

**Catholic School Assessment:
Lindsay Holy Family & Humphrey St. Francis**

Summary Findings synthesize analysis of the Current Reality presentations at Lindsay Holy Family and Humphrey St. Francis on August 10th, 2022, the Listening Sessions that followed on August 17th and 24th, respectively, and data collected in support of the *Journey of Faith* planning process.

Summary Findings

- 1) Community support for Catholic schools in Lindsay and Humphrey is passionate and multi-generational.
- 2) There is a strong desire to maintain separate K-12 Catholic schools in both communities, but there is also an aspiration for additional class offerings and extracurricular activities.
- 3) Combined enrollment of high school aged students is relatively low, but modest increases are likely in the foreseeable future.
- 4) School finances are solid, although the per-student cost of education is about 40 percent higher at Lindsay Holy Family when compared with Humphrey St. Francis.¹
- 5) The national and state-wide teacher shortage is negatively impacting the availability of properly certified teachers in both Catholic school systems, which are essentially competing for the same scarce resource:
 - a. In the current academic year, Lindsay Holy Family is offering 7 remote classes in 3 subjects because of a lack of certified teachers.² It is also unable to fill its Guidance Counselor position.
 - b. Humphrey St. Francis is offering 2 remote sections of one subject and is unable to offer instruction in another subject for lack of certified teachers. In addition, junior high classes have been absorbed by current teachers due to no applicants for positions advertised.³
- 6) The teacher shortage is likely to continue, and competition for teachers between two relatively small Catholic school systems located 12 miles from one another is not sustainable.
 - a. Unfilled teacher positions in 3 subject areas at one or both schools have been designated as shortage areas in Nebraska for each of the past 15 years.⁴
 - b. Unfilled positions in 3 additional endorsements are among the top 5 shortage areas for 2021-2022.⁵
 - c. Enrollment in teacher prep programs has steadily declined in the U.S. and in Nebraska over the past 10 years.

¹ Cost per student is \$11,682 at Lindsay Holy Family and \$8,204 per student at Humphrey St. Francis.

² For 2022-2023, Lindsay Holy Family (LHF) has vacant teacher positions that required remote instruction in 3 English classes, Spanish I and II, and classes in Agriculture Mechanics and Agriculture Leadership.

³ Humphrey St. Francis (HSF) has had to offer remote instruction in 2 sections of Spanish II. It is unable to offer instruction in Family Consumer Science. Its junior high classes, including 7th-8th grade Science, 7th grade Language Arts and 7th grade Social Studies, have been absorbed by other teachers because there were no applicants.

⁴ This applies to Language Arts (English) taught remotely at LHF and sections of World Language (Spanish) taught remotely at both schools. Also applies to junior high classes in Science and Language Arts at HSF. For details on statewide shortage areas, see the Nebraska Department of Education's "2021-22 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary," available at https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2020-Teacher-Vacancy-Summary.rev_.pdf

⁵ Refers to unfilled positions in Agriculture Education, which is being taught remotely at LHF, and Family Consumer Science, which is not being offered at all at HSF. Both subjects are part of the Career Education endorsement. The unfilled School Counselor position at LHF is also one of the top 5 shortage areas. For details on statewide shortage areas, see the Nebraska Department of Education's "2021-22 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary," available at https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2020-Teacher-Vacancy-Summary.rev_.pdf

Sections 1 and 2 of this assessment on pages 2-4 go into greater detail by summarizing discussion from Parish Listening Sessions at Lindsay Holy Family and Humphrey St. Francis on August 17th and 24th, 2022. Beginning on page 5, Section 3 presents detailed schools data required in all Family Pastoral Planning Team proposals as part of the *Journey of Faith* planning process. Appendices A and B on pages 8-21 include detailed responses from each Listening Session.

Section 1: Fr. Olsen Listening Session Introduction.

