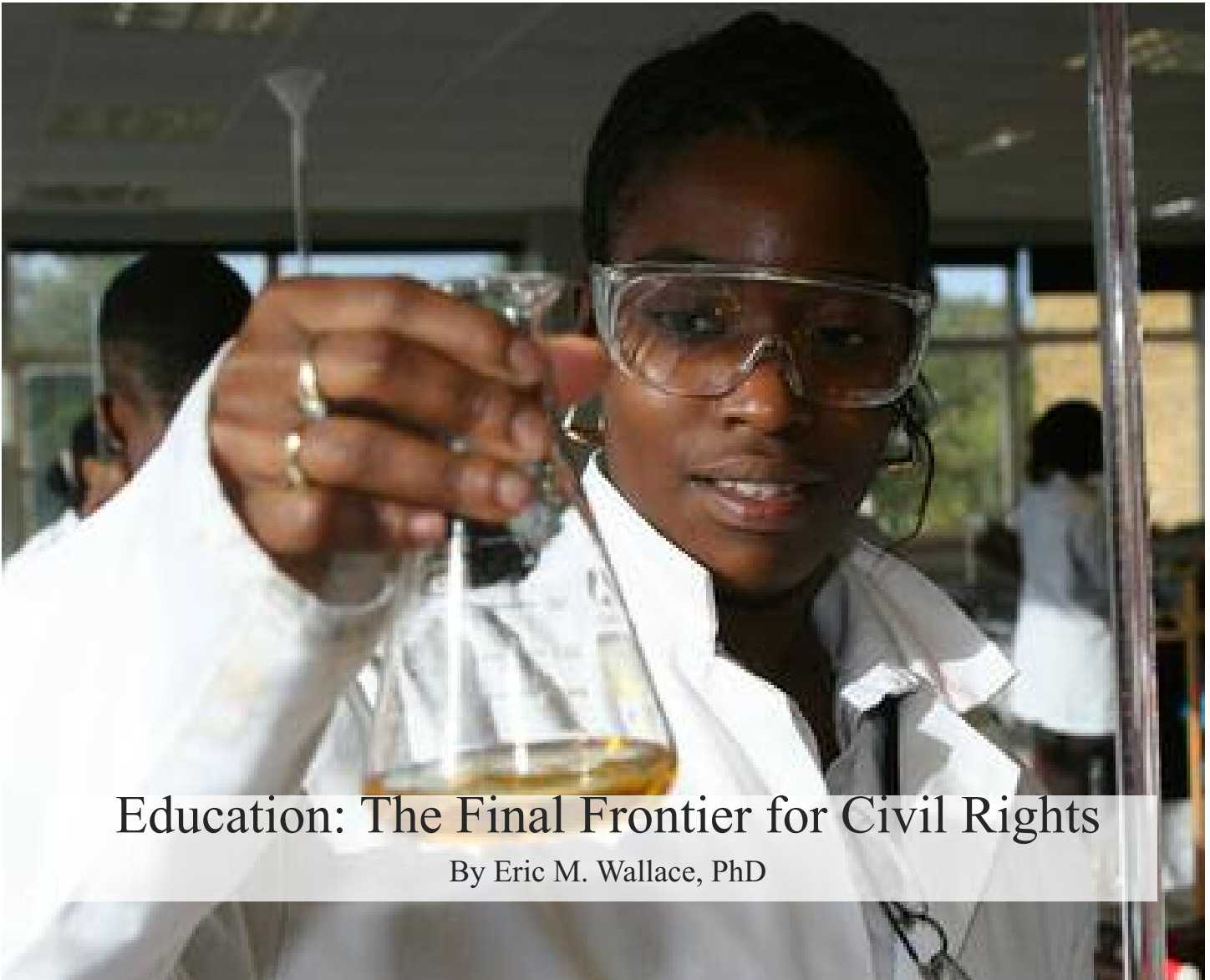
We'll also look at the accomplishment of vouchers programs, charter schools, and home schooling. We are firm believers that innovation that is demonstrated in the private sector, should find a home in our education system. Schools, which are not encumbered by union rules or over-burdensome government over-sight, have proven that they can produce amazing results. You'll read about some of these schools in this issue.

Additionally, we compare the movement for "school choice" with the Civil Rights movement because so many minorities still suffer the devastating effects from the status quo. Together Blacks and Hispanics represent the highest drop out rates—and highest unemployment—for all teenagers. Violence in these communities is also problematic. A good education is the surest way both parents and students have as their ticket out of highly impoverished neighborhoods. A "good" education is a ticket to advancement, as well as a student's chance to look beyond the boundaries set by others—to achieve the impossible.

Our hope is, that as you read this issue you will be "stirred up" to join the fight for school choice in your state, city or community. As you read the articles and watch the videos you'll be struck with the overwhelming truth that our educational dysfunction is not only a concern for those with school age children—but for everyone who expects the next generation to pick up where we left off, to ensure our liberties for generations to come.

I trust this issue, as with every issue, will inspire you to continue to "stand for what we say we believe, and actively engage in the political process that represents us".

Eric M Wallace



Education: The Final Frontier for Civil Rights

By Eric M. Wallace, PhD

“Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its five-year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before.”

In the 1960s Americans were in awe about space travel. A new young President would, among other things, challenge a nation to send man to the moon. Our imaginations were energized as thoughts of space exploration filled our heads.

By May of 1961, America had launched her first manned space flight. In June of 1965 Edward H. White walked in space. Then in 1969 Apollo 11 propelled astronaut’s Neil Armstrong, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin and Michael Collins to the moon. As the world stood by glued to the radio or TV set Neil Armstrong uttered the oft-quoted “One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.”

At about the same time, the Civil rights movement was making great strides. The March on Washington in 1963, The Civil Rights Act in 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Thurgood Marshall’s appointment to the Supreme Court in 1967 and the election of Edward Brooke as the 1st black elected to the US Senate since reconstruction marked the 60’s as a decade for both political and social policy achievements. It was clear by this time, especially, in those areas of science and civil rights, that our country showed promise for moving forward at a steady pace.

However, our imaginations and thinking proved to be light-years ahead of the governments’ space program as the entertainment world debuted a new TV program in September of 1966 called Star Trek. In it, we explored the galaxies, which lie beyond the moon, while mapping new solar systems to “boldly go[ing] where no man had gone before.” We were “exploring strange new worlds” three years before we ever landed on the moon. Our imagination for the “great beyond” was stoked—with

space providing the final frontier.

Unfortunately for us our education system, although integrated, has not followed our imaginations. In fact, as the years go by our public education system has become more and more static. The “one size fits all” approach has caused our schools to perform at new levels of mediocrity.

For example, in the state of Illinois parents are lobbying for school choice because of the dysfunction of our schools. According to the Illinois Policy Institute (IPI):

Only 32 percent of Illinois public elementary school students are reading at grade level. That number slips to 30 percent by the end of middle school. By the time they reach the 12th grade, only 20 percent of public school students possess the requisite skills to succeed in college. At least 25 percent of students in Illinois’s public high schools drop out of school altogether.

These alarming facts are despite the 25 billion dollars spent on education annually. Yet, state legislators, teachers unions, and politicians alike continue to call for more money for education reform: while systematically blocking attempts to break Illinois’ cycle of mediocrity.

Happily, in recent months there has been renewed hope for Chicago school children—and their parents. One of the state’s most ardent supporters of the “more money mantra” changed his mind and decided to support school choice. State Senator James Meeks, Sr. Pastor of Salem Baptist Church located in Chicago’s predominately African-American Pullman Park community, now agrees that more money alone will not improve the underperforming schools in his district, nor will it change the plight of many of the students trapped in those schools. Senator Meeks championed a bill in the Illinois legislature that would establish a pilot voucher program for kids who “attend the lowest-performing public schools in Chicago to be given the opportunity to instead send their children to a private school, should they see fit” according to IPI. Although both Democrats and Republicans heralded the bill—it unfortunately after passing in the senate, failed in the House.

Needless to say, the evidence is clear: according to researchers in the publication *School Choice Issues* “Monopoly Versus Markets: The Empirical Evidence on Private Schools & School Choice” voucher students do better when allowed to attend the school of their choice. Researchers found an increase in math scores between 5 to 11 percentage points above the control group. More specifically, in New York after 3 years Black students

had combined reading and math scores 9% above their control group. In Washington D. C. and Dayton after 2 years the combine reading and math scores were 6.5% above their control group. All across the nation research has shown that once you allow parents to choose where their children should attend school their kids do better, the parents are more involved and even the public schools begin to improve with competition from private schools.

The same results occur when kids are allowed to attend charter schools. Case in point, in Springfield Illinois Ball Charter School is an elementary school that enrolls students from all across the district. According to the Illinois Policy Institute “Ball students outperformed the district average in 80 percent of comparable measures of student performance; notably, low-income students outperformed district peers in nine of 14 match-ups.” IPI states that there are “nearly 300 Springfield students on a waiting list to get into Ball Charter because of limited seating and the school’s excellent reputation.”

Another more astonishing case in the success of charter schools is that of Urban Prep Academy founded in 2002. In 2006, they opened their doors in the tough Englewood neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois. This is the only all boys school in Illinois. What is remarkable, is that

School choice has the potential to change our society exponentially, while unleashing the creative potential of our children and teachers.

while Illinois public high schools graduate less than half of its students, Urban Prep announced this year that all 107 students of its first graduating class have been accepted to a four-year college. When these young men started the Academy only 4% of the seniors were reading at grade level in their freshman year. The motto of the school is “we believe.” They are making believers out of many skeptics.

Unfortunately, even with the successes of Ball Charter School and Urban Prep Academy there is a cap on Charter schools in Illinois. Thus, many parents will not be able to get the quality education they desire for their children. Many children are stuck in schools that either cannot, or will not, perform at a level that will allow its graduates to fulfill their destiny. Someone once said, “that prior to 1954 they won’t let blacks [us] in their schools, now they won’t let us out.”

And now, in the 21st century, education is the new frontier for civil rights. It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to understand the need for educational “choice”. Black and Hispanic children have been sentenced to spend their most formational years in schools, which not only breed crime—but also fall well below the standards for achievement. It’s society who pays for the high level of dropouts. Chicago graduates a mere 49.7% of enrolled students: with crime rates through the roof (Chicago



homicides since January 2010, number 115) and public school violence so horrific that parents are afraid to send their kids to school.

You would think that 41 years after the Apollo 11's flight to the moon, and 46 years after the Civil Rights Act we would not have these problems. Many would argue, that ingenuity that put man on the moon should have been first put to use right here on planet earth to encourage the next generation of thinkers through all types of school options: private, public charter, vocational, confessional, parochial, performing arts schools and home-schooling.

Only then will the activism of the Civil rights movement ensure that all students, regardless of their ethnicity, have access to quality education. If we do this, the future is only bound by a student's imagination and hard work.

Finally, if I had it my way, I'd change the opening quote to the following: Education, the final frontier. These are the goals of parental school choice. Its life long mission: to challenge our students to master reading, math and science, to study history and new civilizations, to use their imaginations to boldly go where no man has gone before."

Undoubtedly, the freedom to choose whatever school we'd like to attend rises from the very spirit of the Civil Rights movement. Those who marched, protested and stood their ground did so to ensure that their children, and their children's children, would be free. Ironically, true freedom comes through the "emancipation of the mind"—and will only be fully realized as schools compete for students, who must excel, to remain open. School choice equals freedom; and freedom opens the door to endless opportunities.

If we'd commit to making school choice a priority; then, Neil Armstrong's quote would finally come to fruition for every student, "One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." School choice has the potential to change our society exponentially, while unleashing the creative potential of our children and teachers. The question is: Are we ready to go where many have not gone before? Are we ready to explore new types of schools and go where public education could never take us? As shown by the various levels of achievement both vouchers and charter schools have already accomplished throughout various cities and municipalities all over the nation—I say, now is the time to move forward full speed ahead!

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SCHOOL VOUCHERS AND THE POWER OF CHOICE

By Lisa Fritsch

While teachers' unions recently turned out their memberships for highly-publicized "save our schools" rallies, there was another education rally at just about the same time that didn't get nearly as much attention.

Too bad, because that was one that was more important.

Rather than a "show me the money" stunt like the unions had — something that simply equated potential success with a continued and expanded flow of taxpayer money to government-run schools, the school choice advocates who marched outside the New Jersey State House demanded vouchers so families could escape failing and unchecked public schools and choose a better education.

"The amount of money pumped into the school system in my lifetime is outrageous. Most of us are aware we don't get what we are paying for," said Robert Gordon, a resident of Middletown, New Jersey.

Indeed. Most public school systems, and usually those in economically challenged areas, are failing our children socially and academically despite already having been shown the money.

Washington, DC is a case in point. Though the Washington Metro area spends around \$22,000 per student annually — enough to send a child to some of the coun-

try's best state colleges, or even some private universities — 67 percent of their public schools fail to meet accepted standards of learning.

In contrast, there are quality private schools available that can sometimes cost half that amount and have a much better success rate. Studies reveal that many students who receive vouchers to attend the schools of their choice perform much better than those given no choice and are stuck in their assigned schools.

Students with vouchers often out-do their peers on a variety of measures: meeting requirements on standardized tests; graduating from high school and going on to college.

One would think that — with these numbers — parents, altruistic teachers and lawmakers would welcome a scholarship or voucher program to remedy dysfunctional public schools that overspend and underperform.

Many parents, in fact, do. Just ask Jeffrey Canada.

