



Christian Educators Journal

October 2023

Hello readers,

I hope you are finding refreshment and community at CEA this year. It's always such a joy to spend a few days reconnecting with one another. Once this conference is over, though, another way to keep in touch with your colleagues throughout the year is by reading *Christian Educators Journal*. It's our goal to serve you by sharing stories of Christian education and providing analysis of a variety of subjects facing Christian educators today.

Like many forms of print media, we are starting to explore ways to provide you with that same set of resources in an easy-to-access format. This year, you may notice increased web presence, and we continue to promote our fully digital version of each issue on our website, cejonline.org. If you have suggestions about how to further improve our website, emails, or accessibility, please let us know!

To choose the issue topics for this year, we went back into the *CEJ* archive and found two topics we'd covered more than ten years ago that deserved revisiting—parent partnerships (December '23) and inclusive education (February '23). We'll start the volume with an issue guest edited by David Smith and the Kuyers Institute of Calvin University (coming to mailboxes soon!) and end the volume with our usual resource review.

Below, you'll find an issue summary for the year.

October 2023 (guest edited by David Smith et al.)—The Civic Hospitality Project

How should Christian education prepare students to take part in civic processes in a society marked by deep disagreements and resentments? Christian faith requires more than tolerance of those with whom we disagree—Scripture calls us to love our enemies and exercise hospitality to strangers. What happens when we connect these themes to civic engagement and think specifically about civic hospitality? How can we help students to learn the dispositions that might enable them to love their neighbor in civic spaces amid tensions and differences? In this issue we will explore how a focus on Christian hospitality can shape education for civic virtue.

December 2023—Parent Partnerships

Connecting and communicating with parents is one of the most important yet challenging aspects of education in the twenty-first century. While the media is filled with negative labels like “helicopter” or “snowplow” parents and political leaders have weaponized parent-run school boards, parents are actually

vital and valuable agents in their students' academic and spiritual education. So: how does your school work with them? What are the best practices for communication at various grade levels? How do you encourage appropriate levels of involvement from parents? What do parent-teacher conferences look like at your school? Do you get parents into the building for career chats, field trips, or volunteering? What assignments do you give in class that encourage students to engage with their parents? We want to hear the success story of how you reassured parents about a touchy curriculum choice or enticed parents to attend a college fair.

February 2024—Inclusive Education

Christian schools have long been known as welcoming and supportive communities for students with a variety of learning needs. It has been more than a decade since CEJ has focused on inclusive education, and we are eager to hear how schools have found creative ways to include and support students with disabilities in the body of Christ. Ideally, this issue will include students with physical disabilities (e.g., Spina bifida, limited mobility, or visual impairments), cognitive impairments or emotional disabilities (e.g., Down syndrome, emotional impairment), or neurodivergences (e.g., autism, ADHD). What are the best practices for serving these students in the general education classroom? What unique programs does your school offer to enrich these students and those around them (sports, clubs, tutoring partnerships)? How do you train aides, paraprofessionals, and faculty alike? What physical spaces and adaptations do you offer? We're hoping to hear from classroom teachers, support staff, inclusion coordinators, parents, and even students themselves.

April 2024—Resource Review

Each year we highlight the best books, films, websites, teaching tools, and other resources for Christian school teachers. We publish reviews of student-facing material (like which books to stock in your classroom library) as well as materials relevant to school staff (like curricula or books about teaching). Articles may focus on one text or may be written in a list style featuring multiple texts around a particular theme.

This coming January, we will begin to think about our issues for the 2024-25 school year. If you have topics you'd like us to consider or even an article you'd like to write, please let us know! We love to hear your ideas. You can contact us at cejeditor@gmail.com.

Thanks again for your readership and for your help in making CEJ a practical and inspiring tool for Christian teachers worldwide. Look for our October issue in your mailboxes and online (cejonline.com) soon.

Yours,

Abby Zwart
Editor