

Re-visioning

A vision for learners

and learning

## May 2021

values poster_3

# Rationale

*‘A Vision for learners and learning was developed in 2002 through a consultative process involving schools and regions within Lutheran Education Australia. The framework provides an overview of how Lutheran education is formed and shaped by its beliefs, while meeting legislative requirements and reflecting current understandings about learners, learning and learning communities.’*

(*A Vision for learners and learning introductory pages*)

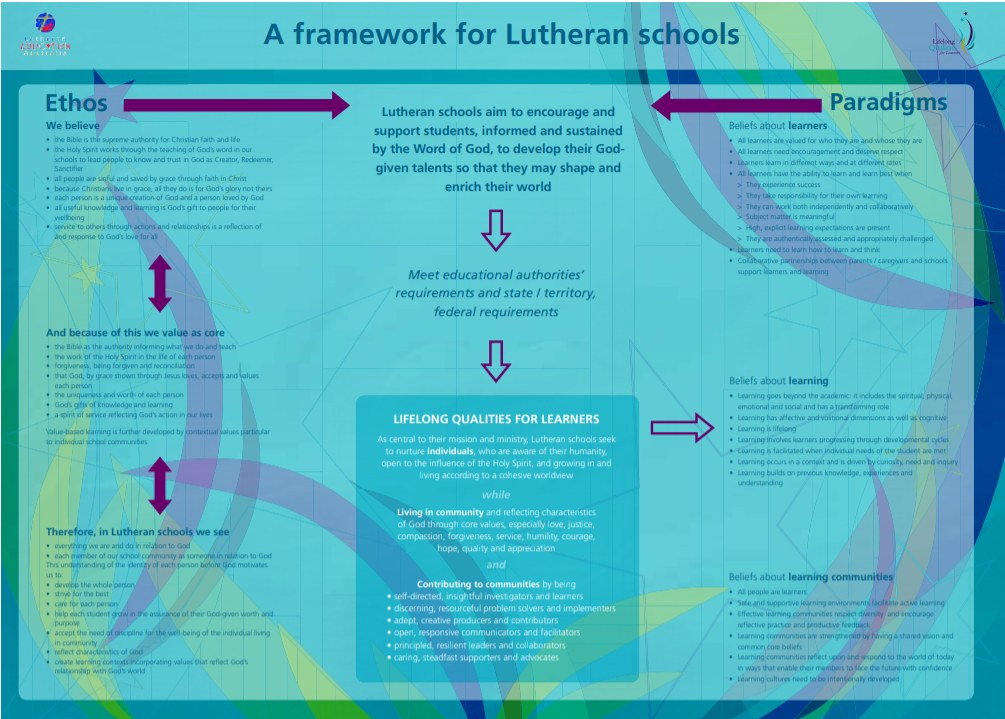
*A Vision for learners and learning* is future focussed in its articulation of the *Lifelong qualities for learners.* It also provides an explanation of the Lutheran theological beliefs that inform the way learners and learning are viewed in Lutheran schools and early childhood services. As Lutheran education is constantly improving and innovating it is timely that we revisit *A Vision for learners and learning* and consider how our Lutheran identity shapes our beliefs, values and practice. [Growing deep as a leadership and formation framework](http://growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au/) also provides foundational statements that shape the way we see learners and learning and guides us to Excellence in outcomes for all learners in Lutheran schools and Early childhood services (ECSs).

Phase 1 of the project engages schools and early childhood services in revisiting *A Vision for learners and learning* through resources that can be used in workshops or discussions with different groups in the school community such as from school council members to the learners themselves. A range of different ways for engaging with the document have been provided to meet the different needs and time available in each community. The information and feedback received from schools and early childhood services will be considered by an expert reference group to develop a draft for validation in schools and early childhood services.

# Context

A Vision for learners and learning provides [A Framework for Lutheran schools](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/a-framework-for-lutheran-schools/?wpdmdl=2162&ind=1541638343329) that provides an articulation of how Lutheran beliefs inform practice in Lutheran schools and early childhood services.

The ethos of the Lutheran school is informed by beliefs about God, the nature of people and the relationship God seeks with each individual, which in turn informs relationships with one another and the environment. Since this ethos is deeply held, certain things are highly valued and they influence and motivate behaviour. This ethos comprises the left column of the [framework](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/a-framework-for-lutheran-schools/?wpdmdl=2162&ind=1541638343329) and grounds the worldview of the Lutheran school. It should underpin each school’s mission statement, hence the solid arrows are used to make links. In addition, Lutheran schools are bound by legislative requirements which, together with current beliefs about learners, learning and learning communities, also shape experiences in the school. However, these elements of the framework are somewhat fluid. Legislation and government requirements change over time. Knowledge and understanding of learners, learning and learning communities are informed by current research. As research in areas like science and the social sciences grows, so does an understanding of these elements. An example is brain research which, in recent years, has revealed new insights into learning and the nature of learners. Thus, the right hand column of the framework is linked by less solid arrows, indicating its more fluid nature. The framework is cohesive as each belief in the right-hand column is in alignment with the ethos elements. Thus, ethos underpins all that is done and said in the Lutheran school. The mission statement and beliefs about the lifelong qualities of people who have attended Lutheran schools find their genesis in ethos. These lifelong qualities in turn are supported by, and support, beliefs about learners, learning and learning communities (paradigms). While ethos is founded on the rock of faith and the paradigms are more transient, being based on what the sciences reveal at this moment in history, together they make a cohesive framework for education in Lutheran schools. (*A Vision for learners and learning introductory pages*)



