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“Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.”
Abraham Lincoln

AACS Hosts Youth Legislative Training Conference

This week, the AACCS hosted the 21st annual Youth Legislative Training Conference in Washington, D.C., for high school juniors and seniors from Christian high schools across the country. The week-long conference included workshops from top conservative leaders, a Day on the Hill, a mock senate, and tours of historical sites in our nation’s Capital. The mock senate, led by Mrs. Gail Nicholas, gave the students an opportunity to role-play actual Senators and write and debate legislation on the topic of foreign affairs. A highlight of the week was the Day on the Hill which included a Congressional briefing designed just for the students, meetings with the students’ Congressmen, and an after-hours tour of the Capitol hosted by Rep. Loudermilk (GA). During the Congressional briefing, the students heard from Representatives Hartzler (MO), Huelskamp (KS), Huizenga (MI), Jordan (OH), Webster (FL), Hice (GA), and Gohmert (TX). The Congressmen all shared how the Lord guided them to run for office, and they encouraged the students to get involved in public policy and elections for conservative leaders, stressing the need for Christians to participate in the public arena. The students also had opportunity to tour the Library of Congress and Arlington Cemetery where the group laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The week culminated in a special banquet, honoring Lieutenant Commander Tavis Long, an alumnus of Christian schools who now serves as a chaplain at the Pentagon. During his keynote address at the banquet, Commander Long challenged the students to follow the example of Daniel who developed his God-given skills and was used to serve in the palace of the king. The Lord blessed the week with a great group of students, and we are excited to see what doors of opportunity the Lord will open for the students as the result of the things learned through the conference. To see pictures of the week, visit our Facebook page, [AACCS Legislative Office](#).

U.S. Senate Votes to Reauthorize ESEA

On Thursday, the U.S. Senate voted to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by passing the bi-partisan bill, Every Child Achieves Act. After several days of debate and votes on multiple amendments, the Senate voted 81-17 in favor of the bill. [Key issues](#) of debate included efforts to allow school choice options and an effort to provide federal civil rights for LGBT students through an anti-bullying measure. Sen. Tim Scott (SC) offered the amendment which would have allowed low-income students to use their Title 1 funds to attend the public or private school of their choice; the amendment needed a 60-vote threshold to pass but failed 45-51. Sen. Al Franken (MN) introduced an amendment that would have enacted the Student Non-Discrimination Act, which prevents discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity; this bill also needed a 60-vote threshold and failed 52-45. Another key topic of debate was an amendment introduced by some Democrats which would have expanded accountability measures for the states. While the amendment failed 43-54, the Democrats are hoping they have garnered enough support to include the issue in the

conference bill. The Senate passed by unanimous consent amendments which addressed some early education issues such as evaluating the early education improvement grants and addressing expulsion and suspension in early education centers. The bill will now move to conference with the House version, the Student Success Act, which many believe to be more conservative than the Senate bill. Once agreement is reached in conference, the bill will be sent to the President for his signature. This marks the first time since 2001 that both Houses of Congress have passed a bill to reauthorize ESEA.

Administration Releases Plans to Expand Head Start Program

The Administration has [released plans](#) to revise the rules that guide the Head Start program. Some of the most notable changes include increasing the number of required hours for an operating program from 3.5 to 6 hours per day and increasing the number of required operating days from 128 to 180 days per year. In addition, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, the document which outlines what a child should know, has been revised to include children from birth to five years old rather than just from three to five years old. The President requested \$10.1 billion in his 2016 budget request for the Head Start program, an increase of over a billion dollars to cover the cost the changes will require; but the House of Representatives has not approved any increase in the funding for Head Start which is currently at \$8.6 billion. Leaders of Head Start are undeterred and claim they will continue with implementation but perhaps proceed at a slower pace until they get the necessary funding. The Head Start program has received much criticism for being ineffective after a report was released in 2012 which showed the Head Start program was not only [unsuccessful](#) in helping students academically but the program was actually harmful in some areas such as peer relations.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Energy and Commerce Committee Launches Investigation Following "Abhorrent" Planned Parenthood Video](#)

[Judiciary Committee to Investigate Horrific Abortion Practices of Planned Parenthood](#)

[House GOP Pulls Bill From Floor Over Abortion](#)

[Common Core Materials Penetrate Every State](#)

[Federal Court Rules Against Little Sisters of the Poor on HHS Mandate Case](#)

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