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Teen Births Plummet; Some Credit Given to Abstinence Education

The birth rate among girls aged 10 to 14 fell to its lowest level in 58 years in 2002, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) announced in November. The number of live births declined 43% from its peak in 1994 despite the 16% rise in the female population of that age group. In addition, pregnancies, abortions and birth rates declined for all teens.

CDC statistician Fay Menacker noted that in the last decade many public and private programs have focused on the importance of pregnancy prevention, including some emphasizing abstinence and responsible behavior. "These programs have been sending these messages at many levels," said Dr. Menacker, the lead author of the study. "It's possible the message is getting through." (*Wall Street Journal*, 11-15-04)

"A number of surveys have shown that in recent years fewer teenagers are sexually active, and they seem to be acting more responsibly," Dr. Menacker told Reuters (11-15-04).

Other factors cited by public health officials include welfare reform, increased use of contraceptives, public awareness resulting from the AIDS epidemic, and more supervised after-school programs for young teens.

Further evidence of the trend toward more responsible teen behavior came in December, when the National Center for Health Statistics reported that the percentage of girls aged 15 to 17 who had ever had intercourse declined from 38% in 1995 to 30% in 2002. For boys, the decline was 43% to 31%.

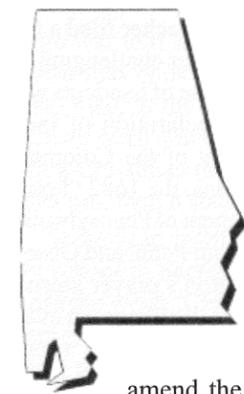
Despite the improvement, the U.S. still has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the industrialized world, with one-third of teenage girls getting pregnant at least once.

AP Courses Seek Broader Enrollment; Critics Fear Watering Down Will Result

Some Prep Schools Opt Out of Program

The Advanced Placement nationwide program of college-level courses in high school is quietly undergoing a transformation as momentum builds to open such courses to all students who are interested.

The College Board, which sponsors AP courses and tests, has been trying to recast the program as accessible to any student willing to do the work, regardless of academic standing. Federal and state incentive programs offer grants and bonuses to encourage more students to enroll. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, about \$24 million is available annually to states to expand access to the AP program by underserved students.



School Funding Litigation

Alabamians Vote No to Opening Education Spending Floodgates

On November 2 Alabama voters narrowly defeated a stealth measure to amend the state constitution to remove language protecting against court-ordered educational spending increases that have become common in other states. Conservative groups successfully mobilized against the measure, which was appended to a non-controversial amendment to repeal archaic and unenforceable language concerning school segregation.

The vote was so close that a recount was ordered. Both the original and the recounted margins of defeat were fewer than 2,000 votes statewide.

Former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore said of the proposed amendment: "This is the most deceptive piece of legislation I have ever seen, and it is simply a fraud on the people of Alabama." The unwanted language concerned whether there is a constitutional "right to an education," which has given rise to numerous activist judicial decisions requiring school spending increases.

Opposition to the amendment was complicated by the combination of the "right to an education" language changes with language eliminating racist "Jim Crow" provisions (which had been unenforceable for many decades). Opponents of the changes concerning the "right to an education" were fully supportive of eliminating the racist provisions, but because all the changes were part of the same ballot measure, opponents had the delicate task of explaining to voters why

they had to oppose the measure as a whole. They succeeded.

As the *Education Reporter* reported in October, about half the states face various court cases concerning school financing. Another 21 have only recently settled similar suits, and most will start litigating again soon. Only five states have avoided litigation entirely. Spending lawsuits began in the 1970s, when they focused on equalization of spending between rich and poor districts. (*The Economist*, 11-25-04)

By the 1990s, the focus of spending litigation shifted from the allocation of resources to demanding a subjectively "adequate" overall level of spending and education, often in reliance on general phrases in state constitutions. Plaintiffs are winning most of the cases despite the constitutional argument that tax-and-spend decisions are solely a legislative prerogative.

NY told to spend billions more

A court-appointed panel in a New York lawsuit found in late November that an additional \$5.6 billion must be spent on New York City's schoolchildren every year to provide the opportunity for a sound, basic education that they are guaranteed by the state constitution. In addition, \$9.2 billion worth of new classrooms, laboratories, libraries and other facilities are needed to relieve overcrowding, reduce class sizes and provide adequate places for learning. The judge overseeing the case is expected to draw heavily from the panel's findings. (*New York Times*, 12-1-04) Tax increases on New Yorkers appear inevitable.

