

St. Francis of Assisi School Leadership Council Minutes

May 14, 2026

Board Members Present:

Father Pins (Pastor)
Steve Craig (Chair)
Brenda Pedersen (Vice Chair)
John Cord (Treasurer)
Jennifer Tracey (Volunteer Coord)
Becky Baker (Fundraising Coord)
Mollie Mertens (Secretary)
Adam Mullinax (At-Large)
Andrew Phillips (At-Large)
William Downs (At-Large)
Michael Perrin (At-Large) via Zoom

Not Present:

Andrew Phillips (At-Large)
Baylie Panzi (At-Large)
Phil Stover (Communications Dir)

Prepared by: Mollie Mertens

Called to Order: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourned: 7:55pm

Location: Saint Francis Science Lab Classroom

Minutes Prepared By: _____
Mollie Mertens

Others Present:

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

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 Fr. Pins led an opening prayer.	Call to Order and Opening Prayer.
Approve Minutes	Minutes from the April 9, 2026 Leadership Council meeting were sent out electronically before the meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.	Minutes of the April 9, 2026 meeting were unanimously approved.

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
Summary of 2026 Auction	Jess Hull and Melissa Mullinax presented: • Net from the auction was \$234,000 with a few outstanding expenses still coming in. Good live auction items and attendance was around 310. • Expenses did end up over budget by a very small margin. • Developing a positive relationship with the Dowling auction chair and sharing ideas and discussing equipment needs. • Requested that Principal Lynch help them find space to store auction items at the school next year. • Still have candles to sell, but have already made a profit on the ones sold. • Knowing what they are funding from the beginning is advantageous. Tying in the Track-a-Thon to this is helpful as well. • Melissa has agreed to chair next year and Jess will assist her. They are anticipating raising less money because they will not be able to sell parking spots next year with the construction planned. Once the carline situation for next year is known, they will be able to make a plan. • Jess mentioned that other schools (Sacred Heart) assign parents from one grade to lead the auction each year. Not sure if that would work at SFA. • Leadership Council expressed their thanks to Jess and Melissa for leading this year's auction and for their willingness to lead next year's auction too.	Update on 2026 Auction
Open Forum	There was no request for Open Forum at this meeting.	
Treasurer's Report	John Cord presented the Treasurer's Report: Leadership Council Account (2422): As of April 30, 2026 • Beginning Balance (04/01/26): \$147,580.01 • Current Balance: \$145,370 • Remaining Budgeted Expenses: \$78,683 • Surplus: \$66,687 Recent Activity: N/A Fundraising Account (2426): As of April 30, 2026 • Beginning Balance (04/01/26): \$335,620.17 • Current Balance: \$335,711.46 Recent Activity: N/A Additional Notes: Appears nearly \$300,000 in revenues already reported but roughly \$20,000 of auction expenses still haven't hit the books.	Treasurer's Report from John Cord.

AGENDA ITEM	DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION	NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS
Proposed Leadership Council Budget for 2026-2027 Presented	John Cord presented the proposed budget for discussion. ● 2026-2027 Proposed Leadership Council Budget ○ Proposed operating expenses down from \$125,847 to \$123,122 ○ Proposed special disbursements up from \$99,700 to \$113,221- this includes contributing \$50,000 to the School Foundation reserves + expenses for new security door locks throughout the school and installing 3 new cameras to better visualize the entire campus which will cost \$59,301. ■ Will need final approval of budget at next month's meeting Budget Questions and Concerns- 1. A question was raised about whether LC funds are properly invested to earn interest. Steve explained that funds in the School Foundation account are invested and earn interest. Fundraising Account and Leadership Council funds are used to pay approved expenses throughout the school year and these are in a checking account and don't accumulate interest. Although these accounts may carry a balance of \$200,000-\$300,000 early in the year, we need to be able to quickly access these funds as bills are submitted. Steve will discuss with Kylie whether we could invest some of this money in a short-term interesting bearing account in the future. 2. The Leadership Council is being asked to consider funding the donuts purchased on Fridays during Lent for middle school students who attend the 7:15 am daily mass to enjoy after mass. There was support for this so Steve Craig will work with Principal Lynch to determine this cost. 3. GiveSmart- Questions were raised about whether this should be charged as an auction expense and whether we should purchase the newer version of GiveSmart. Mari and Steve had a meeting with a consultant from GiveSmart in April and the consultant felt that the extra features in the newer version would not be used. Even the new version does not allow for payment by Venmo/Apple Pay and there is no way to restrict payment to debit cards only (e.g. for gambling expenses), The school did pay for another training session that has to be used by July 15th and the plan is to renew the same contract then. The version we are using will continue to work for us in the future.	2026-2027 Leadership Council Budget will be approved at the next meeting on June 11, 2026.

