

LUMEN CHRISTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
School Board of Directors Meeting
February 21st, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Michelle Hajdukovich at 6:02 via Zoom. Members immediately went to break out rooms (Finance, Marketing/Retention, Lumen Forward.)

The meeting was reconvened at 6:20p.

Present: Michelle Hajdukovich, Fr. Tom Lilly, Aaron Sperbeck, Marcy Adkins, Audrie Williams, Marcus Holmquist, Deacon Dave Van Tuyl, Anne Gore, Brian Ross, Shane Locke, Daniel George, Kathy Gustafson, Liz Loeffler, Jim Seeberger, Dr. Kevin Jones

Absent: Liz Loeffler, Kathy Gustafson

The meeting opened in prayer led by Father Tom.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Michelle Hajdukovich made a motion to approve the agenda as written, it was seconded by Bill Arnold.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Michelle Hajdukovich made a motion to approve the minutes from January 17th as written, it was seconded by Bill Arnold.

ARCHDIOCESAN PERSPECTIVE

Liz Loeffler may be joining the meeting later, at which time she'll add comments.

WORDS FROM OUR SISTER SCHOOL

Kathy Gustafson is excited to share that 17 of 26 sixth grade class members will be coming to Lumen. SEAS had a great Catholic Schools Week including a successful Open House even though there are very few open slots. New student acceptance begins next week. Catholic Schools Essays written by 6th graders will be coming over on the bus tomorrow for review by Lumen staff. The winner of the essay contest will receive a \$500 discount on their first semester's tuition.

Michelle thanked Kathy for her time on the Family Partnership subcommittee.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

As written, by Brian Ross and attached.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Marcy Adkins reported that things continue to look very positive as far as the bottom line goes. The budget process for next year, with a line-by-line review of projected income and expense is starting. Michelle wonders if we should have an in person meeting for April to review the budget.

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Marketing/Development/Retention - Shane Locke thanked all who helped out with Catholic Schools Week - attending Mass, attending the staff luncheon, helping with parents - especially Audrie Williams and Deacon Dave Van Tuyl. Huge thanks!

Finance - Bill Arnold echoed what Marcy said in that budget discussions were starting and there would be a thorough review of each line item moving forward. Bill was looking forward to the later in the month when Gala numbers would be coming in as the bottom line just keeps getting better as months go by. Michelle notes that it's always good news to know we're able to pay our bills!

Lumen Forward - Aaron Sperbeck noted that the LF Committee, working with C+L Creative, is in the process of making final tweaks (getting things to print, online marketing, etc) for the March 28th Speaker Series. Aaron encouraged all to encourage others to attend! The Committee is also actively planning for the fall event and looking at substance abuse and would likely tackled that from multiple angles.

DEVELOPMENT/MISSION MOMENT

Anne Gore provided an update on both the LUMENary Drive which officially 'closed' December 31st (for which donations still trickle in however), and "Denim and Diamonds" - the Annual Fundraising Gala.

LUMENary Drive totals have crept up to \$88,621, surpassing the goal of \$75,000 by \$13,621. Ongoing gifts from current and alumni families, as well as other friends of Lumen account for this overage.

February 11th's Gala was a resounding success! Current income with Greater Giving, our auction platform at \$249,929 - a mere \$71 short of the \$250k mark! That said, there is still one \$500 pledge to come in so the event gross will be **\$250,429**. A breakdown of income is as follows:

Fund a Future	\$80,675
Silent Auction	\$51,475
Live Auction	\$44,202
Raffle Sales	\$28,350
<i>1 in 100</i>	\$8,600
<i>AK Airlines</i>	\$7,500
<i>Heads/Tails</i>	\$7,375
<i>Glitz in a Glass</i>	\$4,875
Sponsorships	\$12,750
Dessert Dash	\$11,628
Convenience Fee	\$2,041

After backing out expenses (catering, decorations, credit card fees, postage, printing, advertising, credit card fees, etc.) our net should be approximately **\$221,000+**.

BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Michelle Hajdukovich began with a recap of Catholic Schools Week (January 29 - February 4) reiterating what Shane said as far as thanks to Board Members who were able to help and support. Michelle then called attention to the most recent North Star Catholic which highlighted a "Letters to Home" featuring Lumen graduate Liam Thomson which showcased from a student perspective all of the things that make Lumen great!

Michelle distributed an overview of results from the Allotment Sub-Committee's review of the public school/private school funding issue (attached.) She noted that just as the Sub-Committee was just starting their work, the National Education Association sued the State of Alaska over this issue (public dollars being used for private school tuition.) With that, the Sub-Committee shifted towards more towards a 'fact finding/educating' stance vs. drafting policy, since the outcome of the litigation will definitely affect direction. Michelle noted there are definitely two different sides to the issue and was incredibly impressed by the respectful discussion of them both.

Shane asked if Brian had heard from parents on this issue, he said informally yes, but nothing direct. Shane wondered if the high number of SEAS families coming over who may be using funds to pay for tuition might affect enrollment. Brian indicated he hoped not, noting that while the funds can't pay for tuition, they could support other areas of learning and related activities.

Fr. Tom wondered if it would be possible to distill down the Subcommittee's report into a one pager that could be distributed to new and existing families. Michelle said that she would happily do this and asked all to reach out to her with questions.

ARCHDIOCESAN UPDATE

Liz Loeffler was able to join late and had been listening in on the conversations, the AOAJ was working on many of the same issues as the school (in particular the Allotment issue) and she looks forward to working collaboratively moving forward. She will forward to Brian and Michelle guidance from the AOAJ that was recently sent to SEAS

PASTOR'S COMMENTS

Father Tom began his comments noting it is a far different board and financial situation now than when it was when he, Shane and Brian were all new to the school, and the Board 7 years ago. It's such a dynamic time to be a part of Lumen Christi and so deeply ingrained with our sister school, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

We will have several openings on the Board next year. If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining, please forward names to Fr. Tom.

CLOSING PRAYER // ADJOURNMENT // NEXT MEETING

The meeting concluded in prayer to St. Michael the Archangel and adjourned at 7:06p. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21st via Zoom.

*St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle;
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;
And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host,
By the power of God,
Thrust into hell Satan and all the other evil spirits
Who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen.*

FINANCIALS

St Benedict Parish/Lumen Christi

Statement of Activities

Lumen Christi Only

January 31, 2023

	<u>Current Month Actual</u>	<u>Current Month Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Income					
Ordinary Revenue Totals:	18,355.00	6,857.01	73,976.32	47,999.55	82,285.00
Extraordinary Revenue Totals:	27,874.05	4,083.37	139,970.07	43,083.35	175,000.00
Fees/Tuition Income Totals:	90,123.98	93,500.00	576,265.14	583,775.00	961,100.00
Investment Income Totals:	119.96	25.00	435.59	175.00	300.00
Sales & Other Income Totals:	10,360.25	8,583.37	109,612.86	60,083.35	103,000.00
Revenue Clearing Totals:	0.00	108.37	0.00	758.35	1,300.00
Income Totals:	<u>146,833.24</u>	<u>113,157.12</u>	<u>900,259.98</u>	<u>735,874.60</u>	<u>1,322,985.00</u>
Expense					
Personnel Expense Totals:	79,710.73	76,883.54	554,368.47	538,584.68	923,202.29
Professional Services Totals:	1,250.03	1,066.63	16,870.40	7,466.65	12,800.00
Supplies Totals:	6,169.07	6,008.48	52,828.85	31,808.40	47,800.00
Facility Expense Totals:	25,834.70	16,710.47	121,680.86	117,984.01	198,936.96
Travel & Transportation Totals:	4,043.07	1,000.00	11,484.09	6,000.00	10,000.00
Dues, Assessments & Community Totals:	0.00	400.00	1,935.00	3,500.00	3,700.00
Education & Development Totals:	1,119.89	183.37	7,072.30	5,533.35	8,200.00
Other Operating Expenses Totals:	3,767.63	7,324.89	37,777.54	31,774.95	57,900.00
Expense Totals:	<u>121,895.12</u>	<u>109,577.38</u>	<u>804,017.51</u>	<u>742,652.04</u>	<u>1,262,539.25</u>
Income - Expense:	<u>24,938.12</u>	<u>3,579.74</u>	<u>96,242.47</u>	<u>(6,777.44)</u>	<u>60,445.75</u>

