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“The time has come that Christians must vote for honest men and take consistent ground in politics or the Lord will curse them. . . . Christians have been exceedingly guilty in this matter. But the time has come when they must act differently. . . . Christians seem to act as if they thought God did not see what they do in politics. But I tell you He does see it - and He will bless or curse this nation according to the course they take.”

Charles Finney

Department of Education Hosts Stakeholder Forum

Last week, the AACCS Legislative Office attended the U.S. Department of Education’s [Stakeholder Forum](#), hosted by Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. The meeting was designed to give education organizations, educators, and policy makers an [outlook](#) on the department’s plan to reform education. Secretary Duncan stated the three items of priority to President Obama and DOE: (1) reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), (2) promoting an early education program, and (3) working with the Recovery Act and saving education jobs.

Secretary Duncan expressed great optimism about the reauthorization of ESEA. Despite the likelihood of a Republican majority in the House and possibly the Senate, the Secretary seemed positive that bipartisan support for the new reform plan will be achieved. The AACCS Legislative Office has been meeting with Congressional offices on the education committees in both the House and the Senate in order to [ensure that protective language](#) for private and faith-based schools is maintained in the bill. Both congressmen and senators have expressed their intentions to keep the language. ESEA will likely be reauthorized sometime in the new legislative session beginning in January.

Second on the secretary’s priority list is the expansion of an early education program. Secretary Duncan stated that he would like to increase both access to early education and the quality of early education programs and that he has asked for nearly \$300 million in federal funds for his initiative. Sarah Griffith, Legislative Assistant for AACCS, had the opportunity to speak briefly with the secretary and express the great quality of early education programs that already exist through faith-based private and independent schools. When asked how he would collaborate with these schools or work together in order to provide quality early education programs without hurting existing early education providers, he simply reiterated his point that many low-income families cannot afford and do not have access to early childhood programs. The AACCS, however, has worked closely with the [Heritage Foundation](#) and the [CATO Institute](#) and is concerned with the federal government’s overreaching interest in early education. With more than [80% of four-year olds](#) already enrolled in a preschool program and nearly 80% of those programs being run by a private provider, the government’s interest in establishing a massive program could essentially hurt parents’ choices in choosing the right education for their child. In addition, one could argue that low-income families indeed already have access to early childhood education programs through the [Head Start program](#).

The Stakeholders Forum also included panels on how states can best implement the funds awarded from Race to the Top, as well as what's next for states that adopted the Common Core standards. In speaking about the Common Core Standard Initiative (CCSI), panelists discussed the need to develop tests and assessments that will correctly assess how well students are achieving. These panelists also discussed the key stakeholders and their appropriate responsibilities. The key stakeholders include (1) school leaders, teachers, educators, (2) higher education institutions and faculty, and (3) parents and students. The first group would be responsible for assisting in the development of test blueprints as well as serving on "content teams." The second group is to be responsible for developing college-ready standards and assessments and implementing these assessments as "valid placement" in the application process of a student. The panel, however, neglected to discuss the third group's responsibilities until an audience member asked what the role of the parents would be. The panel simply replied that it would be the parents' role to promote the common standards.

While the AACCS is a strong supporter of setting high standards and providing quality education, the source from of these standards is key to achieving success in education. A nationally endorsed and incentivized standard will not allow states and local school districts to operate in a manner that best works with their students. And by creating a federal standard, parents will have little say in their child's education.

2010 Election Outlook

Things are heating up around the country as millions of Americans make their way to the polls this Tuesday, November 2. With a possible takeover of Congressional seats by Republicans in the House and possibly the Senate, many are viewing this election as not only a referendum on the President and his policies but also a referendum on Washington politics itself. Frustrated voters are focusing mostly on the uncontrollable spending and high unemployment. Other important issues at stake in this election, however, include life, traditional marriage, and pro-family issues. As Charles Carroll, signer of the Declaration of Independence stated, "Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they therefore who are decrying the Christian religion, whose morality is so sublime and pure...are undermining the solid foundation of morals, the best security for the duration of free governments."

Please take the time to research each candidate and vote for the one who best represents your values. Many conservative organizations have put together voter guides to help voters make informed decisions about the candidates. Please click on each of the following organizations to view their voter guides: [American Family Association Christian Voter Guide](#); [Concerned Women for America](#); [Eagle Forum](#); [National Right to Life](#); [Susan B. Anthony List](#).

The Founding Fathers' Thoughts on Voting

"Consider well the important trust . . . which God . . . [has] put into your hands. . . . To God and posterity you are accountable for [your rights and your rulers]. . . . Let not your children have reason to curse you for giving up those rights and prostrating those institutions which your fathers delivered to you. . . . [L]ook well to the characters and qualifications of those you elect and raise to office and places of trust. . . . Think not that your interests will be safe in the hands of the weak and ignorant; or faithfully managed by the impious, the dissolute and the immoral. Think not that men who acknowledge not the providence of God nor regard His laws will be uncorrupt in office, firm in defense of the righteous cause against the oppressor, or resolutely oppose the torrent of iniquity. . . . Watch over your liberties and privileges—civil and religious—with a careful eye."

~*Matthias Burnett*

"Now more than ever the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption. If it be intelligent, brave, and pure, it is because the people demand these high qualities to represent them in the national legislature. . . . [I]f the next centennial does not find us a great nation . . . it will be because those who represent the enterprise, the culture, and the morality of the nation do not aid in controlling the political forces."

~*James Garfield*

“Impress upon children the truth that the exercise of the elective franchise is a social duty of as solemn a nature as man can be called to perform; that a man may not innocently trifle with his vote; that every elector is a trustee as well for others as himself and that every measure he supports has an important bearing on the interests of others as well as on his own.”

~*Daniel Webster*

“In selecting men for office, let principle be your guide. Regard not the particular sect or denomination of the candidate - look to his character. . . . When a citizen gives his suffrage to a man of known immorality he abuses his trust; he sacrifices not only his own interest, but that of his neighbor, he betrays the interest of his country.”

~*Noah Webster*

“When you become entitled to exercise the right of voting for public officers, let it be impressed on your mind that God commands you to choose for rulers, ‘just men who will rule in the fear of God.’ The preservation of government depends on the faithful discharge of this duty; if the citizens neglect their duty and place unprincipled men in office, the government will soon be corrupted; laws will be made, not for the public good so much as for selfish or local purposes; corrupt or incompetent men will be appointed to execute the laws; the public revenues will be squandered on unworthy men; and the rights of the citizens will be violated or disregarded. If a republican government fails to secure public prosperity and happiness, it must be because the citizens neglect the divine commands, and elect bad men to make and administer the laws.”

~*Noah Webster*

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Changes Made to Federal Regs for Higher Education](#)

[AZ School Choice Program a Sour Lemon?](#)

[Court Rules Against Susan B. Anthony's Free Speech Case](#)

[Woman Prosecuted for "Christian" Roommate Ad](#)



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