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Republicans Win Texas School Board

AUSTIN, TX - Molly Ivins must have sounded the alarm a little too late. "A slate of stealth candidates is running for the State Board of Education on the Republican ticket," the distaff curmudgeon warned in her October 25th commentary in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, two weeks be-

fore the election that turned Texas state politics on its ear.

The liberal scribe's worst nightmare became a reality two Tuesdays later, when Texans elected three of the six candidates disparaged by Ivins as "your basic radical right-wing Christian fundamentalists hell-bent on teaching creationism in biology class." While George W. Bush was wrestling the governorship away from incumbent Ann Richards, fellow Republicans Randy Stevenson, Donna Ballard, and Richard Watson bested their Democratic opponents to gain a one-vote majority on the 15-member State Board of Education.

That slim advantage should spell doom for the values-free approach to sex and health education avidly promoted by the

ousted governor. Support for Goals 2000, the federal education reform program endorsed by the Board's previous Democratic majority, should dry up as well.

A "voting scorecard" distributed prior to the election by the Texas American Family Association recorded the positions of the

candidates on the use of Goals 2000 funding, as well as their reaction to the treatment of certain controversial subjects in state health textbooks. Stevenson, Ballard, and Watson all opposed the use of Goals 2000 funds to subsidize school-based health clinics and to promote OBE. All three likewise opposed textbook materials that encourage students to consider the positive aspects of homosexual "families," suicide, cheating on

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Michigan's New Standards Are Outcome-Based

LANSING, MI - Michigan is attempting to implement Outcome Based Education, after the bill creating a statewide core curriculum passed in December 1993. Michigan is one of the states that does not presently have a required core curriculum, other than a semester of civics in high school. The new required standards were recently released to the public.

The 150-page proposed standards require children to demonstrate values and diversity, rather than academic skills. Proponents of the new standards have not promoted them as "outcome-based" although that is what is being implemented.

An example of one of the social studies standards is that, by graduation, a student "should be able to explain the meaning of core democratic values and describe the political and legal processes created to resolve conflicts involving the values of the American Creed." Many parents object to having a member of the National Education Association teaching their children ideas to resolve these "conflicts" and "values" of the American Creed.

Also, children will be expected to "identify disparities between American ideals and realities and propose ways to reduce them" and "evaluate possible amendments to the Constitution."

These standards will be revised by the end of November based on the negative reactions of parents. They will then be returned to the state board for approval by the end of 1995. In January 1996, they will go to the Michigan Legislature's Joint Administrative Rules Committee for final approval. The standards need not be passed by the entire legislature, only by this committee. The mandates will take effect in the 1997-1998 school year.

In order for the schools to receive full funding provided by the education bill, they are subjected to the state sanctioning of courses. Acceptance of the new core curriculum is a part of this accreditation process. Districts not accredited could lose up to 5 percent of their state funding, a substantial amount considering the drastic shift from local to state funding in recent years. The law enables the state to seize control of districts that don't comply with state mandates.



Donna Ballard
Dist. 8



Randy Stevenson
Dist. 9



Richard Watson
Dist. 14

Stop OBE Rally Gathers on Capitol Steps

LANSING, MI - Several hundred concerned parents and students gathered at the Capitol building in Lansing, MI on Sept. 29 to voice their opposition to Outcome-Based Education in Michigan's public schools.

OBE opponents carried signs and posters with phrases like: "Oppose Brainless Education," "Our Brains are Empty," "OBE is Rotten to the Core" and "Teach ABCs not

OBE."

Organized by the Michigan Alliance of Families, the rally included several state legislators as well as Michigan Eagle Forum president Joanne Voorhees.

Participants called for the Michigan Legislature to adopt a resolution "asserting the inherent rights of parents to impart family-held values, attitudes and beliefs to their children; the sole right of parents to care

and nurture their children to become responsible, moral and productive adults; the irrefutable right of parents to guide, direct and control their children's education; and the undeniable right of parents to safeguard the privacy of their children from unreasonable and unwarranted invasion by any government agency...."

The resolution also called for the repeal of Public Acts 25, 335, and 339, more commonly known as Michigan's school code. Supporters of the resolution said it promotes "socio-political reform rather than true education reform" and "exists... to foster the values and beliefs of the state and federal governments."

