

St. Francis of Assisi School Board of Education Minutes

February 8, 2024

Board Members Present:

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)
 William Downs (Chair)
 Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)
 Steve Craig (Secretary)
 Thomas Call (Parish Council Rep)

Not Present:

Kaba Kayemba
 Andrew Phillips
 Phil Stover

Prepared by: Steve Craig

Called to Order: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Location: Middle Conference Room

Others Present:

Jeff Lynch (School Principal)
 Jamie Zabel (AP) via MS Teams
 Wendy Henry (Preschool Director)
 Tim Schulte (Business Manager)

Home and School Leaders

Heather Darling (President)
 Mari Lewis (Treasurer)
 Molly Mertens (Secretary)
 Brianna Umthun (Past President)

Minutes Prepared By: _____
 Steve Craig

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
Call to Order & Opening Prayer	William Downs called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and Father Pins led an opening prayer. Introductions were made of all those attending the meeting. Tim Schulte (SFA Business Manager) and leaders of the SFA Home and School organization were introduced and participated in the meeting. Minutes from the January 11, 2024 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer. Tim Schulte and four Home and School leaders attended the meeting. January Board meeting minutes were unanimously approved.
Open Forum	Tim Schulte discussed the 2024-2025 SFA School budget and the proposed tuition for 2024-2025. He explained the effort to gradually increase tuition as part of the 5-year plan to raise SFA teacher salaries to market levels. The proposal that will be reviewed by the SFA Finance Council in two weeks recommends in-parish tuition of \$5300 per student and out-of-parish tuition at \$8300. There are efforts to provide increased tuition assistance for families needing help with increased out-of-pocket tuition costs. Tim shared information received about the proposed tuition at other DM area parochial schools. SFA's proposed tuition is right in the middle compared to these other schools.	The SFA Finance Council will finalize school tuition for 2024-2025 at their February 20, 2024 meeting. A communication plan to share this information and the reasons for the tuition increase and opportunities for tuition assistance was discussed.
Pastoral Update	Father Pins explained that the Bishop has decided to delay fully implementing the regional school system until the 2025-2026 academic year. He then discussed the success installing a new sound system in the church that has been VERY well received. A system to link hearing aides with Bluetooth capabilities to the new sound system will soon be available. He then discussed plans for Ash Wednesday and the Lent 1% Challenge where parishoners will be encouraged to spend 1% of their day (15 minutes) in prayer. Parishoners will be able to purchase the Hollow	Report from Father Pins. A new sound system has been installed in the church to the delight of all parishoners.

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	app for \$1.00 to use during lent.	
Report from SFA School Principal Jeff Lynch	<p>Principal Jeff Lynch discussed the following with the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The school is proceeding with the purchase of another AED device that will be placed outside the school office. This will not be through WDM Police as any unit they purchase would not be stored at the school. * The Polk County Hazard Assessment was conducted in October and the school is still awaiting a report about any building safety/security concerns. * The Diocese is currently reviewing the school's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and is also exploring the possibility of bringing in a contractor to help train the staff in areas like active shooter training. * The school is exploring creation of a Student Council involving 6, 7 & 8th grade students. Mr. Todd Hilton volunteered to serve as faculty lead for the project. * The current plan is to send out 2024-2025 teacher contracts the week before spring break. There is a need to recruit a permanent 5th grade teacher and possibly one other middle school teaching position. 	Report from Principal Jeff Lynch.
Report from SFA Preschool Director Wendy Henry	Wendy clarified that all 3 year old preschool slots are full but there are currently 6 openings in the afternoon Pre-K program for 2024-2025. Wrap-around care is currently full, with a waiting list. The plan is to also send out 2024-2025 preschool teacher contracts the week before spring break.	Report from Presechool Director Wendy Henry.
Board of Education Committee Assignments & Reports	<p>Members discussed results of recent committee meetings they attend as BOE reps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Home and School reps provided a brief report of recent activities. The Bid for the Kids Auction fundraiser was conducted February 3, 2024. The final amount raised is still being determined. It was a great success although attendance was down some from prior years and the amount raised will likely be somewhat less than last year. * Phil was not present to report on the School Improvement Advisory (SIAC) Committee but Jeff explained that the committee is looking at curriculum and textbook needs for next year, now that the decision has been made to delay implementing the regional school system until 2025-2026. * Brenda discussed the recent Building and Grounds Committee meeting that discussed new fencing for the school playground, new keying of all outside entrances of the church and school, removing dead trees near the school playground, and addressing roofing concerns and leaks affecting the parish 	Committee Meeting Reports.

