

# St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

November 14, 2024

**Board Members Present:**

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)  
 Steve Craig (Chair)  
 Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)  
 Mollie Mertens (Secretary)  
 Mari Lewis (Treasurer)  
 Phil Stover (Communications Dir)  
 William Downs (At-Large)  
 Andrew Phillips (At-Large)  
 Adam Mullinax (At-Large)  
 Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coord)

**Not Present:**

Jeff Lynch (School Principal)  
 Becky Baker (Fundraising/Dev Dir)  
 Michael Perrin

**Visitors/Invited Guests:**

Katie Tigges (2nd grade Teacher)  
 Courtney Waters (2nd grade Teacher)  
 Nikki Kock (2nd grade Teacher)

**Prepared by:** Mollie Mertens

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

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

**Location:** SFA Science Lab

**Minutes Prepared By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mollie Mertens

**Others Present:**

Jamie Zabel (Assistant Principal)  
 Wendy Henry (Preschool Director)  
 Thomas Call (Parish Council Rep)

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
<b>Call to Order &amp; Opening Prayer</b>	Steve Craig called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and Father Pins led an opening prayer. Current Agenda and Minutes from the last Board of Education meeting from October 10, 2024 were approved.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer.
<b>Teacher Presentation</b>	Mrs. Tigges, Mrs. Waters and Mrs. Kock reported three things happening in 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade this year to the council. 1. They had a very successful Mission Day - \$1,800 raised and 25 pillows purchased for the Sleep in Heavenly Peace program. 2. Second graders are preparing for Reconciliation and First Communion. In the classroom this includes learning the examination of conscience, Act of Contrition, etc. 3. The teachers attended a professional development program called the Science of Reading with teachers from St. Augustin. This matches the Really Great Reading program and promotes structural literacy and phonics but has a lot of differentiated resources for all levels of students.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Teachers Report.

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	<p>The SFA Knights of Columbus will be at all masses on December 7th and 8th raising funds and they are organizing a bed building day for Sleep in Heavenly Peace.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teachers discussed their hope for continued transparency and support from the Leadership Council as the St. Francis community grows. Also, they are looking forward to continued efforts to keep the school culture positive.</p>	
<b>Open Forum</b>	<p>There was no request for an Open Forum at this meeting.</p>	
<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	<p>Fundraising account (as of 11/11/24) balance was \$77,330.</p> <p>Changes relative to last month include Track-a-Thon revenue and expenses, as well as a couple of small credits from the 2024 auction.</p> <p>Leadership Council account (as of 11/11/24) balance was \$174,368. There is currently a surplus in this account of \$62,291.</p> <p>There were \$8,358 of debits since the October Leadership Council meeting report. The most significant expenses were for Heartland AEA professional development (\$1,467) and the library (\$1,378).</p> <p>The Building and Grounds committee discussed the playground surface. They decided not to proceed with resurfacing and will instead refill the rubber mulch once or twice a year. They requested the Leadership Council cover the cost this year and it will be built into the school budget for future years. Mr. Lynch proposed using our current surplus on this which was approved by Steve (chair) and Mari (treasurer) as a Special Disbursement. A motion was made that if special disbursement needs are identified between meetings Steve, Mari and Jeff can approve these and bring them to the next Leadership Council Meeting. This motion was made by Phil Stover, seconded by Jennifer Tracey, and unanimously approved by the Council.</p> <p>8th grade fundraising account (as of 11/11/24) balance is \$8,595. \$1,250 of that will now be transferred to the Leadership Council account as previously agreed.</p>	<p>Steve, Mari and Mr. Lynch are now approved to make budget decisions that arise between meetings using appropriate discretion and reporting back any disbursements approved to the Council at the next meeting.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	<p>The Furniture Fund-a-wish from 2024 has \$4,000 left and Mr. Lynch identified \$6,300 worth of furniture needs. Motion to approve funding the full \$6300 of furniture using leftover Fund-a-wish funds with the remainder coming from surplus funds in the LC account. This motion was made by Adam Mullinax, seconded by Jennifer Tracey, and unanimously approved by the Council.</p> <p>Fund-a Wish Technology bucket also has money to spend. Ideas included a smart board in the band room and/or charging stations for 4th and 5th grade Chromebooks. Cost of these items is needed before this can be approved.</p> <p>Christmas Fund- Home and School traditionally collected contributions from families for St. Francis staff members and then dispersed it evenly based on FTEs. The only amount this will take out of the Leadership Council budget is the amount it takes to round up to even amounts. Brianna Umthun has agreed to coordinate this and will begin collecting money soon.</p> <p>Mari said there is still \$150 left in the budget for new staff shirts. Dr. Zabel will check to see if these shirts have been ordered.</p> <p>Mollie Mertens mentioned how much trouble the volunteers had at Grandparents Day with the paper cutters. Dr. Zabel agreed that would be a helpful item to purchase for the school. Mollie Mertens will follow up on the cost to purchase new paper cutters.</p>	<p>Council unanimously approved using approximately \$2300 of surplus funds in the LC account to assist in purchasing new furniture needed at the school.</p> <p>Dr. Zabel will look into pricing for a smart board for the band room, charging stations for Chromebooks and whether the school shirts have been purchased for new teachers.</p> <p>Mollie Mertens will follow up about the cost to purchase new paper cutters.</p>
<p><b>Fundraising and Development Report</b></p>	<p>Steve reported on behalf of Becky Baker that the Auction Committee has a lot of motivated and organized members but that moving the event back to school adds more expense. Also, they are currently struggling to get sponsorships and asked for permission to reach out to parishioners. The Council agreed and recommended that advertising this to the entire parish would benefit from a direct link or QR code so parishioners can easily order auction tickets or sign up to serve as auction sponsors.</p> <p>The Council asked Mari how much was spent in previous auctions and how we can help guide the committee regarding expenses. Father Pins suggested Steve, Mari and he meet with the committee to discuss expenses.</p>	<p>Steve will follow up with the Auction Committee about the Council's recommendations on advertising the auction to SFA parishioners.</p> <p>Steve &amp; Mari will arrange a meeting with Auction Committee</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	Becky is taking notes for future auction committees to utilize.	leaders (per Father Pins request) to discuss expenses for the 2025 auction.
<b>Volunteer Coordinator Report</b>	<p>Jennifer Tracey reported that Tommy Karpuk resigned his position as playground equipment volunteer. This position will be advertised in News and Notes.</p> <p>Jennifer organized a recent meeting with volunteers to touch base on how things are going this year. Jennifer plans to organize another meeting in January and perhaps in March or April. Jennifer continues to support volunteers as needed.</p>	
<b>Policy on Request for Fundraising at SFA School</b>	Copies of a revised School Fundraising Request Policy were circulated to council members in advance of the meeting. After discussion, Jennifer Tracey made a motion to approve the policy, which was seconded by Phil Stover. The council unanimously approved the policy.	A Leadership Council Policy on how to handle future School Fundraising Requests was unanimously approved.
<b>Old Business</b>	<p>Leadership Council Bylaws- Final signed copy sent to all board members.</p> <p>Plans to incorporate recurring ancillary expenses for students into standard school tuition- will need to discuss with new parish business manager who starts in early December 2024.</p> <p>Playground surface- see above</p> <p>Plans to spend unused remaining 2024 Fund-a-Wish monies - see above</p> <p>Ideas for what projects to support with Fund-a-Wish money raised at 2025 auction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leader in Me Teacher Training</li> <li>2. Vinyl on glass in other rooms facing outside the building</li> <li>3. Art to brighten hallways</li> <li>4. Desks for teachers</li> <li>5. Charging station for Chrome books</li> <li>6. Glow Forge Printer (approx \$9000)</li> <li>7. Staff investment- Father Pins brought up some changes may come next year due to AEA Training that will no longer be provided free to SFA School. Will need to follow up with Mr. Lynch about this.</li> </ol>	