# Purposes for the Re-visioning A vision for learners and learning

* To engage with the richness and diversity within and between schools and ECSs in the process of re-visioning *A Vision for learners and learning* across Lutheran education ([Growing Deep, Vocational practices: Community building](http://growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au/index.php/vocational-practices-2/))
* To celebrate and grow collective identity as Lutheran schools and ECSs as we re-vision A Vision for learners and learning ([GD, VP: Strengthen Lutheran identity](http://growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au/index.php/vocational-practices-2/))
* To affirm and grow contemporary learning in Lutheran education guided by our core beliefs and values about learners and learning ([GD, VP: Excellence in learning](http://growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au/index.php/vocational-practices-2/))
* To further develop a culture of reflection, collaboration, innovation and creativity that drives ongoing transformation and improvement so that we may reach our highest potential ([GD, VP: Ongoing improvement and innovation](http://growingdeep.lutheran.edu.au/index.php/vocational-practices-2/))

# Who can we engage in this process?

* school councils
* exec teams
* curriculum leaders
* teachers
* students
* parents

# How can we engage in the process of Re-visioning A vision for learners and learning?

Schools or Early childhood services (ECSs) determine the time and groups to be engaged in the process depending on their needs as some schools may have just been through a process of reconsidering the needs of their learners and learning while for others, this may support a fresh engagement in considering the needs of learners and learning. Each school or ECS chooses the level of engagement that best meets their needs. The resources provide some suggested ways of engaging with the project and providing feedback and schools can also innovate and use these resources to design their own workshop. Workshop options include:

* one-hour discussion (fast food)
* two hour workshop (pub meal)
* a day workshop (gourmet degustation)

Schools and early childhood services can engage a wide range of groups or a small number of staff in the workshop process. The workshop could be the focus in any of the following settings:

* staff retreat day
* staff meeting
* exec team meeting
* online parent and student forums
* parent information night
* school council retreat/meeting
* afternoon high tea/ wine and cheese for volunteers

**Please engage with regional leaders (Kimberley Powell, LEVNT, Derek Bartels, LEQ and Andrew Bradtke, LESNW) who can support you through this process and co-facilitate these workshops.**

The resources will engage participants in considering the beliefs and values that inform their vision for the learner and learning in Lutheran education. The following question provides a focus for the revisioning of a learner and learning:

* What are the beliefs and values that shape our vision for the learner and learning?
* In what ways can Lutheran beliefs and values enhance our dynamic vision for learners and our approach to contemporary learning?

# A Vision for learners and learning

The following visual representation could be developed progressively through the workshop as participants explore how a vision for learners and learning is seen through the lens of the beliefs and values of Lutheran schools and ECSs.

**The learner and learning**

**Graduate profile**



Alternatively, A framework for Lutheran schools from A vision for learners and learning could be reimagined in

Evidence and beliefs about excellence in learning for learners

Lutheran beliefs and values that inform the way we view learners and learning

**Excellence in outcomes for the learner**

**Graduate profile**





## Fast Food (one hour option)

|  |
| --- |
| Purpose:  To engage with *A Framework for Lutheran schools* using a thinking routine such as the [4 Cs](https://www.nesacenter.org/uploaded/conferences/FTI/2013/handouts/VT_4CsRoutine.pdf) or an adaptation of the Traffic light to provide feedback and recommendations to the Expert reference group who will incorporate the feedback in the new *Vision for learners and learning*.  You will need:   * Copies of *A Vision for learners and learning* (if available at the school or ECS) * Resource 1,2,3,4 * Three different colours of highlighters for each participant, eg red, green, yellow |
| 1. Share the quote:   ‘I *believe that A Vison for leaners and learning in Lutheran schools is one of the most important accomplishments of Lutheran Education Australia (LEA). It represents the culmination of a lengthy development process and reflects the thinking of a wide range of practitioners on learning in a Lutheran school. It challenges us to consider the beliefs and values that direct our practice, and it calls us to be consistently true to them*.’ Adrienne Jericho  Briefly introduce and show a copy of *A Vision for learners and learning* that was produced in 2002 and revised in 2005 and 2013. It is often most identified by the [Values poster](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/lql-values-poster-a4/?wpdmdl=4419&ind=1516580991263). Also show *Growing deep* as a foundational framework for Lutheran schools and ECSs. *Growing deep* articulates the beliefs and practice of Lutheran schools and ECSs and the review of *A Vision for learners and learning* will inform the completion of *Growing deep* with the articulation of Excellence in outcomes for *Growing deep* and Lutheran education.   1. Provide copies of [*A Framework for Lutheran schools*](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/workshop-resource-framework/) *(resource 1)* [*Rational, Explanation, Uses*](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/workshop-resource-framework-explanation/) *(resource 2)* and the *Lifelong qualities for learners (*[*resource 3*](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/workshop-resource-lifelong-qualities-for-learners-1/)*) and (*[*resource 4*](https://www.lutheran.edu.au/download/workshop-resource-lifelong-qualities-for-learners-2/)*)* and the highlighters 2. Ask the participants to review the documents and use either 4 CS or Traffic light to identify aspects of the documents that are still relevant and meaningful, need some clarification or editing and those that are not relevant or meaningful.   CONNECTIONS: What connections do you draw between the learning described in A Vision for learners and learning and your school or ECSs approach?  CHALLENGE: What ideas, positions, or assumptions do you want to challenge?  CONCEPTS: What key concepts or ideas do you think are important and worth holding onto?  CHANGES: What changes in attitudes, thinking, or action are suggested by A Vision for learners and learning, either for you or the community?  OR  GREEN LIGHT I like this and would like to keep it  AMBER LIGHT I am unsure about this and would like to discuss it and possibly change it  RED LIGHT I am challenged by this statement and would like it omitted.   1. Discuss their findings in pairs or groups depending on the number of participants.   On a shared document (poster/slide/ A3) work through Resource 1 to reach consensus on what is helpful, needs some change and what could be omitted.  Discussion to close the workshop:   * In what ways can Lutheran beliefs and values enhance our dynamic vision for learners and our approach to contemporary learning? * What advice do we want to provide to the expert reference group who will review the feedback? |
| FEEDBACK  Make a copy of the collated feedback and email to [lea@lutheran.edu.au](mailto:lea@lutheran.edu.au) . |

