

Choice, charter schools and the disappearing american dream pt. 1

How the "CHOICE" Fix Won't Fix Common Core

Is There Such A Thing As A Parallel School System? Looking at the plans puzzling together for a Trump Presidency, education is front and foremost on many parents' minds. Parent warriors have become concerned to the point of being totally stressed over the appointment of billionaire Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education. Why is this?

President-Elect Trump promised a vision of life without Common Core—

- A day of looking forward to our kids not being manipulated with the behavioral conditioning processes of teacher-trained Skinnerian techniques;
- A day without government data mining our children and inputting their private behavioral data over to the Feds.

Is our battle over yet? Can we rest assured that Donald Trump will keep his promise to rid our schools of all of the Common Core baggage? Are solid academics on the horizon, again?

Unfortunately this just doesn't seem to be happening. President-Elect Trump has jumped off the TRUMP TRAIN and he has jumped on the phony CHOICE TRAIN. Keep in mind that Vice President-Elect Mike Pence is a pro-"CHOICE" Governor, and he muffled the true spirit of academic freedom by cleverly rebranding the Common Core standards in Indiana:

"Indiana governor Mike Pence has made a serious miscalculation on what could easily become the sleeper issue of the 2016 presidential campaign, Common Core. After dramatically

withdrawing Indiana from participation in Common Core, Pence was poised to become a hero to the grassroots movement resisting this egregious bid for federal control of America's traditionally independent and locally run education system. Instead, Pence has created the illusion of quality and independence, while installing second-rate standards that are little more than Common Core rebranded." [Source]

And on the charter school "CHOICE" agenda Governor Pence has pushed charters:

"But Pence has a robust record on the issue. As governor, he pushed through the most significant increase in charter school funding in years, according to Chalkbeat Indiana. Pence worked with the legislature to create a \$10 million grant fund that would offer an extra \$500 per student to charters that post better outcomes than traditional public schools. And if Pence had his way, the funding would have been even more robust—he initially pitched a \$1,500 per charter school student increase." [Source]

Since the election, every new word coming from our President-Elect is beginning to sound a bit too familiar. It reminds us of the Senator Ted Cruz S 306 legislation that we parents fought when Sen. Ted Cruz was running for President against the TRUMP TRAIN. Not quite the words we wanted to hear from Mr. Trump. This sort of government-sponsored CHOICE sticks in our throats because we know the outcome—more oppression over our children and more Common Core for ALL. [Source]

Do we want this kind of "CHOICE"?? No! This is a false CHOICE, and it is not the pathway that will lead our children to educational excellence. Phony CHOICE is not the answer to American exceptionalism. Government-controlled CHOICE is globalism, not Americanism. That scrap of money tied to the child will determine future ambitions and pathways. It is linked to the government's similarly aligned obsession to create "human capital" – i.e., the government determining the

worth or worthlessness of your child as a commodity in the future workforce. Do elected officials realize just how offensive this is to America's parents? Our children are not "human capital"!

This sort of government-controlled CHOICE is a trap, Mr. Trump. "CHOICE" is a pretty cozy word that assumes freedom. Little do parents understand the tentacles of federal strings that accompany federal assistance. Or, maybe they haven't thought of it in those terms. But, yes, CHOICE is accepting federal assistance. And with that comes the "Have To's", where all children, parents, teachers, and schools will be forced into the federal government's obsession with domineering over the lives of our little children.

Many advocates of this CHOICE appear to think that killing public education is OK. Betsy DeVos, President-Elect Trump's new pick for Secretary of Education, thinks so. "Detroit Public Schools, she argued, should simply be shut down and the system turned over to charters, or the tax dollars given to parents in the form of vouchers to attend private schools." [Source]

She believes that our public schools are an

"...antiquated, top-down model of education in this country that originated in the 1800s in order to "educate the masses."

And her CHOICE:

"is beginning to transform to a student-centric model that respects every child's unique learning style." [Source]

Well, isn't this interesting. This is the exact personification of COMMON CORE! ESSA, The Every Student Succeeds Act passed by Congress this past year, legislated this and more. Every child must meet Common Core standards, with digital individualized career plans and diagnostic supports that will help Johnny and Suzy attain government-

determined “proficiency” in collectivist style mental health and globalist attitudes, values, beliefs, and dispositions.

But this isn't why the citizens voted for you, Mr. Trump. We want you to STOP COMMON CORE!

Pending Education Secretary DeVos also explains her views that “Educational choice is an essential part of the solution to our nation’s education challenges, including the greater issue of education inequality in America. The idea that no child should be defined or limited by his or her ZIP code or family’s income is deeply rooted in our movement’s commitment to social justice. Every parent should be free to choose the best educational environment for their children and low-income and minority children are too often the ones without choice. The only way to truly improve and innovate our nation’s system and help these students is through educational choice. The public is recognizing that true choice will break open our nation’s closed education system, encouraging innovation and education entrepreneurs to develop new ways for children to learn and reach their full potential.” [All emphases added]

DeVos’s version of CHOICE will certainly “break open,” or better defined, “smash down” the public school system. Is the destruction of local public schools what American citizens voted for? The biggest problem with this DeVos thinking is that Common Core does not allow or encourage academic attainment, nor opportunity for advancement. If her CHOICE is initiated, Common Core remains – because of ESSA. Didn’t we all just vote to get RID of Common Core?

