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It Has Taken Years to Radically Transform U.S. Education

Excerpted from a speech presented by MerryLynn Gerstenschlager, Texas Eagle Forum Vice-President, to the Spirit of Freedom Republican Women in Sugar Land, Texas, 8/3/15

The *New England Primer*, the very first textbook printed in America, was introduced in the year 1690 when parents wanted their children to learn to read the Bible. Our Founding Fathers used the *New England Primer* to learn to read. How is it that these men, who learned to read using such a simple book, came up with the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, yet many of today's kids can't even read?

We have come a long way since using the simple *New England Primer* in the classroom. Education does not have to be complicated or expensive. Our children belong to their parents, and parents have the ultimate right to direct the education and upbringing of their children. We cannot give them over to the state to be treated as mere "human resources," yet that is exactly what the Obama administration has planned for your child.

America spends thousands of dollars annually to educate a student, many of whom can't read by the time they graduate

from high school. Specifically, figures compiled by the National Education Association and released last March show that Texas schools were spending an average of \$9,559 per student in the 2014–2015 school year. This was below the national average of \$12,040 per student.

Compounding the reading deficit, the federal Common Core Standards Initiative also cripples our students. **While it is illegal to implement the Common Core Standards Initiative in Texas, it has infiltrated our schools in several ways.** [See the February 2015 *Torch* article entitled, "Parents are the key to removing CSCOPE," which gives examples of the Texas version of Common Core, and its curriculum teaching our kids



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“Education does not have to be complicated or expensive. Our children belong to their parents, and parents have the ultimate right to direct the education and upbringing of their children. We cannot give them over to the state to be treated as mere ‘human resources,’...”

to be global citizens with a disdain for American achievements and principles.]

There were three major pieces of legislation passed in 1994 during President Bill Clinton’s Administration that fit together to set up the foundation to pave the way for Common Core. They included the **School-to-Work Act**, **GOALS 2000**, and the **Improving America’s Schools Act**. Hillary Clinton played a huge role in education reform, as outlined in the 1992 “Dear Hillary” letter (http://www.eagleforum.org/educate/marc_tucker/) from Marc Tucker, who is still influential in education today.

The combination of these three laws created a cradle-to-grave system that stretched beyond high school graduation. This “system” is similar to the German system, where a child is put into a career track at the sixth or eighth grade level and “trained” in order to serve the workforce demands of the future.

The three laws fit neatly into a program that had been developed in the 1980s by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education. The two agencies worked together to decide what skills a qualified laborer would need for the workforce.

In 1992, the groundwork was laid for the U.S. Department of Labor’s SCANS Report: Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance - A SCANS REPORT FOR AMERICA 2000. Page 65 of the SCANS Report contains a “Hypothetical

Resume” on which the student’s birth date and social security number appear. There is a space for rating “Personal Qualities,” among which are “honesty” and “integrity.” One has to wonder just how they are going to evaluate those qualities.

The **Improving America’s Schools Act** tied the three federal pieces of legislation together by connecting the classroom to the workplace. The **School-to-Work Act** was based on the SCANS Report.

The School-to-Work opportunities systems were to be set up in every state. This tracking system is intended to function until retirement. Public school students were now referred to as “human resources.” Big business, through the Business Roundtable and the Chambers of Commerce, was brought into the circle.

Along came more technology that permits identifiable, personal student data to be collected and shared. Much of the data collection occurs when the student takes his “assessments” via computer. The technology and textbook lobby wield great influence on legislation, as there is lots of money to be made in this field, especially since electronic “instructional materials” have been legalized.

Because the U.S. Constitution does not address education, President Obama had to offer federal grant money in exchange for implementing the Common Core Standards. When he could not get all fifty states to adopt the Common Core Standards through federal Race to the Top (RTTT) funds, he offered Race to the Top “D” (RTTT-D) funds to individual school districts. In Texas, the Idea Charter Schools and the Harmony Turkish Charter Schools applied for, and were awarded, the RTTT-D funds.

Texas law that prohibits the teaching of Common Core includes a loophole, which allows Common Core to be used in Advanced Placement (AP) exams and in International Baccalaureate exams. Unfortunately, the SAT, ACT, and the AP exams are being aligned with the Common Core Standards. **No child will be able to escape being required to learn what is going to be on those tests.**

WHAT YOU CAN DO: In her new book, *The Long War & Common Core: Everything You Need to Know to Win the War*, Executive Director of the Constitutional Coalition, Donna Hearne, offers some solutions to fight Common Core: recruit intelligent conservatives to become teachers, pay attention to your child’s school, run for the school board, network with other parents and keep a close watch of the curriculum that is being brought into your home. Also, Eagle Forum has a wealth of information on Common Core on their website: www.eagleforum.org.

