

OUR VIEW

Don't close mind to what's best for students

TO BUILD or not to build – that is the question that continues to be lobbed back and forth among those involved with Lansdale Catholic High School.

The school has called Lansdale its home since 1949, but with a size crunch both with the building itself and room for athletic events, the Philadelphia Archdiocese is taking stock of the situation

In fact, it is considering not only building a school in Hilltown that would replace Lansdale Catholic, but also building on another site near Royersford to accommodate growth in that region.

Parents who send their children to Catholic school no doubt are happy to see that there is a growth in attendance at the schools. But to actually close old schools in order to build new, state-of-the art structures presents quite the dilemma for many.

It obviously is an emotional issue, as evidenced by the formation of Friends and Alumni of LC Inc., which has just announced the results of its own survey, in reaction to a survey being conducted by the archdiocese.

NATURALLY each side wants to rally support to its point of view. But no matter which “side” a person may decide to take, the most important factor must be how to best educate and serve the students who attend the school.

And that's why interpreting results of surveys from either camp will have to be done with an eye on the respective agenda.

In the Friends and Alumni of LC poll, whose results were released Friday, for example, it's wise to note that 64 percent of those responding had attended Lansdale Catholic. So it's not too surprising to see that 58 percent would like to see the school stay where it is.

In a similar question, 65 percent said the current location was ideal but upgrades were needed, versus 17 percent who favored moving to Hilltown.

And when you ask if you would rather see \$10 million to \$15 million spent for improvements to the present school or \$40 million to \$50 million for a new school, it's no shock to find 79 percent favor the lower figure and only 18 percent support the higher tab.

Stay or go? Not an easy choice to face.

Those making the final decision must weigh what's best for the present and future students - not the alumni.

When that day comes, though, it will be essential for the community to rally behind either a major change in what has been or modifications to the status quo.

Surveys provide important feedback and should be weighed in the decision-making process. But keeping an open mind about supporting what is deemed best for the future is paramount.