



INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 2019

THE CONNECTER

CONNECTING HEARTS OF PRAYER FOR
THE NATION TO GOD AND EACH OTHER!

Your Prayers Are Needed for Public Schools



By David Schmus,
Executive Director
Christian Educators Association International

Our youth are in crisis—depression, suicide, sexual/gender confusion, and a myriad of other kinds of spiritual and emotional brokenness—and **more than 85% of our nation's children attend public schools.** Christian educators are a powerful force in God's hands to pour out His grace, love, and truth into the lives of our youth. After 15 years as a public high school educator, I joined the leadership of Christian Educators Association International (ceai.org). **The Lord spoke into my spirit, "My army is already in the schools—your job is to wake them up."**

How do we help these often overwhelmed educators to step out in faith to partner with God to bring transformation to their classrooms and schools? Prayer.

First, pray directly for your local educators:

- Pray through the staff list on your local schools' websites, and even send an email or note to each educator as you pray.
- Go to everschool.com and sign up to pray for a specific school.
- Join a Moms in Prayer group for your local school (momsinprayer.org)
- Call your local schools to find out if they have a Christian club, then ask for the names of the faculty advisers. Pray with and for them.
- Visit your local school (bring treats!), meet the principal, and ask how you can pray.

As you intercede, **pray that Christians in our schools would see what God is**

doing on their campuses and how to partner with Him. Pray for courage and boldness in their witness. Pray that they would understand what they can do legally to live out their faith. (CEAI can help with this: ceai.org/whatcanwedo).

Second, Christian educators themselves need to pray. Teachers and administrators have a greater degree of authority to pray over their classrooms and schools. A high school principal faithfully prayer walked his campus every morning. After a fight broke out, he later realized he had failed to prayer walk that day.

One student was aware of a darkness that would constantly follow her around at school. When she finally described this to a teacher, he asked her, "Where is it now?" Her response was, "Oh, it's outside...it can't come in your room." This teacher was a Christian who prayed over his classroom. We need prayer outside of schools, but we desperately need prayer inside as well.

If you know a Christian educator in our public schools, encourage them to connect with us at CEAI. We encourage, equip, and empower Christian educators to walk out their calling in our schools, and we protect them legally should they face opposition.

As the Body of Christ, **let's embrace Christian educators for who they really are—the most strategic missionaries in our nation.** ♦

FIRST FRIDAY PRAYER

September 6, 2019

On the first Friday of the month, we encourage all to fast and pray for America using the prayer focuses in this newsletter.

STAFF AND TEACHERS

Pray that God would continue to raise up godly leaders within the public school system. Intercede that school staff would become aware of their liberties, and exercise them, in order to build Christian community within the school-affiliated buildings in which they work.

CHURCH ENGAGED IN SCHOOLS

Pray for local churches, community organizations, and families to have an awareness of the outreach opportunities present. Pray for and with staff and teachers, for Bible clubs, and for Christians to join school boards and/or parent/teacher organizations.

SALVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Pray for public school staff, students, and families, to find salvation in Christ resulting from the Holy Spirit at work through the Christians working in public schools. Pray for encouragement for the Christians in the public schools and who serve in political offices that affect our schoolchildren and families.

To see God's purposes for America fulfilled through sustained prayer and Spirit-led obedience



A Teacher's Testimony: Prayer Changes Hearts in the Public Schools

By "Christian," a second grade teacher

After twenty years of homeschooling, I headed back to work as a teacher. My hope was to work in a Christian school, but God had other plans for me—my neighborhood public school. I was anxious about this transition. What would I find? Could a Christian even teach in a public school?

What I found surprised me—a godly principal and a school filled with Christians who were shining the light of Christ into the lives of their students. Their love and friendship overwhelmed me—I **wondered why God had put so many Christians in this one place.** As the years passed, I discovered one of the reasons we were all there together—we **were called into the trenches, every day walking into spiritual warfare.**

The children I teach often face overwhelming problems. Some parents make very little money and cannot pay the electric bill; some are homeless and move from one roach-infested place to another—often to avoid paying the rent. Some children are being raised by single grandmothers and live with half-siblings—all from different fathers. Some children come from extremely poor countries and speak no English. Some parents are drug addicts; others are in jail. Some parents make a good living and are able to buy nice homes and cars, but they have their problems too. Every day there is a story that tugs at my heart:

- "In my family no one talks to each other. We all go to our rooms with our phones and computers."
- "My dad never calls me and he lives

far away."

