

**Lourdes Catholic School Advisory Board Meeting**  
**6:00 P.M.**  
**Tuesday, October 8, 2024**  
**AGENDA OF REGULAR MEETING – IN PERSON (LIBRARY)**

1. CALL TO ORDER 6:01

1. OPENING PRAYER (Fr. Jason)
1. WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS
1. ROLL CALL - Girsakis, Fernas, Morlock, Meier, Wilkinson, Hanell
1. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA - Meier/Wilkinson

0. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PAST MEETING -Meier/Wilkinson

0. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

- a. Mrs. Katie Selden - transfer from another school. 1st grade aid starting. ELA para - parents reaching out. Working on Xmas programs now. Had an attorney volunteer today for mock-trial. The deadline has passed, but I'm still going to ask if it is not too late. Teacher collaboration time - substitute teachers for ½ day for ELA time. Received \$50,000 safety grant. \$90,000 playground grant. Rosales - 2 more grants open soon - construction and Casey's K-12. Creating a PDF student directory this year. Working on blending SJF and LCS early childhood programs.

1. PASTOR'S NOTES

- a. Pastor (Fr. Jason) - new Bishop Walsh. Fall festival, had a car donated that we are going to work to repurpose for a different cause to use in fundraising. Continue to pray for end of war in holy lands. Lots of baptisms and weddings this time of year. Vocations week this school year? Kathy did it last year. For perspective in 1970 there were 161,000 sisters, currently 35,000.

2. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Teacher Report - we will do rosary 3x in October - 8th/4th/student council. Fr. Rich did blessing of the PetsK-5 LETRS training on 10/14. Feedback from LETRS training - it's a lot of work - 16 hrs, home and training. Reset and best practice. Hesitation at beginning, raving afterwards. SCCS compensation. Applicable w/ new ELA curriculum. Trunk or Treat coming up. All Saints Day and two days of mass that week.
- b. Home and School Report - Nov 8th Donuts w/ Dad. Nov 15th Trivia Night - new volunteer - Jenny. Hospitality - treats for teachers and dinner during conferences. Rearranging Cub Scout Pinewood Derby to allow for Bingo to kick-off CSW. CSW - potential fundraising options? Starry Night March 1st. Fundraiser - SCRIP and reach outside of our community.
- c. St. Joan of Arc Construction Update - exterior walls, structural steel, floors, CPT meeting on site
- d. Athletic Director Report - is Joe on the email?
- e. Marketing Report - NA
- f. Faith Formation Report - NA

0. ITEMS FOR BOARD ACTION

0. ITEMS NEEDING DISCUSSION, BUT NOT NECESSARILY BOARD ACTION (OTHER BUSINESS)

- a. St. Joan of Arc Funding Plan  
\* Please note that per board rules, we will limit public comment to approximately 3 minutes per person to respect everyone's time.

Father Jason opens w/ a statement - As we are committed to Catholic Education and have been for over a hundred years, we are at a point where we are undergoing new changes. We had conducted a number of studies before beginning this project and have engaged a number of committees. One challenge has been the idea of "no more fees" that was understood but not specifically mentioned to donors and families. I have an apology for this. There was never an attempt to deceive or hide data. We should have had more communication with these movements, and we need to remember that this has been done with many volunteers. We have now determined that there will be a recommendation donation to the project for Catholic families and a fee system for non-Catholic families for the next school year. We are open to questions and comments about this issue.

In attendance for Loan Funding Committee -  
Joe Steineke OLOL trustee  
Kathy Langley SJV trustee  
Les Lipinsky SJV trustee  
Paul Alagna OLOL trustee

