



A Publication of the American Association of Christian Schools

**The Washington Flyer
February 26, 2016**

“The secret of my success? It is simple. It is found in the Bible, ‘In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.’”

George Washington Carver

AACS Submits Public Comments Regarding Early Education Regulations

Earlier this week, the American Association of Christian Schools submitted public comments regarding the proposed rulemaking for the Child Care and Development Block Grant Fund, a program which was created in 1990 to help low-income families with child care costs. Reauthorized in 2014, the program allows families to choose from a variety of child care providers, including many faith-based providers, by using certificates to cover the costs. In some cases, states have used the program funds to offer grants and contracts to providers for direct child care services, but in these cases there are usually restrictions that exclude faith-based providers. To ensure that options and access are not limited for parents, the reauthorization legislation specifically prohibited any mandate which would require states either to include or favor grants and contracts over certificates or to discourage the use of certificates for families. Despite this clear language, the proposed regulations put forth by the Administration require states to “include some use of grants of contracts for the provision of direct services.” The AACCS has objected to this requirement, stating the following in submitted public comments: “Should states be required to include grants and contracts in the delivery of direct services, many faith-based providers will be excluded because the religious nature of their programs and the religious employment practices followed by the providers would be prohibited. Additionally, the shift in dollars away from certificates and toward grants and contracts would necessarily limit access and options for parents who wish to choose a religious provider for the care and education of their children. . . . As such, AACCS requests that the requirement . . . mandating state use of grants and contracts be removed from the proposed regulations.” The AACCS further noted the great benefits of having a diverse educational system which allows for many distinctive approaches to child care and learning, emphasizing the following: “We believe that overly prescriptive rule making on the federal level is counter-productive to choice, diversity, and quality. Prescriptive rules at the federal level ultimately overreach into state decision making and reduce options and limit choice.”

Settlement Reached in Religious Liberty Case

Last Thursday, the Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, diocese settled with Colleen Simon, a former employee who had sued the diocese and its former bishop, Robert Finn, after they fired her from her position as food pantry coordinator when they discovered that she was married to another woman. The settlement was reached just two days after Judge Kenneth R. Garrett III dismissed one of Simon’s claims that the diocese had deceived her into believing that her same-sex marriage would not be an issue. The terms of the settlement have not been released. Simon had [filed the lawsuit](#) in July 2014 against Finn and the diocese, and a trial was set to begin February 29. Erik Stanley, senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom which represented the diocese in the proceedings, referred to the 2012 Supreme Court decision in [Hosanna vs. Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School](#), stating, “A church isn’t obligated to employ those who act contrary to the church’s teachings. The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed this as recently as four years ago.”

Ohio Defunds Planned Parenthood

Ohio has become the [10th state](#) to defund Planned Parenthood by passing legislation that denies funding to any centers that perform or promote elective abortions. A total of \$1.3 million in state and federal funds will be redirected to health centers that offer women's health services and do not include abortions. Governor John Kasich signed the bill into law last Sunday, after the legislation passed both the state house and senate chambers. The legislation was introduced after the release of a series of undercover videos by the Center for Medical Progress which revealed the horrific practice of Planned Parenthood entities selling body parts of aborted babies and consequently sparked several state and federal investigations. Ohio Right to Life executive director, Stephanie Ranade Krider, [declared](#) the new Ohio law "is an incredible victory for the pro-life cause in Ohio and for the national pro-life movement's collective efforts to defund the abortion industry chief, Planned Parenthood."

South Dakota Senate Passes Bill to Protect Students

On Thursday the South Dakota State Senate passed a bill by a vote of 20-15 which would stop transgender students from using opposite-sex bathrooms, further intensifying an effort to protect students from being forced to share a bathroom or locker room with someone of the opposite gender. The bill, H.B. 1008, passed the state house earlier this month, and now moves to the governor's desk for his signature. A spokesman for Governor Dennis Daugaard, a Republican, said that Daugaard has yet to decide whether or not he will sign the bill. Republican state Senator Brock Greenfield, [stated](#), "This only asks us to contemplate what we feel is appropriate related to our law regarding the co-mingling of biological sexes in, I guess I would say, rather intimate settings. . . . Do you feel it is appropriate for a 13-year-old girl to be exposed to the anatomy of a boy or a 13-year-old boy exposed to the anatomy of a girl because of decisions we've made here?"

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Supreme Court Vacancies in an Election Year: The "Biden Rules"](#)

[Judiciary Committee Confirm Hearings Won't Be Held for Obama's SCOTUS Pick](#)

[Common Core Remains Controversial](#)

[Common Core Backlash: Track State Efforts](#)

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