

# St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

October 10, 2024

**Board Members Present:**

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)  
Steve Craig (Chair)  
Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)  
Mari Lewis (Treasurer)  
William Downs  
Andrew Phillips  
Becky Baker  
Jennifer Tracey  
Michael Perrin  
Adam Mullinax (Secretary for MM)

**Not Present:**

Phil Stover (Communications)  
Mollie Mertens (Secretary)  
Thomas Call (Parish Council Rep)

**Prepared by:** Adam Mullinax

**Called to Order:** 6:30 p.m.

**Adjourned:** 8:00 p.m.

**Location:** Middle Conference Room

**Minutes Prepared By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Adam Mullinax

**Others Present:**

Jeff Lynch (School Principal)  
Jamie Zabel (Assistant Principal)  
Wendy Henry (Preschool Director)  
Todd Hilton (Teacher)

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
<b>Call to Order &amp; Opening Prayer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Steve Craig called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and Father Pins led an opening prayer.</li></ul>	Call to Order and Opening Prayer.
<b>Attendance and Discussion of where future meetings should be held</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Steve Craig solicited council feedback on the best location for future meetings given the size of the council.</li><li>Council agreed to hold future meetings in the SFA School Science Lab.</li></ul>	Future Council meetings will be held in the School Science Lab (second floor of SFA School).
<b>Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes from September 12, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Steve Craig asked for any changes/additions to the 10/10/2024 agenda. No changes were requested.</li><li>Minutes from the previous Leadership Council Meeting (9/12/2024) were approved with no recommended changes/edits.</li></ul>	Council proceeded with the original agenda without change.  Council approved the meeting minutes from the 9/12/2024 Leadership Council Meeting.

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<p><b>Teacher Presentation: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Update + Student Council News</b></p>	<p>Todd Hilton (Middle School teacher) attended the Leadership Council Meeting to provide an update on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Camp Dodge, and to share information about the new SFA Student Council.</p> <p>Mr. Hilton stated the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Camp Dodge for leadership training was very successful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students participated in a variety of team building activities. The activities encouraged engaging interactions between students.</li> <li>• Throughout the session, students were supporting one another, collaborating and remained very positive.</li> </ul> <p>Mr. Hilton also provided an update on the SFA Student Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SFA Student Council meets every other week on Wednesdays.</li> <li>• The SFA Student Council takes the place of the prior Student Ambassador program.</li> <li>• The Student Council has been very engaged to-date (ex. WOW recognition board, Grandparent's Day).</li> <li>• Q. Are students elected to the SFA Student Council? A. Students apply to join the council. Teachers review student applications and select top candidates. Top candidates go to a ballot and are selected by peers.</li> <li>• Q. Which grades are represented on the SFA Student Council? A. Just 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade currently, but will expand to 6<sup>th</sup> grade midyear.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership Council will be inviting SFA teachers to attend future meetings to provide updates on activities across grade-levels.</p>