## A Pub Meal (two-hour option)

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| Purpose:  To emotionally engage participants in considering the future of their children or students and to spark curiosity about the purpose of learning.  The re-visioning for learners and learning begins with the end in mind and a focus on what excellence in outcomes might look like for learners through the development of a graduate profile and consideration of the question; *What is our vision for the graduate of (insert school or early childhood service name)?*  *You will need*  *Resource 5,6*  *Scissors, paper, textas* |
| 1. *Excellence in outcomes* Consider images of learners and learning from the school prospectus/brochures, website, social media etc and ask each participant to discuss and **generate** responses to the question:  * What does *Excellence in outcomes* look like at (insert school name) Lutheran school or ECS?  1. *Excellence in outcomes: global perspectives*. View the excerpt from the video [Rev Dr Chad Rimmer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rWyNPR1NJI) (view from 1:58 -18:53). Participants discuss in small groups or pairs and **generate** ideas to respond to the question:  * Considering the needs of the world, what might *Excellence in outcomes* look like for learners and learning in a Lutheran school or ECS?  1. *Gallery walk* Participants explore different perspectives on learners and learning by going on a walk around a gallery of quotes (See Resource 5) posted on large sheets of paper around a room to **identify** and **generate** further ideas around *Excellence in outcomes for learners and learning*. They return to their groups and discuss and sort their ideas*.* 2. Share with the participants that Lutheran schools engaged in a process to identify excellence in outcomes for learners and learning in 2002. It culminated in the development of the *Lifelong qualities for learners*. Share the document (See Resource 6) and participants consider how it **connects** to their ideas. Make available a range of resources such as paper, scissors, coloured textas, etc. Participants **create** a graphic to **elaborate** on their ideas and create a new framework that articulates *Excellence in outcomes* for learners and learning. 3. Groups share and others can ask clarifying questions.   The following questions may be helpful in focussing the discussion in your context.   * How do the learners see the world and their place in it? * How do we want them to see themselves and learning? * What kind of people do we want them to be? * What do we want them to believe? * What do we want them to value? * What kind of relationships will they nurture with their peers, the wider community, and the world?  1. Take photos of the information and share with participants that the information will inform the review of *A Vision for leaners and learning.* Theexpert group who will use all of these developed in schools and early childhood services to develop A vision for learners and learning. |
| FEEDBACK  Make a copy of the collated feedback and email to [lea@lutheran.edu.au](mailto:lea@lutheran.edu.au) . |

## A gourmet degustation (a day workshop)

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| Purpose:  To engage with beliefs and values about learners and learning to consider a vision for learners and learning.  You will need:   * Blank strips of paper * highlighters * Copies of the *Lifelong qualities for learners* (See resources) * Quotes (Resource) * Beliefs and values (Resources) * School or ECS prospectus, brochures, teaching and learning handbook |
| 1. View [The adaptable mind](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=937iCwJd3fI&t=140s) to stimulate thinking about learners and learning into the future.   Share the quote*:* ***Education is not just about the teaching of a what (some particular subject or another); it is also about the growing of a who****. Christenson, T*  Pose the question:   * What is our shared vision for the ‘who’ we are nurturing? * What kinds of learners and learning does the world need? * How do we describe the graduate of our school or ECS that will be able to respond to the future and needs of the world?   If conducting the workshop with students, the following questions may be helpful:   * What do you wish your schooling would help you do or be? * What do I believe and value for my future?   The following questions provide alternatives that may be helpful in focussing the discussion in your context.   * How do the learners see the world and their place in it? * How do we want them to see themselves and learning? * What kind of people do we want them to be? * What do we want them to believe? * What do we want them to value? * What kind of relationships will they nurture with their peers, the wider community, and the world?   Participants work in pairs or threes to discuss the questions and brainstorm their initial ideas to describe the graduate of their school or ECS. They record their ideas on strips of paper and display in a shared space as an emerging vision of the graduate or learner.  *2. Gallery walk* Participants explore different theological and education perspectives on learners and learning that may inform their graduate profile by going on a walk around a gallery of quotes (See Resources for quotes) that are posted on large sheets of paper. They each record the important beliefs and values for their graduate profile. Participants gather in groups to discuss, sort and give titles to their lists. Groups share their lists and add to their graduate profile.   1. Introduce *A Vision for learners and learning* with a brief overview of its development and purpose. Provide copies of the *Lifelong qualities for learners* (See resources) developed by schools in 2002and ask participants to read and consider the vison for graduates of Lutheran education. They highlight any important information for their graduate profile and add it to their display. 2. *Beliefs and values* Share with participants that our graduate profile is shaped by our beliefs and values. Provide the beliefs and values on stripes of paper taken from *Growing deep and A Vision for learners and learning* (See Resource). Participants **analyse** and **prioritise** the beliefs into essential, important, and worth being familiar. Ask each group to share their sorting and rationale.   Participants explore the school or ECS website, prospectus, social media or teaching and learning handbook to **identify** significant beliefs about learners and learning and record these on blank strips. They sort and add these statements into the categories of essential, important, and worth being familiar.   1. *Making connections between beliefs, values and vision* Ask participants to consider the profile of the graduate and the beliefs and values they have just sorted. Provide time for the participants to make connections between the belief and value statements and the graduate profile on the display. They draw or use string to make lines of connection between the beliefs and values and their graduate profile. 2. *In full view* Participants finalise the graduate profile display. Take a moment to stand back and consider the beauty and scope of the graduate profile. Participants could engage in a reflective practice such as I see, I think, I wonder.   Discuss:   * In what ways can Lutheran beliefs and values enhance a dynamic vision for learners and our approach to contemporary learning? * What implications, challenges and affirmations are emerging? * What action can we take to realise the shared vision today, this week, this term, this year?  1. Take photos of the information and share with participants that the information will inform the Vision for leaners and learning expert group who will use all of these developed in schools and early childhood services to develop A vision for learners and learning.   Close the workshop with a blessing. |
| FEEDBACK  Make a copy of the graduate profile and collated beliefs and values (photos, notes etc) and email to [lea@lutheran.edu.au](mailto:lea@lutheran.edu.au) . |

