

General Introduction

Following the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 to “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Our motivation should be clear and based on a solid foundation that Matthew provides for us. This foundation is more important in these times than ever before. The cultural, political, legislative, and public-school climates continue to decline, calling for developing strong Christian leaders. We have a highly motivated group of volunteers and families that are willing to take the journey with us.

This is the next evolution of our educational ministry; it is a major project needing courageous faith and discerning congregational support. Our intent is not to compete with current High School offerings but to offer a faith based educational option for our community.

Believing we are called; work needs to start with taking our first steps in the direction of a faith-based Lutheran high school. The very first step has been a dedicated group of supporters spanning 6 committees and 34 believing people to bring forward a path to making it a reality. Along with the overall team there were 5 sub-committees: Curriculum Review, Mission & Name, Communications, Facilities, and Finance & Sustainability.

Objectives of Informational Sessions

1. Provide information on our approach to a Bethel Lutheran High school with a 9th grade pilot program for 2021-2022 school year.
2. Seeking questions, comments, and concerns regarding the approach to ensure we can gain Voter’s approval on June 14th.

The Proposed High School Mission

We, as believers and disciples of Jesus Christ and members of His Body here at Bethel Lutheran Ministries, in response to His Commission to make disciples of all peoples and in awareness of our unique, collective gifts, clearly see the mission before us to worship, to grow, and to serve.

Bethel Lutheran School offers a Christian education for the whole child. Students in the school find identity, purpose, and power for their lives by living in God's grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. The education is well rounded and provides *spiritual instruction, intellectual achievement, social interaction, emotional development, physical education, and aesthetic experiences.*

Building upon the foundation of faith in Jesus Christ developed in the grade school, **Bethel Lutheran High School** further equips students academically and Biblically, helping them

internalize the gospel of Jesus Christ to become discerning, well-rounded servant leaders, ready to courageously serve Christ in a changing world.

Two Phase Approach Summary

Bethel has been involved in childhood education since the 1950s. This experience provides an excellent approach for how we can move forward continuing this ministry. While many options have been discussed and considered the recommended approach can be summarized as follows:

1. Pilot 9th grade for 2021-2022 school year
 - a. Limit to 9th grade only to start small and learn.
 - b. Provides time for policy development, piloting curricula, securing a FT teacher for the following year.
 - c. Provide progress updates to Voters and Church Council throughout the year
 - d. All enrollees and families would need to understand that there is no commitment to provide for a 10th grade option.
 - e. Determine goals and success metrics for pilot period.
 - f. Ensure students would get high school credit for attending
 - g. School classrooms to be used for the 9th grade pilot include the 2 recent multi-purpose classrooms added by the School Library.
2. Complete detail work and bring a recommendation for continuation of High School to Church Council and Voters in 1st Quarter 2022 regarding adding additional grades for 2022-23 school year. Recommendation would be for all grades with a phased implementation plan.

The school will be owned, administered, and supported by Bethel Lutheran Ministries, leveraging the existing school board structure, and under the day-to-day administration of the existing staff.

Christian-based Educational Program: Curriculum and delivery approach

The mission statement drafted for Bethel's pilot 9th grade demonstrates the distinctive mission of continuing robust academics while developing strong Christian Leaders. The added third paragraph directs the pilot 9th grade educational program.

Bethel's 9th grade pilot educational approach is best described as a **"faith-integrated cooperative learning community"**. The curriculum will feature:

- In-person/face-to-face learning using an online Christian-based curriculum,
- Academic courses (with a Biblical perspective) will be offered by:
 - Face-to-face instruction, with our Bethel teacher, and
 - Online with an engaged online facilitating teacher (instructs, grades, answers questions) plus our Bethel on-site teacher

- Benefits of using an online approved curriculum with an engaged teacher facilitator multiplies the variety of courses available with limited teaching staff
- A theology, faith application (apologetics), leadership course will be required each year
- Community outreach experiences and mission work will be integrated into the coursework
- Two learning tracks offered:
 - College preparation, and
 - Career and technical education (CTE)
- Career planning emphasized
 - 9th grade will include Illinois Central College Career Lab, interest surveys, and CTE tours

Financial analysis

It is expected that student tuition and fees will cover the core operating expense of the high school operation. The intent is to be cost neutral for the ministry. Mirroring the elementary and preschool, the congregation will cover cost for use of existing facilities and utilities related to operations.

Expected startup cost will be covered by foundations and funds in restricted accounts identified for school usage. We expect these to be minimal and, in some cases, recovered through tuition payments. Summary of cost for the 9th Grade pilot:

9 th Grade Option	Minimum Cost Curricula	Maximum Cost Curricula
On-Line Curriculum	\$1200/per student	\$3900 per student
2 Part Time Teachers**	\$57,750	\$57,750
Estimate Total for 8 students	8 Students: \$67,350	8 Students: \$88,950
Tuition/Student	\$8,419	\$11,119
Estimate Total for 12 students	12 Students: \$72,150	12 Students: \$104,550+
Tuition/Student	\$6,013	\$8,713

** Estimate salary of \$25,000 for each

- 1 PT teacher < 20 hours = No payroll taxes
- 1 PT teacher > 20 hours = Payroll taxes of \$7750 added

Summary

Our history and our mission provide a solid purpose for proceeding forward with the recommended 9th grade pilot. The fact that this is cost neutral, offers people a faith based alternative and allows us to learn as we go just makes the case for starting more compelling. We look forward to addressing your questions on the 9th grade pilot recommendation at this time and the full proposal in the coming months as we bring that forward for review and approval. We look forward to your full support as we advance our mission.

To view the entire feasibility report, you may go to the following link:

https://www.bethellutheranschool.org/uploads/4/4/1/9/44192469/bethel_high_school_feasibility_study_1.pdf