State Sen. Doug Carl attended the rally and advised residents: "We've got to go back to the traditional goals and values. Go back and raise your voices to your school board because the future of the next generation is at stake."

State Sen. Gilbert DiNello also spoke out against OBE at the rally. "We have got to make these [OBE supporters] people un-

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Outcomes May Be On the Way Out in Kentucky

FRANKFORT, KY - The much-vaunted Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) may bite the dust when the State Legislature reconvenes in 1996. A statewide coalition of conservative organizations has launched a Campaign for Academic Renewal in Education (CARE) and is currently drafting a bill to supersede the 1990 reform law. The Academic Renewal Act of 1996 would replace the vague, subjectively evaluated outcomes established by KERA with rigorous academic standards measured by objective and reliable tests.

The proposed legislation would also increase local control of schools, protect the privacy of students and their families by limiting information stored in state computer banks, and make the current non-graded primary program optional.

With the implementation of KERA, "state education bureaucrats and ivory tower education theorists seized control of local schools, and began mandating ideas and policies that many parents and teachers don't support," charges a brochure distributed by the CARE coalition. "Parents want their children to be taught how to read, write and calculate, and they want them to be acquainted with the best that has been thought and said," the brochure argues, noting that the works of Homer, Shakespeare, Dickens and other outstanding literary and historical figures have been

shunted aside in favor of materials considered politically correct.

"KERA is classically anti-intellectual," claims CARE coalition member Donna Shedd. "It disdains knowledge. Only that information that is useful to the student's 'real life' is [considered] worthy of class time." Shedd argues that KERA overemphasizes so-called skills and "scorns such time-proven tools and methods as memorization of facts, drill work, textbooks, separate disciplines, competitions, and teaching."

Shedd denounces the illusory local control provided for by KERA, insisting that "true local control would not force the ungraded primary program upon every elementary school in the state regardless of teacher/parent support." Nor would it "have the state sanctioning and taking over schools because they don't 'perform' to some arbitrary formula's increasingly unreasonable level based on scores from invalid subjective tests on their students' opinions," she adds.

"These are desperate times for our schools," Shedd warns. "The public schools continue to lose students at an ever-increasing rate, but the private schools are bursting at the seams." The decline in public school enrollment in Kentucky is so dramatic, claims Shedd, that

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Angry parents show opposition to OBE in Michigan.

EDUCATION BRIEFS

H.D. Cooke Elementary School in Washington, DC, won a \$1 million federal grant to make the school formally bilingual. No student would be forced to participate, but those who do would study in both Spanish and English, with two teachers in each classroom. Through third grade, 80% of teaching would be in Spanish; after that, the balance would even out gradually. The plan has split the once-harmonious school into two hostile camps. "Many black parents are struggling as it is to teach their kids good English. Why are they suddenly going to start teaching them 80% in Spanish?" asked Katherine Warner, a black mathematics teacher.

It has been more than 20 months since the Michigan Chamber of Commerce filed a complaint against the Michigan Education Association's Political Action Committee (MEA-PAC) for its failure to itemize those contributors who gave the MEA-PAC more than \$20 in calendar year 1992. The Chamber's complaint alleged that the MEA-PAC failed to disclose the required names and addresses of contributors to the \$2,064,683.81 it raised during the 1992 election cycle. The Chamber claims that thousands of MEA members contributed at least twice to the MEA-PAC in 1992, bringing their total annual contribution over the \$20.01 threshold which triggers the campaign finance law requirement of disclosure by name and address. "Let's face it, this was a very simple complaint that should have been resolved in 2 months or less," said Robert LaBrant of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

Education-reform ideas favored by government and business leaders are badly out of sync with the general public's top concerns, claims a survey by the Public Agenda Foundation. The new survey, titled "First Things First: What Americans Expect From the Public Schools," reported that the public ranked the threat of drugs and violence as the most serious problem, followed by academic standards that are too low and a lack of emphasis on basic subjects. It found that the public prefers "time-honored ways of doing things" and rejects the new forms of assessment, cooperative learning, and relying on calculators in mathematics.