1) Declining Mass Attendance

- Holy Family (LHF)
 - 322 this summer, down from 548 in 2019 and 550 in 2016
 - From 2006-2016 – High 753 / Low 372
- St. Francis (HSF)
 - 505 this summer, down from 773 in 2018 and 785 in 2016
 - From 2006-2016 – High 1,693/ Low 528

2) Enrollment Update

- High Schools (combined) 18 seniors, 15 juniors, 19 sophomores and 21 freshmen
- Good News: Low point in the near term; lower grades are high/especially grade school
- Biggest class: LHF 13 (7th grade), HSF 27 (Kindergarten)
- Concern: Low marriage rate as indicator of future growth
 - 2016-2022 (so far) – 31 at HSF (4.5/year), 16 at LHF (2.25/Year)

3) Teacher Availability Challenges

- Teacher Openings: Elementary
 - LHF – 4 openings, 4 total applicants, all hired in the 21/22 and 22/23 school year.
 - HSF – 2 openings, 1 total applicant (hired) and 1 volunteer (hired)
- Unfilled Teacher Positions: High School
 - 2022-23
 - LHF – English, Spanish, Guidance Counselor
 - HSF – Spanish; Family Consumer Science; Junior High Science, Language Arts and Social Studies
 - 2021-22
 - LHF – Spanish, Guidance
 - HSF – Spanish, Business, Science
 - Finding a qualified Theology teacher has been especially difficult
 - HSF – Opening after Fr. Wayne retired– 3 applicants, none hired; fortunately, Fr. Steve was able to step in

4) Priest Availability Challenges

- 105 in 2022 will decline to 81 over the next decade– according to archdiocese
- Assumes 2 ordinations per year, but there were 0 in 2021, 2 in 2022, and there will be 0 in 2023
- 6 priests have left active ministry in last 6 months for personal or medical reasons (will grow)
- 2 priest positions in parishes are open/unfilled now
- In our family, 4,333 priests assigned in 2019, but down to 2 in 2023

Section 2: Listening Session Summary. A summary of the responses from both Listening Sessions are outlined below. For detailed responses from each session, see Appendix A for Lindsay Holy Family and Appendix B for Humphrey St. Francis.

1) In what ways do our schools flourish now?

In Lindsay, the most consistent answers were:

- *students graduate with strong faith*
- *the school is financially stable*
- *relationships between parents, teachers, students, and the community are strong*

In Humphrey, the most consistent answers were:

- *students graduate with strong Catholic values*
- *students get lots of one-on-one attention*
- *school enrollment is increasing, and relationships between parents, teachers, students, and the community are strong*

2) How do our children benefit from keeping our schools exactly the same as they are today?

In Lindsay, the most consistent answers were:

- *the smaller environment provides more one-on-one contact between students and teachers*
- *there is strong community support*
- *maintaining the status quo would keep the town unified and alive*

In Humphrey, the most consistent answers were:

- *the smaller environment provides more one-on-one contact between students and teachers*
- *there is strong tradition and community support*
- *maintaining the status quo would result in less travel and more safety for families/students*

3) What opportunities would you like our schools to provide that they currently do not?

In Lindsay, the most consistent answers were:

- *the schools currently provide all the opportunities they want*
- *they would like additional classes/extracurricular activities.*

In Humphrey, the most consistent answers were:

- *the schools currently provide all the opportunities they want*
- *would like additional classes/extracurricular activities*
- *would like a full teaching staff in-person,*
- *would like to see better pay and benefits for staff*

4) If there must be consolidation, what do you think that should look like?

In Lindsay, responses were predominantly split between three sentiments:

- 1) there is no need for consolidation*
- 2) each town maintains a separate K-8 school and feeds into a central high school*
- 3) a centralized school would need a completely "fresh start," i.e., new name, mascot, colors, central location)*

Several responses also suggested that the Catholic schools share a "superintendent." NOTE: educational director is a more suitable term.

In Humphrey, responses were predominantly split between three sentiments:

- 1) there is no need for consolidation*
- 2) each town maintains separate K-8 school and feeds into a central high school*
- 3) a centralized school would need a completely "fresh start," i.e., new name, mascot, colors, central location*

However, several expressed that a centralized high school should be in Humphrey.

5) How might our children benefit from consolidation?

In Lindsay, the predominant sentiment is children would not benefit; various reasons were given.

Benefits that were named included:

- more opportunities for friend groups*
- extracurricular activities*
- would assist with the teacher shortage*

In Humphrey, many felt that children would not benefit; various reasons were given. Benefits that were named included:

- more opportunities for friend groups*
- more class offerings and extracurricular activities*
- more kids would allow for larger class sizes and more competitive classrooms/sports teams*

Section 3: Additional Data from the *Journey of Faith* Pastoral Planning Template.