Canada is the founder and operator of Harlem Children's Zone.

The hope for a chance to attend Harlem Children's Zone is strong in the community because of the school's mission and its history of success. Once admitted to Canada's program, students are aggressively monitored,

challenged and protected to ensure success. Canada's program has had a 100-percent graduation and college acceptance rate thus far. They even guarantee that each child admitted to the program will go to college.

Because there are many more desperate parents and eager students seeking admission than there are spots available, admission to Harlem Children's Zone is based on a lottery system.

In a special profile of the school aired on "60 Minutes," the frustration and disappointment of parents and students whose number wasn't called was palpable. Canada could only offer that they try again next year.

Public schools cannot match Canada's promises or his track record.

Why Vouchers Work

Choice, and the ability to exercise it, is life's golden egg.

When one boils it all down, the only thing separating rich from poor is options. The option to choose gives people power.

Consider the old saying "beggars can't be choosers." In a culture of poverty, where choices can be few and far between, one is less powerful and less vested in the consequences and outcome of one's life.

Choice is power, and people are treated differently when they are known to have power. Does anyone really get respect when it's known they have no other option than to take whatever is dished out? Does someone offer their best when they know people have nowhere else to go?

In an educational context, do students get the best from teachers who think they are teaching natural-born failures? Can teachers be motivated to offer the best teaching possible knowing that their students have no other alternatives other than what they give them? Is the student motivated to learn, knowing that they are stuck with their learning atmosphere of apathy — whether they like it or not.

The student, the family, the community, the school and education in itself become completely taken for granted. This results in a team effort of recognized losers.

What vouchers offer students, teachers and parents alike — apart from a better education — is a sense of power and responsibility that the current public school regime cannot. Subconsciously, the parent and student are empowered through their ability to choose. Their choice and power motivates them to work towards success. More than this, they have a desire to choose to go elsewhere at their discretion.

Teachers are now teaching winners, and students are motivated to learn — thus bringing out the best in even the most modest teacher. The enthusiasm for education works in symmetry and invests each party in a successful outcome.

Choice is a huge game-changer, and now the team is operating based on a line-up of winners.

A Diabolical Agenda?

Every day that a child is stuck in failing school — especially in those neighborhoods where a pair of sneakers is more valuable than a book — it is a day that they are not realizing their fullest potential. They also learn to underestimate the value of higher education.

A disadvantaged public school that no one would ever choose if they could help it cannot ever match the kind of self-starter attitude of a chosen private or public school — no matter how much money is spent per student.

Being trapped means being a victim. And, public schools are already turning victims out left and right. For someone with a conspiratorial bent, this might feel like an intended method of operation.

After all, why would any person who claims to want to rectify the ills of inequality be against a voucher program that has spelled success for thousands of minority children? Their arguments are flimsy at best.

Liberals and teachers' unions argue that vouchers takes money away from the schools in the poor communities, thus making those schools poorer. Black community leaders have unreasonably argued that vouchers helps some kids while allegedly leaving others behind.

Still, in realizing that money is not the issue, both arguments fail. The children who stay in the disadvantaged school would actually be better off with fewer students and could receive more individual attention from teachers and administrators.

As for leaving those children behind, would a fire department not go in and save as many people as they could on the first floors of a building because they couldn't save each and every person from burning alive? And, would those left behind be more motivated to succeed knowing that there is the possibility that things could be different?

If they cared, perhaps the parents of those children supposedly "left behind" would become more active in their public school district to ensure that their children can equally compete with the children in the better schools. The parents who care the most will fight for those



vouchers and a good education so that their children won't be left behind.

Being left behind isn't the issue — saving the lives and the promises of the American dream is, even if it is only one student at a time.

Since the civil rights era, America has struggled with how to best remedy the inequities and injustices of our past. Those inequities do still persist today in employment, education, housing and standards of living. But, what if it were possible to remedy most areas of inequality by fixing just one part of the problem?

When looking at the argument for affirmative action in college, increased diversity in the workforce and increasing the minimum wage — helping improve the quality of life for a person in all of these areas boils down to a good primary education. So why do we wait until adulthood to try to remedy the inequality instead of targeting the problem at its onset?

When it comes to making a choice that will have the greatest effect on the long-term outcome of one's life, primary education is the biggest single indicator of lifetime success. It can even be argued that the force of our primary education is so strong that no matter what we do afterward, our success is pre-destined based on the education we have received in grades from kindergarten through high school.

And it isn't just a matter of literary and mathematical education. There is also social learning to consider. Students born into an underachieving and/or apathetic school district begin with a systematic disadvantage that

affirmative action or diversity initiatives arrive too late to remedy.

The tearful truth is that liberals, teachers' unions and others who are against vouchers are likely the most afraid of what can be achieved with school choice. They are nervous at the prospect of this newfound success among black and minority children. They are probably loathe to lose their victims.

They are afraid of the power of choice.

The government needs victims and inequality so that they will have an excuse to take money from taxpayers to support the agenda or taking care of the poor. What might happen if the poor learned to take care of themselves?

What if the poor realize that they can make choices and that they are better off alone? This is the fear of the risk of true equality. Vouchers just happen to be one major choice on the road to true independence, liberty and freedom.

Vouchers today mean independence for the future and for the many generations to come. Of course, we all want that right — this power of choice. Well, apparently not.

Lisa Fritsch is a no-nonsense, common sense columnist and talk radio host based in Austin, Texas.



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Milton Friedman Talks about the Merits of School Choice



PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ITS **Assault** ON THE FAMILY

By Allan Carlson, PhD

Partisans of “school choice” were cheered recently by reports of success from an unexpected place: Sweden. The inaugural issue of *School Choice: Issues in Thought*, published by the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation, celebrates the results of that Scandinavian land’s 1992 education reform. The measure requires municipalities to fund independent schools on terms equal to existing state schools. It also allows parents to choose which school their children will attend. To qualify for funding, independent schools have to be approved by a National Agency for Education, meet educational standards and targets set by the state system, and be open to all children regardless of their ability, religion, or ethnic origin. These independent schools cannot charge extra tuition. Nonetheless, by 2002, the number of such institutions had grown from 122 to 637. Four percent of primary school children and 5.6 percent of secondary school pupils nationwide were now in independent schools, up from about one percent in the pre-reform period. The innovation proved to be popular with teachers and apparently had no measurable negative effects on the state schools.[\[1\]](#)

All the same, there are some curiosities about the Swedish results. To begin with, so-called “confessional” schools played only “a minor part” in the reform, although they were fully eligible to participate. Some Muslim schools appeared among immigrant communities; but the number of Christian schools—already small—did not grow at all. Instead, most of the new independent schools were created by for-profit corporations and offered special curricula such as Montessori and Steiner-Waldorf. In turn, these new schools tended to be located in the more affluent parts of the larger Swedish cities.

Moreover, although the reform began in 1992 at the initiative of a center-right coalition government, it also won the support of the leadership of the leftist Social Democratic Labor Party, which returned to its traditional political dominance in 1994. Since 1971, these Social Democrats have pursued a consistent policy aimed at dismantling the family. The Party has intentionally eliminated the legal, economic and cultural bases for marriage. It has largely dismantled parental authority and encouraged children’s rights. The Party’s sexual policies favor early experimentation, universal contraception, homosexual rights, and cohabitation.[\[2\]](#) School choice, it appears, has at least not proven incompatible with this larger social agenda.

Accordingly, the Swedish example usefully clarifies some issues regarding educational reform. Because of the exercise of a limited consumer choice, the encouragement to a kind of state-funded entrepreneurship, and the lack of any guiding moral vision, the 21st Century Libertarian can celebrate this experiment in “school choice.” Because the results pose no threat to

Sweden's intentionally post-family social-political order and may actually divert energy from more important issues, the modern Socialist can embrace "school choice" as well. It appears that only the Social Conservative, normally an advocate for parental authority, is left to ask several nagging questions: Is shared moral purpose truly no longer possible? Do not the local community and the inherited culture also have claims on the child? Are not the family virtues the starting place for real learning? Might there still be ways to reconcile parental autonomy with communitarian claims?

THE GRIM ROOTS OF "COMMON SCHOOLS"

I hasten to note that these family- and community-centered questions need not require "the public schools as we know them" as answers. Indeed, the record of American state education regarding the status and role of the family is fairly dismal, with one remarkable time period as exception.

From the very beginning, public school advocates aimed – as they had to – at undermining and displacing the family as the center of children's lives. The most important claim for public education was that only a compulsory system of this sort could unify a scattered and diverse people: the parochial ideas of families obviously stood in the way. Benjamin Rush, perhaps the most radical of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, urged a politically-charged vision of learning that began by demoting the family:

Our country includes family, friends, and property, and [the state] should be preferred to them all. Let our pupil be taught to love his family, but let him be taught at the same time that he must forsake and even forget them when the welfare of his country requires it.[3]

Horace Mann of Massachusetts, the acknowledged "father" of the Common Schools in the mid-19th Century, held similar attitudes. Citing the "neglect," ignorance, and inefficiencies of families in his state, he underscored the special brutality of what he labeled "monster families," deemed totally unworthy of their children. Indeed, Mann linked the "common school" system to a vision of the later welfare state, where government simply assumed the *role of parent*. As he wrote in his school report for 1846: "Massachusetts is *parental* in her government. More and more, as year after year rolls by, she seeks to substitute prevention for remedy, and rewards for penalties." [4]

The *Common School Journal*, founded by Mann and colleagues in 1838, featured the deconstruction of family life as one of its regular themes. Passages included:

the public schools succeed because "parents, although the most sunken in depravity themselves, welcome the proposals and receive with gratitude the services

of ...moral philanthropy in behalf of their families";[5]

"[T]hese are ...illustrations of the folly of a parent, who interferes with and perplexes a teacher while instructing or training his child".[6]

"the little interests or conveniences of the family" must be subordinate to "the paramount subject" of the school;[7] and

"there are many worthless parents." [8]

Such sentiments spread with public education across the country over the middle decades of the 19th Century. John Swett, an early superintendent of the California state schools, was blunt in his opinion that the state must supplant the family. In his 1864 Report to the state legislature, Swett explained that "the child should be taught to consider his instructor...superior to the parent in point of authority....The vulgar impression that parents have a legal right to dictate to teachers is entirely erroneous....Parents have no remedy as against the teacher." [9]

F.W. Parker, the so-called "father of progressive education" and inspiration for John Dewey, told the 1895 convention of the National Education Association (NEA) that "The child is not in school for knowledge. He is there to live, and to put his life, nurtured in the school, into the community." The family home and religious faith simply must give way to a grander vision. As Parker concluded: "Every school in the land should be a *home* and *heaven* for children." [10]

STATE SCHOOLS AND FAMILY DECAY

In fact, there is *direct* evidence of a *strong* linkage between the *spread* of mass state education and the *decline* of the family. It comes from the field of demography and uses fertility as a measure of family commitment.

Demographer John Caldwell's *Theory of Fertility Decline* appeared in 1982, [11] and represents a provocative attempt to apply anthropological research, primarily in Africa and Australia, across the board. Caldwell notes, as others have before, that fertility declines only when there is a change in economic relations within the family. In agrarian societies, for example, children are economic assets and fertility is high while in industrial societies the economic value of the young turns negative and fertility declines.

But in an important turn of the argument, Caldwell emphasizes that it is not the rise of cities or industry, per se, that causes this change in family relations. Rather, he shows that it is *the prior* introduction of new ideas through *mass state education* that stimulates the critical shift in the parent-child



relation. He argues that state-mandated schooling serves as the driving force behind the turn in preference from a large to a small family and the re-engineering of the family into an entity limited in its claims.

Evidence from the United States gives strong support to Caldwell's emphasis on mass state schooling as a major explanation of family decline. The steady fall in American fertility between 1850 and 1900 has long puzzled demographers, for throughout this era the U.S. remained predominantly rural and absorbed a steady flow of young immigrants, circumstances normally associated with large families. Caldwell's interpreters^[12] speculated, though, that the leadership role of the United States in introducing a mass state education system might explain the change. And indeed, U.S. data from 1871 to 1900 show a *remarkably strong negative relationship* between the fertility of women and an index of public school growth developed by L.P. Ayres in 1920. Fertility decline was particularly related to the average number of days that children attended public school in a given year. Even among rural farming families, where children still held economic value, the negative influence of public schooling on fertility was clear. Each additional month that rural children spent in school decreased family size in that district by .23 children. Indeed, we see here how state education quite literally "consumed" children, and weakened families.

Norman Ryder of Princeton University agrees that mass state education disrupts family integrity.^[13] He writes approvingly in *The Population Bulletin of the United Nations*: "Education of the junior generation is a subversive influence. Boys who go to school distinguish between what they learn there and what their father can teach them....The reinforcement of the [family] control structure is undermined when the young are trained outside the family for specialized roles in which the father has no competence."^[14] The broader contest is between the home and the centralizing state for the allegiance of the child. As Ryder puts it: "Political organizations, like economic organizations, demand loyalty and attempt to neutralize family particularism. There is a struggle between the family and the State for the minds of the young." In this struggle, the state school serves as "the chief instrument for teaching [a new] citizenship, in a direct appeal to the children over the heads of their parents." The school also serves as the medium for communicating "state morality" and a state mythology designed to displace those of families.^[15]

Ryder's work underscores the vital importance of *specific functions* to family institutional strength. For example, when families educate their own children, serve as the focus of religious life, and raise the largest share of their own food, the persons in these families are more likely to fix their first loyalties on the home. When these functions pass over to rival institutions, families lose these claims and diminish as institutions. Using solid empirical evidence, then, we actually can indict *public* education as a *direct* cause of family decline.

