Guest editorial

A rhombicosidodecahedron is a solid with 62 faces, 60 corners and 120 edges. Schools and early childhood services (ECSs) are also shaped by many faces, points of intersection and paths of connection but what makes Lutheran schools/ECSs solid is the gospel of Jesus Christ. This supplement explores eight of the many facets of Lutheran education and how Lutheran theology informs all dimensions of what a school/ECS is and does. These are not position or policy papers but instead provide an opportunity to investigate an angle of one element of life in the school/ECS context. The range of papers highlight the complexity of school and ECS life.

The authors come from the national and regional Lutheran education offices, schools and ALC and we are very appreciative of their time, effort and expertise in writing these papers. Behind the scene was also the collaborative effort of reviewers. While the *LTJ* is not a peer-reviewed journal, in this case we used an informal peer review process to provide constructive feedback for authors and bring the insights of reviewers into the article writing process. Thank you to the following reviewers: Andrew Dewhirst, Adam Yeager, Anne Dohnt, Anthony Dyer, Athalie McArdle, Corinne Salmon, Daniel Hausler, Derek Bartels, Dianne Eckermann, James Winderlich, Jane Mueller, Kaye Mathwin-Cox, Kimberley Pfeiffer, Kimberley Powell, Kylie Duyzer, Nick Schwarz, Stephen Pietsch, Sue Kupke, Thomas Böhmert, Thomas Pietsch, Tim Kotzur. Thank you also to the *LTJ* editorial team for this opportunity.

The reality is that fees keep schools open, parents shop around for schools and schools compete in the enrolment marketplace. In the first article Andrew Jaensch has us thinking about the challenges and opportunities for Lutheran schools seeking to be faithful to the theology of the cross within the education marketplace. The final paper brings another management consideration into focus—managing underperforming staff. This paper follows on from Shane Paterson's EdD thesis on this topic which showed that principals apply their understanding of Lutheran theology so that their strong sense of responsibility to the school is coupled with a desire to care for and support a teacher through the process of addressing underperformance.

Curriculum and pedagogy are the foci of two papers. Lutherans' theologically informed anthropology aligns with student agency as explained by Anna Nürnberger. Science educators may be interested in the Lutheran Education Australia paper about how a shared receptive spirit underlies science and theology as both disciplines seek truth.

Lutheran schools and ECSs 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. They educate and care for all students and each child is accepted and supported according to their particular needs. Parents of children with complex needs may choose a Christian school for many reasons and Kerrin Huth's paper explores the opportunities and tensions this may bring. Dianne Eckermann and Stephen Haar's papers look at how students experience their gender identity or sexuality in the context of the

school community. Many factors may affect students' wellbeing and Tim Jarick has shared the insights and experiences of one school's journey with positive psychology and the explicit articulation of the intersection with Lutheran theology. The overriding theme of this group of papers is summed up by Huth, 'Above all, when we value the richness each individual brings to our community and love them as God loves them, we live out our theology in action.'

I hope that these papers provide a launch pad for discussion and debate within school and ECS communities and that dialogue informs local practice and decision making. Theology is what we do so that love and learning come to life through the schools and early childhood services of the LCA/NZ.

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