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## David Horowitz Was Right—About the Left

A retrospective essay about David Horowitz's life and works by Mark Bauerlein appears in the Summer 2018 issue of the *Claremont Review of Books*. Titled "Radical Prophet," it follows Horowitz from a 1960s leftist radical through his 1980s transformation into a leading conservative voice.

There were times when other conservatives thought Horowitz was too upset by the left, too radical, or too outspoken. Observers today realize that all his warnings about what could happen that might have seemed alarmist at the time have come to pass and are now part of the culture. Bauerlein writes, "For many years, David Horowitz was deemed unseemly by establishment conservative intellectuals, editors, and journalists. He's too blunt and confrontational, they worried." Bauerlein continues, "In 2003 when he initiated his Academic Bill of Rights campaign ... , Republicans held the presidency and both houses of Congress, and they might get three openings on the Supreme Court. Why stir up trouble on campus, where everyone despises us?"

Had we listened to Horowitz, academia might be less bad. An Academic Bill of Rights is desperately needed on college campuses where conservative thought is often deemed hate speech and conservative speakers are banned or protested. Conservative students on many campuses are afraid to admit their beliefs lest they be treated as crazy.

In his multi-volume series *The Black Book of the American Left*, Horowitz teaches readers what he knows from in-

side leftism, as a former believer of leftist doctrines, and what he realized once he saw the utopian lie for what it is.

Bauerlein says of Horowitz's writings:

The aim is to de-romanticize the Left, to undercut idealized, softened versions of radical aims and deeds with Horowitz's own eyewitness accounts. He was there, he was one of them, a member of Huey Newton's circle, a community organizer in the Oakland ghetto, urging leftists to support Ronald Reagan for governor of California on the supposition that the election of a genuine fascist would help bring on the revolution.

The tendency to lionize Communist ideas, that are sometimes thinly disguised as "Socialist," beliefs that were once fringe ideas on college campuses among radical academics, have filtered into mainstream society, into corporate offices, and into the core values of the Democratic Party. In Volume Nine of the Black Book series, *Ruling Ideas*, published in 2018, Horowitz says, "When I began the project of describing this movement in the 1980s, the emergence of the left as a mainstream force in America's political life was fairly recent and inadequately understood."

**Conservatives Aren't Just Wrong. They Are Crazy.**

Among Horowitz's revelations of Communist procedures now normalized in American leftist culture, as explained by Bauerlein, is the tactic of declaring dissenters "psychologically disturbed"

or "mentally unbalanced." Horowitz describes it in Volume Eight of his series, *The Left in the University*. It is difficult, if not impossible and futile, to fight back against the tactic; who can prove their own "sanity"?

Bauerlein writes:

Many liberal columnists and hosts now take conservatism-as-pathology as a starting point, and establishment conservatives haven't responded effectively. This is another instance in which the Right has failed to understand how the Left operates, Horowitz believes.

As university professors convince impressionable students that conservatives are crazy, they promote concepts



such as it is acceptable to kill babies in the womb, it's just love when a woman marries another woman, and it is perfectly normal for males to decide that they are female. Campuses that condone sex with no marital commitment serve to weaken society as a whole. Those influenced by bad ideas are now not only voting but being voted into office by others trained up to hold the same beliefs, or lack of any belief system beyond the

tenets of the socialist progressive.

About radical leftism, Bauerlein says, "Its triumph in the 21st century was demonstrated perfectly by soon-to-be-president Barack Obama in 2008, when he spoke of 'fundamentally transforming the United States of America.'" He continues:

President Obama didn't look and sound like a '60s radical — no bad behavior, a bourgeois family life — but he readily politicized the IRS and other agencies, inserted gender identity into regulations never intended for it, and was entirely comfortable with rappers in the White House. There you see the liberal accommodation of the Left, the same beliefs and goals but with a lighter touch. When CEOs of corporate America join the White House in pushing diversity initiatives and transgender policies that mirror forms of radical social engineering, we know that the Left didn't die on Election Day 1980 or on November 9, 1989, when East Germans poured over the Berlin Wall and soldiers held their fire.

The portion of the U.S. population that resists radical leftist ideas is deemed crazy and deplorable. Imagine presidential candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower or John F. Kennedy calling Americans with whom they disagreed deplorable! Today it is common for traditional conservative thought or religious beliefs to be called not only crazy but even fascist.