NOTE: Texas Eagle Forum Vice-President MerryLynn Gerstenschlager attends the State Board of Education meetings and works diligently throughout the Texas Legislative Sessions to advocate for your parental rights. TEF will never, never, never, never give up on defending you and your children!

NEA's Plan to Indoctrinate Schoolchildren

By Phyllis Schlafly,
Eagle Forum Founder & CEO

If you want to stay on top of what's going on in schools, watch the policies adopted by the National Education Association (NEA) which attracted nearly 10,000 delegates to its annual convention over the Fourth of July weekend. The NEA's 3 million members include most of the nation's public school teachers, who fund its half-billion dollar budget with their mandatory union dues.

NEA convention resolutions typically recycle every liberal buzzword you can think of: diversity, inclusion, sexual orientation, pluralism, stereotypes, reproductive freedom, racism, sexism, homophobia, equity, multiculturalism, undocumented immigrants, and global interdependency. At this year's convention in Orlando, several propaganda terms appeared for the first time: marriage equality, gender identity, and institutional racism.

Until this year, the NEA had refrained from explicitly endorsing same-sex marriage, although it was on record in favor of equal benefits for domestic partners, repealing the Defense of Marriage Act, and other tenets of the gay-rights agenda. In 2008, the NEA's California affiliate donated \$1.3 million of teachers' dues money to the campaign against Proposition 8, which defined marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

Prop 8 nevertheless passed by a 600,000-vote margin, largely due to ads warning parents that schools would soon begin teaching first- and second-graders that boys can marry boys and girls can marry girls. Teachers complained about the ads when they were aired in 2008, but this year's convention declared that teachers should tolerate no dissent from so-called "marriage equality," even for sincere religious reasons.

The teachers union adopted this New Business Item A: "The NEA will develop educational materials for its state affiliates and members about the potential dangers of so-called 'Religious Freedom Restoration Acts' or RFRAs, which may license individuals and corporations to discriminate on the theory that their religious beliefs require such actions."

Religious Freedom Restoration Acts offer a way for Christians to live their religious beliefs without being sued for not providing their services or facilities to gay marriage ceremonies. The Christian belief that marriage is an institution blessed by God to unite a man and a woman is just a "license to discriminate," according to official NEA policy. When the gay marriage case was argued before the U.S. Supreme Court decision earlier this year, the U.S. Solicitor General was asked whether even private religious schools would have to change their teaching if the Supreme Court changed the public definition of marriage. General Verrilli replied with the chilling non-answer, "It's going to be an issue."

Not content with the redefinition of marriage, the NEA moved right along to endorse the "transgender" agenda for the nation's public schools. In New Business Item 30, the NEA says

schools must provide "transgender student and staff access to facilities consistent with his or her gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on the employee's or pupil's records."

The trans nonsense doesn't stop there. According to the NEA's New Business Items 45 and 74, schools must allow students to dress in the gender of their choice, and should not require students to "obtain a court-ordered name and/or gender change as a prerequisite to being addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity."

New Business Item B, considered so important that it was introduced by the NEA Board of Directors and passed unanimously at the Orlando convention, declares that "we acknowledge the existence in our country of institutional racism" which "manifests itself in our schools." Since the existence of institutional racism is not open to debate, the delegates called for "partnering" with like-minded groups, "particularly in areas of cultural competence, diversity, and social justice in order to address institutional racism."

This is what Dinesh D'Souza calls "the shame narrative" of American history, famously advocated by the bestselling left-wing historian Howard Zinn, which presents American history as a cavalcade of oppression by the white Europeans who stole the country from Indians, Africans and Mexicans. Is that what you want your children and grandchildren to be taught?

Every presidential candidate has (or will soon have) a position

"Not content with the redefinition of marriage, the NEA moved right along to endorse the 'transgender' agenda for the nation's public schools."

paper on how best to reform public education, and both houses of Congress have passed bills to rewrite the law that provides federal aid to schools with strings attached. All these reform ideas depend on teachers to implement them in the classroom, but most teachers pay dues to a union whose policies are diametrically opposed to what parents and the public want children to learn.

