

The Blumenfeld Education Letter



"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce those risks.

"Without vision, the people perish."

The Tama Story: Educational Tyranny in Iowa

On May 17, 1989, the Iowa Supreme Court ordered that an 11-year-old boy being taught at home be enrolled in school and left open the possibility he could be taken from his parents if they refuse to send him.

"A child's best interests include not only proper care and treatment, but also education," the court said in a Tama County case.

In a narrowly drawn opinion, the court said failure to enroll a child in school can leave parents vulnerable to proceedings seeking termination of their parental rights.

The case had been closely watched because of its potential impact on fundamentalist Christians who refuse to send their children to school, insisting on teaching them at home. The court didn't rule out state intervention on those cases, but didn't specifically allow it either.

Court staffers noted that the decision turned on special circumstances and said it left open the home schooling issue.

Mother Was Certified Teacher

The dispute centered on an 11-year-old boy who lives with his family on the Mesquakie Indian Settlement near Tama.

Beginning in 1983, the youngster was enrolled in local schools, but attended only sporadically. In one year, he attended classes 51 days and was absent 129 days. His mother, a certified teacher, said she was teaching the youngster at home. She cited health reasons -- not religion -- for not sending the youngster to school.

Court records described the child as "mildly to moderately mentally retarded" and said he was making little progress in the home schooling situation. The court noted that educational experts had said the child needed special education classes.

The parents refused to send the child to school, however, and both were prosecuted under the state's compulsory attendance law. Those convictions are on appeal.

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