

Media Character Assassination ... of Children

In January, a group of Catholic school students landed in the crosshairs of a Trump-hating media that repeatedly lied about the actions, character, and intent of the students who came to the nation's capital for the annual March for Life that was held on January 18.

What happened to this group of young people from Covington Catholic High School in Kentucky is a dark and disturbing example of the lack of professionalism among today's so-called journalists and people on social media who can rapidly become rabid attack wolves, destroying individuals before any semblance of the truth about a situation can be determined.



Headlines screamed that teenaged thugs wearing "Make America Great Again" hats had taunted an innocent Native American Vietnam War veteran during a demonstration at the Lincoln Memorial. The students were assailed for days after a brief video from the mobile phone of a bystander was shared on social media and became a headline story, a fantasy that played out over and over during repeated news cycles.

The 16-year-old boy featured in the short clip did nothing notable except "stand fairly calmly and stoically while a demonstrator beat a drum inches from his face." For that, he was accused of racism, bigotry, intimidating a minority, and all sorts of things.

The storyline was that the students were unprovoked and that they had behaved badly. This is untrue. If the situation wasn't so terrifying, it would be comical.

Jumping to False Conclusions

Who made these false accusations against a child, a minor who is too young to drive in many states?

- Democratic politicians who have announced they're running for president in 2020, and other currently serving national politicians.
- Most of the major news organizations in the nation, including "reporters" who work at the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, MSNBC, and CNN.
- Other media entities including *GQ* magazine and TMZ, a Hollywood gossip website.
- A bevy of Hollywood elites, who seem to have a need to continually bloviate, although no one should ever care about the opinions of people who make their living pretending.
- Perhaps most disturbingly, the Catholic high school and the Catholic dioceses of Covington and Lexington, as well as

the archdioceses of Louisville and Baltimore, all joined the accusatory chorus.

What About the Truth?

Once the entire video was released, it showed that the 16-year-old boy initially featured, along with the rest of the students in the group, had remained calm and quite composed even though they'd been hounded and taunted by "a group of Black Hebrew Israelites, a reported hate group."

What about the Native American?

Extended footage of the clash reveals that far from being surrounded, it was the Native American demonstrator — the same man being portrayed as the victim by the media — who sought out and approached the high school students, and the Catholic young men didn't appear to be 'taunting' him at all.

Here are the words of a Covington High School student who was part of the group.

In the midst of our cheers, we were approached by a group of adults led by Nathan Phillips, with Phillips beating his drum. They forced their way into the center of our group. We initially thought this was a cultural display since he was beating along to our cheers and so we clapped to the beat. However, after multiple minutes of Mr. Phillips beating his drum directly in the face of my friend (mere centimeters from

his nose), we became confused and started wondering what was happening. It was not until later that we discovered they would incriminate us as a publicity stunt.

The student's recap continues:

To reiterate, we did not partake in any physical or verbal abuse. After that initial occurrence, we were then verbally assaulted by four or five African-American men who called us 'faggots' and berated one of our African-American students for being friends with us.

The version of the truth told by the Covington students is borne out by the video when viewed in its entirety. "You white people go back to Europe, this is not your land!" the same group that the media is portraying as the 'victims' can be heard yelling in one clip, while the teenagers in MAGA hats do their best to stay calm and respectful."

Video shows the Black Hebrew Israelites "hurling racial and derogatory slurs — including the N-word — toward the Catholic teens, apparently mocking them for their race and friendship with African-American students who were in attendance, as well as insulting black Trump supporter Kanye West." (WesternJournalism.com, 1-20-19)

Please note that *Education Reporter* will continue to follow this story in the March issue.

Common Core Wrecks SAT

Erica L. Meltzer, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) tutor and author of a bestselling guide to grammar that has helped thousands of students, is highly critical of the testing service since David Coleman has been in charge. He is known as the "architect of Common Core," but has never been an educator, and has mired the SAT in missteps and controversy since he took over. Meltzer explains her criticism in an article titled "The College Board is a Non-profit; It's Also a Hedge Fund," which was posted on her blog *The Critical Reader* in late 2018.

Coleman was appointed to lead the College Board, the agency in charge of the SAT test, in May of 2012. The College Board formerly used Educational Testing Service (ETS) to write the tests. There are "widespread assertions that the new, internally drafted SAT test items paled in quality by comparison to the old, ETS-written questions."