There can be no positive change in America's public schools as long as teachers unions have the power to collect mandatory dues from school employees whose salaries are paid by the taxpayers. The National Education Association must return to what it was for the first 100 years of its existence: a purely voluntary association of individual teachers who willingly choose to support the organization with voluntary contributions.



Eagle Cliff Notes

Iran Deal Is “Insane”

When Joel Rosenberg, author of *The Last Jihad* series, finished reading the 159-page Iran nuclear deal, known as the “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action” (or JCPOA), he concluded that “the deal is insane.” He says the deal doesn’t live up to the very “red lines” that President Obama and his team set; the deal doesn’t end Iran’s nuclear program—it legalizes, legitimizes, expands it; the deal provides Iran not just one but two paths to The Bomb—in 10 to 15 years if Iran keeps the agreement, and much sooner if Iran cheats. And the details inside the deal are absolutely stunning—and catastrophically dangerous for the U.S., Israel and our Sunni Arab neighbors. Rosenberg urges the American people and Congress to do everything possible to stop this deal from becoming U.S. law.

SOURCE: Joel C. Rosenberg Blog, 8/8/15

Texas Supreme Court Rules Against Houston Mayor Again

The Texas Supreme Court has again ruled against Houston Mayor Annise Parker’s administration related to Houston’s so-called “equal rights” ordinance. The high court ruled that the “The City Council must comply with its own laws regarding the handling of a referendum petition and any resulting election,” and must “word the proposition such that voters will vote directly for or against the ordinance.” The Council, under Mayor Parker’s guidance, had initially approved confusing ballot language that would have forced opponents of the controversial ordinance to vote “yes” to repeal the ordinance, which was in violation of the Houston City Charter. Plaintiff Jared Woodfill told the *Houston Chronicle* after the ruling that the original ballot language was “all about deception and trickery... It shows how vested the mayor is in this issue that she has broken the law twice.” Citizens of Houston will vote on the controversial anti-religion LGBT ordinance on November 3.

SOURCE: Texas Values, 8/20/15

400,000 “Anchor Babies” Born Each Year In U.S.

Children gaining birthright citizenship are pejoratively referred to as “anchor babies” because they provide an anchor in the U.S. for family members seeking to enter the country legally. When anchor babies reach age 21, they can petition the government to grant their parents and siblings permanent resident status. The number of babies gaining birthright citizenship has been steadily rising and is now estimated to top 300,000 and reach as high as 400,000 a year, according to John Feere of the Center for Immigration Studies. The Pew Hispanic Center puts the estimate at 340,000 a year. In the most recent analysis, nearly three-quarters of all children of undocumented immigrants were U.S. citizens, and the children of illegals cost taxpayers some \$52 billion a year in education expenses alone, Judicial Watch disclosed.

SOURCE: Newsmax, 8/23/15

Weighing In On Women In The Military

In her article, “Women Still Don’t Belong In Combat” (8/26/15), Phyllis Schlafly writes that despite two women recently finishing Ranger School, the Army’s toughest training course, women still do not belong in combat. “The Obama administration...remains determined to admit women to Special Forces (including the Army Rangers and Navy SEALs) before he leaves office. Putting ‘diversity metrics’ ahead of military necessity, Joint Chiefs Chairman Martin Dempsey said in 2013, ‘if a particular standard is so high that a woman couldn’t make it, the burden is on the service to explain: Why does it really have to be that high?’” Maybe that is why the Navy has announced that the physical fitness criteria for being in the Navy will be loosened in order to integrate more women into the service. Starting in January, the allowable percentages of body fat for women ages 18 to 21 will be 33 percent. To put this in perspective, the American Council on Exercise states that a woman having 32 percent body fat is considered obese.

SOURCE: Eagle News & Notes, 8/21/15

Quote of the Month

“The abortion industry places more value on killing babies than it does on the sanctity of human life, and under no circumstance should it receive taxpayer funds. This is more than a mere fiscal matter—this is a moral issue. How we handle this issue reflects who we are as Americans and what we value most—either the lives of the most innocent ...or the fiscal solvency of an industry that exists to abort babies.”

Senator Ted Cruz, “End Planned Parenthood Funding,”
USA Today, 8/20/15

Famous American Quote

“Every child in America should be acquainted with his own country. He should read books that furnish him with ideas that will be useful to him in life and practice. As soon as he opens his lips, he should rehearse the history of his own country.”

Noah Webster, *On the Education of Youth in America*, 1788

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