from Phyllis Schlafly

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Michigan Senate Speaks Up for Parents

A state legislative committee set up to investigate a controversial curriculum used in Michigan's public schools has just issued a sensational report. It shreds the curriculum of all pretense of academic purpose, and it accuses the state education establishment of “educational tyranny” and a “shameful” attack on parents who criticized the curriculum.

In response to grassroots protests from all over the state, the Senate Select Committee to Study the “Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education” held 12 hearings attended by several thousand people, including hundreds of witnesses. The 53-page report, entitled “It's Not Kid-Friendly,” presents 30 Findings and makes 30 Recommendations.

The “Michigan Model,” consisting of 9 volumes, 2,5OO pages, covering 863 “student learning objective” for children aged 5 to 13, was first introduced into Michigan classrooms in 1984. Several million dollars from federal, state and local sources were funneled into the task of training the teachers, imposing the curriculum on every Michigan public school student, and circumventing parental opposition.

Much of the “Michigan Model” concerns traditional health topics such as brushing teeth and avoiding accidents, but 347 of it’s “learning objectives” deal with emotional and mental health, and those are what caused the controversy. According to the Senate report, top officials from the Michigan Departments of Education and Pub1ic Health used taxpayer funds to hold training sessions around the state to teach local school officials how to discredit parents who criticized the curriculum.

According to the report, “any parent or teacher who got in the way of implementing the Michigan Model was to be labeled as a right wing, fundamentalist Christian fanatic. The education establishment painted a picture of that person that would qualify as slander in any court of law.” The Committee recommends that the Michigan Attorney General and the U.S. Justice Department investigate to determine if parents, civil rights were violated.

Committee Chairman Sen. Gil DiNello summed up the underlying problem in his Preface to the report: “From the l-2 hearings we held around the state, it became clear that the social engineers stepped in to make the local school the surrogate parent. Their attitude was that the school was the venue where children should be equipped to deal with life/s situations, including such intimate areas as sexuality and social decision-making. Teachers were put in the unenviable role of having to cross these boundaries that were previously dominated by the family.”

The Committee found that, “because of mixed messages about pre-marital sex, Michigan Model lessons result sexual promiscuity.” The Senate committee found that efforts to curb teen pregnancies and teen abortions have actually been “hindered by Michigan Model lessons.”

The Committee recommends that “abstinence from pre-marital sexual activity should be the basis of sex education in our public schools.” In one of the most constructive recommendations heard yet on this volatile subject, the Committee recommends that teen fathers be charged with statutory rape, have their Social Security number put on their baby's birth certificate, and be required to support their children.

The Senate committee found that the Michigan Department of Education “appears to have obtained Federal Drug Free Schools funds under false pretenses,” and recommends an investigation to determine if laws were broken. The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act may actually be a national scandal ready to burst.

For several years, parents in many states have protested the way that federal funds have so lavishly flowed out of the U.S. Department of Education without compliance with the law's requirements. The General Accounting Office reported last year that the Drug Free Schools Act had by that time cost the taxpayers $1.1 billion with “impact unknown.”

The Senate committee investigating the Michigan Model even discovered that the state approved sex education video list “violated community standards.” The Committee recommends that parents have full access to videotapes used in c1ass.

The Senate committee even discovered that “boundaries between church and state were violated with New Age teachings.” The Committee recommends that public schools be held accountable so that they “do not endorse the religious teachings or practices of any religion.”

This Michigan legislative investigation proves that the public schools have, indeed, set themselves up as surrogate parent and that the schools display enormous hostility to any attempt by natural parents to retain their natural and constitutional rights. It's no wonder that, as the Senate committee reported, “public confidence in public education was being threatened in a massive way.”