New Montana decision

Meanwhile, in Montana, the supreme court unanimously decided in November that the school financing system is fatally flawed and demanded better legislation

(See *Alabamians*, page 4)



Roy Moore

Gay Agenda in Schools Riles Parents

On the heels of lopsided votes against same-sex marriage in 11 state referenda last November, parents and students are becoming more vocal in resisting school programs aimed at support for the homosexual lifestyle.

In northeastern Kentucky, hundreds of students have defied the Ashland-Boyd County school district's "mandatory anti-harassment workshops" required by an agreement with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) that also allows the Gay-Straight Alliance student group to meet in school buildings. Some 324 students did not come to school the day the tolerance training video was shown, and hundreds more refused to watch it.

The ACLU has threatened to seek a court order to enforce attendance. Joseph Platt, a lawyer representing parents, said "mandatory training on tolerance for homosexuals violates the right of conscience of parents and students who believe such behavior is immoral." (*Washington Times*, 12-1-04)

In Montgomery County, MD, pastors and parents are joining forces to oppose a new sex education program in high schools that promotes homosexuality. The program teaches 8th- and 10th-graders that sexual experimentation with members of the same sex is common and normal, that same-sex couples are one form of traditional family and that homosexuality is not a choice. The program also includes a video in which a girl is shown fitting a condom on a cucumber.

Parents must provide written permission for their child to participate in the week-long sex education program. Abstinence-only classes and an independent study option will be offered as alternatives, according to a spokeswoman for the county public school system.

The new curriculum also teaches that "a family is two or more people who are joined together by emotional feelings or who are related to one another." Three members of the citizens advisory committee that endorsed the curriculum resigned in protest, said Michelle Turner, a committee member and mother of a high school student.

"Sexual orientation being introduced to 8th-graders is totally inappropriate for such a young age and is only going to confuse kids, and it's contrary to what many parents want to teach their children," she said, adding that the parental permission slips should contain more detail about the program. "I don't understand why we have to teach kids how to put on a condom. If they can't figure out how to put on a condom, then they're too stupid to be having sex." (*Washington Times*, 11-11-04)

Meanwhile, a dozen organizations led by the National School Boards Association

(See *Gay Agenda*, page 4)



EDUCATION BRIEFS

Condoleezza Rice illustrates value of homeschooling, skipping grades, right to bear arms. President Bush's choice for his second-term secretary of state was initially home-schooled by her teacher mother, who took a year off work to teach the 5-year-old Rice after the local black elementary school officials said she was too young to start school despite her well-developed reading skills. She later breezed through school, graduating from high school at age 15 and college at 19. Having lived through white-on-black racial violence in Birmingham, AL in 1963, she is a staunch supporter of gun rights, arguing that they allowed her father and other neighborhood men to defend the community from white vigilantes. (montgomeryadvertiser.com, 11-17-04)

Another study questions what exit exams measure. Many high school graduation tests don't measure whether students are ready for college or work, according to a study released in August by the Center on Education Policy. Most of the 25 states that have such tests gear the tests to 10th or 11th-grade levels, and some measure pre-9th-grade skills. (See *Education Reporter*, Sept. 2004 for previous studies on this subject.)

District planned drill simulating terrorist attack by homeschoolers. A school district in Muskegon County, MI planned for more than a year to conduct an elaborate emergency drill involving 60 students, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, transportation and medical services and various other service agencies. According to the *Muskegon Chronicle*, the exercise planned to "simulate an attack by a fictitious radical group called Wackos Against Schools and Education who believe everyone should be homeschooled" and who detonate a bomb on a bus. After the plan was publicized, an outcry prompted apologies from officials involved.

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Schools Censor U.S. Religious Holidays, Historical Documents

In a year of court challenges to teacher-led recitations of the Pledge of Allegiance and a school's display of the Ten Commandments, some public schools did their best in late 2004 to spare pupils from exposure to God in the context of Thanksgiving, Christmas and historical documents such as the Declaration of Independence.

