

After forty-five years of service to the West Seattle community and educating countless local students, it is with a heavy heart that the Board of Directors of Seattle Lutheran High School has decided to close the high school, effective after the conclusion of the current 2021 / 2022 academic year.

The Board of Directors reached this decision at the end of a two-year effort with Hope Lutheran Church and School, focused on creating a viable pathway forward for the high school – a pathway leading to sustainable enrollment levels, appropriate compensation for faculty and staff, and the kind of educational experience that our students so much deserved. After considering all available information for the 2022 / 2023 academic year, including enrollment, financing, and recruitment and retention of key faculty and staff, we did not see a way forward that could safely and responsibly accomplish these objectives. And so, over the next year, the Board will consider how the school facilities can best be utilized to further Christian education, to include continued collaboration with Hope Lutheran Church and School to explore a new vision for the future.

Our immediate priority, however, is to our students and families – to finish off this year like any other, to graduate the 2022 senior class, and to assist the underclass students in transitioning to other schools. Some staff will remain employed over the next year to facilitate an orderly and thoughtful closure process.

We are grateful to the Lutheran Church Extension Fund for providing the financial assistance needed to support our mission over the years. We also would like to thank the staff and Board of Hope Lutheran Church and School for their relentless efforts, support, and belief that we could see the high school succeed into the future. While our goals were not reached, we could not have made it this far without their support.

Seattle Lutheran High School was chartered in 1976 by an association of over 30 Lutheran churches in greater Seattle and opened its doors on September 17, 1978. Hope member Bob Christian was the founding principal/executive director of Seattle Lutheran High School, and Hope Pastor Clem Pera was the founding chairperson of the Seattle Lutheran High School Board of Directors. We are grateful to all the association churches who have supported the ministry of the high school through their prayers and their tithes.

The Board also recognizes the gravity of this decision and that many people will experience a range of emotions related to it. The good news is that even when times are difficult, God is faithful to His people. The prophet Jeremiah prayed these words that may be of encouragement to you as well in this time: *“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!”* – Lamentations 3:22-23

In His Strength and Peace,

Hamilton Gardiner, President
Seattle Lutheran High School Board of Directors