

February 24, 2017

Dear Wildcat Alumni,

Whether you are a graduate of Luther Institute, Luther High School North, or Luther North College Prep, you are a part of this school's long and storied history and tradition. For over one hundred years, this institution has been a hub for excellence in education, and I feel our graduates bear witness to that. As an alumnus of the Class of 1997, and as the current principal of this institution, I have been asked to address you directly.

As you may know, on November 13, 2016, I was asked by the Luther North Board of Trustees to assume all administrative duties in addition to my duties as principal. The responsibilities have been daunting. Over the last three months, I have frequently met with our board to discuss Luther North's future. In addition to this, I have also met with representatives from other Lutheran entities in an advisory capacity. And, prior to November, the board was working with consultants to examine the viability of continuing to operate the school. I am writing today with some very difficult news.

It is with a heavy heart that I must inform you that after examining many different factors and evaluating many different options, the Luther North Board of Trustees voted that for the 2017-2018 school year, Luther North College Prep will not conduct classes and will devote time to planning for continuing Lutheran secondary education in Chicago. Among the key reasons for this decision are:

- **Enrollment.** Despite our adding a full-time recruiting and marketing position, enrollment has remained flat at around 165 students since 2010. It is difficult for Luther North to compete in the marketplace.
- **Finances.** Revenues have not matched expenses, and the school has operated with deficit budgets. Continuing to operate this way is not sustainable. The increases in tuition and fees required to bring revenues and expenses into balance would only compound the financial challenges, in that significant increases would impact enrollment.

- **The Facility.** The aging facility was sold to New Life in 2010, and pursuant to the terms of that sale, Luther North's lease will expire in 2020. As you know, the buildings are old, not handicapped accessible, not energy efficient, and not attractive from the standpoint of recruiting students. LN currently occupies its space "rent free"; however, the need to begin paying rent at the end of the term would increase LN's costs substantially.

Why now? The board is also concerned that continuing to recruit and enroll a freshman class knowing that those students will not be able to attend for four years is not the right thing to do.

In order to complete the 2016-2017 school year and to complete the second semester as planned, we will need your support. As a fellow alumnus, I hope that that support will come in the following ways:

- We need your prayerful support for both students and staff.
- We encourage you to make a special gift and hope that you would encourage others to do so.
- And then finally, help us make this a great semester at Luther North College Prep by supporting our spring events. Spring sports will commence as planned. We will proceed with our ceremonies, including the honors convocation, prom, and graduation, as well as with our planned events like Trivia Night and the Spring Auction.

The Board of Trustees and various other entities are making their priority the students and the staff of this institution.

In 2010, we were faced with a situation that threatened the closure of this institution. Seven years ago, students, parents, families, faculty, alumni, and friends came together to mount the "Save Luther" campaign, which included the sale of our campus. Very many, including me, view this campaign as a success, because it provided us with seven more years of "enabling students to reach their potential and become lifelong-learners through a challenging academic curriculum." Those that walked these halls and graduated between 2011 and 2017 are among the finest young men and women imaginable. You should be proud to consider them among your ranks as Luther North alumni. However, while that sale enabled us to have seven more years of ministry, it also has been a hindrance to our growth efforts. In addition to this, the administrators and board previously had resources available to them that are not available to us now. Further, I am cognizant of the fact that the initial sale drove away many alumni from our cause.

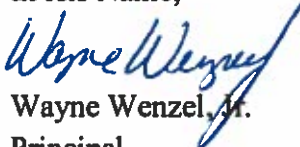
Many of you will be saddened or angered by this news and these revelations. However, I ask that you consider several things for a moment. First, a history such as ours, which dates back over one hundred years, is something that we, as alumni, regardless of our hurt and frustration, should celebrate and applaud together. Second, we as alumni were able to complete our time at Luther North, and 134 freshmen through juniors will not be able to do so. They and their families will need the support of our entire community through this difficult period, and that includes our alumni and our friends. In order to finish the school year and continue our tradition

of providing a high quality Christian education to our students, we need to assure our staff that they will be paid for the remainder of the year. Please consider making a financial contribution to enable us to do that. You can contribute to Luther North directly by sending a check to the school or by making a contribution to the Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation (CLEF) designated for Luther North. Please continue our legacy by enabling us to finish this school year with dignity and pride.

Over the next few months, we will be contacting you as best as we can regarding the steps we will be taking during this phase. Part of this will be information regarding storing and maintaining institutional and academic records. I feel that our alumni should be a part of as many scheduled events as possible. And any help we can offer is both our obligation and our privilege. I will be the first of us to say that I owe a debt of gratitude to Luther North for the education and spiritual and personal growth I gained as a student here.

As our academic year ends, we will celebrate our 108 year history. I ask that you join me in this effort to make this transition as seamless as possible for our students and for our entire faculty, and obviously for you, our alumni. During this time, I ask you to remember the words found in Jeremiah 29:11: ““For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” Please join me in keeping the students, families, teachers, staff, and alumni of Luther North College Prep in your prayers. I do not know exactly where God will take us, but I do trust that He will, as He always has, bless the lives of the members of this community abundantly.

In His Name,



Wayne Wenzel, Jr.

Principal

Class of 1997