Maryland school administrators proudly reported that religion does not figure in their approach to teaching about the origins of the American celebration of Thanksgiving. In fact, the teachers don't even mention that the Pilgrims thanked God.

Nor do they quote George Washington's 1789 proclamation establishing Thanksgiving Day, which stated: "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor." (Capital News Service, 11-22-04)

Wordless songs banned too!

The latest casualty of the Christmas season is instrumental-music renditions of Christmas carols, which were banned in the South Orange/Mapplewood, NJ school district. The district had already nixed the singing of Christmas carols since the early 1990s.

Moreover, the famed Columbia High School concert choir in that district, which used to perform great choral classics such as Handel's *Messiah* and *Judas Maccabaeus* (which deals with an ancient Jewish hero), is now limited to mediocre generic seasonal tunes like "Winter Wonderland" and "Frosty the Snowman." (nypost.com, 11-19-04)(See Focus on p. 3 for

other examples of Christmas censorship.)

Even American historical documents that mention God have raised controversy. A California 5th-grade teacher filed a federal lawsuit in November challenging his principal's ban on his use of handouts with excerpts from the Declaration of Independence, "The Right of the Colonists" by Samuel Adams, the 1682 "Frame of Government of Pennsylvania" by William Penn, and George Washington's prayer journal.

Steven J. Williams, an evangelical Christian, is represented by Alliance Defense Fund in his suit against the Cupertino district. "It's a fact of American history that our founders were religious men, and to hide this fact from young 5th-graders in the name of political correctness is outrageous and shameful," said his attorney, Terry Thompson. "The principal seems to be systematically censoring material that refers to Christianity and it is pure discrimination." (Reuters, 11-24-04)

California's Education Code allows "references to religion or references to or the use of religious literature . . . when such references or uses do not constitute instruction in religious principles . . . and when such references or uses are incidental to or illustrative of matters properly included in the course of study."

Tennessee's solution

The Cupertino problem probably could not arise in Tennessee, which passed a law in 1993 affirming that teachers in public schools may use historical documents that mention God. It specifically lists the following documents as permitted for classroom use and for posting in public school buildings:

(See *Censorship*, page 4)

Officials Overreact, Treating Children as Delinquents

Efforts to make schools and neighborhoods safer with police protection and disciplinary codes can result in bizarre overreactions. Recent incidents of criminalization or excessive punishment of child's play include:

- Miami police used a Taser stun gun to shock a 6-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl within weeks of each other last fall. The boy was threatening to injure himself with a shard of glass. The girl was skipping school and apparently drunk when she ran away from a police officer escorting her back to school. (Associated Press, 11-14-04, 11-12-04)
- A 5-year-old St. Louis charter school student was handcuffed by police at the request of the principal, who wanted to teach the unruly boy a lesson. (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 12-15-04)
- Two north Florida 1st-graders were arrested after fights in separate incidents in October and September. An 8-year-old, 70-pound 1st-grader was handcuffed after reportedly punching and slapping a 10-

year-old boy, whose mother called police.

He was charged with misdemeanor battery and criminal mischief and taken to a juvenile center. A 7-year-old was arrested at school for allegedly fighting another student, hitting a teacher and scratching a police officer. (Associated Press, 10-6-04)

- A Colorado 7th-grader was charged with misdemeanor disorderly conduct following a shoving match last May with a Hispanic student who allegedly harassed him in Spanish for almost a month before. Neither student was injured and no charges were made against the Hispanic student. (Associated Press, 9-29-04)

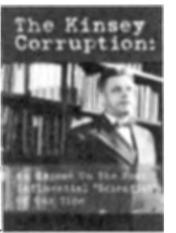
- An 11-year-old California girl was suspended from her school for doing cartwheels and handstands during lunchtime. School officials, who had warned her to stop, said gymnastics on the playground are unsafe. Her parents plan to homeschool until they find a more "reasonable" school. (Local6com, 11-12-04)

(See *Officials*, page 4)

Book of the Month



The Kinsey Corruption: An Exposé on the Most Influential "Scientist" of Our Time, Susan Brinkmann, Ascension Press, 2004, 79 pp.



This is a deeply disturbing book. Essentially a summary of a more detailed examination of Alfred Kinsey by Dr. Judith Reisman, it was released in time to counter the new film "Kinsey" which lionizes the controversial sex researcher.