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	<p>hall, gathering space and preschool areas of the building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Steve discussed the most recent Finance Council meeting held on 1/16/24. The focus was the school budget and tuition but overall parish finances and the plan to install a new chiller this spring were also addressed, * Kaba was not present to report on the Technology Committee. * William reported the Security and Safety Committee did not meet in January. 	
Old Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans to merge the SFA Board of Education and Home & School organization were addressed at the last BOE meeting. The consensus was that merger plans should proceed even with the one-year delay in SFA School becoming part of the diocesan regional school system. Home and School leaders in attendance voiced strong support for merging the boards by August 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Those present unanimously approved establishing a Steering Committee to work on merging the two boards. It was agreed that two members of each group would meet with Principal Jeff Lynch (and/or Asst Principal Jamie Zabel) to determine the best structure for the new leadership group. Andrew Phillips and Phil Stover have volunteered to serve from the BOE. Mari Lewis + one other Home and School organization leader will be appointed to serve. ○ Current charters & bylaws of the SFA BOE and Home & School will be reviewed and it was agreed that we should see if the new Holy Trinity merged leadership group has created a charter and bylaws. ○ Those present endorsed a timeline where work of the Steering Committee on merger plans will be presented at the April 11, 2024 Board of Education meeting that Home and School leaders will also attend, with a goal of finalizing merger plans by May 2024. • Dr. Zabel updated plans to implement the “Leaders and Me” curriculum at SFA School by the start of the next school year. This curriculum has been implemented and very positively received in Ankeny, Urbandale and Waukee schools and at Christ the King School in Des Moines. • Discussion about possible changes to the SFA School Emergency Operations Plan and work of the School Safety Committee was postponed to the next BOE meeting. 	<p>A proposal to create a Steering Committee of two BOE members and two Home and School members to work with Mr. Lynch & Dr. Zabel on plans to merge the two groups by August 2024 was unanimously approved.</p> <p>The Steering Committee will discuss their work on how to merge the two groups at the April 11, 2024 BOE meeting that Home and School leaders will also attend. The goal will be to finalize merger plans by May 2024.</p> <p>Tim Schulte said he will try to secure any charter, bylaws, organizational documents created by Holy Trinity School when they merged their two groups last year.</p>
New Business	<p>William discussed a few other concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past, the discernment process for identifying possible new members to serve on the Board of Education occurs in March. It was unanimously agreed that this should be delayed until merger plans are finalized and the 	<p>The Board of Education meeting</p>

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	<p>need to recruit new members to serve on the merged board is clarified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns regarding the \$100 paid to the regional school organization by SFA school parents to register a student for 2024-2025 were discussed. Tim Schulte stated that most of this money will be returned to SFA School although a portion will be retained to help with the regional organization's operating expenses. SFA School plans to again use the FACTS system for processing tuition and other payments from parents during the next year. There was discussion about whether to have a BOE meeting in March as the current scheduled meeting date is during spring break. The board approved canceling the March board meeting. Jeff Lynch questioned whether the board wanted to meet on March 21, 2024 instead (delayed one week from the prior March 14 scheduled meeting). 	<p>scheduled for March 14, 2024 is canceled.</p> <p>William plans to survey board members about possibly moving the March Board of Education meeting to March 21, 2024.</p>
OTHER BUSINESS	<p>There being no further business, a motion was made and unanimously approved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.</p>	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm</p> <p>William will announce whether the March Board of Education meeting will be moved to March 21, 2024.</p> <p>The Board of Education Meeting will definitely meet on April 11, 2024 at 6:30 pm. Home and School leaders will also attend this meeting.</p>