PRINCIPALS REPORT

Principal's Report Feb 2023

Academics

- Science and humanities departments have started their curriculum reviews. Math department is finishing up their final report from Spring 2022.
- We held an awards assembly on Monday, January 30 and recognized academic honor roll students, faith in action students, and student athletes. Emily Ross, Class of 2023 senior, was named the "And Then Some" award recipient.
- Junior High PSAT is on Wed, April 19th.
- Class of 2023 Baccalaureate Mass is on Wed, May 10 and Graduation is Thurs, May 11.
- Academic year 2023-2024 calendar is out. See attachment.

Safety/IT

- None

Campus Life

- Catholic Schools Week was a great success! Many thanks to the Board members who attended events and helped serve our awesome parents in the morning drop off line! Students collected over 1000 canned food items during the "Souper Bowl" drive and stocked shelves at the St. Benedict's Outreach Pantry.
- Over 30 Lumen students went to St. Therese's Camp for the St. Benedict Winter Retreat and joined youth from the parish. This retreat also serves as the 10th grade annual grade level retreat.

Recruitment/Retention/Marketing/Advancement:

-Current Enrollment Update: 98	-2023-24 Projected Enrollment: 114
7th: 20	7th: 20 (plus 2 waitlist)
8th: 19 (one student dropped)	8th: 21 (plus 5 waitlist)
9th: 26	9th: 21 (plus 2 waitlist)
10th: 18	10th: 25 (plus 1 possible)
11th: 10	11th: 17 (plus 4 possibles)
12th: 5	12th: 10 (plus 1 possible)

- Annual Gala (Denim and Diamonds) held on February 11th. Anne will provide rough numbers during Mission Moment.

Athletics

- High school girls basketball team participated in the Hardwood Classic tournament at Grace Christian. They lost the first two games to Soldotna High and Dimond, but defeated Service in the third game.
- Remaining games include:
 - Tuesday, Feb 21 vs Nanwalek (6pm girls, 7:30 boys)
 - Thursday, Feb 23 vs Holy Rosary (6pm boys)
 - Friday, Feb 24 @ Cook Inlet Academy (3pm JV boys, 4:30pm girls, 6pm boys)
 - Monday, Feb 27 vs Birchwood (SENIOR NIGHT)(6pm girls, 7:30pm boys)
- Lumen hosts Peninsula Conference/Regions tournament from Mar 2-4. 1A/2A State Championships scheduled for Mar 15-18.
- Junior high volleyball season still underway with final games scheduled for Feb 24-25

ALLOTMENT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

MEMORANDUM

To: Brian Ross, Principal - Lumen Christi High School
Father Thomas Lilly - Pastor of St. Benedict's Parish

From: Michelle Hajdukovich, Board Chair - Lumen Christi School Board

Re: FAMILY PARTNERSHIP/ALLOTMENT SUBCOMMITTEE'S RESULTS

Date: February 20, 2023

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In December of 2022, Father Tom Lily and Principal Brian Ross requested that the Lumen School Board form a subcommittee to study the homeschooling allotment process from a variety of angles to fully understand the nature of the program. With an increased focus on this issue by both sides of the school choice argument, and the fact that many families of St. Elizabeth Anne Seaton (SEAS) will be joining Lumen, we needed to develop a clear answer to whether or not Lumen would participate in the allotment programs and specifically Family Partnership which seems to be the most popular due to its higher reimbursements. Historically Lumen has not participated in this program while SEAS, Holy Rosary, St. John's, ICS and Monroe Catholic High School currently are.