Horowitz wrote that conservatives  
(See Horowitz, page 4)

## Mrs. Trump's 'Be Best' and Christmas at the White House

Melania Trump hosted a televised tour of White House Christmas decorations in late November. Some Christmas trees featured ornaments from her "Be Best" initiative that she launched in May. Be Best has three goals for children that involve their overall well-being, their activities on social media, and ways they might be affected by the opioid crisis.

Melania Trump says of the initiative, "The mission of Be Best is to focus on some of the major issues facing children today, with the goal of encouraging children to Be Best in their individual paths, while also teaching them the importance of social, emotional, and physical health. Be Best will concentrate on three main pillars: well-being, social media use, and opioid abuse." She continues, "Be Best will champion the many successful well-being programs that provide children with the tools and skills required for emotional, social, and physical health. The campaign will also promote estab-

lished organizations, programs, and people who are helping children overcome some of the issues they face growing up in the modern world."

In November, Mrs. Trump spoke at a Townhall meeting at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. She is friends



with Liberty's President Jerry Falwell, Jr. and his wife, Becki Falwell. Other speakers at Liberty University that day included Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar and Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Kirstjen Nielsen. Both agencies are trying to alleviate the  
(See 'Be Best', page 4)

## Common Core: Ditch It!

Common Core is a failed experiment that was not state-led and not evidence-based. The nation is at a turning point and now that results of this harmful experiment that was perpetrated on American students are pouring in, a solution must be found. Last month *Education Reporter* exposed the dismal test results of younger students. Common Core results are bad news for all students.

The Pioneer Institute Study "Common Core, School Choice, and Rethinking Standards-Based Reform" was presented by its authors at The Heritage Foundation on November 8, 2018. Authors of the study are Ted Rebarber of AccountabilityWorks and Neal McCluskey of the Cato Institute. Senior Fellow with the American Principles Project Jane Robbins wrote about the presentation for *Townhall* in an article titled "New Evidence Reveals Full Extent of Common Core's Historic Failure."

"Higher performing" students hoping to attend college have been harmed by Common Core. Robbins reports, "Rebarber's graph of recent ACT scores showed that the modest upward trend

line flattens upon Common Core release and then begins a decline which accelerates with full implementation."

ACT is the English, Reading, Math, Science, and optional Writing test that students take and institutions of higher education use to determine college admissions. The ACT is considered by many to be a better test than the SAT, especially since revisions to that test attempted to make it align with Common Core. This was instigated by David Coleman, who is often described as "the architect of Common Core." He now has a leadership position with the College Board, the organization of which SAT testing is a part.

In October, *Education Week* reported, "The newest batch of ACT scores shows troubling long-term declines in performance, with students' math achievement reaching a 20-year low." But that publication's analysis failed to name Common Core as the culprit. *Education Week* almost completely missed the point, deflecting attention away from the failed Common Core standards and  
(See Common Core, page 4)

# EDUCATION BRIEFS

**The principal of Cedar Hill School in Towaco, New Jersey apologized to parents after a Grinch of a substitute teacher told a classroom of first-grade students that there is no Santa Claus.** The principal spoke to the substitute about “poor judgment” and later reports state that the individual will not be invited back. The superintendent of Montville Township Public Schools said she was “troubled and disheartened by this incident.” (NorthJersey.com, 11-30-18)

**Nine-year-old Dane Best convinced the town board of Severance, Colorado to overturn a ban on throwing snowballs, saying, “Today’s kids need reasons to play outside.”** Dane found out about the ban, which had been in place for 100 years, on a field trip to the town hall earlier in the year. He encouraged classmates to write letters in support of eliminating the ban. Many youngsters who had written letters supporting elimination of the ban also attended the board meeting. After a unanimous vote, the mayor gave Dane the privilege of “throwing the first legal snowball within town limits.” (NPR.org, 12-4-18)

**Jennifer Sinclair, the principal of Manchester Elementary School in Nebraska, told teachers not to decorate their classrooms for Christmas in order to avoid offending those who don’t celebrate it.** Sinclair said teachers could use generic winter items or even a character from the Disney movie “Frozen,” but nothing specifically Christmas-themed, like Santa Claus or reindeer. Her memo prohibited candy canes, saying, “Historically, the shape is a ‘J’ for Jesus. The red is for the blood of Christ, and the white is a symbol of his resurrection.” The district placed Sinclair on administrative leave and issued a statement saying that “the memo does not reflect the policy of Elkhorn Public Schools regarding holiday symbols in the school.” (FoxNews.com, 12-6-18)

Merry Christmas



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Web site: [www.phyllisschlaflay.com](http://www.phyllisschlaflay.com)  
E-mail: [education@phyllisschlaflay.com](mailto:education@phyllisschlaflay.com)

## Students Have Religious Liberty

Some wonder how much Christian students are allowed to celebrate Christmas at public schools or to share about their religious beliefs. Because it is important to know what rights students have at school, *Education Reporter* is again publishing the following fact sheet that was prepared by the Liberty Foundation.