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California Gov. Cancels CLAS

SACRAMENTO, CA—California Governor Pete Wilson vetoed California Learning Assessment System (CLAS). Wilson argued that the two-year-old testing system for California schoolchildren had failed to provide reliable scores or objective standards. His veto marked a major defeat for California's "education elite."

The CLAS test was beset with problems from the beginning as parents claimed it pried into their children's private lives and beliefs (See July '94 *Education Reporter*). In May, Wilson put a hold on \$26.4 million earmarked for the program. He said he would not release the money until lawmakers enacted changes to address his concerns. Wilson claims now that the new measure "falls short of meeting these requirements."

Beverly Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition claims that, "CLAS ignores basic skills in favor of politically correct an-

swers and has a built-in system to keep parents uninvolved." An example she cites is a performance-based math test that asked students to divide 17 apples among four children. The "best answer," according to the test, is to give four apples to each of the children, with the extra apple going to the "neediest" child. ■

Kentucky

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"the public schools in Montgomery County have had to take out an ad this summer in their local newspaper in an attempt to recruit children." Citing a recent survey revealing that 42 percent of Kentuckians "believe that education reform is going in the wrong direction." Shedd predicts that the demise of KERA is only a matter of time, and that time may come in 1996. ■

Texas Board

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tests, and "divorcing their parents."

Two months before the election, on September 9th, the Board voted 11-4 to apply for \$37 million of Goals 2000 funds. Retiring Democrat Bill Hudson joined Republicans Bob Offutt, Jack Christie, and Monte Hasie in rejecting Goals 2000 as a thinly veiled federal power grab leading ultimately to a national school board, national student assessments, a national curriculum, and national teacher certification. At that same meeting, Hudson and the three staunch Republicans tried unsuccessfully to defeat Commissioner of Education Skip Meno's proposal to spend \$2,450,000 to hire experts to rewrite the Texas "Essential Elements." Offutt, Christie, Hasie, and Hudson opposed the measure for fear that the rewrite would be used as a means to replace the state's existing curriculum guidelines with Outcome-Based Education goals.

With the three incoming Republicans all having campaigned in opposition to Goals 2000, reversal of the Board's two September votes looms as a distinct possibility. Meno's days may be numbered too, inasmuch as the commissioner is hired by the Board, subject to approval by the governor and confirmation by the state senate. The Board's responsibilities also include setting teacher certification standards, approving curriculum standards, and adopting textbooks. Given the state's status as one of the largest textbook purchasers in the country, the new Board may be able to persuade educational publishers to make their offerings more palatable to the unradicalized majority.

Such ominous tidings inspired the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA), the Texas Medical Association, the state affiliate of the NAACP, People for the

American Way (PAW) and assorted other ax-grinders to follow Molly Ivins' lead in warning of the dire consequences of a Republican majority on the State Board of Education. "They are running on an agenda to do away with the public school system of Texas and replace it with vouchers and

That slim advantage should spell doom for the values-free approach to sex and health education avidly promoted by the ousted governor.

home schools," proclaimed TSTA President Richard Kouri in an effort to frighten his 95,000 union members into action. "The future of public education in the state is at stake," a PAW spokesperson said. The vested interests pretty much ignored the issues, however, opting instead for *ad hominem* attacks on the conservative and religious groups that backed the Republican candidates — what Ivins called "the usual coalition of flakes" supporting "this collection of dingbats."

While Ivins licks her wounds, the "flakes" and "dingbats" are savoring their triumph. "This will give control back to the parents," declared Cathie Adams, president of Texas Eagle Forum. "The people of Texas are saying they don't want Outcome-Based Education. We want good academic standards in this state. We do not want a dumbed-down curriculum." Bob Offutt, the Board member who recruited the candidates whose victory established a Republican majority, summed up the outcome succinctly: "It is a great victory." ■

Other Victories

Republicans made significant gains in education races elsewhere throughout the nation. In Florida, staunch conservative Frank Brogan defeated a Democratic opponent endorsed by Governor Lawton Chiles and the NEA to win election as the state's commissioner of education. A former school teacher principal, Brogan was elected to the post of Superintendent of Public Education in Martin County in 1992.

