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In My Opinion

My Ideal Education

We Hindu kids want our own schools

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I have found that many Hindu children sent to private Christian schools know far more about Christianity than Hinduism. Children are becoming less and less religious in our community, whereas in other religions, children are well taught about their religion and have a strong faith. Some of my neighbors attend private Christian schools and some go to Islamic schools after regular public school.

I think Hinduism in America is being attacked in three ways. First from outside through conversion and not being represented well enough. Second, the walls of defense, which were Hindu education, are crumbling. Conversion relies on the fact that people know very little of their religion. Third is from within. Hindus have stopped performing rituals to God. We need a Hindu school to strengthen our walls against attack.

Geographical environment is important for this school. It should be located near a hill, with a lot of tall trees and a river

running through the grounds, or maybe a lake with fish. According to vastu shastra (text of spiritual architecture), all these features are good. I believe that when I stand on that earth, with the trees all around me and I see water flowing, the devas (angels) will be all around, making me happy. The Hindu school should be a complex, not just one building, almost like a monastery, having a temple with a tank, recreational facilities, two or three multi-purpose, single-room buildings and of course, the main building for classes. Such an environment is essential for the proper teaching of Sanatana Dharma

We would continue to learn the same secular subjects as in regular schools. Hindu parents want to make sure their kids go on to university and get good jobs. But we need to know about the history of Sanatana Dharma, which is preserved in the Puranas and other writings, and all the math and science and psychology that is already part of our scriptures. We should also learn mantras. Along with European languages, we should be able to learn modern Indian languages and Sanskrit.

After school, we could participate in clubs or societies that teach meditation, Vedic math and astrology, dancing, hatha yoga, Indian music and art. The concept is to combine secular Western studies with the teachings of Hindu culture to form an excellent curriculum to help make Hindu students well-rounded and aware of their culture.

Most of all, a Hindu school will provide an environment superior to other schools. If the principles of Sanatana Dharma are properly observed, there will be nothing bad there, only good. In our public schools now, we have a policy of zero

tolerance for physical violence. But nothing is said of mental violence. In fact, teachers think nothing can be done about it. Some kids go and shoot other people because they are being verbally tormented, either at home or by other kids. According to our religion, we should never, ever taunt or hurt anyone. Meditation could help settle our feelings so we don't get so upset by people around us. If we pray to Ganesha before starting school and say the mantras with sincerity, we will get strength in ourselves.

Another important part is the fact that such a school could stop the current decay from within by encouraging children to do puja and prayers, which form the greatest bulk of Hindu rituals. Most importantly, the Hindu school should work on building national recognition as an academic institution. Such recognition would also show that we can do just as well, and contribute just as much to this great country as people of any other faith. Hindu schools in America need to be established so that our way of life is strengthened among children, because they are the people of tomorrow. If Sanatana Dharma does not exist with them, then it will not exist at all.

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