

MLC Philosophy of Education

We believe God's Word clearly teaches that parents, not schools, are ultimately responsible for training their children.¹ Consequently, our role, if invited, is to serve as educational partners with the home. Understanding our roles should then motivate us continually to communicate in order to share the benefit of our mutual experiences, perspectives, and expertise. We believe education works best when the school becomes a consistent extension of the Christian home and church.

First and foremost, we believe all education is value filled. The only question is this: What values fill your education? We believe God's values should permeate every aspect of education. Biblical principles need to be the unchanging foundation of all our activities. No part of our life is exempt: not our homework, not our social conversations, not even our behavior on the athletic field. Students must be trained not only to think biblically, but also to live biblically.

We believe the teacher is the living curriculum³. We know that a student, in fact, becomes like his or her teacher⁴. Teachers are interpreters who give meaning to knowledge and life experiences for the student. Consequently, we believe Mountain Lake Christian teachers must be: not just believers, but spiritually mature, growing Christians; not just good role models, but possessors of a biblical world view; individuals who not only know their subjects, but who are also passionate and enthusiastic about them; not just good speakers, but effective communicators; not just competent instructors, but creative leaders with high expectations; those not just willing to teach students, but who sense a calling⁵ to work specifically with our students. We believe teachers have an awesome responsibility and opportunity to shape lives.

Although schools by nature seek to educate efficiently by grouping students, we retain a simultaneous and unwavering commitment to the individual. We treasure and affirm the uniqueness of each student. We believe in the "ladder of maturity"⁶, a concept that suggests each student develops various aspects of his or her life at different rates. If we fail to understand the various rates, we miss great opportunities to nurture growth. Although students often learn differently, we believe God has gifted every student and intends for each one to be successful according to his or her gifts⁷. While Mountain Lake Christian remains committed to prepare students for any college or vocational training, our ultimate goal is to assist a range of Christian youth in the discovery and development of their gifts and abilities for the purpose of a life of service to Jesus Christ.

We believe the environment in which one learns is critical. We believe education improves when students are free to participate without fear – not just from physical danger, but also from emotional and intellectual danger. We believe students respond best when treated with dignity and respect. We believe everyone benefits from encouragement and accountability. Accountability happens best within a small, personal environment. There must be absolutes, clear boundaries, and logical consequences attached to our choices, but our goal is not rigidity. We seek to create a mature school culture that encourages and expects self-control and self-discipline. Our goal is not simply obedient youth, but mature and discerning young people capable of making good decisions when they are on their own.

We believe a comprehensive and foundational core academic curriculum is essential. The basics will never go out of style. Systematic and rigorous academic study is the foundation of quality education. We believe students will rise to the challenge of high standards and tough expectations. We also believe students must learn beyond pure rote knowledge. Discovering individual learning styles and then refining the corresponding study skills are essential. We seek to train students to use reasoning skills. Students must be taught and challenged to think at high levels. Our curriculum should prepare students not just for college, but for life.

As you reflect on Mountain Lake Christian's philosophy of education, know that we treasure your prayers and support as we seek to make the beliefs that guide us a reality in more young lives as we move into the 21st century.

¹ Duet. 11:19

² MLC Mission Statement (Jan '03)

³ MLC Living Curriculum Teacher document (Jan '03)

⁴ Matthew 10:24-25, Luke 6:40

⁵ The Purpose Driven Life, Warren, P229-231

⁶ Email, Jon Keith, 12-12-02

⁷ Ephesians 4:8-15; The Purpose Driven Life, Warren, P236-244