# Feedback that will inform the development of A vision for learners and learning

1. Please complete the survey for the Expert reference group.
2. Please email your ideas, photos of any displays or graphics developed during your workshop, that articulate the beliefs and values that shape your graduate profile and/or Excellence in outcomes to [lea@lutheran.edu.au](mailto:lea@lutheran.edu.au)

## A vision for learners and learning survey

Name:

School:

1. Which groups in your community were involved in workshops?

* staff
* students
* governing council
* parents
* curriculum team
* other (please specify)

1. Which workshop option did you use? (please circle)

* one-hour
* two-hour
* day workshop
* other …………. (please specify)

1. The process of discussing a vision for learners and learning was: (please choose)

* helpful as we are about to further develop our approach to teaching and learning
* a process of revisiting what we have recently explored
* a new conversation for our community
* other (please specify) ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

1. What was affirming/challenging/surprising in the process of reviewing A vision for learners and learning?
2. What advice do you wish to provide to the Expert reference group?

Please email your information to [lea@lutheran.edu.au](mailto:lea@lutheran.edu.au)

## Resource 5: Quotes for gallery walk

Quote

…education is also about formation, and a kind of knowing that is embodied through the experiences of relationships that transform us, across ages, genders, cultures, languages, etc. education is part information…part formation.

And not just practical formation for the sake of contributing to the economic wellbeing of the home or state. Education results in the formation of certain skills, and marketable ones to be sure, but education should never be only a means to an economic end. Rather, education is about nurturing human beings to become Nit ku jam (“people of peace”). The heart of education is humanization, freeing people to be what we were created to be.

*Rev Dr Chad Rimmer May 2021*

Quote

An overarching goal of education should be to immerse students in the beauty and inspiration of their surrounding world.  
*Tony Wagner,*[*Most Likely to Succeed: Preparing Our Kids for the Innovation Era*](https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/45554459)

Quote

Children are biologically engineered for constant intellectual and physical play. They are designed to question, daydream, pretend, arrange block towers and doll houses, wiggle, fidget, run, jump, laugh, cry, be frustrated, be absorbed, be bored, be creative, and, above all, to be different.

*Pasi Sahlberg and William Doyle*

Quote

A Lutheran approach to education is about forming people who can fulfil their vocation to be the caretakers, tillers and keepers of God’s Earth, and contribute to the physical, political, economic and ecological health and wellbeing of their society. For Lutherans formation is a driver of reformation because liberation leads transformation. The goal of education is to transform individuals who transform the world, as educator Paulo Freire once said.

*Rev Dr Chad Rimmer May 2021*

Quote

Through learning we re-create ourselves. Through learning we become able to do something we never were able to do. Through learning we reperceive the world and our relationship to it. Through learning we extend our capacity to create, to be part of the generative process of life  
*Peter M. Senge*

Quote

I believe that the story that informs our understanding of what it means to be human is one of the most important things about the educating we do. It’s more important than teaching a particular language or a particular set of historical or scientific facts, or a particular theory, it’s even more important than reading this or that particular author. It’s more important because it influences the decisions we make about all these other things, about why we do them and how we do them. But it’s also more important because it shapes who we become, how we understand ourselves, and what we will do (and not do) with the rest of the education we receive.

To return to the language of David Orr, what kinds of persons does the world desperately need? I think that as Christian educators in the Lutheran tradition we have some good answers to that question. And we have images of the human that are deep, multi-dimensional, realistic and viable that can inform the education of such persons. We have this gift, the world has this need, therefore we have a clear calling.

