

## Education = Academics + Values

By Douglas R. Johnson  
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It seems to me that having a school system concentrate solely on academic standards leaves a very large hole which will be filled with something.

Perhaps it will be with drugs or alcohol. Perhaps it will be with witchcraft or atheism. Perhaps it will be with some violence ideology.

I do not believe that school can be truly values free.

Schools claim to be a partnership with the parents in the education of the youth but this has broken down to "teach values at home" and keep schools solely for academics.

I believe this approach undermines whatever values are taught at home in the following ways:

- If there is no reinforcement, the child is given the message that the values of the parents are "outside the norm" and thus should be questioned.
- If any competing values are expressed, they can be taken as alternate values to those taught at home.
- Teaching that all value systems are equal is a value system itself which may contradict the values taught at home.
- Encouraging students to question values taught at home as a way to teach students to think, directly undermines those values.

Once the student questions the values taught at home he/she immediately starts "shopping" for a new value system, whether consciously or subconsciously.

Of course, if the School System thinks it knows best with concern for values, then it thinks it has a "mission" to change the values from that which is taught at home to some "better" value system.

I believe the concept of a locally elected school board is a mandate for the local community to have the values taught at home be a vital part of the school system.

I believe we need to find methods and procedures that support and reinforce those values which are taught at home.

And, of course, we want to protect the value systems of the minorities independent of any judgement of worthiness and certainly any action taken must conform to law.