1. Student-to-teacher ratio
 - a. LFH – 6.8 students per teacher
 - b. HSF – 13.9 students per FT teacher (16 FT teachers);
11 students per PT and FT teacher (20 FT and PT)
2. Number of full-time teachers
 - a. LHF – 14
 - b. HSF – 16
3. Number of part-time teachers
 - a. LHF – 8 teachers and 1 counselor
 - b. HSF – 4
4. Teachers working outside of their endorsed area
 - a. LHF - 16%
 - i. JH English
 - ii. Librarian / had Sped and Elem endorsement
 - b. HSF – 20 %
 - i. 4th grade teacher/ endorsed 5 – 9
 - ii. Science teacher 7th – 12th grades / endorsed 9 – 12
 - iii. Religion teachers -- Fr. Olsen and Fr. Emmanuel not certified
5. Multi grade classrooms –
 - a. LHF - none except for PE/ Music / Art / Computers
 - b. HSF – none
6. Full time administrators
 - a. LHF – 1 PT president/pastor and 1 FT administrator
 - b. HSF – 1 PT president/pastor and 1 FT administrator
7. Number of other school personnel
 - a. LHF
 - i. 2 part-time secretaries
 - ii. 2 part-time elementary teachers aids
 - iii. 1 part-time librarian
 - iv. 1 part-time bookkeeper
 - v. 1 full-time custodian
 - vi. 2 part-time custodians
 - vii. 5 part-time cooks
 - b. HSF
 - i. 2 FT secretaries
 - ii. 2 FT aides (classroom aides and librarian)
 - iii. 1 FT maintenance
 - iv. 5 kitchen

8. Total number of personnel at the schools
 - a. LHF – 31 (teachers and staff)
 - b. HSF – 31 (teachers and staff)

9. Number of courses taught by remote instruction
 - a. LHF = 7 classes taught remotely
 - b. HSF = 1 class (2 sections) taught remotely

10. Rationale for choosing remote instruction –
 - a. LHF
 - i. 3 English classes are taught remotely because we were unable to hire a full-time English teacher.
 - ii. Spanish I & II are taught remotely by Rider Foreign Language.
 - iii. 2 Ag. Classes (Ag. Mechanics and Ag. Leadership) are taught remotely by our Newman Grove FFA teacher.
 - b. HSF – Spanish II because we were unable to find a certified teacher.

11. Unfilled positions for this school year?
 - a. LHF – English, Spanish, Agriculture
 - b. HSF – Junior High classes (7th-8th grade Science, 7th grade Language Arts, and 7th grade Social Studies) have been absorbed by other teachers. Family Consumer Science (FCS) position is unfilled.

12. Total number of students in each school for 2021-22
 - a. LHF
 - i. K – 6 = 69
 - ii. 12 = Preschool
 - iii. 7 - 12 = 42

Cost per student: \$11,682
 - b. HSF
 - i. K – 6 = 137
 - ii. 7 – 12 = 85

Cost per student: \$8,204

13. What percentage of student body is Catholic?
 - a. LHF – 99 %
 - b. HSF – 100%

14. How does each school invite non-Catholics into the faith?
 - a. LHF – has several staff members who are non-Catholic. Holy Family will welcome and education any student regardless of their religious denomination.
 - b. HSF - We invite non-Catholics into the faith by providing a Catholic environment at school. Non-Catholic staff and students attend mass, prayer services, faith development opportunities and retreats, etc.

15. Projected enrollment for the current year?

- a. LHF - K-12 Students
 - i. 2022-2023 - 111
 - ii. 2023-2024 - 121
 - iii. 2024-2025 - 133
 - iv. 2025-2026 – 139

- b. HSF – K – 12 Students
 - i. 2022-2023 - 222
 - ii. 2023-2024 - 222
 - iii. 2024-2025 - 229

16. What is the capacity of the school if all classrooms were full?

- a. LHF – approximately 250
- b. HSF – if 25 students in each grade = 325

17. How does parish membership trends compare to enrollment trends?

- a. LHF – From 2016 to 2022, there was a 58.5% decrease in parishioners (550 in 2016 to 322 in 2022). During that same time, LHF's enrollment has remained relatively stable at just over 100 students since the 2016 school year.
- b. HSF - From 2016 to 2022, there was a 36% decrease in parishioners (785 in 2016 to 505 in 2022). During that same time, HSF's enrollment increased by 12% (198 in 2016 to 222 in 2022).