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<b>Open Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was no request for an Open Forum at this meeting.</li> </ul>	No Open Forum.
<b>Report from Treasurer Mari Lewis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mari informed the council that there are three Leadership Council accounts that we manage: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising account – Funds raised this year (2024-2025) will fund next year’s Leadership Council budget. Current balance: \$75,363 (\$178k recently transferred to Leadership Council account)</li> <li>Leadership Council account – Funds allocated to SFA school for 2024-2025 school year. Current balance: ~\$183k.</li> <li>8th Grade Fundraising – New account for 2024-25 school year.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2024 Track-a-thon net revenue: ~\$21.5k (\$26k gross revenue, less \$4500 in expenses).</li> <li>8<sup>th</sup> grade Spirit wear Fundraiser: They are asking to re-open sales due to high demand. They are willing to split revenue from sales 50/50 with the SFA Leadership Council. No objection from council members voiced.</li> <li>Mari provided an update on the 2024-2025 cost for busing, primarily used by the grade-levels for field trips. SFA subsidizes busing costs and parents are billed any difference in actual busing costs beyond the subsidy. Busing cost estimated to be ~\$22k for the school year.</li> <li>Q. Do we increase the busing subsidy to cover the entire busing expense? A. Council agreed to keep the budget as-is with an equal amount allocated for each grade level.</li> <li>Council had a discussion about the various expenses that arise during the year that are billed to families via FACTS. It was agreed some of these should be factored into student tuition.</li> <li>Council discussed how to utilize un-spent funds from the 2023-2024 SFA Auction Fund-a-Wish. ~\$11,314 remaining for technology; ~\$4,425 remaining for furniture.</li> </ul>	<p>Mari Lewis to discuss with Tim Schulte the possibility of moving recurring ancillary expenses into the standard student tuition rate vs. billing those charges to families via FACTS throughout the school year.</p> <p>Jeff Lynch, Jamie Zabel and Wendy Henry to bring back recommendations for how to spend remaining 2023-2024 Auction Fund-a-Wish funds, specifically in the areas of technology and furniture.</p> <p>Jeff Lynch to discuss possible Fund-a-Wish ideas with faculty/staff for the 2025 Auction and bring to the next Leadership Council Meeting for review/approval.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council had discussion about possible ideas for the 2024-2025 Fund-a-Wish program. Initial discussion around improving the main playground like installing artificial grass turf or another type of cover over the rubber mulch currently there. Mari will check on costs for this change. Jeff Lynch will discuss with faculty/staff other possible Fund-a-Wish ideas.</li> </ul>	
<b>Fundraising and Development Director – Review of Plans for 2024-2025</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becky Baker reported that Jessica Hull (coordinator for 2024 Track-a-Thon) will be putting together a detailed plan that can be referred to in future years regarding Track-a-Thon planning. This plan will serve as the ‘playbook’ that can be followed for future planning of the event.</li> <li>• The 2025 Auction Committee has been formed and planning is underway.</li> <li>• Auction theme – Casino Royale.</li> <li>• Theme and auction details will be shared with families on 10/11/2024.</li> <li>• Becky will serve as the Leadership Council liaison to the Auction Committee.</li> <li>• Auction committee members are also being asked to developing detailed plans that outline the logistics for auction planning. This will serve as the playbook for future year’s auction planning activities.</li> </ul>	<p>Report from Fundraising and Development Director Becky Baker.</p>
<b>Volunteer Coordinator – Review of Recruitment and Training for 2024-25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jennifer Tracey provided an update on volunteer recruitment for 2024-2025. She plans to organize a meeting with the heads of the different volunteer committees to discuss ideas and concerns about recruiting, retaining, equipping and training the volunteers needed by the school.</li> <li>• Jennifer is working on a survey to be sent out in the spring to ask if volunteer committee chairs plan to return + a form to be sent to all parents (including incoming K parents) about volunteer opportunities for next school year.</li> <li>• Jennifer also stated Grandparents Day was a huge success and they received lots of positive feedback about this year’s event. Mollie Mertens did a great job coordinating the event this year.</li> </ul>	<p>Report from Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer Tracey.</p>

