



Emanuel Lutheran School

179 East Main Street Patchogue, New York 11772
631.758.2250 Fax 631.758.2418 emanluthpatchsc.org

WHY IT IS A BLESSING TO SEND YOUR CHILDREN TO EMANUEL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

By: Wayne Caldicot

Phys. Ed Teacher, Emanuel Lutheran School

On days I'm not working at Emanuel, I have been back to the district where I spent my entire teaching career working as a substitute teacher which has enabled me to remember the highs and lows of public education. Because I've been busy seeing student populations, I've had a renewed awareness of the many aspects of both education public and parochial. I did this when I first arrived at Emanuel in 2012, and from all this thinking I've created it for you.

At Emanuel I was able to see all the students, class by class, in one long day of activity. At the other district I have been in multiple subject areas, and spent most of the days in grade levels 6 - 12. On some occasions I have observed classes in the elementary school.

Here goes....

It's that time again when you have to assess what the Emanuel experience does for your child and for you. Soon you will make the decision to continue at Emanuel or go to the alternatives, public education or another parochial site. It is my intention to help you make the decision. I want to offer you, from an insider's perspective, my teacher's perspective, and one as well as a parent, just what the value is here at Emanuel. Let me start with this, all people who are educators are working in a field in which their primary goal is to work with children. We, as managers of your child's education, are the teaching and administrative staff. We are well trained in skills for learning and communication. We are the behavioral mentors that your child looks to, responds to and models. We are devoted to our responsibilities and take them very seriously.

The small staff at Emanuel has impressed me with their efforts, ideas, classroom management, teaching and mentoring skills. They have embraced the combination of academics with the Fruit of the Spirit which is character education presented in the mode of parochial or religious instruction. There isn't a day that goes by that I do not see an example of the Fruits of the Spirit, support and guidance. In the public district, there too are many devoted teachers, but there are also examples of people not working at their previously high levels of performance, and the Character Education has become fruitless. The greater the number, the greater the variation of skill you will see in the student populations, Administrators and the teachers.

Emanuel's students are making progress on a daily basis whether it be academically, socially or emotionally. Of course I see a few stagnated efforts, and some regressions, but while the students are on their journey through childhood, into adolescence and early teens, this is to be expected. All our students are in their own growth period. For me, in any one work day, I can observe this: that each class has a particular defined social identity. It is manifested in the whole group, in small group dynamics as well with special friends, best friends and peers that are working together.

Recently at Emanuel, I had one of the best days I ever had in my career. Everything seemed to be so easy, so positive and so good that I talked about it for days. **The Fruit of the Spirit in my gym all day long!!** The students were engaged in our activities, there was sharing, laughing and there was so much positive interaction that I hardly had a re-focus or re-direction to do....and it added to my feelings that I wanted to share it with the parents as I did with the administration. Who and what stood out? We were in a Badminton unit and on this day there was Samantha's reaction to Andrew's badminton shot and her comment to him "that was a really good shot"! The 5th graders played each other in both one on one and team competitions... the middle school students had three courts going without a single argument and only a little fuss....the kindergarteners all were amazingly good with their eye-hand coordination, some were having more than a few volleys, and for those children who couldn't volley, they stood in lines while I hit the birdie to them for a return.... the first and second graders used the short handled racquets and had a great deal of success which led to smiles, laughing and cheering all class long "I did it!" "I hit it!"

Days like that are precious to a teacher. It was a combination of the Emanuel experience that we tell you your child will experience. The advantages of a small setting, the safe and disciplined environment, the intimate social climate, the interaction of students united by similar values and goals, the materials, the instruction and instructors, and mostly demonstrations of the students with regard to their actions and skills towards each other that were all aligned so positively.

Let me tell you about value now...of what you get at Emanuel...