The Education of James Madison: A Model for Today

by Mary-Elaine Swanson, *The Hoffman Education Center for the Family, Montgomery, AL, 1992, 333 pps, \$21.95.*



The education of James Madison, "the Father of the Constitution," is an exceptional example of colonial education at its best. Mary-Elaine Swanson traces

outlines in *The Education of James Madison: A Model for Today* to show why outstanding results were obtained in the lives of so many students of Madison's generation who were similarly educated. "The reader will be in a position," writes Swanson, "to judge whether a return to this caliber of education may not be the answer to the failed educational policies of contemporary America — policies that have made us 'a nation at risk' where there are now 23 million illiterate citizens."

Despite the difficulties of colonizing a new nation, boys like James Madison received a remarkably fine education from resourceful parents and teachers. They were taught the art of learning so that the pursuit of knowledge would be a stimulating lifelong experience.

Madison's formal education began at home by his devout grandmother, continued at a small boarding school run by Donald Robertson, a Scottish schoolmaster who inspired him with a love of learning, and concluded at the Presbyterian College of New Jersey where he attracted the interest of its new president, Dr. John Witherspoon.

Swanson shows in her book what an influence Dr. Witherspoon had in forming Madison's religious and political convictions. The religious and political ideas Madison learned at home, which were later reinforced and developed by Witherspoon, played a significant role in all his contributions to America's political history — from his draft for the article on religion in the Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776), to his contributions to the Constitutional Convention, which made him "Father of the Constitution" (1787) and finally to his drawing up of the Bill of Rights (1789) at the First Congress under the new Constitution.

The Education of James Madison contains the subjects Madison studied in school and college and the principles and methods used in his education. It shows how that education permeated his entire political career.

Swanson includes in her book an overview of colonial education, its purposes, goals and methods. She answers the question: In what ways is Madison's education a model for our time? She discusses how parents and teachers can produce such a model for children today.

"Madison's well-rounded and thorough education — and its end results — should be thought-provoking for parents and teachers today," writes Swanson.

SIECUS Says Sex-Ed Programs Don't Go Far Enough

The Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) applauds the dramatic increase in the number of states that require or recommend sex education in public schools. A recent SIECUS survey of state sex-ed programs reports that 44 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have gotten on the sex-ed bandwagon since 1986, when only three states required such curricula.

The focus of the SIECUS assessment, however, is on the "shortcomings" of the state curricula, as determined by deviations from the group's *Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, K-12*, published in 1991. Those guidelines include six "key concepts," subdivided into 36 topics. The concepts are Human Development, Relationships, Personal Skills, Sexual Behavior, Sexual Health,

and Society and Culture.

The new SIECUS study, entitled *Unfinished Business*, consists of three major components: 1) the responses of education officials in 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa to a 20-question survey; 2) the analysis by SIECUS staff of 28 state-developed sex-ed curricula or guidelines; and 3) SIECUS recommendations for "improving" such materials. Resources cited for the study include the Alan Guttmacher Institute, Planned Parenthood, the Center for Population Options, the National Education Association, and People for the American Way. Funding for the study was provided by the Carnegie Corporation.

"Almost all state curricula guides include abstinence messages as well as positive and affirming statements about human sexuality," the study notes. "However, many state guides omit sexual behavior topics; exclude

topics that are considered controversial, such as sexual identity and orientation and abortion; lack thorough coverage of topics throughout grades Kindergarten-Twelve (K-12), particularly in the elementary grades; and lack balanced coverage of abstinence and safer sex." Such "shortcomings" are said to indicate that the states have "unfinished business."

According to the SIECUS findings, states are more likely to develop guidelines rather than curricula, "suggesting a preference to defer to local discretion concerning the specifics." Most sex-ed programs across the country are incorporated into "health" education, and most have been developed "with the input of advisory committees." Few states have "teacher training or certification requirements for instructors of sexuality education."

The study laments the absence from most curricula of "detailed age-appropriate developmental messages," which, according to the *Guidelines*, are statements that lay the foundation for easier acceptance of permissive sexual practices at a higher grade level. According to SIECUS, "Human development (i.e., anatomy, puberty, body image); relationships (i.e., family parenting, friendship); personal skills (decision-making and communications); and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV infection are the topics most commonly covered in state guides."