## PUBLIC COMMENT / OPEN FORUM

- Comment: How many non-Catholic families will be affected? 13 IL families and 65 non-Catholic students.
- Brent: This was due to the fact that non-Catholic families are not giving to the parishes with weekly donations.
- Fr. Jason: This goes back to how the parish subsidized the school before the ESAs. There is an expectation that non-parishioners need to step up and support what the Catholic families are doing.
- Comment: Is there an avenue for people who were expecting ESA to cover people who are not able to afford the fee? No, they are expected to pay the fee.
- Brent: Non-Catholic fee is at a minimum \$1300.
- Finance: \$2250 + \$1330, \$1950 per child plus \$1300, etc.
- Comment: Will it be paid to the parish? Yes. Not SCCS.
- Comment: How will that be tracked? How many families will be expected to contribute?
- Fr. Jason: We have tracking programs and are meeting to hammer out the details.
- Comment: Will there be a 100% participation by school families?
- Answer by Brent: Nope. We are expecting a shortfall. We will need \$750,000 every year to cover the debt.
- Finance: We will hope to have an emergency fund of 10-20% on hand to cover shortfall amounts.
- Comment: What is the difference between non-parish vs parish-subsidized? \$500 - answer by Andy Craig.
- Comment: Is there a projection for the sale of this Lourdes property?
- Answer by Fr. Jason: No, we will need to study it.
- Comment: Is there a plan to reach out to the 65 non-Catholic students' families? Answer by Brent: We will do that.
- Comment: An analysis of the contributions made to SJA by non-Catholic families should be done, as some families have donated to SJA.
- Brent: 69/239 families in the school have donated, out of the 69, 24 families raised 80% of the donated money. Catholic families are mandated to tithe.
- Comment: This is hard for new families that have had no idea this was happening seven weeks ago. It is not what we expected, and are the fees just going to keep going up? Is everything going to be this way with fees? Are we creating a separation between families who are Catholic and non-Catholic?
- Comment: The use of the words Catholic and non-Catholic is creating segregation.
- Comment: This school has been able to bring families into the Catholic Church and it is leaving a bad taste.
- Comment: Families who are new are not getting a good picture of what Catholic education has always been. Perhaps parishioner vs. non-parishioner should be used. There is a larger miscommunication about how Catholic education has always worked. We need to campaign to the new families about what has been expected in the past and how they can contribute.
- Comment: We need to make sure all the lists are accurate, as many lists are outdated.
- Comment: Is the fee \$1300? Brent: Yes, for every family, Catholic or not, and then the recommended donation on top of that.
- Comment: What happens when people leave and go back to public school?
- Brent: We understand that, but we need to pay for this school.
- Comment: How much time do we have to re-tone this conversation? It has turned from excitement to anger. Do we have the time to get back to the excitement of a new school? Can we communicate to the new families what is needed and how we need their help?
- Brent: Till the start of new school year.
- Comment: What happens if you refuse to pay or cannot pay?
- Answer from Fr. Jason: We will have a communication plan. Previously, we have had people leave if they cannot pay tuition, but tithing is different. We work to understand that relationship with parishioners and put forward an effort to be at church and be part of the community. Everyone can give a little. I have met families who have refused to give, but not anyone who cannot give a little. This is difficult to manage in this structure because we run into the 80/20 rule, where 20% carry the other 80%, and that is unsustainable.
- Comment: I am upset that I tithe and I have contributed to the SJA fund, but now we need more. I have struggled to make payments in the past and I am worried that I will be in a hole financially if I am asked to do this.
- Comment: Can we use the extra \$500 in ESA to fund this? Andy: You have to look at the law, and I have yet to get a solid answer about this. ?????? This answer should be no.
- Comment: What will this look like in the future? Andy: This year is telling as to whether or not ESA will continue. It will be easiest to stop it this year, but once it gets through this year it will be hard to get rid of it without phasing it out. We will have time to figure it out.
- Comment: What happens to other programs that are in place? Andy: STOs mirror the ESA. The state has not answered about how this money can be spent, as they want us to use the ESA. I think all the tax credits will eventually disappear.
- Comment: Can we make the fee a suggested donation so it can be tax deductible? Answer: Yes, that is the intent.

