



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

What Is the Alternative as Public Schools Degenerate?

Public schools are more left-wing indoctrination centers than educational facilities — as test scores attest — so since the schools cannot be fixed, what should parents do?

Horace Mann, the first secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, speaking in the first half of the 19th century, declared that public schools constituted “the greatest discovery ever made by man.” He added, “Let the common [public] school be expanded to its capabilities, let it be worked with the efficiency of which it is susceptible, and nine-tenths of the crimes in the penal code would become obsolete; the long catalogue of human ills would be abridged; men would walk more safely by day; every pillow would be more inviolable by night.”



Such utopian sentiments provoke laughter today, especially when one considers that a leading cause for the growing exodus from the public schools into various forms of private or home schooling is due to the dangerous environment — physical, academic, and moral — found in so many of America’s public schools.

As public schools continue their degeneration into increasingly physically unsafe conditions, mediocrity, leftist indoctrination, and anti-Christian bias, parents struggle to decide whether these government-run institutions can be salvaged, and if not, what is the best alternative for their children in terms of preparing them for life.

As we shall see, parents do have other options for their children. But first, let us look at why many parents have either taken their children out of the government schools, or are considering doing so.

FreedomProject ACADEMY
Classical School • Judeo-Christian • Live Online
1.800.807.7292 | [FPEUSA.ORG](#)



Secular Humanism: Established Religion of Public Schools

There are thousands of patriotic and Christian men and women teaching in the public schools. They care about their disciplines and the children in their charge. But it must be understood that the problems of the government schools are mostly systemic.

The reason is that secular humanism is the prevailing “religion,” even if not formally the “established religion,” of America’s public schools. This is clear from an examination of the various “Humanist Manifestos” produced over the years, including the first one of 1933, which was signed by John Dewey,



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

considered the father of “progressive education.” Dewey, an atheist and secular humanist, said the public schools were the institution through which social reform could take place, saying it was “the only sure method of social reconstruction.”

Dewey was a founder of the League for Industrial Democracy, an organization that itself was an outgrowth of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society. The student version of the league was known as Students for a Democratic Society, an organization that called anti-communism an obstruction to democracy.

The socialistic and atheistic themes of the first “Humanist Manifesto” were carried forth in the second “Humanist Manifesto” of 1973. In that document, signer John Dunphy echoed Dewey’s view that the public schools constituted the best means of advancing secular humanism. “I am convinced,” Dunphy said, “that the battle for humankind’s future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers that correctly perceive their role as proselytizers of a new faith.... The classroom must and will become an arena of conflict between the old and new — the rotting corpse of Christianity, together with all its adjacent evils and misery, and the new faith of humanism.”

As the late Sam Blumenfeld, perhaps the premier historian of the public-school movement in America, wrote for *The New American*, “Although the U.S. Constitution forbids the creation of a national establishment of religion, the closest we have come to the creation of such an establishment is that of Secular Humanism, the worldview philosophy that now governs the curriculum of our tax-funded public schools.”

What is the credo of this secular humanism that has displaced the Judeo-Christian model that until recently dominated American society, and that Blumenfeld contended is the “worldview philosophy that now governs the curriculum of our tax-funded public schools?”

The “Humanist Manifesto 2000” calls for a “global family,” while condemning what it calls “fundamentalist religions.” Instead, the document states, “The realities of the global society are such that only a new Planetary Humanism can provide meaningful directions of the future.”

As part and parcel of the humanist religion, the “Manifesto” states, “The opportunity for appropriate sexual education should be made available from an early age,” including instruction in “contraceptive techniques.” Also found in the “Manifesto” is a demand for the “theory of evolution and standards of ecology” to be studied.

“We need to develop a new human identity — membership in the planetary community,” the Manifesto demands, arguing that such views be an important part of the curriculum of every public school. And these humanists are prepared to combat any effort to oppose this leftist agenda.

It is logical that the public schools have degenerated into moral cesspools when one considers that God has been ejected from the classroom and that the teaching of immoral versions of sex education are taught there. With God removed from the equation, absolute truths have been replaced by situational ethics and secular humanism.

