

Green Knights Walkout for Transparency

By: Gracelyn Giese

March 27, 2024, was not an ordinary day for St. Norbert College. At 11:30 a.m. many students got up from their seats and left their classrooms. They all walked together to Baer Mall to protest the lack of transparency with the budget cuts that happened before spring break.

The night before the walk out a town hall was held with the President's cabinet as a way for students to get some transparency and to ask their questions. It went from 7:00 p.m. in the F.K. Bemis International Center to 8:30 p.m. with a presentation given by multiple members of the President's cabinet. The questions ranged from the status of a professor who is now on "indefinite leave" to other solutions that the college did not do. With the town hall, a lot of students came to the event leaving an overflow of students to sit on the ground or lean up against the wall.

But, at the time of the walkout students gathered on Baer Mall from all directions, ready to have their voices heard. At first, students chanted the words "Whose campus?" and "Our campus!" in a call and response with campus being changed to professors, money and voices. Some professors were off to the side, and some were in the crowd, talking with their students about their efforts. Students held up their signs and were given pieces of paper. These pieces of paper were to encourage students to ask questions to the staff at Main Hall. One student called to go towards Main Hall. Students chanted and held up their signs. A student even sat by the light platform at Main Hall. News stations caught many photos of the walkout, the students' voices were hoping to be heard.

On the goals of the walkout, a student who participated said, "We are affected by decisions made by the college, and we deserve to have a say," which was the common theme of the walkout. Many students held signs that demanded more transparency from the college. The other general type of sign was asking whether or not one professor's comments lead to his indefinite leave. The posters at the walkout were similar to the questions asked at the town hall. Around noon the walkout ended with many people slowly leaving. But many stayed behind to get interviewed by the news or just to keep up with the event. With the weather conditions that Wednesday morning, it was not an easy walkout. It was cold and windy, and the sun appeared every so often creating less than pleasant conditions. But, Scotlyn Roemhild, one of the organizers of this event said, "I will say that I do think that this will make an impact in the concerns of the student body or at least the students who were present at this demonstration. Which by the way, I was astounded by the turnout of my peers at this demonstration".

With the number of students and staff who appeared at the demonstration, it is safe to say there was an impact with the concerns. Even at the town hall the night before, the number of

students who showed up and asked questions was astounding as a good portion of the student body who was present was sitting on the floor or standing against the wall to listen to the President's cabinet. Yet, to see how successful the walkout was is something only time can tell.