

St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

October 9th, 2025

Board Members Present:

Father Joe Pins (Pastor)
Steve Craig (Chair)
Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)
John Cord (Treasurer)
Mollie Mertens (Secretary)
Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coord)
Becky Baker (Fundraising Coord)
Adam Mullinax (At-Large)
William Downs (At-Large)
Andrew Phillips (At-Large)
Baylie Panzi (At-Large)
Michael Perrin (At-Large)
Sara Hedding (Pastoral Council Rep)

Not Present:

Phil Stover (Communications Dir)
Thomas Call (Pastoral Council Rep)

Prepared by: Mollie Mertens

Called to Order: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourned: 7:59 p.m.

Location: Saint Francis Science Lab Classroom

Minutes Prepared By: _____
Mollie Mertens

Others Present:

Dr. Donna Bishop (Superintendent
of Schools, DM Diocese)
Jeff Lynch (School Principal)
Jodi Halligan (Vice Principal)
Wendy Henry (Preschool Director)

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. Minutes from the September 11, 2025 Leadership Council were sent out electronically before the meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Andrew Phillips, seconded by Jennifer Tracey and then unanimously approved.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer. Minutes of the September 11, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved.
Teacher Presentation	Student Resource Teachers: Micki Alsin, Kasey Eoriatti, Sara Doyle and Lynda McLuen presented the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The teachers are currently looking over the FAST data and tiering students into three tiers. Tier 1- all students will receive universal instruction. Tier 2 - there is some risk and therefore they might pull kids into a WIN group or teachers may help students through resources they provide. Tier 3 - High	Presentation by Student Resource Teachers.

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	<p>Risk - students are monitored throughout the year and pulled for additional individual instruction. 70 students in reading and 70 students in math fall into Tier 2 or Tier 3. Kids can flex in and out as needed but typically Tier 2 and Tier 3 students score below the 40th percentile nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PANORAMA is a new software to look at data connected to FAST Bridge that allows the teachers to take data from FAST and look at the student as a whole. For instance, attendance, performance in other classes, and behavioral components are looked at to see if these factors are supporting or impeding their success. The Diocese asks resource teachers to track these students so they can monitor progress more closely. PANORAMA also tracks infractions from a disciplinary standpoint. This is a newer program- they were just trained by Ann Franklin from the Diocese and they feel very supported. • Resource teachers also participate on the SIT committee. SIT- Student Intervention Team includes a behavior interventionist, nurse, counselors, and Vice Principal. The SIT committee meets weekly to discuss students and problem solve about specific students. This includes giving teachers ideas of interventions, plans, check-ins and then follow up as needed. If a student has a 504, they assist teachers with modifying or helping with accommodations. Currently SFA School has 47 students on a 504 plan. 	
Open Forum	There was no request for an Open Forum at this meeting.	
Treasurer's Report	<p>John Cord presented the Treasurer's Report</p> <p>Leadership Council Account (2422): As of September 30, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning Balance (Sep 1, 2025): \$235,063.56 Subsequent to last month's report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Technology (Hardware and Software): \$54,000 debit ◦ School Foundation (for Parish Tuition Assistance): \$12,514 debit • Ending Balance: \$218,465.92 • Remaining Budgeted Expenses: \$113,216 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ \$7,302 still needing itemized on the budget sheet • Surplus: \$105,250 <p>Recent Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Fundraising Account Transfer: \$244,401.77 • Staff B-days: \$2,250 debit • LC Tech Subscription for 25/26 School Year: \$2,886.60 debit 	Treasurer's Report by John Cord.

