

Funding Reformed Education across a lifetime and across a Church Community

Since its inception 65 years ago, the Free Reformed School Association (FRSA) has sustained a truly unique, privileged and biblically based membership system. The entire Church Community, generally including brothers and sisters, young and old; married and unmarried; parents and grandparents; widows and widowers; are life-time members and supporters of Reformed Schooling. Parents send their child(ren) to receive a Reformed Christian Education at the John Calvin Schools, and only pay a nominal tuition fee for each child on top of the cost of a single membership subscription (currently set at \$60/week).

The questions might be asked; Why not require parents to pay the full cost of sending each of their children to our John Calvin Schools? Why do we spread the cost of education across a lifetime? Why do we share the cost of education across the wider Church Community?

“Why do we share the cost of education across the wider Church Community?”

It is biblical

Scripture often calls upon the whole Church Community to ensure that the next generation knows the Lord. Yes, this is a call to the Parents in the first instance, but also to the wider Community of God’s people as a whole. (Duet 4:9; Duet 6:6-7; Ps 22:30; Ps 71:18; Ps 78:6)

For 65 years now, our John Calvin Schools have been instrumental in the task of educating the children of the Church with a distinctively Reformed Christian Education founded upon the fear of the Lord. Over all these years it has been the Church Leaders, Church Members and Parents who have promoted School Association Membership amongst all Church Members, as part of a communal calling to support the nurturing and education of God’s Children. (Ps 79:13; Ps 102:18)

Through baptism, children are adopted as God’s children and are fellow heirs with us, and in this way belong to the Church family. When parents promise to instruct their children in the ways of the Lord, and send their children to the John Calvin Schools as part of that promise, these parents can also expect their fellow Church Members to support them in this task. As the body of Christ, all Church Members are a hand and foot to one another. (1 Cor 12, Josh 1:10-18)

The John Calvin Schools have been established by an association of Parents and Members of the Church. As the body of Christ, Church members look out for one-another’s well-being and are there to support each other and help those who are vulnerable. We care about one-another’s children.

It is equitable

Recently, parents who were newly introduced to our Churches and John Calvin Schools articulated their understanding of the Communal Support System very simply and clearly; “while our children go to school, others help us... and when our children no longer go to school, we will help others”.

The lifetime Membership Community has enabled all Church Families over the past 65 years to send all of their children to the John Calvin Schools. Families can afford to do so because the Communion of Saints have been standing around them, assisting them with keeping school Membership Fees at a minimum. Therefore, it is right and honourable for families to remain lifetime members of the School Association, both before their children attend school and after their children leave the school system. It is such a rich blessing that, with only very minor exceptions, all Church families do remain lifetime members of our School Association! (2 Cor 8:12-14)



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It is sustainable

Education is very costly, and the FRSA is a not-for-profit organisation that relies completely on contributions and commitments from the Government, Church Members, and Parents in order to remain financially sustainable.

Support from the entire Church Community ensures school fees can be kept to a minimum, thereby making it very affordable for all parents to send their children to the John Calvin Schools. Currently about half of FRSA members do not have children at school. With the whole Church striving for a high level of participation in school membership, it remains affordable and sustainable for all parents and Church Members to maintain lifelong commitment to the schools.

The lifetime communal system enables parents to spread the shared cost of their children's education across a lifetime, rather than just the schooling years, and enables all Church members to join in that beautiful calling to ensure the next generation knows the Lord.

“We care about one-another’s children”

It is a Privilege

The Lord has indeed richly blessed our Church bond with John Calvin Schools where covenant children are educated in the fear of the Lord. It is also a rich blessing that our forebears held the conviction that education of Church children was a shared responsibility of the whole Church. As a blessed consequence, the school continues to be funded through Association Membership contributions rather than fees charged only to parents with children at school. What a rich privilege that as living members of Christ's body, His Church, we may support Reformed Education across a lifetime and across a Church Community! May His name be praised for this enormous privilege and blessing.

FRSA Membership
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