In Tulsa, Oklahoma, last year, a mother consented to a “field trip” for her daughter, only later to discover that the 16-year-old had been taken to a clinic where she received the Norplant contraceptive implant. According to interpretations of the Federal Title X, children as young as 12 are allowed to receive contraceptives without a parent’s consent.



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

Dr. Michael Ritze, a family physician and a member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, noted that Norplant can have several side effects, including strokes. “A school official cannot give a [minor] student an aspirin without the parent’s consent, but can take them out of school to get contraception,” Ritze added. Or even an abortion.

Ritze commented on what seems to be the morally bankrupt attitude of the government schools: “We know students are going to be promiscuous — like monkeys — so let them go out there and use a condom or other birth control or get an abortion if they get pregnant.”

Casey Polczynski, who lives in central Virginia, was shocked when her kindergarten daughter came home and said that she now wanted to marry her friend — also a girl — when she grows up. She told her mother, “My teachers said boys can marry boys and girls can marry girls.”

Academics Take a Back Seat to Secular Humanism

While the secular-progressives are determined to keep any Christian worldview out of the public schools, they are very aggressive in their desire to inject their own secular positions into the classroom, and into the minds of the students. Updated textbooks that promote the LGBTQ lifestyle are expected to be unveiled in the public schools of California this fall. Textbook publishers were told to either conform to California’s Fair Education Act, or lose out on the lucrative Golden State public-school textbook market.

And because of the clout California wields in this area, due to its large public-school student population and corresponding purchase of large numbers of textbooks, you can expect that these textbooks, which will lionize the “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer” lifestyle, will soon be in your local public school, as well.

What exactly will students in the public schools learn from these textbooks?

According to the Fair Education Act, California’s schoolchildren will learn about “diverse” families in the *second grade*, and eighth-graders will discuss “gender roles in the 19th century.” Finally, when students make it to their junior year in high school, their studies in history classes will include the LGBTQ “civil rights” movement.

Teachers will not be able to get by with just a passing mention of LGBTQ. Don Romesburg, an associate professor at Sonoma State University, who chairs the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies explained, “The scholars, LGBT advocates, educators, and students who were pushing for these changes wanted to make sure that there weren’t just *token mentions* of Harvey Milk and Stonewall in the 11th grade.” (Emphasis added.) Milk was a city supervisor in San Francisco who was murdered in 1978 by a disgruntled fired employee. The incident had nothing to do with Milk being an open, practicing homosexual, though his murder has been portrayed in that light; Mayor George Moscone was likewise murdered by the same ex-employee. Stonewall was the “gay bar” in New York City whose clientele fought back in the late 1960s during a police raid, thus marking the launching of the so-called gay rights movement.

Romesburg added, “We knew that, for both the sake of historical accuracy and for student education and school climate, it was important that all students learn about LGBT lives and history in *elementary*, through middle, and into high school.” (Emphasis added.)



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

Students will learn about LGBT community as a part of family diversity in the *second grade*.

“At this point,” Romesburg noted, “the California Department of Education has put itself on the leading edge of LGBT content in schools, and it [is] absolutely history-making and ground breaking. It’s light years ahead of where everyone else is at this point. And it will absolutely be a guide star for other states that want to bring their frameworks and curriculums into the 21st century.” While little children learn all the secular humanists want them to learn about LGBT, what about learning their ABC’s?

According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), which tested 600,000 fourth- and eighth-graders in 2015, only 36 percent of fourth-graders were rated at or above proficiency in reading. Eighth-graders were even worse, at 34 percent. Math scores were similar, with 40 percent of fourth-graders at or above proficiency in that subject, compared to a dismal 33 percent of eighth-graders. California schools, in particular, are atrocious, as journalist Alex Newman pointed out in his article “50 Percent of California Kids Can’t Read” in telling about the state’s reading scores:

The latest numbers from the California Department of Education tell a tragic tale. According to an analysis of the data by CALmatters, less than one fourth of black boys meet even the dumbed-down Common Core standards used by today’s government schools. More than half of them scored in the lowest possible category, suggesting they are unable to read even the most basic material.

