

A BIBLICAL VIEW ON

CRISIS IN EDUCATION



KERBY ANDERSON

CRISIS IN EDUCATION



For decades, America has faced a crisis in education. But the last year has taken a problem in education and made it worse. Schools have been closed, and many of them have not reopened. The pandemic has been an excuse to keep students at home while they are supposedly learning through “virtual education.”

One Reuters analysis discovered that fewer than half of the 57 public school districts in one location were

taking attendance. About a third weren't providing required services to special-needs student.

A Philadelphia Superintendent warned that students would fall through the cracks and feared that we would see an increase in youth delinquency and crime. Learning gaps are increasing. Affluent families may be able to supplement the teaching and monitor their child's virtual learning from home. But what about parents who have to work and must leave a six-year-old in front of the computer screen all day to try to learn?

Schools Closed Down

Schools have often been closed due to politics rather than "the science." Teachers' unions have tried to leverage state legislatures and put charter schools out of business. The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* say there is a phrase for this: political extortion. Another commentator called it educa-

tional blackmail.

The American Federation of Teachers declared their support of “safety strikes” if local unions didn’t approve of steps used by school districts to address the virus. Recently, an alliance of teachers’ unions and progressive groups sponsored a “national day of resistance” and listed their demands before returning to the classroom.

Most of the demands have little to do with education and can’t even be addressed by school boards. They range from cancelling rents and mortgages to passing Medicare for All to passing a wealth tax. A few demands do relate to schools, like implementing a moratorium on voucher programs and standardized tests, along with moving towards “police-free schools.”

These teachers’ unions also wanted a moratorium on charter schools and want governors and other political leaders to also close private schools.

Public schools are funded whether they are open or not. Private and religious schools rely on tuition and donations. Already more than 100 private and religious schools have shut down permanently.

On the other hand, the teachers themselves have expressed great concern about the impact closing down the schools has had on their students. Some have tried to use their summer and spring breaks to help students who have not done well with virtual education.

Researchers have come to different conclusions about the educational progress during the last year. All of them acknowledge that students have fallen behind where they would have been if they had stayed in classrooms during the last school year. All also report that racial and socioeconomic achievements gaps have widened because of the disparities in access to

computers, home internet connection, and direct instruction from teachers.

Educational Failure

While it will be tempting to blame the current educational failure on the pandemic and lockdowns, America's public schools have been failing students for many decades. The National Assessment of Educational Progress is often called the "Nation's Report Card." This is not a report card you would want to show to your parents. It isn't something America's taxpayers want to see either.

About a third (37%) of the nation's 12th-graders tested proficient or better in reading. Only one fourth (25%) were proficient or better in math. We spend all this time and money, and still have a majority of students who cannot read or compute at their grade level.

Dr. Walter Williams was a columnist and economist at George Mason

University. Because he was an African American, he focused some of his attention on black students. Sadly, they did even worse in these tests: 17 percent proficient in reading, and 7 percent proficient in math.

He asked an important question. Why are we giving these kids diplomas? The national high school graduation rate is over 80 percent. That means that two-thirds of these graduates cannot read at the 12th grade level and three-fourths cannot compute at the 12th grade level.

Not only is there fraud in high school diplomas, but the fraud continues when we look at the percentage of these students who then go on to college. According to government statistics, about 70 percent of white high school graduates were enrolled in college, and 58 percent of black high school students were enrolled in college. This is also educational fraud since

so few are college-ready if they cannot read even at the high school level.

University administrators and faculty are certainly aware they are admitting students who are not prepared for and cannot perform at the college level. They cope with this problem in a number of ways. They provide lots of remedial courses. Professors dumb down their courses so that these poorly prepared students get passing grades. They also offer majors that are less challenging, usually with the word “studies” attached to them.

We can see the problem when we look at these students that enter the university. Only about a third (37%) of white high school graduates and a smaller percentage (17%) of black high school graduates are college ready. The National Conference of State Legislatures estimates that possibly as many as 40 percent of students have to enroll in at least one remedial course.

Education and Illiteracy

America spends more on education than just about any other country in the world. Unfortunately, we have very little to show for our financial investment. We have levels of illiteracy that should embarrass us. And I am not just talking about functional illiteracy. I am also talking about cultural illiteracy, historical illiteracy, and political illiteracy. Here are a few examples.

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation discovered that only one in three (36%) Americans could actually pass the US citizenship test. And I might add that you only have to get 60 percent of the questions right in order to pass the test.

