

Council for American Private Education

CAPE outlook

Voice of America's private schools

Private Education: The Next 10 Years

Given the rapid and radical changes that have affected private education in the past decade, predicting the future of religious and independent schools would seem to be risky business. Nevertheless, several leaders of private education recently took that risk during a panel discussion at the National Private School Leadership Conference, sponsored by the Office of Non-Public Education (ONPE) at the U.S. Department of Education.

Peppered with questions by ONPE Director Maureen Dowling, four panelists, including three members of CAPE's board of directors, offered observations about the daunting challenges private schools face and the opportunities they have to continue to influence students, their communities, and the country.

Catholic School Challenges

Sr. John Mary Fleming, O.P., executive director of the Secretariat of Catholic Education at the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, traced the history of Catholic education in the United States back to the early French and Spanish settlements. Serving roughly 1.9 million students through nearly 6,600 schools in the United States, the system is seeing declining enrollments in some regions and an increase in Latino and underserved populations in others.

Fleming said a great opportunity available to the Catholic church is what Pope Francis calls the "new evangelization." Schools are part of the church's larger mis-

sion of outreach, she said. However, the challenges facing Catholic schools are many: competition from charter schools and other educational options; rising

tuitions and declining parish subsidies; the cost of maintaining aging buildings or investing in new ones; and an increasingly "secular and relativistic culture that does not necessarily value a faith-based educa-

tion." But the greatest challenge, said Fleming, is helping pastors, parents, and others to know and support the mission of Catholic schools.

Key to Jewish Survival

Rabbi David Zwiebel, executive vice president of Agudath Israel of America, a national Orthodox Jewish organization and a member of CAPE, called the overall decline in private school enrollment "alarming" and something "of deep concern." But in a ray of positive news, Zwiebel reported that Orthodox Jewish schools are actually seeing significant growth. He noted a recent study by the New York City Independent Budget Office showing that between 2002 and 2012, Jewish schools in the city alone increased enrollment by around 20,000 students.

Zwiebel attributed the growth in the Jewish school population to the fact that "the Orthodox Jewish community in particular has come to see Jewish education as the key to Jewish survival." He said rabbis hammer this message home from the pulpits, and the community understands "that Jewish education is critical for

the ongoing continuity of the Jewish community here in the United States."

Offering advice to the wider private school community, Zwiebel said it must do a better job proclaiming "how valuable private education is; how important it is to contributing to the diversity that is the great strength of the United States," and how important it is in providing laboratories for experimental approaches to education. But the community also needs to educate itself and its constituents about "how vital the religious education of our children is," especially in a society where values have "moved in a very different direction."

Quaker SPICES

Drew Smith, the new executive director of the Friends Council on Education, offered an overview of Quaker education in the United States, going back 325 years to the founding of the first Friends school in Philadelphia. Quoting George Fox, who established the Religious Society of Friends, Smith said Quakers are called to "[w]alk cheerfully over the earth answering to that of God in everyone." Children in Friends schools are taught to live by the Quaker SPICES: simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and social justice.

Noting a strong belief that Friends education is important for promoting Quakerism and recruiting new members, Smith said the community needs to "leverage the change that's happening in the delivery of education" to make it more affordable for students to attend Friends schools. He specifically mentioned the opportunities available through blended learning models.

Affirming the importance of serving students in need, Smith said Friends schools could reach a wider pool of students by containing costs and convincing the broader Quaker population to support their schools at more generous levels than is currently the case.



CAPE board members Sr. John Mary Fleming, O.P., Rabbi David Zwiebel, and Drew Smith at a private school leadership conference September 22 in Washington, DC.

