



## Does your local school administration see you as a blessing or a bother?

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It's that time of year when schools are ramping up for another school year! In some areas, school has already started while in other areas it will be commencing in the next week or two (the lucky kids get to wait until after Labor Day).

Earlier this week, Brenda and I bumped into an older acquaintance who had raised their children in the school district that the Finley kids attend. In the course of the conversation, this individual offered that they had frequented the principal's office many times over the years to serve as the "unofficial spokesperson" for the evangelicals in the community. "If there were things going on in the school that we had concerns about, I was the person who went to talk to the principal about them."

I have to admit that I've cringed when reflecting upon this conversation throughout the week. A couple of disclaimers: 1) I'm not suggesting that Christians shouldn't voice their concerns or work to challenge their local schools when things need addressed. There are certainly times when we need to address issues that impact not only our own children, but all the children in our local schools. 2) I have no idea if my friend had ever offered anything but critique or criticism to the local school administration. This friend may have been deeply invested in serving the local school, but I am unaware of whether that was the case or not. I was only told how they worked "to keep things in line."

As I've thought about this experience throughout this week, I've silently pondered this question: "Did the school principal see my friend as a blessing or a bother?" Again, there is much about this scenario that I do not know and thus I can't really answer the question with any certainty, but it hasn't kept me from wondering how my friend was received by the school administration.

We probably all have these types of relationships in our lives. Some people are a blessing to us and others are often a bother. Are you excited to see them walk through the door or do you duck away and try to find an escape route? Does the sight of their name on the caller I.D. make you want to pick up the phone or let it go to voice mail? When they leave do you feel energized or drained? Does the possibility of a meeting with them make you eager to see them or anxious and full of dread?

### Author

The weekly eNews is provided by CGGC Executive Director Lance Finley



We are called to be people of blessing: we've been blessed to be a blessing. Do your local school leaders see you and your fellow brothers and sisters as a blessing or a bother? Do we only bring critique, criticism and concern or do we offer partnership and service to our local teachers and school administrators? We love, worship, follow and serve a God who cares deeply about the children in our world. Isaiah 65:23 gives us a glimpse of the kingdom of God in its fullness: "They will not labor in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune." Our local schools provide a wonderful opportunity to love and serve others in the name of Jesus and bear witness to the fact that we serve a God who loves to see children flourish.

So have you or your congregation interacted with any of your local schools? When you have interacted, have you been a blessing or a bother? Does the principal of the local school smile when she sees you walk through the door or does she look to hide somewhere in her office? Does the announcement of your awaiting phone call make the principal want to pick up the phone or pass the call off to someone else? Are you blessing or bothering?

I think one of our greatest opportunities to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to impact our communities is found in blessing our local schools as they seek to educate young people. You get to invest into the lives of children that God loves deeply. You get to establish relationships with teachers and parents and others in the community that may have never been exposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You get to mobilize the many gifts and talents of the local church to love and serve others in Jesus' name. I think God has blessed us so that we can be a blessing to those in our neighborhoods, in our local schools and in our local communities.

I came across a great article from our friends at Youth Specialties entitled **3 Questions To Ask When You Meet With Local School Administrators**. You can find the entire article here: <https://youthspecialties.com/blog/3-questions-ask-meet-local-school-administrators>. While it's written with youth workers in mind, I believe it offers three great questions that any Jesus follower or local congregation could use as they seek to be a blessing to their community schools:

- **What is your vision for the school year? How can we help you accomplish that?**
- **How can we serve your staff and faculty?**
- **How can we support lower-income students?**

While you or your local congregation can't do everything, there's probably something you could be doing to be a blessing to a local school in your community or neighborhood. Why not take a risk and shock a school administrator by asking for an appointment, showing up without a list of concerns or complaints, and asking the above questions? I'm going to guess that they might be surprised and relieved and you might be surprised by how much they're willing to welcome a group of Jesus followers to help (although it may take a little time to build some trust).

Let's live our lives in such a way that we put Jesus on display. Let's seek to be a blessing instead of a bother.

I'd love to hear about what some of you are doing to bless your local schools and bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the kids in your community.

Christ's Peace,

**Lance**