

*"I think that states should explicitly acknowledge the option of home schooling because its going to be done anyway. It is done in every state of the country and therefore the best thing to do is to get the home schoolers organized," [Clinton] said. "But if you're going to do this, your children have to prove that they're learning on a regular basis and if they don't prove that they're learning then they have to go into a school either into a parochial or private school or a public school," he added. "If you're going to this your kids, the children have to learn. That's the public interest."*

Yet, Colorado public school teachers are fuming at being graded. How dare we question the outcomes of their work?!

Why is it, that these so-called professionals, be they teachers, caseworkers with Child Protective Services (CPS) agencies, therapists, etc. all rely on the built-in credibility attached to their title without having to earn that credibility?

Even though these 'professionals' can't even agree among themselves, their golden words are automatically more correct, more useful, and more important than the words, observations and actions of the average joe on the street.

I can't tell you how many times I've been opposed to these 'professionally' designed policies and practices, especially with CPS agencies, and have been confronted with the "Are you a professional? Are you educated in this area? If not, you're not qualified to judge" mumbo-jumbo. I guess nine years of intensive research and hands-on practice counts for nothing unless you have a string of letters behind your name.

Naturally in the course of their work, they are allowed to practice 'professional discretion' due to their prestigious titles, regardless of their level of intellect or character. They can do no wrong, even if proof of wrong-doing, incompetence or the outright failure of their pet theories is staring you in the face.

Look at our schools. They are pathetic compared to the education American children received prior to the Department of Education's formation. When I look at eighth grade textbooks from the last century, I am amazed at how far our schools have fallen. They look like post-graduate texts. I doubt many college students could pass those classes today.

Is it any wonder that home schooled children can graduate high school at eleven years old, college at thirteen and get their masters degree by sixteen?

My own son is a prime example of the success of home schooling. I home-schooled him from sixth grade (where I had to start him with third grade spelling and math thanks to the dumbing down of the public school I pulled him out of) to halfway through ninth when he went to live with his father. He became a high school dropout and never completed ninth grade. Yet, at seventeen, he passed the ACT with a 22. Many public high school graduates can't even do that with twelve years of schooling.

Excuse me if I don't weep crocodile tears that the schools must be graded. They've got it pretty darn easy since they get to grade themselves.

Dear Teacher: If you want the credibility associated with your 'professional' status, you're going to have to prove it by me. You'll have to actually educate those students of yours. So far, the public schools have fallen far short of the mark in my eyes. I only regret that there is no provision to fire the real losers out there and replace them with competent and dedicated, non-credentialed educators so we could have a real comparison as to the credibility of credentialing.

And to the competent teachers out there: if you watch the incompetence of your colleagues in silence, you aren't doing anybody any favors by your inaction. Least of all yourself. Their failures rub off on you.

*Dedicated to my senior year math and science teacher - one of those inspirational teachers who found a niche that didn't compromise her professionalism.*