

# EDUCATION REPORTER

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## Transgender Issues: Political and Emotional

A Houston-area mother who claims to be an evangelical Christian and an ordained minister is in a fight with the suburban Pearland Independent School District of Texas. She is upset about policies that require her biologically male child to use the boys' bathroom in a kindergarten classroom or to use a single stall bathroom in the nurse's office. She is upset because her student isn't allowed to use the girls' bathroom.

Kimberley Shappley claims her five-year-old kindergartener is her daughter, although the child was born a male. It is unknown whether there is a father actively involved in the child's life or whether the child has seen a psychologist.

Shappley says the child named Kai exhibited female behavioral traits by the age of two; at that time she put away the toys made for boys, replaced them with traditionally female toys and allowed the child to dress as a girl, including growing long hair and having ears pierced for wearing earrings. Shappley says she tried everything to make her child be a boy, including time outs and corporal punishment. She says that the child screamed when it was time for a haircut. (*Houston Chronicle*, 8-10-16)

The mother pleads for her child, as she did at a school board meeting in August, in a widely viewed video created by a group called Equality Texas. The professional video provided to news organizations and seen in dozens of news reports, in whole or in part, shows an emotional mother pleading her case. The

video has the words "Equality Texas" in the bottom right corner.

The Equality Texas website states: "We envision a Texas where lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Texans and their families have full equality in the hearts and minds of our fellow Texans and in all areas of the law." Their mission statement includes LGBT education, political action, community organizing, and collaboration. Some of the supporters with whom they collaborate are: Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal, ACLU, Texas Stonewall Democratic Caucus, Texas Gay-Straight Alliance Network, and the Gender and Sexuality Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

This is a well-funded organization with heavy hitters on their team. They found a mom who could tell her story as *their* story, and as *they* want it told.

### Inclusiveness vs. Privacy

Legislators, school boards, parents, and others who believe that students have a right to privacy and that children of different sexes shouldn't unclothe together or sleep together in the same rooms on overnight field trips are portrayed as villains in the story as told by Kimberley Shappley. They are accused of causing transgender individuals to suffer indignities or even to commit suicide.

The logical and most often offered solution to the problem is separate areas

for transgender individuals. But this is unacceptable to activists because they believe it creates a "differentness" that sets the transgender student apart.

A transgender student in Gloucester County, Virginia, who according to a lower court ruling would have been allowed access to the bathroom of choice, was denied the win by the Supreme Court in August. "Acting on a 5-3 vote, the justices put on hold a groundbreaking court ruling requiring a Virginia school district to accommodate a transgender high school student's request to use the boys' bathroom." According to experts, this means the Supreme Court "is highly likely to grapple with the issue of transgender bathrooms in its coming term." (*Politico.com*, 8-3-16) Twenty-three states have joined North Carolina in suing the Obama administration over interpretation of federal civil rights laws regarding school bathrooms and other private spaces.

Obama's Department of Justice and the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights have tried to force schools to accept full transgender inclusion, threatening withdrawal of federal funds. They base their claims on Title IX violations, even though that regulation is about actual biological sex and making certain that females have equal rights at schools. Nothing in Title IX addresses transgenderism. They also claim there are civil rights violations involved when rules require transgender students to use

separate facilities or those of their biological sex.

Parents, teachers, schools, and districts are trying to cope with regulations and threats coming from many directions. For the most part, issues about so-called transgender students haven't been addressed by elected officials. Edicts are coming from the executive branch and rulings are being made by courts. Many say this runs counter to Constitutional government.

Since final decisions will likely be played out in the Supreme Court, it is vitally important that the right person is appointed to that court to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. It must be noted that this is the same way that abortion and gay marriage became the "law of the land." When radicals can't get their way because citizens oppose them, they go through back doors, bypassing voters. The Supreme Court imposes the opinion of nine judges on the nation.

North Carolina has been ground zero for transgender activism as the governor and legislators sought to maintain order by not allowing the city of Charlotte to enact laws that gave special rights to transgender people, affecting all students at public schools. The governor's campaign for re-election is at stake over House Bill 2; he is behind in polls because he sought to protect students.