Meltzer says that "it is important to understand that the College Board of 2018 is a radically different organization than it was 20, or 10, or even 6 years ago." Some might be surprised to learn that the SAT no longer has a vocabulary section. Meltzer says that since Coleman's takeover, there has been "a resulting decline in the organization's quality,

reliability, and capacity to create/administer exams effectively."

She continues, "The redesigned SAT is the SAT in name only; it is effectively a Common Core mess cobbled together from the ACT and the PARCC." The redesign rolled out in 2016. (The PARCC is the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers.)

Meltzer also notes that the organization receives "public subsidies."

College Board Exodus & Irregularities

The changes Coleman planned were unpopular and controversial. Meltzer says, "Of the 21 members of College Board's top leadership the year before David Coleman's arrival, only five remained the year after, and two of them were demoted."

Coleman changed how the test was written, the topics it covers, and how it is administered.

Here are some of the problems and irregularities that Meltzer identifies:

1. A shortage of test forms that resulted in thousands of students encountering identical questions in subsequent test-taking sessions.
2. A tech firm was awarded \$3 million in a "no-bid contract" for an "online version" that was never completed.
3. "College Board administered a

test form in Asia though aware that it had been compromised, reproduced, and published by a Chinese test-prep firm."

4. The test asks math questions that are "so wordy" that they give an unfair advantage to "highly verbal students" and needlessly hinder students with "competent math skills" who are less skilled in reading comprehension.

5. There were scoring "irregularities" in the August 2018 test.

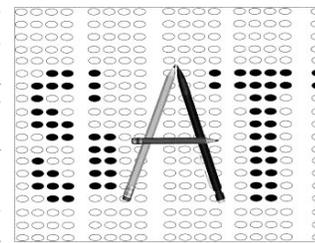
6. The College Board executive director of assessment and development "turned whistleblower" and revealed "irregularities in test construction so egregious that they invalidated the test as a measurement instrument."

Meltzer says, "Now, given this rather lengthy list of missteps, some quite serious, one might reasonably wonder

why the College Board, and particularly David Coleman, have faced no real consequences."

The same is true of the disastrous Common Core, the set of faulty standards devised by Coleman and his Achieve, Inc. cohorts. Those standards were not internationally benchmarked (the gold standard for such); they were never tested prior to rolling out in most U.S. states starting in 2010; and U.S. student scores in reading and math have plummeted since 2010.

More about the College Board, its questionable financial expenditures and accounting methods, its non-profit status, general problems surrounding the new SAT, and further documentation and footnotes can be found at Erica Meltzer's website. (*TheCriticalReader.com*, 12-15-18)



IN THEIR OWN (GOOD) WORDS

"The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is."

— Winston Churchill
1874-1965

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during World War II

EDUCATION BRIEFS

On January 31, Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis followed through on a campaign promise and issued an executive order to eliminate Common Core standards. He instructed Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran, a “longtime Common Core critic,” to have new standards that include streamlined testing and curriculum revisions ready by next year. Florida adopted Common Core in 2010. It was supposedly eliminated in 2014, but the Florida Standards effort was a rebranding of Common Core with few actual changes. The new mandate includes finding “ways to really make civics education a priority in Florida.” (Daily-Signal.com, 2-5-19)

The Aspen Institute promotes Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) but their final report on it shows that the actual trend is troubling, at best. The report was released on January 15, 2019 and is titled “From a Nation at Risk to a Nation at Hope.” It claims to be “uniting leaders to re-envision what constitutes success in our schools.” Underlying problems unintentionally highlighted by the SEL report include six major flaws, as reported in an article on the website The National Pulse. These flaws are: “SEL promotes characteristics they think best for the workforce, not necessarily what is best for the individual student”; “efficacy of SEL outcomes shows it to have a very mixed bag of success” and “research expansion would continue to use our children as lab rats”; protecting individual privacy is at risk as SEL demands increased student data collection, especially after FERPA privacy rules were greatly diminished during the Obama years; the report claims there will be no “federal control,” while simultaneously listing the involvement of 111 federal entities in eight federal agencies; additional teacher time spent on paperwork will contribute to teachers fleeing the profession; and SEL is a thinly disguised way to spy on children and to “step in for parents,” as illustrated by the home visits it institutes. (TheNationalPulse.com, 1-25-19)

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Successful, Reliable CCU

Colorado Christian University (CCU) began as the Denver Bible Institute in 1914. The 34-acre campus is located in Lakewood, about eight miles west of downtown Denver. An expansion project was undertaken in 2012 because the campus designed to accommodate 600 students now has over 1,300 undergraduates, along with those seeking graduate degrees. This is the result of “nine consecutive years of record-breaking enrollment.” Students from all 50 states attend CCU but almost half are from Colorado. The school’s freshman retention rate is more than 90%.