A Subcommittee was formed to address these issues, which was comprised of board members and interested families. In all, the Subcommittee consisted of eight volunteers who brought a diverse background of experiences and viewpoints. The school board members who participated were Michelle Hajdukovich, Aaron Sperbeck, Shane Locke, Marcus Holmquist, Audrie Williams and Liz Loeffler from the Archdiocese. Parents Amy Locke and Donabelle Shephard also volunteered. The Subcommittee's plan was to meet in small groups with representatives from Family Partnership, SEAS, Monroe, and The Archdiocese of Anchorage in order to gather information for later discussion with the board and Lumen Christi High School's administration.

Contemporaneous with the formation of our Subcommittee, we learned that the Archdiocese of Anchorage had also decided to take a closer look at this issue, due in part to a recently filed lawsuit by NEA against the State of Alaska (Anchorage Superior Court case 3AN-23-04309CI). While the results of both of these events would most certainly impact our decision, we decided to go forward with our meetings to fully educate ourselves on the issue and perform our due diligence. To this end, Marcus Holmquist led the team who went to the SEAS meeting with Kathy Gustafson and Nicole Branch. Audrie Williams interviewed Dr. Jessica Parker of Family Partnership and Aaron Sperbeck met with Liz Loeffler and the legal

team for the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Matt Meggs their COO and Clint Campion their general counsel.

II. MEETING NOTES, RESULTS AND DATA

a. *St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton Subcommittee Meeting Notes*

On February 8, 2023, the Subcommittee met via Zoom to discuss their findings and share notes. Marcus Holmquist opened the discussion saying that SEAS was extremely hospitable and open with them and that Shane Locke and Donabelle Shepherd were in attendance. Here are the notes provided by Shane from that meeting:

- Current SEAS tuition is \$6400. Family Partnership's total distributed allotment is \$4250 per student, of which (currently at SEAS) \$3200 may be used towards tuition offset.
- If SEAS were to raise tuition rates (to \$8000, as an example), Family Partnership would be able to distribute \$4000 (or, 50%) to be used towards tuition offset. Family Partnership suggested that SEAS raise tuition rates so that more funds could be used towards tuition. SEAS/Kathy Gustafson declined and was not interested in doing that.
- Of all the K-6 students enrolled at SEAS that are also dual-enrolled with another school, approx. 90% are with Family Partnership (as opposed to Raven, MatSu, PACE, etc.). This is believed to be because Family Partnership offers a much greater amount of allotment funds.
- Of the current 6th grade class of 26 students, 18 are enrolled in Family Partnership.
- The current NEA lawsuit has not stopped Family Partnership's operation or how their student allotment funds may be used. It continues as business as usual.
- The amount of paperwork, records requests, receipts, and overall communication with Family Partnership has been an enormous burden on SEAS school staff (primarily Nicole).
- The curriculum approval process by Family Partnership was extremely simple. SEAS staff provided detailed information about the current curriculum and textbooks used, and Family Partnership reviewed it and gave approval. The only course that was not "approved" was Religion. All others were considered secular and allowable.
- SEAS academic reporting dates do not match up with Family Partnership's, which has also been very difficult for SEAS staff to coordinate when submitting final grades.
- SEAS does not advertise or promote Family Partnership, nor any other dual-enrollment school programs. If parents ask, SEAS staff informs them that they (SEAS) are an approved vendor and are able to work with dual-enrollment schools, Family Partnership included. Other

schools (Anchorage Christian School was an example given) advertise their dual-enrollment availability on their website.