When I go to the public school there are many more variables in play. There are so many students and so much diversity in every classroom that alignments for the class are difficult to achieve, though definitely possible. Population numbers are a major issue and it creates an issue of accommodation for all attendees. Then there are the sensitive areas of defining a class by its social mores, academic skills attained and demonstrated, social and behavioral skills demonstrated, aspects of cooperation and willingness to cooperate. When you have large numbers of students, you have a large and varied range of successes. While a majority of the students are on grade level, meeting expectations and are advancing onward toward their grade level promotions they are often mixed together in classes with greater numbers of students who have little or no education success. Most classes are general academic level classes with few advanced placement opportunities. It is my observation that in the general education classes there is this, a distinct correlation of the students who will demonstrate distracting or disruptive behaviors, lateness to class, and disrespectful relations to authority figures to the students who have a history of lack of success in school. The Emanuel experience is quite different than that. It is here that I see the best examples of social, behavioral and academic success. Small school, small classes at Emanuel allow the teachers and the students a controlled setting where we offer daily demonstrations of organized and well managed education settings which are comparable the best aspects of each level of the public school experience.

Let me explain and use an example something simple- getting on line and transferring from one setting to another. As I often say, mostly in September, October and November, being on a line is a skill that requires patience, awareness and respect for personal space. When I am having the Kindergarteners, First, Second grade classes come in, I see what I observed in early grade schools buildings (Pre/K through 3), I see our teachers have created short lines, with line leaders and door holders, messengers etc.... I observe them to be quiet, aware of personal space, and following directives. As the classes come in to my gym space, they stay in the line until they are released from their classroom teachers responsibility to mine. This is the same for the 3rd-4th graders, a little bigger, more independent and aware of the rules, and of course, adhering to the rules... The 5th grade, and all of the Middle School students have all these qualities and habits ingrained and easily adhered to that. There are few, in any incidents or issues. The students have been trained to listen for the instructions, follow the

directives, maintain and or check their impulsivity and discipline and focus on the activities set up for them. When we went to the pool during March, and we had to enter the YMCA, transfer from the buses to the lobby, we performed the skill with ease. We often were complimented on our student's good behaviors.

All day long, I observe the beauty of the healthy, high discipline environment Emanuel offers. The uniforms, the class size that can properly accommodate the students, the active engagement of the student-teacher relationships, the Fruits of the Spirit always in play. Our students are treated with respect and often receive the praises they hear at home where the parents are paying attention to their needs. Our students are in a safe and orderly environment managed by caring people who have come to Emanuel to give. The atmosphere and environments are clear of distractions. The learning channels are open and flowing... Friendships are being made, and children are experiencing positives within the classrooms, the gym, the recreational areas and the offices....all of these things makes Emanuel an appealing school. There are few distractions or disruptions. If there is a problem which is in need of extra attention it will be settled quickly.

The value on all of this is measureable, you get what you pay for. You want your child to wake up and want to come to school every day, where they will have an exciting day filled opportunities to learn about subjects taught, to exchange ideas and make friends, and to engage in the Fruits of the Spirit.

Let me give you one more example of Emanuel's value I recently experienced. At a Home basketball game, a contest vs. Laurel Hill, Alexandra Eye made a foul shot, her first shot made in a basketball game and in the next moment we heard the reaction of Alex's dad who called out " I got it on video!", as we all heard this and laughed, Hailey was seated next to me, looked me in the eye, and told me "that was priceless" ... she was correct, it was simply stated and/but exactly how much that moment was worth. For what Hailey saw, felt and recognized was the love of a parent for his child's success, a child who is her teammate and her friend... she was happy for Alex and her Dad. There is a lot of this at Emanuel. I know, this does happen in public schools, but this happened while we were at Emanuel, and that this particular demonstration of love and friendship had me thinking about all the good I see here, and got me thinking I need to tell you that if and when your child comes to Emanuel that their experiences will be for the most part, just like that... sharing and caring...respectful and well manned students are enrolled here, students that are your children's friends, students that they are learning from and giving to...students who are enriched by and are enriching the programs here.

As we know, when your child has school success it leads to a good post-school employment opportunity and responsible adult relationships. As they get older it becomes more and more important for the child to be able to independently demonstrate admirable behaviors, carefully chose their friends and influences. If you continue to provide a suitable environment for them to get educated in, work in, grow in and achieve in they will have the success you envisioned for them when they were born.

I think Emanuel is a very good place to start... Think of the cost of living, with regard to education at Emanuel, as a well spent investment.

Live a life worthy of the Lord.....bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God. Col 1:10