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	<p>Fundraising Account (2426): As of September 30, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Beginning Balance (Sep 1, 2025): \$65,529.60Ending Balance: \$65,529.60<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fundraising transfer occurred in August <p>Recent Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Looking to gather Track A Thon revenues in October <p>Additional Notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2025 Track A Thon Expenses currently at \$6,842.00 <table><tr><td></td><td>2022</td><td>2023</td><td>2024</td></tr><tr><td>Revenue</td><td>\$34,016</td><td>\$29,630</td><td>\$25,225</td></tr><tr><td>Expenses</td><td>\$5,866</td><td>\$5,080</td><td>\$3,940</td></tr><tr><td>Net Income</td><td>\$28,150</td><td>\$24,550</td><td>\$21,285</td></tr></table> <p>Items to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase Grandparents Day budget to \$1000 from \$600. This will allow them to cover all expenses thoroughly. Motioned to approve by Adam Mullinax, seconded by Jennifer Tracey, and then unanimously approved.Auction to use GiveSmart and Square (3.5% fee). The fee is paid by the purchaser. Will Encourage using checks for larger purchases. FACTS will not be utilized this year.Middle School PBIS Incentive \$600 - Jeff Lynch. The Leader in Me group discussed incentives to include gift cards in different ranges + dress down days, elevator passes, etc. Motion to approve by William Downs, seconded by Brenda Pederson and unanimously approved.Requests for Use of Surplus Funds: Jeff Lynch<ul style="list-style-type: none">AI Video Security System initial fee (\$40,000)- to install software that uses our camera system. Monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently used by Waukee and Des Moines public schools. Monitored by humans. If a weapon is detected the police are automatically contacted. \$40,000 to install and then \$40,000 per year. Some discussion about it being added to SFA tuition going		2022	2023	2024	Revenue	\$34,016	\$29,630	\$25,225	Expenses	\$5,866	\$5,080	\$3,940	Net Income	\$28,150	\$24,550	\$21,285	<p>Council approved increasing Grandparent's Day budget to \$1000 yearly.</p> <p>Council approved providing \$600 to fund Middle School PBIS Leader in Me Awards in 2025-2026.</p>
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	<p>forward. Questions arose- A motion was made to look into any other options and discuss at the next meeting. Motion made by William Downs, seconded by Michael Perrin, and unanimously approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Film glass coverings on every school window and door (\$27,400). The main school and church entrances and the arch window in the church have been completed. Covering every first-floor school door and window will cost \$27,400. Installation would start over spring break and finish over the summer. Motion made to approve this expenditure now using surplus funds by Michael Perrin, seconded by Bailey Panzi and unanimously approved. ○ Key fobs (\$4,500) - The delivery door is unlocked when items are being delivered. This would reduce the risk when items are being delivered. Motion to approve this expenditure made by Michael Perrin, seconded by Bailey Panzi and unanimously approved. ○ ESL education (\$3,500) Last year we had 3 students and this year we have 13 in the program. Our teacher will complete certification after 1 more year. This is a program that is needed. Dr. Bishop said this expense could be funded through a Diocese account. Mr. Lynch will follow up with Dr. Bishop on that expense. 	<p>Jeff Lynch will look into other AI security options and will arrange for a presentation on the best option at the next LC meeting.</p> <p>Council approved using \$27,400 in LC Account funds to purchase protective coverings for all 1st floor school windows and doors (to be installed this spring-summer).</p> <p>Council approved using \$4500 in LC Account funds to purchase a new key fob system to be installed on the school delivery door.</p> <p>Jeff Lynch will follow up with Dr. Bishop to secure diocesan funding for ESL certification training for our current ESL instructor.</p>
Fundraising and Development Report	<p>Becky Baker presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Auction Committee meets on the Tuesday before each LC meeting. ● This year's auction theme will be "A Night at the Derby." The casino will be back again this year. The goal is to raise over \$200,000. ● Auction promotion efforts will kick off the week of October 20th. ● Selling mid-year out of uniform passes was approved by Mr. Lynch. Gift meeting set for next Monday. ● Auction budget set at \$65,000. ● The Council will be asked to assist with securing auction sponsors. 	<p>Fundraising Report from Becky Baker.</p>
Volunteer Coordinator Report	<p>Jennifer Tracey presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Just met with parent volunteers. May try to meet bi-monthly. ● Homeroom parents and class parties have started. ● Kristin Richey will head the yearbook committee this year. 	<p>Volunteer Report from Jennifer Tracey.</p>

