

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos Meets With Pastors to Pray for Children and Schools in America

Betsy DeVos, the U.S. secretary of education, who is known to be a strong evangelical, met with several pastors recently to pray for safety as the school year begins. Entrepreneur Kenny Koldenhoven of Lake Mary, Florida—a longtime friend of the DeVoses—set up the meeting in Washington, D.C., with DeVos and his pastor, Shaddy Soliman of Lake Mary Church, along with two other local pastors. They met for 45 minutes specifically to pray.

“There’s a culture beneath what you see on the surface of prayer and intercession for those who are in authority, believing God that the Lord will direct them,” Shaddy says. “So we prayed exactly that with Secretary DeVos—for direction from the Lord to the education system and Department of Education in her term.

“We also had a couple other pastors who prayed the last verse in Malachi—that the hearts of the children be returned to the fathers.”

Kenny explains that he and Shaddy are seeing God move in unprecedented ways through Lake Mary Church’s ministry to the youth in schools. And by uniting in prayer, Kenny hopes this move of God will only increase.

“So one of the reasons I wanted to get up to D.C. and pray with Betsy DeVos over the school system was that we see the Spirit of the Lord move in these schools,” he says. “And we see that these children and these middle schoolers and high schoolers—we see an influx in the youth groups across the

nation. So that was one of our prayers—that we see a rise in the youth groups all around the country and that it becomes evident that this younger generation ... will make a conscious decision to look at a church or a mentor or youth group.”

I’m old enough to remember that we used to pray the Lord’s Prayer every day at my elementary school. This was before prayer was taken out of the schools. Since then, things have seemed to really deteriorate.

I also remember people saying that the worst problems in school in the 1950s were kids lying, chewing gum and pushing each other. But today, the problems are much more serious, including drugs, unwanted pregnancies and school shootings. It reflects what is happening in the larger culture.

But I’m encouraged that our secretary of education took time to pray. I know that many people around the country are praying. And in this case, it was a private meeting, not open to the press, but I appreciate Shaddy and Kenny sharing their experiences with me on my podcast. You can listen to that episode by [clicking here](#) or clicking on the podcast icon in this article.

Shaddy and Kenny were both encouraged by their exclusive time of prayer with DeVos, and they were both impacted by the secretary of education’s passion for the youth in our nation.

“Her passion for what she’s doing was so evident,” Kenny says. “She’s in the same boat as Donald Trump. She doesn’t need to be doing this, but she does it for the love of the next generation and what she sees fit to be the most equal and the best way for children to succeed in life and get a proper education.”

Shaddy encourages Christians across the nation to get on their knees and cry out for the school system if they want to see revival. What we do behind the scenes, Shaddy says, “will bring the results that everybody wants.”

Thankfully, there are churches like Lake Mary Church that are working hard to reach the next generation—whether that means contributing to school pantries or raising money for athletic programs or mentoring young people.

Be sure to listen to my full interview with Kenny and Shaddy. I think what they have to share will encourage you and even embolden you to pray more fervently for today's young people.