



The Federal Choke-hold on Education

By [Alan Caruba](#) | 02/08/10 | 01:21 PM EDT | [0 Comments](#) [Tweet This](#)

I couldn't have known it at the time, but my generation that attended schools in the 1950s would be among the last to get an education that the federal government hadn't dictated or the United Nations had not infiltrated.

The education I received was intended to be primarily a function of local communities with oversight by the states. I often remind people that the word "education" does not appear in the Constitution as a function of the federal government because it was always a local responsibility.

As the school systems, especially in the urban centers of the nation, began to grow in size, various social reformers saw the schools as the perfect place to indoctrinate students. Compulsory schooling ensured that masses of young people would be imprisoned in classrooms for the purpose of turning them into productive citizens. The result was and is masses of bored young people.

Many of the innovations and inventions we take for granted were the result of people who did not attend or do well in school. Thomas Edison was sent home because he asked too many questions! He was home schooled after that and the result was countless inventions including the iconic electric light bulb.

The government has decreed that Edison's incandescent bulb cannot be purchased in the near future in the interest of energy conservation as opposed to actually allowing more power generation plants, coal-fired and nuclear, to be being built to meet the nation's needs.

If there is an idiotic "solution" to a non-problem, the government will find a way to make it mandatory.

One of the many bad ideas of the Carter administration was the creation of the U.S. Department of Education on October 17, 1979. Carter was and is a dolt. He installed solar panels on the roof of the White House which, when Ronald Reagan took office, were swiftly removed.

Let me be as blunt as I can. There is no need, nor ever was, for a federal Department of Education except as an instrument of the central government to control the curriculum of schools. This one-size-fits-all approach is totally contrary to what any teacher will tell you; children learn at different rates and each needs to have their particular skills and abilities encouraged.

Nat Hentoff, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, recently wrote of "Real Education Reform" in Free Inquiry magazine. He recalled being in the office of Tony Alverado, then head of the New York City school system (1987-1998), when the reading scores from standardized tests arrived. They were collectively higher, but Alverado asked, "When are we going to teach them how to think by themselves instead of just giving us just what the tests want?"

Almost any educator today would ask the same question. One of George W. Bush's greatest blunders was the implementation of No Child Left Behind, a pet project of the late Sen. Teddy Kennedy. The present

Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan is quoted by Hentoff calling NCLB “not education, since it is tied to bad tests with the wrong goal. The biggest problem is that it doesn’t encourage high learning standards.”

Why then is NCLB allowed to continue? The answer is federal control.

Karen R. Effrem, MD, the [EdWatch](#) Director of Government Relations, has sounded the alarm over a slick deal involving more good money thrown down the federal education rat hole. “Without the slightest bit of legislative discussion in either chamber, the Obama administration quietly slipped \$4.35 billion in education funding into the stimulus bill passed last year for a program called Race to the Top (RTTT).

“The federal government is using this program to bribe states to accept even more federal control of education, a constitutionally and traditionally state function.”

“RTTT is accomplishing more of that same federal control without having to go through the messy process of reauthorizing the controversial NCLB.”

Hidden within the stimulus bill, RTTT has NOTHING to do with stimulating jobs or the economy in any way, but it does require states to accept the Common Core Standards Initiative. Thus initiative is funded and promoted by the National Governors’ Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Proudly they note that it is “internationally benchmarked.”

As of mid-January, 41 cash-strapped states have signed on to this monstrosity and the result is that American school children will be taught a curriculum largely devoid of traditional American values such as the God-given rights of life, liberty and property in favor of UNESCO’s Baccalaureate Organization program.

In short, American children will be taught that the only rights they have are those the United Nations says they have. Its Earth Charter states that “sustainability education” advocates “the promotion of equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations.”

Now, let me see, who is it that believes in the distribution of wealth? Barack Obama!

The federal government is not concerned with the education of American children. It is deep into indoctrination, i.e., the victimization of American children. And it just cost the American taxpayers another \$4.35 billion!

Caruba blogs at <http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com>.