

Opinion

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THEIR VIEW

Ohio education and the 'ACE' up its sleeve

A new school with new challenges for families across Ohio has begun. The COVID-19 delta variant continues to roil plans for what many had hoped would be a more normal school year. Health concerns are paramount, of course, but questions also remain about the quality of education and the limitations on in-person instruction imposed by the pandemic. Academic ground was lost last year and students, parents, and teachers need to find creative ways to regain it.



Greg Lawson
Contributing columnist

Fortunately, state policymakers, including Ohio's Senate President Matt Huffman (R- Lima) and House Speaker Bob Cupp (R- Lima), have recognized the educational challenges that families face — and the financial burdens that those

challenges can pose. To help, state leaders have expanded school choice options to reach more students and families, offering them more than a one-size-fits-all, hand-me-down approach to public education.

Among the most innovative solutions so far is the new Afterschool Child Enrichment—or ACE — Education Savings Account Program. The ACE program will deploy \$125 million in federal COVID-relief funds

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The ACE program takes another solid step in the right direction, especially in light of the pandemic's persistent challenges. But this is not a one-step race and more remains for state policymakers to do with ESAs and academic options for students and families.

The Buckeye Institute continues to encourage Ohio to pursue a more robust ESA program to help parents pay for a broader range of educational services, such as online courses, computers, and academic services tailored to meet individual student needs. Ohio's off-the-rack public education system makes it too hard for too many students to get the academic environment and help they need to thrive in the classroom.

Jennifer Roberts, of Montgomery County, for example, recently explained the frustrations her autistic daughter faced in a traditional public school. "I can't tell you the number of times I've been on the phone or down in the principal's office ready to scream," she said. She even looked into open enrollment for her daughter, but there were no districts nearby offering that option. Fortunately, Ms. Roberts obtained a school voucher, but her experience is not unique and ESAs should be more readily available to help.

Federal dollars and special savings accounts, of course, are not the only tools in the education policy toolbox — and other tools can and should be used to empower parents and improve academic achievement. Ohio policymakers have wisely expanded other school choice programs: adding more EdChoice vouchers, making more money available for other school choice initiatives, and offering new tax credits for home school expenses and donations to non-profit organizations that give scholarships to low-income students.

The new school year and the delta variant may deal many students a pretty tough academic hand, but education savings accounts may offer families the proverbial "ACE" up the sleeve. Ohio should continue expanding its school choice initiatives and make it easier and more affordable for K-12 students to get the quality education and academic resources they need.

Greg R. Lawson is a research fellow at The Buckeye Institute



THEIR VIEW

Biden sounds weak, is weak

In his address to Congress on Dec. 8, 1941, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt said: "... we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us. Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph, so help us God."

Compare that powerful address with President Biden's threat following the deaths of 13 U.S. troops and at least 90 Afghans last week outside Kabul airport: "We will hunt you down and make you pay. I will defend our interests and our people with every measure at my command."

FDR spoke from a position of strength. Biden spoke from a position of weakness. Roosevelt announced an offensive. Biden's "threat" was made during a retreat and surrender.

In his 1961 inaugural address, John F. Kennedy pledged, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty."

Granted, the world has changed significantly since FDR and JFK, and now a feckless president with low credibility makes a promise that will



Cal Thomas
Syndicated columnist

not be kept. How can it when there will be no Americans in Afghanistan to hunt anyone?

Biden has done more to harm American interests and security than perhaps any other U.S. president. He sounds and looks weak because he is weak. This has not gone unnoticed by terrorists, as well as Iran, China, Russia and others who do not wish us well.

Perhaps the most discouraging part of Biden's remarks was his continuing obsession with blaming former President Donald Trump for the Afghanistan debacle. True, Trump floated the idea of inviting unreliable Taliban leaders to Washington and even Camp David to reach a deal to end the war, though he never did. Critics apparently forget that Bill Clinton did invite Yassir Arafat to Camp David.

The "treaty" then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo concluded with the Taliban worked. No U.S. soldiers were killed during an 18-month period. There were probably two reasons. First, the Taliban thought they could patiently wait out America, because based on our withdrawal from Vietnam, they believed we would not stay "forever," and second, because Trump had specific requirements for the Taliban to meet or the deal would be off. It is hard to imagine, as much as Trump wanted to stop "endless wars," that he would abandon Afghanistan altogether without at least a minimal U.S. presence to deter terrorists who wish to

again attack America.

Biden claims the military was on board with his decision to withdraw all forces from Afghanistan. That is difficult to believe, unless leaders have gone completely woke, focusing on diversity instead of on winning current wars and preparing to defend us from the possibility of future ones.

The drone strike last week that the administration says killed an ISIS-K leader is more likely a one-off than an effective military strategy for diminishing the threat of more terrorism.

The president had promised to reach out to our allies. "America is back" he repeatedly said. He had chastised Trump for "going it alone" and pledged to include allies in decision-making.

He did just the opposite with a unilateral decision and an arbitrary pullout date, leaving our allies to effectively fend for themselves. They will likely be cautious about joining a future American military coalition when new threats emerge.

When speaking of our national debt, Democrats frequently say that "the full faith and credit of the United States" is on the line if the debt ceiling isn't raised and our bills paid.

America under Joe Biden has demonstrated its faithlessness and unreliability. This will have serious implications for our immediate and long-term future. Should there be another terrorist attack on our homeland — something that seems likely — the blood of the dead will be on the hands of President Biden, no matter who he tries to blame.

YOUR VIEW

Too much LCC coverage

You can tell it's a new school year as The Lima News transforms into the LCC Gazette.

John Bowersock
Elida

Thank you for saving my friend

On July 8 my friend Chuck Ray had a heart attack outside his home at Market and Roberts. He fell hitting his head. We believe two Good Samaritans who stopped and called 911 saved his life.

Chuck is doing much better and is out of hospital. He would like

to thank the folks that came to his rescue. He sends his blessing and so do I.

Robert McPherson
Lima

Afghan failure is Biden's legacy

Grabbing defeat from the jaws of victory!

This will be the Biden legacy. The first US president to ever surrender. Heads should roll from this debacle and yet the one and only person to lose his job has been a 17-year veteran, a Marine who had had enough of the feckless ones in charge.

From Biden on down, heads should

roll. Biden should be impeached immediately. Milly should be relieved of command and face a court martial. The secretary of defense should be prosecuted as well.

In Biden's speech, he said his military commanders told him that the air base was of little or no significance. He is either lying or he has some of the most ignorant staff to ever exist. There was \$83 billion in advanced hardware at that base and it was of no significance?

But then one has to wonder, how much did Biden benefit from this disgrace? China now has an open door to Afghanistan and its vast supply of minerals.

FDR has been quoted, "Nothing happens in politics by accident."

Bob Riley
Ft. Jennings