

St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

Jan 9, 2025

Board Members Present:

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)
Steve Craig (Chair)
Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)
Mollie Mertens (Secretary)
Becky Baker (Fundraising Dir)
Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coor)
Mari Lewis (Treasurer)
William Downs (Member at Large)
Andrew Phillips (Member at Large)
Michael Perrin (Member at Large)
Adam Mullinax (Member at Large)

Not Present:

Phil Stover (Communications Dir)

Prepared by: Mollie Mertens

Called to Order: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Location: Middle School Science Lab

Minutes Prepared By: _____
Mollie Mertens

Others Present:

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

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
Call to Order & Opening Prayer	Steve Craig called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and Father Pins led an opening prayer.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer.
Approval of Agenda and minutes from December 12, 2024	No changes were recommended to the agenda. Minutes from the 12-12-2024 Board of Education meeting were approved with one minor change.	Minutes Approved.
Teacher Presentation	Ms. Jenks, Miss Winter and Mrs. Doyle presented about <ul style="list-style-type: none">4th graders are learning about the 10 Commandments, and during lent will do a scripture study. In language arts they will continue to read class novels including "The Genius Files" and "I survived Pompeii." At the end of the year. students will perform a play based on the book "Because of Winn-Dixie" that they will read. 4th grade math is a big year for multiplication and division. Social studies- will study states and capitals, branches of government, including a field trip to the state capital building.	

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	<p>Science- life, earth and physical science. Des Moines Conservation came and presented, and this year the students will build windmills. When the 4th grade teachers were asked what the Leadership Council can do to assist them, they stated that they appreciate all the support and hope for continued support. They did mention that their curriculum is a bit outdated, and they would love updated resources, especially in Science and Social Studies. Mr. Lynch reported that the regional school system is going to focus on updating the Science curriculum next year and the Social Studies curriculum the following year.</p>	
<p>Open Forum</p>	<p>No request for an Open Forum.</p>	
<p>Treasurer Report & Fund-A-Wish items for upcoming auction</p>	<p>Fundraising account (as of 1/6/25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The balance in the fundraising account was \$121,578. ● There were \$2,609 of debits since the December Leadership Council meeting report. The main expenses were deposits for catering and casino tables for the auction (\$1,000 each). ● There were \$32,624 of credits, all for the auction. This included \$16,750 of sponsorships, \$14,424 from GiveSmart revenue (tickets and candle sales), and \$1,450 of FACTS charges (likely out of uniform pass sales). <p>Leadership Council account (as of 1/6/25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The balance in the Leadership Council account was \$163,758. ● There were \$3,135 of debits since the December Leadership Council meeting report. The most significant expense was for vinyl wall graphics (\$1,300) approved at December meeting. ● In addition to the \$3,135 of expenses we also withdrew \$21,920 in cash for school staff Christmas gifts, but the majority of this was covered directly by family contributions. The cash gifts are rounded so \$379 of Leadership Council funds were used to cover the excess. ● There is currently a surplus of \$59,081. 	<p>Treasurer Report from Mari Lewis.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	<p>8th grade fundraising account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not available this month. Work is being done to identify the 8th grade fundraising FACTS charges so a balance can be reported by next month. <p>2023 Fund-a-Wish technology bucket (estimated \$2,557 remaining)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The current balance is \$11,314 but the following purchases are planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5th grade Chromebook charging stations (\$5,500) - 1 for each classroom. Extra cords for other middle school classrooms so students can charge their Chromebooks. ○ Clever Touch interactive white board for band room (\$2,343.11) ○ Three sets of translator earbuds (\$913.50) <p>The Council then discussed proposed Fund-A-Wish items for the upcoming auction and whether we want to do a tiered approach or bucket approach. The bucket approach runs the risk of not knowing whether you will reach the price for any bucket item. Consensus was to use a tiered approach raising funds first for the kiln, then the 3D printer, then flexible seating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kiln: the original is 22 years old- used a lot and a newer kiln will be safer. Cost \$5,175. ● Glowforge 3D laser printer: a second one is needed. Cost \$9000. ● Flexible seating for students: if requested by teachers. Stand up desks and lower and higher seats needed. Cost will be up to \$10,000. 	
<p>Fundraising and Development Director Report</p>	<p>The Auction Committee provided an update. They inquired about help with clean-up the day after the auction. Dr. Zabel said Mrs. Schragger and Mrs. Henke should be able to help arrange for students to earn service hours doing clean-up work. The committee presented a new proposal on conducting a raffle for a new car. Father Pins said not this year but perhaps in the future when there is more time to build interest and sell tickets. Council members suggested that raffle tickets could be sold during fall events like Grandparents Day, Christmas Concert, and Francis Fest. After this year's auction we will revisit what we have learned and changes we need to make for next year with current Auction Committee members.</p>	<p>Report from Fundraising and Development Director Becky Baker</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
Volunteer Coordinator Report	Jennifer Tracey is conducting a meeting with volunteers next Wednesday 1-15-25. She plans to invite leaders and others interested in discussing the different volunteer activities needed by the school.	Report from Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer Tracey
Old Business	<p>Items Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Steve and Becky detailed discussions with Auction Committee leaders since the last Leadership Council meeting. Council leaders will sit down with auction committee members after the auction to get feedback and suggestions for next year. ● \$6300 furniture purchase was approved at the November meeting and the full amount has been used - waiting on arrival of some items. ● Steve showed pictures of Chrome Book charging stations and cables purchased with residual 2023 Technology Fund a Wish money. ● Lego League/Bricks for Kids- Mrs. Larson is excited about the Lego League and would like to present a proposal at the next meeting. Initial assessment suggests the cost would be about \$1000 for supplies plus a registration fee of \$400, which must be paid annually. There might be an opportunity to apply for a grant to help fund the cost. STEM teacher Samantha Hartmann is already coaching two teams and is interested in helping coach at St. Francis of Assisi next year. LEGO league maxes out at 8-10 students on a team. Bricks for Kids is different from Lego League and is typically for younger kids. Mari is unsure if Bricks for Kids will be available to SFA students this spring. Camille Lewis may be willing to help in the future. ● Mental Health Committee- The full committee has not met so far this year, but teachers have met - once in November and in December. The entire school is doing Mental Health Mondays. Middle school did a soft launch of Leader in Me- the Seven Habits from Steven Covey. Dr. Zabel reports the full Mental Health Committee with parents will be meeting soon. ● Budget: Status of Tuition and Teacher/Administrator Letters of Intent & Final Contracts- This will be run by the regional school system. Next week, there will be an announcement regarding tuition and revenue model now that ESA is available for all students. There will be a standard salary scale for teachers and administrators that will be a closer match to what public 	