- SEAS student base is becoming more and more predominantly Catholic. Priority is given to 1) Siblings of current students, 2) SEAS parishioners, 3) St. Benedict's parishioners, and 4) other Archdiocesan church parishioners before opening up slots to the general public. With such high demand for a slot at SEAS school, this has resulted in the number of Catholic students to drastically increase.
- Kathy Gustafson did not think that SEAS parents who currently use Family Partnership funds towards tuition would pull their children out of the school if the lawsuit ruled in favor of NEA and Family Partnership funds were no longer allowed to be put towards tuition. She feels that demand is so incredibly high to get into the school that parents would pay the full tuition rate without Family Partnership assistance.

b. Family Partnership Subcommittee Meeting Notes

Audrie Williams then followed with her update from Family Partnership. Here are her notes from that meeting:

- After much discussion it is my understanding that Lumen would not be seeking to be a vendor, but simply to be vetting our curriculum so that if a parent would like to pursue reimbursement for certain curriculum they could. This means that Family Partnership would not direct bill and Lumen's name would not be anywhere on the Family Partnership as a vendor or partner.

- The curriculum would be examined by their curriculum chair who would determine solely based on the curriculum used if that curriculum is reimbursable and how much. (Ex: Algebra II would present their math book and curriculum and FP would determine that it is 100% reimbursable at a certain rate. The parent would then go to FP and ask for reimbursement for Math classes).

- I specifically asked if prayer during class would make a curriculum less reimbursable. She stated that it is only the curriculum used that is reviewed for reimbursement. The vetting process would not be stating how much of our day was religious but the % of the curriculum that is non-religious and reimbursable.

- As Lumen would not be a vendor, FP (and ASD) would have no involvement in anything Lumen related aside from reviewing curriculum when asked to do so.

- When asked about the potential double credit and double diploma, Dr. Parker stated that currently students can enroll in math at Lumen and in Math through FP. This is not the case at all homeschool programs. Since students can have Math on both transcripts, they can

potentially have two diplomas. Her opinion is that in the near future (potentially based on the outcome of this legal case) the student will only be able to obtain one diploma. She agrees that this dual diploma can create issues as the student appears to be taking double credits for only one class.

- When asked about graduation rates she stated that students can chose which school to graduate from. In her experience students generally choose the brick-and-mortar school they attend. This does have potential to change our graduation rates if students chose to walk with FP as opposed to Lumen Christi.

c. *ICS/Monroe Subcommittee Meeting Notes*

Michelle Hajdukovich was able to speak with a board member from ICS/Monroe in Fairbanks.

- Their participation in the allotment program is with BEST.
- BEST, like Family Partnership, is a homeschool under the umbrella of the local public school system.
- ICE/Monroe recognized during Covid their ability to participate in this program when parents brought it forward. They then increased tuition on the surface though through the use of the BEST money a family's net tuition went down.
- They believe because parents manage the money, they are not directly involved though they are actively advertising BEST at their family nights and as a way of decreasing tuition.
- The board member spoken to did not agree with the raising of tuition in this manner.
- Michelle was unable to reach the principal to confirm this information or ask additional questions.

d. *Archdiocese, Loeffler, Legal Subcommittee Meeting Notes*

Lastly, Aaron Sperbeck reported what he had discussed with the Archdiocese and had Liz Loeffler confirm his impressions. Here are his notes:

- Everything that the school does should be infused with faith;
- given the recently filed lawsuit, the position of the Archdiocese is that Lumen should not venture into becoming a vendor for the FP program anytime soon;
- Lumen should maintain its status quo which the Archdiocese will support;
- Archdiocese will begin work putting out guidance to ALL schools regarding this position and expectation;
- There are no current plans for the Archdiocese to become involved in the actual legal matters at this time but will be watching closely.

III. DISCUSSION

The first new information we discussed was that SEAS made it clear that this had caused a lot of work for their admin when it came to grades and deadlines that do not match up. The impression by our homeschool moms, Audrie and Donabelle, was that this burden should not be on the school but on the parents and that in their experience that was the case. Shane and Marcus speculated on if SEAS had just shouldered this at first because it was a small number of students using the program in the beginning and that over time and as the participation grew they had not created a policy to remedy it. As of writing this we are not sure of the answer to that question but we did decide if Lumen were to ever participate in the allotment, then we would have a policy to address this. Marcus and Shane both expressed having a better understanding of the program after discussing it with Kathy but still not being comfortable regarding a private institute accepting federal money for tuition.

