

## Panel Discussion: THE FUTURE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

### Panelists:

Dr. Rajashree Srinivasan (Professor & Associate Director, School of Education, Azim Premji University)

Mr. Brian Caszo (Senior Faculty, St. Francis ICSE School, Bengaluru)

Dr. Indu Sezhiyan (Junior Cardiologist, Columbia Asia Hospital)

Adyoth Channakesashav (Student, St. Joseph's Boys' School)

Moderator: Dr. Kennedy Andrew Thomas (Director, Centre for Education beyond curriculum, Christ (Deemed to be University); Professor, School of Education.

The panel discussion on 29 August 2018 at the School of Education aimed to bring awareness and understanding on the future of school education to pre-service teachers.

Dr. Kennedy began the session by stating that we need to look at “the beautiful past, the real present and the hopeful future of education”. He briefly spoke on the history of education in India, the ‘Gurukul’ system to the present day classrooms. He highlighted that accuracy and transparency in assessment and learning, is one of the most sought after expectations by parents and students. He enabled the audience to reflect on “Is learning processed or just packaged? How is the world changing to the increasing use of augmented and virtual reality. Have we lost the faith in the process of the beautiful past, are we going to sustain them in the present, is there a scope to carry forward these change ideas to the future schools? Are we losing out on our past to correct ills of the present and build a bright future for the generations to come?”

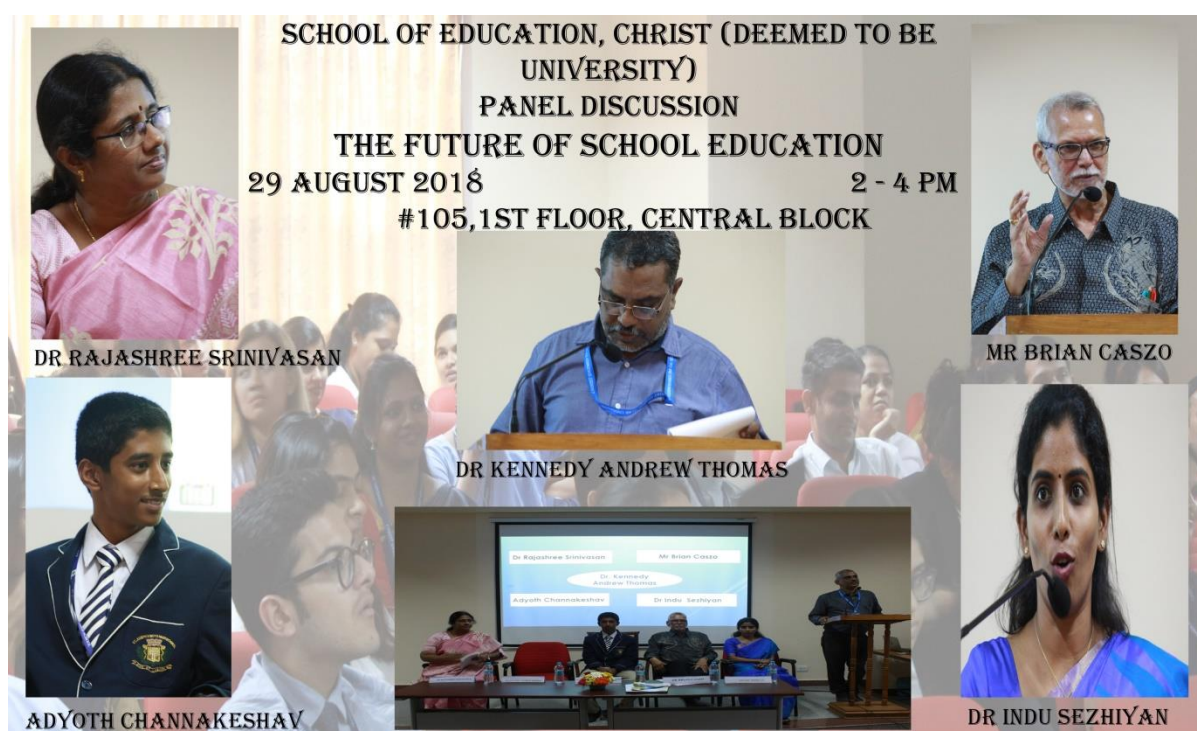
Dr. Rajashree Srinivasan, opened the panel discussion on the “the privilege of education”. She stated that teachers are the link between school and higher education for students. With regard to the future of school education she vehemently denied that technology will replace teachers in the future. To her, teaching is a “relational and social practice” and will always depend on human interaction even in the future. She expressed how teachers must come ‘collective’ and that “teaching is a social profession, not to be seen in isolation, to create community learning and contributing to society.” She stated that the capabilities needed for the future are: Analytical thought, introspection and reflective thought by the teachers; Make students curious about the subject matter; the adolescents need to be seen in the light of ‘development’ and teachers should remain open-minded and imbue the students with moral capabilities and integrity.

Dr. Indu Sezhiyan, represented the parents. She emphasized the key role a teacher plays in the life of the student and child. She focused on creating “global citizens” of the students, stating that “education is no longer just about national identity, but a feeling of belongingness to the world.” Teachers must teach global citizenship and help students understand and solve problems faced globally. The students should be taught to respect their own culture as well as other cultures. She drew attention to the challenge facing the working mothers in spending adequate time with their children. She rightly pointed out that the working mother today struggles to strike a balance between professional and personal life. Spending maximum time with their children tops the parents’ list and they look up to teachers to play the role of sharing this responsibility of being a friend, a facilitator and a guide to their children.

Mr. Brian Caszo also touched on the topic of globalization, saying the future of education needs “worldwide collaboration and a fact-based understanding of the world”. Fact-based exchange and collaboration eliminate bias. He emphasised that competency and performance should aim not only to achieve good grades but to be an able human being. He said that the teachers are the real heroes or the champions for the students and hence they must be creative and think out of the box. He also emphasized on inter-personal relationships. The TED talk ‘Every Kid Needs A Champion’ by Rita Pierson discussed the need for a good human relationship between teachers and students for significant learning to occur.

Adyoth Channakeshav, class eight student began “.....help us prepare for life. Do not prepare us for a job!” He represented the most important demographic of the future of school education- the students. He spoke passionately about what the children want in their learning experience within a classroom. The classes to be more interactive and based more on practical knowledge and field experience. He asserted that technology can only improve teaching but never replace teachers. He stated that evaluation and assessments should be tailored to individual needs of students.

Thus, the panel discussion was interactive that opened new windows to how the future of school education is going to be and what the young generation expects from the school, the teachers and the parents. There still remain a few pages unturned which will be revealed with time, because education is dynamic and so are the students!



Malakrishna Murthy, Shatabhaandi Biswas, Artheetha Sarker and Dr Greta D Souza