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Old Business	<p>Steve Craig presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School yearbook plans – Kristin Richey agreed to coordinate this year and will receive a stipend of \$1500. • 1st grade-level Sunday mass held September 28th for 8th Grade Students & Families. From the first grade-level mass, we learned to have a volunteer help navigate people from the church to the reception in the Parish Hall. The next mass is October 19th for 7th Grade Students and their families. A group photo was suggested in front of the altar after mass. • Subcommittee working on communication to school parents to increase contributions to parish/school. The subcommittee will complete work on this communication soon. • WDM installation of new crosswalk with flashing lights between track & school. Still awaiting word from WDM about when lights will be installed. 	Old Business discussion led by Steve Craig.
Pastoral Report	<p>Father Pins presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation will be with Bishop Joensen on Sunday October 26th. • All Saints and All Souls Day will be celebrated soon and 5th graders will do their Saints Projects that week. • The Capital Campaign was announced to the parish last weekend. Part of the messaging of this campaign includes the importance of our faith and that Jesus calls us to do as St. Francis and “Rebuild my Church.” Francis fixed up the physical aspects (brick and mortar) of a few churches but soon realized rebuilding the church also involved getting people to live out their faith and to spread God’s word. A new preschool, a new adoration chapel, and new meeting rooms and kitchen upgrades are all part of the Capital Campaign. Need to raise 15 million dollars to complete all phases of the campaign. 	Report from Father Pins.
Report from SFA Preschool Director	<p>Wendy Henry presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School year is off to a great start. • Pre-K conferences are approaching quickly. 	Report from Wendy Henry.

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Report from SFA School Principal & Vice Principal	<p>Jeff Lynch presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did team building at Camp Dodge and the goal of getting them together and working closely together was accomplished. • Dowling Football team and cheerleaders will be greeting families at morning carline tomorrow. • Conferences are quickly approaching and the Book Fair is up and running. <p>Jodi Halligan presented the following information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data dive occurs 3 times a year using FAST assessment results where they look at what we need as a building. Data shows that our students are very proficient. Jodi is encouraging teachers to consider this question: 1. What will we do when they already know it? The teachers broke into PLC small groups and decided to look at WIN time and moving kids around as needed. <p>Donna Bishop presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Bishop continues to develop long range plans for the diocesan school system and wants to be helpful to the school boards. • What does the future look like? St Francis and a few other schools are at capacity. Early Childhood Education is a passion and is encouraged at all parishes. St. Boniface may start an Early Childhood program. Looking at other parishes that might have the capability of adding a school. Also, they are exploring the possibility of a second high school in Ankeny. • NESBECS standards are best practices for Catholic Schools across the country. The DM Diocese wants to fulfill and surpass those standards. Teams from the diocese will visit schools to tour the schools + do on-site interviews. The team recently visited St. Luke's and looked at all four NESBECS domains and how to excel in each area. • Dr. Bishop reported she is encouraged by the way we are meeting students where they are. DM diocesan schools have shown 6 years of consecutive growth. It is an exciting time to be involved. She requested continued advocacy for ESAs to help support parent decisions about where they want to send their children to school. 	<p>Report from Jeff Lynch & Jodi Halligan.</p>
Update from Committees	<p>Steve sent out a report in advance with notes from LC members who attended parish or school committee meetings as LC reps since our last Council meeting. No questions were raised about this report.</p>	<p>No questions about the Report from Parish & School Committees sent to LC members in advance.</p>

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New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7th Grade Sunday Mass: October 19, 2025 @ 11:30 am – Need volunteers for cookie & lemonade reception- Mollie Mertens agreed to help. • Planning Faith Night Program for school parents - Ali Henke and Megan Schraeger are considering a program about safe use of social media. St. Augustin did a similar event featuring Ben Tracey who formed Safe Social Network in 2018. Looking at dates to bring him in to speak to both parents and the students. Also, a new version of the film Screenagers is available which does a good job covering the challenge of kids and social media use. Plan to have a screening of this film for SFA parents. • Plans for the Mental Health Committee and Leader In Me Action Committees- may merge these two committees. An action meeting will be planned soon. Want to make sure needs are addressed as identified. • Students are now saying the prayer of St. Gertrude after lunch. If this prayer is said it will release up to 1000 souls from purgatory into heaven. Also, prayer before and after lunch serves as a way to encourage students to quiet their bodies during lunch. 	New Business.
Executive Session	There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting	No Executive Session was requested.
Closing Prayer and Adjournment	Father Pins led a closing prayer. There was no other new business to discuss so the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.	The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for November 13th 2025 at 6:30 pm.