

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

A good education for their children is one desire held by most parents the world over. Here in America that which comprises a "good education" is subject to the variable winds of education reform, and thus the source of considerable controversy. Some changes in recent decades have been worthwhile; others have been disastrous experiments which have actually hindered the progress of many children. As these changes have been implemented in schools around the country, some parents holding traditional, Christian beliefs have found certain changes within the tax-funded system unacceptable, and thus alternative education programs have been pursued. C.E.A. is one such alternative.

When considering what type of education program to provide for their children, parents do well to carefully analyze their own beliefs and goals for the children God has placed in their care. Parents should formulate in their own minds what they consider to be foundational knowledge and truths they wish their children to acquire. A "philosophy of education" may not be formally written, but all parents do well to give thought to what they desire from any given education program.

We believe that a good education will prepare children to cope with the world around them in the years ahead, and most importantly, to fulfill God's plan for their lives. Fundamental, core knowledge in the areas of science, math, history, and language should be emphasized to build a sound academic foundation for each child. Such emphasis will provide the children with basic skills with which to develop themselves as they mature. In the early grades, children are presented with much factual information, and "rote memory" is one of many tools utilized. As students mature, our goal is to help them use the factual information mastered earlier as they develop higher level thinking skills and the ability to critically analyze information and events. C.E.A. believes that God has a special plan for each child. We desire to come alongside home school parents and help them equip their children for the work to which He will call them.

Our philosophy of education is based on a Christian world view. That is, while the academic program we follow and the curriculum we select may change from time to time, our basic philosophy regarding educating children will not. It is based on our belief that our omnipotent God created the universe and all that is within it. Human beings, holding a special place in that universe, are created to develop a personal relationship with God, and to live lives that will bring honor and glory to Him. Although each individual is a unique creation, all of us are "sinners saved by grace." We are free to accept or reject God's plan of redemption as we embrace Jesus Christ as the only way to the Father (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

It is our desire that C.E.A.'s program will enhance each child's appreciation for the Word of God. The Bible reveals God's great love for His children and His plan for their salvation. Study of the Bible, while not in-depth in nature, will be included with the ultimate goal of helping each child acquire a deeper understanding and appreciation for the Word of God. C.E.A. desires that each child develop a vital relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Recognizing that parents are the key influencers of children with regard to spiritual growth, C.E.A. encourages parents to accept this God-given role and seek His wisdom as they work with their children (Deut. 6:6-9).

C.E.A.'s philosophy of education is rather unique in its application. First, we recognize that parents are especially knowledgeable about their children, including their strengths and weaknesses. God, through His Holy Spirit, gives parents special wisdom in dealing with the children placed in their homes. This unique strength must never be minimized, but rather developed as the years go by.

At the same time, we believe that teachers, while not as familiar with individual children, are often recipients of God-given abilities to teach. Godly teachers are in a special position to influence children in areas beyond mere academics, i.e., attitudes, self-esteem, goal-setting, spiritual growth, etc. They often have great talent for cultivating in their students a lifelong desire to learn, a worthy goal for all families. We see the role of teachers as providing assistance and expertise to parents who have chosen to delegate certain teaching responsibilities to the teacher through C.E.A.

With this basic philosophy of education as a foundation, C.E.A. has taken a novel approach in designing its program. Parents who share our vision for a quality, Christian education for their children join with gifted Christian teachers to direct the learning activities of their children. As active participants, parents must be able and willing to assume significant and time-consuming duties pertaining to their child's education program, for C.E.A. is not a "school," as such. Parents must be willing to work closely and cooperatively with the child's teacher(s) in order to ensure superior learning opportunities. Without such parental support, C.E.A.'s efforts will be limited, and the child's education will be compromised. The program is designed to help home school families meet certain specific academic, spiritual, and character goals shared by our families. Parents unable or unwilling to work within the guidelines presented by the Board and its teachers to achieve such goals will not be permitted to re-enroll their children.

Actual on-site class time is limited, and as stated above, parents play a key role in assuring that children complete assignments and fulfill requirements as set forth by the teacher. This role requires considerable time as most of the "seatwork" and reading is done at home. Parents must be available to provide direct assistance in teaching and reinforcing concepts on a daily basis. Failure to do so will lead to frustration for parents and students alike, and may result in failing grades for the student.

Parents assist with C.E.A.'s program in other ways as well. They grade certain non-subjective homework which gives the teachers more time to focus on the actual instruction of important facts and concepts. They may be asked to help with special projects, field trips, etc. Parents are also encouraged to share their special talents and abilities with our students to enhance learning. And naturally parents are encouraged to meet with the teacher as needed to discuss goals and objectives, as well as specific approaches useful in working with their child.

Yes, C.E.A.'s approach is rather unique. However, since 1994, our approach has proven successful, and many families have benefitted by it. We give God the glory for what has been accomplished.