Kinsey's sex research at Indiana University from the late 1930s to the mid-1950s fathered the sexual revolution, led to changes in the law of sex crimes and pornography, was cited in the *Roe v. Wade* decision, and spawned the sex education industry. The Kinsey Institute he founded lives on at the university. Yet his methods and his personal life were repulsive and his statistics were specious. Today, his exploitation of children for his "research" would probably land him in prison.

This book documents that behind the façade of a family man, Kinsey approved of wife-swapping and kept up a double life as a bisexual with an interest in boys. He engaged in compulsive genital self-mutilation which may have contributed to his death. He presented surveys relying on large numbers of prison inmates and prostitutes as representative of the American population. He pressured his staff to perform sex acts, some adulterous, on film. He employed no trained statistician.

Worse, he used serial child rapists and molesters as long-term sources without reporting them to the authorities. His infamous "Table 34" reported round-the-clock data on the sexual response of infants and young boys, including a report of 26 "climaxes" in 24 hours by a 4-year-old and a 13-year-old. The book quotes one unnamed victim who recalled being abused by her father at the age of four — his watch and a Kinsey questionnaire at the ready — and having to meet with Kinsey to discuss her experiences.

Such an abhorrent history did not stop the Kinsey Institute from reprinting Kinsey's two big studies on male and female sexuality in 1998. The American Legislative Exchange Council, with a membership of 2,400 state legislators, recently concluded that Kinsey's work presents "evidence of illegal and criminal acts masquerading as science."

Virtually all American sex education other than strict abstinence programs is Kinsey-based, according to Dr. Reisman, because of the network of training and accreditation started by the Kinsey Institute.

This short paperback is repetitive and derivative, but packs a punch. To order, visit www.CatholicOutreach.com or call 888-488-6789.

FOCUS: Public Schools and the ACLU Play Scrooge This Christmas

By Don Feder



In Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge wishes that "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart."



Don Feder

Scrooge would make the perfect public-school bureaucrat — except he'd insist on calling it a *holiday pudding*, playing "Winter Wonderland" as background music, and doing it all in the name of inclusiveness, sensitivity, and church-state separation.

In the latest manifestation of what Rabbi Daniel Lapin of Toward Tradition calls "secular fundamentalism," the South Orange/Mapplewood, NJ school district has banned playing the *instrumental music* Christmas carols.

In the early 1990s, the district prohibited the singing of Christmas carols. However, in an embarrassing oversight, bands continued to play "Silent Night" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

Such gross insensitivity and incipient theocracy shall cease forthwith, the district's superintendent decreed. From now on, the 40-member Columbia High School brass ensemble will be restricted to uplifting numbers like "Frosty the Snowman," according to the *Newark Star-Ledger*.

Furthermore, an October 29 directive provides that printed programs for holiday concerts "must avoid graphics which refer to the holidays, such as Christmas trees and dreidels." In the South Orange/Mapplewood school district, they celebrate generic "holiday." Even under torture, they won't disclose more than that.

The public schools have become a major battleground in the war on Christmas ("Lookout, Santa, incoming!") and, by extension, Christianity. Last year, a kindergartener at a school near Portland, OR was told he couldn't bring cards with a religious message to a school Christmas party. When a teacher noticed that little Justin Cortez's cards contained the dreaded J-word (Jesus), she confiscated the offending items and forwarded them to the principal who sent them to the superintendent. Thus was the school's secularist early-warning system activated.

The New York City school system allows menorahs and Islamic symbols in holiday displays, but not nativity scenes. Christians thereby are excluded from inclusiveness, presumably in the name of sensitivity.

In 2002, the mother of a student in the Del Mar Union School District in San

Diego was told she could no longer read a Christmas book to her child's 4th-grade class. Also, at the Sage Canyon School, teachers were ordered to remove jewelry with a Christmas theme. First a flashing Santa pin, then a state church.

- Same year, instructors at an elementary school in Sacramento were told not to use the word "Christmas" in the classroom or in written material. A la 1984, in public education, Christmas has become the un-holiday.

- In Yonkers, NY, public school employees were ordered to purge holiday decorations with religious themes. Silent-Night sanitizing?