18. What are the sources of revenue for the schools?

- a. LHF
 - i. Tuition
 - ii. School Support Envelope
 - iii. Fundraising / Development
 - iv. Parish
- b. HSF
 - i. Tuition
 - ii. School Support Envelope
 - iii. Fundraising / Development
 - iv. Parish

19. What percentage of parish income supports the school?

- a. LHF – 60%
- b. HSF – 53%

22. What is the minimum number of students for each school financial sustainability?

- a. LHF – 90 students
- b. HSF – 180 students

Appendix A:

Lindsay Holy Family Listening Session Responses, 8/17/22

1. In what ways do our schools flourish now?

- Kids graduate with strong faith and Catholic values
 - Kids graduate with good education; kids carry Catholic education their whole life
 - Kids who attend Catholic school are seen at weekend Masses; public students not so much
 - Students are passing their experiences on to other students at other schools, e.g., their faith and respectful attitudes
 - Growing in their faith
 - Equipping disciples
- 100% graduation rate every year; participation levels are good
- Theology department improved/sacraments far more frequently
- Newer teachers
- Teachers converted to be Catholic
- Graduates teach at Catholic schools
- Many/most of our teachers have ties to Lindsay
- Good people, e.g., teachers, coaches, volunteers
- Numbers are increasing--babies being born. We are at a low attendance now, but numbers are looking up.
- Young adults drawn back to town to raise kids
- Both schools have successful
 - extracurriculars
 - sports
 - academics, e.g., advanced learning courses with students being 2 years ahead
 - programs: Gratia, JC Camp, Totus Tuus
- Holding our own financially and with attendance
- Close knit with strong parent involvement
- Solid education; good student-teacher ratios foster good relationships
- Rich tradition including support from all ages within community, including those without kids
- Plant projects
- Unity
- Financially stable- no debt, self-supporting, independent
- Jobs = new parishioners
- Good working relationship in current co-op with Humphrey High School
- Dual credit for high school
- Not having to teach sexual education that is required in public schools
- Mass every day- 100% participation rate
- Strong, great priest
- Supportive and stable families and great kids; positive family life, low divorce rate
- Consistent principal

2) How do our children benefit from keeping our schools exactly the same as they are today?

- No travel- not on road improves safety for kids
- Smaller environment fosters positive relationships, more one-on-one faith interaction; small class size beneficial for learning; less bullying
- Small town atmosphere, keeping it local in their own hometown
- More opportunities for participation--more kids being involved because of more opportunities
- Keeping kids in our community means they are more likely to return
- Opportunity to grow our school and maintain our current classes/kids
- The entire community wants Lindsay Holy Family to succeed; everyone shows up to support the school
- Easy to make friends
- Positive effect for Humphrey High
- Kids get unique, diversified experiences working with three different schools
- Technology is state-of-the-art; greenhouse and STEM program
- No change for kids means less stress
- Younger and older kids interact together
- Holy Family closure results in a town divided
- Community unity

3) What opportunities would you like our schools to provide that they currently do not?

- None, we're happy as things are
- Campus ministry like Fr. Wayne did
- Daily Mass for all grades
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Totus Tuus, religious sisters
- Unity in extracurriculars (Humphrey High School, Twin River, Newman Grove, Humphrey St. Francis)
- Classes/Extracurriculars: FCCLA, wrestling, trade school courses, internships for class credit, band
 - FFA is offered through Newman Grove; there would be no FFA if the schools consolidate
 - There would be no softball if the 2 schools consolidate
 - ESU offers important resources that would be lost if we consolidate
- Full-time English teacher
- To stay fully staffed, we don't feel online teaching would work well; need in-house teachers
- No handicap accessibility
- Youth group, retreats
- Younger kids read in Mass and participate at first communion at Mass; music with kids in Mass; peace sign at Mass
- Class schedules should be the same every year

4) If there must be consolidation, what do you think that should look like?

- We don't agree that there must be a consolidation.
- Communities to make the decision; should be a choice of supporting school and church the way it is now
- Sports consolidation with Humphrey St. Francis was already considered and was not well received by either entity/school/parish
- Each town has grade school (keep K-8 separate); schools feed into a central high school
 - Good things happen when we come together
- 100% fresh start from ground up; if joined, new name and new mascot, build a new school in the middle at a central location
- Fair 50/50 compromise (both parties give equally), brand new school name and mascot
 - Keep elementary or junior/senior high in town
 - Transportation/busing would be required
- Both grade schools located in Lindsay (1st-8th) and both high schools located in Humphrey or other way around
 - Any consolidation needs a neutral name and pro-rated expenses according to the number of students (financially each school is separate)
 - As of now, we are able to support ourselves financially and pay for quality teachers. We do not want to lose school in our community.
- Give and take means a new name. Make do with the buildings each group has.
- The school should be in Lindsay. Opportunity to draw Catholic families from the west and south. Humphrey still has an option for school.
- Consider vice-principals or superintendent to share responsibilities amongst multiple Catholic schools. To relieve stress, hire a superintendent instead of requiring priests to serve in this role.
- Clarkson families will go to public school if the school closes
- LHF doesn't want to pay HSF debt

5) How might our children benefit from consolidation?