New academic space, a residence hall, and a student center have been completed. In 2018, ground was broken for another residence hall, and more academic buildings are planned.

Expansion has included junior college and graduate studies programs that provide opportunities for students at campuses in Colorado Springs, Englewood, Grand Junction, Loveland, Pueblo, and Sterling. Many of the more than 5,500 adult undergraduates attend these satellite campuses. Once graduate students are added, the total university enrollment is over 8,400 students.

Chapel attendance is an integral part

of student life at CCU for undergraduates who represent 48 denominations. Every member of the CCU community “is expected to live in a way that respects and encourages others by remaining committed to biblical moral standards; this is why all students in CCU’s College of Undergraduate Studies are required to sign CCU’s lifestyle covenant.”

Proximity to the Rocky Mountains allows several student clubs to focus on outdoor activities. Other activity options include a pro-life student organization, a campus newspaper, a literary magazine, and various intramural sports programs.

Since 2000, CCU has sent more than 250 short-term missionary teams to areas of need within the U.S. and over 50 foreign nations. And the university has a new Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering degree that will add students to the School of Science and Engineering, in which enrollment has already tripled over the last five years.

CCU launched the Centennial Institute public policy think tank in 2009. It “works to enhance public understanding of the most important issues facing our state and nation” and “aims to foster faith, family, and freedom, teach citizenship, and renew the spirit of 1776.”

Marijuana Legalization Costs Big

Colorado Christian University’s Centennial Institute released a report that says since legalization of recreational marijuana, taxpayers in that state spend \$4.57 for every dollar the drug generates. Expenses include lost time at work due to absences and productivity decreases, an increased high school dropout rate, treatment costs, and other ways the drug creates social and economic woes.

The college’s vice president of public policy, Jeff Hunt, is also the director of the Centennial Institute that completed the study based on state data. Hunt says, “No matter where you stand in the marijuana legalization debate, having more information is critical to making the best decisions for the future of Colorado and our nation.” He adds, “Like tobacco, commercial marijuana is likely to have health consequences that we won’t be able to determine for decades.”

A separate report shows an increase in traffic accidents among “high” drivers, those who have used marijuana, not commensurate to any increased alcohol-related crashes. A Rocky Mountain regional drug enforcement task force “analyzed data from 2003 to [2018] and found that 43% of drivers in fatal accidents had

drugs in their systems, and 36% of drivers in fatal accidents had marijuana in their systems.”

Colorado dispensaries sold almost \$247 million worth of various marijuana products in 2017. The Colorado Department of Revenue reports that pot sales taxes surpassed those of alcohol in 2014, the first year of legalization.

The data presented by the university didn’t go over well with some.

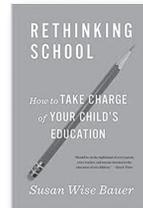
Media relations director of the National Cannabis Industry Association responded to the study saying, “There is no causal relationship shown between marijuana legalization and most of the costs they mention.” This pro-marijuana group’s leader called the Centennial Institute a “vehemently anti-marijuana group.”

A *Reason* magazine senior editor wrote that the findings are “conflating correlation with causation and counting every purported cost to which a number can be attached, no matter how implausibly, while ignoring every benefit except for tax revenue and the increased value of Colorado homes since legalization.” *Reason* is a libertarian organization; those familiar with libertarians know that many want almost everything to be legal. (*Reason*, 11-3-18) (*Vail Daily*, 12-6-18)

Book of the Month



Rethinking School: How to Take Charge of Your Child’s Education, Susan Wise Bauer, W. W. Norton & Company, 2019, \$16.95



Susan Wise Bauer has been a home educator, university professor, historian, curriculum creator, and best-selling author. Her most recent book, *Rethinking School: How to Take Charge of Your Child’s Education*, encourages parents to adjust the education system to fit their children, rather than attempting to change children to conform with the education system.

