

# YOUR SAY

*M. Bridget Algeo*

## **LC students deserve a renovated school**

**I** commend *The Reporter* for its stance, “Archdiocese should release all information”, published Nov. 30. The staff at *The Reporter* has striven to be fair in presenting the various views surrounding Lansdale Catholic.

I also thank Bishop Joseph McFadden for his Dec. 5 response, particularly his assurance that no decision has been made.

In the past few years, many community members have come to believe this matter is a “done deal” and that nothing can dissuade the archdiocese from moving forward.

On the morning that the area papers announced the August survey, a column penned by a Hilltown proponent asked that readers be open to the new school. Within two weeks, parents within a 10-mile radius of Hilltown returned approximately 1600 surveys out of the 6,100 released.

The survey responses indicated a 60-plus majority *not* supporting a new school and less than 18 percent expressing willingness to pay for it. In addition, the mild 30-something percent showing some degree of interest in the new school may have included parents who would have been open to renovation of LC had it been presented as an option.

Recall that a survey in 2000 determined that an equal number of parents wanted Lansdale Catholic to remain at its present location as did

those who wanted a new school. Two recommendations were made by that committee: aggressive renovation or a new school.

Given the weak survey numbers, as well as the fact that the actual number of parents in support of the Hilltown site decreased by 24 percent between surveys, it is more than fair to request that archdiocesan officials be open to the concept of modernizing Lansdale Catholic.

In response is the insistence that the two surveys cannot be compared due to different methodologies: In reality, the methodology used for the most recent survey was far more partial to the Hilltown site and should have yielded returns significantly in favor of the new school. It did not.

Also is the claim that the survey figures robustly support a new school because the Catholic population in the area is increasing? In reality, the percentages represent a minority in a target group of parish school and CCD parents whose numbers are, in fact, decreasing.

Another approach to selling the idea of a new school will be the continuance of such broad language as “cutting edge” and “progressiveness.” In reality, we have yet to hear what specific educational tools only a new facility can provide.

Incredulous is the contention that building a \$50-plus million school is necessary in order to provide a strong academic curriculum coupled with successful athletics and a wide range of activities. It is not the quality of the programs at LC that is in question. In reality, at the heart of this issue, continues to be the condition of the facility.

Sadly, thousands of LC students have passed through this ignored facility for almost two decades as members of the archdiocese devote attention to a new facility that has clearly not received a lot of support and that a number of families will not be able to afford.

Unfortunately, the ongoing attachment to a new school denies students and teachers at LC the necessary improvements to their school.

At the expense of the archdiocese “moving forward” are LC students, who will once again be deprived of the modernization of their facility.

Many parents continue to support the expansion and renovation of LC for their children. Readers are invited to visit [www.thepoweroflc.com](http://www.thepoweroflc.com), a website that reflects the viewpoints of parents who believe that the blending of LC’s established history of academic

excellence with the modernization necessary to meet changing educational needs is the best option for area families.

It also dispels the erroneous logic that an old school cannot be equipped with state-of-the-art features in order to provide a progressive education for its students.

In particular, it expresses the hope that archdiocesan officials will embrace this reasonable and viable option with vigor and enthusiasm so that the growing number of students now choosing Lansdale Catholic can be given the renovated facility they have long deserved.

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