- They will not benefit:
 - Taking away our school will kill our town; we will lose a sense of community
 - Higher teacher-student ratio is not a benefit!
 - They would meet more kids, but they are already doing that through extracurricular activities
 - Better chance of kids becoming priests by attending Catholic schools; also true for girls' vocations
 - If we are trying to raise flourishing disciples of Christ, how is taking two Catholic schools and combining into one going to help that? Forcing a consolidation will drive people away, not bring them in.
 - We should cooperate without consolidation
 - Afraid kids won't stay in Catholic school
 - Consolidation could hurt Church attendance and town business; it will not help the priest shortage
- Our students like being together
- Catholic means universal; we have to be united
- More opportunities with larger class sizes
- Bigger teams
- If done right, it could draw people to the school
- Community unity, eventually
- More friend groups help negate peer pressures; more friend/social opportunities if a child didn't get along with peers
- Helps priests be in school more often
- Helps with teacher shortage
- More competition in sports and academics
- Have an English teacher
- More class options
 - One Act, speech would be available
- Grow as a Christian family

6) If there were no Catholic High School in Lindsay or Humphrey, where would I send my kids to school? Schools listed:

- Boone Central
 - Newman Grove
 - Columbus Scotus
 - Norfolk Catholic
 - Humphrey High
 - Twin River
 - Battle Creek
 - Columbus Lakeview
 - St. Edward
 - Madison
-
- We have schools now- we shouldn't have to change. People would move out of town
 - How does Clarkson fit in?
 - Depends on geography and where we live in reference to good schools.
 - People to the west would go to Albion, people in Humphrey would go to Humphrey High. This would cause a huge split in our church family
 - Would we be able to build a new school? But we have two good locations that are working now
 - Concern that if we consolidate, are we going to lose a third to a half of our kids; do we need to be one Catholic school? Are we going to be able to persuade people to become one faith-filled school?

Additional Thoughts & Questions

- Would church attendance numbers be better outside of summer months? Parishioners are going to other parishes because of activities
 - The timing of the church attendance numbers isn't a fair comparison (now vs. Oct. in the past)
- If the school closes/ merges, what happens to our town? It dies.
- Fear of ANOTHER chance in the future with priest shortage; if we consolidate, do we have to worry about another closure in 10 years?
- Are we talking about consolidation of schools only or parishes as well?
- Why are we even talking about the schools if this is about a priest shortage? How will consolidating lighten the load for our priest?
- Why do you want us to consolidate and accept change but Omaha will not work with Lincoln? Why do our leaders not lead by example by collaborating together with the 3 dioceses of Nebraska (e.g., sharing priests)
- If the archdiocese has a 10-year plan, can we also have a 10-year plan? As 2 schools working together, we could develop a strategic plan (with the assistance of you, Phil) to work towards growing our schools, outreach programs, recruiting teachers (a nationwide program).
- In spite of your data, there is actually a shift from urban to rural communities (i.e., Nebraska Youth Survey). Help us build on that, please. We want what you want-- more Catholic students going out into the world. Keeping schools open is the only way to do that.

