



The Washington Flyer
August 19, 2011

We are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of Nature has placed in our power....The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave.

Patrick Henry

Cardus Survey Results Show Benefits of Christian Education

A comprehensive new study recently released by Cardus, a Christian think tank “dedicated to the renewal of North American culture,” provides empirical evidence for the numerous positive outcomes that result from attending a private, Christian school. The [survey](#), one of the largest samplings ever conducted of Christian school graduates and administrators, compares them to Catholic, public and non-Christian private school graduates. A June *Christian Post* [article](#) provided a summary of the survey findings in four main areas—spirituality, academic development, civic and cultural engagement. Christian school students ranked higher than their counterparts in charitable giving, intact marriages, and general optimism about the future while contemporaries were more likely to pursue advanced degrees and be active politically. Graduates of Christian schools ranked family as the most important thing while other graduates ranked college as their number one priority. Survey compilers attributed this difference in priority as a causative factor to the statistical evidence that shows Christian graduates were also more likely to stay married. To view a copy of the survey findings [click here](#).

Colorado School Choice Program

On August 12, a district court judge ruled that the Douglas County (Colorado) school choice [program](#) was unconstitutional because religiously affiliated private schools were allowed to participate in the recently established voucher program. The plaintiffs argued that the program violated the oft-cited separation of church and state standard. Approximately 500 scholarships of up to \$4,575 dollars per student were available through the voucher program. About 300 students have already started the semester. As a result of the ruling, some parents will have to find alternative educational options. Disappointed parents whose children were awarded scholarship funds are appealing the ruling. Douglas County school board officials feel confident that the program passes constitutional muster and that the current decision will be reversed upon appeal.

Indiana Voucher Program Upheld

Earlier this year, Indiana garnered significant media attention for creating the nation’s largest [voucher](#) program. Teacher unions and other school choice opponents immediately sought to overturn the legislative measure in the court system. This week Superior Court Judge Michael Keele ruled in favor of the program and refused to grant a temporary injunction to halt implementation during the appeals process. Over 2800 students have been approved to receive vouchers for the upcoming school year. The plaintiffs (most notably the Indiana State Teacher’s Association) claimed that the law violated Article 1, Section 4 of the state constitution that prohibits the use of taxpayer funds to support religion. In his opinion, Keele pointed to the historical precedent of state support for instruction at schools with religious affiliations. He reasoned that while some of the private schools participating in the voucher program were religious in nature there was no evidence of coercion to support religion. Parents who receive the financial assistance are free to enroll their child in the private school of their choosing. Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller called the ruling “a victory for Hoosier students and families

currently utilizing the choice scholarship program.” The Institute for Justice will continue to represent the defendants throughout the pending appeals process.

Montana NCLB Update

The Department of Education (DOE) and Montana education officials have resolved their impasse over the raising of the “No Child Left Behind” annual yearly percentage (AYP) requirements. According to the law’s provisions, states are required to raise their achievement rates every year and reach 100% proficiency in math and reading by 2014 or face punitive action. In April, state Education Superintendent Denise Juneau announced that Montana would not raise the state’s AYP goal for the upcoming year. The DOE warned the state that noncompliance would result in a loss of Title I funds if they did not comply by August 15. After intervention by Senator Max Baucus and talks with the department officials, the DOE will now allow Montana simply to [revise](#) its AYP scale, effectively letting the state proficiency standards remain the same. The AYP rates have remained at 83% (reading) and 68% (math) for the past three years and must now reach 84.4% (reading) and 70% (math) goals to avoid penalty. A Department spokesperson explained that the impetus for this compromise was the fact that Montana did not take advantage of a 2005 opportunity to revise its standards. Pundits who have questioned the constitutionality of the proposed NCLB [waiver](#) now question whether this type of compromise would be a viable solution for other states facing similar difficulties.

California SB 48 Petition Efforts Advance

Grassroots efforts to overturn California law SB 48 are gaining momentum. The controversial law which would go into effect next year mandates the incorporation of LGBT history in K-12 social science curriculum, the inclusion of positive examples, and bans any negative portrayals of the homosexual lifestyle in all public and charter school educational materials. Although the measure was portrayed as an anti-bullying initiative, there is no language in the law that addresses bullying, and laws against bullying already exist. Despite strong [objections](#) by a variety of groups, Governor Jerry Brown signed the measure which passed by a party line vote in the Democratic-controlled legislature. The state Attorney General stipulated that 750,000 signatures must be submitted by September 30 in order for the measure to be placed on the ballot. The effort [stopSB48](#) is gathering the signatures to place the measure on the 2012 ballot to give voters an opportunity to reverse the detrimental law. The effects of the law could potentially be far reaching since California is the largest textbook purchaser in the nation. Opponents of the measure counter that SB 48 “costs too much” and that “it goes too far” because the curriculum will indoctrinate impressionable young children and prohibits parents from removing their children from the classes. To view more information about this initiative [click here](#).

Register Today - Annual National Legislative Conference, September 12-14

This year’s event will highlight the recent Supreme Court victory that upheld Arizona tuition tax credits. Mike Sproul (Christian Schools of Arizona) and banquet speaker Congressman Trent Franks (author of the Arizona Scholarship Tax Credit) will provide first-hand information about the very successful Arizona program and its impact on our AACS schools in Arizona. Former U.S. Attorney General Ed Meese and Education expert Lindsey Burke will address the attendees during the exclusive AACS briefing from the Heritage Foundation. You can also meet with your Congressmen and hear from others at the Congressional briefing. [Register](#) today!

In Case You Missed It:

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

[A Stunning Victory for the Constitution](#)

[ACLU Files First LGBT Filtering Case](#)

