LCRSS
LEAGUE OF CANADIAN REFORMED SCHOOL SOCIETIES INC.

The Link

Volume 10 Issue 2 October 2025

Upcoming Events

October 23-24, 2025
Compass Reformed Educators Convention

November 13, 2025
LCRSS Directors Meeting at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College

December 4, 2025
LCRSS Annual General & Membership Meeting at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College.



Coordinator's Connection

Is It Hard to Promote a Reformed School?

By: John Wynia

In this edition of the Coordinator's Connection, we're continuing our focus on school promotion. This time we're looking at obstacles that make it challenging to promote our schools.

The existence of Reformed schools testifies to the conviction Reformed Christians have about Reformed education: we believe it is commanded by God in Scripture. We confess that God's Word teaches the covenant community's responsibility to nurture children in the fear and knowledge of the LORD in various places:

- Deuteronomy 6:4-9 makes clear that parents have a covenant calling to instruct their children;
- Psalm 78:1-8 speaks of the law established in Israel (the OT covenant community) that the next generation must be told the glorious deeds of the LORD;
- Matthew 28:18-20 tells us that the church is called to disciple and teach those who are baptized;
- Colossians 1:15-20 demonstrates that all teaching and learning must recognize and submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ;
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17 shows that education must be saturated with Scripture;
- Ephesians 4:11-13 reveals that faithful teaching is needed to equip and build up the church.

These are well known passages and we've likely heard them at school assemblies or read them in school newsletters. Despite the solid Biblical foundation on which our schools rest, though, it can still be challenging to promote them. Why? Here are five potential explanations:

Assuming shared convictions: I've often said that one of the joys of my work is that I get to work with people who are excited about, and committed to, Reformed education. Those who volunteer to serve on the League Board or its committees are fully bought in and are giving their time and energy to serve schools not just in their local community, but across the province. Though it's great to work with people like this all the time, it's easy to begin assuming that everyone thinks like us. If everyone I interact with – on the school board or its committees – understands the theological basis for the school and values it, I begin to assume that everyone else– even newcomers or those outside the community – does too. This assumption can lead to a failure to clearly articulate the distinctives of and rationale for Reformed education.

Working against prevailing cultural trends: Our schools face the reality that younger generations may not have the same kind of institutional loyalty that previous generations did. They value choice, and more educational choices exist. Added to this is the utilitarian view of education that sees education as a means to an end. Usually for our neighbours that end is individual self-expression and financial freedom in the form of a fulfilling, well-paying career. Reformed schools promote ideas like covenant responsibility and church-home-school unity. They view education as the formation of Kingdom citizens who submit to Christ's lordship in all areas of life. This kind of vision for education can be a tough sell in a society that values choice, individualism and autonomy.

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Is It Hard to Promote a Reformed School? continued from page 1

Misunderstanding Christian education: readers have likely (hopefully) noticed that we tend not to talk about "Christian" education in *The Link*. We prefer to talk about "Reformed" education or "Reformed Christian" education. This is because not all Christians define Christian education the same way. Some see it as simply adding Bible classes or chapel to a standard education. But Reformed schools aim for a fully integrated Biblical worldview that is taught across all subjects, a worldview that reflects Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein" (ESV). The importance of this kind of education can be difficult to communicate, especially when families are making educational decisions based on surface-level features like school course offerings and extracurricular activities.

Dealing with inconsistencies: Because the Biblical mandate for education is given to parents, Reformed schools promote a high degree of parental involvement. Whether it be on the board or committees, or as volunteers for marking, field trips, or other school events, parents are regularly in our schools. This kind of involvement brings with it an increased level of familiarity and an awareness that sometimes the realities inside the classroom don't reflect the aspirations of the schools mission/vision statement. Parents may be committed to the purpose of the school, but this kind of "warts and all" familiarity can make it challenging to promote it.

Failing to prioritize promotion: When we do strategic planning work with schools we often find that the Promotion Committee takes on the most significant projects. Kevin Hutchinson, who helps to lead the suggestions, actually makes the argument that the Promotion Committee is the most important committee of the school. But Reformed schools tend to prioritize stewardship of resources and supporters can sometimes be uncomfortable with flashy marketing and self-promotion. On top of that, the Promotion Committee members might not have expertise in communication, branding, or digital engagement. This means that even when schools have a rich, faithful vision for education, they may lack the will, the tools, or the resources to communicate that vision effectively.

