

Council for American Private Education

CAPE outlook

Voice of America's private schools

Title V in Jeopardy; Campaign Launched to Save It

The federal education program that reaches the most private school students is facing extinction. Last month the Senate Appropriations Committee voted to eliminate Title V, Part A, of the No Child Left Behind Act, following a House vote to cut the program's funds from \$297 million to \$20 million.

Title V is an enormously popular program that serves students in private and public schools alike. It provides materials, equipment, and services to meet student needs, as those needs are identified by local administrators. In one school the program might provide remediation in reading and math; in another it might be used to purchase library books, and in another, to train teachers to use instructional technology. The bulk of the benefits go to public schools, but as much as 11 percent of funds are available for services to children in private schools, a reflection of their portion of the school-age population.

Within the private school community, Title V is the most popular of all the federal education program, and enjoys a long history of support, in part because it provides for the equitable participation of private school students based on their share of a district's enrollment. The program's origins are with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), when it was known as Title II. Under numerous reauthorizations since then, the program has undergone several name changes, including Chapter 2, Title VI, and now Title V. In 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the program in *Mitchell v. Helms*, a landmark case in church-state jurisprudence.

But despite the program's long and distinguished history as a staple of federal education law, the current Congress, incredibly, seems ready to dismantle Title V, even as it moves to increase overall education spending for fiscal 2005 to record levels.

Predictably, the decision to decimate Title V has prompted substantial pushback from both the private and public school communities. In an all-out campaign to save the program, CAPE organizations and state affiliates have besieged their members with calls to action. And members have responded. Since July, citi-

zens have used CAPE's Legislative Action Center to send more than 6,600 e-mail messages urg-

ing Congress to protect Title V. Other voters are contacting senators and representatives by phone and fax.

On the public school side, groups like the American Association of School Administrators, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National School Boards Association are working the issue hard. Some state education department officials have contacted their state's Congressional delegations to explain the unique advantages of Title V. One letter from a state superintendent described Title V as the only No Child Left Behind title that all districts receive and that can be used to support all students.

Groups Band Together

As a sign of just how prized the program is, many major national public and private education organizations have formed an alliance to preserve it. The unique coalition of 13 associations, including CAPE, wrote to members of Congress urging them to restore funding. The group's letter extolled Title V's flexibility, which "allows schools to engage in reforms and improvements that might not otherwise be funded." In a news release, the coalition wrote: "With 15,000 school districts and 27,000 private and religious

schools in this country, there is no one-size-fits-all approach that meets the needs of all schools. Title V fills that gap by enabling local innovation and customization to maximize each school's ability to deliver the best educational opportunities for all students."

In another broad coalition, the National Governors Association, the National Association of Counties, the United States

Conference of Mayors, and other government organizations have joined forces to urge Congress to restore Title V funds. In a letter to House and Senate appropriators last month, the group explained that the program helps "state departments of education and localities successfully implement NCLB and promote innovative educational activities and opportunities tailored to meet specific state and local needs."

The far-reaching campaign to protect Title V seems to be causing quite a stir in Congress. Word from Capitol Hill is that phones are ringing, servers are churning out e-mails, and members of Congress are starting to learn about the program's importance. One sign of progress is that Representatives Marilyn Musgrave (R-CO) and John Shadegg (R-AZ) have been encouraging House members to sign a letter to leaders seeking full funding for Title V.

Even the White House is getting into the act. Karl Rove, senior advisor to President Bush, has declared an interest in the issue, and David Dunn, the president's chief education advisor, has pledged that the administration's priorities will be reflected in negotiations on education spending with the House and Senate.

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**Protect
Title V** | *Contact
Congress
Today at
capenet.org*

CAPE member organizations:

- American Montessori Society
- Association Montessori International—USA
- Association of Christian Schools International
- Association of Waldorf Schools of N.A.
- Christian Schools International
- 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
- Solomon Schechter Day School Association
- Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- 28 Affiliated State Organizations

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

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Paige Announces NCLB Blue Ribbon Schools for 2004

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige last month announced the names of 256 schools identified by the Department of Education as the No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools for 2004. Schools were selected either because they dramatically improved student performance on standardized tests in reading and math or—as was the case for all the private schools—because their test scores placed them in the top ten percent of schools in the nation or state.

The award was bestowed on 206 public schools and 50 private schools. State education departments nominate public schools, and CAPE nominates a maximum of 50 private schools. In both cases, the U.S. Department of Education makes the final selection.

Among the private schools named this year, were 45 elementary schools, three high schools, one middle school, and one K-12 school.

CAPE joins Secretary Paige and the nation's education community in congratulating all winning schools, including the 50 private schools listed below.

Applications and rules for the 2005 program are available at <http://www.capenet.org/brs.html>.