CAPE member organizations:

- Agudath Israel of America
- American Montessori Society
- Association Montessori International—USA
- Association of Christian Schools International
- Association of Christian Teachers and Schools
- Association of Waldorf Schools of N.A.
- Christian Schools International
- Council on Educational Standards and Accountability
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Friends Council on Education
- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
- National Association of Episcopal Schools
- National Association of Independent Schools
- National Catholic Educational Association
- National Christian School Association
- Oral Roberts University Educational Fellowship
- Seventh-day Adventist Board of Education
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod Schools
- 35 Affiliated State Organizations

a coalition of national associations serving private schools K-12
Executive Director: Joe McTigue

Outlook is published monthly (September to June) by CAPE. An annual subscription is \$35. ISSN 0271-1451

13017 Wisteria Drive #457
Germantown, MD 20874
(tel) 301-916-8460
(fax) 301-916-8485
(email) cape@capenet.org

www.capenet.org

Senate and House Reach Agreement on Child Care Bill

Congressional gridlock? Not when it comes to child care legislation. Senate and House leaders reached a remarkable bipartisan, bicameral agreement last month on legislation that allows parents to use federal certificates to choose the child care program that best meets their child's needs. The bill (S. 1086), which reauthorizes the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program, was approved September 15 by voice vote in the House and is expected to be approved by the Senate sometime in November. The Senate overwhelmingly supported an earlier version of the legislation in March by a vote of 96 to 2.

Certificates

The bill includes language proposed by the CAPE community and originally introduced by Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) that affirms the use of child care certificates, which are provided directly to parents for use in whatever program best suits their child: faith-based, Montessori, Waldorf, or any other public or private program.

Specifically, the language states that nothing in the statute “shall be construed in a manner (1) to favor or promote the use of grants and contracts for the receipt of child care services... over the use of child care certificates; or (2) to disfavor or discourage the use of such certificates for the purchase of child care services, including those services provided by private or nonprofit entities, such as faith-based providers.”

The bipartisan amendment retains this critical provision and, largely due to efforts by House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline, even adds language in various sections that supports the availability of a variety of approaches to childhood development.

Vital Lifeline

“The Child Care and Development Block Grant program is a vital lifeline for parents trying to build a better future for their families,” said Kline. “This bipartisan legislation will strengthen this important program to give working moms and dads greater access to quality, affordable child care.”

The bill was based on legislation originally introduced by Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD) and Senator Richard Burr (R-NC). Mikulski said of the agreement: “I am so pleased that

the Senate and House have come together on a bipartisan basis to revitalize, refresh, and reform this vitally important program to support child care providers, give parents peace of mind, and better prepare our children for the future. It's time to get this done for children, parents, and providers alike!”

Senator Burr said: “I am thankful for the work of my colleagues in the Senate and the House who stood together to ensure the passage of this legislation.

This legislation will positively impact the lives of millions of children and their parents.”

Enhance Choice

A bipartisan news release from Senate and House leaders said the agreement will “enhance parental choice by provid-

ing information about available care options from all providers, including faith-based and community-based providers, and allowing parents to choose the child care provider that best suits their family's needs.”

The joint release went on to say that the bill will “strengthen safety in child care settings by requiring all providers to comply with state health, safety, and fire standards and undergo annual inspections.”

Lawmakers also believe the bill will “promote high quality child care by reserving funds at the state level to improve the quality of care provided to children, enhancing states' ability to train providers and develop safer and more effective child care services.”

1.5 Million Children

CCDBG focuses on the care of children under the age of 13 while their parents work or participate in training or education programs. Allowable care includes that provided in centers or programs, or by relatives or neighbors. It does not cover the cost of compulsory schooling.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, roughly 1.5 million children receive CCDBG assistance, and 51 percent of families served have incomes under the federal poverty level. Center-based programs enroll 68 percent of children assisted by CCDBG, while family child care homes serve another 21 percent. Ninety percent of children who benefit from CCDBG do so through the use of certificates.



Common Ideas and Sharp Differences on Teaching Children

In large measure, marketing is a matter of matching the right message with the right audience. Mess up on message or audience and marketing efforts can be a waste of resources or, worse, counterproductive.

People involved with marketing private schools would do well to pay close attention to a recent report from the Pew Research Center detailing how adults have some common notions, but also sharp differences, about what traits children should be taught. The report makes clear that different groups of parents want their children to develop different qualities. Finding parents who want the traits your school fosters, that is, finding your school's true market niche, and then tailoring an appropriate message can make all the difference in the world.

