

Opinion



A Kansas Viewpoint

Kids need success

From The Kansas City Star
When Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Law in late 2001, it focused attention on an admirable goal: All children should receive the educational opportunities that lead to school success.
But a host of problems with the law since then shows it is time to give the states more flexibility. Education is primarily a state and local responsibility, and the federal government's attempts to help in recent years have often been disappointing.
Despite promises when the legislation was passed, Congress has failed to provide the schools with sufficient resources to help students who are hindered by poverty, language barriers or learning disabilities.
Some lawmakers, led by Rep. Dennis Moore, a Kansas Democrat, favor legislation that would allow states to opt out of testing requirements until the federal government provides \$55 billion more.
That is an excellent idea: No more federal mandates on schools without sufficient federal money to meet them.
More money alone, however, will not resolve all the law's deficiencies. They include:
—The heavy emphasis on testing for reading and math proficiency has led many schools to shortchange science, social studies and the arts.
—Gifted students get inadequate attention because teachers and specialists — and the funding for these professionals — are focused on other students.
—Schools are improperly labeled as needing improvement when a small group of pupils test poorly, often because the students have special needs or are immigrants who cannot speak English.
—Children with learning disabilities are under unfair pressure to perform on tests designed for those without disabilities.
Before No Child Left Behind, many states were well on the way to improving their educational standards. ...
But the federal law has undermined many local and state efforts, hurting areas that have worked to improve their schools.
Schools should not be allowed to return to the days when some were all too willing to let children advance without knowing the basics.
However, states should be given the opportunity to opt out of No Child Left Behind's testing requirements, and its misleading measurements of proficiency, as long as there are suitable alternatives.
Those alternatives must still be focused on the ambitious goal of the federal legislation: success for all children.

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail jvannostrand@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

Where to write, call

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-4774
U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521
U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124
State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 300 SW 10th St. Rm. 143-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorrison@ink.org web: www.morrisonfamily.com
State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

COLBY FREE PRESS
155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701
State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.
Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.
John Van Nostrand - Publisher
jvannostrand@nwkansas.com
NEWS
Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkansas.com
Tisha Cox - General Assignment
tcx@nwkansas.com
Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter
ackermanjk@ruraltel.net
ADVERTISING
Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director
crystalr@nwkansas.com
Kristi Powell - Advertising Sales
kpowell@nwkansas.com
Emily Wederski - Advertising Sales
ewederski@nwkansas.com
BUSINESS OFFICE
Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping, Ad Building
japplegate@nwkansas.com
Everett Robert - Circulation, Classifieds
erobert@nwkansas.com
Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com
NOR'WEST PRESS
Jim Bowker - General Manager
Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Judy McKnight, Jim Jackson, DeLisa Allen, David Erickson, Betty Morris, and Dana Huthansel

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.
PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.
THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National Newspaper Association.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$40, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$74. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$53, 8 months \$65, 12 months \$82. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$60, 8 months \$70, 12 months \$85. All other states, \$85, 12 months.

© 2007
BRANKA
SAN ANTONIO
EXPRESS-NEWS



Carculture

Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path



I had the chance to see classic cars and visit with their owners at Oakley's car show Saturday. I always enjoy seeing such cars, and hearing the enthusiasm of their owners, many who are willing to share the stories of their cars. Some of those owners also asked if Colby is holding its rod run this year.
A couple of the owners I talked to were glad Colby's show is being revived this summer. Not just because they want to bring their cars, but because they know such events are a boost for the community helping them.
And as owners of some of the best steel Detroit ever manufactured, they are aware of just how much of an impact our four-wheeled conveyances have.
Here in the U.S., we have a car culture that has dumbfounded much of the world.
But then again, anyone living in a rural area like northwest Kansas understands a personal vehicle is just about the only way to get around, unless someone wants to walk, which is just unlikely unless it's on a short errand or for pleasure.
However, \$3 gas and the possibility of ever higher prices still aren't much of a deterrent to Detroit or Washington, D.C. doing anything to build more fuel efficient cars.
Much more efficient, that is.
Many of the classic cars on display in Oakley, and to be seen next month here in Colby weren't, for their time, remarkably fuel efficient, especially the muscle cars.
Those would be the Camaro, Mustang, Challenger, Charger, Corvette, Chevelle, etc.
Because of the energy crisis of the 1970s, the

car companies pulled the muscle cars in favor of smaller, more fuel efficient cars.
Of course, the Mustang is still alive, as is the Charger and Corvette, and the Camaro and Challenger are making their respective returns over the next two years. And for the record, the Camaro is allegedly going to get somewhere around 30 mpg, and the Challenger's expected fuel efficiency is somewhere in that ballpark.
If you ask me, that's unheard of for a car that has the name of "muscle car."
Over the past few years of the Bush administration has come the occasional rumble that SUVs might be the victim this time around.
They have been a cash cow for the car companies, and many people have come to depend on them to haul their families.
But maybe there is some hope for middle ground. With muscle cars making a return, and hybrids becoming more prevalent, maybe that can spill over into the rest of the industry.
Round one
I have survived two weeks of NHL playoff hockey. The first round ended Monday with game seven of the Vancouver Canucks-Dallas

