

## PTA

By Branch Isole

Dear Parents,

As we begin  
a new school year  
It's incumbent from each  
of you we hear  
We need your acceptance  
of our new rules  
for your sons and daughters  
attending high school

As partners with parents  
in raising your young  
it's important they see us  
unified as one  
For that reason  
from this point forth  
your home values  
we will endorse

In accordance with the lawsuit  
filed last year  
the courts have made it  
abundantly clear  
Our job is no longer  
to be at loggerheads with you  
in determining what's appropriate  
or within who's view

Your home and you  
are the primary source  
the biggest influence  
as to the course  
their budding lives take  
and what of themselves  
they will make

# Writing Raw

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You being the foundation  
of their behaviors and morés  
we've been instructed  
to assist you in all ways

We can't control  
their cell phone use  
anymore than we can  
your cell phone abuse  
Therefore, one-half  
of each classroom will be  
dedicated space  
for egress and ingress  
voice text messaging

Half of the remainder,  
(that would be one quarter)  
is reserved for clothes and make up disorder  
Insuring one-up-manship fashion borders  
with enough pre-pubescent skin showing  
and high heel heightening  
to aid at least an appearance  
of chronological growing

Shorts should be no shorter  
than summer's micro shorts look  
Blouses, shirts and tops  
no more than three buttons or hooks  
For the boys any new, used  
or cleanest T-shirt  
from the pile will do

And since they insist  
on wearing their pants  
hanging off their asses  
Out of respect for their classmates  
(obviously they have none for themselves)  
we would ask once again  
they pardon with "excuse me"  
when passing gases

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With fifty percent  
of the available space left,  
that would be one-eighth  
(as in 'eight ball' you know)  
remedial basics will be addressed  
for our high school scholars  
who have yet to pass  
the third grade competency test

With this last section,  
a final one-sixteenth  
piece of the pie  
As charted on our colored  
bar graph grids  
representing the other kids

It too will be fractionalized  
yet one more time  
so we're able to provide  
four whole seats, serialized

Two and two that is  
in each classroom's  
one-thirty-second space  
For the two hard core  
on the felons path,  
and the last two  
getting an education  
in spite of the place

In this way our Bell Curve  
will automatically adjust  
according to Piaget, Skinner  
Freud and Bloom  
Sealing our children's myopic lives,  
and we, our doom

Like you, we will let them

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have their way  
Then irresponsibility  
can continue to play  
and wreak further havoc  
on a society in decay

Please sign this release form  
and return by Friday  
indicating that you fully understand  
we are now absolved of doing your job  
and your children's future  
is back in your hands

## Teacher

By Branch Isole

teacher, teacher  
should have been a preacher  
talking, talking  
balking, gawking,  
when we don't know Your answer

force-fed Your favorite subject  
charging through Your cherished notes  
onward, onward  
ever onward  
as if You were a Bengal Lancer

we all sit quietly  
pencils in hand  
each #2 at the ready

Your test before us  
Your last command  
“get ready, get set, go go go”

moments later  
marks and erasures  
cover the paper land

salivating without a break  
finding each and every mistake,  
how smug Your smile  
how cyclical Your wit  
as Your red pen slashes  
in a furious fit

teacher, teacher  
have You always been this way?

or is it only since  
You've had us,  
as Your prey

## First Rule of Correction

By Branch Isole

“Whack”  
resonated the sound  
of the wooden rule  
hard, coming down  
Breaking the silence  
that hung in the air  
like a mist  
of sullen despair

Within seconds  
a collective gasp  
raced audibly  
through the room,  
Another hand  
had met its doom

Somewhere  
in our austere chamber  
decorated white  
Another mate  
had now, seen the light

No one moved  
to say the least  
For all had heard  
the bellowing beast

Of all who heard  
not one said, a single word  
but all together  
a mouthing choir  
managed to whisper,  
“yes, Sister”

“Silence is Golden  
and I Want Some Gold!”  
She shrieked out loud

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as she stalked  
and strutted  
to the front of the crowd

No need to look  
nor even to glance  
no one dared peer  
at the great, black and white bear

So familiar the sulk  
of this habited hulk  
All knew her sneer  
permanently affixed there

One quickly learned  
the fear and the dread  
of daily confinement with she,  
who seemed to have eyes  
in the back of her head

Surely custom made  
this flattened and measured  
twelve inch blade  
Perfect for punishing  
each little buggler  
Chip off the old block  
of a Louisville slugger

Having experienced the trauma  
of her unbridled wrath  
channeled through  
that appendage of ash  
Wincing back  
a single tear,  
dripping to the page  
like a drop of rain  
Wondering whose hand  
was now newly bludgeoned  
Red with whelps  
and searing pain

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Recalling vividly  
what little fun  
was found at God's school  
with the Sisterhood of Nuns  
When I,  
was in grade one.

**Branch Isole bio:** Writing to strike a chord or touch a nerve, storyteller and poet Branch Isole uses common themes to explore issues and emotions often experienced, but not always voiced. Author of twenty titles, available in paperback and ebook at Amazon or [www.branchisole.com](http://www.branchisole.com)