When it comes to coverage of sexual behavior, SIECUS argues that most states

leave out the good stuff. SIECUS complains that most curricula are guilty of a "fear-based" approach to intercourse, insofar as they avoid "a balanced discussion about abstinence and safer sex." To achieve the desired "balance," according to SIECUS, the curricula would have to present "safer sex" as a more realistic option than abstinence. SIECUS complains that masturbation, shared sexual behavior, human sexual response, fantasy, and sexual dysfunction are covered by only ten or fewer state curricula guides.

"Very few states discuss such topics as sexual identity and orientation (13 states), abortion (11 states), and sexuality and religion (four states)," SIECUS notes disappointingly. "Fortunately, only six states have specific provisions that restrict the content of instruction, including the prohibition of discussion about contraceptive use among unmarried minors, abortion, and homosexuality."

SIECUS rejects the "just say no" approach in sex education, asserting that such approaches "do not provide corresponding refusal skills or assertiveness messages." SIECUS sees refusal skills as sexual negotiation techniques that students can acquire through explicit role-playing and instruction in the art of lewd conversation. SIECUS ignores the fact that such techniques undermine the natural modesty of children (their most potent defense), as well as the likelihood that a thor-

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Two New Abstinence Bills Introduced In New Jersey

TRENTON, NJ – Assemblywoman Marion Crecco, an advocate of school programs that teach abstinence is the sponsor of two bills that support abstinence and family values. Both bills were released out of the New Jersey Assembly Education Committee, and are expected to go to the full Assembly for a vote in early December.

Under current law, schools are required to develop a health education curriculum that includes instruction in family life education, AIDS prevention, health promotion, and disease prevention. A-1985, the "AIDS Prevention Act of 1994," provides that any public school program on sex education (including anything related that is discussed in a health, self-esteem, family living, or any other course) must state that abstinence from sexual activity is the only completely reliable means of preventing the sexual transmission of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and of avoiding pregnancy. The bill also requires that any in-

formation describing the use of contraceptives such as condoms also include information on their failure rates in actual use among adolescent populations and that any course, program, or material concerning methods for the prevention of AIDS shall clearly state the importance of avoiding intravenous drug use.

According to Crecco, A-1985 is designed to "eliminate risk" rather than to "reduce risk," which is the focus of many failing programs that promote the use of condoms. Crecco said, in her testimony on November 21 to the Assembly Education Committee, "What our children really need are strategies to help them remain 100% safe from all the fears and concerns of too-early sexual activity." The bill is designed to introduce the notion that there is no such thing as "safe sex" into school programs that currently educate children about sexuality.

Crecco's second bill, A-2078, establishes family life education committees in each school district to review and approve family

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Coverage of Key Concepts

Concept #1 (Human Development) includes the topics of reproductive anatomy, reproduction, puberty, body image, and sexual identity and orientation. The SIECUS study notes that such topics are "introduced by grade 4 by approximately two-thirds of the states," with the exception of sexual identity and orientation, which is covered by only 13 states. The topic of anatomy "typically is limited to naming of sexual organs and only rarely includes the concept that the human body has the capability to reproduce as well as to give and receive pleasure."

Within the 13 states that address the topic, sexual identity and orientation is "largely limited to definitions of homosexuality, heterosexuality, and bisexuality." While taking comfort in the fact that no states directly label homosexuality as "deviant," SIECUS laments their failure to portray the joys of same-sex encounters: "All states frame discussions of intimate relationships within the context of male-female scenarios. Only four states (Alaska, Maine, Nebraska, Rhode Island) include messages that affirm sexual identity and orientation — whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual — as an essential quality of personality."

Concept #2 (Relationships) includes the topics of families, friendship, love, dating, marriage and lifetime commitments, and parenting. While noting that these topics are "typically reserved for later grades," SIECUS says that its handy *Guidelines* offer "extensive developmental messages that are appropriate for el-

mentary-aged children on these topics."

Concept #3 (Personal Skills) includes the topics of values, decision-making, communication, assertiveness, negotiation, and finding help. SIECUS rejects the "just say no" approach in favor of "detailed information about responding to pressures to become sexually active."

Concept #4 (Sexual Behavior) includes the topics of sexuality throughout life, masturbation, shared sexual behavior, abstinence, human sexual response, fantasy, and sexual dysfunction.