Audrie and Donabelle expressed an opposing view saying the parents taking responsibility and receiving the funds makes this between the parents and Family Partnership not the school and the allotment program. At this point you can see from the data that SEAS is 90% involved in allotment programs and they feel it has made their school "more predominantly Catholic" but that if the allotment programs were to be discontinued, they would retain these students or keep their high enrollment numbers because there is such a high demand for their school.

The second discussion area that we clarified was that neither SEAS nor Lumen are or would be a "vendor". We were confident that was the language used previously but were told that was not the case. What was presented by Audrie is that the link to Family Partnership that the school would have and what has happened with SEAS is that we would provide them with the physical curriculum and syllabuses for each class and then through reviewing these they would determine how much would be reimbursed to the parents per class. It was asked on how our infusion of our Catholic faith would be considered and she said Family Partnership is not concerned with how it is taught/interpreted but what the materials we used to teach it are. One example that was given was that if there is a section in the syllabus that specifically goes over Catholic religious values on a subject that would affect the percentage reimbursed for that class but if a Catholic scientist is being studied that would not necessarily be considered because secular schools also study Catholic scientists. When ask if they have any input on what Lumen could teach the answer was no.

Family Partnership agreed there is no solution, at the moment, for dual transcripts but also did not see the negative in using them to apply for colleges. At this time, you can graduate with dual diplomas but they believe in the future, due to litigation, you will have to choose. Their belief is the majority of kids decide to walk and graduate from their brick-and-mortar school and they said they have seen some schools have family contracts which bind those students to graduate from their school. It was brought up by the committee that with the competitive nature of applying for college it would be tempting to go with the diploma that had the highest GPA. When asked about the current litigation, Family Partnership feels they will win with the likes of the Institute for Justice behind them but expressed that ASD is their boss and if at any time they

feel like discontinuing the program they can but they would do so at a natural pause as to not disrupt families using the program.

The discussion when it came to Monroe was brief because we don't have a lot of information about their opinions but it was noted that they are actively "advertising" their relationship with BEST and did raise tuition which SEAS did not. It should also be stated that ICS and Monroe fall under the Archdiocese of Fairbanks not Anchorage.

As for the Archdiocese's legal view, Aaron reiterated his notes and said that the Archdiocese is looking into this at length and following the lawsuits closely. When asked a guesstimate for a decision to be made he felt this would go faster than a jury trial, that it would go to appeals and we could hope for a decision in the next 12 to 24 months. Liz said that it is the view of the Archdiocese that they will not interfere with what any of the schools are doing right now in regards to the allotment program and that she was hoping to have more information by April. They too are worried about making sure that we are not compromising our Catholic identity but also know that there needs to be a unified approach to dispel the current confusion.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion I want to thank this Subcommittee for the time and respect they gave this issue and critical thinking they brought to the discussion. This group is probably very representative of our Catholic community as a whole, with two distinct opinions. While those who were hesitant about this issue felt more informed after this investigation, they are still on the side of keeping government money out of a private institutions for the fear of putting it at risk or watering down our Catholic mission. Those who had experience in homeschooling and in other Catholic schools felt it was a resource available to parents that they should be allowed to access and that it in no way was controlling what we could teach or judging how Catholic we are. While the group was respectful and acknowledged the gray areas no opinions were changed on either side after the presentation of this data. The group as a whole did agree that we are anxious for the Archdiocese to make a decision and we feel in limbo until that is done. We all felt it is hard to explain to future students why different schools have different policies and that ultimately the decision on how to go forward lies in the conclusion of the lawsuits and Archdiocese giving guidelines for how to deal with allotments. Since our meeting it has come out our attention that the Archdiocese is releasing two guidelines in the coming week. One, schools must provide information to all parents regarding the Attorney General's stand, the current litigation, and possible risks. Two, schools must refrain from promoting allotment programs.