- What will happen to the plant project with Lindsay Manufacturing?
- As a town, we're taking steps to grow: Community Center, housing, recreation (walking trail), clinic, more businesses (on Main Street)
 - Community Center is looking at the ability to work with Central Community College to offer additional trade school/educational opportunities
- The population of the towns should be considered when looking at the number of students in each school
- It should be considered: our high school kids are “last kids” versus the younger grades that have families just starting out
- What is the archdiocese doing to help recruit or inspire new priests?
- Why doesn't the archdiocese help our school grow vs. close us down?
- How does consolidation help the teacher shortage? Class sizes will be larger and we would need more teachers
- Closing Catholic schools will cause more family breakups; people will stop attending Mass, donations will decrease, and the business community will suffer. Fear of town division and family distress. Tension creates an atmosphere that isn't always Catholic. Fear of kids losing friends by choosing different schools.
- If it isn't broken, why fix it? We lose families if we consolidate; if we lose local school, the town dies because there is no other option for school; we would lose businesses in town
- If we are financially stable, why not leave us alone?
- Can deacons do more or Father designate more responsibilities?
- Can boys go to seminary as field trips to spark interest, and girls do convent trips? What is being done to encourage the priesthood?
- How are we promoting our rural schools? Can the archdiocese help with promoting our rural parishes and schools and potentially attracting teachers/staff?
 - What would happen to the teachers? Would teachers leave?
- ** Noteworthy comment made to Vickie and Phil after the listening session
 - How important is Catholic education to you (question directed to Vickie and Phil)?
If you close our school, we will go to public school.

Appendix B:
Humphrey St. Francis Listening Session Responses, 8/24/22

1. In what ways do our schools flourish now?

- Independently now
- Sharing resources
- Adequate facilities
- Financially doing ok
- Catholic education/values- keep societal views out of school
 - Kids learning faith; disciples of Christ
 - Mass frequently
 - Availability of sacraments, Adoration, Confession, etc.
 - A lot more time spent around Catholic religion than in the past
 - Father visits classrooms; interaction with religious
 - JC Camp
- Enrollment- the largest it has been in 10 years
- Graduation rate is high, kids going to college
- Athletics/Extracurricular activities
 - Good success with extracurricular activities; combined activities, too
- Small groups & one-on-one attention
- Dedication to the schools; parish support
- Parent support and relationships; family environment/values
 - Parents are willing to be more involved to take workload off the priests and let priests do their priestly duties
 - Raising kids who send their kids back to Catholic schools
- School community has common goal
- Town support; growing community and involvement
- Great teachers in both schools
 - Large numbers of alumni coming back as teachers
- Friend groups and relationships between schools are strong
 - Sharing resources between LHF and HSF has affected the kids in a positive manner
- We are attracting people from outside our community to come here
- Strong tradition and deep roots due to ancestors building our churches and schools
- Priest availability in schools

2. How do our children benefit from keeping our schools exactly the same as they are today?

- Smaller class sizes; student-teacher ratio (more students = more teachers needed)
- Less travel for students; more time at home with family and studying; more safety
 - More expensive with potential bussing; we do not have a bus service
- Tradition → community → thriving → families come back and stay
- Full staff/current staff- no changes needed
- Sports and classes
- College credits available
- Classroom space
- Textbook availability
- Daily Masses
- If you force a consolidation, it will result in in-fighting
- Parent support
- Each school will continue to draw people back to their home and roots if our schools stay as is
- Name recognition
- More kids will stay in Catholic schools. If schools close, not all kids would stay in Catholic schools.
- More opportunities for students to be involved in extracurriculars
- They won't have to deal with change
- Logistics would be easier; no money spent on a new building

3. What opportunities would you like our schools to provide that they currently do not?

- Education is awesome but would like more sports options
- Full teaching staff with in-person teachers (need to have teachers travel back and forth to different schools)
 - To fill teaching spots, we need to step up financially since public schools can pay more than Catholic ones; we need a strong enough faith to step up our support
- More elective classes and college courses for in-house college credits
- More diverse curriculum and specific classes: band, shop class, home economics, life lesson courses, Spanish, ag classes, STEM program
 - Streamline scheduling with HPS in order to utilize band, FFA, shop; look back to earlier years of “sharing” classes with HPS
- Expand extracurricular activities: Right to Life, Campus Ministry, fine arts, technology, FFA/Ag, shop (welding), band, drill team
- More one-on-one guidance opportunities
- More easy access to class schedules
 - Online education classes, including evening?
- Additional communication to community members, graduates, new alumni, etc.
- Handicapped accessibility
- Better pay and benefits for staff and teachers and pay to attract teachers
 - Daycare for teachers – cost break
- Better benefactor program to support more students with Catholic education
- Tuition cap for large families
- Support for students continuing to Catholic colleges
- Field trip to convents or seminaries
- Could not come up with anything
 - We are fortunate and pleased with what we have. We are here because we want it to continue.
- Sports co-op works well now
- We desire transparency during this process

