



The Washington Flyer
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Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army.
Edward Everett

Maryland Common Core Standard Training

[Efforts](#) are underway in Maryland to introduce the recently adopted Common Core Standards (CCS) to the state's educators. Over 40 states adopted the CCS for their Race to the Top applications in hopes of receiving a slice of the 4.35 billion dollar pie. Maryland received a 250 million dollar [Race to the Top](#) grant as a result of its proposed education reforms. Maryland is spending 12.5 million dollars to host the current CCS training sessions. Teams consisting of a principal and at least three teachers are attending "educator effectiveness" academies being conducted around the state. Session attendees will also be helping to formulate detailed guides to accompany the CCS curriculum framework. Interviews with teachers revealed a level of cynicism about the effects that the CCS will have on curriculum, content depth, and teacher evaluation scores. Teachers also commented that the tendency of the state legislature to routinely adopt new reforms in order to gain additional federal funding puts an additional burden on educators to provide stability to classroom instruction. During question and answer sessions, several teachers expressed concerns to state education officials about the new outcome-based teacher evaluations. Questions centered on how evaluations could be done when the standards and the implementation plans are in a state of flux. State Department of Education Curriculum Director Judy Jenkins acknowledged that there were no real answers to the teachers' inquiries. Critics of the untested reforms oppose the ever expanding role of the federal government in local education decisions.

New York Legalizes Same-Sex Marriage

Late Friday night, the extended legislative session [yielded](#) to the pressure of same-sex marriage advocates and voted to legalize same-sex marriage in the state of NY. Governor Andrew Cuomo, financial operatives, and homosexual advocates exerted considerable pressure on undecided Republican state senators throughout the week. In the final vote, four Republicans sided with senate Democrats and approved the measure which legalized same-sex marriage in the largest locality up to this point. This vote marks the first time that a chamber with a Republican majority approved the categorical redefinition of marriage. Pundits unleashed a flood of articles portraying this decision as a watershed for the same-sex marriage movement, a momentum-building opportunity for similar initiatives, and a model for future state legislature battles. Defenders of traditional marriage and religious liberty dismiss these presumptive assertions that the defeat in New York is [indicative](#) of the mood in the rest of the nation. Family Research Council Vice President Tom McClusky [posits](#) that "the weakness of legislators and financial backing of a small but vocal minority" combined to ignore the will of New York voters. He also contends that the religious exemption attached to the measure in order to ensure passage is inadequate and offers little protection for those whose faith precludes them from promoting the homosexual lifestyle. The bill's proponents counter that this law is necessary to prevent discrimination and promote equality for same-sex couples. McClusky writes that "the fact that there are restrictions on who they can marry, and at what age, or restrictions on marrying relatives, does not mean they are being discriminated against, but that marriage is defined in a certain way." According to Brian Brown, president of the [National Organization for Marriage](#), the decision in New York was a "disaster for the Republican party." He stated that NOM will spend \$2 million over the next 18 months to defeat the legislators who supported it. Traditional marriage groups are concerned about the imminent assault on religious liberty and the subsequent need to protect the conscience rights of those who will face litigation for adherence to their faith.

Tornado Relief Thank You

So far, almost \$13,000 has been donated to the [AACS](#) Tornado Relief Fund. These funds are going in their entirety to assist those AACS schools affected by the April 27 tornadoes. Following is a sampling of the thanks we have received from these families, teachers, and schools. “Thank you so much for the generous gift you gave Cullman Christian School. The tornado that came through on April 27, 2011 and destroyed our school was devastating, but the outpouring of love and support from others has been overwhelming. We are so thankful for friends like yourself who have stepped up to help Cullman Christian continue to serve families in our community. Please continue to lift up Cullman Christian School in your prayers as we move forward to rebuild. May God richly bless you in the same way you have blessed us.” If you would like to contribute to the tornado relief fund please note the following: all donations will be used entirely for tornado relief and all disbursements will be made with approval of the AACS executive committee and coordinated through the Alabama Christian Education office. Donations should be sent to AACS, 602 Belvoir Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412. Donations can also be made online using the “Donate Online” option. Select “Missions” from the drop down list.

Senator Jim DeMint Applauds AACS in New Book

South Carolina Senator [Jim DeMint](#) has a new book launching on July 4. *The Great American Awakening: Two Years that Changed America, Washington, & Me* is DeMint’s account of the events that took place following the 2008 presidential election. He talks candidly about Congressional leaders, including the pressure he received from colleagues when he consistently stood on the frontlines for the conservative agenda. Senator DeMint also provides a plan for 2012 that includes a return to federalism and a strengthening of states’ rights. Senator DeMint speaks very highly of AACS in the book. For further information [click here](#).

Texas Stands Up to Planned Parenthood

The Texas state legislature has sent [SB 7](#) to Governor Rick Perry for his signature. The measure is the latest in a series of efforts to defund Planned Parenthood around the country. Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest abortion provider, receives approximately 363 million dollars in taxpayer funding. The House of Representatives voted to defund the group earlier this year, but the measure faces stiff opposition in the Senate. Several provisions in Texas’s recently adopted budget in conjunction with SB 7 will eliminate 47 million from Planned Parenthood’s budget. “Once again, the pro-life grassroots have fought and won another battle at the state level to defund Planned Parenthood,” said SBA List President Marjorie Dannenfelser. Pro-life advocates are watching Indiana’s [battle](#) with the federal government over its recent attempt to enforce a similar measure that prohibits taxpayer funding of abortion.

In Case You Missed It:

[Weekly Market Update](#) provided by Jeff Beach of the [AACS Investment Team at Merrill Lynch](#)

[House Education Committee Chairman Questions Secretary Duncan’s NCLB Waiver Plan](#)

[Rhode Island Passes Civil Union Bill](#)

[AACS Youth Legislative Training Conference Alumni Named Leadership Institute Graduate of the Week](#)



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