End Notes:

[1] Fredrik Bergstrom and F. Mikael Sandstrom, "School Choice Works! The Case of Sweden," *School Choice: Issues in Thought* 1 (Dec. 2002): 1-26.

[2] See: Allan Carlson, *The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics: The Myrdals and the Interwar Population Crisis* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1990): chapter 7; and David Popenoe, *Disturbing the Nest: Family Change and Decline in Modern Societies* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1988).

[3] Benjamin Rush, "Plan for the Establishment of Public Schools [1786]," reprinted in Frederick Rudolph, ed., *Essays on Education in the Early Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1965): 14.

[4] See: Horace Mann, "Challenges to a New Age [1845]," in Lewis Filler, ed., *Horace Mann on the Crisis of Education* (Yellow Springs, OH: The Antioch Press, 1965): 86; and Horace Mann, "The Ground of the Free School System [1846]," in *Old South Leaflets* No. 109 (Boston,

MA: Old South Meeting House, 1902): 12-18.

[5] Dr. Chalmers, "The Power of Education," *The Common School Journal* 3 (September 1, 1841): 269.

[6] "Duty of Parents to Cooperate with Teachers," *The Common School Journal* 8 (August 1, 1846): 226.

[7] Horace Mann, "Fourth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board of Education," *The Common School Journal* 3 (December 1, 1841): 359.

[8] "Extract from the Christian Review for March, 1841," *The Common School Journal* 3 (May 1, 1841): 143.

[9] John Swett, *History of the Public School System of California* (San Francisco: Bancroft, 1876): 115.

[10] Francis Wayland Parker, "Response," *N.E.A. Journal*, 1895, p. 62; in Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1963): 104.

[11] John C. Caldwell, *Theory of Fertility Decline* (New York: Academic Press, 1982): particularly chapters 4 and 10.

[12] Avery M. Guest and Stewart E. Tolnay, "Children's Roles and Fertility: Late Nineteenth Century United States," *Social Science History* 7 (1983): 355-80.

[13] Norman Ryder, "Fertility and Family Structure," *Population Bulletin of the United Nations* 15 (1983): 18-32.

[14] Ryder, "Fertility and Family Structure," p.29.


[15] *Ibid.*, pp.29-30.

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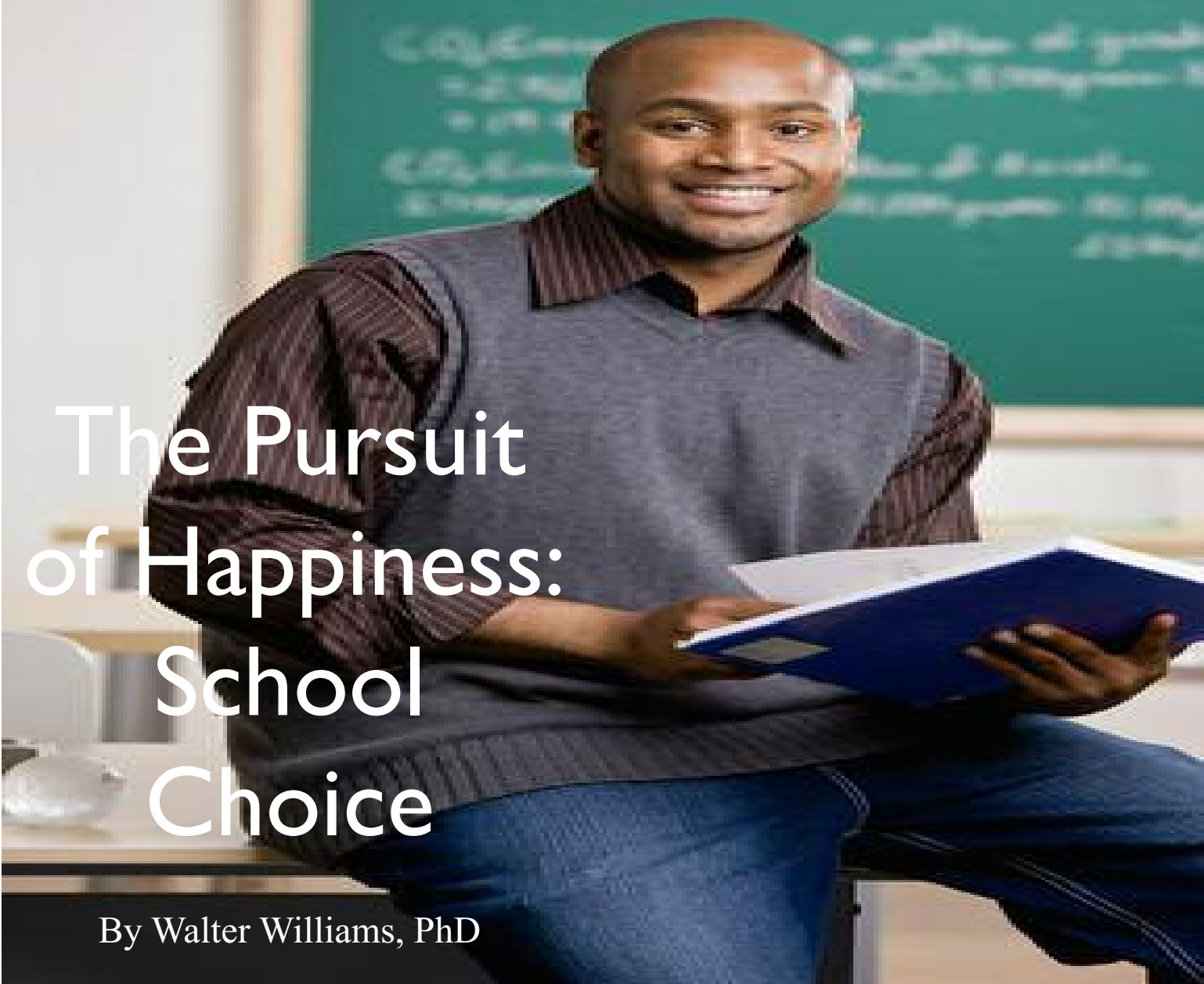


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Local Corruption
In New Jersey Public
Schools



The Pursuit of Happiness: School Choice

By Walter Williams, PhD

The overall quality of Primary and secondary education received by white students is nothing to write home about. The very fact that 30 percent of college freshmen require remedial education, at a cost of over \$2 billion, is pretty good evidence that there is widespread fraud in the conferring of high-school diplomas. That level of fraud, though, does not compare to the fraudulent education received by blacks—that darn near approaches criminality. According to National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) findings, only in writing do less than 40 percent of black high school test “below basic.” NAEP defines “below basic” as being unable to demonstrate even “partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work” at their grade. In math 70 percent and in science 75 percent of black students score below basic. Black high school graduates perform a little worse than white eight-graders in both reading and U.S. history and a lot worse in math and geography. The nation has tried almost everything to improve black education: busing, setting up magnet schools, pouring billions of federal, state, and local tax dollars and all for naught. It seems that the only approach that has not been tried on a large scale is some form of school choice.

Most school-choice proposals are in the form of either educational vouchers, which pay all or part of the cost of nonpublic education, or tuition tax credits, which let parents deduct tuition from taxes owed. Some of the support for school choice comes from the expectation that it would introduce more competition into education and produce higher-quality education for all students, particularly minority students. Though school choice has that potential, I support it for another reason: Namely, I think any government-created and protected monopoly is harmful to the best interests of consumers. Competition always produces a superior and lower-cost product than government monopolies. It is no accident that our supermarkets (stocking over 60,000 different items) are the best in the world. Similarly, it’s no accident that we lead the world in communication, computer hardware, software technology, the Internet, and other areas where competition is ruthless.

There is no reason to suspect that it would be any different if there were competition in primary and secondary education. U. S. universities, particularly at the graduate level, are the envy of the world. People from every country salivate at the chance to earn a degree here. However, I would wager that there would be no such excellence if our graduate education were organized like our primary and secondary education.

Most of the criticism of school choice, regardless of method, is wrong and self-serving. My own preference is for tax credits as opposed to vouchers. Tax credits would reduce the risk of government intervention in the form of Department of Vouchers.

There is considerable hypocrisy among some of the staunchest opponents of school choice for themselves, but for the less affluent it is different matter. President and Mrs. Barack Obama enrolled their two daughters in Washington's prestigious Sidwell Friends School, forking over \$28,000 a year for each girl. Whilst Obama was senator, the girls attended the University of Chicago's Laboratory School, a private school charging almost \$20,000 each. A Heritage Foundation survey found that 37 percent of the members of the House of Representatives and 45 percent of senators in the 110th Congress sent their children to private schools (www.tinyurl.com/d97ooo). Public school teachers enroll their own children in nonpublic schools to a much greater extent than the general public. In Cincinnati about 41 percent of them send their children to nonpublic schools. In Chicago it is 38 percent, Los Angeles 24 percent, New York 32 percent, and Philadelphia 44 percent (www.tinyurl.com/99d8s). Both congressman and public school teachers enroll their children in private schools at rates three, four and five times the rate of the general public.

Defenders of education monopoly have advanced arguments against greater competition in primary and secondary education. These arguments seem plausible; however a little reflection shows they are simply baseless.

Public school would be destroyed. This charge amounts to a tragic confession that public schools are so inferior that given a choice all parents would opt out. In fact, some public schools are doing a good job; those schools would survive. Schools doing a poor job would have to either improve or face an exodus of students and perish.

Private schools would skim off the best students. Assume for a moment this might happen. To object to parental choice for that reason is callous arrogance and cruelty. It differs little from saying that parents who want a better education prospects and a brighter future for their children should be held hostage until some undetermined time when public schools have improved.

School choice would lead to school racial segregation. Most voucher and tuition-tax proposals prohibit racial discrimination. The major thrust for school choice has come from black parents. Moreover, most large city public schools are already racially homogeneous, but while a smaller percentage of blacks attend private schools, those schools are more racially heterogeneous.

There are not enough private schools. This is an absurd criticism and reflects ignorance of markets. In the 1970s there were no computer software stores and few videotape rental shops. Would anyone have argued back then that the manufacturing and marketing of computers and VCRs should be held up until software and video shops were in place? By purchasing computers and VCRs, consumers created the demand for those shops. We would expect the same with private schools. If parents had vouchers or tax credits worth \$3,000 or \$4,000, profit-seeking entrepreneurs would meet the demand for private schools.

Parents, particularly those who are low-income, can't make wise choices. This is a demeaning attitude toward the poor, and it also reflects ignorance of how markets operate. People have little direct information about the quality of most goods and services they use. They depend on indirect information such as word of mouth, consumer reports, and advertisements. The market would generate information about K-12 schools just as markets already provide information about colleges and universities. It is inconceivable that parents, particularly black parents, could choose schools worse than the ones their kids already attend.

Education vouchers and tuition tax credits face another source of opposition: from those fearful of government control of nonpublic schools. I share that concern and urge strong measures to minimize that likelihood. The question I pose these critics is: Which is the most serious and costly risk, the increased government intervention in nonpublic schools that might accompany school choice or the continued educational destruction of the nation's youngsters, particularly its black and Hispanic youngsters?

Finally, I am thoroughly convinced that all children, including black children, can achieve academic excellence. What's necessary is 1) parental involvement, 2) well-behaved and motivated children, and 3) a competitive educational environment.

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education



PARENTAL CHOICE: WHO WINS, WHO LOSES – A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

By Milton Friedman, PhD

The School Choice Advocate (July 1998).

Time: Five years after a populous jurisdiction has adopted a comprehensive voucher program. The voucher has a value equal, let us say, to one-half of spending per child in government-run schools, and can be used at any recognized public or private school, secular or religious, non-profit or for-profit.

All school age children are entitled to receive a voucher. The percentage of all students in private schools has risen from 10% to 30%, and the number of private schools has doubled. Who has benefited and who has lost from the adoption of the voucher program?

Losers

We shall list the losers first, because they are fewer and easier to identify:

Government educational administrators (Bureaucrats). They are now fewer, and their discretionary control of funds has been curtailed by the need to meet the competition arising from empowering parents. Prior to the adoption of vouchers, government schools devoted to administration rather than to the classroom a far larger fraction of total spending than private schools — often more than half of total spending. Competition from the newly empowered private sector has forced government schools to spend a larger fraction of total spending in the classroom. Many cushy administrative jobs have been eliminated.

The officials and employees of the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers and their associated local affiliates. They have lost their monopolistic control of a government school system that had provided schooling for roughly 90% of all children. Dues revenue has fallen drastically. This is what they feared in advance, which is why they fought so hard against vouchers, spending large sums to stop every effort to introduce vouchers, however limited.

Some politicians. Those politicians who were able to determine the allocation of educational expenditures and to influence the appointment of personnel have seen their power decline. The reason is simple. With a government monopoly, they could dispense patronage through the school system. That is why local African-American politicians opposed vouchers, even though the rank and file African-Americans they professed to represent were invariably the group that was most supportive of vouchers. In addition, most African-American politicians have been democrats, strongly beholden to the teachers' unions. That dam began to break in the late 1980s, first with Polly Williams in Wisconsin and then in the 1990s with J.C. Watts and Floyd Flake in the U.S. Congress.

