



Is Public School an Option?

The growing chaos in society is forcing Christians to rethink even their most cherished assumptions about their relationship with government institutions. For example, is public education even an option anymore?

Should Christian parents send their children to the public schools? That question has emerged as one of the most controversial debates of our times. And yet, every family must come to terms with the issues involved in the public school debate—and fast.

Most parents already know that a great deal is at stake in this question. We start with the affirmation that it is parents who bear responsibility for the education of their children. God will hold every parent accountable for the decisions we make about our children and the context, as well as the content, of their education ([Deuteronomy 6:1-26](#); [Ephesians 6:1-4](#)). In the truest sense, Christians understand that every home is a church, a government, and a school—the first church, the first government, and the first school that a child will come to know. The duty of Christian parents to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord cannot be delegated to anyone else—not to the state, not to the schools, and not even to the church.

In today's context, most parents still send their children to the public schools. This has been the norm and expectation for most American parents since the beginning of the twentieth century. Until fairly recently, exceptions to this rule have been seen as profoundly anti-democratic and practically un-American. Homeschoolers were seen as marginal eccentrics,

Catholics were seen as hopelessly sectarian, and those who sent their children to private schools were seen as elitist snobs.

For the most part, American evangelicals in the twentieth century agreed with this assessment. Evangelical families sent their children to the public schools with confidence and with eagerness. They had little interest in other alternatives for the simple reason that they saw little need for any alternative. Evangelical Christians were happy with the public schools and saw them as both effective and efficient in the delivery of an American education. They also saw the public schools as safe and healthy places for children, and they grew to love the athletic programs and extracurricular activities that grew along with the schools in the American Century, as the last century came to be known.

Then, something happened. By the end of the twentieth century, American evangelicals were abandoning the public schools by the millions. The last four decades have witnessed the explosive expansion of the Christian school movement in America and the emergence of homeschooling as a mainstream educational option among the nation's Christians. Why?

A Tradition of Local Control

To understand the reason for this vast backlash against the public schools, a bit of historical perspective is required. The earliest public schools in the United States were community-based and parent-controlled. Parents and fellow citizens within a community would establish a school and hire a schoolmaster. The community would establish the curriculum, and the schoolmaster was expected to maintain discipline within the school as well as to guide the education of the students.

Public schools are being transformed rapidly into laboratories for ideological

experimentation and indoctrination. If these developments have not come to your school, they almost surely will soon.

This pattern prevailed even when the nation grew and village schools gave way to the vast suburban expansion of modern America. The public schools were public in the sense that they were community schools maintained for and by the citizens of a community. Local control was axiomatic, and parents had a direct influence in the curriculum and policies of the schools.

That model of the public school, though rightly cherished in the American memory, is no more. First came the educational authorities who pushed for a "progressive" understanding of the schools and their function. Figures such as John Dewey argued in the early years of the last century that the public schools should form a common liberal culture as their main purpose. Without hiding their agenda, these educators argued that the public schools should separate children from the religious "prejudices" of their parents and redefine Americanism as what Dewey called a secular "common faith."

Still, the full impact of the progressivist agenda took decades to emerge. For the most part, the public schools in rural and suburban America remained community schools. Local school boards, elected by the community, set policy and controlled the schools. The schools continued to teach the basic disciplines and to maintain order and discipline in the classrooms. That condition did not last, however, and the last half of the twentieth century saw the public schools radically transformed in the vast majority of communities.

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LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Senator Graham Introduces Resolution Opposing Common Core

On February 7, 2014, Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC), along with Senators Enzi, Cochran, Cruz, Grassley, Inhofe, Lee, Scott, and Wicker, [introduced](#) a resolution that strongly denounces the Administration's forceful role in the adoption of the Common Core Standards for English and mathematics.

The measure strongly parallels state level attempts to reassert local control of education. Since federal law prohibits the Department of Education (DOE) from establishing specific content standards and curriculum, the measure rejects the Department's use of federal grant programs such as Race to the Top and NCLB flexibility waivers to circumvent these statutory constraints. The measure explicitly states that control of education lies first with the parents and then with local education officials who are best able to determine what is best for students.

