

JANUARY, 2012

Happy New Year! I pray that each Dominion family has enjoyed the holiday break. I spent time contemplating all that has changed here at Dominion Academy over the past two years. I am now into my 3rd year as your principal, and I feel so blessed to be part of this ministry, and to be a part of God's work here in Leesburg. We have had many changes over the past couple of years as we continue to grow in size and stature in the Lord's work. As we reach the midpoint of the school year, I wanted to pass along some of these updates to you. First, though, I wanted to extend a word of thanks to all parents for your continued support of this ministry. As your principal, I continually pray for a clear vision for the kingdom work that God will have us do. There is such a need for Christian education here in Loudoun County. Your prayers and support are blessings that continue to further this ministry.

Curriculum Reviews

Since taking over as principal in November, 2009, we have orchestrated a much-needed curriculum review for our core academic areas of math, language arts, social studies and science. These reviews have produced updated Scope and Sequence guides for our staff, and new textbooks and classroom materials. To complete this rotation of curriculum review, we are about to embark on a review of our Bible curriculum for all grades. This process will be similar to that of the other core academic reviews, and through this process we will end up with a new Scope and Sequence (what content is taught at each grade level), as well as a review of existing texts and teaching materials. This process helps us not only see gaps and overlaps in what we teach grade by grade, but it also allows us to refresh our texts and classroom materials. In addition, our enrichment teachers (art, PE, music, foreign language, computer, and library) are beginning to work on the Scope and Sequence guides for their respective disciplines. I am excited about this process of review, as it helps us continually push our academic program forward and keeps fresh materials in the classroom.

The School Budget

Dominion Academy's fiscal budget uses two primary funds:

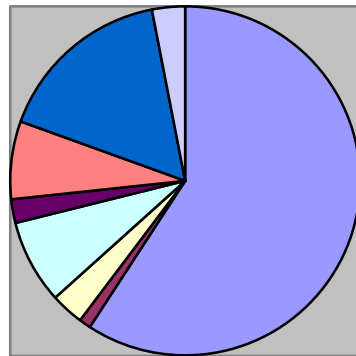
Operational Fund ó This fund generates income with tuition dollars and fees, and covers all expenses related to operating the school, including salaries and benefits, supplies, books and materials, and building costs.

Annual Fund ó This fund generates income from our summer camps and fall and spring fundraisers. These funds will be spent on items necessary for that school year, such as supplementary classroom materials, computer or equipment upgrades, classroom enhancements, or infrastructure needs. These items will be purchased by the end of a current school year with funds raised over that school year.

We are half-way through our fiscal year, and I am pleased to report that our efforts toward good stewardship have paid off. Below is a summary of our two primary budgets.

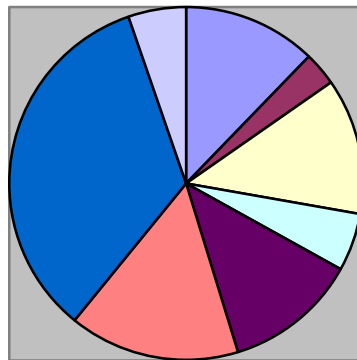
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Our Operational Budget for this school year is \$2.1 million, with nearly all income in the form of tuition and fees. In setting our budget year to year, we strive to fund a program of excellence while also maintaining affordable tuition rates. With private school tuition, you can easily spend over \$20,000 a year in our area, but at that level our program would not be accessible to many families. As a non-profit, our goal is to essentially break even each year. Below is a pie chart that represents our costs as a school for this budget:



- Personnel
- Administration
- Academic supplies
- Tuition discounts/aid
- Operational exp
- Taxes & insurance
- Building exp
- All other exp

Our Annual Fund for this school year is projected to be \$65,000, with income from our fall car raffle fundraiser, our Fun Run this spring, our summer camps, and private donations. Below is a pie chart that represents the projected expenditures from this fund by June 30th:



- program expenses
- PE equipment
- science equipment
- library software
- promethean boards
- computer lab
- iPads
- art and music

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Enrollment for the 2011-2012 School Year

Even though we're just half-way through this school year, re-enrollment for next year will begin in one week. Below is important information regarding that process:

Dominion Academy strives to be a school that delivers a high quality education at the most reasonable tuition rates possible. For next year the school board has approved the continuation of modest tuition increases with a 3% increase for next year (the same increase as last year). This will allow us to continue to grow our ministry while still being accessible to as many families as possible. Our tuition rates for next year are as follows:

Lower school grades (K-5) annual tuition	\$7980
Upper school grades (6-8) annual tuition	\$8450
Enrollment fee	\$350

Enrollment procedures ó the following is a list of enrollment deadlines:

- January 11th ó re-enrollment packets go home in the Wednesday folders
- January 25th ó re-enrollment forms due back to secure a spot for next year
- January 30st ó LCC members and PLC families enroll
- February 1st ó enrollment opens to public