Decisions about transgender ac-

(See *Transgender Issues*, page 4)

## Facing Homeschool Legal Hurdles

As more and more parents choose homeschooling, support apparatus for those who want to educate their children at home is increasingly available.

Homeschool laws vary from state to state, and sometimes within a state, and bureaucrats often don't understand the law. The result is that families can "get in trouble for doing exactly what government officials told them to do."

There are organizations to help parents who need support, including legal support. The Homeschool Legal Defense Association offers members free legal representation if the government tries to interfere in a family homeschool plan.

Such was the case when an Ohio family moved to Connecticut. One month after their move, the newly arrived Connecticut homeschooling family received calls from Ohio public schools, demanding proof that Connecticut officials had approved the family's homeschool plan and proof of purchase of curriculum. The family was threatened with truancy (by a state in which they no longer resided) if

documentation wasn't provided.

Since the family had joined the Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), they were assisted in facing down the bureaucracy. An HSLDA attorney "informed the Ohio school district that Connecticut law did not give schools authority to 'approve' homeschooling, and that the family did not have to provide evidence of their curriculum to withdraw."

An official with the Ohio school thanked the attorney for explaining Connecticut law, said the troublesome attendance officer was new to the job, and assured him that the family wouldn't receive further calls or threats.

### Ohio Mother Convicted

Another family faced criminal charges for missing a deadline they were originally told didn't exist. The Ohio family withdrew a child from public school in January of 2015. When they received notice that the public school had been marking their child absent

(See *Homeschool Legal Hurdles*, page 4)

## Finding Homeschool Fun!

Homeschool support systems are available to encourage parents and students, and to make learning more fun.

Read Aloud Revival provides an opportunity to learn how to focus a family on reading together and individually, and to find appropriate literature to read.

Sarah Mackenzie, creator of Read Aloud Revival, is a mom to six children who range in age from toddlers to teenagers. Her website is [AmongstLovelyThings.com](http://AmongstLovelyThings.com). There, homeschoolers and others will find Sarah's blog, her booklists, and links to her every-other-week podcasts. One of her goals is "to equip and inspire parents to connect with their kids through stories."

The podcasts are events that offer interaction among authors and illustrators of children's books, parents, and young readers. Whether participatory or listened to later, the interviews are a delight for parents, teachers, and youngsters. Their popularity is proven by one and a

half million downloads.

The most recent podcast is a discussion with Melissa Sweet, the author of

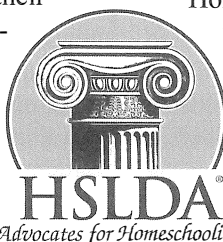
*Some Writer! The Story of E.B. White*. White is the author of such children's classics as *Charlotte's Web*, *Stuart Little*, and *The Trumpet of the Swan*.

Sarah Mackenzie also offers free monthly booklists on various subjects. Just

sign up for her emails or check out the lists available at the website. The most recent list provided is picture books with a Thanksgiving theme and includes *Sharing the Bread*, *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie*, and *An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving*.

Another popular and valuable list is "Series Books that Will Turn Your Struggling Reader into a Voracious Reader." Series suggestions include *The Boxcar Children*, *A-Z Mysteries*, *Calvin and Hobbes*, and *Encyclopedia Brown*.

(See *Homeschool Fun*, page 4)



## EDUCATION BRIEFS

**A University of Michigan Ann Arbor student has chosen to be referred to as "His Majesty."** Such is Grant Strobl's reaction to university administrators' effort to promote "gender fluidity," announcing a new campus-wide policy that allows students to select their own "designated personal pronoun," regardless of biology or reality. (TheCollegeFix.com, 9-28-16)