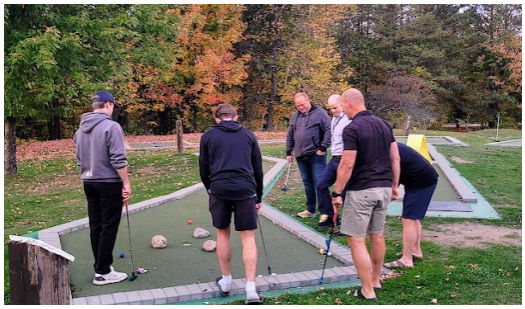
In our last article, we concluded that "supporting Reformed education is not just an obligation – it is a joyful privilege." Could we edit that sentence slightly to say that "*promoting* Reformed schools is not just an obligation – it is a joyful privilege"? If not, do some of the obstacles mentioned above explain why? And if they do, what can you do about it? Let's not gloss over the fact that our schools face real challenges in promoting themselves effectively. Even so, they rest on a solid biblical foundation and have a compelling scriptural vision: let's commit to communicating that clearly, compellingly, and consistently, both inside and outside of the Reformed community.

National Principals Conference 2025

By: Otto Bouwman (Principal at Credo Christian Elementary School, Langley, BC)

The weather was spectacular, the fall colors brilliant, the camaraderie most enjoyable, the food and accommodations excellent, and our guest speaker did a fantastic job. From October 1 – 3, about 35 principals from across the country (and from the US) gathered at the Muskoka Bible Camp in Huntsville, ON, for another National Principals Conference.





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The organizing committee welcomed participants: "*This conference is a wonderful opportunity to gather together with principals from other confessionally Reformed schools for a few days of mutual encouragement and professional development. As principals, you understand the critical role leadership plays in shaping and sustaining healthy organizations. Christian schools can thrive under faithful, wise, and mission-driven leadership. NPC 2025 has been designed to encourage and equip you as leaders to steward your calling with strength, humility, and vision.*"



The theme of this year's conference, "Healthy Leadership for Thriving Schools," was unpacked for us by Dr. Justin Irving, Professor of Christian Leadership at the Southern Baptist Seminary. During his first lecture, Dr. Irving spoke of the character and commitment of healthy school leaders, explaining that this is necessarily the place that he needed to start, because a Christian leader needs to continually examine his/her own heart and motivation before all else. Character matters. Christian leaders need to be healthy – not just physically, but also spiritually, emotionally, relationally, and intellectually – in order to flourish and enable the organization they serve to flourish. Effective leaders pay attention to their well-being, so that they in turn can be a blessing to those they lead.

During the next lecture, the speaker highlighted the critical importance of ensuring that the people on our teams are aligned. The people around us are our organization's #1 asset, so we do well to strive that all participants work in alignment with each other. He reminded us of the theology of work, and spoke of various types of leaders, exhorting us to be servant leaders and intentionally model servant leadership to those around us. Effective leaders look for character and mission alignment when they hire, and motivate, empower and hold accountable after they hire.



The third lecture explored the leader's role in stewarding mission and vision in organizational culture. The leader needs to have a deep level of commitment to the organization's mission and needs to "tell the story" repeatedly and persuasively to all the organization's stakeholders. Strategies need to be implemented so that the organization's culture aligns with the organization's mission.

During his final session, Dr. Irving spoke about how we need to lead our schools through crisis and change. Though our faithful God doesn't change, there are many times in life that change is required; in the days of Nehemiah a destroyed city needed to be rebuilt, and in our days changing technologies, for example, require us to do things differently than previously. Effective leaders are deliberate in identifying what things may not change and what things must change; when change is required, deliberate and intentional strategies need to implemented. Effective leaders are also deliberate in the context of a crisis; we were encouraged to display a calm and non-anxious disposition when under pressure.

During the lectures, our speaker frequently referenced appropriate Scripture passages, historical figures, authors, and university presidents. Not surprisingly, his own president, Albert Mohler, was referenced affirmatively. Though at times listening to Dr. Irving might have felt like "drinking from a firehose," his well-organized lectures were presented effectively. During his presentations and when responding to questions, he referenced his extensive reading and the broad research he had done in the field of leadership. Additionally, as a result of the considerable effort he had expended to understand the unique context of our schools, he effectively weaved conversations with us into his material.

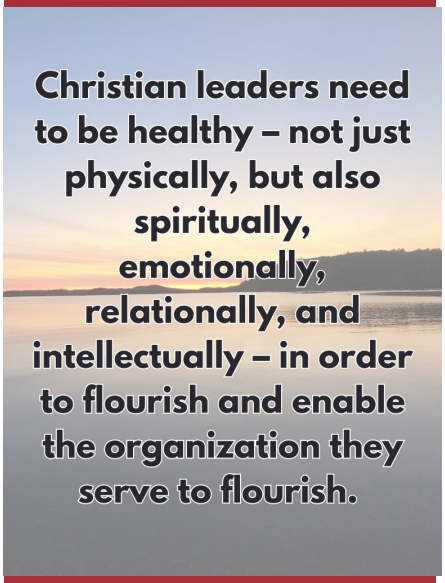
fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

The organizing committee made sure that there were a variety of constructive activities in addition to Dr. Irving's lectures, such as engaging in various crisis case studies and working through the results of a leadership survey we had all completed over half a year ago. Not surprisingly, school leaders find themselves most frequently preoccupied with navigating their way through "people challenges." We noted, with profound gratitude to our school boards, and a special nod to our treasurers, that principals don't often feel the burden of responsibility when it comes to ensuring that our schools remain financially viable.

