

# St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

**Aug 14, 2025**

## **Board Members Present:**

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)  
Steve Craig (Chair)  
John Cord (Treasurer)  
Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coord)  
Becky Baker (Fundraising Coord)  
Andrew Phillips (At-Large)  
Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)  
Phil Stover (Communications Dir)  
Baylie Panzi (At- Large)

## **Not Present:**

Michael Perrin (At-Large)  
Adam Mullinax (At-Large)  
Mollie Mertens (Secretary)  
William Downs (At-Large)

**Prepared by:** Brenda Pedersen

**Called to Order:** 6:35 p.m.

**Adjourned:** 8:05 p.m.

**Location:** Saint Francis Science Lab Classroom

**Minutes Prepared By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda Pedersen

## **Others Present:**

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

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS</b>
<b>Call to Order &amp; Opening Prayer</b>	Steve Craig called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and Father Pins led an opening prayer. Minutes from the last Leadership Council meeting of June 12, 2025 were discussed. A motion to approve was made by Phil Stover and seconded by Andrew Phillips and the motion was unanimously approved	Call to Order and Opening Prayer. Minutes of June 12, 2025 Leadership Council meeting approved.
<b>Open Forum</b>	There was no request for an Open Forum at this meeting.	
<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	John Cord presented the Fiscal Year Summary for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 using the table below. He highlighted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SIAC requests \$425 for Back-to-School event supplies- (balloon arch, snacks and juice)- A motion to approve was made by Phil Stover and seconded by Jennifer Tracey and the motion was unanimously approved.</li><li>• Textbook requests – SFA Budget set by regional system in March of \$55,000 for textbooks. After this, decision made to purchase new book series for all SFA religion classes + new Really Great Reading textbooks purchased for additional grades + new TCI history books purchased for</li></ul>	John Cord presented the Treasurer's Report summarizing the status of Leadership Council funds for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.  Motions to approve \$425 for supplies needed for the 8/21 Back to School event + \$20,000 for new textbook purchases were both approved.

additional grades. \$20,000 was requested from LC funds to purchase these additional books for use this year. In future years, these textbook requests will be included in the budget request to the regional school system. Due to the transition to the new regional system this school year, these needs were identified after the regional system budget was set. After discussion, a motion to approve this funding request was made by Jennifer Tracey and seconded by Phil Stover and the motion was unanimously approved

- There are available funds for the teachers to use if they have special requests. They will be notified of this and should use the money request form.
- At future council meeting will need to decide whether to put some of the surplus LC funds into the Endowment. In the past this covered tuition assistance. Will continue to feed this fund due to uncertainty with ESAs.

**Account: 2422 Leadership Council Funds**

Category	Amount
Beginning Balance	\$80,824.34
Total Debits (Expenses)	\$203,565.36
Total Credits (Income)	\$225,640.21
Net Change	+\$22,074.85
Ending Balance	\$102,899.19

**Account: 2426 – Leadership Council Fundraising**

Category	Amount
Beginning Balance	\$230,463.61
Total Debits (Expenses)	\$281,768.81
Total Credits (Income)	\$367,726.00
Net Change	+\$85,957.19
Ending Balance	\$316,420.80

<b>Fundraising and Development Report</b>	<p>Becky Baker presented the following information: Planning has begun for the January 31, 2026 School Auction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jessica Hull is the new chair with Melissa Mullinax assisting her. There are a lot of returning auction committee members.</li> <li>• The theme will be Kentucky Derby, intending to have a casino again.</li> <li>• Monthly meetings will be set up to report out progress with planning to the Leadership Council, Principal and Pastor.</li> <li>• Sept 9 is the scheduled first meeting.</li> <li>• Will need to assure that gambling license obtained earlier this year.</li> <li>• There is also a new expense policy for reimbursement that will be discussed with auction committee members at the September 9 meeting.</li> <li>• There was a request for help with securing sponsorships- Kelsey Christeson has agreed to lead these efforts with assistance from Michael Perrin.</li> </ul> <p>Track-a- thon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date is September 19, 2025 (rain date September 26).</li> <li>• Jessica Hull will once again organize this fundraiser. Several parents have volunteered to assist her with this year's event.</li> </ul>	<p>Becky Baker presented the Fundraising and Development Report.</p>
<b>Volunteer Coordinator Report</b>	<p>Jennifer Tracey reported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8/21 is the Back-to-school supply drop off and meet the teacher event for SFA students – A table will be set up to recruit volunteers needed by SFA school and church. Rebecca Bahl is assisting Jen with this.</li> <li>• Volunteer committee chairs are reporting current needs- will meet after school starts to assure all positions are filled, and all needs will be met.</li> <li>• One known vacancy: Trying to recruit a Chair of Hospitality for the school.</li> </ul>	<p>Jen Tracey presented the Volunteer Coordinator Report.</p>
<b>Old Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2023 Technology Fund a Wish funds have all been spent.</li> <li>• 2023 Furniture Fund a Wish account still has \$1431 left to spend- Principal Lynch is seeking teacher requests to use up these funds.</li> <li>• Yearbook- Mollie Jenks has agreed to be the teacher lead for this. She is looking to recruit another teacher to assist her. A stipend of \$1500 was previously approved by the Leadership Council for this work.</li> <li>• New Auction Guide for future auction planning committees- A BIG thank you to Melissa Mullinax for pulling this together.</li> <li>• DM Diocese School Policy 504: Covenant of Trust Between Parents &amp; School- A draft of a memo to SFA school parents about the Covenant was shared at the meeting. LC members were asked to contact Steve Craig</li> </ul>	<p>LC members were asked to review the draft memo to parents explaining the Covenant of Trust Between Parents &amp; SFA School and let Steve Craig know ASAP of any recommended revisions.</p>