- "My mom was fired from her job for stealing money."

- "My mom wants my stepdad to leave because all he does is play video games. I wish he would leave because he's mean."

Some children have been sexually abused. Many have severe anxiety and anger management issues—exploding over minor disappointments and irritations. It is common for children to fall asleep or have crying episodes, and I haven't even mentioned those who are managing Autism, learning disabilities, or ADHD.

"Children are allowed to pray in public schools!"

Despite all this I have hope. **I know that Christ called me and that I am not alone.** Another teacher is my prayer and accountability partner. We talk every morning, share Scripture verses and words of encouragement, and pray for each other. My sister formed a prayer group of women who pray for my students. **Every year God puts Christian children in my class who witness to their faith and whose parents pray for me. And almost daily I see God answer prayer.**

One year I taught a child who had learning disabilities, hated school, and had a history of extreme behavior problems. A Christian student befriended him. Whenever he would begin to have a meltdown, the friend would put his hand on his back and gently whisper, "It's okay. You can

work this out." God used a team of people to help him that year, and He gave me insight into how to handle the student's anger. He had a turn-around year. Years later, his mom told me he was an honor student and was active in school clubs.

One day a boy who had many troubles broke down sobbing, saying, "I'm a total failure!" The kids all came around him and hugged him and told him all the things they loved about him. As he was crying, one child said, "Let's pray for him!" Children are allowed to pray in public schools!

A student did not talk and I didn't know why. She didn't write much either, and I wondered if she had a learning disability. I kept praying that God would show me what was wrong. Then one day she wrote, in complete sentences, a horrific thing that had happened to her. She was then able to get help.

Sometimes, I ask my students a question like, "What are we going to do about this problem of everyone getting on each other's nerves?" A Christian student will say something like, "We should pray about it" or they will quote a verse they've learned from Awana like "Be ye kind, one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another."

I am grateful to God that He called me into the public school to bring His light. It is not easy. Many days I am overwhelmed by the needs of my students and the darkness that surrounds them. Nevertheless, prayer is powerful and God's Word gives me hope and courage to love God and the children in my school. ♦

God Has Given You a Prayer Request

By Jennifer Rowell, Good News Clubs

There is an unbelievable opportunity *NOW* to reach public school children, grades K-5, with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This opportunity has been available since 2001, and has been secured by a decision of the Supreme Court.

Yes, you read that correctly, **we can take the Gospel into the public schools.** Jesus asks us to come to Him as a child, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus loves children. Children today face broken homes and families, environments polluted with drug and sex addictions. Children need the hope of the Gospel and they naturally come to Jesus with a simple faith and belief. Barna

in a local church. Volunteers teach a Bible story, memory verse, missionary story, and lead songs.

Last school year, I started a club that grew from 9 to 52 kids. We had to move from one room to two rooms; three teachers from the school began to help. The students looked forward to Club meetings and invited their friends and classmates. A few students started bringing their Bibles to school. **Although the office staff and principal were hesitant in October when the club began, by the end of the school year they thanked us and acknowledged that the children loved**

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research studies show that 80% of people who are Christians today came to know the Lord between the ages of 4-14. It is called the "4/14 window." The doors to reach them are open wide right now, but we don't know how much longer. We must take advantage of this opportunity.

A powerful ministry, Good News Clubs, meet after school in public elementary schools. Part of Child Evangelism Fellowship, the purpose of Good News Clubs is to explain the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and establish children in the Word of God and

the Good News Club. We developed a good relationship with the school staff by serving them a "Thank you for sharing the kids" lunch.

The experience of seeing children grow into a relationship with God and loving His Word at one elementary school in rural Maryland has inspired me—**how can more schools and children be reached?**

In Luke 10, even though Jesus sent 70 out to spread the Gospel, the workers He sent were not enough to bring in the whole harvest. As a result, **God gives US a prayer request.** God tells us to pray earnestly, to beseech him, to beg, to implore for more laborers. **There are simply not enough of us to reach the multitudes of children in the public schools.** The Lord commands us to ask Him to send more laborers to bring in His harvest. Will you be a part of those laborers? Visit cefonline.com. ♦

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PRAYER GUIDE FOR EDUCATION



Pray for Students

Pray Luke 10:2, Proverbs 22:6.