Incompetent teachers. Competition has forced government schools to loosen seniority rules and union regulations that had made it nearly impossible to get rid of incompetent teachers. An early example occurred in Albany, NY, where a philanthropist offered vouchers to every student in the city's worst school. After 20% of the parents chose to send their children to a non-government school, the principal was fired, teachers were reassigned, and major reforms were initiated.

Winners

Residents of inner cities. Improved educational opportunities have lowered dropout rates, imposed discipline in schools, and reduced school violence. More youngsters acquire the skills needed for employment, thereby raising economic levels and reducing street violence. Poor schools were not the only reason for the decline of the inner cities, but they played an important role.

Students who use the voucher to attend a private school of choice and their parents. Their actions speak for themselves. They, or more realistically, their parents, had a choice, and they chose what they believed would be best for their children. Every study of the early limited voucher programs — Milwaukee, Cleveland, CEO private voucher programs — reported that parents and students were glad that they were able to make a choice. Experience since has strongly reinforced that evidence.

Students who remain in government schools and their parents. The introduction of competition, as in the Albany example, has forced all government schools to reform in order to keep their clientele.

Employers. Improvements in education are making available a larger pool of potentially productive employees. Functional illiteracy and numerical incompetence are by no means gone, but they are starting to decline, and it is clear that the prognosis is good. Employers are already saving on the costs of training new employees, and are looking forward to still larger savings as the number of better schooled potential employees grows.

Competent teachers. A new, innovative, vibrant educational industry now competes for teachers. The reduction in administrative spending in government schools has added to the demand. The broader market for teachers pays more attention to quality and less to certification than the monopolized market did earlier.

Educational entrepreneurs and their backers. The availability of vouchers has led to the establishment of new schools, some non-profit, some for-profit. The new and growing education industry is marked by innovation, change, and variety. Old methods of teaching are being rapidly replaced by newer methods that are surviving the test of the market. Costs are going down at the same time that quality is going up — as happened when parcel and message delivery was opened up to competition, when the telephone monopoly was dismembered, when air travel was deregulated, when Japanese competition forced the U.S. automobile industry to change its ways, and on and on without number.

Taxpayers. Before vouchers, parents who sent their children to private schools paid twice for their children's schooling, once in tuition and once in taxes to support government schools that their



children did not attend. Now they still pay taxes but they get the equivalent of a tax refund. In addition, since vouchers equal only half of spending per child in government schools, total government spending on schooling has declined. 1 Spending per child has remained the same in government schools, but competition is forcing them to provide a better education at the same cost.

Existing private schools. These schools had been in the difficult position of charging for something that was available to their customers from government schools without extra payment. With vouchers, they are at less of a disadvantage in attracting pupils and have used the additional funds to improve still further the education they provide, even though that was initially good enough though that their customers were willing to pay twice for schooling for their children.

Institutions of higher education. They are benefiting from the sharp decline in the fraction of their entering students whom they find it necessary to place in remedial courses. Better-schooled entrants are enabling them to concentrate on their real function, higher education, rather than having to serve as a backstop for poorly performing elementary and secondary schools.

Society as a whole. Improved education is offering a hope of narrowing the gap between the less and more skilled workers, of fending off the prior prospect of a society divided between the "haves" and "have nots," of a class society in which an educated elite provided welfare for a permanent class of unemployables. We have so far only seen the early fruits from the introduction of vouchers, from giving parents a choice. The best is yet to come as competition and the market work their wonders. ■

New Orleans Charter Schools



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Homeschooling: The New Old Choice



By Julia Nelson

From images of socially awkward teenagers in homemade clothes to harried mothers in aprons toting eleven children to the library, stereotypes of homeschoolers abound. In reality, homeschooling has been part of American education from the nation's founding. Many accomplished Americans such as George Washington, Mark Twain, Booker T. Washington, Thomas Edison and Sandra Day O'Connor were taught primarily at home. In addition to conservative Christians, today's homeschooled children include elite athletes, musicians and entertainers, the non-religious and an increasing number of racial minorities, who according to the National Center for Education Statistics, made up approximately 23% of the homeschooled population in 2007.

It is difficult to provide a comprehensive overview of modern homeschooling's complex history, although few would deny the practice has enjoyed exponential growth in recent decades. Before the advent of American public schools in the latter half of the nineteenth century, children were taught at home, in small community-run schoolhouses, in more expensive private institutions, or not at all. Growing numbers of Americans began to support the idea of universal education out of concern for poor or neglected children who received little to no education. By 1918, all fifty states had laws requiring children to attend at least elementary school¹, and in 1925 the Supreme Court² ruled that private schools met this compulsory attendance requirement. Whether or not compulsory schooling had to occur in a classroom remained unclear.

Most agree that modern homeschooling began largely under the radar in the 1960s as a growing number of parents opted out of classroom schooling for various reasons. In the 1980s, organizations such as the Home School Legal Defense Association fought to clarify, and in some cases overturn, various state laws to ensure that all parents had the right to teach their children at home. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 1.5 million homeschooled American students in 2007, up from 1.1 million in 2003, although other studies put the current number closer to 2.5 million.

Today, a growing number of black American families have found homeschooling to be the best option for their children. Groups like National Black Home Educators have responded to this trend by offering resources and support. Rolando and Angela Lamb, parents of four in Georgia, pulled their children out of school when their oldest was in fifth grade. They were concerned both with what they believed to be substandard academic instruction in their local public school and the fact that

one of their children had been taught explicit sex education without their consent. Angela began to instruct them at home at a tremendous financial sacrifice. All four children were standout athletes; throughout their years of homeschooling the Lambs' three sons played basketball in private leagues and their daughter was a competitive gymnast. Once they were confident in their children's moral and academic foundation, the Lambs chose to send them to public school for their high school years. As of this writing one son is a freshman in college on a full basketball scholarship and one is a senior in high school and who has secured a full scholarship for next year.

Of course families of all colors still face opposition for their choice to homeschool. As recently as 2008, an appellate court judge in California ruled that parents must be state-certified teachers in order to instruct their children at home³. The ruling was challenged and the case re-heard. Many others with no legal obstacles to homeschooling encounter resistance from family members. "Kiana" found that some of her husband's relatives, many of them public educators, were skept-

tical of her ability to teach her three children at home. They were also critical of Kiana's decision to stay at home, believing she should contribute more to the family income than her earnings from her home-based business. Fortunately, they seem to be warming up to the idea. "Now that they see my children are not only excelling academically, but take great joy in learning, they are not as vocal about their opposition to our decision," she explains.

Homeschoolers' educational philosophies come in all varieties, from parents who use exactly the same text books as their local public schools to "unschoolers" who allow their children to direct a large portion of their education. Neo-classical homeschoolers (like the author of this article) typically emphasize a rigorous core curriculum but encourage their children to develop independent scholarship. A typical neo-classically educated sixth grader might spend the morning studying pre-Algebra and diagramming adjectival clauses in complex sentences, lunchtime reading *Beowulf*, and the afternoon reviewing Latin vocabulary, studying a Spanish dialogue and outlining an article on the development of the gold



trade in medieval Ghana.

Contrary to the imagination of many, homeschooling does not usually entail replicating a classroom environment in one's home. Siblings on differing grade levels will frequently study history and science together, while receiving math and English instruction on different levels. Homeschooled students can move at their own pace, spending more time on troublesome lessons and moving quickly through material they find easier. Conscientious parents will ensure mastery of all information in their core curriculum, but they can also allow their children to pursue specialized interests thanks to a more efficient use of instruction time. A student who does not have to wait for 25 others to learn the math lesson before he moves on can spend more time on art, music, foreign languages or sports.

The tremendous growth in homeschooling has spawned countless support groups all over the country. These include field trip cooperatives, organizations that provide weekly instruction and parent support, and others that provide complete online instruction. Organizations like Classical Conversations and Veritas provide weekly instruction in Latin, History, Science and Literature to parents and children, while parents do follow up lessons and teach math and English during the rest of the week. Many homeschooling parents opt for a combination of tutoring, online instruction and parental teaching as their children head into the teen years. Homeschooled students can also participate in annual standardized testing, which is required in some states.

A growing body of research indicates that homeschooling parents are doing their job successfully. On average, homeschooled students between Kindergarten and twelfth grade score between the 65th and 80th percentile on standardized tests, compared to the 50th percentile for public school students⁴. Interestingly, lower income homeschooled students still out-perform the national average for public school students of average income. A 2005 study further revealed that the average homeschooler applies to college with a higher SAT score than his public school counterpart.⁵

There are few people who would dispute the importance trying to achieve universal education in a society, which was the original inspiration for America's public school system. However, there are a growing number of parents who question whether the government is the best institution to provide that education. The success of homeschooling parents, many of whom are lower income and nearly a quarter of whom are racial minorities, is a clear indication that the state is not the only game in town.

I have personally found educating my children—ages eight,

ten and twelve—to be a tremendously satisfying endeavor. The future will confirm whether or not it has been a successful one. Most people would love a career that challenges them to grow intellectually, apply their new knowledge on a daily basis and reap tangible rewards from their labors. Homeschooling has been all this for me and more. There are few experiences as thrilling as teaching your four-year-old to read or your twelve-year-old to spot and dissect a fallacious argument.

All parents must evaluate a variety of factors to determine the best educational option for their children. I speak often with individuals who either question their ability to homeschool or dismiss the possibility outright. I am always struck by how high they assess the cost of homeschooling and how low they assess the benefits. It is true that homeschooling requires effort, as all worthwhile activities do. It has been my experience, however, that the payout far exceeds the investment.

My husband and I made the decision to homeschool for several reasons. We believed that our children's education was our responsibility, whether or not we chose to delegate it to someone else. We were not confident that someone else could teach the combination of a biblical worldview and rigorous academics that we deemed appropriate and desirable. But more than anything else, we enjoy our children's company. We did not want to send them to school all day because we would have missed having them around. Homeschooling has allowed us to cultivate close family relationships despite the fact that we, like most Americans, lead very busy lives.

Families, churches and governmental agencies must work together to ensure that there are a variety of good educational options for parents everywhere. However, parents must never forget that the classroom is by no means the only or best way to educate their children, especially in the early years. Parents who are dissatisfied with the educational choices available to them must never forget that they are free to do the job themselves.

¹ Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2004*

² *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*

³ Egelko, B. & Tucker, J. (2008, March 7). Homeschoolers' Setback in Appeals Court Ruling. *San Francisco Chronicle*.

⁴ Ray, B. & Eagleson, B. (2008, August 14). State Regulation of Homeschooling and Homeschoolers' SAT Scores. *Academic Leadership*.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Julia Nelson is a freelance writer. She and husband Dean home school their children.

RACE IS THE LEAST OF THE PROBLEMS

By Joseph C. Phillips

The people of Mississippi have not been angels. The history of the Magnolia State and segregation invites the kind of scrutiny and criticism that has recently been visited upon the state. Media reports that the Walthall County School District has been ordered to stop segregating its schools raised the ire of most Americans because it was a reminder of a particularly ugly moment in this nation's history—a history that Americans have no desire to repeat.

Still it stretches the limits of credulity when a school that is 66% white and 35% black is labeled a “racially identifiable ‘white’” school and the county supporting the school is depicted as filled with a bunch of ugly racists just itching to don the bed sheets and ride through the night terrorizing the countryside. Yet, that is exactly the case in Walthall County, Mississippi.

Walthall County is a rural community of about 15,000 people – 54% of whom are white, 45% of whom are black. The school district services a total of 2,500 students. At issue are Tylertown, which sits in a predominantly black community and has a black enrollment of 75%, and Salem Attendance Academy the “racially identifiable white school.”

Over the years the school district has allowed hundreds of white students to transfer out of Tylertown and into Salem resulting in race ratios the U.S. Justice Department finds unacceptable. In a written statement, Thomas Perez, assistant attorney general in charge of the civil rights division, said, “It is unacceptable for school districts to act in a way that encourages or tolerates the re-segregation of public schools...” (It should be noted that the school district also allowed many black students to transfer from Tylertown to Salem and, while the media accounts do not say, the numbers seem to suggest that a large number of black students also transferred from Salem to Tylertown.)



Mr. Perez is legitimately concerned that if left unchecked the schools in Mississippi may slide back into separate and unequal institutions; kind of like schools in Detroit, New York, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, (and other places).

In our haste to announce ourselves morally superior to those “rednecks” in Mississippi we have rushed past a few facts, which also conveniently allow us to skirt some uncomfortable questions.

The Walthall School District is not preventing any student – black or white – from attending either school. The district is not segregating the students; rather they are allowing parents to choose where they would like to educate their children and the people are making decisions that they deem to be in their best interests. To the extent that there is segregation it is a result of choices made freely. No doubt this is why the Supreme Court held in *Green v County School Board* that freedom of choice is not an effective method to desegregate schools. People tend not to willingly follow a bureaucrats carefully crafted race ratios. Here in southern California I have been afforded the right to send my children to any number of schools within Los Angeles, no matter that they fall out of my residential district. I am concerned when other parents are denied that same right regardless of whether or not I agree with their rationale. “Never send



to know for whom the bell tolls...”

If all children in the district are free to attend whatever school they want, providing there is room, what is the states compelling interest in usurping the freedom of parents to choose where to educate their children? The reason is the stigma attached to black schools. Salem is not really the problem. There are schools all over the country that can't claim as diverse a student body as Salem. The real concern is the increasing number of black students at Tylertown and the subsequent death of the school once it becomes known as a black school.