Private School Awardees

St. Cyril Catholic School, Tucson, AZ • Laurel Hall, North Hollywood, CA • Our Savior's Lutheran School, San Clemente, CA • Spring Hill - The Advanced Elementary School of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA • St. Anne School, Laguna Niguel, CA • Valley Christian High School, San Jose, CA • Valley Christian Elementary School, Dublin, CA • St. John's Lutheran School, Denver, CO • All Souls Catholic School, Sanford, FL • Carrollwood Day School, Odessa, FL • Divine Mercy Catholic School, Merritt Island, FL • Independent Day School-

Corbett Campus, Tampa, FL • Our Saviour's Catholic School, Cocoa Beach, FL • Resurrection Catholic School, Lakeland, FL • St. Mary's Catholic School, Rockledge, FL • High Meadows School, Roswell, GA • Pace Academy, Atlanta, GA • The Epstein School, Solomon Schechter School of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA • Valwood School - Elementary, Hahira, GA • St. Augustin School, Des Moines, IA • Infant Jesus of Prague School, Flossmoor, IL • St. Alphonsus Liguori School, Prospect Heights, IL • Bishop Dwenger High School, Fort Wayne, IN • Cathedral High

School, Indianapolis, IN • St. Barnabas Catholic School, Indianapolis, IN • St. Mary School, North Vernon, IN • St. Christopher School, Indianapolis, IN • St. Luke Catholic School, Indianapolis, IN • Saint Mary's Catholic School, New Albany, IN • Saint Albert the Great School, Louisville, KY • St. Margaret Mary Catholic Elementary School, Louisville, KY • Our Lady of the Lake, Mandeville, LA • Ascension Day School, Lafayette, LA • St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School, St. Charles, MO • St. Alphonsus Catholic School, Ocean Springs, MS • Cary Academy, Cary, NC • Providence Christian School, Charlotte, NC • St. Timothy's School, Inc., Raleigh, NC • St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Elementary School, Omaha, NE • Yeshiva of North Jersey, River Edge, NJ • Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Scarsdale, NY • Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cincinnati, OH • St. Joseph Montessori School, Columbus, OH • The Agnon School, Beachwood, OH • Dallas Christian School, Mesquite, TX • Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School, Selma, TX • Prince of Peace Christian School, Carrollton, TX • Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran, San Antonio, TX • St. Mary's School, Richmond, VA • Country Christian School, Nashotah, WI.



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Bush's fiscal 2005 budget request calls for funding Title V at the current level of \$297 million.

At this point it appears that Congress will take up an omnibus appropriations bill for fiscal year 2005 in a lame-duck session sometime after Election Day. Funding amounts for particular programs could be adjusted in a House/Senate conference committee before the bill is reported to both chambers for a vote. Under this scenario, some strong Congressional champions of Title V, backed by colleagues, could put pressure on conference committee members to reverse

the cuts and restore the program. Advocates of Title V are hopeful that when a critical mass of members of Congress learn about the significance of this issue, a way will be found to fully fund Title V. Meanwhile, in late September Congress passed what is called a continuing resolution, a stopgap measure to fund government programs at fiscal 2004 levels from October 1 (the start of FY 05) through November 20.

To keep abreast of the latest developments with Title V and to find out what you can do to help save the program, visit www.capenet.org.

CAPE Launches Campaign About Private Education

Private education is good for students, good for families, and good for America. That's the compact theme of a new Web page, brochure, and campaign CAPE has developed to tell the public about private schools.

The brochure reminds readers of the roots of private education. America's first schools were private, and its first leaders were taught in them. Today private schools join public schools to create what the brochure describes as "an educational system that is the envy of the world and the hope for our continued freedom." Drawing on John Milton's claim more than 350 years ago that truth emerges "from the marketplace of ideas," the document declares that the "rich diversity of private schools is a staple in the marketplace of American education, and the nation is stronger for it."

In telling the private school story, the brochure, written by CAPE board member Dr. Philip Patterson, president of the National Christian School Association, repeatedly cites findings from national surveys and especially relies upon data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The Web version (<http://www.capenet.org/benefits4.html>) is fully footnoted and provides links to each data source.

Good for Students

In a June 2002 report titled *Private Schools a Brief Portrait*, NCES noted that private school students scored higher than the national average on standardized tests, had more stringent requirements for the high school diploma than the typical American school, and sent an above-average percentage of graduates to college. The brochure highlights this information and adds the NCES finding that "students who had completed at least the eighth grade in a private school were twice as likely as other students to graduate from college as a young adult." Readers also learn that "students in private schools are much more likely than others to take advanced-level high school courses." And on the issue of school safety, they find out that "private school students are significantly more likely than others to feel safe and be safe in their schools."

Good for Families

"Choosing a school for their children is one

of the most important decisions parents must make," the brochure states. "Whether they move into a school district, apply to a private school, or adjust family duties to make home schooling possible, most families want school choice." The document goes on to note that parents of over six million children choose private schools, and do so for a variety of reasons, "with quality academics, a safe and orderly environment, and moral and ethical values the common reasons cited." What's more, private school parents tend to be satisfied customers, with more than three-quarters saying they are very satisfied with their child's school.