The largest mission field in the U.S. today is the schools. Pray for efforts like Good News Clubs, FCA, and Young Life that are bringing the message of the Gospel to students in schools. Luke 10 shows us that we have authority in prayer when we are engaging onsite. Pray for more people to serve in ministries in the public schools and for those servants to use their authority in prayer.

Pray Psalm 8:2.

"Children are allowed to pray in public schools!" Pray that children will freely exercise their constitutional right to pray and love their fellow students with the love of Jesus. Pray for ministries like ClaimYourCampus.com, that inspire students to pray.



Pray for Teachers

Pray Luke 6:40 ESV.

"The most strategic missionaries in our nation" are teachers and they also have tremendous influence. In fact, every public school teacher is an agent of the government. What is taught has lasting and profound impact.

Find more resources at IFApray.org.



PRAYER GUIDE FOR EDUCATION



Pray for State & National Education Leaders

Pray Luke 6:40 ESV

Our educational leaders affect each and every public school student. From Common Core to revised sex education standards to No Child Left Behind, these policies started as ideas in state and federal departments of education and university education programs, from there they were mandated eventually to local school districts. Once passed and promulgated, these programs are very difficult to change. Pray for godly education reform—in government as well as college and university education programs. Intercede for **CampusRenewal.org**, a ministry uniting student believers.



Pray for Local Education Leaders

Pray 2 Corinthians 9:8.

The members of your local school board and the principals of local schools set the tone for each jurisdiction and each school, as do the parent/teacher organizations. Is there discipline or disorder? Is there freedom for parents to be involved and active or are important decisions made behind closed doors? Have you exercised your right to have a voice in these settings? **These bodies are an excellent place to add action to your intercession.**

Intercessors For America
800-USA-PRAY (872-7729)

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

Staff Bible Studies In Public Schools Are Changing The Culture

By Danielle Nadler

There is a quiet, yet powerful movement in public schools in suburban Washington, D.C.

Teachers, counselors, administrators and other staff members of the schools in Loudoun County, Virginia—from elementary to secondary—are gathering on campuses for weekly Bible studies. Staff members meet at school to read from the Gospels aloud and pray.

The impact of the before and after-school Bible studies has been palpable, according to Brett Leshner, who's helped launch and support the groups through a nonprofit, Staff Fellowship Inc.

"It's giving people the freedom to transform their work relationships from just a vocational dimension to a spiritual dimension," Leshner said. **"We're seeing the lives of staff, as well as students who they're praying for, be transformed just by inviting God to do his work in our public schools."**

During his career as a school counselor, Leshner launched faculty Bible studies within each of the schools he worked. He formed relationships with other staff members eager to study the Bible with their colleagues and pray for the specific needs impacting their campuses. As he started sharing the experience, more and more faculty around the county were eager to connect in similar ways. First as a student and later as a guidance counselor in the schools, Leshner always felt passionate about the public schools being ripe with opportunities to

make an impact in Jesus' name through love and service.

"I believe **the public school system is the most influential community impacting families today, second only to the local church,**" Leshner said. **"The vast majority of people have a connection to the public schools in some way."**

Leshner's weekly on-campus studies are changing lives. A middle school nurse regularly prays in her office with a teacher before school. The nurse noticed that one particular student would step into her office almost every day. "The nurse told the student, 'I know there often aren't any medical needs when you come see me, but I'm glad you visit.' And the girl replied, 'Well, I come see you because I feel the safest in your office,'" Leshner said. "We're seeing direct fruit from staff praying together for students and for staff and asking God to make himself more present in people's lives."

Staff Fellowship's goal is to launch and support a staff Bible study in every one of Loudoun County's 91 schools. "With how many schools we have in this county, there's such a great need to connect and network through the body of Christ. Our hope is to grow and see the Lord's work multiply."

Learn more about how **you can start or support a staff Bible study in a public school**, or how to further Staff Fellowship's mission, at stafff.org. ♦

—Author Danielle Nadler is a Staff Fellowship board member and blogs at DanielleNadler.com.



FIRST FRIDAY PRAYER CONFERENCE CALL

Please plan on setting these important 30 minutes aside to join with hundreds across the U.S. in praying for America, its leaders, and its citizens on **September 6, 2019 from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. (ET)**
Call: (712) 775-7430