**A student has filed a \$1 million lawsuit against a Memphis, TN, Catholic all-boys high school that would not allow him to bring another boy as his dance date.** Lance Sanderson tried to force the school to allow him to bring a same-sex date to the homecoming dance by getting media publicity and through an online petition. Since this failed and the school prohibited the "gay" date, he now blames Christian Brothers High School for causing him to "suffer severe injuries and damages which include, but are not limited to disability, past and future emotional distress, past and future medical expenses, and personal care services." (LifeSiteNews.com, 9-29-16)

**James Charles is CoverGirl makeup's first male representative.** The "cover boy" is a high school senior with a wide following who watch his makeup tutorials on YouTube. Advertising will feature James in eye and skin makeup. He says, "I truly hope that this shows that anyone and everyone can wear makeup and can do anything if you work hard." (Time, 10-11-16)

**Texas Christian University, a private college in Fort Worth, TX, offers students an internship at Planned Parenthood.** The college defends their having arranged for a student to volunteer at the facility as an historian by claiming to "provide diverse learning opportunities for students to effectively prepare them for the global community." (Star-Telegram, 9-2-16)

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## South African Students Demand Free Education, No Real Science

Several of the largest South African universities have had to suspend classes over the past several months because of student protests that began almost a year ago. As some students attempted to return to class at University of the Witwatersrand on October 10, others entered classrooms and disrupted learning. Then violence erupted on campus and law enforcement was called. "Protesters demanding free tuition threw rocks at the police, who fired rubber-coated bullets and used tear gas and stun grenades to control the crowds."

*Newsweek* says, "University tuition fees have become a flashpoint for protests in South Africa, which has struggled to provide education, jobs, and housing for many poor black people since the end of apartheid in 1994." The article continues, "The protests highlight an ingrained frustration at enduring inequalities more than two decades after the end of apartheid." Students "say the increased tuition makes it particularly hard for black students, who tend to come from less-privileged backgrounds than white students, to attend college." (*Newsweek*, 10-11-16)

In September, the South African government recommended tuition increases of no more than 8% for 2017, no increases for "some categories of needy students," and that student subsidies for those from low-income backgrounds will continue.

Student protestors found this unacceptable and the next day violence erupted at the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Cape Town, and students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal marched in Pietermaritzburg city.

Earlier in September, "32 students were arrested after a law library at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was torched following protests over tuition fees."

### Origins of Discontent

There was campus unrest in the African nation even before tuition became the focus. A *New York Times* report says that in March of 2015, "a student at the University of Cape Town threw excrement at a statue of Cecil Rhodes, the British imperialist who donated land to the university, giving birth to a movement called "Rhodes Must Fall." The University of Cape Town was soon overrun with protests and rallies, and students

even occupied buildings. Less than 25% of students and professors at this prestigious South African university are black, and this is one cause of unrest.

Soon there were protests at Stellenbosch University and then at the University of the Witwatersrand. When the need for tuition hikes was announced, the protests accelerated and many campuses were closed due to ongoing riots. (*New York Times*, 9-22-16)

### Rejecting 'Western' Science

Another complaint has arisen among leftist South African students: Science. Some believe "Western Science" should not be the focus because it is racist and black magic should be taught to students instead.

According to *Reason* magazine, "Students at the University of Cape Town in South Africa brought some interesting concerns before the science faculty this week: namely, they think science as it is currently understood must be abolished."

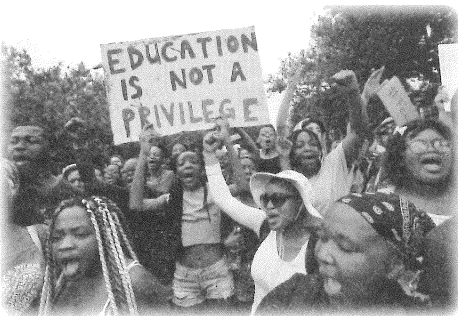
They are serious. And they got members of the science faculty to attend their meeting and listen to their demands.

One of the student panelists said, "The whole thing should be scratched off, especially in Africa." The students who believe that modern scientific understanding is too Eurocentric are known as "fallists" and they use the hashtag #ScienceMustFall.

