Guess What's Going On In School!

May 16, 2001

While the education debate in Congress revolves around standards, testing, accountability and spending, 3,000 miles away on the Left Coast, very different factors have leapt to center stage.
Santa Rosa (CA) High School held a "Week of Diversity" on April 9-13 that included 82 presentations by outside speakers. The announcement letter sent to parents permitted them to opt out their children, but said the event was "essential to the exposure and understanding of important topics and teen issues not normally taught in our public school system."

However, the letter failed to mention a controversial assembly entitled "Sex and Stuff." Students who had been excused from the other presentations attended the assembly.

"Sex and Stuff" was a play presented by the San Marin High School Peer Counselors. According to parents who attended, the play depicted all the ills and sadness a high school student could ever experience, from sexual molestation to rape to unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection, anorexia, deaths from drunk driving, fights, and even suicide.

"Still worse," according to parent Orlean Koehle, "were the vulgar, inappropriate sex scenes, beginning with a very suggestive dance followed by a scene where a bra, undies, and nylons are thrown from behind a sheet. Another scene, by virtue of sound effects, was suggestive of sexual intercourse taking place behind the sheet."

Although the play occasionally contained a redeeming statement or line, these were "surrounded by such filth that only the filth is likely to be remembered." The teaching of abstinence included recommendations for alternative sex acts.

Some parents were so outraged at the school's failure to notify them about the assembly that they contacted the Pacific Justice Institute, which found the lack of notice in direct violation of California education code. PJI is now working with parents to help them assert their legal remedies and hold the school accountable.

Some parents, who opted their children out of the 82 presentations listed in the announcement, attended the classes themselves. Mrs. Koehle reported that at least half the classes were conducted by "an amazing lineup of leftist, radical, Marxist speakers."

Fourteen classes addressed gender, homophobia, and AIDS issues, all in support of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender ideology that these lifestyles are not a choice, but genetic, and that they are healthy and normal. The week-long agenda included more than 20 hours of pro-homosexual indoctrination and only one 50-minute presentation in opposition to the gay agenda.

Eleven classes espoused radical leftist ideology and causes. These included support for Communist Cuba, for guerrilla forces in Colombia, and for stopping "American Imperialism" imposed by greedy capitalist corporations. One class offered support for social change to make America like Cuba "where the government owns everything and gives it out equally to the people so there are no rich and no poor."

Seventeen classes supported leftist environmental causes, animal rights, or vegetarianism. Speakers from Amnesty International and the Sierra Club encouraged students to change their diets and become environmental activists.

Five classes were devoted to police bashing, including a video depicting police brutality and tales of alleged atrocities committed by the Santa Rosa police department. Students were encouraged to support a group called the Purple Berets and the ACLU in setting up a Citizens Review Board to monitor the police.

One class was conducted by militants representing the Midnight Special Law Firm. Students were given a three-page handout that warned, "Never trust the police," and included tips on how to engage in civil disobedience.

Two classes focused on making a "hate-free world." One presenter portrayed a person who expresses hatred as a believer in a "book" which she reads every morning, especially on Sunday, and which supposedly gives her the right to hate and to put down others.

Everyone understood what "book" the presenter was referring to. Christian students felt they were being accused of prejudice.

The California Education Code is really very pro-parent, but it was ignored by Diversity Week. Education Code 51554(b) requires written notification to parents prior to "instruction that involves presentations on sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, human sexuality, or family life delivered in an assembly."

Education Code 51553 states that, whenever sexual instruction is given in the public schools, abstinence must be stressed as "the only protection that is 100 percent effective against sexually transmitted diseases," that factual information must be "medically accurate and objective," and that the failure rate of condoms must be presented.

The code also requires instruction to "stress that pupils should abstain from sexual intercourse until they are ready for marriage," to "teach honor and respect for monogamous heterosexual marriage," and to inform students that "it is unlawful for males or females of any age to have sexual intercourse with males or females under the age of 18 years to whom they are not married."

Parents say that the class on the "book" violated Education Code 51500, which forbids public schools to "sponsor any activity which reflects adversely on persons because of their ... creed," and the classes on the police violated Education Code 60044, which prohibits "any matter reflecting adversely on persons because of their ... occupation."