Bauer begins by explaining the history of the K-12 school system — how it began and evolved, as well as what its strengths and weaknesses have been and currently are. She offers parents feasible suggestions for helping their children overcome challenges that the typical system presents for kids with learning disabilities or differences, as well as gifted and “good” children.

Stating that “Differences can be strengths, given the correct context,” she encourages parents with struggling children to see their children as more than their labels. “If a ‘disability’ really only becomes a problem in one setting — our factory-model K-12 system — I’d challenge that label.” She then offers suggestions for tweaking both teaching methods and the classroom environment to better suit the needs of a variety of children.

For parents with children in the typical education system, Bauer teaches how to become well-informed and how to collaborate with teachers to benefit their children. She addresses topics such as testing and homework, when to accelerate children, how to supplement education at home, and even offers conversation starters for parents to use when children come home from school.

Bauer recognizes that “not everyone can, or should, homeschool,” but ends the book by addressing parents who feel they need to opt out of the standard education system. She provides practical information on how to withdraw a child from school and select a homeschool curriculum; insight for encouraging a child’s independence; and suggestions for thinking outside the box when teaching at home.

To all parents, Bauer offers this wisdom: “As a parent of grown children, a grandparent, and a lifelong academic, I can tell you that almost every parenting and educational decision I made out of fear turned out to be wrong.” In *Rethinking School*, Bauer helps parents who are navigating the school years to avoid this fear-motivated decision-making with her concrete data, seasoned wisdom, and much-needed encouragement. This book will help all parents — regardless of their chosen form of education — to craft the best possible educational experience for their children.

MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley



FOCUS: Dear Homeschool Mom: Balance, Not Perfection



by Gena Suarez

The following was written by the publisher of The Old Schoolhouse® magazine. Reprinted with permission.

Dear Homeschool Mama.

Was your week stellar, absolutely perfect? Did you fail at all, even once? Were there any meltdowns (by yourself and/or the kids)? How about grief or pain — any of that? Did some of the kids run away or starve? The house didn't burn down, right?

Another week in the life of a homeschool family. A family who strives for balance, not perfection. A Mama who loves her children with all her heart but who also keeps it real. A house that is so messy at times, maybe it should burn down (at least things would be sterile), but the important things got done this week, at least for the most part.

If the school work wasn't completed, if the kitchen smells bad (still), if the playroom looks like it went nuclear, if the ants are back because of all the crumbs, know this one thing: you kept the priorities. Your children were hugged; they laughed their chubby little heads off; there were meaningful conversations that happened; they ate just fine (because hoo-boy, you can cook, Mama!); they feel secure, safe, and loved by a mom who's not at all perfect—but never has she claimed to be! She didn't sign up to be the Queen. She never asked to be viewed as some unattainable picture of an angel. She simply fell deeply in love when she was younger... and then sweet babies came along. There's more love in this house than was ever dreamed about;

it just grew as the family did.

These kids of yours see the REAL. They see what's TRUE. Nothing phony's going on at your house. You keep it genuine — sometimes bluntly so, and while you might not feel too balanced lately, even that is actually okay because you're striving for it. And it will come. Give it some time, and don't be too hard on yourself. Did you really think you'd never have a difficult season of life? Your happily-ever-after isn't just around the corner. You've actually been living it all



along. You're going to look back someday when you're really old and totally get it. Keep building memories.

There are some raw, harsh emotions that make the joy even sweeter when the hard days taper off and a new, happier season begins. Chapters. Life is full of them. Some are really great. Some, not so much. Don't sweat that.

You follow the King of kings. He turns ashes to beauty. He also chastises and purifies the ones He holds close to Himself. All things end up working out for good; this life He has given us is so worth it. Such a gift! Your kids see it all; they're learning how to go through these seasons or chapters of life when they, too, will face them later. Finish well, Mama. Model grace.

And we know that all things work

together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. — Romans 8:28

You might say, "Sure. All things will end well, but what about NOW? I'm not making it. I'm drowning."