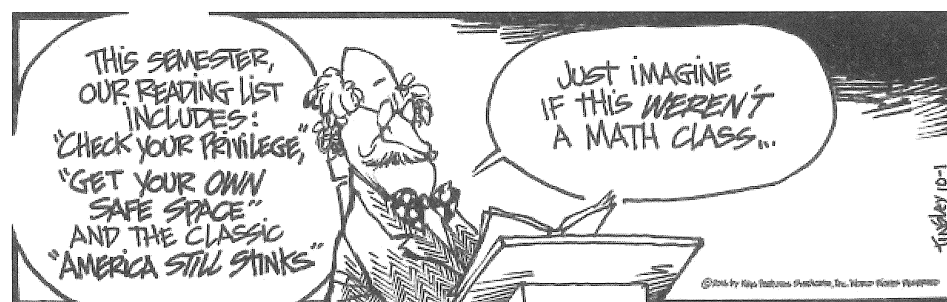
One panelist demanded to know why "science" should be any more respected than black magic or witchcraft that can cause an individual to be struck by lightning. She said, "Can you explain that scientifically because it's something that happens?"

Members of the audience snickered and laughed. But they were quickly reprimanded and shushed. The leader of the student panel asked the audience to apologize and to "understand the rules," as she turned and pointed to a list written on a blackboard. Any audience member not choosing to abide by the rules of the "safe space" should "remove yourself from this space." She said about those who snickered that what they were "trying to do is collapse the space and make it antagonizing." (*Reason*, 10-14-16)

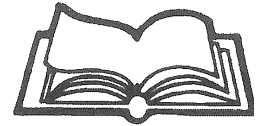
It's unknown whether the #Science-MustFall gang believes this collapsing of space is a black magic or a Western scientific principle.



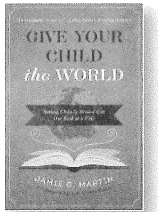
## MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley



## Book of the Month



**Give Your Child the World: Raising Globally Minded Kids One Book at a Time**, Jamie C. Martin, Zondervan, 2016, \$16.99



*Give Your Child the World* is a resource that directs parents and teachers to books about world cultures. The author wrote it so that even without traveling, children can make their way around the globe. This is not a "multicultural" book that denigrates the U.S. in favor of other cultures; instead, it's a resource for children to learn about and appreciate a varied and beautiful planet.

The book is divided into regions: Africa, Europe, Asia, Middle East, North America, Latin America, and a section including Australia and the Polar regions.

Jamie Martin includes lifestyle suggestions, like prioritizing family dinners to enjoy ethnic foods, studying a different country each month, and discussing current events. But the main way Martin suggests learning about the world is through stories. She says, "With nothing more than a library card, you are ready to foster a lifelong love of the world in your family."

According to the author, reading these sorts of books helps children develop compassion, good character, understanding of language, the struggles between right and wrong, and more.

Most of the recommended books are fiction, with some non-fiction sprinkled in.

In the general multicultural section, an example for children ages 4-6 is *Bread, Bread, Bread*, which is a "global tour of bread."

In the Africa section, Martin's first suggestion for ages 8-10 is *African Critters*, a journey with a *National Geographic* wildlife photographer.

The European section includes *Katie Meets the Impressionists*, an art book for ages 6-8.

Asia selections include *Homesick*, a fictional story about a young American living in China in the 1920s, and longing for home.

One suggestion for ages 8-10 in the Middle East region is *Snow in Jerusalem*, about two children living in the Jewish and Muslim Quarters, respectively, and how they are brought together by a stray cat in a snowstorm. For such books, Martin gives parents notice that "religious beliefs are mentioned."

Ages 10-12 should enjoy the story of the first black Indian Territory U.S. Marshall, *Bad News for Outlaws*, in the North American section.

In the Latin American section for ages 10-12, a young student's cousin shows up from Mexico. When they are assigned to the same classroom, together they delve into their unfamiliar heritage.

This book is a teaching resource that would take years to compile, and still likely wouldn't be this lovely and complete.

