



# Lexington Christian Academy High School

450 West Reynolds Road Lexington, Kentucky 40503

Dear Parents,

In our attempt to fulfill our mission of providing a *World-Class, Christ-Centered Education* for our students, school improvement must be at the forefront of our planning at all times. It is for this reason that I am sending this letter to the parents of all rising 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. I trust that you will carefully read the following information regarding a change in our graduation requirements beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

In the past four years significant steps have been taken to enhance the academic programs of Lexington Christian Academy at all levels. However, the primary focus of these efforts has been at the high school. Certainly, we are seeing the results of our decisions. The Class of 2011 earned over 7.5 million dollars in academic scholarships. The average ACT score for this class was 24.7 (3.6 points higher than the national average and 5.1 points higher than the Kentucky average). Presently, over 20% of the Class of 2012 has scored a 30 or higher on the ACT (36 is the highest possible score). This class also includes 6 Governor's Scholars, 4 Governor's School for the Arts Scholars, 1 National Merit Semi-Finalist (with the potential to convert to a Finalist later this year), and 4 National Merit Commended students. The next significant step forward we need to take is in the area of community service.

There is no question that the vast majority of our students are involved in community service, missions programs or service activities in their local churches. Certainly, these activities are undertaken as a result of the students' personal desire to serve the Lord and others. However, you may not realize how important community service is to your student's college application process. I believe you may find the following quotations enlightening:

*"Community service provides applicants with a way to demonstrate leadership, involvement, and commitment – all qualities desired by admissions committees." (The Princeton Review)*

*"Sustained involvement in any activity is something that we take note of during our application review. We particularly like to see students with community service experience, because it demonstrates values that we like to see in our student population – social responsibility, community consciousness, and altruism." (Western Washington University)*

*"Ask yourself, 'How am I vested in my community?' We would much prefer to see a student in fewer clubs that had vested themselves and made a true difference in their life and in other peoples' lives." (Dean of Admissions, Vanderbilt University)*

Because we want to ensure that every LCA senior has the best opportunity to be accepted to his/her college/university of choice, a Community Service Requirement (CSR) was approved by our Board of Directors last year to be implemented during the 2012-2013 school year. Here are the basic components of the CSR:

- Students will earn 30 hours per year while enrolled in the high school.
- Students will select no more than 2 partnerships (i.e. Red Cross, nursing home, etc.) per year – each for a minimum of 15 hours.
- Students will earn 15 hours for a mission or service-oriented trip (whether the trip is sponsored by LCA or a local church)

Thus, the rising freshman class will be expected to earn 120 community service hours during their high school career. The Class of 2013 will only need to fulfill 30 service hours. The requirement for junior and sophomore students will be 60 and 90 hours respectively.

Mr. Byron Ethington, High School Spiritual Life Director, will provide oversight for the CSR program. He has indicated that he presently has a list of over 50 approved partnerships for students to choose from to meet the CSR. He is confident that the list will continue to grow as students and parents suggest other partnerships.

Over the course of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, Mr. Ethington will be providing additional information and assistance to students as they anticipate fulfilling the CSR. While I'm sure that parents and students will have many questions, it is our hope that we can satisfactorily answer those questions in the coming months.

Our desire is to fulfill our mission as a *World-Class, Christ-Centered* educational institution. The addition of the CSR enables our graduates to be better prepared for admission to their college/ university of choice and potentially qualify for scholarship monies specifically designated for students who are significantly involved in community service. Of course, serving others is also foundational to our personal faith and our distinctiveness as a Christian school.

As additional information is made available from our high school office, please feel free to contact Mr. Ethington or members of our staff if you have questions. I trust that you and your family have a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

Sincerely,

*Ollie Gibbs*

Ollie E. Gibbs, Ed. D.  
Headmaster