Last year we did have Dominion families who waited until after the deadline to turn in enrollment forms. Unfortunately, new applicants had taken all available spots and these families were placed on waiting-lists, with some not able to return this year. This year nearly all of our grades are full, and we had a nearly 95% return rate from last year to this year. In addition to our already limited availability in each class, with current boundary changes, increasing class sizes, and fall out from the SOL program in the local public schools, we are seeing more interest than ever in Dominion Academy. We have already taken applications from the general public and are holding them for the open-enrollment period. ***We want all of our current families to have spots in our program for next year, but it is important to turn in enrollment forms by January 25th to secure a spot.***

Financial Aid

Each year we try and provide a certain amount of financial aid to families who want to be part of our program but for whom our tuition is too great a burden. Growing up in Lynchburg, I was always impressed with the approach that Lynchburg Christian Academy (now Liberty Christian Academy) took ó that no student would be turned away due to lack of finances. For our families who are financially blessed and are looking for ways to help our school, giving to our financial aid program is one way to help others become or continue to be part of Dominion Academy. For families who would love to continue to be part of Dominion but know that this cannot happen without financial aid, please check our website for information on our financial aid program. There you can read about our financial aid process and about how to apply. Our committee meets to grant aid in early March, so forms need to be turned in by mid-February. I ask that each family pray especially over this need, as we want all those who have a heart for our ministry to continue to participate in it.

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How Does Dominion compare?

I recently ran across current statistics on Christian schools that I wanted to share with you as a way to measure how we are faring in the world of Christian education. Below are statistics from ACSI as a result of their school surveys.

	<u>ACSI average</u>	<u>Dominion Academy</u>
Number of faculty	20 full time	23 full time
% of faculty with bachelors degree	76%	100%
Median budget	\$825K	\$2.1 million
% of budget provided through Fund-raising	15%	0%
Current enrollment	244	260
Enrollment capacity	70%	84%
Student retention	79%	94%
Student-teacher ratio	12	11
Average tuition increase	5.5%	3%

There are a few statistics for me that stand out in the world of Christian education. All of our full-time staff have at least a bachelors degree, with some of us carrying a masters degree. All of our operating expenses come from tuition and fees, so we do not rely on fundraising to meet our budget. All of our fundraising dollars are spent on enhancements to our program. Despite the tough economy and tightening budgets, Dominion continues to have modest tuition increases at just 3%, which is nearly half that of the national average. All our success is by God’s grace and for His glory, and the strength of our program is s testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit in this school.

Accreditation

Dominion Academy is a member school with ACSI, but is not currently accredited. We are a school that is moving in the right direction in all critical areas, and we are at a place where it is prudent to consider accreditation. I know that many of our families will have questions about accreditation and the process, and I wanted to answer a few common questions, below:

What is accreditation? This is a process whereby an outside organization reviews all the critical areas of a school, and confirms that proper practices and procedures are in place for each critical area.

*DOMINION ACADEMY STATE OF THE SCHOOL
LETTER*

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Who are these outside organizations? There are several accrediting organizations. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is one of the larger organizations, and will accredit private and public schools and colleges. Dominion Academy has a long relationship with ACSI (Association of Christian Schools, International), and we will be pursuing accreditation through them.

Why hasn't Dominion Academy been accredited before now? We did go through the accreditation process in 2005, but at that time Dominion had experienced a series of headmasters who stayed only one or two years, and this was in large part why we were not accredited at that time. We needed stability in a few areas, including our headmaster position. I am pleased to announce that we now have stability in this area ☺. There were other aspects of our program that needed attention, and over the past two years the staff and I have been working toward improving in all critical areas. Now is the best time for us to start this process once again.

How long will accreditation take? This will be at least a three year process. During this time we will be formalizing curriculum guides and writing documents about all aspects of our program. Our entire staff will be involved in this process.

What benefits will there be for Dominion families? To be honest, from a day-to-day experience, families will not notice a difference in our program once we are accredited. In a practical way, however, Dominion Academy will put itself in the position to begin issuing credits for completed high school level work, which will allow us to expand our academic programs in the upper school. For the most part, however, the accreditation process will benefit our staff and ultimately our families by allowing us the opportunity to critically examine, discuss, and improve each area within our program. Accreditation is an important process for a school that continually seeks to be the best in each area of ministry.

I am excited about this process. I am pleased to announce that our own school counselor Mrs. Brown will be helping Dominion Academy through this process. Mrs. Brown has extensive experience with ACSI accreditation from her work in previous schools. I feel so blessed that the Holy Spirit has led Mrs. Brown to Dominion and that she is willing and able to be a part of our program in this way. As we begin to make formal strides toward Accreditation I will keep you all posted on our progress.

I look forward to an exciting winter and spring, and a blessed 2012-2013 school year, too. I pray that the Holy Spirit continue to dwell in each classroom and hallway at Dominion Academy, and that God guide us in our plans.

In Christ,

Doug Stump, principal

*Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your **dominion** endures through all generations.
The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. Psalms 145:13*