Controversies In Education Essay, Research Paper

Controversies in Education

Public schooling has been the predominate form of education in the United States for many decades; however, recent statistics demonstrate a rise in the number of home schooling participants. On the other hand, the majority of these participants eventually return to public school systems once they reach the high school level. The reasons for this movement are based on the opportunities for socialization and academic competition provided by public schools. Public education also provides superior classroom interaction directed by a more qualified faculty. Although home schooling has become an appealing educational alternative, public schools continue to provide better opportunities resulting in a more well rounded citizen.

Despite the increasing number of home schooled students due to overprotective parents, public schools continue to offer the best form of education in our country today. To begin, public schools provide a more satisfactory and effective form of education. In home schooling, no competition is attainable to push the child to achieve a higher level of education; however, public schools offer a sophisticated classroom setting in which the students are constantly competing with each other. Many of the children attending public school work hard to earn the most efficient grade in the classroom, but a child learning at home probably will not care for his or her grade. What parent would give a low grade or even fail their child? Every parent feels that his or her student must obtain the most adequate grade. Next, in public school, a student can receive help from several different people within a classroom. To explain, one may ask another student or the teacher for assistance on an assignment (Hawkins 57). Such a variety of help is not attainable in the antisocial home schooling society.

Another vital reasonon for a child to go to public school rather than home school would be that of the child’s outlook on society. William Martin, Director of communications for the National Education Association, the nation’s largest teacher’s union explains:

“If, say, a fifth-grader goes through a book at an accelerated pace, It’s good for him to see other kids who struggle with the same material, so when he goes into the work force, he will know that not everyone learns at the same pace,” (Hawkins 58).

Furthermore, a student that is taught at home by parents will grow up acting and thinking the same as the parents do. It is important for a child to find his or her own personality with their own visions and outlooks, not just mimic that of their parents. Public schools offer a plethora of different opinions and views concerning world issues and people. A child that understands that everyone thinks differently is a child who will succeed in the real world.

Along with these ideas, one more plausible reason is public schools help to provide for a more well rounded citizen. Many participants in the public/home school controversy argue whether or not home schooling impedes the development of social skills in a student. “In a survey of 115 educators, more than 80 percent believed home schoolers were at a disadvantage in the social development of the child,” (Hawkins 57). Activities may be available to home schoolers, such as church activities, sports leagues, and scouting; however, home schooling deprives the child of important social experiences. These “social experiences” create an inspirational part in a students’ life. Public schoolers have this opportunity with the involvement of school sports, clubs, dances, and other social activities. With out these didactic experiences, a student could result in a socially immature young adult.

Along with social skills comes the topic of friends or acquaintances. The majority of children under the age of 18 rely on school as the primary source of social interaction. Friends are easily made at public school because of the many opportunities to interact with other students in class, on the bus, or at school functions.

Being home schooled until third grade, it was hard for me to make friends at a young age. The other children that lived on my street would often poke fun at and would not play with me. They did not understand why every morning when left for school I would just be waking up or why when they would return home from school I was in the front yard playing with my dog. One of the little boys who lived at the end of my street thought that it was cool my mom was my teacher, but most of the others child were still cruel to me. Later when did attend public school for the first time, I remember being so nervous and shy. Bathroom breaks, raising your hand to speak, and walking in a line, all seemed foreign to me. My mom had not covered all the new rules and regulations that accompanied public school. It took a while to get used to. While I did enjoy getting to sleep in and work at my own pace, home school was an experience I will never force on my own children.

In another instance, arguments arise over the consequences once home schoolers reach the adult working level. Gary Marx, senior associate executive director at the American Association of School Administrators, comments that “while the parents may seem to be saving their children from confronting diversity in thinking, race, economic status and social skills, in the long run, these young people will still have to go into the world. And these kids later will feel deprived,” (Hawkins 58). In the real world, business people need the skills to work well with others. Deprived home schoolers will find it difficult to interact in the work place because of their lack of contact with other children during their previous years. These students will find that adapting to a more social atmosphere is difficult at an adult level. In one instance, a girl, Teren Williams, was searching for a job. The job for which Teren applied almost did not hire her because they felt that her home school education would cause her social skills to not be “strong enough,” (Kennedy 50). Teren shows only one example of difficulty faced by home schoolers. Many other instances occur where they overcome problems due to their social standings.

A controversial argument has also occurred over the issue of UIL activities in public schools. Many home schoolers, to help advance their social skills, want to participate in these activities. The concerned parents of these students feel that because they pay school taxes, their children have the right to participate in UIL extracurricular activities. However, many public schoolers feel that giving home school students UIL rights would be unethical. Allowing home schoolers to be involved in a public school’s UIL program would cause a school district to lose money in the long run. Also, a concern that affects public schoolers involves the no-pass, no-play rules. Grades are really not determined at the home school level; therefore, distinguishing a passing or failing home-schooled student would produce a difficult task for a parent. Another reason that home schoolers should not be allowed to participate involves the fact that they do not have the competitive advantage that a public school student is subject to. Through the opportunity of being in school and training at the same time for that UIL activity, public schoolers can create a stronger UIL organization than if a home school student just came to play. For these reasons, “most states resist the idea of home schoolers taking courses or participating in extracurricular activities” at a public school (Hawkins 58). Many believe that the involvement process for home schoolers would cheat the public school students who actually work hard to achieve their goals in a more social setting.

Even though home school is on the rise, public school still provides a more adequate form of education. More over public education advances the ideals of and preserves the democracy in the youth as it equalizes the opportunities among the different races and classes. In conclusion public school offers an effective form of education that produces well-rounded individuals ready to enter the world.