# FOCUS: Are Your Kids Getting a Daily Dose of News Propaganda with Their Common Core?

'Tasty morsels of progressive propaganda for unwary little minds.'

by Ashley Thorne

Originally published at *PJ Media Parenting* ([pjmedia.com](http://pjmedia.com)) on September 14, 2016. Reprinted with permission.

Many public schools are now assigning their students children's versions of newspaper articles through a new company called Newsela. Newsela takes articles from outlets such as the *Washington Post* and Associated Press, rewrites each one to fit five reading levels, and publishes them online.

The "ELA" part of Newsela's name evokes the "English Language Arts" component of the Common Core State Standards, which has established national teaching norms for K-12 schools. One of the core characteristics of the Common Core is its emphasis on "informational texts" — its term for nonfiction. Thus, non-fiction texts take primacy over literature and stories in the English Language Arts world of Common Core.

News is the informational text par excellence. The creators of Newsela found an opportunity to profit from the Common Core standards by adapting news to the classroom and selling it to schools as "Common Core-aligned." It offers grade-appropriate versions of newspaper articles as reading exercises, coupled with four-question quizzes to test or assess students' comprehension.

While this may seem a useful teaching tool, not everyone thinks of it favorably.

## A Liberal Slant?

Leslie Wilson, the mother of a seventh-grader said by email that she is concerned that "the articles seem — to me at least — to consistently reinforce a very leftist political view." She said that for example, "an article about returning the Elgin marbles to Greece quoted a variety of supporters of that view, but did not offer any viewpoint from the British Museum or other informed/interested party for keeping the marbles where they are." The mother also said she believed that the material was of a poor quality and that her daughter had found two factual errors in them.

Do Newsela articles consistently reinforce a leftist point of view? A scan of its daily offerings would suggest this, but the articles were originally published by professional, mainstream media, so the political slant reflects the original source's as well as Newsela's own bias:

- Newspapers such as *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, and AP, from which Newsela articles come, already lean left.
  - Newsela cherry-picks the news in such a way as to emphasize ideas sympathetic to progressivism.
- Many of Newsela's articles are

PBS-type material about animals, sports, science, and popular culture. Headlines from recent weeks include:

"Slow, sleepy sloths lead a relaxed life"

"McDonald's to change what it's made of, removes unhealthy ingredients"

"Popular 'Pokemon Go' game has been banned in Iran"

"Newly discovered planet may support life, scientists say"

But when Newsela chooses articles with an ideological flavor, that flavor is distinctly progressive. It abounds with articles that sound the alarm on global warming, pollution, or animal extinction ("The role of climate change in the Louisiana floods"); praise President Obama ("President Obama is protecting more water off the coast of Hawaii"); or focus on racial and ethnic grievances ("Indian tribe sues over river damage").

How does a Newsela version of an article compare with the original? The company's article "A career as a costumed mouse? Not just for Disney World anymore" is the "1020L level" version of the September 6 *Washington Post* article "Japan is so crazy about mascots that 'fluffy toilet character' is a real job."

The 1020L rating is matched to 7th graders. Newsela's reading levels correspond to the Lexile Framework for Reading, which bills itself as "the gold standard for college and career readiness." The highest Newsela level is labeled "MAX" and is the unaltered text of the original article. Second graders read articles around the 400L-450L level, such as "To many people, 'The Star-Spangled Banner' is more than just a song."

The 1020L level article about careers as Japanese mascots differs from its *Washington Post* original in a few small ways:

- Vocabulary is simplified. For example, it says "goofed around" instead of "bumbled around."
- Vulgarity is scrubbed. The *Post* article mentions a mascot name formed from a mashup of Japanese and English words that ends up sounding like the f-word. The Newsela version edits out this paragraph.
- Derogatory descriptions are deleted. Newsela purges the description of one interviewee as "a short, round 35-year-old with a lisp." The only detail it keeps is his age.
- Generally the 1020L article retains the ideas of the full article but in fewer words. It appears that Newsela never changes the quotes it keeps.

Of course, the lower the reading level, the greater the tendency to oversimplify.