The Liberty Foundation believes that “the most precious freedom” in our society is” religious liberty, our first liberty in the Bill of Rights.” They want to help parents and students to protect “against increasingly hostile legal threat to their freedom to believe and to act upon [their] beliefs.”

### 25 Surprising Facts About Religious Rights in Public Schools

1. Students and educators do have First Amendment religious rights inside public schools.
2. Students can speak about their faith even when teachers must be neutral.
3. Schools cannot treat religious activity differently than other activity.
4. Students can pray during lunch, recess, or other designated free time.
5. Students can pray silently during a school’s moment of silence.
6. Students can read the Bible or other religious materials at school.
7. Students can share their faith with fellow students.
8. Schools can acknowledge religion.
9. Students can pray, either individually or as a group, at school athletic competitions, student assemblies, or other extracurricular activities when school officials are not involved in the prayer.
10. In many cases, a school district can allow student-led prayer before an athletic competition (such as a football game), a student assembly, or other extracurricular event as part of the school program.
11. Students can pray at graduation ceremonies or include religious content in their speeches.
12. A public school can refer to “Christmas” and have a “Christmas party” if the intent is not to advance Christianity.
13. Public schools can display Christmas decorations if the intent is to teach and not part of a religious exercise.
14. A public school can include religious Christmas music, art, or drama in a school play or performance if it is used to teach history or cultural heritage and not to advance a particular religion.
15. Students can give out Christmas gifts with religious messages at school parties.
16. Students can incorporate their faith or religion in classroom and homework assignments under normal and appropriate circumstances.
17. A public school district cannot be hostile toward religious beliefs.
18. Teachers and other public school employees can discuss religion with students under many conditions.
19. Teachers and other public school employees can discuss religion with other teachers or other school employees.
20. A public school or a teacher cannot limit religious speech by students unless they limit other speech.
21. Students can have a religious club at their school.
22. Religious student groups can meet on campus whenever other non-curricular clubs can meet.
23. Religious clubs can use the same school resources available to non-religious clubs (e.g., school facilities, bulletin boards, public address systems) to promote or facilitate club events.
24. In most states, teachers or other public school employees may attend a religious student group’s meeting in a supervisory role.
25. Members of religious student clubs can distribute flyers about meetings and events just like non-religious clubs.

The Liberty Institute is “a legal powerhouse for religious liberty,” the largest legal organization dedicated solely to defending and preserving religious liberty in America. Liberty Institute offers a variety of Religious Liberty Protection Kits that

These rights hold true at elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as at public colleges and universities.

Today it is even more important for students, parents, grandparents, and the public to help children know their freedoms than it was when this was first shared in December of 2015. The election of Donald Trump has helped bring “Merry Christmas” back, but many schools are still hostile to youngsters of faith. Events at schools that have taken place in recent years prove that we need prayer and hope in our schools more than ever. Please share the truth widely and often.

outline the fights of churches, those in the military and other workplaces, and those involved in Christian schools and ministries. More information can be found at [www.ReligiousLibertyProtection.com](http://www.ReligiousLibertyProtection.com) and [LibertyInstitute.org](http://LibertyInstitute.org).

## Book of the Month



**Different: The Story of an Outside-the-Box Kid and the Mom Who Loved Him,** Sally Clarkson and Nathan Clarkson, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2017, \$15.99



Sally Clarkson has shepherded Christian mothers for decades. Reading one of her many books is always a good decision. *Different* is written cooperatively with her son, Nathan. As the title indicates, Nathan exhibited traits that made him different from other children. Neither of them gloss over her struggles as his mother or the hardships he faced growing up.

The book is arranged in alternating sections, one written by Nathan and the next by Sally. What evolves is an intriguing look at the inner workings of a complicated relationship. Sally shares her feelings during moments of exhaustion, defeat, and embarrassment due to her son’s behavior. Nathan expresses what it is like to feel odd, lonely, and scared.