Among Hispanic boys, less than a third met the dumbed-down government standards in English. And among whites, while the numbers are slightly better, more than 40 percent failed to meet even the basic standard. In every grade except 11th, less than 50 percent of students met the literacy standards, which again, are dumbed down to the extreme.

Where does this leave the teacher who holds to a biblical worldview? They will either teach as heroic what the Bible teaches as perversion, or they will be fired. And maybe even fined.

And not just in California. The secularists intend for this to come to your state and to your local public elementary school as well.

Public Schools Are Filled With Leftist Propaganda

Not only are teachers bullied who resist the secularist agenda, in some cases, students are verbally abused by secularist teaches determined to advance a radical agenda.

For example, James Coursey, a high-school philosophy teacher at Norman North High School in Oklahoma, recently stirred controversy when he told his class, “To be white is to be racist, period.”

Coursey, who is white, expanded on his theme. “Am I racist? And I say, yeah. I don’t want to be. It’s not like I choose to be a racist, but I do things because of the way I was raised.”

The teacher reportedly used a YouTube video about imperialism to make his point that all whites are racist. In the video, a man uses white-out on a globe as an illustration of the spread of European influence around the world.

One student at the school said the “all whites are racist” philosophy is a common theme at the school — and it is almost certain that students across the nation are subjected to such verbal floggings on a regular basis — in a public school supported by taxpayer dollars.

While white children are called names in Oklahoma and across the nation, parents and taxpayers in



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

New York State are furious about a lesson that “promotes Islam,” and whitewashes terrorism. And this is not just one isolated school district — the program was promoted by the New York State Department of Education for use in the classroom.

The right of Americans to keep and bear arms is also under assault in many public schools. Schools have suspended children for playing with Nerf guns on the school grounds, others for drawing a firearm, or even shaping their fingers as a gun and saying “bang!”

Conservative critics also charge that authors of the Advanced Placement (AP) American History standards have as their goal to indoctrinate students to take a favorable view of big government, as well as other important causes of the Left. The private (but federally subsidized) College Board is essentially developing a nationalized left-wing history curriculum.

AP American History classes, offered in high school, allow students an opportunity to obtain college credit without having to take the class in college and pay tuition — thus making the course enticing to cost-conscious parents. Larry Krieger, a retired AP history teacher, is considered the man most responsible for calling attention to how these tests are being used to promote a secular-progressive agenda.

After examining the new “framework” of the revised curriculum, he was shocked. He said the AP framework “ignores the philosophical underpinnings of the Declaration.” Reading the practice questions and the proposed “correct” answers, Krieger said it was obvious that the intent was to indoctrinate students into a liberal, big-government viewpoint. For example, he noted a question that showed an image of a family living in poverty conditions, in which the student was asked to give an interpretive response as to what should be done about it. The “correct” answer, according to the College Board, was, “Government should act to eliminate the worst abuses of industrial society.” A suggested answer, which was the “wrong” answer, according to the College Board was, “Capitalism free of government regulation would improve social conditions.”

Krieger and other conservative critics found similar problems with the revised AP European History tests.

Kids are essentially being propagandized to be believers in the secular-progressive agenda. They are not being taught to think critically, but rather are being propagandized into what to think, and automatically accept whatever they are told by these secular progressives. This is why no other viewpoint is allowed to even be heard by children on such topics as atheistic evolution and their propaganda on climate change. The schools are not going to teach Americanism, as defined by the Declaration of Independence — our Creator endowed us with certain rights and the purpose of government is to protect those rights. After all, it is considered “unconstitutional” to even teach that God exists.

