

Report from the Leduc Society for Christian Education

First, my apologies for not coming to this meeting. I didn't update my calendar well and ended up working today.

Covenant's governance is a little confusing, even if you've been here for a while, so I'm going to begin with some background. Black Gold oversees the operation of Covenant Christian School as a school under all the Alberta regulations for public schools. School Council is part of that—a parent group to advise and support the principal and staff. But Covenant is not an ordinary public school—we run an alternative program. The alternative program is, of course, our Christian component. All of us here know that Christianity isn't just a “tack on” to some parts of Covenant and not others, but in terms of governance, I find it easier to think of two separate entities. So the Leduc Society for Christian Education (LSCE) is the other governing body, and the LSCE Executive is the parent group that serves as directors for the Society. As directors, we are charged with upholding the vision of the Society and making decisions on the Society's behalf. (In that way, we are different from this School Council that just advises).

Some aspects of the Christian program don't require a lot of governance but are essential. For example, last week our teachers went to a Christian teacher's convention. The LSCE doesn't run this, so we don't have to make decisions about it, but we pay for registration fees, travel, and accommodation costs. And by we, that means everyone around the table—your LSCE fees help send teachers to Convention, and I'm sure that Donavin and Kyle can testify to that positive experience.

The LSCE also has a very practical side. We own 2 buses that bring students to school from outside the Black Gold catchment area (think Calmar, Beaumont, Millet and surrounding farms). We own the school building. We run a pre-school program. To own and operate these assets and help with Christian programming, we hire staff and receive and distribute funds. We do have committees that help in all these areas (Transportation, Facilities, Pre-School, Booster [for fundraising], and Finance), as well as a Public Relations Committees (to help build community and promote Covenant). The reports from these committees require the Executive to deal with some very pragmatic issues. Last time meeting, for example, we talked about a new storage space for our snowblower and when to purchase a new bus (with funds set aside in our budget). Although these items take meeting time, I don't typically bring them up at School Council!

What I do want to report on is the long-range facility expansion planning. As I mentioned at the School Council meeting last month, we are holding an information night for everyone who is interested. Our presentation will talk about our student growth and how that's impacted our facilities, financial considerations related to our building, and some options for obtaining more classrooms (with their pros, cons, and estimated impacts). After the presentation, we will divide into smaller groups to get feedback from the Society members. This is not a meeting where we are taking a vote on action. It's a sharing of ideas between the Executive and Society members, so that we can shape future ideas for action. As we did at the Annual General Meeting, we are providing free childcare and refreshments. I expect the meeting to run from about 7:00 to 8:30. Please come and encourage others to join us!

Finally, those of you who have been part of the Society for a while know that we have revised our bylaws, but a few technicalities left them incomplete. The technicalities have been fixed, so now we have bylaws that will work better for us. And we can stop talking about bylaws at AGMs!

On a different, more sober note, I attend the Leduc Composite High School Council as well. Donavin will explain why I am asking that this School Council pray for that community. We also prayed at our Executive meeting. And I will tell the High School that we are providing this support.

Blessings, Emily Meetsma