

Parent Announcement (Monday, March 17, 2025) – Next Steps for LACS

Dear school families and friends,

As Lake Arrowhead Christian School begins to wrap up its thirteenth year as a ministry of Calvary Chapel--and its forty-seventh year of service to the surrounding mountain communities-- the time has come for us to consider the appropriate next steps for this amazing school family. The approaching 2025-2026 academic year will be the final year in which LACS functions under the authority of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa and the final year of being located on the Twin Peaks campus.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the school reached its highwater mark for enrollment, the school has faced two significant challenges: increasing operating costs and decreasing student enrollment. After the decision was made in the spring of 2023 to close the high school, we responded to your plea to keep you fully apprised of the school's financial well-being and any efforts that were being made to secure donors and raise funds. At our back-to-school-night events, our open houses, and our fundraising team meetings, we articulated the school's financial goals for the year and invited our school families to partner with us in our efforts to increase revenue. Additionally, through the generous support of one donor, LACS secured, for an entire year, the services of a marketing firm that worked to increase the school's digital visibility in the mountain communities and to underscore the quality of the Christian education we can offer. These avenues, although helpful, have been insufficient.

Simply put, continuing to operate LACS on the Twin Peaks campus has become untenable. So, as we, the staff, and you, the parents, begin taking the familiar steps of preparing for next year, we must simultaneously take the unfamiliar steps of preparing for LACS to be housed in a different facility and, possibly, under a different church leadership. Any such change, however, will do nothing to alter our desire to love, serve, and educate. Our staff will continue to instruct and encourage the young people you have entrusted to us.

For the remainder of this year, little to nothing will change for you and your children. The same can be said about next year. This campus will remain our home, and there are no plans to alter the composition of our staff or the programs we offer. We must, however, add one significant item to our list of goals: procuring a new home for the school, one that conforms to the size of our student population and to the capabilities of our annual revenue. Our expectation is to conclude the 2024-2025 school year in such a way that ensures we will begin school in September 2025 with no significant change in student enrollment and with a commitment to

finishing well as a CCCM ministry. I believe we can do this while simultaneously praying, planning, and preparing for what comes next.

Understandably, this news generates a host of questions, some of which we have anticipated and can answer as follows:

Can we be confident that the 2025/2026 school year will be a legitimate educational experience for our children?

Yes, you can. Calvary Chapel has granted LACS ample financial latitude to operate one more year in accordance with what you have come to expect from LACS. This includes the extra-curricular programs that are currently in place. The entire staff is committed to being here next year to continue the work they sincerely love and to contribute to the effort of securing the 2026-2027 school year for the students. Lastly, re-enrollment for next year will open soon, and we want you to know that there will be no increase in any tuition rates or fees.

Does this announcement ultimately mean that LACS is closing after 2025/2026?

No, it does not. *Relocating the school* is not a euphemism for *closing the school*. This ministry has fulfilled a vital role in the lives of hundreds and hundreds of young people, and we believe that fact will be a significant motivating factor for current staff and families (as well as prior staff and families) to join the effort in establishing LACS elsewhere. It should be noted that LACS has relocated multiple times during its existence; this is not a unique situation. It may be difficult, but it is not impossible. Furthermore, the CCCM Board of Directors has graciously set aside a substantial monetary sum to help LACS with the unavoidable costs of relocating an entire school.

How is the school handling the conversation with prospective families, especially those who hope to enroll in kindergarten in fall of 2025?

Now that we've made this announcement to the staff and to current families, we can begin the dialogue with our several prospective families. Beginning tomorrow, we will be contacting them to explain the school's current situation, to answer their questions, and to provide reasons that they should continue to consider LACS a viable option for their children's education.

Is there anything you can tell us about the future location and leadership of LACS?

At this moment, no. Keep in mind, however, that the conclusion of the 2025-2026 school year is fifteen months distant. The generosity of the CCCM leadership team has allowed us ample time to sort through the many details associated with such an endeavor. LACS could be adopted by another church on the mountain and operate under the authority of the pastoral staff and church board, or it could become an independent institution that operates in conjunction with an elected school board. During its history, LACS has functioned in both capacities. Now that this news has been presented to you, tomorrow we can begin in earnest the work of finding a suitable home for the school.

What can parents and friends of the school do to help in the months ahead?

Be in prayer. Respond to people's questions with facts rather than speculation. Direct people to the school administration if they have questions you cannot answer. You are a key component in making sure the surrounding community receives accurate information about the current and future status of LACS. Lastly, let us know if you are interested in being part of a joint committee of staff and parents who will organize the effort to relocate the school.

In Conclusion

In the seven years I've been part of LACS, I have witnessed the love that our staff and parents have for this school, and the sincere belief they share in the school's mission. This makes me confident that we will navigate this transition together and alleviate the uncertainty that is naturally attached to making such a change.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and patience.

Mr. Jim Hein, LACS Principal