

St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

March 13, 2025

Board Members Present:

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)
 Steve Craig (Chair)
 Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)
 Mollie Mertens (Secretary)
 Mari Lewis (Treasurer)
 Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coord)
 Becky Baker (Fundraising Coord)
 Andrew Phillips (At-Large)
 Adam Mullinax (At-Large)

Not Present:

Phil Stover (Communications Dir)
 William Downs (At-Large)
 Michael Perrin (At-Large)
 Jamie Zabel (Assistant Principal)

Prepared by: Mollie Mertens

Called to Order: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom call

Minutes Prepared By: _____
 Mollie Mertens

Others Present:

Jeff Lynch (School 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. Current Agenda and Minutes from the last Leadership Council meeting of February 13, 2025 were unanimously approved.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer. Minutes of 2-13-25 meeting approved.
Open Forum	There was no request for an Open Forum at this meeting.	
Treasurer's Report	Mari provided the following report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fundraising account (as of 3/10/25) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The balance in the fundraising account is \$452,736. ○ There were \$2,373 of debits since the February Leadership Council meeting report, all auction expenses. Most significant expense was payment to the Heads or Tails winner (\$2,000). ○ There were \$308,885 of credits. These were all auction credits, with the exception of \$1,371 from yearbook rebates. The most significant credits were \$284,629 from Give Smart, our fundraising platform. ● Leadership Council account (as of 3/10/25) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The balance in the Leadership Council account is \$157,334. 	Mari will continue to keep the group informed about finances as needed. The plan is to present a proposed LC budget for 2025-2026 at the next meeting.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There were \$3,384 of debits since the February Leadership Council meeting report. ○ There is currently a surplus of \$59,081. ● 8th grade fundraising account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not available this month. Work is being done to correct these transactions so a balance can be reported by next month. ● 2023 Fund-a-Wish technology bucket (estimated \$2,273 remaining) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The current balance is \$10,006 but the following purchases are planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 5th grade Chromebook charging stations (\$4,476 in addition to \$1,024 already spent) ■ Clever Touch interactive white board for band room (\$2,343.11) ■ Three sets of translator earbuds (\$913.50) ● 2025-2026 Budget Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 2024-2025 budget will be used as a starting point. ○ Staff and volunteers have been asked to submit any requests for budget changes by the end of spring break/March 26th. ○ Potential budget increases: Music/band, First Lego League (if approved) 	
Fundraising and Development Report	<p>Becky explained that Fr. Pins, Jeff, Jamie, Steve, Mari, Becky, Jessica Hull, Melissa Mullinax, Laura Biggins and Kylie Dittmer met on February 26th to discuss the recent auction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengths identified include holding the auction at the school, attendance, decorating of the gym, excellent food and the clean-up process went well. ● Weaknesses identified include auction committee feeling they needed more guidance, the live auction went too long, and questions raised about whether to use Give Smart again. ● Takeaways for the Leadership Council include the need to create a policies and procedures binder, conducting at least monthly meetings with auction committee members, and helping the auction committee connect with community members to get more auction sponsorships. 	<p>Steve Craig will keep Leadership Council members updated on what support is needed from them when planning for next year's auction begins.</p>
Volunteer Coordinator Report	<p>Jennifer Tracey will be having another meeting before the end of the school year to determine next year's needs. Kindergarten Visit Day is April 25th and she will gather a few current kindergarten parents to do a presentation at this event.</p>	

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Old Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First Lego League at SFA next year- when presented a stipend was suggested which complicates the request due to the other school activities that are run without a stipend. Mr. Lynch will look into this. ● Tuition letters went out and teacher contracts were given out this week. Contracts due back on March 24th. Mr. Holben is moving, and Mrs. McFarland is going back to the classroom. Other openings may arise with teachers requesting to move. ● The Leadership Council will serve coffee and donuts after 7:30 & 9:30 am masses just on Sunday April 6, 2025. ● Recruitment of new Leadership council members- A letter will go out to parents and a note will be put in the bulletin to find two new members. ● Christmas/End of Year gifts to teachers from parents- A note will go out to parents when we request an end of year gift that reminds them that names of all families who donate are given to the recipients. Also, we will remind parents that ALL staff benefit from the year end gift. Mari also brought up the timing of requests (i.e., the American Heart Association this year) and suggested we spread out requests to parents if possible. 	<p>Mr. Lynch will check on the need for stipends if FIRST Lego League is added at SFA School next year.</p> <p>Leadership Council will serve coffee and donuts after 7:30 & 9:30 am masses on Sunday April 6, 2025.</p> <p>Steve Craig will work with Phil Stover (Communications Director) on the memo to be sent to school parents and parishioners about the two LC openings for 2025-2026.</p>
Pastoral Report from Father Pins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tuition- letters have gone out. LC members can tell people to reach out to Father Pins or Mr. Lynch if they have questions. ● Lent- Ash Wednesday ended up being a snow day but off to a good start within the school. Encouraging the 1% prayer challenge for all families. 2nd-8th grade students all went to Confession before Spring Break. 	Report from Father Pins.
Report from SFA Preschool Director Wendy Henry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admission for 2025-2026 is done and a Pre-K Waitlist has been created. ● Preschool tuition for 2025-2026 will be decided soon. ● Preschoolers are currently doing Acts of Kindness around the school. 	Report from Wendy Henry.
Report from SFA School Assistant Principal Jamie Zabel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ISAPS for Elementary and Middle School students will start soon. ● There are currently 8 openings for Kindergarten for 2025-2026. ● Students will complete Confession and Stations of the Cross during Lent. ● Information on registration fees for 2025-26 should be coming out soon. 	Report from Jeff Lynch.
New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Letter to Bishop - The Chairs of Leadership Councils in the Des Moines area sent a letter to the Bishop requesting that they meet on a regular basis with regional school leaders to get more information and answers to 	

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	<p>questions and concerns brought to the various Leadership Councils. The Bishop agreed to take this request under consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purchase of Kiln and 3-D Laser Printer with excess funds available in this year's budget. The printer will be purchased using the excess 2023 Technology Fund a Wish funds, with the rest from excess LC funds. Motion to approve by Adam Mullinax and seconded by Brenda Pederson. The motion was unanimously passed. ● Mr. Lynch agreed to create a wish list of items the school needs that can be prioritized for purchase with future Track-a-Thon and Auction proceeds. ● It was brought to the attention of the Council that the Auction Committee is requesting help with recruiting auction sponsors for the next auction. ● Steve provided the Leadership Council with information about the events and costs the 8th grade class accrues due to various special events and celebrations conducted for these students. The different events and expenses were discussed and questions about actual vs. projected costs were reviewed. Council members expressed support for using LC funds to pay for training and educational events but not to fund the various parties. A scholarship fund was suggested to help those students who might have trouble paying the party expenses. 	<p>Authorization to purchase a new kiln for the Art Department and a new 3D Laser Printer for the STEM Department was given to Mr. Lynch.</p> <p>Mr. Lynch will help create a wish list of items the school needs that can be prioritized for purchase with future Track-a-Thon and Auction proceeds.</p>
Update from Committees	No questions about the report that was sent out in advance of the meeting.	Steve sent a report summarizing updates prior to the meeting.
Executive Session	There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting	No Executive Session was conducted.
Closing Prayer and Adjournment	Father Pins led the Leadership Council in a closing prayer. There was no other new business to discuss so the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.	The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2025 at 6:30 pm.