Sally started from a place of faith. She writes about very young Nathan, “This one will require blindly walking in faith, with a willingness to learn and understand how to be his parent.” She says that Nathan was a “boy whose outsized needs and over-the-top behavior would test the far limits of my love, challenge my desire to have a heart of compassion, force my ability to love slowly and patiently, and defy my ability to tame or control my circumstances.”

All children are unique and pose challenges for parents. The degree of difference varies from small personality quirks to actual emotional or psychological problems. Those might include Obsessive Compulsive Disorder or Oppositional Defiance Disorder, both of which were included in Nathan’s diagnoses. What doesn’t change is a child’s need for devoted parenting and a parent’s need for spiritual guidance and strength.

Mother and son aim to help other children and parents, to motivate them to keep trying. They encourage families to communicate in order to understand each other and face the world united, instead of pretending everything is okay when it isn’t. While most readers will find it helpful, this isn’t a self-help book. It is storytelling that offers hope through faith and hard work.

Over the years, Sally developed what she calls her L.A.U.N.C.H. code, an acronym about which those who choose to read the book will find out more. Her strategy wasn’t to “fix” Nathan. It was instead to prepare him for life on his own.

Nathan is a successful adult now. He lives in New York where he is involved in acting and other entertainment-related fields, including writing

### MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley



# FOCUS: Mediocre Books Confirmed

by Peter Wood

Originally published at the National Association of Scholars website, *NAS.org*, on November 20, 2018. Reprinted with permission.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has just published an article (unfortunately, behind a paywall) on a new study about college common readings by Jennifer R. Keup of the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. Keup's research confirms much of the National Association of Scholars' critique of the genre over the last decade—that common readings consist largely of mediocre, modern nonfiction, not suited to challenge students to college-level thought. Keup only jibs at our characterization of common readings as “progressive propaganda”—although her euphemism “modern ideas” confesses the accuracy of that charge.

Peter Wood, President of the National Association of Scholars, has written *The Chronicle* a Letter to the Editor, to clarify some inaccuracies and omissions in their article. The letter was published on November 20, 2018.

As the president of the National Association of Scholars (NAS), who has presided over the release of our annual studies of college common readings published under the title *Beach Books*, I am pleased to hear of Jennifer R. Keup's research validating many of our findings.

As it happens, NAS's sample size is considerably larger than Keup's. In our most recent report, published this October, we review 11 years of data from 2007 to 2017: 4,754 selections at 732 colleges and universities, including 498 selections at 481 colleges and universities for the academic year 2017-2018. We invite future researchers to use our data, which we gathered in good measure to be of use to researchers such as Keup.

From the *Chronicle's* account, it appears that Keup faults the NAS's analysis for being insufficiently nuanced. It is not entirely clear what she means by this. Her study replicates our findings that the

common reading genre on the whole assigns books far below college reading level; that common readings are generally nonfiction; that common readings are usually very recently published;

that common readings emphasize the evanescent topics of “timely” concern; that they emphasize progressive identity politics; that the subjects of the books are frequently college-aged or younger; and that popular subjects include science, women, and medicine. So far as we can tell, Keup not only duplicates our findings but also largely duplicates our categories of analysis.

Keup differs from the NAS's study only in that she did not attempt to measure political bias. Yet her statements

that common readings have “subject complexity” and “are communicating more modern ideas, content, and sensibilities” would appear to confirm that analysis as well. “Subject complexity” and “modern” appear to be euphemisms for “progressive bias.”

I believe researchers will find that our data and analyses provide considerable complexity and nuance. We divide institutions by state, educational reputation, and type (public, community, private sectarian, private nonsectarian). We divide assignments into 16 genres, 30 subject categories, and 23 themes. We provide focused study of the most popular assignments—including the very interesting fact that the most popular assignments tend to have lower than average Lexile levels—that *March: Book One* is appropriate for fourth graders, *Enrique's Journey* and *The Circle* for fifth graders, and *The Other Wes Moore* and *Outcasts United* for sixth graders. We provide focused analyses of the virtues of classic common reading assignments. Our study of eleven years of common reading assignments provides, to my knowledge, the only large-scale longitudinal study of the genre.