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
	<p>school teachers receive. Father Pins reported that in the State of Iowa starting teacher salaries are \$50k and bump up to about \$62k after 12 years. The region will attempt to match that at minimum. WDM and Ankeny teachers are the highest paid in Iowa. A question was asked about how teachers are evaluated. Dr. Zabel explained that evaluations are done for new teachers three times a year during the 1st year by the Principal and Vice Principal. Veteran teachers are formally evaluated once every three years. Donna Bishop recently evaluated all diocesan schools to help determine what was needed personnel wise at each school.</p>	
<p>Pastoral Update</p>	<p>Father Pins reported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First Reconciliation for 2nd graders was held in December with additional sessions planned in January. ● Dr. Scott Hahn will be presenting at SFA Church on Saturday March 1 to teach more about the Catholic faith and understanding the Bible. ● Ash Wednesday is coming up on March 5, 2025. ● Father Pins will be on vacation starting next Monday. Fr. Kramer will be in charge until Fr. Brobbey gets back late Monday evening. 	<p>Report from Father Pins.</p>
<p>SFA Preschool Administrator Report</p>	<p>Wendy Henry reported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Registration- every current family was contacted. Sign-up was closed to parishioners last week. Currently working on final placements and everyone who registered will know if they got a spot or are waitlisted by the end of next week. ● Once class lists are finalized, Jess will send out a Google Doc in February to families interested in ECE. 	<p>Report from Preschool Director Wendy Henry.</p>

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
SFA School Administrator Report	Principal Jeff Lynch & Assistant Principal Jamie Zabel discussed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FAST testing is being conducted in all grades this month. ● Registration for 2025-2026 is complete. They have started a waiting list for different grades. ● ELA- recently announced that next year the curriculum will return to two separate classes daily – one ELA class and one writing class. They will continue to stress writing activities in other classes as well. ● Instructional coaches are currently working with teachers at SFA. The school recently learned that AEA money for these activities will be available next year as well. 	Report from Principal Jeff Lynch & Assistant Principal Jamie Zabel.
Update from Committees	Updates from committees that Council members serve on were mailed to all members prior to the meeting. No questions raised about this information.	
New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request from Becca Bahl for Leadership Council to host Sunday morning Coffee & Donuts after masses. Mollie will send a form for members to sign up to help on April 6 or May 18, 2025. ● Leadership Council Terms and Future Recruitment of New members. Mari is stepping off, but Phil & William each agreed to sign on for another 3-year term. Will need to recruit at least two new members. ● Christmas Gifts for Teachers and Staff- Mari reported that soliciting contributions for monetary gifts has two goals: to make sure all teachers and staff are recognized and to make donating more convenient for families. Changes may need to be made as many families are also giving individual gifts to teachers. Will discuss this further at next meeting. 	
Executive Session	There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting	No Executive Session was conducted.
Closing Prayer and Adjournment	The meeting was closed in prayer. A decision about the need for a virtual meeting in March will be made at the February meeting. There was no further new business to discuss so the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.	The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2025.