Common Core: Nationalizing Education

Secular-progressives want to impose such viewpoints on all American children, not just those who take AP classes. The latest incarnation of this long-standing effort is the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), designed so that every school in the nation will teach the same secular-progressive viewpoint. Probably because they know that there is still powerful resistance to a nationalized curriculum, proponents of Common Core contend that the standards were created by the states themselves. They



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

usually give the example that the standards were written by the National Governors Association (NGA), and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The names of these two organizations certainly make it *sound* as if it is the states that are responsible for the standards, and not the federal government.

The truth, however, is very different.

ACHIEVE, a nonprofit organization, produced the Common Core standards for the NGA and the CCSSO. The president of ACHIEVE is Michael Cohen, who was once a staffer for Bill Clinton when Clinton was governor of Arkansas. The National Governors Association, despite its title, is not dedicated to state sovereignty. It is a private organization, funded by powerful corporate interests and individuals such as Bill Gates, the left-wing head of Microsoft.

The Constitution does not allow the federal government to mandate educational standards or curriculum. However, because the federal government appropriates money to the states for use in their public schools, the feds can threaten to cut off those funds if the states do not comply with federal requirements. With the national testing tied to the Common Core standards, Common Core is, in effect, a national curriculum.

Much has been written about the specifics of the Common Core standards. For example, the English Language Arts standards have drastically reduced the reading of literature, replacing classics with material such as industrial manuals. This pleases the corporate world that finances the NGA because they evidently believe it is more important to read instruction manuals than great works of literature. Those who have read George Orwell's classic dystopian novel *1984* might recall that the totalitarian government described in the story attempted to reduce vocabulary in order to "narrow the range of thought," and thus lessen the chance that the populace would rebel.

Writing in *On Liberty*, British philosopher John Stuart Mill said there was a systemic problem with public schools: "A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another."

Totalitarians have always seized control of the schools. Karl Marx, writing in *The Communist Manifesto*, listed government-controlled schools as one of his planks to achieve his dream of socialism. Not surprisingly, Hitler, Stalin, Castro, and other brutal dictators have always wanted control of education in the hands of the central government.

Arne Duncan, education secretary for President Barack Obama, was blunt when he spoke to UNESCO (the United Nations education agency) in 2010: "Today, education is a global public good unconstrained by national boundaries." He added, "I've said that America is now in the midst of a 'quiet revolution' in school reform. Before the 1960s, almost all policymaking and education funding was a state and local responsibility. The Obama administration has sought to fundamentally shift the federal role."

Can the Public Schools Be "Saved"?

Across the country, the secular humanists swing into action if their worldview's monopoly in the public schools is challenged. In Texas, a school nurse's aide was even ordered to take down a Charlie Brown Christmas poster. The principal called it a violation of church and state, and said it might offend kids from other religions or those who do not have a religion. In Georgia, when a kindergarten student asked the teacher what Christmas was about, and the teacher responded that it was "Jesus' birthday," the



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

teacher was reprimanded — at the instigation of the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

The Good News Clubs, a popular after-school Christian ministry for elementary kids, have even been challenged by “After School Satan Clubs” demanding “equal time.” Of course, no such equal time is provided during the school day, when a Christian kid is told that his religion is full of fables and myths. These so-called satanic groups generally do not believe in a literal devil, but use Satan “as a metaphor for fighting religious tyranny and oppression.”

Some, of course, argue that we should “take back the public schools,” rather than simply remove children from them. While political activity to improve the public schools can do some good at the margins, what should a family do in making decisions for their own kids? What can parents do who wish to protect their own children from being indoctrinated into a secular-progressive worldview?

Many well-intentioned conservatives and libertarians have embraced tax-funded vouchers for private schools as a solution. The idea seems appealing because some of the parents’ tax dollars can be used in a private school of their choosing. But this is playing with fire. The problem is that this could prove to be the “trojan horse” to bring government control over private schools. In Wisconsin, a state that has a voucher program for private schools known as Parental Choice Programs, the Wisconsin ESEA Flexibility Request reads, “All schools receiving state funds will be a part of the state accountability and support system.” In other words, programs such as Common Core will be imposed upon private schools in Wisconsin. If private schools are then just like public schools, what is the point?

Parents should also be aware that many private schools, secular or religious, often use the same textbooks as the public schools.