- According to Rev. Jerry Falwell, a New Jersey middle school cancelled a field trip to attend a performance of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. One supposes there was a fear the Ghost of Christmas Past would cause mass conversions — or worse.

- When a school displays a modicum of common sense here, secularist vigilantes threaten dire consequences. Last year, the Elbert County Charter School in Elizabeth, CO had a holiday program that included such proselytizing anthems as "Jingle Bells." The ACLU and Anti-Defamation League threatened to sue unless the program was cleansed. A joint letter from the censors to the principal claimed, "Jewish students no longer feel safe or welcome" at the school. Islamist pogroms are going on across Europe, but in Colorado Jewish kids are threatened by jingle all the way.

"Since at least 9 out of 10 taxpayers are Christians, they foot the bill for a public education system on a search-and-destroy mission against even the mildest expressions of their holidays."

The ADL/ACLU letter demanded that the Elbert County Charter School "take immediate steps to comply with the constitutional separation of church and state."

Even if the First Amendment required the separation of government and religion (it doesn't), no federal court has ever held that Christmas carols, Christmas decorations, Christmas cards, Christmas books, or Christmas greetings constitute a violation of the Establishment Clause.

The closest the judiciary has come to a ruling which might affect public-school Christmas celebrations is the Three-Reindeer Rule, in which the Supreme Court held that there must be a sufficient number of secular items in a Christmas display to allow religious symbols (crèches and menorahs) to pass constitutional muster.

Back in New Jersey, South Orange/Mapplewood Schools Superintendent Peter P. Horoschak explained the rationale behind the new policy: "Rather than try to respond to all the various religions and

try to balance them, it's best to stay away from that and simply have a non-religious tone to them and have more of a seasonal tone."

There it is. If we can't provide equal time for every religion on earth (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, you-name-it), there can be no reference to — or musical suggestion of — the holiday that's celebrated by 96% of the American people (and many people who are not professing Christians).

When liberals can't use their convenient misinterpretation of the First Amendment (reading church-state separation into the Establishment Clause), their fallback position is multiculturalism, inclusiveness and sensitivity.

Little Omar will feel excluded by trees with tinsel. Myron may fear the onset of another Crusade if he hears the strains of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" drifting through the hallways.

But this hyper-sensitivity to religious minorities requires gross insensitivity to America's majority religion. You know, the one that begins with a "C."

Since at least 9 out of 10 taxpayers are Christians, they foot the bill for a public education system on a search-and-destroy mission against even the mildest expressions of their holidays.

America was founded by Christians and based on Judeo-Christian values. The signers of the Declaration of Independence and drafters of the Constitution were Christians — not Buddhists, or Wiccans, or Zoroastrians. Were it not for Protestant Christianity, we wouldn't have limited government, separation of powers, a Bill of Rights, or religious tolerance. In short, without Christians, the United States of America would not exist.

Even in an age when traditional religion is driven underground, our currency still says "One nation under God" — not one nation under Allah, or Shiva, or Buddha. On January 22, like all of his predecessors, George W. Bush will take the oath of office on a Bible that tells the story of

the Nativity.

The brave men who fought and died for America in every war from the Revolution to Iraq, overwhelmingly were Christians. Count the number of crosses in Arlington National Cemetery (on federal property, no less). Add the Stars of David. Now compare them to the number of crescents.

Yet in a nation founded by Christians on Christian values, defended by Christians from Bunker Hill to Falluja, primarily populated by Christians, and whose public institutions are financed by Christians, most references to the holiday that celebrates the birth of the founder of Christianity have been expunged.

This isn't just a war over Jingle Bells and holly wreaths, but a war on Christianity, which in turn is a war on the Judeo-Christian ethic.

The public schools are busy inculcating other values: humanism, environmentalism, internationalism, multiculturalism, sexual anarchy, and New Age spirituality. In California schools, there's even mandatory instruction on the tenets of Islam, including I'm-a-Moslem role-playing.

Reference to America's Judeo-Christian roots would interfere with the ongoing liberal re-ordering of our society — which, ultimately, will neither be jolly nor result in peace on Earth and good will toward men.

Now, if I had my way, every public school administrator who banned Christmas carols, Christmas decorations, etc., would be boiled with their own anti-Christmas directives and buried with a rolled-up copy of the latest ACLU newsletter through their hearts.