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Fundraising and Development Report	Report by Becky Baker on the Fundraising and Development Committee: • Auction gift committee members have a draft letter ready to go to local businesses. Committee members will start meeting soon.	Fundraising and Development Coordinator Report from Becky Baker.
Volunteer Coordinator Report	Report: Volunteer Coordinator – Update (Jennifer) • A Volunteer meeting was held during the first week of May. We have commitment from all Volunteer Chairs for next year except Spirit Wear. Willing to explore whether a new vendor would be more effective. Jennifer will follow up with the current chair regarding other options for vendors and see if she would be willing to stay on and assist with this. • Will double check with Mrs. Richie to see if she will continue with the yearbook next year. • The End-of-Year Campaign for Teacher Appreciation funds is underway and will wrap up next Tuesday.	Volunteer Coordinator Report from Jen Tracey.
Old Business	Steve Craig presented the following information: • Preschool and School Enrollment for 2026-2027 – Status of Wait Lists. Wendy reported 20 families on the waitlist for both preschools classes. Families often make other plans so these may not all remain on the wait list. A few vacancies exist for certain K-8 school grades and there are no names currently on the waiting list. • Update on Teacher Vacancies for 2026-2027 – All positions are filled! • Work on SFA School Strategic Plan- will be discussed at the August meeting. • Work on Plans for Car Line next year (2026-2027 Academic Year) with new campus construction. Mr. Lynch reported that a drone came in today with still photos and video to provide context. A variety of ideas for next year are being considered. They will finalize and announce plans soon. They are also looking at ways to increase carpooling.	Old Business discussion led by Steve Craig.
Pastoral Report	Fr. Pins presented the following information: • 8th Grade Mass and Graduation is on Tuesday May 19th. • Dowling Baccalaureate Mass on May 20th. • June 7th Feast of Corpus Christi: there will be a eucharistic procession and First Communion recipients are invited to attend. • \$13.6 million of \$15 million goal raised so far by the Rebuild My Church capital campaign.	Report from Father Pins

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	Preschool and Chapel construction will hopefully start in August or September. It has been decided that the new preschool will be built to storm shelter safety standards and it will be large enough to accommodate all SFA students.	
Report from SFA Preschool Director	Wendy Henry presented the following information: - Preschool picnic tonight- great to have fellowship and community. - Next week is the last week of preschool. - No open positions for next year at this time.	Report from Wendy Henry.
Report from SFA School	Jeff Lynch and Jodi Halligan presented the following information: - The MRA survey results are in and nearly every category reflected positively. Student empowerment did show a slight one-point drop. Next year, one of the focuses in the Diocesan Schools is student engagement and Saint Francis will work to facilitate this as well. - The Carline Survey received 70 responses. 28 would consider carpooling and suggestions were made for ways to reward those families that did carpool. The survey also identified challenges like traffic congestion, safety concerns, and parents not following car line procedures. Still, many survey participants stated that carline is “so much better than it used to be.” - A suggestion was made to come up with a way to mark your car to indicate if your child will need help getting out of the car. - Tragedy at St. Luke’s and take aways- our current car line procedure has cones that maintain about 16 feet between the students and the cars. In new campus construction meetings, there is also discussion of putting in decorative rock to further separate waiting children from moving cars.	Report from Jeff Lynch and Jodi Halligan.
Update from Committees	Written summaries sent by email to LC members in advance of meeting - no questions.	
New Business	Steve shared the following: Mass for Kindergarten & 1st Grade Students: Sunday May 24 @ 11:30 am – Volunteers to help serve cookies/lemonade after mass needed. Thomas Call & John Cord indicated they will help.	

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	- 8th Grade Student Applications for 2 Leadership Council Scholarship Awards. 10 submissions are being reviewed and the winners will be announced at next week's graduation. - Planning Back to School event + how to present Covenant of Trust to school parents (especially new ones). It was suggested that information about the Covenant of Trust should be added to News and Notes. - Mr. Lynch reported there will be a new 6th grade orientation to Middle School added this year.	
Executive Session	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 7:55 pm.	The next Leadership Council Meeting is scheduled for June 11th at 6:30 pm.