In other words, many private schools, including even many Christian and parochial schools, are just pale carbon copies of the public schools, with the exception that a religious class may be added in addition to the standard Common Core curricula. But there are also private schools that do offer a genuine alternative to public schools. And in addition to brick-and-mortar schools, there are also myriad homeschooling options.

FreedomProject Academy: A Fresh Alternative

One option we are particularly familiar with, and highly recommend, is [FreedomProject Academy](#) (FPA), which is affiliated with The John Birch Society, the parent organization behind The New American. FPA is a private, online K-12 school that does not accept any government funds. While not affiliated with any Christian denomination, the school has adopted a definite Judeo-Christian worldview.

Courses are delivered online through interactive classrooms to students around the world. The school is fully accredited, and it provides diplomas and transcripts. Founded in 2011, FreedomProject Academy offers a first-rate, classical education that acquaints students with great literature and the wisdom of the ages, including the principles of freedom that guided the Founding Fathers. According to its website, “FPA is happy to provide a fully accredited curriculum recognized for its authenticity and excellence, without any need to compromise our beliefs or high academic standards. FPA remains opposed to implementation of Common Core in public, private, and homeschool curricula, and will not tolerate it in our own classrooms.”

The online classes of FPA are in real time, with live teachers and student interaction, not recorded lessons. Students log in at specified times, have opportunities to ask questions, and are also called upon



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

during class.

FPA graduates have enrolled in higher education, have accepted internships, and have entered the workforce. They are prepared to compete academically at an extremely high level, bolstered by an education centered on civics, economics, writing, and math, and fortified by the Judeo-Christian values that are at the heart of the curriculum.

Dr. Duke Pesta, the academic director for FPA, told The New American, “Many kids who take our placement exams end up joining FPA after spending a few years in private schools, where parents become frustrated with the cost of tuition and imposition of Common Core in the classroom.” The placement exams, which are given at no charge, help FPA determine whether a student should be in, say, French I or French II. These tests are also utilized by many homeschooling families to monitor their children’s progress.

Pesta added that FPA partners with private schools, homeschools, co-ops, and churches, delivering “our teachers and curriculum into their local communities,” giving families a quality, yet affordable, education in safe spaces. He noted that “FPA’s reputation as a national leader in online K-12 education has provided a platform for us to offer national leadership in the fight against Common Core standards and the federalization of education. [FPA kids are] economically literate [and] schooled in the Constitution and founding documents. We are creating morally responsible, civic-minded thinkers, and we’re doing it without the help of the federal government.”

The reason that some parents are reluctant to homeschool their own children is that they feel educationally inadequate, especially as their children grow older and need specialized instruction in more advanced subjects. For these parents, FPA might very well be the solution.

And it is a safe bet that FPA will not be making use of history textbooks coming out of the California system of public schools.

This article originally appeared in the July 24, 2017 print edition of The New American.

 **FreedomProject ACADEMY**
Classical School • Judeo-Christian • Live Online
1.800.807.7292 | FPEUSA.ORG





Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 24, 2017

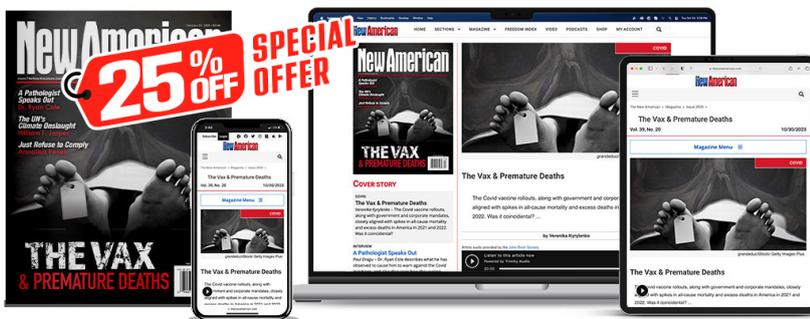
Published in the July 24, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 14

Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



[Subscribe](#)

What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.