

Hello,

My son attended Brookwood Elementary School last year as a kindergarten student. I will never forget the statement the teacher made to me during our parent/teacher conference.

“You know, Marcus likes to pretend to be a ninja. Sometimes he will get up during class and he will go to the back of the room and just start practicing his moves. I just let him go and continue with the rest of the students. It’s quite funny.”

My son was basically allowed to do whatever he wanted at Brookwood and no one pushed him to learn. No one demanded his attention while class lessons were being taught. No one held him accountable for his actions while he was in school. No one bothered to tell me he wasn’t grasping the curriculum. He was entertainment that got to move on up to the first grade even though they KNEW he wasn’t ready.

I visited Immanuel Lutheran looking for a day care program for before and after school. A friend of mine at work sends her daughter to the daycare and to the school and she told me they had an excellent program. I didn’t go because I was looking for a “religious school” for my son to attend. I was simply looking for a day care.

After having a conversation with the admissions counselor, we decided to test Marcus for the first grade class. Just out of curiosity. HE DIDN’T REMOTELY TEST FOR THE FIRST GRADE. It absolutely blew my mind. Had Brookwood made an actual effort to keep my son involved in school instead of letting him do whatever he wanted, then maybe this wouldn’t be the case.

So what did I do? I want to give my son his best chance at the best possible education. (What parent doesn’t?!) So I took a chance and enrolled him in the kindergarten class at Immanuel and, with the help of the EdChoice scholarship, I was able to afford to send him to school here. The difference I have seen in my son is so extraordinary that I would describe it as adding color to a blank and white canvas!

This school has changed his life. He has been more focused and more driven than I have ever seen him. He is happier. It has nothing to do with chapel or church. But, I will say that the Christian attitude that every staff member has displayed during and outside of school hours I believe with absolute certainty makes every student feel comfortable and safe. If children feel that they actually matter, that their education and the course of their future is genuinely cared about, then of course they will be more open to learning and they will excel. That’s why these kids excel way beyond some of the children who go to city schools.

For the HB 9 Committee, your comments about religious schools are despicable. This is not a battle against religion in a private school. This is about the public schools THAT ARE FAILING and about parents who want more for their children than to pass along to the next level without any regard on whether or not they are ready. The option for parents to want BETTER for their children should NEVER be taken away from them.

If you wish to see a decrease in the amount of people who wish to send their children somewhere outside of city schools then maybe you should be focusing on IMPROVING the city schools instead of trying to take away scholarship opportunities. You may be fine with children just being passed up grade levels blindly but we are not. My child will not be a city school statistic. He is an amazing little boy with a mind so full of wonderful thoughts and ideas. That needs nurtured, not filled with junk.

This is not about religion. It's about people who actually care about our children's' education.

Thank you.

Natalie Profitt

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