Black schools are generally viewed as bastions of dysfunction, violence, and academic mediocrity. In addition, much of the research being produced by social scientists regarding the racial achievement gap purports to show that academic deficiency among black students is exacerbated by racial segregation. Columbia University researchers Douglas Ready and Megan Silander have determined that attendance at a minority segregated school contributes to the racial achievement gap for elementary school students. The study concludes that these gaps “may result in the loss of more than a year’s worth of cognitive development for black students attending a high minority school.”

I remain unconvinced that sitting next to white children is necessary in order for black students to be academi-

cally competitive. However, if in fact the research is true, why would any parent want to send his/her child to a black school? The answer is that a whole lot of American parents do not.

Americans living in glass houses throw stones at Mississippi parents for transferring their children to a “white school.” Yet the decisions of these southern parents put them in the good company of parents — both black and white — from San Francisco to Stamford. Cynics among us would point out that the current occupant of the White House is one of those parents. While residents of Chicago, the Obama’s enrolled their children in a school with only a 12% black enrollment and a 70% white enrollment. The Obama’s found a black church; no doubt if they had wanted to they could have found an all black school for their children to attend.

Finally, (file this under the heading of “misplaced priorities”), according to “the Children First Annual Report” of the five schools in the district one of them is failing and four are in danger of failing. I would submit that race is the least of the problems in Walthall County.

An accomplished TV and Film actor, Mr. Phillips is also a syndicated columnist. He is the author of the book: “He Talk Like a White Boy.”

2020

stupid in America

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An Interview with Kevin Chavous

By Kiara Ashanti

Three years ago 20/20 aired a program titled, “Stupid in America.” Hosted by John Stossel, long before he jumped to Foxnews, was about the problems in the world of education. It painted a grim picture on the contentious issues about teacher pay, lower test scores, and the issue of school choice.

One of the people appearing in the show was Kevin Chavous, Chairman of the Black Alliance for Educational Options. A strong advocate for school choice, Chavous, highlighted the reasons for school choice, and became an even bigger target for the opponents of taking education in that direction. We caught up with Chavous to see where things stand now that there is a new administration in the white house.

FJM: I’d like to start with what has happened since you appeared on the 20/20 special, “Stupid in America,” with John Stossel. Have you spoken with anyone in the Obama administration?

Chavous: I was on President Obama’s education policy committee, and internally there was a battle between those that wanted to maintain the status quo and those that wanted more charters and school choice. At the end of the day the President did sign on with charters (schools) and many of us were pushing for him to appointment Arnie Duncan as Secretary of Education, which he did. So he ended up siding with the reformers. So that’s been a positive step forward, but I still don’t think they have gone far enough in terms of supporting school choice, which is why I publicly disagree with them regarding the DC voucher program. I still have people that reach out to me from 20/20, even this past week. That show was pretty powerful in terms of laying out the case for reform. I’m traveling a great deal, and in each city I go to, I can feel the momentum for reform getting energized. To paraphrase a famous line, “People are sick and tired of being sick and tired” of what’s going on in public schools.

FJM: What do you think the driving force behind our current state within the educational system?

Chavous: Nostalgic, bureaucratic clinging to a one style fits all way model of education. Where you divide kids according to age, and put them in the same classroom, but there is no deviation. In today’s world with so many kids hav-

ing different needs, a one-size fits all, does not work. The US is sliding backwards against other nations in the world. One size fits all, just does not work. That's why I believe in educating parents about having a range of options. If all you had at a buffet line were chicken fried steak, you'd be pretty disappointed. But that's pretty much what we have in most school districts.

FJM: 20/20, 60 minutes, and a number of news programs, and newspaper stories have reported on how smaller class sizes in charter schools lead to better education results. The administration has to know this, as do opponents of school choice, what keeps them from changing?

Chavous: Again, I don't think we can underestimate the thinking of the status quo person and the pressure of the unions. There is pressure to maintain how things are. Democrats, and many small town, rural Republicans, where the biggest employer in the town is the school district, the pressure of the folks that want to keep their jobs and continue to run things as they are or to stay silent is huge. When I give speech's on this, I'm pretty direct and blunt about it, and I cannot count the number of high level school officials or politicians that come to me and whisper, "keep saying what you're saying, I agree," but they don't say anything themselves.

FJM: When it comes to schools, be they charter or private schools with vouchers, there is generally a waiting list. There are not enough to go around, so if we moved to a situation where anyone could go to a charter school, it does not solve the problem, there are not enough spaces.

Chavous: I don't think charter schools are the answer. I think they are one of the tools in the tool shed. And that tool shed is expansive. You have to have a full range of options. You have traditional schools, charter schools, private schools, parochial schools, magnate schools, and home schools. You need a wide range of options available to parents. I think the lion share of our children will always be in public school systems. But, what private schools and charter schools help do is push reforms from the outside, by showing a vision that you cannot see in traditional schools. And the competition works. For example, when they broke up AT&T, the presiding judge said they had picture phones and caller ID technology for 20 years, but Ma Bell did not sell it. When MCI and Sprint started using it, it lead to a technology boom in the telecommunications industry as the firms competed for customers. So you know, people don't know what they don't know. If all you're used too is the local, public school with just notepads or outdated computers, you don't know that

many charter schools today have the I-pads.

The goal is to have all these options, and show parents what quality education looks like, and it will jump start reform by putting outside pressure on the bureaucracy in traditional schools and bring in innovation.

FJM: Since most of the kids will still be in traditional public education, what are things that need to be reformed within that system? Is it higher pay, changing the curriculum, or getting rid of the teacher's unions?

Chavous: That's a great question. Look, we know what works. To have good teachers in any system, you need high standards. You need accountability, so that teachers are accountable and they hold students to a higher standard. We have no excuses. Just because a student comes from a lower income group does not mean they cannot learn at a high level. There are too many studies that have proved that notion false. Teachers need autonomy, and freedom from the bureaucracy. By that I mean, if you need a blackboard, the order should not have to go down to downtown and take anywhere from two weeks to two months to receive, which is what usually happens.

The other thing that must happen is that you have to change the work rules, and this is what goes to the heart of confronting the unions. Changing work rules includes having good principals that can hire and fire teachers freely. Right now, you cannot fire a bad teacher in most school districts. It takes years. In the state of California, for instance, teachers get lifetime tenure after two years, and then you can't fire them. So you can't reform a school district with bad teachers, but you can't fire bad teachers. So you have to change these work rules. That's why President Obama has talked about merit pay or performance pay. But that is dancing around the primary issue. You have to start from scratch regarding the work rules for teachers.

FJM: Since he won the Presidency, have you had any movement on this issue, because I think most people would agree they don't see President Obama going against the unions?

Chavous: That's a huge problem [going against unions] which is why I don't think we will see real reform until we do. The goal or pathway is to educate and empower parents. There just will not be change from the top down. The change will occur through educated parents. What we have working for us is also the thing that is working against us, and that is the system will not change itself on its own. We will be locked into the same approach; test

scores shall continue to go down. Like the civil rights movement, it's going to force parents to say I can't take it any more, and more and more parents and people will get involved. It will be like the Berlin wall. It will just keep chipping away at it until it falls.

FJM: What are the consequences do you believe if we don't change?

Chavous: If we don't change the way we do education; we will have anarchy in democracy. The whole system will crumble. Thomas Jefferson said, "The only way this experiment in Democracy will work is if we have an educated population." It's because, through education we understand the concept of capitalism, and understand the responsibilities of citizenship. It's the essence of our survival. If we don't get education right, we will have a number of the young uneducated, who are surviving on the streets, becoming predators on us. That's why other industrialized countries are beginning to bypass us. They've got this piece right, they understand it, and they are performing. Beyond that we cannot have, as we do in over 25 cities in the country, over 25% of kids of color dropping out. In some cities, like in the city I grew up in Indianapolis, 80% of black boys are dropping out. Though this is not just a black problem. In Detroit, 83% of white males are dropping out as well. So you ask what the consequences are if we don't fix it. Our country will fail if we don't.

FJM: In the African-American community specifically, there does not seem to be a real push from "leaders" like Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, etc., to solve this. I mean they want to solve it, but they seem more interested in blaming racism or Republicans instead of addressing problem systemic to the African-American community. Why is that?

Chavous: Sharpton, himself, has said that some of the traditional coalitions have tied us to people who are causing the problem. He also said, although I'm not sure how serious he was, that we have to reexamine being a part of those coalitions. I think that has to happen. We have to reevaluate and reexamine the traditional coalitions that were formed during the Civil Rights movement as it relates to education.

FJM: This is not an easy fight to wage. What is your motivation?

Chavous: I don't know. As I worked in education, and worked with these kids, it struck me that there was a correlation between quality of life and a life with challenges.

And 95% of the time it always ties back to education. Over 85% of the people in prison are high school dropouts. Homelessness, joblessness, it all goes back to education. If we could raise the percentage of high school graduates by 10% percent there would be a 20% reduction in the murder rate. So all this stuff hit me, and we can do this [change system] but we won't because of political pressure to keep things as they are. I just found my passion to fight this fight.

The other thing is I got to know families. I got to know these poor families, uneducated, and it burns me. Because of politics, we are not taking care of our kids. We tell families you have to send your kids to school, and then we have to send them to this bad school.

FJM: So in your mind, if we fix education we can solve a lot of the problems within the black community and fix this divide between blacks and whites?

Chavous: We can fix this country if we fix education. If we fix education, we become a model for the world.

FJM: I have an operational question. There is always a rallying cry for more money—

Chavous: You need money, so I don't want to say otherwise. But, a lot of the money in school districts doesn't make it to the classroom. I read a study once that say less than 50% of the money in the school district gets to the kids. Most of the money goes to maintain the administration—contractors, main office; all those layers take the money. In the DC schools, when I was the head of the education committee, we gave the DC schools 300 million new dollars. At the same time they loss 10,000 students in the system, so they were educating fewer kids with more money. Over the next two to three years, they loss another 1,000 students. In that same time frame test scores went down. So more money, fewer students, and still lower test scores. So it's not an issue of money. It's an issue of how the money is spent. If it's not spent on instruction, in the classroom, then it's not helping the kids. My view on how you reconstruct a budget is to start from the classroom. If it does not relate to that classroom, to that teacher in the classroom, then it's not a priority. And that's not how it works. Right now, we have all these people whose duties have nothing to do with the instruction of the future of our society. And that's a problem.



WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO WIN THE BATTLE FOR SCHOOL CHOICE

1) Organize: Find Other Parents with Passion for School Choice

Remember, there is strength in numbers. Find and organize parents who will help you advocate for school choice and educational reform.

Become visible in your community. Identify parents who can help and invite them to get involved for their children—and everyone’s children.

Remind parents that they have the **right** to speak out for a better education for their children.

Empower parents to tell their personal stories effectively—briefly and to the point—to show why school choice is needed.

Stay in regular contact with your network of parents. Keep them busy to keep them involved—and look for ways to help them, too.

2) Gather Community Support

Reach out to community groups, church groups and alternative schools. Attend local events and volunteer with other organizations. Get to know community leaders.

Sponsor local events like parent meetings to get your name out and build your network of parents and allies.

Become a **resource** for parents with “how to” meetings: “how to” interpret test scores, pick a school, use tutoring services or whatever is important to the parents you want to serve.

Post flyers *everywhere*.

Always gather contact information.

When talking with parents and community leaders, deliver a **call to action**: tell them what your mission is, who you’re helping and how the listener can help you.

3) Tell Your Stories: Work with the Media

Moms and dads put a real face on the issue. Give parents an opportunity to tell their stories about the need for school choice.

Hold events, like marches and rallies, to make news and demonstrate support for school choice.

Contact all kinds of media: reporters who might be interested in a story, community bulletin boards, radio call-in shows, public TV and community newsletters.

Write and help your parents write letters to the editor. Respond to stories about education issues and explain why school choice would help you secure a better education for your children.

Plan and prepare to talk to the media. Choose three points *only* that you want to say and stick to them.

Don’t say anything you wouldn’t want to see in print!

Be accurate, positive and helpful to reporters.

4) Make Your Voices Heard by the Legislature

To support school choice, politicians must know that voters support school choice and they must see the faces of parents and children who will benefit. **So be persistent and bring out your numbers!**

Plan days to personally visit state legislators with your parent leaders.

Always wear T-shirts to the legislature that voice support for school choice.

Attend every hearing or meeting you can about school choice legislation.

Meet with the legislative staff and leaders who are championing your school choice legislation. Find out how you can help them.

Send letters and emails and make phone calls to state legislators—especially those who represent you.

Like talking with the media, tell your story and stick to your key points.

5) Get Inspired and Stay Inspired

Get to know the parents and children you represent. Their stories and faces will help you fight through the unavoidable setbacks.

Handle setbacks with grace and dignity. Other parents will follow your lead and you need their continued support to keep on fighting.

6) Educate Yourself

Learn as much as you can about school choice and education in your state. Look for state and local organizations that can help you learn more.

Check with national organizations that work for school choice, such as the Institute for Justice School Choice Team (www.ij.org/schoolchoice), Alliance for School Choice (www.allianceforschoolchoice.org), Black Alliance for Educational Options (www.baeo.org), Friedman Foundation (www.friedmanfoundation.org).

Read *Voices, Choices and Second Chances: How to Win the Battle to Bring Opportunity Scholarships to Your State*, by Virginia Walden Ford, to learn real-life lessons for securing school choice. To order copies, contact:

Contact Virginia Walden Ford, DC Parents for School Choice/DC BAEO at wcdparentschoice@aol.com or wdcbaeo@aol.com or call 202-832-3895 for information in the Washington, DC area or contact your local school choice organization.