Tom Christenson, Professor of Philosophy, Capital University, Columbus Ohio US

Quote

Education at its best… is not just about getting information or getting a job. Education is about healing and wholeness. It is about empowerment, liberation, transcendence about increasing and renewing the vitality of life.

Parker Palmer

Quote

While helping students develop basic practical skills is still needed, education should also be about development of humanity in citizens of local, national, and global societies. Education must be seen as a pathway to attaining lifelong learning, satisfaction, happiness, wellbeing, opportunity and contribution to humanity. Schools therefore need to provide comprehensive access and deep exposure to all learning areas across all years in order to enable all students to make informed choices and develop their passions and unique talents.

*Yong Zhao*

Quote

What is deep learning?

* Quality learning that sticks with you the rest of your life
* Learning that engages the world, changes the world

*Michael Fullan*

Quote

Humanising education in this way equips and liberates children to read the Word and read the world, and see meaningful ways to use their gifts to live out their vocation to transform society to a just, sustainable peace….

And, I want to end by affirming that approaching education in the framework of transformative pedagogy is something that Christians can resonate with, because Christianity is a faith based on an encounter. Emmanuel, God with us. Jesus was the liberating Word incarnate in the real political, social reality of oppressive systems. Jesus encountered them, taught and transformed. He didn’t give a new law. He loved. That encounter with the Word in the world helped those with eyes to see the powers of injustice and oppression, and liberated them to see the path to transform those systems (religious, social economic or political). I can teach you about love, or I can love you, and you know the difference. Like the gospel, transformative pedagogy is about embedding learning and formation in critical, creative, concrete, and contextual relationships that liberate learners to reform and transform.

Rev Dr Chad Rimmer May 2021

Quote

Being freed from securing our own right relationship with God, we are free to attend to the needs of the world and our neighbour at hand. Lacking freedom we are all puppets of the powers that dominate our culture. ….

Christians can be thinkers and inquirers in freedom, and we can be inquirers and teachers toward freedom. Freedom is not only a shaping principle of our knowing, but of our teaching and learning as well.

…education informed by the biblical, Christian, and Lutheran understanding of the human should include:

Vocational education, i.e. education that leads not just to a job or just down the path of a career, but rather that leads to an understanding of jobs and careers as a calling, a way in love, that our gifts may intersect with the deep needs of the world.

Education that connects to the deep questions, anxieties, and hopes that students have.

Education that unites theory and practice, academic learning and community engagement, reflection and life, analysing serious problems and giving hope.

Christenson T

Quote

Human communities depend upon a diversity of talent, not a singular conception of ability. And at the heart of the challenge is to reconstitute our sense of ability and intelligence.

*Sir Ken Robinson*

Quote

Christenson suggests that learning and knowing in a Lutheran school or early childhood service can be characterised by:

Wonder – openness to reality that does not fit into our ready-made conceptual boxes.

Openness – willingness to consider views and arguments from other points of view. A willingness to look through Galileo’s telescope and actually consider Darwin’s argument.

Recognition of connectedness – considering the essential relatedness of things that our university structure or curriculum may have completely separated.

Freedom – openness to consider any topic, any author, any theory. Frequently students say, “everyone’s entitled to an opinion.” I respond, “No, everyone is entitled to make an argument.”

Critical faithfulness – willingness to be critical about things we care about. Criticism is not an act of betrayal but may be an act of deep love.

Engaged suspiciousness – suspicious concern for the motivations that stand behind our ways of seeing, our ways of inquiring, our so-called objectivity.

Vocation – diligence in asking, “Whom and how does this serve?”

Hope – persistence in the inquiry even when we fail to find an answer or we fail to resolve the tensions we have found. Tensions may be the reality at the basis of what we are studying. Or, as Goya wrote on the charcoal sketch of himself he did in his nineties, “I am still learning.”

T Christenson, p78 *Who needs a Lutheran college? Values vision and vocation*

Quote

Authentic learning that brings new understanding, transforms and challenges students to take action requires a rich learning environment where students:

• are challenged to think critically and laterally about increasingly complex issues

• are given a range of strategies to solve problems

• are engaged in meaningful debate

• are stimulated to think in new ways

• interact with a range of people, data and media

• make coherent links with prior learning and experiences

• listen and are genuinely listened to

• share their growing understanding

• have opportunities to be still and reflect

• embrace the new and different with thought, creativity and respect

• respond in a multiplicity of ways

• make meaningful connections between learning and their experience of the world

*The Christian Studies Curriculum Framework*

Quote

Creatio continua means creation continues, God keeps on creating. We so often just think of creation as what God did at the very beginning, the story we read in Genesis One. But the beginning was only the beginning. God did not retire! God keeps on creating in every corner of our world, in the sea, in the sky, in the soil and in the soul. Wherever a bee spreads pollen and fertilises a flower, God is creating. Whenever an embryo grows inside the womb, God is creating. Creating, however, is not confined to bees and flowers and embryos. It also takes place in the heart, in the spirit and in the mind. The mind of the child is alive with creating impulses from God. The imagination is one of the most powerful creating impulses from God. The spirit is one of the deep and mysterious creative impulses from God.

How will your school tackle this challenge? Many schools have already begun to explore ways of making learning a path filled with amazing discoveries. In one kindergarten class, the words on the wall read: TAKE A RISK! What a great start! TAKE A RISK! And we know that God is working in the mind of each child to create all the capacities needed to explore the unknown, to discover wonders and to realise his or her potential. And all of this comes free from God.