Concept #5 (Sexual Health) includes the topics of contraception, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection, sexual abuse, and reproductive health. "All state guides include topics about the Sexual Health concept, with the most common being sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS," notes SIECUS. "Abortion is covered by only 11 states."

Concept #6 (Society and Culture) includes the topics of sexuality and society, gender roles, sexuality and the law, sexuality and religion, diversity, sexuality and the arts, and sexuality and the media. "Twenty-one states discuss gender roles through messages that stress cooperation and mutual respect between the sexes, as well as messages against unequal treatment of females and the breakdown of gender stereotypes," SIECUS reports. "Sexuality and religion is a rarely discussed societal topic, covered by only four states (Maryland, Nebraska, Rhode Island, and Washington)."

HLI Conference on Sex Education Held in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS, MO — Human Life International held its National Sex Education Conference in St. Louis, MO October 21-23. It provided a thorough assessment of current sex education programs, attitudes, and alternatives and featured nationally recognized family life experts such as Dr. William Coulson, James Likoudis, Dr. Joseph Nicolosi, Dr. Judith Reisman, and many others.

Dr. William Coulson spoke on The Sex Education of Bill Clinton. He summarized

the message of Bill Clinton's sex education as, "follow an inner feeling, whether right or wrong."

Dr. Coulson explained that Bill Clinton was an undergraduate in the '60s, so he is a product of many of the therapeutic techniques used in schools today — such as amateur group therapy which involves "sitting in circles getting in touch with your feelings." Dr. Coulson explained how these psychological techniques in the classroom have impacted the personality, attitudes,

and values of Mr. Clinton today.

Dr. Judith Reisman discussed her book *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud*. In her presentation she gave proof that the the sex studies of Alfred Kinsey were really just "criminal experimentation on children funded by taxpayers."

Regarding sex education in the schools, Dr. Reisman stated that, "sex is a private act and does not belong in a public place." She claims that all that is needed [in the schools] is people who say, "Sexual relations belong in a marital relationship — otherwise, the results are tragic." She says that's all. Case closed.

Charles Donovan spoke on the History of Modern Sex Education. He pointed out that before 1910 only about a dozen books on sex education even existed. But by today's standard they weren't really about sex education at all, but, rather, a warning of the dangers of immorality.

There was never a grassroots effort among parents and churches for sex education in the schools, according to Mr. Donovan. Planned Parenthood was very shrewd to get support for sex education, starting from more of a "medical" perspective.

SEICUS brought the element of pornography to sex education to help desensitize

subjects. It was throughout the '70s that federal involvement with SEICUS and Planned Parenthood exploded.

Mr. Donovan claimed that, besides being a moral problem, sex ed is a public policy disaster (increased crime, teen pregnancy, abortions, etc.). But he sees signs of hope.

"You can only run from the data so long," he says and, already, research shows that there is a slight decrease in sexual activity being young people.

"If you want chaste marriages," Donovan stated, "you must start teaching kids about chastity." He also stressed the importance of parents being allowed access to review sex education texts and materials.

Pat Holman spoke on the Difficulties and Hazards in Promoting Chastity/Sex Education. He described many of the problems of today's sex education such as its graphic content, no moral absolutes, and values clarification.

Other topics discussed were Sex Education: Who? What? When? How? Why? with Fr. Paul Marx, Challenging Teens to Chastity with Barbara McGuigan, and others. All speeches are available on cassette for \$4 each, or you may order the entire set of 17 cassettes for \$60 (save \$8). Add extra for shipping/handling charges. Please contact Human Life International, P.O. Box 2024, Baltimore, MD 21297-0330, (301) 670-7884 FAX (301) 869-7363. □

SIECUS

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ough understanding of refusal skills would enable an ardent negotiator to overcome them.

Few sex-ed curricula begin early enough for SIECUS. "Twenty-six of the 28 state curricula and guidelines reviewed by SIECUS are designed for K-12 or K-1," the study notes. "Yet fewer than half cover specific sexuality education topics in elementary grades, particularly grades K-3."

