

Sacramento Drama

On July 11, 2007 our California associate, Wendy Leece, successfully petitioned California's State Board of Education (SBE) to reverse the California Department of Education's denial of her request to make submitted K-8 textbooks available for real public inspection before state approval. Here she tells how it went:

Dear Friends,

When one walks on water, it takes a few hours to come back to dry land. Yesterday's experience in the board room with the California State Board of Education was truly amazing and we thank God for every bit of the excitement.

Briefly, we had to sit and wait for most of the day for item 18 to come up. While I was sitting there I realized item 16 dealt with online editions of textbooks. So, I thought, why not get my intro stuff done first and ... explain in detail when I came back to discuss Item 18.

I got their attention. I was respectful. ... Made eye contact. Talked slowly. Commended them for their passion for education and California children – as evidenced in the hours of discussion I sat through (only 2 minutes and they were strict).

I went back up for Item 18 with **Dorothy** and she introduced herself which justified us getting 4 minutes. So I dove right in to the comments and pretty much go through ALL of them and then Voila!!!!!!

We took an end of the **scroll** and just unrolled it. They were stunned! Speechless! I only had time to ask if they had any questions. But there were none. We went to the back of the room and out the door and finished rolling the scroll up. (Did Moses have a problem when the next speaker came up too?)

Anyway, it was glorious!!!!!!! For the rest of the afternoon – as they wrestled with what to do next – we just listened and smiled. There seemed to be consensus ... that it was time to put the proposed books online: a "virtual textbook" adoption process for all the world to see. ...

[One of California's 11 SBE members] actually said he would not vote for the regs [i.e., new rules] unless a virtual L[earning] R[esource] D[isplay] C[enter] was put into the proposed regs.

It will be an interesting debate. But we made our point. It is time to be transparent and this board appears to agree.

The vice president [of the SBE] ... even agreed that she has been frustrated for years because she could not figure out how to get a copy unless she got the whole PALLET of books for the [state textbook review committees].

Upon leaving, one woman said "Congratulations – you really got their attention." That was the best we hoped for. We wanted to engage them and praise God – we did!!!!!!

So let's thank God and keep praying for wisdom. This is the time. This board seems to really want to do what is right. They are workers. ...

Sincerely,

Wendy

This was a 62-ft long list of 427 remaining uncorrected factual errors documented in five 8th grade U.S. History texts approved for 2006 local California adoption. We taped its 66 pages end-to-end for Wendy and Dorothy to unwind before the SBE to dramatize their testimony. Such rolls were Mel and Norma's very best visual prop, never before seen in California.

Wendy's assistant who helped unwind the roll

In response to Wendy's testimony, California's State Board of Education passed this new rule. Beginning in 2009, publishers must post student editions of submitted K-8 textbooks online for easy public access.



**Title 5. EDUCATION
Division 1. California Department of Education
Chapter 9. Instructional Materials**

**Article 2. Adoption of Curriculum Frameworks,
Evaluation Criteria and Instructional Materials – Procedures ...**

§ 9523. Display of Instructional Materials for Public Inspection. ...

(b) Beginning with the first adoption that takes place after the Reading/ Language Arts adoption that is currently scheduled to be completed in November 2008, on or before the delivery date designated in the schedule of significant events, publishers shall also provide CDE with a URL to those instructional materials intended for student use that are being submitted for adoption, and the CDE shall post on its website direct hyperlinks to the URLs provided by the publishers. The instructional materials posted on each publisher's website shall be identical to the hard copy version of the instructional materials submitted for adoption, except that copyrighted items that do not allow for posting online may be omitted and replaced by a description of the omitted item, and any online features that are absent from the hard copy version shall be identified.

God will bless Christian conservative activism on California textbooks if its work is sound and its counsels smart. We will stay as engaged there as our Texas priorities allow. LORD, PLEASE LIGHT A LIGHT IN CALIFORNIA NOW, LIKE YOU DID IN TEXAS THROUGH MEL AND NORMA GABLER!

*When the enemy shall come in like a flood,
the Spirit of the Lord shall
LIFT UP A STANDARD AGAINST HIM.
Isaiah 59:19*