

# **How Conservatives Can Use “Education Reform” as a Campaign Issue**

**By Samuel L. Blumenfeld**

All candidates for office promise to “improve education,” but when they are elected, they haven’t the faintest idea of how to proceed from there. That’s because the whole idea of education reform is based more on the deliberate falsehoods produced by the educators than on the reality of why our schools are the way they are.

I have been writing critically about education for the last forty years, and the one thing that has become quite obvious to me is that all of the serious problems we have in public education today have been deliberately caused by the educators themselves, and that no true education reform is possible so long as we rely on the educators to create and implement these reforms.

Here are the realities that every conservative candidate and concerned citizen should be aware of:

1. The public schools were taken over in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by a cabal of progressive educators whose goal it was to use the schools as a means of turning American children into little socialists who would then bring about a socialist society. The plan for all of this was outlined by John Dewey in an article entitled “The Primary-Education Fetish” written in 1898 and published in Forum magazine, in May of that year. In it, Dewey advocated changing the way children were taught to read so that they could be deliberately dumbed-down. High literacy was considered an obstacle to socialism because it developed independent, individualistic intelligence not conducive to collectivist group think.

In that article Dewey also wrote: “Change must come gradually. To force it unduly would compromise its final success by favoring a violent reaction.” Even then, Dewey and his colleagues knew that Americans would never accept socialism if it was openly imposed upon them by the Progressives.

2. The new “sight” or “look-say” instruction method, which teaches children to read English as if it were Chinese, was put in the schools in the 1930s, and by 1955 the reading situation had become so bad that Dr. Rudolf Flesch was compelled to write “Why Johnny Can’t Read.” In it he explained, “The teaching of reading--all over the United States, in all the schools, in all the textbooks--is totally wrong and flies in the face of all logic and common sense.”

And believe it or not, the situation is as bad today as it was in 1955. In fact, in 2007 the National Endowment for the Arts issued a report on America's declining literacy, "Reading at Risk." Endowment Chairman Dana Gioia stated: "This is a massive social problem. We are losing the majority of the new generation. They will not achieve anything close to their potential because of poor reading."

3. In order to implement these new socialist programs in the schools, the Progressive Cabal decided to take over the National Education Association and turn it into a powerful political instrument in order to pressure the Federal Government to pour billions of dollars into the public schools. Their success has been spectacular. Back in 1967, the NEA's executive secretary proclaimed: "NEA will become a political power second to no other special interest group....NEA will organize this profession from top to bottom into logical operational units that can move swiftly and effectively and with power unmatched by any other organized group in the nation." In short, the NEA is a political organization attached to the radical left-wing of the Democratic party.

4. The Progressive program has been fully implemented in the public schools, paid for by the taxpayer who is barely aware of what is going on. Thus American children are at risk in four ways in the public schools: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically. Academically because of the reading programs that create dyslexia and reading failure; spiritually, because of the undermining of the children's religious beliefs through the philosophy of secular humanism; morally, because of pornographic sex ed, drug ed, and moral relativism; and physically, because of school shootings and massacres, assaults and violence, and school-bus accidents.

5. So how can a conservative candidate offer a program that makes sense when it comes to education? He or she must support the idea of educational freedom, the right of parents to home school, and the right of entrepreneurs to create good private schools. A conservative can support the idea of the charter school, which in reality is a public school, provided that the charter issuing board will approve of schools with traditional teaching programs.

As for the public schools, the conservative candidate should advocate the complete reform of the primary school curriculum so that it includes intensive, systematic phonics, cursive writing instruction, and basic arithmetic. It is in the primary school where the greatest damage is done to the children. Therefore a detailed plan to completely revamp the primary school curriculum should be the basic educational reform offered by a conservative candidate. Such advocacy would be an excellent way to gain the support of parents in the community. All parents want their children to be taught to read in the proper phonetic manner, and it would be very difficult for the liberals to argue against such reforms.

Suggested reading: *The New Illiterates*; *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education*; *The Victims of Dick and Jane*; *Revolution via Education* by Samuel L. Blumenfeld. *The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America* by Charlotte Iserbyt. *The Underground History of American Education* by John Taylor Gatto.