Stars series.
Dallas lost the series. I wasn't happy about it, but that also means they don't have to play the Detroit Red Wings in the second round.
The playoffs were preceded by two games in Denver, the last games of the Colorado Avalanche season. They failed to make the playoffs for the first time since moving to Denver before the 1995-1996 season.
Eight teams from each conference get whittled down to one during the course of the first three rounds.
Three rounds remain — the conference semi-finals and finals and the Stanley Cup playoff itself.
The season is winding down
Summer is a long season for the teams that don't make the playoffs. Three months to wonder, replay each moment that went wrong. Also three months to put together the resolve to do better.
It usually means golf, family vacations or heading to a cottage on some Canadian lake.
But this fall, much is going to change. The familiar uniforms and colors will give way to the "uniform of the future" which was unveiled at the All-Star game in January. Not many fans were impressed. I haven't heard what the players think.
Maybe it'll be something for the league to think over during the summer. I hope so.

Tisha Cox is a general assignment reporter/photographer for the Free Press. Her column appears on Mondays. tcx@nwkansas.com.

Your turn

Red Cross needs your help

Sherry White, Red Cross Branch Manager Colby
As some of you may already know, March was Red Cross Month. I would like to share some information about what your local office has been responding to since the first of year, and also ask for your help.
First, I should probably remind you that although we are named Thomas County Red Cross and are located in Colby, our jurisdiction includes the following counties: Thomas, Wallace, Logan, Gove, Sheridan, Rawlins, and Cheyenne.
During the blizzards, Red Cross opened one storm shelter in Thomas County and assisted with four others in Gove County. In total, the storm shelters housed 209 people and served 2189 meals. Just since January, your local Red Cross has serviced five house fires: two in Thomas, one in Gove, one in Cheyenne, and one in Rawlins.
Recently, destructive tornadoes ripped through Cheyenne and Rawlins counties also leaving several families temporarily homeless and without their personal belongings. Some also lost family pets, outbuildings, livestock, and even farm machinery.
Each case varied from assistance rendered

depending on the clients' needs, but general aide offered was in the form of groceries, clothing allowance, medicines, storage containers, and rent supplements.
Of course, we continue to hold our blood drives, CPR and first aid classes, and aquatics training. We also proudly provide support to members of the military and their families.
As you can imagine, providing all these services and responding to this many disasters in such a short period of time leaves our community chapter's resources stretched to its limit — both financially and volunteer-wise.
Red Cross doesn't receive any funds from the state or federal government. I want to stress that your local Red Cross is totally funded by donations.
If it weren't for caring, generous citizens, we would not be able to respond to our own friends and neighbors when they suffer a tremendous loss in a disaster.
So I encourage everyone—both private citizens and businesses to make a tax-deductible financial donation to Thomas County Red Cross at 350 S. Range Suite #8 Colby, Kan. 67701.
Another resource we have a shortage of is volunteers. We especially need volunteers that can respond to local disasters and assist with

shelter operations. Other volunteers we need are office workers, fundraisers, and people who can assist with community presence by becoming a board member.
We are hosting the following trainings for those interested in becoming a Red Cross volunteer or who would just like to become better prepared for their own position in their own community:
Shelter Operations- 6-9 p.m. May 10-11 at Thomas County Office Complex Meeting Room 350 S. Range Colby, Kan.
Disaster Response: 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. May 12 at Thomas County Office Complex Meeting Room 350 S. Range Colby, Kan.
We, as citizens of northwest Kansas, should be proud to have a local Red Cross presence in our communities. But with that also comes a responsibility to do our part to insure the health of the local community chapter. We must be prepared in all facets of the services we offer, but we need your help to do it.
Please consider either making a financial donation or taking one of our free community trainings.
For information call 462-7161. Now is the time you can make a difference. Thank you very much for supporting your local Red Cross.

About those letters . . .
The *Free Press* encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, if at all possible, and should include a telephone number and an address. Most importantly, all letters must include a signature. Unsigned letters cannot be published. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length, and, likewise, reserve the right to reject letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive or libelous.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