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Books With A Christian Worldview

A young man with short dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, is looking down at an open book he is holding. He is standing in a library or bookstore, with wooden bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. The lighting is warm and focused on the man and his book.

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Reflecting the Character of Christ

Education is the Silver Bullet

By Armstrong Williams

America's once proud public education system is officially broken. Just about every study, statistic, expert, and professional agrees that without serious changes, our schools and our students will continue to fall further and further behind the world standard. But although parents, politicians, and policy makers recognize the problems facing our schools, they aren't doing the right things to fix them. They've tried - in fact, they've tried ad nauseam - but they're using band-aids when reconstructive surgery is needed.

Whether it's the No Child Left Behind Act enacted in 2002, President Obama's "Educate to Innovate" campaign started this year, or the countless other education program instituted in between, our leaders seem to recognize that our education system is bleeding. Teachers, individual schools, school districts, local governments, states, and the federal government also see the problem and have made many legitimate attempts in the last decade to improve schools and better educate our children. And it seems as though every politician and education professional has, at one time or another, spouted off various ways to fix our schools and help our children catch up with their international counterparts. The problem with all these ideas and initiatives however - no matter how sincere they are - is that none of them truly address the real problem in education: a lack of funding.

During the 2009 - 2010 school-year American taxpayers will

spend about \$543 billion to teach the nearly 50 million students who attend public elementary and secondary schools (Kindergarten through 12th grade) across the country. In comparison, taxpayers will pay about \$60 billion to house, correct and punish the 2.2 million prisoners who are behind bars everyday in American prisons. I'll do the math for those of you whose middle school math class was a bit lacking; each year, Americans spend about \$26,000 per prisoner but just \$11,000 per student (US Department of Education; Washington Post).

Common sense - and every study and analysis proves this - tells us that the more educated one is, the less likely they are to end up in prison.

However, American taxpayers, lawmakers, and leaders - regardless of the information in front of them - have yet to seriously act on this correlation. We've tried just about every strategy in the world to keep people out of prisons, yet most states are still suffering from overcrowded prisons, and one state out west is set to release over 50,000 inmates over the next few years because they simply cannot handle the influx of inmates. So if we know education keeps people out of prison, then why are we spending more than twice as much money on prisoners than students?

When you think about the aforementioned numbers, it shouldn't shock anybody that American students, according to international comparison exams, have long lagged behind their counterparts in Asia and Europe in math and science. Nor should it be surprising that more and more American companies are hiring foreign workers, or that American universities are accepting foreign students at a higher rate than ever before.

In fact, Bill Gates, Chairman of Microsoft, said to Congress in a 2007 address, "Now we face a critical shortage of scien-

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More \$ or Less \$: Good Education is About How We Spend the Money By Kiara Ashanti



Whenever I get into a discussion about education with anyone who is not Conservative, I always hear the same things: (1) either we need to spend more money on it, or (2) Republicans do not spend enough on education. The latter statement makes me chuckle though because the Bush administration spent 45% more (\$38 billion) on education than the previous administration. Once President Bush left office, he had actually spent more on education than any other president in United States history.

The former statement, however, is the one that strikes me as the most curious because as a country we spend more money per child on K-12 public school education than any other country in the world. On average, we spend \$10,000 per student, while District of Columbia- area schools spend even more: \$13,000 per student. But something is horribly wrong: graduation rates are falling; test scores are getting worse; illiteracy is on the rise; and fewer college students are choosing to major in math-related subjects

Within minority communities the statistics are even worse, with some cities having dropout rates for black males at a staggering 80%. No one disputes the fact that despite the tremendous amounts of money spent on public education, the results seem to be worsening.

By contrast, it appears that private schools are succeeding; they are doing the job that most public schools are *not* doing very well. Private and charter school students consistently have higher test scores than their public school counterparts, and graduation statistics and college acceptance rates are also higher. The public perception is that with private schools having more resources and money to spend per child, these results would be obvious. While private schools often have more and better resources, they do not spend more per child. According to the U. S. Department of Education, private schools spend an average of \$3,116 per child, significantly less, but with substantially better educational results, than public schools.

Apparently the dollar amount spent per child is not the only, or primary, factor involved in solving the educational challenges this country faces. Spending more money is not necessarily the answer, nor is the money we are spending the problem. We spend enough already. That said, the question becomes: *what exactly is the problem and how do we solve it?*

There is no simple or easy answer, but we can start with what we know: smaller class sizes work best. The problem, however, is more profound than just class size; rather, it includes many of today's social issues, such as the breakdown of the family structure. Relative to education dollars spent, the problem is clear: we waste it; and the majority of educational dollars never make it to the classroom.

Kevin Chavous, chairman of the Black Alliance for Educational Options, says that 50% of educational spending is allocated to administration costs and expenses. This translates to money flowing into the pockets of bureaucrats as large salaries, a reality that may be true in several districts nationwide.

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tific talent. And there's only one way to solve that crisis today: open our doors to highly talented (foreign) scientists and engineers who want to live, work and pay taxes here."

Since previous programs have not fixed the problem, let's try doing something we're really good at: throw money at the problem. Seriously.

Readers, relatives, friends, coworkers, and even my mailman know that nothing makes me cringe like reckless government spending. Whether it's the War in Iraq, the health care legislation or any other issue, I almost always believe that less is more when it comes to government intervention and spending. Time and time again we've seen that private enterprises out-gain and out-produce their public counterparts. Yet, we can't completely privatize education, so let's give the public schools every dollar they need and then some. Then we'll figure out the curriculum, content, standards, and assessment procedures.

Many people argue that money isn't the answer to this problem. They're wrong. Here's why. We need to increase teacher salaries significantly, reduce class sizes drastically, rebuild or refurbish about 80 percent of our public school buildings, provide more resources for our students and teachers, and hire more administrators, teachers, and support staff. This will cost trillions of dollars. But it must be done because, investing in our schools and students today will create a better America tomorrow.

As of now, because teachers are paid so little, worked so hard, and supported so poorly, our best and brightest minds are not becoming teachers. And the ones who do go into the field are quickly realizing that the job is not sustainable. In California, over 50% of teachers leave the industry within two years, and nationwide, the statistics aren't much better. The average teacher in America (there's about 3.3 million of them) earns just over \$50,000 per year and receives less than stellar benefits and support. This is no way to treat the people who are spending hours and hours with our children everyday. If we want our students to be the best, we need them to be taught by the best – and that costs a lot of money. In order to attract elite professionals and the exceptional leaders, we need to raise teacher salaries by 50%, and then provide teachers with the best benefits and backing in the world. They teach and mentor our children, they deserve it.

We need to reduce class sizes significantly. Every education professional will tell you that the ideal class size is between 10 – 25 students, depending on the age and needs of the children. Currently, many American classrooms designed for 25 people are packed with 35-40 students and sometimes more. Reducing class size costs a ton of money because it entails building more classrooms and hiring new teachers, but it must be done.

We need to rebuild or refurbish schools and provide students with the best resources in the business. That means providing every student a laptop computer during the school year and giving them access to all the books, materials, and academic tools they need to succeed. Yes, this will cost billions, but in order for our students to compete with their international peers, we need to prepare them using every tool necessary. Remember, we cannot just cover up the wound anymore – we need to fix what's broken once and for all.

We need to hire more administrators and support staff so that the student/adult ratio in schools is significantly improved. Without college and career counselors, librarians, aids, nurses, crisis counselors, janitors, secretaries, administrative assistants, and other support staff, our schools and our students suffer. With fewer and fewer support staffers and administrators at our schools, more and more children fall through the cracks, become bullied, or just downright don't get the support and help they need. It will cost lots of money of to hire more administrators and support staff, but the cost is worth it, because when young people are surrounded by qualified and caring adults, they will thrive.

And that's the point here. We need our students to succeed. Not just for their own sake, but for our society, and for our country. We need the next generation of young people to grow into contributing adults who are smarter, more prepared, and more motivated than their international peers. And we need them to contribute more than just their share of taxes. We need the students of today to find a cure for cancer, AIDS, and Parkinson's. We need them to solve the energy crisis, the poverty problem, and global warming. And we need them to be better people, more active citizens, and the future leaders of the world. This is no easy task. A band aid will not suffice. Surgery is always risky, always costly, and always the last resort, but there is no other option here. And we cannot spare one dime or waste another minute when we're dealing with the lives of our children and the future of our country

Armstrong Williams is a political commentator who writes a conservative newspaper column, hosts a nationally syndicated TV program called The Right Side, and hosts a daily radio show. Williams can be heard nightly on Sirius/XM Power 169 9pm - 10 pm est.

Elsewhere in other school districts, one only needs to drive past some of the newer schools in major metropolitan areas and see that their money is being spent on infrastructure. Newer middle and high school campuses today resemble community colleges. They are huge, state-of-the-art buildings on sprawling grounds with impressive, gymnastic facilities and large, beautifully maintained athletic fields. And new ones are continually being built. Consider the maintenance costs of these complexes, many of which are empty one-third of the year. The debt service on these buildings alone is huge.

What does any of this have to do with the education problem? In every survey conducted over the last 40 years, what is clear to nearly everyone is that the smaller the class size the better the results in learning, test scores, graduation rates, and most things academic. Since we know this, why are school districts across this country spending billions to build secondary schools that rival the sizes of community college campuses that house 6,000 + students?

Of course not all school districts have new schools. Because of budget cuts, many districts are consolidating schools, e.g., closing one and moving those students into another. While it may be a great idea on paper, in reality once you factor in the larger class sizes, the costs of maintaining the old school that still has expenses, and the disruption in the routines and psyche of the students being moved, it is just a bad idea.

This is just one example of how taxpayers' education dollars are misspent. Business school students learn the lesson exemplified in a famous study about corporate spending. In the study, companies that had a habit of spending money lavishly on new corporate headquarters and company jets, did so just before going bankrupt. The lesson learned was that external excess, i.e., when money is spent on large, extravagant buildings, planes, and expensive off-site trips signaled a company in decline.

This same concept could be applied to schools. Even as American education declines, billion dollar campuses are still being built; administrators' salaries continue to increase; and expenses allocated for annual conference trips persist, as do more line item expenses that contribute nothing toward healing a broken public school system. These misspent dollars are all paid for by us, the taxpayer. None of those expenditures remotely relate to what is actually, or the learning that should be, happening in the classroom.

In contrast, private and charter schools are not having these problems. Charter and magnet schools are almost always small and seem to thrive within small buildings with small classroom sizes. Since neither has access to endless tax dollars, they focus on using what they have to do in order to ful-

fill their main purpose, which is to educate children. Charter and magnet schools typically pay their teachers better; and they buy quality textbooks and computer systems. A good deal of money goes into items that are related directly to the student. But how is this possible if they are spending less than half, per student, of what public schools spend?

If you do not look more closely at the statistics you will not see the full picture. When you break out the costs of public school overhead—buildings, administration, and maintenance—the cost per child expenditure is probably lower than it is for private schools. It is easy to have high per student education costs when billion dollar infrastructure costs are factored into the equation. By contrast, private schools spend their money on classroom teaching, tutoring, and trying innovative teaching methods. Ultimately, they seem to better understand that parents care most about their children's learning, test scores, and college admission rates than about a new structure that houses them. Thus, it seems private schools do better in terms of accountability. They know that if students don't do well, it is very likely the school's enrollment will spiral downward as parents withdraw their children.

To be fair, not all public schools are bad. Many do have higher test scores, decent graduation stats, and college admission rates. And yes, often these schools are in affluent areas, where parents are more engaged with their children's educational performance. This social construct, parental involvement with a child's schoolwork and performance, is a strong driver of student success despite socio-economic level. Parental involvement is something schools have no real control over. Nonetheless, a closer look shows that class sizes are smaller in these schools and accountability, to a small degree, is gleaned via the school board and the PTA.

The bottom line is that no matter what kind of school it is—private, charter, magnet, parochial, or a good public school—if the school is successful, the things they have in common are always the same: small class sizes, engaged teachers and parents, and funding that is spent on things directly related to teaching. Generally speaking, these characteristics are found more often in non-public schools that must succeed or otherwise close.

Public schools need to be challenged to be more cost-effective. In many instances, it will require thinking outside the box, as opposed to spending more money. We spend enough.

We just have to rethink how we spend it. School choice forces the public school system to reallocate its funds in order to survive.

A graduate of University of South Florida, Kiara Ashanti is a freelance writer and financial professional based in Central Florida.

School Choice Programs for the 2000s

State	Program	Year Enacted	Overview
Arizona	Individual Scholarship Tax Credit	1997	Dollar-for-dollar contribution scholarship
	Corporate Scholarship Tax Credit	1997	Dollar-for-dollar private scholarship
Florida	McKay Scholarship Program	1999	Scholarship for their parents
	Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program	2001	Dollar-for-dollar private scholarship
Georgia	Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program	1997	Private scholarship
	Georgia Tax Credit for Private School Costs and Scholarship Donations	2008	Tax credit for students
Illinois	Education Expenses Credit	2000	Tax credit
Indiana	School Scholarship Tax Credit	2009	Tax credit
Iowa	School Tuition Organization Tax Credit	2006	Income tax credit
	Tax Credits for Educational Expenses	1987	Tax credit for private school
Louisiana	Louisiana Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program	2008	Scholarship for school
	Elementary and Secondary School Tuition Deduction Program	2008	50 percent income tax deduction
Maine	Town Tuitioning Program	1873	Scholarship for a public school
Minnesota	K-12 Education Credit Program	1955	Tax credit
	K-12 Education Deduction Program	1997	Tax deduction
Ohio	Cleveland Scholarship Program	1996	Scholarship for school
	Autism Scholarship Program	2004	Scholarship
	Educational Choice (EdChoice) Scholarship Program	2006	Scholarship for school
Pennsylvania	Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program	2001	Tax credit for organization
Rhode Island	Business Entity Scholarship Tax Credit Program	2008	Tax credit for organization
Utah	Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarship Program	2005	Scholarship
Vermont	Town Tuitioning Program	1869	Scholarship for a public school
Washington, D.C.	D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program	2004	Scholarship
Wisconsin	Milwaukee Parental Choice Program	1990	Scholarship

* Scholarships will be available beginning in 2010. ** Deductions will be available beginning in 2010.