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Alabamians (Continued from page 1)

to effectuate the state constitution's guarantee of "a basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools." That decision marked the second time the state's funding formula has been struck down since 1989. (*Education Week*, 11-17-04)

Kentucky is still in court 16 years after the first decision there. A 1981 lawsuit filed against New Jersey was decided four years later but has returned to the court nine times since, including in 2004. "Courts have moved from broad principles to micromanagement, telling schools how much money to spend and where — right down to the correct computer or textbook," *The Economist* reports.

Texas litigation update

However, the relation between school spending and student performance is extremely tenuous. In the ongoing litigation concerning the adequacy of Texas public education, George Mason University public policy professor David Armor recently testified that family background, not school spending, has the greatest effect on student performance.

After adjusting for family income and English skills, "Texas has one of the best-performing educational systems in the nation," he told the court. "People expect us to eliminate this [performance] gap when it's caused by something that schools have no control over." (*statesman.com*, 9-13-04)

In a separate development concerning Texas school funding litigation, a study by Harvard economist Caroline M.

Hoxby has concluded that a 10-year attempt by education finance lawyers to reduce per-pupil spending disparities in Texas schools by means of a so-called "Robin Hood" scheme has produced a smaller spending gap but also resulted in the destruction of an estimated \$81 billion worth of property wealth.

The soon-to-be-abandoned Texas program involved the forced redistribution of about \$30 billion annually in school property taxes, taking from so-called "property-rich" districts and giving to "property-poor" districts. Hoxby's analysis shows the plan did not succeed in equalizing per-pupil spending throughout Texas, although it did reduce the gap between the highest-spending quartile and the lowest-spending quartile from about \$2,000 to \$1,500 per pupil.

That \$500 reduction was achieved at a cost of \$27,000 per pupil in property value destruction across the state. This destruction resulted from increased property taxes in the wealthier districts, which depressed real estate values, leading inevitably to additional tax increases (and further declines in real estate values) as revenues fell short of projections.

"Good intentions about redistribution are not enough in school finance: understanding the economics is important too," write Hoxby and Ilyana Kuziemko in their July 2004 report, "Robin Hood and His Not-So-Merry Plan: Capitalization and the Self-Destruction of Texas' School Finance Equalization Plan." 🍎

AP Courses (Continued from page 1)

earn a score of at least 3 out of a possible 5. Colleges generally require at least a 3 to award credit for the course.

Some selective colleges have recently raised their requirements for awarding credit, such as requiring a score of 5. Harvard College now requires a 5 on four

AP tests for a student to graduate in three years instead of four.

Some prestigious private high schools have opted out of the AP program, asserting that they can offer more rigorous or flexible courses outside of the program. (*Wall Street Journal*, 11-23-04) 🍎

Censorship (Continued from page 2)

- 1) the national motto
- 2) the national anthem
- 3) the Pledge of Allegiance
- 4) the Constitution of Tennessee
- 5) the Declaration of Independence
- 6) the writings, speeches, documents and proclamations of the founders, presidents of the United States, or the founders or governors of Tennessee
- 7) opinions of the United States and Tennessee Supreme Courts
- 8) acts of the United States Congress and acts of the Tennessee General Assembly.

Even service academy e-mail is being censored for religious content. Air Force Academy officials took action twice last year to crack down on religious references in e-mails by cadets and staffers. In March, they admonished cadets for using academy e-mail to encourage people to see Mel Gibson's movie "The Passion of the Christ." In the fall, the Air Force Academy prohibited the practice by some staffers of putting Bible verses at the bottom of their e-mails. (*Associated Press*, 11-19-04) 🍎

Officials (Continued from page 2)

'Zero tolerance' strikes again

• A 10-year-old Philadelphia girl was placed in handcuffs and taken to a police station because she took a pair of scissors to her elementary school. School district officials said the 4th-grader did not threaten anyone but violated a state law that considers scissors to be potential weapons. Police officers decided the girl hadn't committed a crime and let her go. However, she was suspended from school

for five days and administrators will decide at a hearing whether she may return to class or be expelled to a disciplinary school. (*Associated Press*, 12-12-04) Officials later apologized for the handcuffing.