An article, "Future climate change doesn't make Earth greener," from

AP serves as an example for comparison.

Opening paragraphs, AP (Associated Press):

In the course of a 17-year experiment on more than 1 million plants, scientists put future global warming to a real world test — growing California flowers and grasslands with extra heat, carbon dioxide and nitrogen to mimic a not-so-distant, hotter future.

The results, simulating a post-2050 world, aren't pretty. And they contradict those who insist that because plants like carbon dioxide — the main heat-trapping gas spewed by the burning of fossil fuels — climate change isn't so bad, and will result in a greener Earth.

Opening paragraphs, Newsela 580L (5th grade level):

Scientists in California know it will be even hotter in many years. They want to know what will happen to plants. They are growing many different plants. They are using extra heat, carbon dioxide and nitrogen.

They hope the elements will create an environment that is like the world in the year 2050. The scientists want to see how the plants react. So far, the future does not look good.

The scientists have been doing this for 17 years. They are creating the changes that come from global warming. The scientists say it is like having a time machine to look ahead.

While the AP article already takes global warming as a given, the 5th-grade level version is even more explicitly partisan. It reads more as a predetermined judgment than as impartial reporting.

## Who's Driving Newsela

Newsela got a kick-start in 2015 with a \$15 million infusion from venture capitalists such as Kleiner Perkins and Zuckerberg Education Ventures, the investment fund of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. Another funder was the Miami-based Knight Foundation, which in 2013 apologized for paying an honorarium to a journalist for the *New Yorker* who had resigned in scandal after admitting to plagiarism and fabrication. The Knight Foundation was created "to promote excellence in journalism."

The founder and CEO of Newsela is Matthew Gross. He has dedicated his career to the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, beginning with the Race to the Top competition. He worked for Education Secretary John King, Jr. while King was New York State Education Commissioner. Gross is also a professional fundraiser who raised over

\$9 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and other heavy hitters whose dollars enabled the Common Core to steamroll its way into states.

## Teaching the News

Newsela boasts that "more than 800,000 educators around the world" pay for its services, and that students have read more than 97 million of its articles. Gross and his company are capitalizing on schools being shackled to the Common Core State Standards — and the company's powerful funders have a vested interest in Common Core continuing to be

the dominant educational regime in the nation. But as a number of states are voting to repeal Common Core and withdraw from tests aligned with it, schools' demand for Newsela may dwindle.

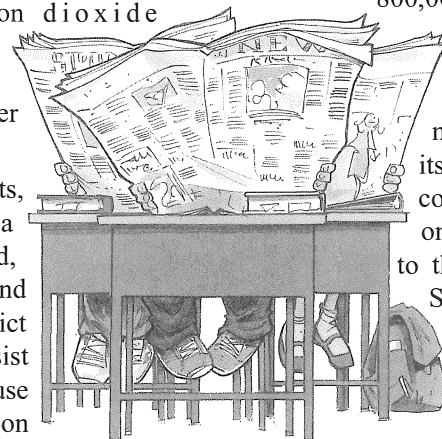
Children should learn at a young age to read and understand the news. Young people have always been less apt to read the news than their elders, but the rise of social media has meant that newspaper reading is in sharp decline across all age groups. Cultivating familiarity with written news could help raise up citizens who know and care about the world around them.

Newsela, however, brings not just news but bite-size bias: tasty morsels of progressive propaganda for unwary little minds. As a company, Newsela has unseemly ties to the U.S. Department of Education and the Common Core machine. Newsela currently has no viable competitor, though some publications, such as *Time Magazine* and *Smithsonian*, each have their own kid versions.

Parents and teachers who have noticed Newsela's bias have valid concerns. Perhaps the only way to counter the one-sidedness in those articles is for parents to read the news with their children and talk about it at home.

As for Newsela in the curriculum, one reason it is popular with schools is that it is well packaged and presented, minimizing extra work for teachers. Like Advanced Placement courses which stand in need of alternative choices, Newsela could use some healthy competition. Until then, as the Common Core's afterglow fades away, Newsela may need to find a new way to market itself.