NAS is very pleased that the National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition has undertaken this research. When NAS began work on this topic in 2009, we were alone in subjecting the genre as a whole to a strong, evidence-based critique as to its academic rigor and political bias. The community of first-year experience educators has generally resisted our interpretations, while relying heavily on our data. It's heartening to see that a major authority within the establishment now endorses all our factual conclusions.

We hope that Keup, and the rest of the professional community, will in time acknowledge the corollary, that it is a bad bargain to trade academic rigor and moral complexity for “subject complexity,” “timeliness,” “relevance,” and “accessibility.”

James Weldon Johnson ends *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912) with these words: “When I sometimes open a little box in which I still keep my fast yellowing manuscripts, the only tangible remnants of a vanished dream, a dead ambition, a sacrificed talent, I cannot repress the thought that, after all, I have chosen the lesser part, that I have sold my birthright for a mess of pottage.” For a decade the National Association of Scholars has been urging first-year experience professionals not to sell our students' intellectual birthright for a mess of pottage, and we hope that Keup's confirmatory study will amplify our rallying call.

*Peter Wood is President of the National Association of Scholars since 2009. Before that he served as NAS's executive director, and as provost of The King's College in New York City. Dr. Wood holds a Ph.D. in anthropology*



*from the University of Rochester, and has a master's degree in library science from Rutgers University. He is an accomplished*

*author of scholarly works, and has published several hundred articles in print and online journals, such as Partisan Review, National Review Online, and the Chronicle of Higher Education.*

## Work on Federal Student Aid Reform and Free Speech

“When the 116th Congress is seated in January, political control will be divided, with Democrats holding a majority in the House and Republicans in the Senate. What does this mean for higher education? We asked a few NAS members to weigh in. Other articles in the series are, Focus on Reining in the American Bar Association, Time to Found a New University, The Dog That Didn't Bark, and Reform by Executive Order.”

by Rachelle Peterson

Originally published at the National Association of Scholars website, *NAS.org*, on December 5, 2018. Reprinted with permission.

Now that political control of Congress is divided, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) appears unlikely. Earlier this year House Democrats, then still in the minority, proposed a reauthorization bill, the Aim Higher Act, that they are likely to pick up again in 2019. But it is so expansively generous with federal funding—with no meaningful accountability—that the Senate almost certainly will not pass it. (In NAS's review of the bill, we said it

“aims higher only in its ambition to secure more federal funding.”)

Republicans have shown themselves unwilling to pay higher education any serious attention. The House Committee on Education and the Workforce, led by the capable Dr. Virginia Foxx of North Carolina, produced the PROSPER Act, which offered the strongest reform of higher education in years. Yet the House neither passed the bill nor even brought it up for a vote. The Senate failed to draft a reauthorization bill.

Still, since the Democrats' priorities are free college, funding for identity politics programs, and similarly ill-conceived changes, the best hope of sponsoring legislation that would meaningfully improve higher education lies with Republican legislators. Republican members of the Senate should use these next two years to draft a detailed, practicable reauthorization plan for the HEA that reforms the most pressing abuses in higher education. Republican members of the House should focus on producing a reform bill that avoids the pitfalls that stymied the PROSPER Act.

The two priorities for Republican legislators should be:

**1. Achieve consensus on reforming federal student aid programs.** The PROSPER Act provides a good starting point, with its repeal of Public Service Loan Forgiveness; its streamlining of federal student aid programs; its cap on federal student loans; and its provision of “skin in the game” for colleges.

Most Republicans favored these changes in theory, but some balked at the specific numbers. Moderate Republicans felt the policies were too austere; conservative Republicans believed they were too lenient.

In order for these reforms to have any meaningful effect, they must not be watered down. Now is the time for Republicans to do the hard work of researching and setting forth the data that bolsters these reforms, in order to be prepared to pass a meaningful reauthorization bill when they regain the majority.

**2. Defend free speech.** Intellectual freedom is the bedrock of higher education. Numerous state legislatures have introduced or passed campus free speech legislation, but the federal government

has not yet enacted policies to protect the free exchange of ideas on college campuses. The PROSPER Act offered strong rhetoric, but little substance.

Republicans should loudly champion free speech. They should call out Democratic silence and inaction about campus abridgements of free speech, oppose legislation that curtails free speech in the guise of banning “hate speech,” and propose legislation to protect campus free speech (along the lines of what NAS sketched out in our Freedom to Learn Amendments) so as to put Democrats on record on campus free speech. This legislation should be detailed and practicable, and ready to be passed whenever the Republicans regain their majority.

