

Campaign Readiness—Financial Health Review
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What did I do?

As Langley Christian School positions itself for a major campaign, it is imperative that we undertake a financial health review or audit to ensure we are running as effectively as possible before approaching the school community for permission to move ahead with an expansion and launch a capital campaign. To accomplish this, the LCS Board of Governors contacted the Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia (SCSBC) to conduct a Financial Health Review. The over-arching goal of the review was to focus on identifying and addressing/correcting elements and practices that might hinder the operational and financial effectiveness of Langley Christian School. As a result, LCS was provided with a comprehensive report that provided observations, commendations and recommendations in 16 critical areas.

Once the review was completed, the finance forum met to discuss the recommendations, identify those that needed an immediate response and determine the course of action for the remaining priorities.

What did I learn?

While LCS has a very capable and knowledgeable business office staff, throughout the process it became increasingly clear that changes were needed to ensure that the school was able to demonstrate fiscal responsibility, stewardship and accountability to the school community.

Each of the identified 16 critical areas of the review had recommendations that addressed deficiencies or critical incidents that needed a response at both the practical and policy development level.

For example, in the area of Internal Controls, we needed to update our procedures manual to include current financial controls, practices and procedures. Also, LCS needed to develop a ‘whistle-blower’ policy to protect individuals who come forward to report inappropriate actions.

What difference is it making in my school?

As a result of this review and the steps taken to improve our operational and financial effectiveness, we are confident that we can approach our community to begin undertaking a Capital Campaign feasibility study.

Having the Financial Health Review has allowed LCS to approach its society members with a sense of confidence in knowing that the school has taken a thorough and comprehensive review of its financial operations and has developed a sustainable strategic plan for the future of the school. The project and resultant changes has demonstrated to the community that LCS is acting in a responsible manner and exercising good stewardship with the resources we have.

This project has been especially helpful for me in two areas. As the new incoming superintendent of Langley Christian School, it gave me detailed insight into the financial landscape of the school and what its strengths and weaknesses were and, secondly, it greatly increased my learning curve in the area of school finances.