



A Publication of the American Association of Christian Schools

**The Washington Flyer
October 25, 2019**

“What spectacle can be more edifying or more seasonable, than that of liberty and learning, each leaning on the other for their mutual and surest support?”

James Madison

AACS Executive Director Discusses Ministry and Benefits of Christian Education

In a recent radio interview, Dr. Jeff Walton offered a thorough explanation of the mission of Christian education and discussed key components that make Christian schools successful in providing a quality education with a biblical worldview. The radio program, [Stand in the Gap](#), is a ministry of the American Pastors Network (APN), a national organization which seeks to provide resources to equip and support pastors as they minister in today’s culture. Hosted by Dr. Keith Wiebe, APN vice president for state chapters and previous AACS president, and Pastor Isaac Crockett, who also cohosts the weekly Stand in the Gap telecast, the interview addressed questions regarding philosophical and practical elements of Christian education such as the primary role of the parents, the elements of a quality Christian school, and the importance of religious liberty to Christian education. The conversation began with a discussion as to what constitutes a true Christian education. Dr. Walton defined Christian education as “the transformation of a child, who is owned by God and given in stewardship to parents, spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially into a yielded and fully equipped servant of our majestic God.” Using this foundational definition, Dr. Walton explained that Christian schools are a tool for parents and churches, “the two agencies given a biblical command to teach children,” to partner with when seeking to fulfill their God-given role of teaching their children. He also offered advice for parents to consider when choosing the best educational opportunity for their children, emphasizing the importance of an education that provides a strong biblical worldview as well as a high standard of academics. The interview also provided an opportunity for Dr. Walton to discuss the efforts of AACS member schools to excel in these areas, explaining that AACS schools are accountable to the parents and most schools use assessments such as standardized testing to measure academic progress. In addition, he explained the value of accreditation as a tool for self-study and school improvement, pointing to the fact that the schools accredited by AACS have seen, as a group, consistent growth in enrollment as parents and teachers recognize the quality improvements that come with the process of accreditation. An important segment of the interview addressed the significance of religious liberty to Christian education. Referencing again the definition of Christian education, Dr. Walton explained that true Christian education can be achieved only when there is the freedom to provide an education that points a child to Christ. He emphasized, “Religious liberty must be protected or Christian schools will be forced to conform to anti-biblical norms or close.” To listen to Dr. Walton’s interview, please [click here](#).

Final Guidance for Equitable Services Through Title 1 Includes Religious Liberty Protections

The U.S. Department of Education recently published the [final non-regulatory guidance](#) for Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA) which ensures that students from low-income families

receive the necessary educational services, such as tutoring or other extra instructional services, to help them achieve academic success. Because the law allows private school students to receive these services, the guidance was issued to offer clarification regarding the consultation process between state and local educational agencies and private school officials, the allocation of funds for private school students, and the eligibility requirements for private school students. The AACCS submitted comments on a draft of the guidance last spring and commended the department's efforts to ensure that the religious liberty of faith-based schools with participating students is protected and that religious organizations are not excluded from being providers of educational services through Title 1. The guidance confirms the decision by Secretary DeVos last March to [reverse the policy](#) which prohibited religious organizations from being providers of the equitable services. In a press release which referenced the Supreme Court's 2017 *Trinity Lutheran* decision, the secretary [stated](#), "Those seeking to provide high-quality educational services to students and teachers should not be discriminated against simply based on the religious character of their organization."

American Federation for Children Releases Annual School Choice Guidebook

American Federation for Children (AFC) has recently released its annual [School Choice Guidebook](#), a helpful resource on the status and growth of school choice programs across the country. The report starts by giving an overview of school choice programs, showing how student enrollment in school choice programs has steadily increased from 29,000 students enrolled in 2000–2001 to over 518,000 students enrolled today. School choice has rapidly spread in the United States, from Wisconsin first adopting school choice in 1990 to the 26 states plus Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico that have school choice programs today. States are listed according to the type of program they employ—tax credit scholarship, education savings account, voucher, or individual tuition tax credit—along with the year in which school choice was enacted, the number of students enrolled, and the amount spent on the program. The majority of the report is dedicated to a state-by-state analysis of school choice, ranking each state program against similar programs in other states. The state index describes how students can be eligible to participate in the program, what guidelines scholarship granting organizations must abide by, and what requirements schools must meet to participate. The AFC School Choice Guidebook is a useful guide to understanding how the country's 55 different school choice programs work and what can be improved to allow more students the opportunity to attend the school that works for them.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Jeremy Dys: Liberal Attack on Barr's Religious Liberty Speech Shows He's Right](#)

[Britain's Opposition Party Wants to Ban Private Schools, Citing 'Grotesque' Inequality](#)

[California Governor Signs Bill Mandating Free Abortions at All Colleges and Universities](#)

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