The resolution does not rescind any monies previously awarded to states or speak to the content of the standards themselves. Furthermore, it seeks to reaffirm the proper role of the federal government and prohibit the DOE from conditioning future funding on the adoption of a national standard.

In September, AACS representatives from across the country met with dozens of offices during the annual National Legislative Conference and educated Members and their staffs about the dangers a national standard poses to the autonomy of the private school community. We are pleased to support this federal effort to highlight the [problematic](#) adoption and implementation on the standards.

Several conservative groups including AACS, Concerned Women for America, Family Research Council, Home School Legal Defense Association, and Eagle Forum support the measure. To read the press release, [click here](#).

Virginia Attorney General Will not Defend Marriage

Virginia's new Attorney General Mark R. Herring announced that he will not defend a legal challenge to Virginia's marriage laws-including the marriage protection amendment passed by 57 percent of Virginia voters in 2006. In fact, [a memorandum](#) filed today in federal district court on the Attorney General's behalf stated, instead, that he will side with the plaintiffs in the case-two homosexual couples who are seeking to overturn the laws and redefine marriage in Virginia.

"Having duly exercised his independent constitutional judgment, the Attorney General has concluded that Virginia's laws denying the right to marry to same-sex couples violate the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution," the memorandum reads. "The Attorney General will not defend Virginia's ban on same-sex marriage, will argue for its being declared unconstitutional, and will work to ensure that both sides of the issue are responsibly and vigorously briefed and argued to facilitate a decision on the merits, consistent with the rule of law."

Herring, a Democrat, was declared the winner of the Virginia Attorney General's race after a recount in late-November. The razor-thin 165 vote difference (out of over 2.2 million votes cast) represents a one one-hundredth of one percent margin of victory.

As you know by now, North Carolina is facing its own legal challenge to the institution of marriage, and this announcement from our neighbor to the north further escalates the ongoing battle over marriage in our region. On the national scene, a federal district court judge in Oklahoma declared that state's marriage amendment unconstitutional just last week, and another judge did the same in Utah in late-December. These rulings are being appealed to higher courts.

In North Carolina, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is using a lawsuit originally filed to challenge North Carolina's adoption laws to now wage an all out war against traditional marriage in the Old North State. In *Fisher-Borne v. Smith*, the ACLU initially sought to overturn state adoption law that does not allow an unmarried individual in a same or opposite-sex relationship to adopt their partner's child. This past summer, the ACLU [filed a motion](#) to amend the complaint in this case with an additional constitutional

challenge to North Carolina's marriage statutes and our marriage protection amendment, which was approved by 61 percent of North Carolina voters in May 2012.

At that time, North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper (D), the lead attorney charged with defending the state's marriage statutes and constitution, [did not object](#) to the ACLU's motion to amend the complaint. Although Mr. Cooper has continued to state that it is his duty as Attorney General to defend the laws and constitution of the state, he [publicly voiced](#) his support for "marriage equality" while speaking to the media in October, and he [served as the keynote speaker](#) at a major fundraising event in November for Equality North Carolina, a statewide pro-homosexual lobbying group that advocates for same-sex marriage and adoption for homosexual couples.

This has led President Pro Tempore of the N.C. Senate Phil Berger (R-Rockingham) and Speaker of the N.C. House Thom Tillis (R-Mecklenburg) to [hire outside legal counsel](#) to advise them on how the state is handling its defense in *Fisher-Borne v. Smith*. Legislation passed by the General Assembly last year gives these legislative leaders standing to jointly intervene in legal actions to defend state statutes and constitutional provisions that are being challenged in court. In December, Senator Berger and Speaker Tillis [stated](#), "While the General Assembly is not formally intervening in the lawsuit at this time, the outside counsel will provide backup review of the attorney general's work to ensure he is fulfilling his duty to vigorously defend the law."