Developing and maintaining personal relationships and friendships between leader colleagues is a key ingredient of our principal conferences. Some principals are young and at the very beginning of their leadership journey; others are somewhat more experienced. Since we all learn from each other, deliberate time was set aside to provide opportunities for conversations over meals, during walks, while driving to Ontario's only cranberry farm (where we were given an informative and humorous tour), around the campfire, or while engaging in sports activities.

As we returned to our respective homes, we felt not only more encouraged, but also more equipped, in our leadership roles. The organizing committee did an excellent job as they structured the program of events at NPC 2025. God provided us with an opportunity to spend a few days in a breathtakingly beautiful part of God's creation; there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Devotions and the singing were uplifting. May the consequences of this conference lead to continued growth from each of the participants and flourishing of each of our schools.



Curriculum Assistance to Reformed Education

By: Anne Hutten

The CARE Committee (Curriculum Assistance to Reformed Education) continues its work of supporting Reformed curriculum development across our League schools. Our goal remains the same: to assist schools and teachers in developing curriculum that is faithful, practical, and unified in vision.

Over the past few months, CARE has been working on several projects. The French Conceptual Framework has been completed in draft form and will soon be reviewed by a Reviewing and Editing Committee. Work on the Information and Communication Technology Conceptual Framework is pressing forward with a goal to complete this draft by March 2026. Looking ahead, we plan to begin new frameworks for Art and Church History in Summer 2026.

Our CARE Day in August was very well received. We're grateful for the feedback shared by teachers and principals, and we're already looking forward to our next CARE Day on February 13, 2026, the Lord willing. As we move forward, CARE is beginning to explore how to support curriculum development at the unit design level, taking the conceptual work we've done and moving it closer to classroom application. To that end, we've published a unit planning template to assist teachers in their work.

Other initiatives include the release of math curriculum posters for Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings (with science posters in the works), a video for Education Committees to help explain Reformed curriculum development, and ongoing conversations about how best to encourage resource sharing among schools.

We're thankful for the continued support of our League community and for the many teachers and leaders who invest their time and expertise in this work. Please keep the CARE Committee in your prayers as we seek to serve faithfully and thoughtfully in this important task.

"Our CARE Day in August was very well received, and we're looking forward to our next CARE Day on February 13, 2026!"

LCRSS Board of Directors Strategic Plan

By: Trish Smith



What could be more exciting than being involved in a strategic plan? Okay, maybe your summer vacation, the start of hockey season, or finally placing the last patch of a quilt. While the words 'strategic plan' might not have you sitting on the edge of your seat, the LCRSS Strategic Plan is all about growth, better communication and strong collaboration. This effort, under the Lord's blessing, will strengthen the LCRSS, which in turn will help the member schools, enabling them to better fulfil their mission and vision of educating God's covenant children to his glory. And that is exciting!

After receiving a lot of feedback from the membership, the LCRSS is well on its way toward rebranding 'The League'. While our commitment to the Hallmarks of Reformed Education remains the same, the LCRSS is evolving. We have received approval from the membership to change our name to 'Compass League of Reformed Schools'. The new name highlights the broader Reformed church community supporting our member schools and the growing collaboration between Reformed schools all across Canada. With the name change comes a new logo, and we look forward to unveiling a logo showing that our educational direction is focused on Christ and his redeeming work.

A new website is key to strengthening the communication between the LCRSS and its members. We are working on designing a website that will serve the member school boards, the staff of our member schools, and the LCRSS committees, in a greater capacity than our current website. Our goal is to have a website that serves as a central resource sharing hub.

The Board of Directors also continues to work on internal initiatives, such as creating a Director's Handbook, improving communication with our member-reps, and managing director turnover.

All these efforts focus on helping the member schools maintain their Reformed Identity and facilitate collaboration. Through that service, we strive to ultimately serve the Lord. For indeed, our work will gain nothing without the blessing of the Lord. We humbly ask that you continue to keep the work of the LCRSS in your prayers.

Goals	A. Revitalize our image	B. Grow our network	C. Facilitate connection
Initiatives	A1. Rebrand the LCRSS	B1. Formalize our partnership with RCDC	C1. Refresh our Member Rep orientation process
	A2. Develop a new website	B2. Increase collaboration with Reformed schools in Western Canada	C2. Review and refresh our communication methods
		B3. Expand our network of Reformed schools in Ontario	C3. Create a central hub for resource sharing and collaboration
			C4. Develop a BOD handbook

The Hallmarks of Reformed Education

CONFESSIONALLY GROUNDED	COVENANTALLY FOUNDED	ENMITY SURROUNDED	BOUND IN UNITY
Learning to say "I do" to all that God reveals about Himself in His Word and works	Recognizing God's claim on children who have received His promises in baptism	Equipping children for service in His Kingdom as prophets, priests, and kings	Working with home and church to tell children the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord