

# St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

February 12, 2026

**Board Members Present:**

Father Larry Hoffman (Pastor)  
Steve Craig (Chair)  
Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)  
John Cord (Treasurer)  
Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coord)  
Becky Baker (Fundraising Coord)  
Adam Mullinax (At-Large)  
Andrew Phillips (At-Large)  
Baylie Panzi (At-Large)  
Michael Perrin (At-Large)  
Sara Hedding (Pastoral Council Rep)  
Phil Stover (Communications Dir)

**Not Present:**

Mollie Mertens (Secretary)  
William Downs (At-Large)

**Prepared by:** Brenda Pedersen

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

**Adjourned:** 7:35 pm

**Location:** Saint Francis Science Lab Classroom

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

**Others Present:**

Jeff Lynch (School Principal)  
Jodi Halligan (Vice Principal)  
Wendy Henry (Preschool Director)  
Jessica Hull (Auction Committee)  
Melissa Mullinax (Auction Committee)

Addy Walker (8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher)  
Todd Hilton (8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher)

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 Fr. Hoffman led an opening prayer. This included [prayers for Fr Pins- recovering well from surgery that was one week ago.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer.
<b>Approve Minutes</b>	Minutes from the January 8, 2026 Leadership Council meeting were sent out electronically before the meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Phil Stover and seconded by Andrew Phillips. The minutes were unanimously approved.	Minutes of the January 8, 2026 meeting were unanimously approved.

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<b>Teacher Presentation</b>	<p>8th Grade Teachers Todd Hilton and Addy Walker presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mr. Hilton reported for Abi Goeser that religion classes are currently focused on prayer and bible history</li> <li>● Addy Walker- 6 &amp; 8 Social Studies- studying early US history and Revolutionary War, looking at how government is built and run, also learning about amendments and Bill of Rights. Discussing early presidents and what their policies were. Now working on mini projects picking one of first 7 presidents to report on.</li> <li>● Mr. Hilton- Science and Technology – Using Olympics theme- learning how technology impacts events such as luge and skeleton while also learning about different countries in the Olympics.</li> <li>● Leader and Me- focus on leadership and who you put trust in, how people put trust in you. Students are excited about signing up for high school classes now.</li> <li>● Lighthouse Team- (formally Student Council &amp; Student Ambassadors) Middle school students interviewed for this newly formed group. Team helped with cleanup Sunday after auction. Received compliments on their work habits. Lighthouse group is looking for other service opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Presentation</p>
<b>Open Forum</b>	<p>There was no request for an Open Forum at this meeting.</p>	
<b>Treasurer’s Report</b>	<p>John Cord presented the Treasurer’s Report:</p> <p><b>Leadership Council Account (2422):</b> As of January 31, 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Beginning Balance (01/01/26): \$180,010.32 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Slight adjustment from last reports ending balance</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Current Balance: \$173,705.47</li> <li>● Remaining Budgeted Expenses: \$111,542.82 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ \$9,000 textbook reimbursement received</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Surplus: \$62,143 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ \$8,092.58 and \$580 charges yet to be categorized</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Recent Activity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leadership Discretionary: \$1,415 for Drop Shot piece for the playground (installed in 2025, invoice received in January 2026)</li> <li>● Staff Stipends for Extracurriculars: \$2,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For Athletic Directors (Mr. Hazel and Ms. Schmulbach)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Treasurer’s Report from John Cord.</p>

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	<p><b>Fundraising Account (2426):</b> As of January 31, 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Beginning Balance (01/01/26): \$150,718.07</li> <li>● Current Balance: \$128,256.84</li> </ul> <p><b>Recent Activity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Auction donations and expenses (casino, catering, entertainment)</li> <li>● Full auction revenues &amp; expenses will be presented at next LC meeting</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Fundraising and Development Report</b></p>	<p><b>Report: Fundraising and Development Director Update</b> (Becky)  Very successful Auction held on January 31, 2026  Fun event- much thanks and congratulations to the Auction Committee. Involved a lot of hard work by many people - very much appreciated</p> <p><b>Report from Auction Committee leaders (Jessica Hull &amp; Melissa Mullinax)</b>  Very preliminary results- believe \$200,000+ raised - 295 attendees (60 less than last year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expenses estimated at \$60,000 - 62,000</li> <li>● Spent less on decorating- Decorator provided some tables and all chairs + photo booth at great savings</li> <li>● Re-used a lot of things from attic, cups, napkins, bracelets, wine glasses</li> <li>● Dog, printing expense, deserts and flowers all donated this year</li> <li>● Cost saving with consolidated vendors (Decorator &amp; Caterer)</li> <li>● Family style dinner great savings- \$5000 less than plated dinner last year</li> </ul> <p>300 items donated to bid upon  Auctioneer (product of Catholic schools - donated his time, and did a great job</p> <p>Police officer let us know that building was very secure &amp; everyone was nice and very welcoming</p> <p>Experiences brought the top bids,- e.g. Dowling sideline pass, Book Fair VIP, ISU experiences, Principal of the Day-  Top auction bids -Red River trip, Brock Purdy jersey, ISU tickets</p> <p>Survey about auction sent to all parents  Those who attended rated the auction 4.62 / scale of 1-5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Everyone felt welcome</li> <li>● Liked music: both singer &amp; DJ Matt Drey</li> <li>● Trips, experiences, family gift baskets voted most popular auction items</li> </ul>	<p>Fundraising Report from Becky Baker &amp; Auction Committee Chairs</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Liked signature drink, décor</li> <li>● Food- rated 4.17/5 family style – significant savings- overall food good- but noted a lot of dishes on table &amp; portions large with some wasted food</li> <li>● Appreciated that food and drinks consistent with Derby theme</li> </ul> <p>Decorator good - People like being in the school &amp; decorating so doesn't look like gym. Working with decorator was a good experience, took a lot off the committee. 92% of survey responders want auction at the school</p> <p>Casino- about 50/50 positive responses on survey, not as profitable as last year, about broke even. Thinking of other interactive activities for next year</p> <p>Traded custodian fees for donating leftover wine to parish for events at church. Leftover beer went to Knights of Columbus for future events. Alcohol cost steady for last 2 years</p> <p>Some discussion about conflicts with auction being held in January with sports activities and Dowling Winter Formal conflicts. It is challenging to find a weekend where there are no conflicts.</p>	
<b>Volunteer Coordinator Report</b>	<p>Report: Volunteer Coordinator – Update (Jennifer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Had meeting with parent volunteers end of January, Hospitality Committee chair found, all volunteer activities doing well and on track</li> <li>● Will start looking for Auction Chair for next year</li> </ul>	Volunteer Coordinator Report from Jen Tracey.
<b>Old Business</b>	<p>Steve Craig presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Request for new iPads – Immediate need addressed (for recording rap music videos)- were able to enhance Chromebooks to get the audio- determined no need to get iPads for now</li> <li>● Use of residual 8<sup>th</sup> grade funds (welcoming picnic not held)- decided any excess funds should go back to Leadership Council account.</li> <li>● Ben Tracey Visit to St. Francis on 1-14-26 – very well received by students &amp; parents with over 100 parents in attendance. Kids were thankful and said they planned to enact recommendations. Kids now understand why parents limit their social media use. The kids were told that they can really trust their parents and to share with them if they run into problems. Snapchat is worst of the social media platforms for kids.</li> </ul>	Old Business discussion led by Steve Craig.

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	<p>Phil Stover suggests that Leadership Council should continue to promote social media safety to parents and remind parents to have regular discussions with their kids about their use. Steve Craig and Jeff Lynch agreed this is a good idea &amp; will discuss with Phil proper messaging. Also going to explore pushing <i>Wait to 8<sup>th</sup></i> initiative at SFA School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● January 24-25 Catholic Schools Weekend Masses - Announcements about SFA School + coffee &amp; donuts served to all parishioners- popular and well attended</li> <li>● Registration of New Students for SFA Preschool and School for 2026-2027 just completed.</li> <li>● Challenges for seating all the attendees at School Christmas Concerts – still ongoing discussion. In process of hiring new music teacher K-5- so will wait to get his/her input.</li> </ul>	
<b>Pastoral Report</b>	<p>Steve Craig and Father Hoffman presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fr. Pins on continued medical leave. Still hoping for 4-1-26 return to duties. Will need to ease back into duties.</li> <li>● Fr. Larry Hoffman doing a great job helping parish during Fr. Pins absence.</li> <li>● Update on <i>Rebuild My Church</i> capital campaign - \$11.5 million has been raised from about 280 people to date.</li> <li>● Goal is to raise \$15 million. Currently in silent phase with personal visits. Public Campaign will launch in April 2026 (just after Easter).</li> </ul>	Report from Steve Craig and Father Hoffman.
<b>Report from SFA Preschool Director</b>	<p>Wendy Henry presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Waiting for final responses from current students by end of next week. Current waitlist for 3-year-olds about 15, Pre-K also about 15.</li> </ul>	Report from Wendy Henry.
<b>Report from SFA School</b>	<p>Jeff Lynch and Jodi Halligan presented the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deadline February 13 for Kindergarten responses- offered 76 spots, still waiting to hear back from 8 families.</li> <li>● A few parents have kids signed up for both Pre-K and K but must decide soon which option they want.</li> <li>● Only current school openings = 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade - will look at waitlists</li> <li>● Capping Middle School at 75 per grade – not much space or lockers to exceed this number. No middle school families leaving this year.</li> <li>● \$100 family enrollment deposit required to reserve spot for next year</li> <li>● Conferences next week - M, T and Th - No school Thursday or Friday or Monday following conferences.</li> </ul>	Report from Jeff Lynch and Jodi Halligan.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Site visit from Catholic Schools Office led by Donna Bishop conducted on 2-9-26- will get formal report later this month- overall went very well. Will need to develop 1, 3, and 5 year formal strategic plans.</li> <li>● Recently received \$1000 grant as Iowa 529 gift recipient.</li> <li>● Currently meeting with architects to finalize plans for new preschool building -hope to have ready for start of 2027 academic year</li> </ul> <p>Entering assessment season</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ACRE (Assessment of Child/ Youth Religious Education)- from NCEA 2/24-3/13 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>; ELPA testing now 2/2- 3/27</li> <li>● ISASP (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress) Middle school – 4/13-4/17 and Elementary 4/20- 4/24</li> <li>● NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress)- 2/27 8<sup>th</sup> grade (NCEA) Pilot School Testing</li> <li>● FAST (Formative Assessment System for Teachers) in spring- Elem 5/4- 5/8, Middle school 5/11- 5/15</li> </ul>	
<b>Update from Committees</b>	Written summaries sent by email to LC members in advance of meeting- no questions	
<b>New Business</b>	<p>Steve Craig shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Mass scheduled on Sunday February 15 @ 11:30 am – Need volunteers to help at reception- Jennifer and Brenda volunteered</li> <li>● LC requested to serve Coffee &amp; Donuts one Sunday this year. Available = 3/8, 3/22, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3, 5/17- Steve will send out email survey to select date.</li> <li>● 2024-2025 Annual Report sent out- had wrong Leadership Council names in brochure, will get this corrected</li> <li>● Diocesan Catholic Schools Office site visit to St. Francis of Assisi School on 2-9-26- see above, waiting for formal report</li> <li>● Plans for Kindergarten Roundup &amp; Discussing with Parents the Covenant of Trust. Scheduled for April 24, 2026 this year. Jennifer is lining up volunteers to speak.</li> </ul>	
<b>Executive Session</b>	There was no call for Executive Session at this meeting	No Executive Session requested.
<b>Closing Prayer and Adjournment</b>	Father Hoffman led a closing prayer. There was no other new business to discuss so the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.	<b>The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for March</b>

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		12, 2026 at 6:30 pm- will be virtual.