• A teenage Civil War buff in New York was suspended for 21 days and charged with a misdemeanor after his replica musket was spotted in his car trunk at school along with the rest of his costume for a battle re-enactment. Police were called,

Pro-Bush Student Attacked at School

Days after the November presidential election, three Minnesota students were charged in connection with a vicious assault on a 17-year-old classmate who had participated in an argument about the Bush-Kerry race. The assailants hit the victim in the face, including with a baseball bat, and kicked him. One boy had a padlock wrapped around his finger, according to a student who tried to protect the victim.

Both the victim and his rescuer were Bush supporters. The attackers were apparently Kerry supporters. The assault

took place on a zoo parking lot near the Apple Valley magnet School of Environmental Studies, also known as the "zoo school."



President Bush

The suspects fled by the time police arrived. The juvenile with the bat was charged with felony second-degree assault and the other two received lesser charges. (*St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 11-10-04)

Gay Agenda (Continued from page 1)

tion have issued "practical" guidelines to help school officials deal with legal issues involving students' sexual orientation and gender identity.

Boys in dresses

On a question about cross-dressing, the guide states: "A restriction on boys' wearing dresses to school would be appropriate in communities where such attire on males would result in substantial disruption of the learning process, but in other locales, cross dressing might actually be more socially acceptable and cause minimal disruption in school, making such a restriction less legally justifiable."



The guide continues, "Schools with sex-specific dress codes could consider making a narrow exception for transgender students — students who are biologically of one gender, but psychologically identify with the opposite gender." (*CNSNews.com*, 10-13-04)

One small-town school in east Texas actually held an official "cross-dressing day" on November 17. After prodding by Liberty Legal Institute, Spurger Elementary agreed to exempt two children from attendance based on their parents' moral convictions, as Texas law requires.

An Iowa parent has questioned the appropriateness of a book read to 6th-graders in which one of the four main characters is gay. The objection is being considered by a special committee and the school board in the Pleasant Valley School District.

A pastor spoke in support of the parent at a November open forum about the book, *The Misfits* by James Howe, which he described as having a homosexual overtone. "It would be one thing to have the book in the library," said Mike

Fendley. "The issue is it is being read to students." He explained that he has no problem with the book being used at the high school level, but he believes parents should be notified of its use in elementary and junior high school. (*qctimes.com*, 11-26-04)

T-shirt battles

Pro-gay and anti-gay T-shirts continue to kindle disputes under school dress codes. The ACLU filed suit November 23 against a Webb City, MO school district for prohibiting a 16-year-old from wearing gay-pride T-shirts to school. School officials assert the shirts are disruptive, and have sent other students home who wore homemade gay-pride shirts in support of the first student. The mother of one of them expressed support for the school's position, saying "I would have never let her wear that shirt to school." (*Associated Press*, 12-5-04)

A student pulled out of class for wearing an anti-gay T-shirt has pressed a federal lawsuit against officials of Poway High School in the San Diego, CA area. The youth acted in response to a "Day of Silence" observed by some students in support of the rights of gays and lesbians. The Alliance Defense Fund took up the student's case and predicts it will wind up in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. (*SignOnSanDiego.com*, 11-6-04)

In a strange case involving a lesbian public school teacher, a 7th-grade language arts instructor in South Haven, MI has been accused of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old former female student, participating in witchcraft and even "wedding" her in a pagan ritual. The teacher, who has been placed on leave from her job, lived with another woman and their adopted son prior to her arraignment. If convicted, she faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. (*Associated Press*, 12-4-04) 🍎

the student was handcuffed and he was charged with criminal possession of a weapon. The Pine Bush high school had recruited students to take part in the re-enactors club. (*Associated Press*, 10-13-04)

• An 8-year-old New Jersey boy who used an L-shaped piece of paper in a game of "cops and robbers" at recess spent five hours in police custody and had to make two court appearances before charges were dropped.

• Tiny plastic toy guns led to suspensions of five young boys in Alabama and Georgia. Toy guns were the grounds for arrest of two elementary-school students in Florida and Alabama.

• A 12-year-old Louisiana boy was arrested for making a terrorist threat after telling students ahead of him in the lunch line to leave some potatoes or "I'm going to get you." He spent two weeks in jail awaiting a hearing. (*nationalreview.com*, 9-8-04) 🍎