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“Should not the Bible regain the place it once held as a schoolbook? Its morals are pure, its examples captivating and noble. . . . In no book is there so good English, so pure and so elegant, and by teaching all the same book they will speak alike, and the Bible will justly remain the standard of language as well as of faith.”

Fischer Ames, Author of the First Amendment

Administration Releases Policy Statement on Family Engagement with Early Learning

The Obama Administration recently released a [policy statement](#) regarding family engagement with early learning programs. This is the third policy statement drafted by the Early Learning Interagency Policy Board (IPB), a committee formed by the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services specifically to create policy statements regarding coordination across publicly funded early learning programs. The IPB has previously released policy statements regarding expulsion/suspension policies in early education and the inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood settings. The newest policy affirms “that strong family engagement is central in promoting children’s healthy development and wellness, including social-emotional and behavioral development; preparing children for school; seamlessly transitioning them to kindergarten; and supporting academic achievement in elementary school and beyond.” In explaining the purpose, the statement charges that family engagement is “not equally valued or implemented” across the existing federal laws and programs that already reference the importance of family to a child’s development; thus, the policy statement reviews research regarding families and early education and also offers recommendations to states on implementing strategies and programs for engaging families with early learners. Last January, the Administration sought feedback to a draft of the policy statement, and the AACCS Legislative Office [submitted public comments](#) which offered caution: “While intentions may be noble, expanded government services almost universally lead to lower levels of individual responsibility and commitment. While we appreciate the recognition of the vital role of families in a child’s development, we are gravely concerned at an increased role of the government in determining what is best for each child. . . . We agree with the Department that a statement on family engagement is necessary to provide guidance for the programs that currently exist to provide assistance to those families who seek such help. However, with the renewed efforts from federal and state governments to increase early education opportunities for children, it is vital that such a statement convey in the strongest of terms that the primary role, rights, responsibility, and privilege of providing care and education to young children lies with the parents. Any additional programs should be offered only as opportunities to help the parents, maintaining the strength of the family unit which is indeed the foundation of our free society.”

Utah Governor Calls for Removing Common Core

Utah Governor Gary Herbert has called for the removal of the Common Core Standards and tests from the state, reversing his original position. When Utah adopted Common Core in 2010, Gov. Herbert stood by the decision in spite of growing opposition to the standards. He did, however, launch an investigation to determine the legality and value of the standards, concluding later that the standards did meet these criteria. So determined, he took no further action. Last Wednesday, however, Herbert wrote a letter to the State Board of Education, [stating](#), “Today I am asking the State Board of Education to consider implementing uniquely Utah standards, moving beyond the Common Core to a system that is tailored specifically to the needs of our state.” Republican

House Speaker Greg Hughes is [condemning](#) the reversal on the issue as a completely politically motivated move by the governor who faces reelection on June 28th. “The legislative branch has not been grafted into the governor’s reelection campaign,” Hughes said. Gov. Herbert’s challenger in the race, Overstock.com Chairman Jonathan Johnson, called out the governor on the reversal, [stating](#), “The House and Senate are not playgrounds to be used to keep office for a third term. The governor has had six years to remedy the federal program Common Core that he helped author.” He also pointed out that the governor would not have vetoed a 2014 bill that would have expanded parental involvement in educational decisions if he “truly cared about this issue.”

North Carolina and the Justice Department Battle over Bathroom Bill

The state of North Carolina is facing immense pressure from the federal government to reverse a recently passed law that specified that government bathroom use would be determined by biological sex. The new law does allow private organizations and businesses to establish their own policies regarding who uses what restroom and bars cities and counties from passing “anti-discrimination” ordinances that would conflict with the law. Last week, the Justice Department sent notice to NC Governor Pat McCrory that the law violated the Civil Rights Act. The order stated he had until Monday to denounce the law as discriminatory. In response, the governor and some North Carolina legislators filed two separate lawsuits against the Administration, charging the federal government with overreaching. U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch then retaliated with a DOJ lawsuit against the state of North Carolina, Governor Pat McCrory, the NC Department of Public Safety, and the University of North Carolina. Furthermore, the Administration has indicated that federal funding will be withheld from the public university system (up to \$4.5 billion) and from the Department of Public Safety while the new law is being enforced. Roger Severino of the Heritage Foundation [charged](#) these actions show that “the radical left is using government power to coerce everyone, including children, into pledging allegiance to a radical new gender ideology over and above their right to privacy, safety, and religious freedom.”

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Research Review: Universal Preschool May Do More Harm Than Good](#)

[Bathrooms Are Just the Beginning: A Look Into the Trans Movement's End Goals](#)

[Success of Arizona's Students Points to Benefits of School Choice](#)

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