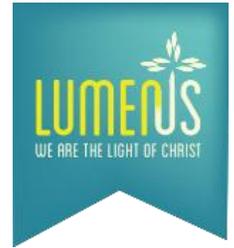


Forming One Parish & School Community



“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” Mt 28: 19-20

We have a strong and vibrant parish and school. Historically, the two organizations have been intentionally kept separate in corporate structure, governance, physical plant and leadership. Strong school leadership has resulted in significant school autonomy and an identity unique from the parish. While it is not necessarily desirable to combine the two under one corporation, there is strong appetite and considerable benefit to be gained by unifying the two culturally and physically, sharing best practices, resources and physical space.

Areas of Discovery:

- Our pastor and principal view our school as a gateway to our faith for youth and families, and endorse all efforts to unify our parish and school as one community.
- The Pastoral Council has reduced the parish contribution to the school for fiscal year 2013-14 from 40% to 25% of Sunday collections, based on the recommendation of the finance committee and the archdiocese that the parish contribution to any program not exceed 25% of Sunday collections. This reduction requires additional fund-raising to make up the difference.
- School families pay on average \$4500-\$5000 per child (depending on the level of parish subsidy and financial aid), contribute to school fundraising, and volunteer many hours to support their children’s Catholic education. These contributions are not recognized as parish stewardship.
- Our parish sacramental preparation program for parish families occurs outside of school hours. Although the archdiocese recommends this practice, there is considerable HCS parent objection to sacramental preparation not being part of school curriculum, as is done by two neighboring parishes.
- Greater school access to parish space would enhance the parish and school community.
- Some families leave the parish once their last child graduates from our school.

Conversation Starters:

- What resources and best practices can be shared between church and school? What cultural elements should be shared? Which ones conflict?
- Should school investment by parents be considered parish stewardship? What are the implications?
- How can we use HCS as a gateway to a family’s faith, parish membership and parish involvement during and after their children’s enrollment in school?
- How do the parish and school unify their leadership and strengthen their common identity as a community of faith and stewardship?
- How can we coordinate parish and school funding in a manner that promotes one community?
- How can the school obtain greater access to parish space, while also respecting the sacredness of church space for activities other than worship?
- What are the primary concerns of school and non-school parents regarding sacramental preparation? Does the program successfully cultivate a desire within families to explore their relationship with God? Can sacramental preparation be presented in a way that makes it a priority rather than an inconvenience in a family’s life?
- How can parish and school improve communication among their respective staff, and with all parishioners?