



Dear Parents,

As I look at the sweet faces of the little ones who come in the door of our school each day I am reminded of my own children when they were so small. What a wonder they are... so full of life and curiosity, ready to learn and absorb everything around them. And boy are they observant! How many times have I seen my own bad habits repeated in the face or the words of my little ones. Embarrassing sometimes, isn't it!

I learned a lot about myself in those days as well. I never fully appreciated the concept of the "mother bear" until I became one. I quickly learned that you can mess with me, but don't you dare mess with my kids! We work so hard to protect them that it becomes second nature. We look for the car seats with the highest safety ratings. We check out the toys they have or want to have to make sure they are safe and don't have small parts or dangerous chemicals. We scrutinize the foods they put into their mouths so they get a balanced diet. We make choices on their behalf with regard to the television so they aren't influenced or negatively affected by what they might see and hear. No doubt you checked out a variety of preschools before you enrolled them into MJCA to find which one would take the **best** care of your precious child.

The thing about children is that they don't mark time. They keep getting older. They move on to new phases. They keep presenting us with new opportunities to preserve and protect them. Sadly, (and yes, in some respects I do mean sadly) they don't stay in preschool forever. They grow up. Soon you will be faced with new decisions to make about where they will go to school and who will be teaching them. That innate desire to protect them doesn't stop when they enter school. That instinct should move you to ask yourself some hard questions... What kind of person do you want investing and influencing your child each day? What underlying philosophy do you want to set the standard for everything your child learns? How important is it for your child to see the hand of God in every subject, in every class? Consider the following questions as you ponder the educational choices that lay before you.

Do you want your child to see God's guiding hand in the formation of our country as men, who either truly loved God, or at least revered Him, worked together to establish a nation built on Biblical principles?

MJCA will do that.

Do you want your child to understand the order and logic in mathematics that comes from the creative hand of an almighty God who designed structure and order in this world?

MJCA will do that.

Do you want your child to see and appreciate that, in the beginning, **God created**... it didn't just happen by accident or fate.

MJCA will do that.

Do you want your child to learn the truth about relationships... that marriage is about a man and a woman who commit themselves to each other in order to create a family?

MJCA will do that.

And when your precious little ones are hurting, either from a fall or a fight with a friend; do you want someone who can take them into her arms and talk to them about how much Jesus loves them and will pray with them on the spot?

MJCA will do that.

Raising children who respect and love God is a difficult thing in this culture. Sometimes it seems like everything out there is warring against us as we strive to bring up our children to be God honoring, responsible, respectful citizens. Is it impossible? Certainly not. It requires diligence on our part as parents, and partnership with others who share our values to bring it about. Is it costly? Definitely. Most things that are valuable *are* costly. And consider for a moment the monumental cost should you fail. Can MJCA guarantee that your child will turn out to be a God honoring, responsible, respectful citizen? No. No one can. If I have learned nothing else it is that there are no guarantees in parenting. You work hard, you invest yourselves in your children and your family, but, in the end there truly are no guarantees. As I have often told my own children; that is part of the adventure we call life!

As you contemplate the options that lie before you and consider the future educational opportunities for your child remember that you do not have to do this by yourself. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon states, *"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!"* MJCA is here to provide you the support that you need as you strive to raise up your children. Many of us want children who will grow up to make a difference in the community and the world around them. We want our children to be able to make a stand for Christ and share their faith with their friends and neighbors. What better way to prepare and equip them to make that stand than with a biblically based education that provides them with a world view that is centered on God's truth. What better environment to nurture that strength of character than one in which godly men and women have invested in your child as they grow and mature.

Greg & I have four children. Our third child is about to graduate from college. It's hard to believe that much time has passed. It has happened all too quickly. People would try to warn me about that, but you really can't comprehend it until it actually happens to you. We have been investing financially in our children's education for over twenty years. I can't even begin to think about what the total dollar figure would look like. If you were to ask me, "has it been worth it?" I would simply have to look into the faces of three wonderful adults who love and honor God, who are respectful and responsible citizens in their communities and I would enthusiastically say, "Yes! It's been worth every penny!"

Thank you for letting me share my heart with you. May God bless you and guide you and your family.



Lori Scheck