You are making it, though. Day by day, you do get through, even when it feels really lacking or like a big fat failure. Somehow, He makes a way. Somehow, you all eat, and you even receive special, additional things that are not exactly necessary (like the gift card for coffee a friend gave you last week). His gifts are all around you. Count them! His blessings are actually abundant. The sadness is monumental at times, but joy peeks through, too. He allows the sweet voice of your child to express love to you in profound ways. You marvel sometimes at how compassionate our God is. His mercy. His gift of salvation to us. You are educated. You can read and write. You can put a meal on the table. Your kids are not crying at night for yet another skipped meal or no clothes to wear. God's not left you, Mama. Life might be difficult right now, and there are probably some things you feel will never be resolved unless the Lord performs a miracle. He's in the business, Mama, of the impossible. He can move mountains; He can melt the hearts of men, too. He even steers them. Focus on doing the next thing; that's all.

Look at your plate. It's full. It's overflowing onto the tablecloth and spilling everywhere, even onto the floor. You have a to-do list a mile long. Looking at the whole of it makes you want to cry. Or hide under your bed. Or call your husband and launch a meltdown. What wife doesn't feel this way from time to time? Life is hard! And emotional. And downright painful. It's full of chaos, which makes keeping the list even more difficult. So just do the next thing. Item one. Just that one for now.

Items #2 to #102 will get done when they can. Zone in on the most important thing first (Item #1), which is probably some relational conversation or hug you need to have with a child, or a quick phone call to pray with a friend to help get her through her day. After all, you're known for being a mentor, or at least a friend who is always there for others. Scratch those off; now move on to Items #2 and #3. Pull the meat for tonight's dinner from the freezer. Next...Item #4. Fill in the blank; what's most important? It may not be the dishes. That's okay. They can sit.

You're doing it all, somehow. Not perfectly, not like an expert, sometimes not even to standard, really. Yet you manage to keep the important things right in front of you. Front and center. You know what's important, and your mountain is being chipped away, a little at a time. It's getting smaller. Good enough. Allow it to be good enough.

Well done. Keep walking, Mama. No one is standing over you, waiting to judge. You're doing that enough to yourself already; time to quit that. You are enough because Christ is your Portion, and He is a kind, kind Friend. A gentle, compassionate Friend.

Eyes up. His hand is on your head today.

Paul and Gena Suarez are publishers of The Old Schoolhouse® magazine. They reside in eastern Tennessee and have homeschooled their seven children since 1990. They embrace and promote the biblical philosophy that homeschooling is not so much about education as it is about discipleship — bringing up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). The Suarez family wishes to share this vision around the world as they publish the trade magazine for homeschool families, The Old Schoolhouse® magazine. They can be reached at publisher@theoldschoolhouse.com.

American School: Middle and High School Programs with AP Courses

by Kathleen Conway and Jeff Cox

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When it comes to teaching middle school and high school, it's not uncommon for parents to be intimidated by the subject matter, especially if children are taking advanced math or science or any Advanced Placement (AP) courses. If you've ever struggled with this, you may want to consider American School. We talked to its executive vice president, Jeff Cox, and learned that American School has all the benefits of homeschooling plus some extra assistance you and your student may need.

The interview with Jeff Cox appears in a question-answer format as follows.

The Old Schoolhouse (TOS): What type of student takes courses at American School?

Jeff Cox: We have students from all 50 states and from all different economic, ethnic, and academic backgrounds. No specific geographic area is more popular. Some students complete a full year

of study with us in grades six through twelve through paper-based or online courses. They're homeschooled and want the whole package of courses. And in those cases, the students ultimately earn an accredited high school diploma from American School. Other students just take individual subjects to enhance an existing homeschool program. In addition to the core subject areas, we offer many business, career, and technical education courses. So it's a real variety of students and they come to us for many reasons. Some have been homeschooled their whole lives. Some may be having difficulty in a traditional school setting. There's no specific reason why students enroll with us other than they like the ability to study at home in a safe environment at their own pace.

TOS: How does your tuition compare to similar schools?

Jeff Cox: The pricing is very affordable. A full high school diploma program, which contains twenty units of credit—five per year—is going to cost \$3,600, and that includes everything. So (See American School page 4)

Homeschooling Around the World

by Daniela Silva

Originally printed in the Winter 2018 issue of The Old Schoolhouse® magazine. Reprinted with permission.

Home education began in the book of Genesis, but the modern movement in the U.S. was reignited by ideas from such men as John Holt, John Gatto, and Raymond Moore. Their arguments inspired the emergence of these new homeschoolers, and today, homeschooling families continue to grow in large numbers around the world.

