



LAKE MICHIGAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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ONE OF AMERICA'S TOP 50 CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS 2004, 2005

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Dear Laker Parents:

I am writing to you today with great excitement and eagerness. I am pleased to announce revised tuition rate guidelines as well as a new incentive program for our existing families to encourage them to recruit others to join the Laker family. Our actual 2006/2007 tuition rates will be published in February.

The attached pages explain both the new guidelines as well as the revised incentive program. However, it is important for you to understand why we are implementing this change. As you know Lake Michigan Catholic Schools have not been immune to the demographic changes that have taken place in Berrien County. According to the BCISD, the number of school age children in Berrien County has declined 4.7% in the past five years and is projected to decline an additional 5.9% over the next five years. In line with this trend, Lake Michigan Catholic Schools have also experienced a similar decline in enrollment in recent years.

The Pastors and our parishes are committed to the maintenance of a strong and viable Lake Michigan Catholic School system that provides the solid, gospel-based foundation we have all come to expect. It is our expectation that these new policies will stimulate enrollment activity and assist us in our efforts to retain and grow enrollment to support our programs. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) recently stated that a strong elementary and secondary Catholic school system serve as invaluable instruments in proclaiming the Good News from one generation to the next. The USCCB strongly support the notion that Catholic education be available, accessible, and affordable. They go on to assert that our young people are the future of our church and that Catholic Schools are the most effective means to provide our children with a high quality, rigorous and Christ-centered education. We believe that the Bishops are absolutely correct and are up for the challenges that face us in the coming years at LMC.

Some highlights of the policy changes include the following:

- Update and enhancement of the multi-student discount
- Elimination of consideration of the "fair-ability to pay" system
- A revision in the tuition rate guidelines for Catholic families who come from parishes that do not provide direct subsidies to the school system
- A significant enhancement and simplification of the Tuition Reduction Incentive Program (TRIP)

Please read on and pass along the good news to your friends and neighbors. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ,

John T. Berlin
Executive Director