Here is how it will work. DeVos’s fake CHOICE will saddle every school with Common Core that forces individual children to have an individualized personal “plan” to meet those government standards, no matter which ZIP code or school they will attend. And this is the ominous end goal for little Johnny or Susie. It is a new way to learn, but it isn’t

academics. Social justice is equated with "individuality," giving way to the forced struggle for "equity" and molding children into cookie-cutter drones. Inequality in ZIP CODES sounds like re-distribution of wealth, with CHOICE being wielded as the useful tool to get American education nationalized. But that also means a leveling of wealthy ZIP codes to be the same of the inner city. Now, that's equality. That's what socialized CHOICE looks like, and this is what Betsy DeVos is all about!

But is this what President-Elect Trump is all about? Is anyone honestly talking to him about the direful impacts of her freedom-diminishing sort of CHOICE? To date there has been NO discussion of the effects of this CHOICE for every child, not to mention the dreadful longterm effects this will have on communities, taxes, local control, and the market value of local homes and properties.

Common Core + Government CHOICE ? true freedom of choice. It is a pending disaster...the disappearing American dream.

Others driving the CHOO-CHOO CHOICE Train

Jeb Bush announced that the DeVos pick was "outstanding...a passionate change agent to press for a new education vision." Of course he would say that. She is Chairwoman of the American Federation for Children (AFC), a charter school promotion group, and she is also a board member of Bush's non-profit Foundation for Excellence in Education (FEE). Bush and his foundation have served as champions for the Common Core standards. [Source]

Oh course, "low energy" Jeb's vision is totally Common Core, artificial CHOICE, and pro-charter schools. When Jeb served as Governor of Florida he was a prominent supporter of the individual data-mining performed on children, with Florida becoming the national model for the collection of personally identifiable information of children. Jeb is also a leader in

the change agent/Common Core enablers. His connections, plus his opinion of DeVos for Secretary of Education, give him an inside track to legislation and a soft welcoming chair in future Secretary DeVos's office. [Source]

Congressman Messer (R-IN), who introduced the Scholarships for Kids Act in 2014, is also a CHOICE enabler. Congressman Messer's bill is the companion to the bill introduced by Senator Lamar Alexander, who is Republican Chairman on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and formerly served as Secretary of Education under President George H.W. Bush.

Senator Alexander, along with Speaker Paul Ryan, pushed through the Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind called ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act, which codified the Common Core/mental health agenda nationally, effectually making President Obama's Flexibility Waivers law, thus further diluting a real academic education. Note how Senator Alexander stated this about the 2014 Scholarship for Kids Act:

"This is the most ambitious proposal ever to use federal dollars to enable states to expand school choice, and is a real answer to inequality in America, giving more children more opportunity to attend a better school. I look forward to working with Congressman Messer to get this bill through Congress and signed into law." [Emp. added.]

Of additional concern,

The Scholarship for Kids Act, introduced in the Senate by Senator Lamar Alexander and in the House of Representatives by Rep. Luke Messer, would re-direct existing federal education funding (Title I) to provide up to 11 million scholarships for low-income children. The scholarships created under this bill would follow K-12 low-income children as they attend either the public or private school of their parents' choice. The money for these scholarships, up to \$24 billion a year, would

come from existing funds directed towards schools, meaning no new spending and no funds cut from education. [All emphases added] [SOURCE]

Readers, notice that the money goes directly to schools, bypassing state legislatures' budgets. This is a states' rights question for sure. The Messer/Alexander bill actually allotted more money than President-Elect Trump's proposed \$20 billion for "CHOICE". Also remember that Rob Goad, aide to Rep. Messer, has been tapped by the Trump campaign to advance this same CHOICE agenda. This pile of money may grow. The Scholarship Act has not been passed but shows the direction of this sort of CHOICE thinking.

The Messer bill aligns to Senator Ted Cruz's bill to include homeschools. Let's look at what the Messer proposed bill would also require: state Common Core standards and tests, provides that parents are able to use that money to pay for private school tuition and fees, supplement their public school or charter school budget, attend a school outside of their district or purchase tutoring services or homeschooling materials. It further

Requires participating states and their local educational agencies to continue to: (1) work toward state academic content and achievement standards; (2) conduct annual assessments of student progress toward those standards; and (3) issue annual report cards of student progress, disaggregated by specified student subgroups, toward those standards.

"No child should have to go to a school where they won't have a meaningful chance to learn," said Congressman Luke Messer. "This bill empowers parents with the personal freedom to choose the best learning environment for their child regardless of income. Quality education is the great equalizer in the game of life, and bills like this one, which offer parents a choice, level the playing field."

Questions for Congressman Messer:

- Has Congressman Messer ever explained to taxpayers what “leveling the playing field” means?
- Has he explained to school board members and homeowners that pay taxes for public schools how this is a massive redistribution of wealth?
- Has he explained that with his fake CHOICE, Title I CHILDREN are not just poor children, and that SCHOOL WIDE encompasses the entire school to have access to CHOICE not just certain poor children?
- Has he explained how the exodus of children out of public schools will eventually kill public education and destroy local districts?
- Will he admit that teachers will no longer be hired by the local school district?
- Will he try to evade questions about the apparent coming dissolution of elected school boards?
- Has he answered penetrating citizen questions about how taxes would be collected and where they would be sent when local neighborhood schools collapse?
- Has he addressed the terrible effects this will have on property values when the playing field is leveled, wealth is redistributed, and equity becomes the commitment to social justice agenda of changing the complexion of your entire ZIP code?

I don't think so. So what is this CHOICE all about? Is it about the change necessary to end representative government to move toward globalism? I fear so. . . .

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