Although the term homeschooling has its origins in the United States, the practice is becoming more widespread throughout the world. But in some countries, parents hoping to educate their children at home still face obstacles.

Germany

In Germany, a family fighting for the right to homeschool has taken its case to the European Court of Human Rights. Dirk and Petra Wunderlich have been

trying for more than a decade to homeschool their four children. On more than one occasion, social workers and police have removed the children from their home, saying it was an abuse of parental rights to homeschool.

Japan

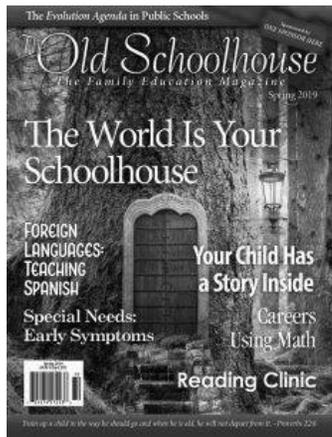
There's a very small homeschooling population in Japan because its legal status remains vague. While Japanese society generally doesn't recognize homeschooling, there's no law explicitly outlawing it. And some parents may prefer home education because bullying is a big problem in Japanese schools.

Mexico

Homeschooling in Mexico, while still rare, is on the rise with over 5,000 families now participating. Some children receive curricular instruction at home because they do not have access to quality education. This is true especially in low-income areas. Statistics show less than half of Mexican children who start (See Homeschooling, page 4)

American School *(Continued from page 3)*

it includes all course materials, grading, and access to the online student center where students and parents can view academic records and receive assistance. It averages about \$180 per course. Similar pricing is available for our middle school program. A full middle school education, which is five units of credit in sixth, seventh, and eighth—so fifteen total—is going to cost \$2,700. In both middle school and high school, students can choose how they want the courses delivered. If they want to do math online but English on paper, they'll have the ability to do that. American School is nonprofit, so we try to keep costs to an absolute minimum. We don't like additional fees. There are always exceptions such as if a student loses a book, but basically the tuition includes everything. For individual subjects, the pricing is slightly different. There are three pricing tiers. We have a value tier in which courses cost either \$200 for a full unit or \$150 for a semester. We have a premium tier which includes AP courses and some lab courses, and those cost \$400 for a full unit and \$350 for a semester. And the vast majority of courses, if they're taken on an individual basis, will be \$300 for a full course and \$250 for a semester. These prices are very competitive and often cheaper than the competition without sacrificing the quality of curriculum.



TOS: Does your program follow a traditional school year?

Jeff Cox: We are open year-round, and we accept enrollments year-round. Students can finish courses year-round as well. It's not uncommon for somebody to enroll at an odd time of year. We like making our courses available to the students whenever they need them. We've found that many families choose to follow a traditional school year, starting in August or September and finishing in May or June, but that doesn't have to be the case. We get the ten major federal holidays off, but other than that we're here. We don't shut down for the summer or take weeks off for Christmas. And we've found that some students choose to "make hay" during the summer months. In everything we do, we're geared toward making courses accessible to students and giving them course materials and assistance as needed.

TOS: Can parents track students' progress?

Jeff Cox: Yes, through our online student center which is password-protected. Students and parents receive a letter right after they enroll with a code and password that allows access, and the online student center contains all the student's academic records. So they'll be

able to see that their student got this particular grade on exam one in this course and this grade on exam two in that particular course. For online courses, there are observer accounts that we can set up for parents. So parents can have as much or as little involvement with their students' courses as they see fit. Some parents, especially as students get older, shift more responsibility to the students. But many parents like to see what their students are working on. We can have it set up that parents get grade notification emails. Our system allows for quite a bit of parental involvement and interaction if the parents so choose.

TOS: Anything else?

Jeff Cox: We're in our 122nd year of offering education through distance learning. We started out offering courses through the mail. Obviously, the internet didn't exist in 1897. But everything we do is really student-driven. We allow students to work at their own pace. Students should not feel burdened by a classroom setting moving too quickly or too slowly for them. So everything we do is geared toward the student learning in a comfortable, safe environment at a very reasonable cost.