Released September 18 and based on a survey of 3,243 U.S. adults, the report "Teaching the Children: Sharp Ideological Differences, Some Common Ground" provides an overview of the qualities the public believes are important to teach children. Asked to identify which of 12 traits they consider "especially important" and allowed to identify as many as they want, 93 percent checked "being responsible," while only 53 percent checked "religious faith" (see table).

But the report dives deeper by identifying the number of adults who considered certain traits to be the "most important" to teach children (respondents could select up to three) and then breaking respondents out by political leanings, age, gender, and level of education. It gets very interesting very quickly.

The top three traits that adults identified as most important were being responsible (selected by 55 percent of respondents), hard work (42 percent) and religious faith (30 percent). The

next most important quality was helping others (selected by 22 percent of respondents), while the qualities least selected as most important were tolerance (11 percent), persistence (10 percent) and curiosity (8 percent).

Looked at through the filter of the political attitudes of respondents, the results show some remarkable differences between conservatives and liberals. Eighty-one percent of consistently conservative respondents thought religious faith was an especially important trait to teach children and 59 percent said it was among the most important. By contrast, only 26 percent of consistently liberal adults thought that religious faith was especially important, with only 11 percent rating it most important.

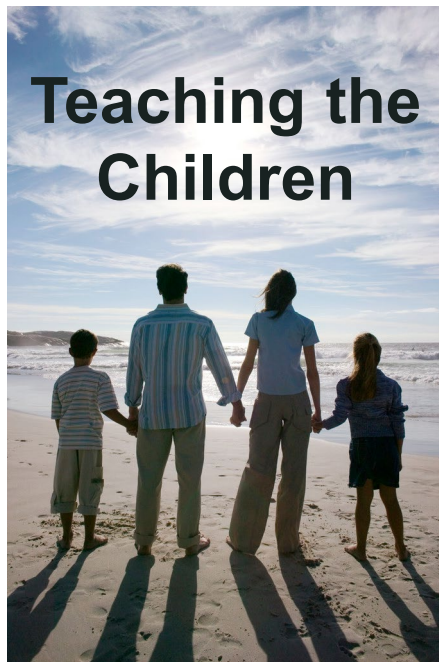
Sharp ideological differences were also obvious regarding the traits of tolerance and obedience. A large percentage of adults with consistently liberal opinions consider tolerance to be especially important (88 percent), while a much smaller

percentage think the same about obedience (35 percent). By comparison, 67 percent of consistent conservatives regard obedience as especially important, while only 41 percent think the same about tolerance.

There are, however, areas of agreement among people of different political attitudes. As the report puts it: "Notably, there is agreement across the ideological spectrum regarding the importance of teaching many of these qualities: Responsibility ranks as the most important child-rearing value for every group—consistent conservatives, consistent liberals and those in between.

Large majorities in all ideological groups also think it is important for children to learn independence, hard work and good manners."

The report is available on the Pew Research Center site at <www.pewresearch.org>.



Percentage of Adults Who Believe the Following Qualities Are Especially Important to Teach Children

Being responsible	93
Hard work	89
Being well-mannered	84
Helping others	84
Independence	77
Creativity	72
Empathy for others	68
Tolerance	65
Persistence	64
Obedience	60
Curiosity	59
Religious faith	53

Teens Talk Choice

For good or bad, teenagers often have a way of cutting to the chase. The attractive side of that trait was prominently displayed at a conference September 22 sponsored by the Office of Non-Public Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Several private school students were given the chance to respond to a series of questions about their schools. Their responses got to the heart of why school choice is so essential.

Kimberly Castellon attends Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Takoma Park, MD, where students participate in a work-study program to gain real-life job experience and earn money for tuition. She and her parents found Don Bosco, with its small classes and supportive teachers to be an attractive alternative to the local public high school, beset by gangs, drugs, and teen pregnancy. Kimberly believes parents should have a choice in selecting a child's school, and she appreciates the sacrifices her parents have made on her behalf.

