

One Republican  
4 December 2002

### **Teach the Children Well**

Thanksgiving week Superintendent Steve Staples invited the public to visit York County schools in this paper. In other media Chuck Maranzano, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Williamsburg-James City County schools gushed about the 'sacred experience' they had putting up a totem pole at an elementary school. Two administrators, two statements, show the twin faces of our government schools.

The York Superintendent confidently welcomes you to visit the schools your taxes support – whether you have school age children or not. He is rightly proud. You should be, too. If you visit, you will see a new generation full of promise being taught by dedicated professionals. York and Poquoson schools are success stories.

This is the first year in 20 that I haven't been to a parent's night at school. What struck me the most on those nights was how the schools were structured for success. The average kid could get a great education if he just did what he is instructed to do. The bright kids can flourish. The troubled ones are treated as individuals. Failure is earned, not accidental.

As the tax receipts rise with the economy (up 10% from last year in September), our Republican General Assembly representatives would do well to honor their pay raise for teachers and other public servants. The pay raise candidate Warner promised, but Governor Warner didn't include in his budget, should be delivered by the Republican majority.

The W-JCC Executive Assistant illustrates the folly government schools engage in - by exception – here. Multi-cultural political correctness is bunk. The danger is a Liberal worldview imposed on children. Consider the small example of a totem pole for a school.

The totem pole was just a tourist magnet. A Northwest Indian culture religious symbol was used in Tidewater with enough tackiness to fetch the tourists. Placing it at a school as a holy icon with an Indian 'ceremony' to celebrate the 'spirits' is a mockery. Substitute 'Christian' in the media stories for the word 'Indian' and what would happen? The ceremony wouldn't have happened.

Why don't Liberals scream 'separation of church and state' at a pagan religious ceremony? Because their agenda is anti-U.S., anti-Western, anti-capitalist, anti-individual, and above all, anti-Christian. You really need to know what the schools teach and when they preach.

Thanksgiving and Christmas are two prime tests for politicizing schools. The guidelines for religious expression – accepted by the left and the right in amazing consensus – are at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) (click on 'guidelines'). This was the best thing to come out of the Clinton administrations.

A great resource for sharing those guidelines with teachers and administrators is to buy Thanksgiving, Christmas and other cards at Gateways to Better Education ([www.gtbe.org](http://www.gtbe.org)). You can order cards for every educator in a school as your gift of knowledge.

I served on the Multi-Cultural Committee for the Poquoson Long-Range Planning effort. I was so pleased that it was all about education and not indoctrination. There was

an initial outburst about banning evangelical Christian speech – called prayer – but the U.S. guidelines ended that complaint. The rest of our time we looked at a serious effort at second language instruction. Because resources are limited, only one language could be chosen. Spanish won. Not for goofy politics, but for practical reasons of developing children’s minds by teaching them another language – well and consistently – from an early age.

Let’s see if the implementation of our recommendations stays on the straight and narrow. It’s up to you, no one else, to know what is taught with your taxes. Only you can get your school board to have historically correct holidays. Begin by calling ‘Winter Holiday’ what is was, is and will be - ‘Christmas Vacation’.

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