

St. Francis of Assisi School Board of Education Minutes

March 21, 2024

Board Members Present:

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)
 William Downs (Chair)
 Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)
 Kaba Kayemba
 Andrew Phillips
 Phil Stover

Attending by MS Teams:

Steve Craig (Secretary)
 Thomas Call (Parish Council Rep)

Prepared by: Steve Craig

Called to Order: 6:29 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:05 p.m.

Location: Middle Conference Room + MS Teams

Others Present:

Jeff Lynch (School Principal)
 Wendy Henry (Preschool Director)

Minutes Prepared By: _____
 Steve Craig & Brenda Pedersen

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
Call to Order & Opening Prayer	William Downs called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m. and Father Pins led an opening prayer. Minutes from the February 8, 2024 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer. February Board meeting minutes were unanimously approved.
Followup Items from Last Board Meeting	Tim Schulte contacted Holy Trinity leaders and confirmed that they have not yet developed bylaws, policies or other organizational documents for their new HT School Leadership Council. He also confirmed that letters went out to SFA School parents about the planned tuition increase for 2024-2025 and there have been no major concerns raised to date.	Report submitted by Tim Schulte.
Pastoral Update	Father Pins discussed the busy Holy Week schedule planned for next week. He discussed the survey of SFA members being circulated now. The Disciple Making Index survey instrument will provide valuable information about parish demographics + strengths and areas for improvement. When results are compiled, they will be shared at a future board meeting. Plans are progressing slowly with the capital improvement/building project.	Report from Father Pins.
Report from SFA School Principal Jeff Lynch	Principal Jeff Lynch discussed the following with the Board: * SFA School just received results from the ACRE Test taken by all catholic students in grades 5 and 8 across the country. SFA scores in the Prayer, Formation, and Mission Spirit areas were all well above the national average and that of other Des Moines Diocese schools. * The school has purchased new vinyl coverings that include the school name, shield, and inspirational messages that will be placed in key areas around the school, including the main stairway to the second floor.	Report from Principal Jeff Lynch.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The new AED device that will be placed outside the school office should arrive the second week of April. * The six-foot fence around the playground was installed during spring break. * The 2024-2025 School Calendar has been finalized. All diocesan schools will follow the same schedule, with school starting on August 23, 2024 and ending on May 28, 2025. School will be out the entire week of Thanksgiving. * Teachers have been asked to sign their contracts for 2024-2025. Two teachers asked for more time to finalize their decision. Two others chose not to renew + there is a need to hire a new full-time 5th grade teacher. Interviews and hiring decisions are currently underway. * Based on the early enrollment process used this year, 685 students are enrolled for 2024-2025. The only openings are 2nd grade (4 positions). * 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 still reviewing the school's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The School Safety Committee is developing a one-page summary of procedures for all possible emergencies. * Mr. Todd Hilton is working to identify by May students currently in 6th & 7th grade who will serve on the new SFA School Student Council next year. * ISASP Tests will be administered to 3rd - 5th grade students next week and 6th - 8th grade students the week of April 8, 2024. * SFA School has purchased glasses for all students so they can view the sun during the major eclipse event that will occur the afternoon of April 8th. * Jeff was asked to discuss the new cell phone policy and he explained that the school has implemented a trial that allows 8th grade students to use cell phones for a brief controlled time each school day. No decision has been made about allowing phone use by students in other grades. 	
<p>Report from SFA Preschool Director Wendy Henry</p>	<p>Wendy stated that they are currently looking at the 2024-2025 Diocesan School Calendar and how this will affect preschool students. She is currently meeting with all of the preschool teachers about 2024-2025 teacher contracts. There may be a need to hire 1-2 new Pre-K teachers. There remain a few PM Pre-K Student openings for 2024-2025.</p>	<p>Report from Presechool Director Wendy Henry.</p>

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<p>Report from the Board Subcommittee working to Merge Home & School + the Board of Education</p>	<p>Andrew Phillips and Phil Stover are the two board members chosen to represent the BOE in these discussions. Phil explained that there have not been any in-person meetings between the two groups yet. The decision was made to start the process by drafting a set of bylaws that would describe the framework of a new board that is currently being called the SFA School Leadership Council. A first draft of these bylaws was created by Phil and circulated to board members. Feedback has been received from a few board members. Phil explained that it should not be seen as merging BOE members focused only on school policy and Home & School members focused only on fundraising.</p> <p>Father Pins confirmed that he envisions blending the two groups and assuring that the new Leadership Council remains focused on the school's mission: providing a solid education to students while also working to advance the faith of students and parents/families. William said we will need to clarify if the board is strictly advisory, if members should be chosen based on skill sets needed on the board, how the new board can be most useful to the school, and how the new regional system will impact the work of the new Leadership Council. Kaba expressed support for assuring that the strengths of board members are best utilized in serving the new Leadership Council.</p> <p>After discussion, it was agreed that all board members should send any questions and possible edits to the draft bylaws to Phil. Phil will take the draft bylaws and proposed edits to the steering committee for discussion. It was agreed that the April Board of Education meeting should bring together current Board of Education members and Home & School leaders to discuss the work of the steering committee on plans for the new SFA School Leadership Council.</p>	<p>Phil Stover led a discussion of draft bylaws he helped develop for the new SFA School Leadership Council.</p> <p>All Board of Education members are asked to send questions and possible edits to the draft bylaws to Phil ASAP.</p> <p>The Steering Committee will meet soon to discuss plans for the new SFA School Leadership Council.</p>
<p>Other Business Adjournment</p>	<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>The next Board of Education Meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2024 at 6:30 pm. Home and School leaders will also attend this meeting to discuss plans for the new SFA School Leadership Council.</p>