Sources: Heritage Foundation interviews with representatives from states' departments of education.

2009–2010 School Year

	People Served
One-dollar state income-tax credit for individuals who make donations to non-profit organizations that award private-school scholarships to students.	27,000
One-dollar tax credit for corporations that make donations to private-school tuitioning organizations.	2,967
Scholarships for children with disabilities to attend a private school of parents' choice.	20,530
One-dollar tax credit to corporations that contribute money to private-school scholarships for students with disabilities.	23,259
Private-school scholarships for students with disabilities.	1,596
Tax credits to individuals and corporations for donations to Georgia Parent Scholarship Organizations.	1,100
Tax credits for education expenses.	238,119
Tax credits for contributions to scholarship-granting organizations.	*
Tax credits for contributions to scholarship organizations.	8,737
Tax credits for educational expenses, including expenses incurred at private schools.	192,000
Scholarships for low-income New Orleans children to attend private school.	640
Tax credit for families for educational expenses incurred at public or qualified private schools.	**
Scholarships for students whose town has no public school to attend or private school in another area.	14,012
Tax credits for educational expenses.	56,372
Tax deductions for private-school expenses.	230,000
Scholarships for low-income Cleveland children to attend private school.	6,273
Scholarships for children with autism to attend private school.	1,500
Scholarships for children in low-performing schools to attend private school.	12,685
Tax credits for corporations that contribute to scholarship-granting organizations.	53,000
Tax credits for corporations that contribute to scholarship-granting organizations.	280
Scholarships for students with special needs.	583
Scholarships for students whose town has no public school to attend or private school in another area.	2,459
Scholarships for low-income students to attend private school.	1,715
Scholarships for students in Milwaukee to attend private school.	19,538

* beginning in 2009.

** Departments of education and departments of revenue.

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Then and

Madam C. J. Walker Two Extraordinary Leaders Difference During

By Timothy F. Johnson, Ph.D., Chair

Walker (1867-1919), born Sarah Breedlove on December 23, 1867, in Delta, Louisiana, to Owen and Minerva Breedlove became known as Madam C. J. Walker and was one of the first American women millionaires.

Walker, the daughter of slaves, Owen and Minerva Breedlove who were owned by Robert W. Burney, lived on Burney's Parish farm during the Civil War/ General Ulysses S. Grant era.

Orphaned at the age of seven after her parents died from the yellow fever epidemic, a 10-year old Sarah and her sister crossed the Mississippi River in 1878 to escape the epidemic and failing crops. In order to escape her sister's abusive husband, Sarah married Moses McWilliams when she was 14. They named their daughter, Leila; but when Leila was two, her father Moses died. Sarah remarried on August 11, 1894, but her marriage to John Davis soon failed and ended around 1903. In January 1906, Sarah married newspaper sales agent Charles Joseph Walker, but unfortunately this union also resulted in divorce around 1910.

Sarah Breedlove became an entrepreneur, built an empire developing hair products, and became famous as Madam C. J. Walker. According to Walker, the empire that she built was inspired by a dream she had in which a black man appeared to her and gave her a formula to cure baldness. Some people said Walker was just trying to make black women's hair look like a white woman's hair. Walker, however, countered saying that she was simply trying to promote growth and help black women take care of their hair.

As her fame spread, Madam Walker began to lecture other black women, helping them gain confidence in starting their own businesses. She also lectured on black issues at conventions sponsored by powerful black institutions. After the bloody St. Louis Race Riot, Walker began to devote her time to making lynching a federal crime. In 1918, she spoke at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and this is where she began fund-raising for the anti-lynching campaign that she started. Later that summer, Madam Walker received a National Association of Colored Women (NACW) award for having made the largest contribution to saving the home of abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

Madam C. J. Walker died in New York at the age of 51 on Sunday, May 25, 1919, from complications of hypertension. Her daughter became the president of the C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company.

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and Now

er and Marva Collins: ing Ladies Who Made a Challenging Times

man, Frederick Douglass Foundation



Marva Collins and the inner-city Chicago private school, Westside Prep, became an American household name synonymous with quality education thanks to the widely publicized 1981 biographical TV movie, “The Marva Collins Story,” starring Cicely Tyson and Morgan Freeman. Marva Collins’s story, however, began 45 years before the airing of this movie when Marva Knight was born in the segregated South.

Marva Collins, born August 31, 1936, to Henry and Bessie Knight, Jr., grew up in Atmore, AL, at a time when segregation was the rule. Black people were not permitted to use the public library, and her schools had few books and no indoor plumbing. Nonetheless, her family instilled in her an awareness of the family’s historical excellence and helped develop her strong desire for learning, achievement, and independence. After graduating from Clark College in Atlanta, GA, Marva taught school in Alabama for two years. She moved to Chicago, IL, and taught in the Chicago Public School (CPS) system for 14 years.

According to Collins, her experiences in that system, coupled with dissatisfaction about the quality of education that her two youngest children were receiving in prestigious private schools, convinced her that children deserved better than what was then passing as acceptable education. That conviction led to her decision to open her own school on the second floor of her home.

In 1975, Marva Collins withdrew the \$5,000 balance in her school pension fund and began her educational program, which she named Westside Preparatory, with an enrollment of her own two children and four other neighborhood youth in Garfield Park, a Chicago inner-city community. Westside Prep became an educational and commercial success. During that first year, Marva accepted learning-disabled, problem children and even one child who had been labeled by CPS authorities as borderline retarded. At the end of the first year, every child scored at least five grades higher, proving that these students had been wrongfully labeled.

Collins began supervising three Chicago public schools that had been placed on probation in 1996. In 2004, she received a National Humanities Medal, merely one among the many awards that she has received for her teaching and efforts at school reform.

Collins ran Westside Prep for more than 30 years until it closed in 2008 due to insufficient enrollment and funding. She is famous for applying classical education methods successfully with impoverished students, many of whom had been wrongly labeled as “learning-disabled” by public schools. Collins once wrote, “*I have discovered few learning-disabled students in my three decades of teaching. I have, however, discovered many, many victims of teaching inabilities.*”

Marva Collins has written a number of manuals, books, and motivational tracts describing her history and methods. Her curriculum is based on classical literature and other subject material that contain ideas, lofty thoughts, and abstract concepts. In 2006, she launched a Web site and public speaking service. Fortunately Collins’s legacy—to teach children the values that hold societies together and to present ideas with varying interpretation—will live on through the teachers she trains today on her educational program and methodology.

60 Minutes meets Marva Collins



Remembering Dorothy Height....

By Joan S. Wallace, PhD



It was awesome to take leave from the Associate Dean's responsibilities at Howard University to commute to New York City and don the trappings of the Deputy Director for Programs at the National Urban League led by Vernon Jordan.

I had been recommended by Howard's Vice President for the position. So it was, I left home in Reston Va., on Sunday nights and worked in NYC until Friday night when I returned home to Reston. There, I cleaned the house, enjoyed my 3 sons and husband and prepared to return to my small apartment in NY. One of the advantages of working at the League, was the people with whom I interacted. They were potential Presidents of the United States, CEOs of major corporations, and African American pioneers like Charles Hamilton, co-author of *Black Power*; Andrew Brimmer, former Federal Reserve Board Member, Andrew Billingsley author of *Black Families in White America*, and Ms. Dorothy Height.

Dorothy Irene Height was born March 24, 1912 and died April 20, 2010 at age 98. She was the President of the National Council of Negro Women. I had heard that she was a friend of Mary McLeod Bethune who had founded the council, was a member of Roosevelt's "Black Cabinet", and a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt. Ms. Height told me about her experience of being accepted at Barnard College, but turned down because they had filled their quota of two African Americans. Later Barnard awarded her the medal of distinction, their highest honor. She was also proud of having been the President of my sorority, Delta Sigma Theta. She had worked with Dr. Martin Luther King and witnessed the marches. She brought her own vision to the civil rights movement. She pushed for equal opportunity for women as well as men. She had 36 honorary degrees. Ms. Height was warm and friendly, but had the strength of a lioness. We met several times before she asked me to Chair the National Council of Negro Women's Annual Conference. Though this was a new experience for me, I accepted. I had the opportunity of working on the National Urban League's Annual Conference, so I shared some ideas with her regarding vendors and programs. I had a wonderful team and she was an outstanding leader.

At the end of the conference, she presented me with a plaque which was written by Mary McLeod Bethune. It read:

"I have a legacy to leave my people. It is my philosophy of living and serving. I pray now that my philosophy may be helpful to those who share my vision of a world of peace. HERE THEN IS MY LEGACY..."

I LEAVE YOU LOVE. I LEAVE YOU HOPE. I LEAVE YOU THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPING CONFIDENCE IN ONE ANOTHER. I LEAVE YOU A THIRST FOR EDUCATION. I LEAVE YOU A RESPECT FOR THE USE OF POWER. I LEAVE YOU FAITH. I LEAVE YOU RACIAL DIGNITY. I LEAVE YOU A DESIRE TO LIVE HARMONIOUSLY WITH YOUR FELLOW MEN. I LEAVE YOU FINALLY A RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUNG PEOPLE." Mary McLeod Bethune

I was so taken by Dorothy Height that I wanted to write her story, but when I left NYC, I lost touch with her, and unfortunately that dream faded away. She was all about equal opportunity and fought especially for women. I am thankful that God took me her way on life's journey.

Joan S. Wallace, PhD was the first African American to serve as the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. She met Dorothy Height while serving as the Vice President for programs at the National Urban League under Vernon Jordan.



Illinois School Choice Delayed, not Defeated

By Collin Hitt

Thousands of families are trapped in failing or poverty-stricken overcrowded schools. An effort was born this spring to give those families a better choice. A school voucher bill was proposed by Senator James Meeks to allow those families to choose a private school for their children, if they so desired.

Though the bill passed the full Illinois Senate and the Illinois House Executive Committee, there is not yet enough support within the House of Representatives to send the legislation to the governor's desk. The other day, Senate Bill 2494 was placed on extended consideration - meaning that the legislation has already received significant support but not a majority of votes on the House floor.

The move to extended consideration means that no official roll call was taken after an impassioned debate in House chambers. However, video of the live vote showed that the landmark school choice legislation was likely five or six votes away from passage, despite heavy opposition from union lobbyists and other powerful interest groups.

Parents, teachers, taxpayers and grassroots activists provided a powerful counter to the special interests who opposed this bill. Their ongoing support will be integral if families in Chicago's worst schools are to have a way out.

And the next step supporters can take is simple: call their elected representatives and candidates for office, and ask them to support this life-saving measure when the legislation next comes before the legislature for a vote.

Collin Hitt is the Director of Education Policy at the Illinois Policy Institute



Los Angeles On Verge of Bankruptcy

By Steve Stanek

The nation's second-largest city teeters on the brink of bankruptcy, largely because of lavish pay and benefits packages for a bloated government workforce, according to tax and budget watchdogs—and former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan.

The California city of 3.8 million people nearly went into bankruptcy in April, with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (D) threatening to shut down most city government services two days a week to save money and avert bankruptcy. Money withheld by the city-owned utility nearly forced bankruptcy.

Nation's Highest-Paid Employees

The city budget has been a fiscal shambles for years, said Kris Vosburgh, executive director of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, from his Los Angeles office.

“The city’s problems are the result of mismanagement, pensions, and high pay,” he said. “We have the highest-paid municipal employees in the nation, and the highest-paid city council at \$178,000 a year [per member]. Only two groups need apply for the ear of the city council—developers and public employee union reps—and the priority is not necessarily in that order. Mayor Villaraigosa was at one time a union organizer. Unions elect the council, so when they negotiate, they have reps on both sides of the table.”

Electricity Rate Hike Sought

The straw that nearly broke the city’s financial back resulted from a dispute between the city council and the city’s Department of Water and Power.

The Los Angeles DWP is the largest municipally owned utility in the nation. The DWP held back a scheduled \$73.5 million payment to the city’s General Fund because the council rejected an electricity rate hike request.

The city entered April with a budget shortfall of \$222.4 million, but in early April City Administrative Officer Ray Ciranna announced the city had collected \$26 million more than expected in property taxes. On April 14 the council voted 8-5 for a temporary 4.8 percent electricity rate increase.

Two days later the DWP board accepted the increase even though two weeks earlier board members appointed by the mayor had rejected it. They wanted a 5.7 percent increase supported by the mayor but rejected by the council.

Killer Pension Costs

The unexpected property tax receipts, and the DWP's acceptance of the electricity rate increase and expected release of the \$73.5 million payment, have given the city a little breathing room.

But it's not enough for budget watchdogs or former Los Angeles Mayor Riordan, who served from 1993 to 2001.

