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*“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.”*  
*George Washington Carver*

**AACS Podcast is Back!**

The AACCS has brought back the “[AACCS Today](#)” podcast! Each episode is designed to help school leaders and educators understand the work of the AACCS in Washington and navigate today’s issues from a biblical worldview. Join our hosts Matt Ticzkus and Jamison Coppola along with special guests weekly for 30 minutes of news, policy, and interviews dealing with the most relevant educational and cultural policy issues. You can access the podcast through [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Google Podcasts](#), or [wherever you listen](#) to podcasts.

**Study Indicates Standardized Tests Are a Good Predictor for College Success**

A recently released study indicates that standardized tests such as the SAT and ACT are the best indicators for a student’s potential academic success in college. When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education, over 1900 colleges [suspended the requirement](#) for standardized test scores in admissions policies, citing the disruption in education and also [claiming](#) that the tests created socioeconomic and racial inequality for students. Instead of the SAT or ACT scores, colleges looked to other indicators such as students’ GPAs and extracurricular involvement during high school. However, data from a [new study](#), conducted by Opportunity Insights out of Harvard, suggests that standardized test scores are a better predictor of academic success in college than good grades in high school. The authors of the study considered admissions records and students’ grades during their first year of college at several Ivy League colleges, using data from 2017 to 2022. The study found that “students with higher SAT/ACT scores are more likely to have higher college GPAs than their peers with lower scores.” The study also found that a “high school GPA does a poor job of predicting academic success in college.” When comparing the socioeconomic status of students, the study found that “there is no evidence that students from higher-resourced backgrounds outperform students from lower-resourced backgrounds—their college GPAs are virtually identical.”

Among “Ivy-Plus” schools [Ivy League colleges plus Stanford, Duke, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and the University of Chicago], two have announced a reinstatement of the admissions requirement of SAT or ACT scores. MIT made the decision in March 2022 after conducting research which led it to [conclude](#) that the tests help determine a student’s academic readiness for college and also “identify socioeconomically disadvantaged students who lack access to advanced coursework or other enrichment opportunities that would otherwise demonstrate their readiness for MIT.” [Dartmouth College](#) this week announced its intention to reinstate the testing requirement for college entrance for the class of 2029. Their research led them to the same conclusions as MIT: the tests were an “important predictor of a student’s success” and also [helped](#) to “identify high-achieving applicants from low and middle-income backgrounds” and others who may be considered socioeconomically disadvantaged. Some speculate that other higher education institutions are also [reassessing their decisions](#) to suspend the testing requirement, especially in light of the data and analysis showing the tests are helpful in assessing a student’s preparedness for college and can actually provide opportunities for those less fortunate financially rather than advancing inequality.

## Ohio Legislature Moves to Protect Minors

The Ohio General Assembly has successfully [voted to override](#) Gov. Mike DeWine's veto of the [SAFE Act](#), a law that will protect minors and females from medical experimentation and from men competing in women's sports. As the AACS [previously reported](#), DeWine vetoed the bill claiming that his decision would protect life. He soon issued an [executive order](#) to address the issue, an order that fell short of the protections in the SAFE Act. The Assembly reconvened, and both the state House and Senate voted to override DeWine's veto. The law, which goes into effect on April 24, will prohibit physicians from performing gender "transition" procedures such as sterilizing surgeries or administering cross-sex hormones and puberty blockers to minors. The bill will also protect females by barring males from participating in female sports. However, the American Civil Liberties Union has announced that it plans to [file a lawsuit](#) against the law, claiming that the SAFE Act is "cruel" and "must be challenged." State Rep. Gary Click (R-Vickery), the SAFE Act's sponsor, [expressed confidence](#) that the Ohio attorney general would successfully defend the law in court: "It is unfathomable that a so-called civil rights organization would sue for the right to sterilize children, amputate healthy body parts, cause irreversible damage, and set children on a path to an increased risk of suicide without parental consent."

## New Poll Shows Americans Want Restrictions on Abortions

A new [poll](#) released by the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal service organization, shows that a [majority of Americans](#) want some type of legal restrictions on obtaining an abortion. The poll, which was conducted in partnership with the Marist University from January 8 to January 9, 2024, surveyed over 1,000 Americans across the nation. Of the people sampled, 66% of Americans want some type of legal limit on abortion. Another 66% also believe that doctors and health care professionals should be exempted from performing an abortion if they have religious objections to the practice. An additional 83% support or strongly support pregnancy resource centers. Of those surveyed, 40% considered themselves to be pro-life, up from 39% in 2023, and 58% of respondents considered themselves to be pro-choice, down from 61% in 2023. "Once again, most Americans are steadfast in their belief that abortion should be significantly limited yet laws should include exceptions for rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother," [stated](#) Dr. Barbara L. Carvalho, Director of the Marist Poll. "This clear trend found in the annual Knights of Columbus-Marist Poll has continued, nearly two years after the Supreme Court's landmark *Dobbs* decision."

## In Case You Missed It:

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

[Practical Legal Help for Christian Schools: ADF Ministry Alliance](#)

[Promise to America's Children](#)

[NEW! AACS Today Podcast: Higher Education Policy and Why It Matters to You](#)

[We're Christian—And We Hire Christians](#)

[The Transgender Administrative State](#)

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