Tim Kidd, a senior at Heritage Christian Academy in Woodbridge, VA, described his school's mission as preparing students academically and spiritually for a life of service to the Lord. His parents wanted a school that would "reinforce what they were trying to do at home." He believes it is "vitaly important" that parents get to choose where they send their children to school.

Cadet Senior Master Sergeant Emma Bunker attends Randolph-Mason Academy in Front Royal, VA, where she learns "leadership, communication, and teamwork skills" through the Junior ROTC program. Emma wants to become a biomedical engineer, having realized with the encouragement of her teachers that she was "pretty good" at science and math. Her views on school choice are straightforward: families should have a say in the kind of education their children receive.

Return service requested

CAPE notes

★ U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced September 30 the names of 337 schools identified by the U.S. Department of Education as the National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2014.

Schools were selected either because their standardized test scores in reading and math placed them among the top-performing schools in the nation or state, or because they made notable improvements in closing achievement gaps.

Fifty private schools were among the awardees this year. Each state's commissioner of education nominates public schools for the award, and CAPE nominates private schools. All winning schools will be honored at an awards ceremony November 10-11 in Washington, DC.

"These great schools are fulfilling the promise of American education—that all students, no matter their name or ZIP code, can flourish when schools provide safe, creative, and challenging learning environments," Secretary Duncan said. "National Blue Ribbon Schools are models of consistent excellence and a resource for other schools and districts. We celebrate them for their tireless effort and boundless creativity in reaching and teaching every student."

The following schools were named National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2014.



Arkansas – St. Joseph Catholic School, Fayetteville • **Florida** – The King's Academy, West Palm Beach • Westminster Academy, Fort Lauderdale • **Georgia** – Blessed Trinity Catholic High School, Roswell • Pinecrest Academy, Cumming • Savannah Christian Middle School, Savannah • St. Jude the Apostle Catholic School, Atlanta • **Illinois** – Holy Cross School, Deerfield • Prince of Peace Catholic School, Lake Villa • St. Cletus Elementary School, La Grange • St. Hubert School, Hoffman Estate • St. John the Evangelist School, Streamwood • St. Mary School, Buffalo Grove • St. Viator High School, Arlington Heights • Saints Faith Hope Charity School, Winnetka • The High School of St. Thomas More, Champaign • **Indiana** – St. Patrick School, Chesterton • **Iowa** – St. Francis of Assisi School, West Des Moines • **Kansas** – St. Patrick Catholic School, Kingman • **Kentucky** – Holy Spirit School, Louisville • St. Agnes School, Louisville • St. Aloysius Catholic School, Pewee Valley • St. Patrick School, Louisville • St. Paul School, Florence • **Louisiana** – Catholic High School, Baton Rouge • Our Lady of the Lake School, Mandeville • **Maryland** – Immaculate Conception School, Towson • Mount Aviat Academy, Childs • Our Lady of Grace School, Parkton • School of the Cathedral Mary Our Queen, Baltimore •

Massachusetts – St. Bernadette School, Northborough • **Mississippi** – St. James School, Gulfport • **Missouri** – Our Lady-Presentation School, Lees Summit • **New Jersey** – Assumption School, Morristown • St. Gregory the Great Academy, Hamilton Square • **Ohio** – Norwalk Catholic Elementary, Norwalk • Notre Dame Elementary School, Chardon • St. Brigid of Kildare Elementary School, Dublin • **Pennsylvania** – Mount St. Joseph Academy, Flourtown • Norwood-Fontbonne Academy, Philadelphia • St. Jude School, Mountain Top • **South Carolina** – Prince of Peace Catholic School, Taylors • **South Dakota** – O'Gorman High School, Sioux Falls • **Texas** – St. Gregory Cathedral School, Tyler • St. Laurence the Martyr Catholic School, Sugar Land • St. Thomas More Parish School, Houston • **Virginia** – Charlottesville Catholic School, Charlottesville • St. James School, Falls Church • St. Luke Catholic School, Mclean • **Washington** – The Bear Creek School, Redmond.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



EASY FOR EVERYONE

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE FOR SCHOOLS
FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILIES
WWW.SMARTTUITION.COM

