

A TRUE COUSIN OF OUR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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Since 1974, KCEA has fulfilled its mission as the cooperative effort of independent ministries as we work together to protect and promote Christian education. Our primary focus has been the modern Christian school movement as this was and is the mode of Christian education that has been under the most attack. This is also the mode that sustains KCEA. While all of this is true, we are strong advocates for biblical Christian education in the home, local church, and collegiate and post-collegiate institutions.

The PA School Code has a legal term for those who satisfy Compulsory Attendance in the home by parental leadership – “Home Education.” That is a broad term. One of the popular and common types of home education is a modern form of the “open room school” pedagogy of the 1970s. The formal title for this is “the unschooling movement.” Go ahead, “Google it.” (Advocates make it sound quite appealing.) These families shun the rigidity of “schooling” – the attributes of a standard school, thus, they: (a) do not embrace the use of educational goals/objectives that come from some authority figure; (b) shun schedules, whether for the class, the day, or the year; (c) oppose mandates for course offerings, even if they use standard textbooks; (d) determine what to expect for a grade on assignments (if they give them); (e) engage in education without adult interdiction as students are largely self-directed. Many exhibit traits of “unschooling” in differing degrees even if they have never heard the term. Oh, by the way, to the extent that a family embraces the traits of “unschooling” in education, their family will likely “live” in a similar manner. They will likely embrace of religious life that is similar, and they will desire a local church with similar attributes (if they identify with a local church).

Secular “home schooling” and biblical “home schooling” function in sharp contrast to these trends. The difference between the secular and the biblical “schoolers” is that the latter will go beyond providing education in a disciplined, structured, “old-fashioned” educational environment. Bible, both doctrinal studies and practical application, will not only be a formal part of instruction but will be integrated into every subject and into every life situation encountered by the student(s) and adult(s)/teacher(s). These families typically operate their “family” like they operate their “school.” They also typically choose a local church that has orderliness that emulates from established doctrine, polity, policy, practice, and leadership.

Yes, we salute the biblical home schoolers. By our observation, their numbers are few, a minority among those who engage in home education. We urge them to continue their unique path. That path is quite similar to the way a typical affiliating school sees the priorities of Christian education.