4. If there must be consolidation, what do you think that should look like?

- Each keeps own elementary school and have one high school
 - Central location; put pride aside
 - 7-12 for consolidation; how would the kids get to school when they are in grade school?
- Keep the high school in a town (Humphrey)
 - Drop “Humphrey” from the name and be St. Francis Central Catholic Flyers
 - Data speaks for itself. St. Francis is a bigger school and Humphrey is a bigger town. High school should be located in a spot that benefits the most people in the family. Lindsay Holy Family HS closes, but grade schools stay open.
 - Keep the parish name; new mascot if needed
- Whole new name/start from scratch (colors, mascot, name, building/location)
 - Equal representation
 - Joint use of facilities
 - No favoritism; new building gets rid of this; neutral territory
 - If we were to consolidate high schools, it could be built on a neutral site, and should be built and ready when the transition occurs. This could mean less loss of students to public schools and less concern for teachers and staff as transition occurs. A new facility could be a great boost for the churches, schools, communities.
- We must do what’s best for our kids’ religious and academic success. No matter the numbers, we all must give and take from both sides.
 - We think it should begin with a fresh slate and build a system centered around our faith in Jesus Christ FIRST. We would like to be an example of how Catholic education and principles can thrive in rural areas, foster vocations, and raise up wonderful faith-filled children.
- Keep Catholic values
- Acceptance on both sides → unity and common ground
- Supported by all family parishes
- Similar geographic area
- Provide transportation
- There is no benefit from consolidation; it would have a negative economic impact on each town
- We should NOT be discussing consolidation. We are short priests and teachers. We should be developing teacher recruitment before “giving up” and talking consolidation. We have 2 strong communities that will do anything for our kids; we need to start there.

5. How might our children benefit from consolidation?

- They won't; there would be more competition and less attention; leave it as it is; we would lose kids to the public school
- We would still have Catholic education, but we don't see a benefit.
- Continued Catholic education
- New friendships/ more kids equals more friend options/ more socialization
- More class opportunities and offerings
- Full staff/increased number of teachers
 - Will lessen the problem of finding teachers but will not solve it
 - Same pool of teachers to cover
 - Less of a struggle to find and hire teachers
- More kids in class/larger class sizes/more competitive sports
- Stronger faith family
- Unity
- Helps kids adapt to college
- Kids see priests more
- Tuition rates could drop
- Additional administrative presence, resource availability; potential new org structure

6. If there were no Catholic High School in Lindsay or Humphrey, where would I send my kids to school?

- Schools listed:
 - Humphrey High
 - Another Catholic school
 - Ashland Greenwood
 - Norfolk Catholic
 - Columbus Scotus
 - St. Leonard's in Madison
 - Boone Central
 - Newman Grove
 - Home School
- Possibly relocate
- Shouldn't our kids' Catholic education start at home?
- Catholic education is so important to us that we will send our kids wherever needed to get a Catholic education.

Additional Thoughts & Questions

- Potential higher taxes if families leave the Catholic school system for public schools
- Fear of closure in 10 years or so
 - If there is no priest in residence in the future, will our schools shut down? If so, we don't know how to answer this because "must" seems offensive! We feel like we are being lumped in with the bigger communities and it is different in the rural communities.
- How might our children be affected by consolidation?
 - Extra travel means weather safety concerns
 - Losing identity
 - Lost teacher/student relationships
 - Expense of potential new facility
 - Bus driver availability
- General confusion around consolidation: lack of transparency; no true Q&A at the listening sessions; will be a comment period after this gets further down the road?
- We are asking, "Is the goal to close churches in order to eliminate 1 priest?" If not, then why are we talking about consolidation?
 - It was stated that we will have 2 priests, so why can't we have the schools we have?
- As Catholics, we are taught to live by example; what is the current plan within the state of Nebraska among the 3 dioceses to share resources?
- How does it work financially, splitting costs with parishes?
- We won't tear 2 communities apart; this will drive more Catholics away from the church. Our table is 100% opposed to consolidation.
- As you proceed, will the families of this cluster be involved? If not, and the Family Pastoral Planning Committee is making these choices, why were these handpicked? Most did not even know about this committee until they read the meeting minutes in the bulletin. There are several in the room that would like an opportunity to be on that committee, as we feel our school is not being well represented.

- Explain how consolidating 2 schools whose enrollment is the highest it's been in 10 years benefits anyone.
- A teacher recruitment committee would help draw applicants to our parish and school. Our website hasn't been updated since 2019 and doesn't even show that we are hiring. We could start there before we talk about consolidation.