*Ashley Thorne is executive director of the National Association of Scholars. She writes frequently about issues in higher education at [www.nas.org](http://www.nas.org). She received her master's degree in linguistics from the CUNY Graduate Center in 2014, and her undergraduate degree in politics, philosophy, and economics from The King's College in 2007.*





## Transgender Issues *(Continued from page 1)*

commodations are on hold in the state until until courts make determinations, but that didn't stop radicals in North Carolina from reeducating teachers about gender. When students returned to school this fall in Mecklenburg County, which includes Charlotte, North Carolina, teachers were given instructions to no longer call children "boys" or "girls." They are to be referred to using non-gendered terms, like "students" or "scholars." Perhaps most disturbing about the teachers' training is that they were directed to sometimes leave parents out of the loop. The instructions say: "Involvement of parents in the plan is determined in working with the student, considering the student's age and health, wellbeing, and safety concerns."

### An End to Sex Segregation

For years the left has worked to sexualize children with sex education. Now they want to do away with all gender barriers. Some see this as part of the continuing assault on traditional family life. Consider the recent analysis by *New York Times* opinion contributor Judith Shulevitz. On October 15, she wrote a *Times* article titled, "Is it Time to Desegregate the Sexes?"

Shulevitz writes:

The new gloss on sex was announced in May by the Departments of Education and Justice in a 'Dear Colleague' letter to schools that presented the change as a clarification of existing law, not a rule. The letter explained that students may change their gender identity simply by notifying the school administration, no doctor's note required. After that, students may use the bathrooms, locker rooms, dormitories, and school-trip

hotel rooms that correspond to their chosen gender. A transgender girl may go to the girls' sex-ed class, and vice versa. The guidelines largely extend to sports teams as well. Students unhappy with the situation may request private spaces. A school that doesn't comply could lose its federal funding.

Shulevitz, a former senior editor at *The New Republic*, points out some sticky points in what the federal government is demanding. One is that there are lawsuits pending against school districts that force opposite sexes to share spaces when undressed. Another issue is the discrimination against students that happens when there is sexual vagueness. She says, "In defining sex so expansively, the agencies may have walked themselves into a legal contradiction. Title IX has also been interpreted as saying that schools must not tolerate a 'hostile environment' that makes girls feel threatened and could impede their education." It doesn't get much more hostile than forcing children and teenagers to share facilities with members of the opposite sex while unclothed.

Stating that the concerns of young people can't be dismissed as "mere intolerance," Shulevitz says, "Religious pluralism requires accommodation of the demure as well as the less inhibited."

The *New York Times* opinion piece also recognizes problems the feds' intervention poses for those who hope to see girls have "equal educational opportunities." It's the same sticky and unfair situation that arises whenever any one group is allowed to have more rights than another, something leftists don't seem to understand. Shulevitz uses special math

classes set up only for female students as an example. As it is written, the "Dear Colleague" letter would make it imperative that males who identify as females be allowed access to those classes. Many believe special classes for females and other benefits made possible by Title IX were unfair to male students in the beginning, and that they remain so.

Shulevitz says, "The characterization of sex as 'internal sense of gender' is already spreading throughout federal agencies' anti-discrimination policies." She suggests two "ways to resolve the conflict between transgender rights and privacy interests," as regulators and judges apply this new definition of sex.

One pathway is a change in "architecture." Shulevitz says that "society could . . . segregate everyone from everyone else." This would involve individual bathrooms, private shower stalls, and separate one-person hotel accommodations on overnight field trips. Sounds expensive.

Shulevitz's other suggestion is more

startling and might offer insight into what progressives are actually trying to



facilitate. She says, "Perhaps it's time to retire the notion of two sexes." As far as implementation of this, the *New York Times* contributor suggests the way to achieve this "would be to stop teaching the sexes to hide their bodies from each other." Shulevitz says, "Give it a generation, and the divvying-up of the sexes may seem as bizarre as racial segregation does now."