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
<p><b>Pastoral Report from Father Pins</b></p>	<p>Tim Schulte resigned as SFA Business Manager to become the new CFO of the regional diocesan schools. Father Pins and Finance Council leaders interviewed candidates for this position and offered it to Kylie Ditmer. She accepted and will begin on December 2nd.</p> <p>Confessions have been increasingly popular, and St Francis will be adding additional confession times during Advent.</p> <p>Christmas mass times have been set and will be announced soon.</p> <p>Bishops in the US recently received feedback from the Vatican and need to make adjustments to the way we celebrate Holy Days. This will require changes to some school masses and an updated schedule will be sent out.</p>	<p>Report from Father Pins</p>
<p><b>Report from SFA Preschool Director Wendy Henry</b></p>	<p>Wendy reported that conferences with parents are scheduled for next week. The preschool prayer services are coming up and the kids and families look forward to this every year.</p>	<p>Report from Preschool Director Wendy Henry.</p>
<p><b>Report from SFA School Assistant Principal Jamie Zabel</b></p>	<p>Jeff Lynch had to miss the meeting due to illness. Assistant Principal Jamie Zabel discussed the following:</p> <p>The new AED device for the school is on back order.</p> <p>RAVE panic button is being installed- Any person in the building can push in an emergency to get a quicker response to other parts of the building. Training for this will occur on December 2nd.</p> <p>AEA training- we have \$48,000 to spend by June 30, 2025. A technology coach will be coming to observe the teachers and help them best utilize chrome books in the classroom. One day they will help 3rd, 4th, 5th grade and the next day 6th, 7th, and 8th grade.</p> <p>Personnel- Kelly Koenigs has resigned her teaching position as of November 26<sup>th</sup>. Ali Henke will fill in as the long-term sub. Still working to fill the 0.25 FTE ESL position which is a tough role to fill.</p>	<p>Report from Assistant Principal Jamie Zabel.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	<p>Leader in Me- Representatives from metro area schools and SFA School teachers Mrs. Stumbo, Mr. Holben, Mrs. Waters and Mrs. Murphy attended a fantastic two-day training program on how best to implement it within the school. Lots of great feedback on how excited the teachers are about implementing this program at SFA School.</p> <p>Saint Francis School and Faith Formation are combining with three other schools in the diocese and will be adopting 45 families for the holiday season.</p> <p>A question was asked about whether hoodie sweatshirts will be allowed on spirit days and mission days when the new school uniform policy banning hoodies is enacted. Dr. Zabel thought that hoodies could be worn on approved out-of-uniform days.</p>	
<b>Update from Committees</b>	<p>Updates from recent Building &amp; Grounds Committee, Parish Finance Council, and School Security and Safety Committee meetings were shared with council members before the meeting.</p> <p>William reported that the SFA School EOP Manual is out of date and missing some information. Members of the School Security and Safety Committee are working together to revise and update the EOP Manual.</p>	<p>Reports from various school and parish committees were provided to council members.</p>
<b>Executive Session</b>	<p>There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting</p>	<p>No Executive Session was conducted.</p>
<b>Closing Prayer and Adjournment</b>	<p>Steve Craig discussed possibly moving the March 2025 council meeting to after Spring Break. He will bring this back for discussion at the next council meeting. Given that there was no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm after Fr. Pins led the council in a closing prayer.</p>	<p><b>The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2024 at 6:30 pm.</b></p>