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<b>Finalizing Bylaws for Leadership Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Steve Craig covered the updated version of the Leadership Council Bylaws in Phil Stover's absence.</li> <li>● The Version-10 draft circulated in advance needed a minor revision to the part-time employee membership criteria.</li> <li>● The Version-10 Bylaws draft with the one minor revision was then unanimously approved by the Council.</li> <li>● Necessary signatures on the final bylaw document will be obtained by Steve Craig. He will then provide a copy to all council members.</li> </ul>	<p>Steve Craig will distribute a final copy of the signed Leadership Council Bylaws to council members.</p>
<b>Old Business: Follow-up Items from September Council Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Steve Craig reminded the council that SFA teachers will be invited to the monthly Leadership Council meetings to present on activities/recent events from their respective grades.</li> <li>● Follow-up question from September council meeting: Q. Are we leveraging interest-bearing accounts for Leadership Council funds. A. Yes, the money is held in interest-bearing accounts that return is at the 4-5% range.</li> <li>● Current draft of proposed Fundraising Policy was shared with council members. One suggested revision was to distinguish that non-school related fundraising would be acceptable (ex. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.).</li> <li>● Council members also suggested that we add language to the policy requesting that fundraising requests be submitted in writing to the Leadership Council at least 60 days in advance.</li> <li>● Council members also suggested that a contact person be identified so we know who to contact if there are questions about the proposal.</li> <li>● Leader in Me training is underway and off to a successful start.</li> <li>● Leader in Me local symposium in November will involve several SFA program coordinators.</li> <li>● SFA School Leaders in Me program is starting to create action committees to help implement the program.</li> </ul>	<p>Steve Craig to bring back updated version of the Fundraising policy for final review/approval at next council meeting.</p>
<b>Pastoral Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● October is the month of the rosary. Each grade will be doing various activities throughout the month involving the rosary.</li> </ul>	<p>Pastoral Update from Father Pins.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardinal Collins will be visiting SFA Church and celebrating 4:30 pm Mass on Saturday evening, 10/12.</li> <li>• Confirmation will be held on Sunday, 10/20 for 10<sup>th</sup> graders.</li> <li>• All Saints Day will be celebrated on Friday, 11/1/2024.</li> </ul>	
<b>Administrative Report: SFA Preschool</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wendy Henry reported that conferences for preschool/Pre-K will be held the week of 10/14.</li> <li>• She also reported that Leader in Me is also being implemented within the SFA Preschool program.</li> <li>• Wendy stated that the Pre-K and Preschool faculty are feeling well integrated with K-8 Leader in Me faculty.</li> </ul>	Preschool Director Update.
<b>Administrative Report: SFA School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeff Lynch reported that SFA School had 800+ grandparents participate in Grandparent's Day.</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Grade took their first field trip of the year to Ledges Park.</li> <li>• K-8 Conferences will be held on 10/15 – 10/17.</li> <li>• Six faculty attended Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI) training.</li> <li>• School is assessing the potential adoption of RAVE mobile safety – which is a phone-based emergency communication and notification platform.</li> <li>• RAVE will be providing a demo to school administration in the coming weeks.</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade just finished the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), which is a standardized test that measures reasoning and problem-solving skills.</li> <li>• Battle of the Books has kicked off for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through middle school. The competition is Diocesan-wide this year.</li> </ul>	School Principal Update

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<b>Updates from Committees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Steve Craig proposed that Committee Updates (ex. School Improvement Advisor Committee, Buildings and Grounds, Finance Committee, Security and Safety, School Mental Health Committee) be provided to council members in writing in the future. Council representatives to these committees will be asked to submit written reports updating work of these committees that will then be circulated to all council members prior to each council meeting.</li> <li>● The Council unanimously approved this proposal and it will commence in November 2024.</li> </ul>	Committee updates will be provided by respective council members in writing for future council meetings.
<b>New Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● William Downs provided an update on safety improvements at the school.</li> <li>● Stated there is an electrical pole access port by the soccer field that was open, and he provided a temporary fix, but school maintenance needs to provide a permanent repair.</li> <li>● He also expressed concerns over missing pieces and deteriorating playground equipment.</li> <li>● Stated the playground surface on the NE side of the playground is losing its underlayment and needs looked at.</li> <li>● Also recommended a reapplication of more rubber mulch to the playground, as certain spots are low with exposed concrete.</li> <li>● Security cameras will be installed on Friday 10/18 while the kids are out of school.</li> <li>● Phone alert system is scheduled to be installed in February 2025. Installation cost is \$500, and the service is free thereafter.</li> <li>● Phone alert system notifies schools when a lock down of security event is happening nearby so the school can address appropriately.</li> </ul>	Principal Jeff Lynch to work with maintenance to review recommended safety repairs.
<b>Executive Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting</li> </ul>	No Executive Session conducted.

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<b>Closing Prayer and Adjournment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Father Pins led the council in a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.</li></ul>	<b>Next Leadership Council Meeting: Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 6:30pm. This meeting will be held in the SFA School Science Lab room.</b>