It is tragic that the God-ordained institution of marriage as humankind has understood it for thousands of years-the union of one man and one woman-is under full attack across our country and in our state. We must do all that we can to defend this most fundamental underpinning of society, which has proven its necessity and worth to individuals, children and cultures throughout the ages.

Please pray that North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory, Attorney General Roy Cooper, Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, Speaker of the House Thom Tillis and other state leaders, including the federal judge in *Fisher-Borne v. Smith*, will stand firm in defense of marriage as only the union of one man and one woman in North Carolina!

2014 Staff Development Opportunities



The *2014 NCCSA Staff Development Seminar* will take place on July 28 through 31. Information regarding the speakers and topics will be available at a later date. To accommodate the travel needs of teachers from across the state, this seminar will be provided in two different locations. The central/western location is tentatively planned to be held at Woodland Baptist Christian School on Monday and Tuesday, July 28-29. The eastern location will be held at Faith Christian Academy in Goldsboro on Wednesday and Thursday, July 30-31. General information about this seminar is available here: <http://www.nccsa.org/services/faculty/summer-staff-development-program/>

Official CEU credits will be available for this training event and will count toward the "official NCCSA CEU" credit that is required for NCCSA Teacher Certification—2008 Edition v1.5. Any new or renewal applicant since January 1, 2008, must earn at least 25% of all CEU renewal work at either the annual convention or a summer staff development session.

FREEDOM TO LEARN EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE

Designed especially for lower-elementary, kindergarten, pre-school, and daycare directors and employees, this conference will be held on Saturday, June 21, at Gospel Light Christian School. More information about speakers and workshop topics will be available in coming days.

2014 SOUTHEAST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL CONVENTION

Make a note of the *2014 Southeast Christian School Convention* at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center on September 24-26, 2014. We will be joining the Christian school associations of South Carolina and Georgia again this year.

More information about these events will be available in the near future.

CONVENTION REQUEST FORM

If you are interested in submitting a workshop for the 2014 Southeast Christian School Convention, please [click here](#) to download and submit your workshops. **These forms are due to be uploaded to the state office by March 7.**

The Newest Blog Entries on the NCCSA Website



- [Personalized Learning Will Go Mainstream](#)
- [Email Options for NCCSA Schools](#)
- [Leading for Deeper Learning: Ten Proven Strategies](#)
- [Blended Learning Implementation Guide by DLN](#)

Subscribe to the NCCSA Blog by [clicking here](#).

Decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court secularized the schools in a way that separated the schools from their communities and families. The courts also turned the schools into arenas of endless litigation. The evil of racial segregation was rightly ended. But as a result, court-ordered busing programs eliminated any sense of a community school for many families.

In Their Own Words

Here are sample resolutions from the 2012-2013 convention of the National Education Association. If your school has not yet implemented these resolutions, it seems the NEA would like to change that.

The NEA pushes educational programs that increase acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle, regardless of the parents' views.

"Plans, activities, and programs must . . . increase respect, understanding, acceptance, and sensitivity toward individuals and groups in a diverse society composed of such groups as . . . gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender persons Such plans, activities and programs must . . . encourage all members of the educational community to examine assumptions and prejudices, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism, and homophobia."

—B-14. *Racism, Sexism, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identification Discrimination.*

The NEA believes government schools should supply family planning instruction and resources directly to children.

"The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. . . . The Association also believes that schools should provide . . . family-planning counseling and access

to birth control methods."

—C-25. *Comprehensive School Health, Social, and Psychological Programs and Services.*

The NEA opposes parental efforts to restrict obscene and offensive books in school libraries and classrooms.

"The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school library media centers and school curricula."

—E-3. *Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques.*

The Fruit of Revolution

But the most radical transformation of the public schools was political and ideological in origin. Control of the schools, enforced through both funding and mandates, migrated to the national government where an army of educational bureaucrats replaced local school boards as the real arbiters of educational policy. Labor unions for teachers, rather than parents, now exert vast influence over the schools.