Let’s take up the challenge. No more tired questions followed by stock answers. The time has come to assess our teaching so that our students have a burning desire to explore every mystery, everything from maths to music, from the formation of an embryo to the gift of a rose.

Habel, N

Quote

Knowledge of other people’s belief systems and the analysis of the complex interplay of factors that contribute to an individual worldview enriches students’ ability to make sense of the world. Opportunities for reflection and refinement of personal beliefs, values and life choices, and application of knowledge and understanding to the breadth of life – intellectual, emotional, personal, relational, spiritual – challenge students to consider the role and contribution they can make towards creating a more just, harmonious and compassionate world…

The Christian Studies Curriculum Framework requires a Christian Studies classroom learning environment in which students can explore a range of religious and non-religious perspectives they encounter in an increasingly pluralistic Australian society, determine the source of their own beliefs and values and understand the role religion plays in society. A collaborative learning environment acknowledges and respects that students have diverse backgrounds, needs and interests. Students are mentored to:

• become articulate, empathic and discerning members of their communities

• listen to and identify the issues underlying discussion

• enter into open, respectful dialogue with people whose religious, philosophical, ethical views are different

• present an informed, well-defended personal position

The processes of inquiry, discussion and reflection underpin the acquisition of those qualities and skills.

*The Christian Studies Curriculum Framework, p6*

Quote

But over the years, Luther came to think of vocation in a very different way. He came to see that all persons have a vocation, a call from God to serve the real needs of their neighbours. This call applied as much to the peasant growing turnips as it did to the mother caring or children, to the shoemaker making shoes or the legislator making laws. The test for vocation was not, ‘Are you doing something religious?’ but ‘Are you serving in your station the real needs of your neighbour?’….

Luther maintained that institutions and not just individuals had a divine calling insofar as they serve real human needs. … we must continually voice questions about what end we are serving and how well we serve it…

So what would it mean for a [school or ECS] to be shaped by this understanding of vocation? First of all, it would imply that the [school] would pervasively and perennially keep in mind a cluster of vocational questions:

* What are the deep needs of the world that we are called to address through the process of education?
* What kinds of persons does the world need in order to serve those deep needs?
* What are the real needs of students who we are called to meet through this educational process?
* How do we educate such persons?
* What gifts (and limitations) do we bring to this task?

What are (and will be) the deep needs of the world?

A pattern of life that is not wasteful, not consuming as such a rate that it cannot be globally generalised. A way of human life that is sustainable. A solution to global problems of poverty, starvation, lack of water, lack of sewerage systems. A way to make economics enhance human life not make humans who serve economics.

What kinds of persons does the world require in order to address and serve its deepest needs?

Peacemakers, critical and creative thinkers, people who think beyond chauvinisms and other over simple either/or patterns, people who know how to live sustainably, preservers of multi-dimensional personhood, people devoted to justice, people practiced in long term and large view thinking, people who combine realism and hope, people who practice community.

How do we educate such persons?

Practice in critical thinking and civil critical discourse. Exercise in imagination, in thinking ‘outside the box’. Practice in systems thinking, in analysis and synthesis, in team work and problem solving. Practice in global awareness, in being well informed, in effective communication, in avoiding the tempting ‘easy answers’ that so many in our culture seem to fall for.

What gifts do we as a [Lutheran school or ECS] bring to this task?

A gospel that liberates us for service to the world, an understanding of creation as a gift, and an understanding of our calling as stewards of creation. Christ as a model of the human, the church as model of honest yet hopeful community, diffracting God’s love for the world.

Excerpts from p24-29 Christenson, T *Who needs a Lutheran college*?

Quote

What follows from seeing Christ as the model human?

1) It implies that many things that are so important to the culture (wealth, economic status, political and military might, gender, ethnicity, being a religious insider or outsider) are worth very little to the Christian.

2) It implies that we discover where the boundaries of insider/outsider, good guy/bad guy, respectable/unrespectable are and that we, being freed from their dominance, can reach beyond them in love.

3) It implies that we practice a community that refracts God’s love into the world in which we live. The Christian image of the human is Christ Jesus. The Christian understanding of human relationship is agape, unconditional love…

I believe that the story that informs our understanding of what it means to be human is one of the most important things about the educating we do. It’s more important than teaching a particular language or a particular set of historical or scientific facts, or a particular theory, it’s even more important than reading this or that particular author. It’s more important because it influences the decisions we make about all these other things, about why we do them and how we do them. But it’s also more important because it shapes who we become, how we understand ourselves, and what we will do (and not do) with the rest of the education we receive.   
To return to the language of David Orr, what kinds of persons does the world desperately need? I think that as Christian educators in the Lutheran tradition we have some good answers to that question. And we have images of the human that are deep, multi-dimensional, realistic and viable that can inform the education of such persons.

Christenson, T SchooLink

### *Resources Beliefs about learners and learning from Growing deep and A Framework for Lutheran schools*

### *The following statements could be cut into strips for sorting and prioritising.*

**Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities** which acknowledge God as creator and join in the ongoing creation and care of the world and all people.

**Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities** that recognise that God has intentionally created each person and that each person is uniquely gifted to live in relationship with God and others.

**Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities** open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, who invites and equips for a life of worship, learning and service.

**Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities** that value learning as God’s gift to people for their wonder, growth, and to inspire them to respond to the needs of the world.

**Lutheran schools and early childhood services are communities** of hope, nurtured by the promises of God’s word, love and forgiveness which empower staff and students to embrace the future with confidence.

