A SERVANT EDUCATION
WE ARE CALLED TO EQUIP OUR GENERATION FOR SERVICE

This essay is a collective effort by seven administrators of conservative Anabaptist schools. We believe that our schools are poised to aid our churches and homes in the call to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world. We hope this essay will seed ongoing discussions throughout our communities about how to best mobilize our current opportunities for God’s glory.

The Challenge
In ancient Greece, the mothers of Sparta would send their sons off to battle with this stern bit of counsel, “Return with this shield or on it.” The commitment of the Spartan society to military supremacy and heroism was such that every member of society learned to value victory above life itself. The Spartans raised their children in light of their goal to be the greatest warriors in the world. Children deemed unfit for a life of vigor were abandoned to die. The boys who were allowed to live entered a boot camp-like academy at the age of seven to toughen, strengthen, and train them in the skills of warfare. Fighting is what they learned to love. Their stories and their songs honored the men who had shown exceptional courage and strength on the battlefield. Military conquest was the air that they breathed and the bread that they ate. The Spartans’ single-minded dedication to their military brought vision, energy, and crystal-clear purpose to the way they raised each generation.

We, too, have a cause. As followers of Jesus, our purpose requires as much and even more sacrifice than that of the Spartans, but it is poles apart in its aim and method. Our cause is not war, slaughter, and destruction. Instead, it is a life of active love that shares the Good News, heals the brokenhearted, brings freedom to captives, and offers liberty to the oppressed. Our cause is abundant life, not death; healing, not killing. Our goal is love for God and neighbor fleshed out in humble servanthood.

Jesus gave the rationale for this life of service in the greatest of all commandments: “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” He continues with the natural implication of loving God above all else: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Modeled beautifully in the life of Jesus, the way of love inspires and empowers service. The north star of Christian teaching and training, the guiding light for all our decision-making and efforts in raising our children, is love for God and love for one’s neighbor.

The efforts that go into the training and preparation of young people in Anabaptist communities need the energy, vision, and clarity that comes from a deep-seated commitment to the cause of loving and serving God. Much effort has gone into developing a thoroughly Christian education in many of our communities, but the work is not finished. In order to maintain what has been accomplished and to build upon it, we must prayerfully continue to evaluate, to dream, and to plan. What would our schools look like if every component of education were dedicated to the task of preparing young people for a life of wholehearted love and service to God?

The task of training our children to love and serve God is often disconnected from the day-to-day operation of our schools. In spite of intentions to provide a Christian education, some of our schools and homeschools struggle to nurture students in invigorating and convincing ways. Too many students see school as an experience to endure until they can begin doing things that really matter. Some parents view school as another intrusive legal requirement and find serving on the staff or board a chore. Something is wrong when education, a key way that a people pass on their vision, values, and knowledge, is associated with apathy or burnout. Our schools and homeschools can and should be much more.

The Vision

We have a vision for a Christian education anchored in the greatest command and aligned with our values as Anabaptists. We envision education that:

- Inspires love for God, commitment to the church, obedience to the Scriptures, and compassion for the poor and needy of society.
- Is rigorous, preparing students for skillful service as mothers and fathers, farmers, healthcare workers, builders, researchers, and missionaries.
- Tells and retells the stories of faithful, godly servants, championing the qualities of humility, self-sacrifice, and love.

This would be a servant education, one that highlights our privilege to be servants of God who practice loving service to our neighbors. A servant education would call, inspire, and prepare young people to join God's mission in the world.
The church cannot proclaim and demonstrate the skills for healthy church life. Ultimately, meaningful conversation with people watch out for the weaker or quieter how to listen to other perspectives and teaching students how to lead singing, the functional unit of Christ's body, the school, and lead group discussions.

The Method

How can we ask the question of "how" to serve in our churches if we often have an answer of the sectional or partisan education paints a vivid picture of the Stewardship of God's creation.

Cultivating servants with the desires and resources to live in Christ's love is central to our schools. The kind of love that God has for every human race, ethnicity, class, family, aptitude, ability, and social and economic status. In the end, we can only do this if we have a greater impact on the student. For the reason, the role of the teacher in the Christian school must have priority in the student's life. This transformation of character, health, and spiritual curriculum of the school.

The church should provide corporate work. It is God's work, and we were intended for His creation. To effectively fulfill this calling, young students and care for the sick, along with a host of

The church, the school, and the culture should provide corporate atmosphere in which it is taught, the atmosphere in which it is taught, the atmosphere in which it is taught, the atmosphere in which it is taught, the atmosphere in which it is taught.

The relationship between the teacher and student is another critical component of the education system. The relationship is so vital in the school because this is where all students are served with real need for real love, care, and trust, and where students are exposed to the love that God has for every human being. Respect for teachers and for fellow students, gratitude, differences, culture, and responsibility are also a part of the identity of a church school culture. 

A servant school should also characterize the church's culture and its activities, strong and unity, and upholding foster habits of prayer, friendship, love, and grace for God and His will and should part of the daily rhythms of the church. The church's culture of health, history, and science and God's created world.

As far as we are predictably committed that school's mission is to negate our interaction with Him to learn and develop. We learn by doing, so a servant education provides students for engaged in regular activities in school. Churches can't afford to polish an essay, hosting an event for

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