When it comes to supporting the values taught at home, the brochure points out that an NCES survey found "that promoting religious/spiritual life was second only to academic excellence in the goals of private school principals.

Good for America

While declaring that nothing in a democracy "is more important than the education of the next generation of its citizens," the CAPE pamphlet reports that private school students score above the national average on standardized measures of "how well American youth are prepared to meet their citizenship responsibilities." And as further evidence of the value of private schools to the country, the document notes not only that achievement gaps between minority and majority students are lower in private schools, but also that minority students in private schools are more than twice as likely to enter four-year colleges than their counterparts in public schools. The higher achievement levels for minority students make "private schools the nation's greatest hope for boosting minority participation in society from boardroom to classroom."

The brochure concludes that "the public applauds the accomplishments of private education," citing research to support the claim. Indeed, the reality of, and public perception of, the quality of private schools, leads to the document's closing line: "Private education promotes the public good."

CAPE's new brochure is available on the Web for free in HTML and PDF formats at <http://www.capenet.org/benefits4.html>. Hard copies are available in bulk quantities at nominal cost through an online order form on the Web site.



Fast Facts About Private Schools

Did you know that in America:

- One in four schools is a private school;
- One child in nine attends a private school;
- Private schools produce an annual savings to taxpayers estimated at more than \$48,000,000,000;
- Private school students perform better than their public school counterparts on standardized achievement tests;
- Ninety percent of private high school graduates attend college, compared to 66 percent of public high school graduates;
- Private school students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are more than three times more likely than comparable public school students to attain a bachelor's degree by their mid-20s, meaning that private schools contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty for their students;
- Private schools are racially, ethnically, and economically diverse. Twenty-three percent of private school students are students of color; 28 percent are from families with annual incomes under \$50,000;
- Private secondary school students are nearly 50 percent more likely to take AP or IB courses in science and math than public school students;
- The participation of private school students in community service projects is significantly higher than their public school counterparts.

(from CAPE's new brochure on private education)

Return service requested

CAPE notes

★ With overwhelming bipartisan majorities, the House and Senate last month approved H.R. 1308, the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004, which among other things extends the \$250 tax deduction for teachers in public and private schools who incur out-of-pocket expenses for instructional materials. The bill was presented on September 29 to President Bush, who was sure to sign it.

Congress first passed the tax deduction legislation in 2002, but it expired at the end of 2003. The bill that passed last month extends the benefit through 2004 and 2005.

★ In his annual Back-to-School Address last month, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige mostly touted the No Child Left Behind Act. “We are at the beginning of a new era in education,” the secretary said. “I am proud to report that our schools are improving; American education is getting better—and it is because of No Child Left Behind and the hard-working teachers and administrators in our nation’s schools.”

Paige, who spoke at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., also took the opportunity to extol the benefits of school choice. He said 50,000 public school parents have taken advantage of the choice provisions within the NCLB by transferring their children to better public schools. Further, he said, “in the District of Columbia, over 1,000 low-income children who had been trapped in schools

that weren’t serving them well are now going to the school of their choice, thanks to the first federally funded voucher program in the nation.” Paige went on to express hope that the pilot program “will help spread private school choice to other cities that want it, as Washington, D.C., did.”

★ Slightly more than 12 percent of families in America send their children to private schools. But for urban families, the number jumps to 17.5 percent. What’s more, for urban public school teachers, the number goes even higher to 21.5 percent. And in some large cities, the percent of public school teachers sending their children to private schools is higher still. In Philadelphia, for example, 43.8 percent of public schools teachers choose private schools for their own children, compared to 30.9 percent of all families in the city; while in Chicago, the private school choice rate among public school teachers is 38.7 percent, compared to a rate of 22.6 percent for all Chicago families.

The numbers come from a study by Denis P. Doyle, Brian Diepold, and David A. DeSchryver, which was sponsored by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

What is the significance of how many public school teachers select private schools? The authors put it this way: “[W]e can assume that no one knows the condition and quality of public schools better than teachers who work in them every day. Teachers, it is reasonable to as-

sume, care about education, are reasonably expert about it, and possess quite a lot of information about the schools in which they teach. If these teachers are more likely than the general public (which may not have nearly as much information or expertise in these matters) to send their own daughters and sons to the public schools in which they teach, it is a strong vote of confidence in those schools. If they do not, then we might reasonably conclude that those in the best position to know are signaling a strong “sell” about public education in their communities.”

The study is available at <http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/publication/publication.cfm?id=333>.

★ The National Center for Education Statistics has released the latest in a string of reports on the achievement of students from the kindergarten class of 1998-99 as they work their way through elementary school. The new report tracks the progress of the nationally representative sample of students through grade 3.

Part of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K), the report quantifies differences in reading, math, and science performance for different groups of children, including those who attend private schools and those who attend public schools.

From Kindergarten Through Third Grade: Children’s Beginning School Experiences is available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/>.