The ideological revolution has been even more damaging than the political change. Those who set educational policy are now overwhelmingly committed to a radically naturalistic and evolutionistic worldview that sees the schools as engines of social revolution. The classrooms are being transformed rapidly into laboratories for ideological experimentation and indoctrination. The great engines for Americanization are now forces for the radicalization of everything from human sexuality to postmodern understandings of truth and the meaning of texts. Compulsory sex education, the creation of "comprehensive health clinics," revisionist understandings of American history, Darwinian understandings of science and humanity, and a host of other ideological developments now shape the norm in the public school experience. If these developments have not come to your local school, they almost surely will soon.

Added to these worries is the general breakdown of discipline within the schools and the fact that the public

schools are now seen as social service centers. Many schools are asked to do social work as much as education, and the very idea of what such an education should be is up for debate. Standards have fallen, discipline has evaporated, armed guards roam many hallways, and teachers feel increasingly unable to teach or to maintain order.

This is not just the fault of the schools and educators. Politicians demand that the schools fix society's problems. But no school can replace a broken or dysfunctional family; no teacher can replace a missing father.

Many fine teachers and administrators serve in the public schools, and many Christians serve among them. In some parts of the country, the public schools still operate in some sense as community schools under local control. And yet, this is already not the case for the vast majority of schools and communities, and the handwriting is on the wall for the rest.

Is public school an option? For Christians who take the Christian worldview seriously and who understand the issues at stake, the answer is increasingly no. The number of Christian parents coming to this conclusion increases each year. We can understand the nostalgia that many Christians hold about the public schools. I spent every minute of my school life from the first grade to high school graduation in a public school. And yet, I saw the ideological transformation of the schools before my own eyes. Long ago, the public schools entered a Brave New World from which no retreat now seems possible.

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been recognized by *Time* and *Christianity Today* as a leader among American evangelicals. He hosts a daily podcast entitled *The Briefing* and writes a popular blog at albertmohler.com about moral, cultural, and theological issues.

Stanford Achievement Testing



Annual achievement testing is one of the best things you can do for your school, teachers, and students. **It is a vital tool in the continual process of assessing the needs of your students and the best approaches to meet those needs.** The NCCSA hopes each school plans to participate in the SAT 10 testing program that the AACS puts together each year to assist member schools.

The NCCSA State Office emailed each school on January 9 (subject line: *2014 Pearson SAT 10 Achievement Testing*) to inform you that the order forms are available on the AACS website. Please refer to that email for login and ordering information.

NCCSA Academic Testing Competition Dates January 20-February 20

AACS Youth Legislative Training Conference



The 2014 AACS Youth Legislative Training Conference in Washington, D.C., promises to be an exciting opportunity for a few fortunate students from NCCSA schools! Whether it be the after-hours Capitol tour hosted by a Member of Congress, a Congressional briefing in the U.S. Capitol, or a Mock Senate for the students, this conference will be an unforgettable experience!

The Youth Legislative Training Conference is designed for AACS high school upperclassmen who are serious-minded about political involvement. It will inform the students about the political system, give them knowledge that has been tested by political experts, and challenge and inspire them about

grassroots activism and getting involved in politics.

Scholarships are provided to a limited number of students and will cover the costs of the conference, lodging, meals, and sightseeing trips. Last year, two North Carolina students received these scholarships and represented the NCCSA. Previous conference attendees have expressed this opportunity as a “trip of a lifetime.” The NCCSA State Office will be responsible for providing transportation for the students to the conference and back. The students’ only expenses are for a couple of meals and souvenirs. North Carolina is normally allotted 2-3 scholarships but may be awarded extra ones if other states are not able to fill their quotas.

The dates of the 2014 conference are July 7-11. You will receive information in the near future about this legislative training conference, and we trust you are already considering which students you would recommend to attend this annual event. If you have any questions concerning the AACS Youth Legislative Training Conference, you can email Jamison Coppola, Legislative Director of AACS, at jcoppola@acs.org, or you can contact the NCCSA State Office.

