

# CONSISTENCY

Pastor Al Harris  
KCEA Board President

I pen this article on September 17 and contend that consistency is to be prized. One illustration of this begins with the introduction to KCEA's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary booklet in 1999.

## “OUR BEGINNINGS

By 1974, a number of Christian schools had begun in Pennsylvania as the need for them became painfully evident in the decade of the 60's. Dr. Al Janney, referred to at that time as 'Mr. Christian Education,' challenged Dr. Richard Harris to launch a Pennsylvania association.

On September 17, 1974, the Keystone Christian Education Association was born. Attending the meeting at the Dutch Pantry Restaurant in Carlisle, PA, were Dr. Richard Harris, Mr. Paul Lunger, Administrator of Upper Bucks Christian School in Sellersville, Mr. David Cranston, Administrator of North Hills Christian School in Pittsburgh, Mr. Leo D'Arcangelo, Administrator of West Chester Christian School in West Chester, and Mr. Ed Meshey, faculty member from West Chester. At that meeting, the name of KCEA was chosen.... Mr. Paul Lunger became its first President, the Vice-President was Mr. David Cranston, and Mr. Leo D'Arcangelo became Secretary-Treasurer.

Historically, some may graphically remember the impetus that gave birth to the KCEA. The Pennsylvania Legislature was in the process of redrafting the PA School Code. The problem became evident in the first draft of this new law. In brief, the language required religious schools to be licensed by the State of Pennsylvania, just as private, non-religious schools are today. This was obviously seen as a very dangerous trend toward control of the Christian schools in the State.

After launching the infant educational association, an additional information and organizational meeting was announced for January 15, 1975....., at Upper Bucks Christian School. It was clear that the State Board of Education was moving toward the position of having an absolute monopoly over education. Monopolies always destroy quality; therefore, the right to provide choice through Christian Education needed to be protected. Legal work to accomplish this and to establish KCEA as a viable force in the State was begun by Attorney William Ball and Attorney Daniel Flint. An initial conference with the Secretary of Education, Mr. John Pittenger, and his assistants was held; a healthy discussion occurred. The task of protecting Christian schools in Pennsylvania had begun. *KCEA became the pioneer Protestant school organization to protect Christian and private schools from government infringement. This is a fact known by legislators on the Hill.*

It also became very obvious that Christian Education must also be “quality education,” or it is not worth protecting. Striving for excellence is a Biblical concept; thus, KCEA began the process of helping Christian Educators work together for each other's benefit. The First Annual Convention of KCEA schools was held on April 11-12, 1975....., at Upper Bucks Christian School, Sellersville. Dr. Al Janney was the main speaker and numbers of workshops were

beneficial to the group of educators who met. The protection and promotion of Christian Education by the Keystone Christian Education Association was a reality.

Dr. Richard Harris  
Founder”

I make three quick observations about consistency:

1. I am conscious that some have little regard or respect for things of the past. Some even embrace a pattern of decision-making that rejects thoughts from those who have white hair. One should never forget that the Bible and the Constitution are old – but wise, to be faithfully followed.
2. Christian education leaders still gather regularly to discuss the issues of protecting and promoting Christian education. The Board of KCEA is ongoing. Members of that Board follow in the footprints of other servants of God. They are dedicated to organizing today’s statewide effort to uphold and strengthen each other.
3. There continue to be challenges from secular society; and there is a continuing need to publish, advise, and organize activities and programs. The affiliating ministries of KCEA share the benefits of those who started KCEA and of those who perpetuate the same goals.

We have no idea as to when our Lord may return. Until then, we do not occupy, we demonstrate consistency. Praise God for the opportunities that He provides, for there are souls to bring to Christ and souls to be disciplined for Him – just as in the past.

AH

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