*Rachelle Peterson is Policy Director at the National Association of Scholars (NAS). She joined NAS in 2013 as a research associate analyzing the campus sustainability movement. She graduated from The King's College in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics.*



**Horowitz** (Continued from page 1)

were mistaken when they “imprudently accepted the left’s deceptive claims to be ‘liberal’ and ‘progressive,’ ascribing to it idealistic intentions.” Bauerlein elaborates, writing:

To take the psychological query at face value is to miss how it alters the debate, insidiously so, and not in the way conservatives have come to expect. For a long time, conservatives have charged leftists with politicizing everything and everyone, but the diagnostic move does the opposite. It de-politicizes the conservative. Whatever political opinions he holds dissipate once we view him as a fragile, deluded ego. Conservatism, then, is no longer a political outlook which must be opposed by democratic means. It’s a psychosocial condition, and that’s not something you debate. Instead, you confine the sufferer.

Taken in this context, it becomes clear that attempts to infuse psychological testing, treatment, and redirection into American schools are part of a wider plan to treat those who don’t agree with so-called progressive thought. The danger of doing this should be taken very seriously.

**2018 Looks Much Different Than 2003**

Bauerlein writes, “Horowitz struck people in 2003—including those on the Right—as an exaggerator and dramatizer. Oh, they acknowledged, a few wild leftists may be found in academic ‘studies’ departments and advocacy organi-

zations such as BAMN (By Any Means Necessary) and ACT UP, a gay advocacy group popular in the ’90s, but they have no impact on the country at large.”

Bauerlein concludes:

Fifteen years later, everything looks different. We hear more talk about white supremacy than we’ve heard since the passage of the Civil Rights Act, and it issues from the high rungs of the Democratic Party. Mainstream news outlets echo the contentions of the leftist hate monitor Southern Poverty Law Center, as if it were the nation’s racial conscience. The mayor of New York City wants to block Chick-fil-A from the boroughs because its CEO espouses a biblical conception of marriage, while the cast of the most popular Broadway show of our time steps out of character to chastise the vice president in the audience for his backward views. Corporate America trembles in fear of leftist boycotts and knows that a mob is ready to form should an incident take place that can be fitted to a victim narrative.

Most of all, a good portion of the population, goaded by the leftist views of media, academia, the arts and entertainment worlds, refuses to accept the results of the recent election. (*Claremont Review of Books*, Summer 2018)

**Common Core** (Continued from page 1)

instead seeming to blame teachers and school districts. The “great standards, poorly implemented” trope has been repeatedly used to prop up and excuse the failing standards.

*Education Week* said:

Math and English scores drew the attention of the ACT by another measure, too: readiness for college-level work. The ACT’s score benchmarks are correlated with the likelihood of earning Bs or Cs in credit-bearing coursework. And increasing numbers of students are falling short.

Only 4 in 10 met the math benchmark, the lowest level since 2004, and down from 46% in 2012. Six in 10 met the English benchmark, the lowest since the benchmarks were introduced in 2002.

Matt Larson, the immediate past president of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, told *Education Week*, “As a country, we’ve reached the limits of what we can get out of standards alone.” Larson said, “We need to pay more attention to what is taking place in the classroom.” (*Education Week*, 10-17-18)

Common Core standards, which instituted teaching math methods that confuse students and make it almost impossible for them to take trigonometry in high school by pushing back foundational classes, are the problem. Teaching according to those standards is what is “taking place” in classrooms. Curriculum has been Common Core-aligned and teachers face negative consequences when they don’t follow along with the aligned curriculum.

[The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, a primary proponent of Common Core, is a major financial supporter of *Education Week*.]

**More Bad News**

Jane Robbins says, “Common Core has been a great leveler—just not in the way it was promised.”

Robbins explains that it isn’t just ACT math scores that are dangerously disappointing. She says, “Significantly, unlike today’s students, the higher-scoring 2012 students had had little if any exposure to the ‘glorious’ reforms of Common Core. As for reading, only 60% of test-takers met the college-readiness benchmark – the lowest level ever in the 16-year history of the benchmark.”

The chief executive officer of ACT said about the situation, “We’re at a very dangerous point. And if we do nothing, it will keep on declining.”