## Homeschool Legal Hurdles *(Continued from page 1)*

from school for six weeks due to a paperwork error over an end-of-the-year assessment, the boy's mother called the school to inform them that the assessment would be completed quickly. She then submitted the child's assessment, on which he scored 97%. But there was no stopping the bureaucracy. This situation ended in a court case that was tried before a magistrate.

According to HSLDA:

At the trial, the mother testified extensively about her decision to homeschool, her conversation with school officials, her son's summer-school program, and his stellar assessment results. The magistrate decided to convict her anyway, sentencing her to the full penalty available under the law: 180 days in jail (although those sentences were suspended provided that the mother attend truancy classes with her child — which she did).

HSLDA filed a lengthy list of objections, and in September a court overturned the magistrate's ruling "that the mother be convicted of contributing to the delinquency of her child, noting specifically that the child had been continu-

ously educated at home even while her paperwork was outstanding." But the mother was convicted of another crime: "failure to send a child to school." Although less serious, this is still a criminal misdemeanor.

HSLDA says: "Thanks to the support and contributions of our 80,000 member families across the country, as well as the generous friends of homeschooling who give to the Homeschool Freedom Fund, we plan to appeal this decision for as long as it takes to protect the legal rights of this family — and to send a message that homeschooling families cannot be prosecuted for crimes they did not commit."

It costs \$120 a year for a family to join HSLDA (five years for \$100/year), with discounts offered for some homeschool groups, for pastors and missionaries, and for active, retired, or disabled military. Families should join before they have legal problems in order to be defended by the organization.

Donations to the Homeschool Freedom Fund are tax-deductible.

General homeschooling information and detailed information for each state is available at HSLDA.org.

## Homeschool Fun *(Continued from page 1)*

Along with the free list of book series, Mackenzie offers tips to help make reluctant students into readers. These are the steps Mackenzie suggests following, using as an example a boy child whose parents or teacher start with the *Nate the Great* series:

1. Read the first book aloud, and when he expresses displeasure at the book coming to an end, deliver the good news: there are more mysteries that Nate the Great solves!
2. Purchase the second book in the series. By purchasing it, you ensure that library due dates aren't rushing you or your child through this process. Hand *Nate the Great* #2 to your child and tell him that you won't be reading this one aloud, but he can probably read much of it on his own.
3. Encourage him to read it while you're nearby (perhaps cooking dinner or folding the laundry, so that you're available but not hovering).

Mackenzie stresses that these pleasurable reading sessions aren't phonics lessons. Parents should resist the temptation to answer questions about difficult words with "sound it out." Instead, simply tell your reader the word so the joy of reading can continue uninterrupted.

She says, "Your goal is to help your child want to read, so that there is significant intrinsic motivation to propel him through those tough moments of sounding words out!" She continues:

The most important thing is that you don't ruin the story by trying to

turn it into a lesson. Let your child love the story. Let the story love him back. The reading skill will come.

Sarah Mackenzie is endearing in that she claims to *not* be a "homeschool superstar." She says the key to her homeschooling success is peace of mind, claiming:

I am utterly convinced that homeschooling does not need to be rocket science or a slog. I'm confident that you and I have everything we need to do it well and with unshakable peace.

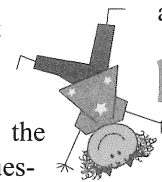
More about Mackenzie's homeschooling philosophy is found in her book, *Teaching From Rest: A Homeschooler's Guide to Unshakeable Peace*, as reviewed in the March 2016 *Education Reporter*.

With membership, which is offered a few times a year at \$14.95 a month, children would have the opportunity to ask questions during podcasts and parents can access master classes and PDF resources, as well as a member forum. Mackenzie

also offers community events on

various subjects and in various locations in the U.S. But there's a world of information available free — so everyone can afford Amongst the Lovely and the Read Aloud Revival.

*Editors note: When looking for and not finding books of interest at your local library, give the librarian the title and ask if the library might consider adding it to their collection. Most libraries are quite responsive to patron requests.*



Homeschooling