ATHLETIC NEWS

The 2014 basketball season is nearing completion, and the NCCSA State Basketball Tournaments are right around the corner. Listed below are the dates and locations of the tournaments. All 2013-2014 NCCSA Faculty/Staff Passes will be honored at the events listed below. If your school will be attending the tournaments, please make sure each administrator and athletic director has reviewed the *2014 Basketball Tournament Letter* and *2014 Cheerleading Tournament Letter* that were emailed to each administrator and athletic director on February 3. If you have any questions, please contact your divisional chairman, Bob LaTour, or the NCCSA State Office.

February 12: Seeding Done through Email—All-State voting on February 19

February 14: District/Region Playoffs

February 20-22: State Tournaments

(A): Fellowship (Durham)

(AA): Gospel Light

March 1: All-Star Games at Friendship

MaxPreps is currently being used for NCCSA basketball data reporting. To read more about the strategic partnership with MaxPreps, please [click here](#).



FINE ARTS NEWS



The 2014 NCCSA Fine Arts Competition season has already begun in the Music, Journalism, and Academic Testing categories, and we look forward to other competitions in the following months.

Over 500 junior and senior high entries registered for the NCCSA Solo/Small Group Music Competition this year. The senior high competition took place at Friendship Christian School on Monday, February 10, and the junior high competition has been rescheduled for Tuesday, February 18, due to inclement weather.

[Click here](#) to download the 2014 NCCSA Fine Arts Flyer to display at your school.

The competition schedules, motel listings, maps, and other details will be posted on the NCCSA website prior to each competition. The state office will email each administrator and fine arts coordinator when each document is posted online.

Please note the following upcoming competition dates below:

January 20-February 20: Academic Testing Month

February 18: Jr. High Solo/Small Group Competition — Friendship Christian School

March 19-21: NCCSA Fine Arts Festival — Raleigh Christian Academy

April 8-10: AACS National Fine Arts Competition — Bob Jones University

April 23-25: NCCSA Elementary Fine Arts Competitions

NCCSA UPDATE

January/February

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SafeSchools

Last year, the NCCSA negotiated a special deal for NCCSA schools regarding online training for teachers in the areas of intruder prevention, disaster recover, and many other safety areas. Please [click here](#) to download the SAFE Schools packet.

Spotlight on New Manna Christian School



New Manna Christian School in Marion, North Carolina, was founded in 1995 as a ministry of New Manna Baptist Church. The Lord has greatly blessed New Manna Christian School, now in its nineteenth year of operation.

At the time of the founding of the school, there were very few Christian schools in

the surrounding area. The pastor, realizing the opportunity to influence the next generation, led the church in founding NMCS. He wanted the parents of McDowell County to be able to provide their children an academically-sound, Christ-centered education with a Biblical world view.

The students of NMCS are blessed with many unique, wonderful opportunities. They have the opportunity to worship and serve in their local church and teen services. Students have a chance to take a servant leadership class in which they perform acts of service in society. These include, but are not limited to, working in a soup kitchen, serving the local police department, and working at men's and women's shelters in Marion. Students also have the opportunity to participate in athletics. Ladies can be involved in volleyball, basketball, and softball; gentlemen can play basketball and baseball.

New Manna Christian School operates by the belief in its school motto: "Striving for Excellence." The school faculty and staff encourage each student to strive to be excellent in their Christian life and in their academic studies. The teachers strive to

instill the core values of Obedience, Wisdom, Service, Separation, Honesty, and Balance into every subject and grade. NMCS believes that God commands us to strive together with the local church and the parents to "Train up a child in the way he should go," so when the student is ready to graduate, he can make educated, informed, and spiritually-discerned decisions about his career path.

The school's goals for the future are to **grow** spiritually and numerically; to **show** God's love to and through the students, staff, and faculty; and to **know** that the students' parents and, more importantly, our Heavenly Father, are pleased with the school.

Lord willing, New Manna Christian School will celebrate its twentieth year of operation in 2014-2015. The Lord has met many needs and been very good to the church and school over the years. The school leadership, faculty, and students are excited to see what the Lord will do, should He tarry, with the next twenty years.