

1

Children... Children are the future, and children are the hope of society, they are the next generation, and they represent the change for the better in our society.

Everyone knows children represent the future, but I must remind and emphasize, we are also the present. History has shown that to progress, we must know our past, live our present, which will then become our future.

What is unfortunate is that today's children will not be considered the future, but will be known as the COVID-19 generation, a generation that does not inspire hope, trust or be strong. We, today's teenagers, will be known as the generation that did not take exams or stayed at home for more than a year. Some small children will find it strange to meet people on the street without a mask!

I don't think children and young people have ever needed more help than they do now, children should not be abandoned. Children are important NOW! We require help and support now! We need to be inspired! We have to increase adult awareness of our needs to influence us and generate new ideas for change for our benefit.

Let's not forget there are inequalities, poverty among young people, and uneven access to education! It existed before; it exists right now and is getting worse. Some students did not have access to devices and the internet to use online learning, children who do not have digital literacy to work online, language barriers for newly emigrated children who have to work online and an old education system that does not fit the needs of today's world.

The discrepancies are growing, children feel abandoned and urgent action is needed! Our goal must be for no child to feel excluded and give the best possible start in life to every child, regardless of gender, ethnicity, financial status or sexual orientation.

We must tackle this!

2

Inequality and limitation of access to a good education exists in the current education system. COVID-19 has not only exposed the flaws of the current education system, but it has unfortunately worsened the situation and has made it harder for children to progress and grow as an individual.

To name a few, children not possessing IT devices to use online learning, children not having digital literacy to work online, language barriers for newly emigrated children having to work online and an old system of education that is not fit for the needs of the current world.

Children that are being left out, children that are unable to compete and children that are not prepared for real life – are children who are failed by the education system.

Let us not forget, Charles Dickens one of the most famous authors in history was forced to drop out of high school twice to support his family financially. Dickens became an office boy where he learned shorthand. It is thanks to this job that Dickens tried his hand at freelance writing and ultimately became known as the greatest novelist of the Victorian Era.

Steve Jobs dropped out of Reed College after just 6 months due to financial difficulties. Although never finishing college, Jobs went on to found Apple, Pixar, and NeXT Computer.

Thomas Edison, the inventor of the lightbulb, was branded as difficult by his school, and as a result, he was expelled.

These represent all examples of successful people who didn't finish or attend school. They are a source of determination and strength. They failed school, yet they succeeded in life, and overall the world became a better place because of them.

Yet they had to face challenges along the way. Two of the people I mentioned had financial difficulties, and one was wrongly labelled by the school, and yet they persevered. Not everyone can do this. My question to you is how many of us can persevere? How many can persevere in this way? Wouldn't the world be a better

place, with more men and women like this, if there would be fewer barriers to success?

These men are all taken from three different centuries, yet their problems are similar or even the same. What does this say about our education system?

We must change. Now more than ever, there is a need for new, for the unfathomable dare I even say crazy ideas, for it is the only innovative change that will successfully tackle these problems. These problems have always been apparent, and I believe it is time for us to focus on solving these issues further in a post-Covid world.

For example, schools to implement giving devices to all children that need them to participate in online lessons effectively. Not only this but providing training for children to be able to use these devices as well.

Creating a new and much easier platform to access by all students, which should be incorporated within the school and its curriculum. As the future of school lies within online learning, or at least at the moment running alongside "normal schooling."

Limiting inequality or disparity between children with disabilities or children struggling with the additional language as they have emigrated to a different country could be achieved by having a group of teachers with special skills that allow them to work easier with students with disabilities or can speak different languages and support those students who don't speak the language to get by.

Restructuring the school system to fit the needs of the real world, through retraining teachers and rethinking the curriculum with the realities of the world. For example how to pay taxes, how to start a business, evaluating important historical events such as the Simon Bolivar conquests and their meaning, etc.

We realized that there is a problem, and it is time to solve it. If not us, then who? If not now, then when?