

President's Report to Parents' Association

February 28, 2019

(for March 5 Parents' meeting)

All parents of Luther College High School (LCHS) students are members of the Parents' Association. We are extremely grateful that the Parents' Association has become more active over the past few years whether that involvement involves attending regular meetings every semester, fundraising, asking good questions/making good suggestions for our school, assisting with various events or thinking about the future of our students and their well-being. We thank especially those who are taking leadership roles in various ventures around the school but are thrilled when parents take an active interest in their kids simply by being involved. Education is much more than what goes on in the classroom; parents help build the community that supports all the learning in our school.

Given that there are a number of items I want to address at the Parents' Association meeting on March 5, I'm writing this report as a background in the hopes that we can make most efficient use of our time at that meeting. If you are not able to attend the meeting, please feel free to contact me at bryan.hillis@luthercollege.edu or (306) 791-9155 if you want to discuss any of these items.

- 1. Strategic plan.** As noted in the minutes from the October meeting of the parents' association, I have asked parents to consider what they might think are strategic directions or themes that the school should pursue. If your ideas take the form of specific initiatives, we are happy to consider those also or at least note them for future reference and consideration. At this point in the process, we are working with the College's Board of Regents to determine the strategic directions or themes. You will find the strategic directions for the current strategic plan (2016-2019) indicated in this summary on our website: https://www.luthercollege.edu/public/images/Strategic_Plan_Handout.pdf

I hope to allow most of my allotted time at the meeting to hear the ideas of parents and share with the parents some preliminary ideas that our Senior Leadership Team is already considering.

- 2. Uniforms.** Please see the summary of the survey here attached, as prepared by Angela Bethune in our Communications office. I will not be taking any time at the parents' meeting to discuss this but would like to float the idea of another dedicated meeting to this where various perspectives could be presented and discussed by all parents as well as some prospective parents. Rest assured that our dress code will not change to uniforms for the fall of 2019. There is too much more consultation to be done and, frankly, more pressing issues I want to address. Unless I hear differently from the parents . . .
- 3. New Luther College, Regina Act.** Saskatchewan's provincial legislature passed the new act for Luther College, Regina (including both its high school and university campuses) on December 5, 2018. Please find the new Act and corresponding by-laws, duly passed by our

Board of Regents at <https://www.luthercollege.edu/high-school/about-luther/governance-administration/luther-college-act-2018-bylaws> As reported at the last parents' meeting, this new Act and by-laws will not change the operation of the College as students and parents see it. It will add some badly needed revisions to our governing procedures including having an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of its corporate membership. The Board of Regents is planning its first AGM in October of 2019 and one new aspect is that the president of the Parents' Association will be a voting member at this meeting. We hope this will further increase the involvement of parents and help them feel even more connected to the College and its future.

4. **“Rooted and Open”.** This is a relatively new document produced by the Network of ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) Colleges and Universities of which Luther College is a part. In an increasingly pluralistic and secular world, Luther College, like most other schools in the Christian tradition, struggles with how best to relate our mission and vision to our students as well as our faculty and staff. This document was warmly received by the Board of Regents and was also favourably received by the senior administration and faculty of the high school campus. It has no official authority within the school but I encourage parents to read it and discuss any concerns they may have with me or Dr. Mark Anderson regarding the document. It can be found on our website at <https://www.luthercollege.edu/high-school/about-luther/presidents-message>
5. **Presidential Search.** Two years ago, I informed the Board of Regents that I would be retiring at the end of June, 2020. I will have served in this great college in this amazing job for 10 years by then and I am that age where retirement seems to suit. The Board has put together a search committee consisting of Regents and faculty and staff representatives from both campuses, the president of the University of Regina and a representative from the Lutheran church. The Board has also hired an external consultant as this search, like the previous two searches, will be an international search including prospects in at least Canada and the United States. If you have any questions about the process, please feel free to contact the chair of the Board, Dave Solheim, who is also co-chairing the search committee. He can be reached at davesolheim@sasktel.net. The Board hopes to make an announcement in December of 2019 with the new president beginning officially on July 1, 2020.
6. **SRC Fundraising initiative.** This year's SRC is an extremely active one with many good ideas. They have asked to be involved in fundraising for the school with some pet projects they are particularly interested in. We in the senior administration welcome this interest and effort while also realizing that our priorities like books, academic and sports equipment may not always line up with those of the students. As a result, Luke Lumbard together with our Chief Development Officer, Maureen Harrison, have written a very good letter to the parents asking for help in raising money for the school in general with the proceeds being split between the various priorities. I hope you will consider supporting the students and the school's administration with an additional gift.

7. **A Time to Build.** With approximately \$2M left to raise to eliminate the debt of the College for its 2014 building and infrastructure renewal program, the College has secured the agreement of two major donors to match the gifts of others that will eliminate this debt. In short, as a result of these major gifts (totaling \$1.05M) as well as the generosity of others, primarily alumni, who have donated another \$705,000, we have \$245,000 left to raise. Many thanks to any who have already contributed as your gifts in this area are ensuring that we are not burdened with a debt into the future. And don't forget that we have \$245,000 left to go! (for all who might still like to help . . .)

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Hillis