The Bible is the word of God revealing Jesus and informing what we do and teach

The Holy Spirit works through the teaching of God’s word in our schools and early childhood services to lead people to know and trust in God

All people are in need of God’s love and forgiveness and saved by grace through faith in Christ

God’s love and forgiveness inspires us to value forgiveness, being forgiven and reconciliation

As Christians live in grace, all they do is for God’s glory and love, accept and value others.

Each person is a unique creation of God and loved by God.

Learning is God’s gift to people for their wellbeing.

Service to others through actions and relationships is a reflection of and response to God’s love.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to develop the whole person.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to strive for the best.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to care for each person.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to help each student grow in the assurance of their God-given worth and purpose.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to accept the need of discipline for the well-being of the individual living in community.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to reflect characteristics of God.

The identity of each person before God motivates us to create learning contexts incorporating values that reflect God’s relationship with God’s world.

**Growing deep: Vocational practices**

**Excellence in learning**  
Lutheran schools and early childhood services value excellence and creativity in teaching and learning for all community members. A culture of challenge and support nurtures enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to lifelong learning. Excellence in teaching and learning is focused on improving student outcomes which includes spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural and social dimensions. All learners should have access to quality learning experiences that ensure they develop their God-given abilities so that they may enrich the world. High expectations are established through reflective practice, collaborative planning, monitoring, providing feedback and reporting on the effectiveness of learning. The learning environment promotes active engagement, risk taking, motivation and a strong learner voice.

**Growing deep: Vocational practices**

**Ongoing improvement and innovation**  
Improvement in Lutheran schools and early childhood services is guided by its values, vision and mission. Excellence is pursued through a culture of reflection, collaboration, innovation and creativity. Evidence is gathered to develop and implement improvement plans and policies for the continuous development of teaching and learning, the institution and its facilities. Ongoing professional learning encourages all members of the community to achieve high standards and develop their service and leadership capacity.

**Growing deep: Vocational practices**

**Strengthening Lutheran identity**  
Lutheran schools and early childhood services, as agencies of the Lutheran Church of Australia, share a recognisable Lutheran identity in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. The rituals, symbols, visual displays and practices convey its Christ-centred identity. The school/ early childhood service community is regularly involved in Christian worship which includes daily devotions. Christian Studies is an essential and distinctive part of the formal curriculum. Lutheran schools and early childhood services deliberately and intentionally share and live the good news of Jesus Christ with students, families, staff and the broader community.  Opportunities for faith nurture are actively promoted and maintained.

**Growing deep: Vocational practices**

**Community building**  
Lutheran schools and early childhood services value the richness and diversity of the wider community and other education sectors. Positive and strategic partnerships are developed and maintained with students, families, local Christian communities, the broader community and Lutheran education. The relationships are built upon support, collaboration, trust and reconciliation. The Lutheran school/early childhood service community lives out the gospel and is active in service of others. The multicultural and multi-faith nature of Lutheran education and Australian society fosters understandings of diverse cultures.  Lutheran education promotes the understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Growing deep: Vocational practices**

**Leading effective organisation and management**  
In Lutheran schools and early childhood services, roles, responsibilities and procedures are clearly articulated so that staff can participate in its smooth and efficient operation. Data and knowledge management methods and technologies are used to ensure that resources (human, physical, technological and financial) are efficiently organised and managed to provide an effective, safe and caring, growth-oriented learning and working environment. Strategic planning ensures the ongoing improvement and sustainability of the school/early childhood service. Best practice is built upon effective collaboration between the governing body, staff, students, families, church and others.

## Values

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| Love  *adore, worship, care for, devotion to, fidelity, kindness, peace, trust, resilience, happiness, have esteem for, honour …*  For Christians, the expression of love is always a response to God’s love. It is a way of being that leads to inner peace. Love flows from the heart and manifests itself in caring, kind and respectful thoughts, words and actions. | Compassion  *mercy, sympathy, empathy, concern, kindness, consideration, gentleness, care …*  Having compassion is being loving and attending to people’s innermost needs. It is exercising the ability to reach out, to walk in another’s shoes, to be open and responsive to the needs and concerns of others and being active in caring for others. |
| Justice  *integrity, honesty, truthfulness, honour, veracity, uprightness, fairness …*  Through genuine concern, and the developing of a conscience for the rights and wellbeing of everyone in the human family, justice focuses as much on understanding and responding to the reasons for suffering and injustices as it does on responding to unjust conditions. It requires integrity between beliefs, words, and actions. It may necessitate taking a stand and acting with courage. | Forgiveness  *benevolence, grace, mercy, amnesty, excuse, pardon, understanding, kindness, absolve, acquit, reprieve …*  Forgiveness is breaking the cycle of un-grace, pardoning the wrongs others have done to us and seeking pardon for the wrongs we have done to others. Forgiveness often comes with pain and can involve stepping over our hurt. Forgiveness releases both ourselves and others, enabling new starts and new beginnings, another chance. |
| Service  *help, assistance, benefit, good turn, aid, support, good deed, charitable act, faithfulness …*  There is a saying you can serve without loving, but you cannot love without serving. Service involves selfless giving, loving others and making a difference in their lives by identifying and responding  to their needs, individually and collectively, and carrying out that service without expecting recognition or reward. | Humility  *humbleness, modesty, unassuming nature, meekness, gentleness …*  Acting with humility involves recognising and valuing one’s own gifts/abilities and the gifts/abilities of others as being equally valid but of no lesser or greater importance. It is using those gifts/abilities in service to others with an attitude of selflessness. It is being thankful rather than boastful and willing to respect and learn from the experience of others. |

