

Failing public schools call for vouchers

Senator's Stance



Michael Cohen

Recently, a debate over school vouchers has arisen in the Supreme Court.

In Cleveland, among other cities, parents can take advantage of a \$2,250 tax credit in order to send their children to a better public school, a private school, or a religious school.

Civil liberties advocates have argued that the voucher system violates the separation of church and state. So, on Feb. 20, the Supreme Court heard arguments both for and against the school voucher system in Cleveland. The Court will make a decision in the next few months, probably by September. It shouldn't take three months for the highest and most supreme court in this nation to decide whether or not school vouchers are Constitutional.

Although school voucher programs are in place throughout a number of other cities in the nation, the decision to come from the high court will have a huge impact on if those programs will continue and if more voucher systems will be initiated across the country.

Education is the most important part of democracy and children depend on an education for their future, so why do we have to wait three months for a decision that will decide the future of our nation and the future of our generation?

Yes, separation of church and state must be respected. However, if parents are upset with the current state of public education (which is not good) want to send their children to a religious school, they should be allowed to. As of right now, parents are not getting what they pay for. The parents should be able to take their money back and use it to send their children to a better school, whether it is religiously affiliated or not.

What is "separation of church and state" anyway? Our government has been subsidizing

students' education at religious schools for years and years. If families can't afford to send their kids to Boston College, Notre Dame, or Northwestern University (all three of which have

religious affiliations), the government will most likely give student aid in some form. In fact, if these schools ask for money from the government to continue a research

project, the government will most likely grant funds to the school, also.

What makes the separation of church and state even more complicated is the fact that on each one of the government academies has a place of worship

longer does the United States score high in math and science scores when ranked against the rest of the world. It is time for change.

And just like in the real world, if a company isn't turning out a quality product, consumers look elsewhere. If schools continue to be mediocre and don't turn out quality students, parents should be able to find

quality education for their children elsewhere.

With a nation that is so proud of its freedom and right to choose, how can a courts, interest groups, teachers unions, and political parties block the parents' right to choose what is best



that has been built by the government, using government funds. (The centerpiece of the Air Force Academy is its chapel.) So, opponents to school vouchers really don't have much of an argument.

If poor and middle-class families want to save their children from underachieving schools, they have every right to use government aid to get their children help.

Opponents to school vouchers say that the system will corrupt and ruin a public education system that is the backbone of democracy. But, in all reality, what is there to ruin? The public school system today is mediocre, at best. No

for their children. We all have the right to choose which religion to follow, we all the right to choose what career field to enter, women even have the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion; it is about time parents received the right to send their children to any school they want to. Somehow these hypocrites—the courts, interest groups, teachers unions, and political parties have controlled the debate so far and have kept choice away from parents.

They have succeeded in abandoning those poor, inner-city children and middle-class families, that they claim to represent, in America's "crumbling schools."

Parents, it is your turn to choose.

have a measure of control but at the same time your really don't.

I do miss home and my freedom but how many people 50 years from now can look back and say—"I was a part of how the U.S. responded after we were attacked September 11, I helped-I did my part to help people be able to sleep better at night?"

I want to leave here a better man-I don't know exactly when that will be yet but I'll stay as long as it takes to do the job and do it right.

So while I am proud, there is a flipside to the whole thing, just like every situation, there's negatives and positives.

You have to take the good with the bad.

-Joe Jordan
Class of 1998

Materialism overtakes American society

Random Notions



Ashley Foster

Materialism—the driving force behind corporate America...more is better, so a lot more is a lot better; and if you have more you are better.

Times have changed. Originally, America represented the notions of freedom and equality.

These days freedoms are put on trial and preduces in the land of the melting pot are not far beyond the corner.

In 1776 the Representatives of the United States of America

These precedents promised equality and individual freedom in a new society—untouched by the demons of a social caste system—opposed to the confinements and suppressions of the Old World.

Immigrants journeyed to America in the eighteen and nineteen hundreds in search of a nation that could provide the environment to fulfill the dreams that subsided in all of humanity.

There was plentiful land to be settled, plenty of money to be made, plenty of freedom and hapiness to be enjoyed.

These children grew up and used their education to pursue higher levels of employment than their predecesors.

It was during this time that the wholesome American Dream of freedom and equality became corrupted by modern-day materialism.

Generations to come would now have to depend more and more on education and technology, to become wealthy, desireable citizens of America.

The 1920s proved to be a time of great wealth and material accumulation. However, the dive of the stock market in 1929 put an end to many aspirations of materialistic wealth.

The American Dream has evolved over time, and as Americans we have adapted to its new criteria.

Instead of the blood sweat and tears that were once needed to aquire these dreams, today all that is needed is a little cold hard cash.

Dreams are presented on a silver platter with a receipt entailing the purchase.

No longer is a certain charisma needed, simple social status may ease these woes.

declared their right to live in free and independent states, released from all allegiance to the British Crown.

In effect, the American Dream of freedom and sovereignty was born. As time progressed the materialistic influence upon the American Dream became quite apparent.

The founding fathers of America based the precedent for life upon their ideals of democracy, liberty, conscience, and the pursuit of happiness.

“Originally, America represented the notions of freedom and equality. These days freedoms are put on trial and prejudices in the land of the melting pot are not far beyond the corner.”

Student voices concern over 'crisis plan'

When I read about the crisis plan in the school newspaper, I was pretty angry at how the school board plans to get their referendum passed.

The towns of Lake Villa and Lindenhurst don't have high schools and the school board wonders why their high school in Antioch is so overpopulated.

If the referendum is not passed, then the future students of Antioch Community High School will suffer the wrath.

For some eighty years, students have enjoyed representing their school in sports, music activities drama productions and the benefit of going

on field trips.

If all these activities are taken away, ACHS will not be an exciting learning environment any longer.

If those threats don't help pass the referendum, then future students will be also missing the benefits of summer school, after school, extra bus routes, low fees, and the enjoyment of having a clean school due to the lack of the great maintenance work that will be taken away.

The future students of ACHS deserve the great learning environment we have now, and I'm sure the school board can find a better solution that can save ACHS from being just another school.

-Steven Rosenquist
ACHS Senior

... to the Editor

ACHS alumnus performs patriotic duty overseas

Me and my brother arrived in Germany with our unit yesterday. The things they really wanted to stress to us were that; #1 we are doing something important as a part of Operation Enduring Freedom, #2 we are setting the standard as the first troops called to our area, #3 we're not going into combat zone but we still have a real threat out there.

Some of the things they've told us about what's going on over here have sobered us and woke us and woke us up.

We realize this isn't training anymore-it's a real world mission.

Making mistakes could be deadly. Knowing that makes you straighten up a lot more, pay attention to what's going on and do the right thing.

I was in the car today on my way to Heidelberg and I just thought to myself -it blows my mind how in three years I've gone from kicking it in your newspaper class, playing your football and chasing girls to trying to learn to communicate with people who speak antoher language and patrolling army occupied streets in the middle of Germany.

It's amazing how quickly your life changes and how you