
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers:

The *Richmond Journal of Law and the Public Interest* is proud to present the spring issue of Volume XVI. The issue examines issues affecting children's rights and education. The articles reveal our legal system's struggle to balance choice, constitutional freedoms, and the mental and physical health of our children.

In *Is Circumcision Legal?*, Peter W. Adler discusses the history and medical implications of the practice of circumcision. He notes the dangers associated with this elective surgery and highlights a recent court decision in Germany in which circumcision is deemed criminal assault. Additionally, the piece compares the lack of circumcision regulation to federal laws prohibiting female genital mutilation. Adler urges American courts and legislatures to treat non-therapeutic circumcision as an impermissible violation of a child's genital integrity.

Reclaiming Hazelwood: Public School Classrooms and a Return to the Supreme Court's Vision for Viewpoint-Specific Speech Regulation Policy, by Brad Dickens, provides an updated perspective on the Supreme Court's ruling in *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*. The *Hazelwood* case requires that student speech and expression be viewpoint neutral; Dickens argues that the Supreme Court's holding was intended to be a narrow exception which the federal circuits have since over-applied. If *Hazelwood* is applied appropriately, Dickens believes schools are better able to carry out their educational missions and students may exercise their First Amendment rights more appropriately.

The spring issue also contains two student comments. The first, *Whose Choice Are We Talking About? The Exclusion of Students With Disabilities From For-Profit Online Charter Schools* by Matthew D. Bernstein, discusses the impact of for-profit and online education on special education students. The comment analyzes both

the rise of “educational management organizations” and the trend of special education students being pushed out of for-profit schools due to the expense of providing special education services. Dickens urges states to create laws regulating online charter schools, to require educational management organizations to make their finances transparent, and to connect charter schools to a special education infrastructure.

The second comment author, Stephanie Fitzgerald, discusses some of the successes and failures of the “No Child Left Behind” federal education legislation in *No Child Left Behind in Special Education: The Need for Change in Legislation That Is Still Leaving Some Students Behind*. The comment specifically analyzes the relationship between No Child Left Behind and special education students. Fitzgerald highlights scholars’ arguments that the current legislation is unreasonable, unfair, and unrealistic for students with learning disabilities. She discusses the need for research-based instructional methods, heightened accountability, increased parental input, and flexibility in the use of funding.

Thus, Volume XVI’s spring issue examines a few of the ways in which our society is struggling to protect the rights of our children. The debate includes issues of physical well-being, educational opportunity, and constitutional rights. The editors and staff of the *Richmond Journal of Law and the Public Interest* hope these pieces enrich the dialogue regarding children’s rights, and we look forward to bringing you forthcoming publications.

Sincerely,

Rachel W. Logan

Editor-in-Chief