In an interview with *The Los Angeles Times*, Riordan argued bankruptcy might be the only way to address pension costs. Riordan noted the city assumes an 8 percent return on pension investments when the average return over the past decade has been just 4 percent. The city could be looking at \$1.5 billion in pension obligations it can't meet, he said.

"We need some adults to come alive in the city and to talk through how to meet that liability," Riordan told the Times. "If that doesn't happen, we shouldn't rule out bankruptcy."

More City Workers Added

Vosburgh agrees bankruptcy might be the only solution. He said Riordan cut city staff by about one-third during his two terms in office but that his two successors "have been layering on" new workers and increasing pension obligations.

"One big thing that has been a constant but growing problem is the pension liability," he said. "The shortfall this year was about \$400 million. So that's additional money that must be made up. One of the things that might have to happen is for the city to literally go bankrupt. Then a judge could rewrite contracts."

The problems started in the 1970s, Vosburgh said, when lawmakers allowed collective bargaining for government unions. Then in the 1990s they fattened pension benefits. Public safety

workers can retire after 30 years and receive 90 percent of their final year's salary, which can include years of rolled over unused sick days and other means to boost the final salary. Many retirees are barely 50 years old, Vosburgh said.

Outsourcing Suggested

Marcia Fritz, president of California Foundation for Fiscal Responsibility, agrees the city's pension situation is a crisis compounded by basing benefits on the nation's highest salaries. She said one solution might be for Los Angeles to contract out services to private businesses.

"If they can find the service in the Yellow Pages, they should contract it out," she said.

"For police we have the biggest police contractor in the nation right here, and that's the county of Los Angeles, which contracts with many cities. They must be competitive; otherwise the cities would have their own police departments. Los Angeles could fire the police and rehire them through the county."

This could save huge amounts of money, she said, because the county police force has a different pension schedule. The county awards 2 percent of salary for every year served for retirees in their fifties. A police officer with 30 years on the job would receive 60 percent of final year salary instead of the 90 percent Los Angeles city police receive. Fritz said the city could also do this with firefighters.

"Fire and rescue, sanitation . . . for all services the city should just send out RFPs [requests for proposals]," Fritz said.

Steve Stanek (sstanek@heartland.org) is a research fellow at The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Budget & Tax News.

A Time to Laugh





10 CANS AMIDST ALL THE CAN'T THINKING

By Herman Cain

The Gulf Coast states did not need another disaster to deal with, but the bad news just keeps on coming. People were killed when the British Petroleum oil platform exploded, along with what will be the worst oil spill in history.

As we hear the news each day about the difficulty in stopping the spread of the oil spill in the Gulf, and the impending dangers to wildlife, fisheries, businesses and the coastal states, we become more and more frustrated because there is nothing most of us can do individually to help the situation.

Gets to you, doesn't it?

We can only pray for the people and agencies trying to remedy the situation, that they will have the resolve and resources to stop the spread of the impact of this disaster.

Consistent bad news leads to a bad attitude, lack of confidence and, eventually, failure. Just ask any high achiever in business, sports or any endeavor of life.

Since the summer of 2008, we have been fed a constant diet of more and more bad news about the economy, the credit crisis, the housing crisis, the recession, political scandals, a dysfunctional federal government, crooked politicians, crooked lenders, crooked borrowers and crooked executives.

We are constantly being reminded that it is going to take time to fix these problems, and that there are no quick fix solutions. We know that, but the Obama Administration and Congress continue to believe that they can spend us out of these problems. They can't. The math does not work.

The president's campaign promises about transparency, bipartisanship and no earmarks in legislation have been broken. And as the mainstream media looks the other way and tries to rationalize the broken promises, the informed voters get more and more frustrated, while the uninformed voters stay stuck on stupid.

Many voters are frustrated with both the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress, because they have failed to fix the real problems, as they continue to ignore lessons from history and the voting public.

As a result, many people are losing hope.

Last week President Obama issued a challenge to his supporters to help him re-elect Democrats to Congress so he can continue to "deliver on the promise of change, hope and prosperity." I shared that with the listeners and asked them to share their feelings and opinions about change, hope and prosperity.

Only one caller out of about 20 thought the president was doing a wonderful job delivering change, hope and prosperity. But before I could ask him why he felt that way, he hung up. The other 19 callers totally disagreed and stayed on and gave reasons as to why, which we talk about nearly every night on the show.

The response by a 29-year-old first-time caller summed it up when she said, "This change is killing my hope for prosperity."

I have not lost hope, because there are [things we can do](#) to capture the change people were hoping for but are not getting. We have our voices, our votes and our valuables (time and money) to work with.

For those that are losing hope I offer these "Ten Cans":

*You CAN have a dream, without knowing how to get there.
You CAN have a life, just start somewhere.*

*You CAN make a difference, one person at a time.
You CAN make things happen, don't expect a straight line.*

*You CAN be happy, if you have a hope inside.
You CAN have love in your life, but look beyond the outside*

*You CAN solve your problems, but FIRST, count your blessings.
You CAN find the strength, like an eagle, waiting, and resting.*

*You CAN make this a better world, but life is just a minute.
God CAN lead you through it, if all your heart is in it. – The Her-
manator*

Despite all the bad news, there is hope if we do what we CAN do.

Herman Cain is an American newspaper columnist, businessman, politician, and radio talk-show host from Georgia.



Way to go Arizona

By Ada Fisher, MD

Congratulations to Arizona Governor Jan Brewer on signing SB 1070, which allows the police to ask for identification of persons in this country, which is the law and then subject to deportation people in this country illegally who are found within her state's borders. The one questionable phrase in the state bill on reasonable suspicion was amended to denounce any attempt to use this bill in racial profiling. But the larger concern, which is being lost in the protests, is the impact of illegal immigrants on that state's public safety.

Kudos to the New York Times for its recent article explaining the Arizona dilemma in terms of its unstable border, rising crime rate secondary to drugs brought in by illegal immigrant conclaves, human smuggling and gangs the likes of which even Chicago or Los Angeles have not seen. Arizona has had enough of protecting the rights of everyone but its citizens so it took on a task where the federal government continues to fail miserably.

Illegal immigrants must play by the rules or we should just open the prisons and let all those in there out who also chose not to follow simple laws on breaking and entering—for that is what illegal entry is all about. McCain, Obama and others who talk about a pathway to citizenship for those who have engaged in criminal activities in coming here in violation of the laws don't get it either.

In Charlotte, NC several illegal immigrants have brought with them an atypical strain of tuberculosis which can affect North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and other states where this disease is endemic, i.e. the strain can kill up to 20% of some of these populations. This is also a major public health issue. For those worried about gangs, our street gangs are nothing compared to M13 of Mexico, notorious for beheading folks. If you haven't learned something from reading that even Chicago, the home of the Obama's, is asking for National Guard assistance since their crime rate is up with over 113 murders committed to date this year. Not all of this is illegal immigrant activity but it is a contributory factor.

Illegal immigrant labor is work on the cheap that our citizens should be doing for minimum wage. Why are we paying able bodied folks on welfare when they could do these jobs?

Al Sharpton and other misguided leaders fail to understand that when you allow people to jump to the front of the lines who simply walked across the borders, you push those other people of color who waited their turn in line to the back. If amnesty is passed

which he and others advocate in a defacto manner, African Americans will be relegated to a subset of minorities losing their representation in Congress, industry, housing, etc. The battle between blacks and browns around illegal immigration has the potential to escalate in some not too pleasant ways.

Those in the country illegally do siphon benefits from education, social services, health care and other agencies designed primarily for citizens without adequate reimbursement to states from the federal government which has not stepped up to the plate to enforce the laws already on the book or pay the cost of compliance with the laws though they have taken our tax money. The cost of criminal prosecutions and tracking of illegal immigrants is another factor. But the biggest insult is the wholesale allowance of accommodations in a language other than English for those who won't speak English.

Ask Mexico's President who seems outraged by this bill, why his country doesn't provide decent jobs for its citizens so that they can make a life for themselves and speak their native tongue among like minded people. After all, they are sitting on oil reserves which could be refined to improve their national economy and trade status. If a US citizen is imprisoned for drug possession in Mexico, they will be treated far less kindly than Arizona has done. In Mexican hotels is an English speaking accommodation routinely provided for visitors? Ask the protestors to show their papers since they are so outraged, for what other country would allow those who aren't suppose to be here a right of protest and an allowance of the taxpayer's precious dollars to feed, clothe, and protect them?

Not all illegal immigrants are Mexicans, but unfortunately a preponderance of current unlawfulness so associated with their citizenship status seems to be directed there. We should be checking VISA's, demanding as they did on Ellis Island that those admitted into the country desiring citizenship must have a sponsor, must have a job and must speak the language.

Unfortunately though we want everyone to be allowed to visit, I don't believe they should get to stay. No to the back of the line nonsense. We don't need more laws. We need to enforce the laws we have.

If folks can't find work they won't stay. So businesses must be penalized who continue to hire or contract out for people who aren't citizens. And our educational institutions and churches must quit giving quarters to those here illegally who are not escaping political persecution but are jumping ahead of many of our citizens in usurping our economic benefits. We must help Mexico, Haiti, etc. develop their own resources to put their citizens to work in their home countries.

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Carter G. Woodson

The Mis-Education of the Black Man

By Raynard Jackson

In 1933, Carter G. Woodson published his classic book entitled, “The Mis-Education of the Negro.” The premise of his book was that Blacks need to be self-reliant and not look for others to do for us what we can (and should) do for ourselves. Woodson thought that the dominant society was teaching Blacks to have an attitude of dependency and subservience, as opposed to controlling their own destiny and teaching their children the truth about the contributions Blacks made to this country’s history. Woodson was a prolific journalist, author, and a historian who was known as the “Father of Black History.”

According to Woodson, “History shows that it does not matter who is in power... those who have not learned to do for themselves and have to depend solely on others never obtain any more rights or privileges in the end than they did in the beginning.” Woodson continues, “When you control a man’s thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his ‘proper place’ and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary.”

The above quotes by Woodson could be very easily directed at the media chosen Black leaders of today. You know who they are, Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, Tavis Smiley, Cornell West, Michael Eric Dyson, etc. Especially when it comes to these folks singing the praises of the Democratic Party. Listening to these guys you would think the Republican Party is filled with white racists whose sole purpose in life is to advocate policies that will be detrimental to the Black community.

You have Black entrepreneurs who have been able to make a great living by selling goods and services to the federal government. But, they are totally unaware that former president Richard Nixon is the reason they have these opportunities.

On March 6, 1961, President Kennedy signed Executive Order 10925. It required government contractors to “take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment, with-

out regard to their race, creed, color or national origin.”

It was during the Nixon administration that affirmative action became what we know it to be today. It was adopted as a federal mandate for companies with federal contracts and for labor unions whose workers were engaged in those projects. The late Arthur Fletcher (a Black Republican and dear friend) was put in charge of creating and enforcing the plan. Fletcher call it the Philadelphia Plan. Fletcher was serving in the Department of Labor. He was Assistant Secretary for Wage and Labor Standards (he was one of the highest ranking Blacks in the Nixon administration). As head of the United Negro College Fund, he coined their famous slogan, “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.” I guarantee that you have never heard the UNCF or Black Democrats ever publically give attribution to Fletcher (especially as a Black Republican) having created this .

Fletcher’s plan required federal contractors to meet certain goals for the hiring of Black employees by specific dates in order to combat institutionalized discrimination on the part of specific skilled building trade unions.

In 1971, Nixon issued Executive Order 11625, which was subsequent to him creating the Office of Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) in 1969. The order gave more authority to the Secretary of Commerce to, “implement Federal policy in support of the minority business enterprise program; provide additional technical and management assistance to disadvantaged businesses; and to assist in demonstration projects; and to coordinate the participation of all Federal departments and agencies in an increased minority enterprise effort.”

Presidents Reagan and Bush (the elder) signed Executive Orders 12320 and 12677, respectively in regards to the board of advisors for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The purpose was to ensure these institutions would be made aware and take advantage of a full range of partnership opportunities with various federal agencies.

Most recently, Republicans spearheaded **The Minority-Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act**. The Senate bill was drafted by then senator George Allen (R-VA) and co-sponsored by Trent Lott (R-MS). The companion house bill was drafted by

Congressman J. Randy Forbes (R-VA-4TH). The purpose of the bill was to assist minority serving institutions in upgrading their technology infrastructure. The bill appropriated and authorized \$ 250 million per year for five years (\$ 1.250 billion). These were not loans, but grants to help make these schools more competitive with non-minority institutions.

So, my point is, the Republican Party does have a very positive story to share with the Black community if they leave the heated rhetoric behind and focus on the substance of their actions. Listening to the media appointed Black leaders, you would think Republicans are walking around in white sheets. You have Black entrepreneurs who have made millions of dollars from government contracts, but yet they savage the very party that allows them to make this type of money. You have Historically Black Colleges and Universities who poison the minds of students with liberalism without exposing them to other views. You have Black college students berating Republicans by way of email, text, and twitter messages using the very technology that Republicans made possible. It was not Democrats who spearheaded this (they voted for the bill), it was a totally Republican initiative.

For the Republicans who want write off the Black vote, and the media appointed Black leaders, you both have been mis-educated and need to explore a new school of thought.

Raynard Jackson is president & CEO of Raynard Jackson & Associates, LLC., a D.C.-public relations/government affairs firm. He is also a contributing editor for ExcellStyle Magazine (www.excellstyle.com).





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