- Finance: We will look at that in early 2026.
- Comment: To clarify, the fee is \$1300. What is the \$2250? Brent: \$1300 is the mandatory fee per family, for non-parishioners. The \$2250 is the suggested donation for everyone per student.
- Comment: How much has been raised, pledged, and how much to build?
  - Project: \$38 million, including \$2 million left on land purchase, and \$3.2 million for Upon This Rock
  - \$18 million verified gifts, unknown how much has been collected
- Brent: We can communicate this to the school families.
- Comment: Is there a communication plan to make people understand this whole project?
- Brent: We are working on specifics and full communication packets.
- Fr. Jason: We have so many modes of communication and bombard people. People just don't read things and word doesn't always get out, especially correct information.
- Claudia: Plan to reach out to people who have not donated, Phase 2. We are looking at everyone who has not donated and businesses. We have a school committee to reach out to school families. We are training people for Phase 2. We need help! Please volunteer for a committee. The Legacy and Alumni Committee will sustain this project. Please be part of the solution.
- Comment: We have to be truthful and transparent. We have loans we need to pay. We need to tell people this.
- Comment: We don't even have a church on the new property.
- Comment: We shouldn't have broken ground.
- Fr. Jason: We have been over this. The studies told us it would be more affordable to build now and go for it. This is the right thing to do and the right way to do it. We can question it, but the expert people behind the project greenlighted this. We can second guess this, but we need to be careful to not damage it. We have not been led astray, and we need to trust the Holy Spirit. The hardest part is how to pay for it.
- Comment: Put a family/member of a family out there to explain it for people.
- Brent: The scholarship program structure from previously is on hold.
- Comment: People are going to see the \$1300 and be done. We need to be clear that the donation amount needs to be gathered beyond the \$1300.
- Comment: Have we thought about an income based donation?
- Comment: We need to look at things as sacrificial giving. We need people to pray on it and know the community needs you to do your part.
- Fr. Rich: Embody St. Joan. Do not be afraid. Also, look at our history. In the 1960s, we announced a new church and they had faith it would work. And look at it now. We have spent so many hours for the last three years in good faith. We are excited and are hopeful. This is so awesome with the ESA. This is really a gut check that people don't want to pay this. We apologize for not being transparent enough. It was not intended. All the hours have been for your kids and this school. And now, we feel like it has been in vain because people are mad it is not free.
- Comment: The tone of the people has been very hurtful. We need to understand sacrifice. It isn't that the ESAs should make things free. We keep hearing we are not giving enough. We would like to hear a thank you for our sacrifice. We have been sacrificing.
- Fr. Rich: For people like you, we would like to help. We would not ignore that.
- Fr. Jason: Please bring things to my attention around that in the future.
- Comment: Do we think tuition will exceed ESA? Andy: At the elementary school, our plan is to keep the cost the same.
- Andy: We need to keep in mind the current costs are at about \$10,000 per kid and the ESA is at \$7600. There is a gap the parish fills. If we cannot fill that gap with the parish subsidy, then the tuition could go up. Our prayer is that it stays like this for five years.
- Comment: Can we get meeting times for SCCS?
- Andy: We will start making the rounds to tell everyone about this. The meetings are the fourth meeting of the month at AHS at 5PM in the board conference room.
- Brent: When will the website be updated? Andy: It is in the process.
- Finance: This plan is a snapshot in time. This all changes as the campaign continues. Everything can change if we raise more money. We are trying to raise more money to have less debt. We need to really push the Phase 2 campaign.
- Comment: When will those meetings be? Is an agenda available? What is the plan:
- Claudia: The Phase 2 campaigns are training soon and I can get you in touch with people. There are two different campaign chairs. We are training the leadership chairs soon.
- Brent: They don't meet at scheduled times. If you are part of the committee, you will know the times.
- Comment: Would it be beneficial to have a sign-up link?
- Brent: We need help on the messaging, and Home and School can help.
- Comment: If there is true hardship for non-parishioner families can they contact you?

- Fr. Jason: Non-parishioner will be hard, but we will listen.
- Comment: We want to help as non-parishioners, but we need to be cautious about the separation between families.
- Fr. Jason: We were not prepared for the influx of non-Catholic families and we hope to put the proper time into creating that one family feeling.

Questions from 08 October 2024 School Advisory Board Meeting, captured during open forum - Nate Meier

- How many non-parishioner families are affected by the potential building fee?
- What is the non-parishioner student fee? Is it tiered?
- Where does the parishioner tithing go to? SJoA? SCCS?
- What is the school family portion of the new school debt?
- What do we do with funds if we exceed our donation amount for the year?
- What is the parish subsidized tuition under the ESA amount?
- Is there a timeline on selling the current school/church/property at Lourdes?
- What is the plan to communicate to the non-parishioners?
- What is the analysis of non-parishioners and their contribution to the school?
- How do we best manage the message between parishioners and non-parishioners?
- What happens if you don't pay the fee? Or refuse to pay the fee?
- How does the STO funding work now that ESAs are available?
- Is the suggested "Building Fee" able to be used as a donation? What is the value of using this donation to itemize my taxes?
- Can we see a breakdown of all the expenses of the building project and where our debt structure stands?
- When are we going to start a campaign for a new church?
- What are we doing differently for the 2nd campaign to improve communication?
- Are there any good stories in the history of Lourdes or SJV that we could use to show the community the faith and power in the community?

0. CLOSED SESSION (IF NECESSARY)

0. CLOSING PRAYER - 7:56

SAB Meeting Schedule: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm (except as noted). Please note that with the planned move-in next summer, we have decided to forgo the June meeting and meet in July to prepare.

<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
August 27 (5 P.M.)	January 14
September 17	February 11
October 8	March 11
November 12	April 8
December 10	May 13
	July 15