SIECUS blames traditional morality for some curricula that are "shaped by conflict, controversy, or fear of division." SIECUS deplors the benighted parents and sinister right-wing pressure groups that have impeded "comprehensive" sex education. "Forty-six respondents (92%) report community controversies around implementing sexuality education in localities within the state," says SIECUS.

SIECUS praises some states as models of enlightenment. SIECUS cites Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, and Rhode Island as states with "exemplary programs based on the Guidelines content analysis, with: full discussion of a range of topics in an age-appropriate manner; inclusion of the values inherent in the Guidelines (e.g., a positive view of sexuality, respect for diversity); coverage of the three learning domains (cognitive, affective, and skills); and clear instruction to teachers on how to provide educational messages."

To bring the other 44 states into line with these models, SIECUS recommends that each one name "a specialist trained and experienced in sexuality education issues to develop and monitor the state program." Uniformity of instruction can be ensured by "strong guidance" from the state. According to SIECUS, all sex-ed curricula should "1) cover kindergarten through grade 12; 2) include all topics at the appropriate grade level; 3) provide a balance between the positive and negative consequences of sexuality, including balancing abstinence and safer sex messages for adolescents; and 4) directly address the sexual issues in adolescent programs."

The ideal solution, as SIECUS sees it, would be for all states to use the Guidelines "as the basis for state curricula/guidelines." To ensure that the full range of behavior topics is covered, SIECUS calls for the formation of "statewide committees — broadly representative of the diversity within the state — to provide advice and input on the formulation of state sexuality education programs."

For the benefit of states that lack diversity, SIECUS recommends the establish-

ment of "a national clearinghouse" to encourage "information sharing" among the states. The "strong guidance" from the state should include "certification in sexuality education;" funding for "teacher training, technical assistance, materials development, and demonstration projects;" and, "mechanisms for monitoring local implementation."

SIECUS also recommends a coordinated effort to combat obstructionists, with states providing "assistance to communities in responding to opposition to sexuality education programs." □

Rally

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derstand all children are not the same," he said. "You can't treat a kid like a car on an assembly line."

Jill Wolber, a concerned parent at the rally, has three children in an elementary school that is piloting OBE. She carried a sign with a cartoon drawing of a skunk that read, "OBE Stinks."

"I don't like the current methods being used to teach and to deliver the curriculum," Mrs. Wolber said. "The process they're using has a lot of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors they want our kids to possess. Everything seems to be about attitudes and not academics."

Another parent, Barbara Jennings, attended the rally and said she was so frustrated with OBE, she put her child in another school.

"They're experimenting with our chil-

dren like they were guinea pigs," Mrs. Jennings said. "They've not provided us [parents] with any proof with what they're doing works and they're not including the parents in the process."

Some rally participants are encouraged that Michigan Governor John Engler at the state Republican convention in August called Outcome-Based Education a "big education battle" and said he "will continue to lead the fight against Outcome-Based Education. Our schools won't be testing attitudes, values and beliefs, they'll be meeting tough world-class standards. When I'm done, OBE will stand for Only the Best in Education."

Rally organizers asked concerned parents to work for the repeal of federal and state laws that undermine parental rights and local school board control. □

Crecco

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life education curriculum and materials. The committee would consist of 15 members, at least eight of whom must be parents or guardians of pupils in the district. Prior to the adoption of a family life education program, a course in sexuality, or an AIDS education program, or to changes in these programs, the board of education would be required to submit all the materials to the committee and also make them available to parents in the district. After review and public hearings, the committee must approve the materials by a recorded roll call vote of its full membership. Materials which are not approved may not be used in the classrooms in the district.

The bill also provides that, prior to use in the classroom, the parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in the district are to receive annually an outline of the curriculum and a list of instructional materials for the grade of their child including notification about how to receive a copy of the full curriculum. Also, if a majority of the parents in a particular grade level object to an item of curriculum or instructional material, its use must be discontinued immediately.

Any teaching staff member who uses materials which have not been approved or which have not been made available to the parents will be subject to the withholding of an increment for a first offense. Any subsequent offense would result in the dismissal of the teacher or administrator.

For a copy of the two bills, call Assemblywoman Marion Crecco's office at (201) 743-7334 and ask for Margaret Cenci. Or you can write to her at 199 Broad Street, Suite 1D, Bloomfield, New Jersey, 07003. □