We have "Four Cs" that we're all about at American School. The first is curriculum—which includes a huge variety of courses, not only in English, math, science and social studies, but also fine arts, world language, and trade courses. Cost is the second "C." Tuition monthly payment plans are available for students in our full-year and diploma programs. And then we have credibility, the third

"C." We are accredited by three major accrediting bodies, which ensures our courses are valid and recognized by reputable agencies. There are so many places that offer high school diplomas quickly, and a lot of times, they're not accredited. Having that accreditation is very important to us. And we offer caring student service which is the fourth "C." We reply to emails within one business day. We're available to answer phone calls during regular business hours. If you leave a message, we reply the next business day. We're always available to assist students. Students are often in a classroom of one, but they're not alone when they study with American School. There's a whole staff that's here, ready, and willing to support them.

Kathleen Conway is a freelance editor for The Old Schoolhouse® magazine. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Virginia and Master of Arts in Mass Communication from the University of Georgia. She spent 20 years as a writer, producer, and reporter for CNN and HLN (formerly Headline News). She's married to KC, has two stepdaughters, Katie and Grace, and an eight-year-old son. They live in Lilburn, Georgia, near Atlanta.

Jeff Cox is a 1998 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, where he majored in American Studies. He has worked for American School in a variety of capacities for the last fourteen years, including instruction, curriculum, and most recently, public relations.

Homeschooling *(Continued from page 3)*

first grade will complete high school. In Mexico City, education reform efforts have faced tremendous opposition, particularly from the teachers' union. The Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) website states, "Without clear compulsory attendance laws, homeschooling is flourishing legally. As a general rule Mexican families homeschool without significant interference from the government."

Canada

The news is a little better in Canada, which currently has tens of thousands of homeschoolers. And the provinces of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia even provide financial support to parents who choose to homeschool. Among the reasons parents choose to home educate are overcrowded classrooms, inflexible school curricula, children with special needs without specialized education, ineffective evaluation systems, and problems with student discipline.

Spain

According to HSLDA, the legal situation in Spain is somewhat ambiguous, because under certain circumstances, homeschooling could be considered illegal.

One hurdle is that there is no process for pulling children out of the school system. Some families have been fined for homeschooling while others have never registered their children with the school system.

France

France specifies that it's the education, not the school, which is compulsory from the age of six to sixteen. So, homeschoolers can take classes by correspondence or lessons under the guidance of the family. For children not enrolled in correspondence courses, an inspector is referred to the family's residence. According to HSLDA, families must annually notify the appropriate authorities of their intent to homeschool. Although the law only gives school inspectors the authority to verify the teaching in a homeschool each year, officials may require homeschooled students to be tested, order children back to public school after only one negative report, or threaten to declare children in danger of mistreatment, to coerce parents to accept the inspector's demands.

Italy

Educazione Parentale is the term used in Italy for parental education or homeschooling. The country maintains websites of educational organizations with activities that inform and guide parents. However to join homeschooling, the family must submit a notice to the school board annually. Parents must also prove they have both a technical and economical capability to teach their children. "Technical capacity" means that the parent must

have completed two full academic years of schooling beyond the level of the children she is currently teaching.

Switzerland

Homeschooling in Switzerland is rare, and parents who choose to do so must first see if the local district authorizes the practice. If asked, parents must respond to an application for legal approval. Teaching materials and lesson plans are provided for free by local schools. In addition, families receive visits and tutorials by members of local associations.

China

In China, the Ministry of Education has issued a statement officially condemning homeschooling. It also warned parents that the practice is forbidden. Their policy states that "[Students] should not be allowed to study at home

to replace the national unified implementation of compulsory education."

Egypt

In Egypt, some public school students say the curriculum proposed by the country does not take into account the individual needs of each student. Nevertheless, Egypt doesn't recognize homeschooling and forbids homeschool graduates from enrolling in the country's public universities.

Norway

As recently as February 2018 a twelve-year-old boy in Norway was chased by police and removed from his

home for several days after his parents decided to homeschool him. The parents made the decision to home educate because he was being bullied at public school. His mother says she followed the law, but because of a misunderstanding, the school did not give approval for him to be homeschooled.

Brazil

In Brazil, the Supreme Court recently ruled that although homeschooling does not violate the constitution, it must be recognized by federal statute. Brazil's fast-growing homeschooling movement is hoping the government will soon recognize homeschooling as legal.

While homeschooling has grown exponentially in some places, there is still much work to be done by homeschooling advocates before it is accepted and legal throughout the world. It should be noted that homeschooling laws do change.

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