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| Courage  *valour, bravery, nerve, pluck, daring, fearlessness, fortitude, boldness, perseverance, intrepid …*  Courage is the strength of heart that enables people to stand up for their convictions to do the right thing, even when it is hard or fearful. It involves being firm of spirit despite the ups and downs of life and it means ‘having a go’ even when success is uncertain. | Appreciation  *admiration, approval, enjoyment of, gratitude, thankfulness, value, recognition, respect, wonder and awe, comprehension …*  Appreciation is recognising and valuing highly the gifts and blessings given to us and surrounding us. It is an attitude of gratitude for learning, loving and being. It is a positive attitude that responds in wonder and awe to, and with respect for, the created world – its fragility and its potential. |
| Quality  *value, worth, excellence, merit, effort, usefulness, of important …*  People bring their gifts, abilities, skills and talents to fruition seeking excellence, striving always to do their best, giving careful attention to every task, every relationship, every interaction. They ensure that their input and efforts result in quality outcomes that, in turn, lead to the successful use of their gifts, abilities, skills and talents for the benefit of others. | Hope  *expectation, trust in, faith in, anticipation, look forward to, expect, desire, aspire, optimism …*    Hope enables us to look forward with expectation and confidence, placing our trust and faith in God’s provision of the things we need to handle all kinds of situations and events that occur. Hope is open-ended, open to all possibilities and not limited by what we might wish for. Hope allows God to define our lives. |
| Please add any school based values |  |

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## Additional resources: Lutheran perspectives on education

Education is not just about the teaching of a what (some particular subject or another); it is also about the growing of a who. Education is about the coming to be of persons in the process of learning particular skills or knowledge; it is paideutic in that sense. In spite of the fact there is a good deal of educational rhetoric about ‘holistic education’ I believe that not many schools have taken the question seriously, ‘What kinds of humans are we developing here?’ When we focus only on the what of education we run the risk of producing specialists, many of whom turn out to be one-dimensional persons.

I think it is important to recognise that every effort at education has, somewhere within it, some assumptions about what it means to be human, and how, as humans, we are related to each other and to the world….

There are certainly a variety of anthropological images and informing stories at work in the world, but if I were asked to identify the dominant image or informing story of contemporary western civilisation here’s what I would say:  
We are real in proportion to what we have, and we are free in proportion to being able to obtain what we want. Our identity is basically the identity of consumer. We work in order to earn money. We earn money in order to be able to buy. We buy things that will establish an identity for us, that will tell us that we are somebody. We need things that tell ourselves (and others who are our mirror) who we are. As the things we have grow old or out of fashion they become invisible (‘I don’t have a thing to wear’). Besides this need for identity-giving things we also have a great need to be entertained. We value our freedom and tend to define freedom in a consumerist way, as the ability to make choices and obtain what we want, choices about what we will wear, what we will drive, what we will eat and drink, who we will bed down with. The deepest truths are the truths of marketplace and economics. These are the metaphors that inform our lives. They are the bottom line.  
Is there a problem with this image of the human and the lifestyle it gives shape to? Several, I would say, but I note three problems here.  
1) This view gives us a shallow and one dimensional picture of what it means to be human. A person who literally is what she has is a mannequin. A mannequin is built to display and advertise clothes and other accessories. It truly is what it wears. But the last time I checked there are no mannequins worth getting to know, because there’s literally no one there. No mind, no soul, no personality, no one who can plan a life, make a commitment, carry on a conversation, have a genuine concern, show care, take an idea seriously, etc. All they can do is model their new gear. All we can do is admire and desire it. They may be hot, cool, or sophisticated, but are they human?

2) This economic model makes most all human relationships competitive. If we are what we have then we’re continually keeping score, trying to match the achievements of some, surpass the achievements of others, and become someone of note in the process. We may form teams and alliances, but we do so ultimately to advance in the competition. We don’t learn how to genuinely care about others, we don’t learn how to love. We don’t learn how to be a genuine friend. A certain kind of hollowness sets in. A person becomes a package with no contents. The paradigm of human being is no longer a caring spouse or loving parent, it is the celebrity, a person who is famous for being famous.

3) A consumerist model of being human literally consumes the planet and its resources. Those of us who live in the US, Europe, Japan, Australia, are sometimes inclined to talk about ‘the developing world’, ie, those countries on the planet that had not reached our level of income and consumption but soon would do so. As we now know, India and China, the two most populous nations on earth, are now included in the ‘developed world,’ and are the two fastest growing economies. But we seem to have given little thought to the question whether the planet can support a population consuming at the level that ‘the developed world’ does. The nearly unanimous answer we get from scientists and economists around the world is ‘no.’ What, then, do we do about that? Should we stop encouraging such development elsewhere? What would be our argument? ‘The planet can afford a few high consuming people, but it can’t afford for everyone to live like this, so we want you to stop it?’  
David Orr in his provocative book Earth in Mind has written:

*The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, story tellers, and lovers of every kind. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage.... And these qualities have little to do with success as our culture defines it.  
The most important thing that Lutheran schools have to offer is an education shaped by some different images of human being, some different informing stories than this dominant cultural one we’ve just looked at…..*

Christenson, T SchooLink