A majority (57%) did not know how many justices serve on the Supreme Court. Nearly three-fourths (72%) could not accurately identify which states comprised the 13 colonies. And only a quarter (24%) even knew why the

American colonists fought the British in the Revolutionary War.

One possible solution might be to require students to pass the citizenship test before they graduate from high school. Some states are discussing this idea. Consider the fact that a naturalized citizen probably knows more about America's history and structure of government than someone who was born in this country.

Most students are also constitutionally illiterate. For example, only one in four Americans can name more than one of the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment. In one study, they found that only one person out of 1,000 people could name all five First Amendment freedoms. Those would be the freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly along with the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. In another survey, they found that one-fourth of

those when presented with the First Amendment, concluded that it “goes too far in the rights it guarantees.”

While Americans are generally illiterate concerning the Constitution, they are less so about popular culture. The same survey that found few Americans could name more than one of the First Amendment freedoms also found that more than half of them could name at least two members of the popular Simpsons cartoon family. Even more disturbing is the fact that in one survey almost two-thirds of Americans think the Marxist phrase “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs” is in the Constitution.

Educational Indoctrination

Of even greater concern to Christian parents is the reality that students are being indoctrinated not just in college but even in high school. Marlin Maddoux documented this in his book, *Public Education Against America*. We

have also documented so much of this on *Point of View* over the last five decades.

One film we promoted on our program was “IndoctriNation: Public Schools and the Decline of Christianity in America” by filmmaker Colin Gunn. The film followed him around the country as he drove to sites that pertain to education in America. Along the way, he interviewed various experts that document the history of American education and analyze the philosophy behind our current educational system.

He believes that education should be fundamentally Christian in its foundation. He and other experts dismissed the idea that education can be truly neutral. Either you accept biblical ideas or you teach philosophies that oppose them.

The film gave a brief overview of the philosophy of education today. Horace Mann and Robert Owen

were progressive socialists who had a profound influence in education. So was John Dewey, who was one of the signers of the original Humanist Manifesto in 1933. It is not an accident that Christian ideas are usually excluded from the public schools, and that there are major fights over textbooks and curriculum when Christians on school boards want a more balanced approach to education.

Another problem with public education in America today is that it is a government-controlled monopoly. Colin Gunn believed that you cannot really solve many of the country's economic and social problems until you solve the problem of public education. School curriculum today indoctrinates students into accepting big government while rejecting many foundational principles of free market economics and moral principles rooted in biblical teaching.

Most important to Christian parents and grandparents is what is happening to the faith of these children raised in Christian homes. Christian students are losing their faith. Youth membership in churches is on the decline. That is why we have been encouraging you to take your children and grandchildren out of the public schools and provide a biblically based education for them.

Biblical Perspective

The Bible commands leaders in the Old and New Testament to instruct the people. Christians are specifically admonished to operate as the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). The Bible also teaches that education must begin in the home (Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:15). Parents are responsible for their children and their education.

Education also must occur in churches and during corporate worship (Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:25).

Older believers are to teach and disciple younger believers (Titus 2:1-8). Christian parents and church members can form a homeschooling coop or a Christian school.

1. Christian education should be biblically based and God-centered. Ephesians 6:4 says, "Parents, do not exasperate your children: instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

2. Christian education should be positive and truthful. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it."

3. Christian education should impart wisdom. Psalm 111:10 teaches "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Wisdom and knowledge come from God and God's Word.

Proverbs 9:10 teaches “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.”

We have a crisis in education, and this is why parents and grandparents need to place their children and grandchildren in educational environments that foster Christian belief.

Additional Resources

Colin Gunn, "IndoctriNation: Public Schools and the Decline of Christianity in America," 2011.

Marlin Maddoux, *Public Education Against America*, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006.

Liberty McArtor, *A Biblical View on Homeschooling*, Point of View Ministries, 2020.

Ronald Nash, *The Closing of the American Heart: What's Really Wrong with America's Schools?* Probe Ministries/Word, 1990.

The background is a vibrant teal color. In the center, there is a faint, stylized map of the world. Overlaid on this are several thin, white, curved lines that sweep across the frame, some ending in arrowheads. The overall aesthetic is modern and dynamic.

Point of View

Point of View Ministries • PO-Box 30 • Dallas, TX 75221

pointofview.net • 800-347-5151

A Biblical View on Crisis in Education

© Point of View Ministries 2021