	<p>ASAP with any suggested revisions to the memo as plans are to distribute it to parents at the 8/21 Back to School event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Covenant of Trust between the Parents and School will now be at the front of the school handbook which parents acknowledge receiving yearly. All kindergarten and new families will be asked to sign the covenant. This document will also be available for prospective families.</li> <li>• There was excellent discussion about ways to partner with parents to increase student &amp; parent involvement in SFA Parish. Ideas discussed include scheduling monthly grade level masses at the 11:30 Sunday Mass (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month) during the school year ahead. There was also discussion about ways to get school kids more involved with Francis Fest, Lenten Fish Frys and Catholic Schools week activities. There was also discussion about offering Faith Night meetings for parents twice during the year and organizing monthly family religion class assignments.</li> <li>• The Leadership Council Chairs request to meet with regional school system leaders was approved and the first meeting was held with COO Tim Schulte last week. He explained that one goal with regionalization is to have tuition uniform across all the parishes and for non-parishioners to pay the full cost to educate their children. Another goal is standardization of teacher salaries across schools. It was decided that there will be quarterly meetings of the COO with the Leadership Council Chairs and that the communication Tim sends to principals and parish business managers every two weeks will now also be shared with Leadership Council Chairs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Pastoral Report from Father Pins</b>	<p>Father Pins presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total cost to educate a child at SFA School is \$10,000, so our current tuition does not cover this cost. The additional cost is covered by the parish. SFA Parish is currently spending \$1.4 million yearly to support Catholic schools, which is 50% of all tithing dollars. As of this year, there are no out of pocket tuition expenses for school parents given state ESA funding. There was discussion about the parish's ability to cover these costs and ways to encourage school families to assist the parish in covering these costs. A subcommittee will be formed to assist with the messaging of this request to school parents.</li> <li>• The Capital campaign is in the early stage of planning. Goal is to raise \$15 million. Campaign will create new preschool space on the southeast side of the school. This will improve security and bring the preschoolers closer to the other early elementary students. This will cost \$6 million. The</li> </ul>	<p>Report from Father Pins.</p> <p>LC members interested in working with Fr. Pins to develop a communication to school parents about ways parents can assist the parish in raising funds to support the school should contact Steve Craig.</p>

	Campaign also includes a new adoration chapel, additional meeting space for the parish and upgrades to the parish kitchen.	
<b>Report from SFA Preschool Director Wendy Henry</b>	<p>Wendy Henry presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are still a few openings with the 3-year-old afternoon classes.</li> <li>• There was some movement with a lead teacher recently announcing a move out of state. This open position was filled this morning, so preschool is now fully staffed for the year.</li> <li>• 9/21 is the date for the Parent Information Night and Open House.</li> <li>• Plans are to delay the start of preschool until after Labor Day next year. It is very disruptive for preschoolers to start school and immediately have a long weekend off.</li> </ul>	Report from Wendy Henry.
<b>Report from SFA School Principal Jeff Lynch &amp; Assistant Principal Jodi Halligan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All teacher and associate positions have been filled. There is a new part-time music teacher that will be shared with Holy Family School.</li> <li>• Jeff Lynch and Jodi Halligan discussed test scores of SFA students on ISASP and aMath and aReading standardized tests for 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade and for K- 1 learners administered in 2024-2025. Results were compared to scores from the prior year. Overall scores were good and showed good knowledge growth, but there is some variability in content and what students learn from fall to spring.</li> <li>• Scores for the NCEA IFG ACRES religion tests administered to all 5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the diocese were reviewed for SFA School. Once again, overall scores were good for the 2024-2025 school year.</li> <li>• SMART goals have been set for SFA School for the 2025-2026 school year. These include Academic Goals (to increase student understanding of vocabulary and fractions), Faith Goals (cultivating connections in Christ by implementing the new Spirit of Truth curriculum), and SELF Goals (consistent implementation of Leader in Me practices).</li> </ul>	Report from Jeff Lynch and Jodi Halligan.
<b>New Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WDM is installing a new crosswalk with flashing lights between track and school- likely in late September 2025.</li> <li>• Approx \$12,000 of funds raised from this year's Track-a-Thon will be used to install a new storage facility at the track</li> </ul>	
<b>Update from Committees</b>	No questions raised about the report sent to LC members in advance of the meeting.	Steve reached out to individual committees and sent a report out to council members ahead of time.

<b>Executive Session</b>	There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting	No Executive Session was conducted.
<b>Closing Prayer and Adjournment</b>	Father Pins led a closing prayer. There was no other new business to discuss so the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.	<b>The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for Sept 11, 2025 at 6:30 pm.</b>