Robbins says:

Anyone with no Gates funding and two brain cells to rub together would conclude that a good start would be ditching Common Core lock, stock, and barrel — every ‘informational text,’ every ‘close reading,’ every ‘deeper conceptual understanding,’ every ‘Lexile’ measure, every ‘alternative algorithm,’ every ‘real-world problem-solving,’ every ‘rigorous’ standard, every delay in standard algorithms, every delay in algebra, every ‘collaboration,’ every ‘consensus’ — all of it.

(TruthInAmericanEducation.com, 10-8-18) (Townhall.com, 11-20-18)

**‘Be Best’** (Continued from page 1)

opioid crisis, and to educate and provide services to help those affected by it.

The First Lady shared the stage with Eric Bolling, the former Fox News host who lost his nineteen-year-old son to an opioid overdose in 2017. Bolling has stated that his teenage son’s death involved purchasing Xanax that was laced with fentanyl “on the street.” It should be noted that such illegal drugs are flooding over unprotected sections of our southern border. By July 31, 2018, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CPB) had seized over 1,300 pounds of fentanyl, which represents almost double 2017’s total of 1,194 pounds for the entire year. (CPB.org)

The White House has declared opioid addiction a national health emergency. It is causing fiscal problems for states and municipalities, and personal problems within families.

Melania Trump told Liberty University students, “I believe that as our next generation, you have the potential to not just reduce, but eliminate the statistics I mentioned earlier.” Trump suggested that it is desirable to go beyond the statistics of the epidemic and instead “think of this as a human story and an opportunity to save lives.” She said, “While you may never personally become addicted, the chances of you knowing someone who struggles with it are very high.” She continued, “And if you, or someone you know needs help, you need to be brave enough to ask, or strong enough to stand with them as they fight through the disease.”

Mrs. Trump said, “It is my hope that what we discussed today will save lives in the future and help prevent our children from falling victim to drug dependence. As a mother and as First Lady, I want to do everything I can to expose the serious dangers of opioid and drug addiction and provide opportunities for youth to become leaders in ending this crisis.” (WhiteHouse.gov, 11-28-18)

Mrs. Trump also took questions from the audience.

During the same time period that opioid drug addiction has become a national emergency, many states are shortsightedly throwing fuel on a fire by seeing fit to legalize marijuana. Marijuana has been shown to not only be addictive but it also damages brain development, especially in younger people.

**Managing Social Media**

A pivotal aspect of Mrs. Trump’s



Be Best campaign centers around social media use. Children and young adults are often embarrassed, shamed, or even bullied by others on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. There have even been instances of suicide prompted by online shaming and bullying.

President and Mrs. Trump have first-hand experience with the online bullying of children; their son Barron has been the focus of several attacks by adult, so-called celebrities and others. Barron Trump is twelve years old and won’t be 13 until March of 2019.

The White House says:

When children learn positive online behaviors early-on, social media can be used in productive ways and can effect positive change. Mrs. Trump believes that children should be both seen and heard, and it is our responsibility as adults to educate and reinforce to them that when they are using their voices—whether verbally or online—they must choose their words wisely and speak with respect and compassion.

Mrs. Trump suggests parents read the Federal Trade Commission booklet “Talking with Kids about Being Online” to find ways that will help their children safely navigate the internet. (WhiteHouse.gov)

**A Beautiful Christmas Tour**

At the end of November, Melania Trump hosted a tour of the White House. Her chosen theme for 2018 decorations was “American Treasures.” She showed rooms full of Christmas trees, mantle displays, and a huge gingerbread scene depicting the White House, the Capitol, and the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials. White House chefs used 225 pounds of dough, 25 pounds of chocolate, and 20 pounds of white icing to create the scene.

Mrs. Trump planned the decorations and dozens of volunteers from across the nation helped White House staff carry out her vision.

More than 30,000 members of the public were expected to tour the White House in December. Being shown the decorations by a gracious First Lady was a treat for those unable to be there in person.

In the Red Room, trees featured “Be Best” ornaments to go along with Mrs. Trump’s chosen initiative for children.

In the East Wing, the Gold Star Family tree was decorated by families of those who lost their lives while serving in the military. There was also a station for guests to send electronic messages to their military family members on duty in the U.S. or abroad.

**IN THEIR OWN (GOOD) WORDS**

“It is every bit as important for pro-family Americans to be as concerned about the economic integrity of the family as about its moral, social, and legal integrity.”

— Phyllis Schlafly (1924-2016)  
The Phyllis Schlafly Report  
April 1982