



A Publication of the American Association of Christian Schools

The Washington Flyer
August 15, 2015

“Our contest is not only whether we ourselves shall be free, but whether there shall be left to mankind an asylum on earth for civil and religious liberty.”

Samuel Adams

Common Core Becomes Education Issue in GOP Debate

The controversy surrounding the Common Core Standards [received some attention](#) during the GOP presidential debate last Thursday. In a question to Jeb Bush, Moderator Bret Baier pointed out that many of the candidates opposed the Common Core and asked if Jeb Bush agreed with Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, when he called those leading the charge against the standards simply a “fringe group of critics.” Bush responded that he disagreed with that assessment, adding that he didn’t “believe the federal government should be involved in the creation of standards directly or indirectly, the creation of curriculum or content.” He continued to explain that while he supported higher standards, he believed it was a state responsibility and pointed to his record as Florida Governor of obtaining “rising student achievement across the board” and attributed that to “high standards, robust accountability, ending social promotion in third grade, real school choice across the board, [and] challenging the teachers union and beating them . . .” Baier then turned the question to Senator Marco Rubio, asking him why he disagreed with Bush on Common Core. Rubio responded that the problem lays with the involvement of the federal government: “Here’s the problem with the Common Core. The Department of Education, like every federal agency, will never be satisfied. They will not stop with it being a suggestion. They will turn it into a mandate. In fact, what they will begin to say to local communities is: ‘You will not get federal money unless you do things the way we want you to do it.’ And they will use Common Core or any other requirement that exists nationally to force it down the throats of our people and our states.” The topic of education was briefly discussed during the earlier debate when Rick Perry referenced the increase in graduation rates in Texas, and Bobby Jindal noted his efforts on school choice reform in Louisiana. To watch a replay of either debate, click [here](#).

Common Core Opt-Out Movement Growing in New York

The New York state education department has [released data](#) that reveals approximately 20 percent of students chose not to participate in the annual assessments, marking a significant growth in the opt-out movement in the state. Education officials claim that those students do not have a “recognized, valid reason for not participating,” yet Chris Cerrone, a parent who is heavily involved in the opt-out movement, took to Twitter and [charged](#) that his valid reason for opting out was that the “assessment system is flawed & narrows curriculum.” The data also shows little improvement in the students’ reading and math scores since the Common Core aligned tests were implemented three years ago. Despite the clear message from parents that they are not happy with the assessments, education officials have indicated that they believe parents do not understand the importance of the assessments, and they will work to better communicate the value of the tests.

States Take Action Against Planned Parenthood

In the wake of the recent videos exposing how Planned Parenthood has been selling the body parts of aborted babies, Alabama [has joined Louisiana](#) and New Hampshire by becoming the third state to defund the abortion business organization. In Indiana, Governor Mike Pence [signed a bill](#) into law last week that will help stop Planned Parenthood facilities from selling body parts of aborted babies by requiring that aborted babies be buried or cremated. Mike Fichter, President and CEO of Indiana Right to Life, commended Governor Pence, stating, “We’re thankful for Governor Pence’s commitment to the pro-life cause and for the legislators who boldly passed these bills.” In addition, a group of black pastors [sent a letter](#) to the director of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Portrait Gallery requesting that the bust of Margaret Sanger, Planned Parenthood’s Founder, be removed from the museum’s “Struggle for Justice” exhibit in light of her support for the targeting of minorities by the nation’s largest abortion provider.

Don’t Miss the AACS National Legislative Conference

The AACS will be hosting the annual [AACS National Legislative Conference](#) on September 14–16, 2015. Pastors, administrators, teachers, and students from AACS ministries will be given the opportunity to gain information about the issues facing Christian education, to meet with their Senators and/or Representatives, and to be encouraged in their service for the Lord. Taking place in Washington, D.C., the conference will include a Congressional briefing designed for AACS members, a briefing hosted by the Heritage Foundation on educational and religious freedom, a “Stories in Stone” tour of the Jefferson Memorial led by Tim Schmig, and the annual Legislative Banquet featuring Senator James Lankford as the keynote speaker. The theme for this year’s conference is “Let Us Be Strong” based on 2 Samuel 10:12 which states, “let us be strong for our people and . . . for God. And may the Lord do what is good in His sight.” Click [here](#) to register. The [registration form](#) can also be found under the “Legislative/Legal” tab on the AACS.org website.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Register Now for AACS National Legislative Conference September 14-16, 2015](#)

[4 Reasons We Must Protect Freedom For Everyone After Supreme Court's Marriage Ruling](#)

[After Court's Gay-Marriage Ruling, We Need Peaceful Coexistence, Not Culture War](#)

[Review of Truth Overruled: The Future of Marriage and Religious Liberty, by Ryan T. Anderson](#)

Jamison Coppola: Legislative Director
Maureen Van Den Berg: Policy Analyst
Legislative Office, 119 C Street SE, Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202.547.2991 Fax: 202.547.2992