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Dear Gaston Christian School families & staff,

We hope you and your family are doing well and looking forward to our upcoming Christmas break. What a wonderful time to spend with family and reflect on the birth and life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the inception of our Continuous Enrollment process a few years ago, this is a reminder that you no longer have to “re-enroll” your student(s) for the 2023-24 school year. However, if you plan on withdrawing for the 2023-24 school year, please do so by January 31 to avoid a withdrawal fee. After January 31, 2023 there will be a \$500 cancellation fee for each student.

As mentioned in my letter dated October 18, 2022, the board and administration have spent a significant amount of time and energy praying, discussing and researching our plans for the 2023-24 tuition rates. There have been many things that were discussed in these conversations. First and foremost, we recognize that we have a wonderful group of staff and faculty members that are dedicated to the mission and ministry of Gaston Christian School. Our objective is to make sure that we can retain these outstanding role models and attract highly qualified new faculty when necessary by increasing our salary and benefits package accordingly. As you know, the only ways that we can fund these increases is by either cutting other costs or increasing the tuition level for our students. Our non-payroll costs are already very low and are themselves subject to inflationary increases and thus provide very little opportunity to cut further, leaving us with a tuition increase as our only option. We’ve been blessed to be able to keep tuition increases very small over the last many years, and even held tuition flat through the peak of the pandemic.

Secondly, we will open our Student Life Center in time for the start of school in August. For the past 40 years, Gaston Christian School has used outside vendors to cater lunch options for our students. This model has always been suboptimal, yet has been necessary due to the lack of a commercial kitchen, which would have allowed us to prepare our meals on campus. After considering multiple candidates, food service vendor FISS (formerly FLIK) has been selected to provide our on-campus prepared food services once we complete construction. We are excited about the quality and cost structure that FISS has to offer. With an expected construction completion date in July, we will have many opportunities (before school opens) for parents and students to come and see our new building and taste the delicious food that your children will be eating on a daily basis.

For the early childhood and elementary students, the lunch will resemble a traditional lunchroom experience (e.g. trays and a lunch line). The cost of their meals will be embedded in the tuition; however, if an early childhood or elementary family wants to opt out of the meal program, you can do so. But it is a yearly decision; it is “all in” or “all out” for the entire school year, we will not be providing daily, weekly or monthly options.

For the middle and high school students, the lunch will resemble a food court style of dining and will be “all you can eat.” There will be a salad bar, soup station, panini area as well as many weekly themed meals. One week might be Italian, another might be Mexican, a third might be Asian and so on. There will be a great variety of offerings for the students each and every day (and we and FISS realize there are many picky eaters!). Like early childhood and elementary students, the cost of their meals will be embedded in the tuition; however, there will not be an option to opt out for middle and high school students.

The new lunch experience will be a significant improvement over our current model, but even still, we are able to get the daily meal price lower than what we currently charge some days and, according to our research, is on par with what the vast majority of you currently incur when not opting for our current lunch options. And it is all you can eat!

After much discussion and prayer, we have concluded that the tuition increase amounts, see attached, are necessary to cover the above-mentioned items. Please know that these increases will pay for: 1) the food service (which, again, is on par with what the vast majority of you are already incurring today) and 2) necessary salary increases for our staff and faculty. Our tuition will continue to be much lower than the majority of private schools in the region, even after these increases, and we continue to be confident that Gaston Christian School provides the best value overall, when considering the full student experience for the tuition costs incurred.

As you review the increases, please realize that because your child is being provided a higher quality, more nutritious, hot prepared meal each day, you should recognize: the cost and time savings of the meals you currently incur, the elimination of lunch forms to turn in, and a great variety of healthy options will be offered in a significantly improved setting. One other reminder, much of the reason why the board and administration prioritized the Student Life Center project was the need to create space for STEM labs and classrooms. Our unique approach to solving this problem has enabled us to avoid the significant costs that would have otherwise been incurred to create the necessary space, which itself would have created tuition increase needs and still leaving us with a suboptimal lunch model.

We do not want these increases to cause any of our current families to bear a burden that is simply too great. Therefore, we are increasing our financial aid budget to assist those who qualify. Financial aid forms are listed under the Admissions tab on our website. We know that a two page letter only begins to answer all of the questions that many of you may have. We have attempted to anticipate and answer additional questions via the attached FAQ document.

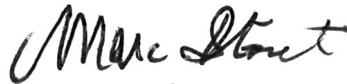
Lastly, we have spent a great deal of time in prayer and discussion about this letter because this is such an important topic. If you would like to set up a time to come in and discuss the contents of this letter with me (Marc Stout) personally, please call my Executive Assistant, Lindsay Lockett at (704) 349-5028 to arrange an appointment. When I came to Gaston Christian School 13 years ago we made our theme “Here to Love, Here to Serve,” which remains the same today for me, our staff and faculty.

May the Lord bless you and your family as you celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ over 2,000 years ago.

Soli Deo Gloria!



Mr. Jesse Bachman
 Chair, Board of Trustees



Dr. Marc Stout
 Head of School

A QUICK LOOK AT THE NUMBERS:

2022-23 Tuition	2023-24 Tuition and Lunch	Increase
P/S 3 days full \$4,344	\$5,214 includes lunch	\$870/year
P/S 5 days full \$5,784	\$7,130 includes lunch	\$1,346/year
Kindergarten full day \$6,912	\$8,342 includes lunch	\$1,430/year
Elementary (1-5) \$6,912	\$8,342 includes lunch	\$1,430/year
Middle School (6-8) \$8,676	\$10,376 includes lunch	\$1,700/year
High School (9-12) \$9,360	\$11,108 includes lunch	\$1,748/year