

Philosophy of Education

The independent school sector is based on a noble political ideal.

“The very idea of freedom presupposes some objective moral law which over reaches ruler and ruled alike. Subjectivism about values is eternally incompatible with democracy . . . if there is no Law of Nature the ethics of any society is the creation of its rulers, educators, and conditioners”.

- C.S. LEWIS

CHI believes in a free, open and prosperous society with officially recognized diversity in its education sector. Philosophically this is known as pluralism, a recognized social theory which is an alternative to monism and anarchism.

For structural pluralism to exist, it must be an operating principle in each social sector that the government is not the only source of values. Further, stakeholders must have functioning rights to support their decisions. Here are some basic democratic principles for good schooling:

1. Thriving families are a key factor in maintaining a free and open society. It is fundamental to religious freedom as well to keep the family as a viable institution.
2. Enabling families to educate their own children effectively is important because education is one of the few significant roles left for parents in the modern welfare state.
3. Family enablement in education means:
 - a) choice of schooling;
 - b) up-to-date information about educational institutions and resources;
 - c) access to support services
4. Parents need and are entitled to sound knowledge about schools, including specific performance indicators based on published standards.
5. Schooling is a major mediating institution which;
 - a) is a legitimate local community function;
 - b) should not be a bureaucratic state monopoly;
 - c) has its own distinct and independent professional standards.
6. Each child, regardless of which school the parents select, is entitled to a **quality** education between the ages of 5-18.
7. At each level, the child is **entitled** to know/learn whether the instruction is suitable for his/her particular talents.
8. Formal education is the process enabling development of a child’s character by promoting a personality ideal through schools. It is achieved through the articulation of worldviews and the inculcation of preferred behaviours in the classroom. This is a public process and should be transparent in all school systems.
9. Schools become officially **accountable** by identifying their operational philosophy of education in a manner suitable for public discussion and by having their performance reviewed and published by appropriate, impartial authorities on the basis of professional standards.
10. Schooling is a vital mediating institution between family and society. It should itself be structurally diverse so that schools can be oriented to the family or the church, or to the state depending on the family’s convictions.

The Benefits of Quality School Choice

This is a short list of the benefits of a pluralistic school sector:

1. Parents informed about choices.
2. Educators knowledgeable about standards.
3. Public debate about real issues.
4. Professional credibility for independent schools.
5. School improvement with integrity and particularity.
6. Sound and open competition among school systems leads to quality.