

Board of Advisors Agenda
Monday, October 20th, 2025
7:00 p.m. / Aquinas Conference Room

Aquinas Catholic Schools Mission Statement:

Provide a Christ centered learning environment where we develop individuals to be disciples of Christ in all areas of their lives.

Opening Procedures

1. Austin Witmer called the meeting to order at 7:10pm
2. Father Stoley led an opening prayer
3. Roll Call of BOA Members (Kelly Koranda- Secretary)
 - a. Present Board Members: Austin Witmer, Sandy VanCura, Philip Zegers, Ron Mimick, Michaela Moravec, Jody Pelan Alina Strong, Maggie Miratsky, Kelly Koranda, Christina Podolak, Jared DeWispelare, Brian Birkel, Kyle Eller, Colleen Storm, Laura Adair, Mike Moravec, Trent Jakub, Ryan Meister, Katie Smith, Fr. Stoley
4. Approval of Previous Board Meeting Minutes (Austin Witmer- President)
 - a. Kyle Eller made a motion and Maggie Miratsky seconded it. The previous board meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

School Reports

5. Chief Administrator Report - Fr. Stoley spoke on the following items:
 - a. Regarding Fr. Ventre's Administrative Leave – the diocese has not yet received a report back from the 3rd party investigating entity. They have communicated that they'd like to hear as soon as possible, because they recognize there is a lot of planning that is happening at Aquinas now.
 - i. Fr. Stoley reminded everyone that when the report comes out, because this is an HR matter, there will be a limit of the extent to which the information can be communicated both legally and morally with respect to privacy.
 1. When a statement is made, it will go to principals, then pastors, staff, then the families/public.
 - ii. Fr. Stoley wanted to assure us that the diocese is very much invested in Aquinas. The diocese wants this apostolate to continue to flourish. He emphasized that this is important and we can continue to invest in Aquinas for the present and for the future.
 - b. Roof project update – Fr. Stoley reported that the corporate resolution went through. This is part of the diocesan policy, going through the building commission. Fr. Stoley submitted our roofing plans through this commission. They had engineers look into it, and they interviewed Tillotson. The diocesan commission gave their approval for the project. A down payment has been made and Tillotson will begin work soon.
 - c. Fr. Stoley attended the most recent daycare board meeting. He reported that overall, the daycare is a very positive project and he feels it is in very good shape. From Fr. Stoley's viewpoint, we have a very solid daycare here. The tax credit that is available has been communicated throughout the community to help with daycare financials.
 - d. Fr. Stoley asked several questions regarding the budget and Philip Zegers explained the finance committee's process of setting the budget for the year. Austin reminded us that January's Board of Advisors meeting is specifically set aside to discuss the budget for the coming year. The pastors of the deanery have requested to see a draft of the budget before Christmas if possible.

- e. There was some discussion about the Board's thoughts on the CAO/high school principal positions. The Board acknowledged that on the one hand, we don't want to wait too long to begin advertising for the high school principal position so as not to lose potential candidates to other positions, and on the other hand that it would be preferable to advertise the position once we have more certainty about who the CAO will be for the coming year. Sandy VanCura is uncertain of her plans for the coming year. She suggested that ideally, we would advertise the position before Christmas. Fr. Stoley thought that we are likely nearing the end of the process for Fr. Ventre's leave, so we should know soon where things sit as far as the CAO. With that in mind, the Board felt it would be advisable to wait until after the November Board meeting to begin advertising, but in the meantime to be compiling a list of important qualities of any candidates for the position, as well as desirable qualities in a CAO that can be communicated to the bishop if there is a change in the CAO moving forward.
 - f. The Board discussed qualities that are important in a CAO and a high school principal:
 - i. Austin pointed out that we have a lot of good momentum going – we want to keep the ball rolling. We need someone with expertise who knows what they are doing and is passionate about continued improvement, not just someone to keep status quo.
 - ii. Fundraising without a CAO is difficult right now. We need some marketing to tell how great our school is.
 - iii. Brian Birkel suggested that if needed, we could call an extra meeting for the Board in order to put a job description and advertising materials together.
 - iv. The Board desires someone with energy to invest in the school, a CAO who is full time dedicated to the school, and ready to invest in the momentum of the school.
 - v. Fr. Stoley noted that he is aware of enrollment and outreach needs, as well as the many parishes invested in the school – ultimately it is the bishop's decision who the CAO would be, but Fr. Stoley can share our list of qualities/needs for a CAO with the bishop.
 - vi. Mike Moravec requested to see the job descriptions for the CAO and the principal positions. He also suggested that it would be great to move forward with some advertising of the position, even if Sandy decided to return and someone new ended up working side by side with her for a year to gain experience.
 - vii. In the next week, if you have any additional opinions regarding the CAO, send them to Austin and he will pass it along to Fr. Stoley and the diocese. Katie and Sandy will also reach out to teachers about their perspective.
6. Holy Family Early Learning Center - Kristy Andel submitted a written report, and Austin spoke a little bit about the recent daycare board meeting.
- a. There is a separate Holy Family Early Learning Center board, which had not met for almost a year, but just met recently. They discussed desires for the direction of the daycare, financials, and goals for improvement.
 - b. They prioritized some items for a strategic plan – these goals relate to marketing, communication, improved systems for clocking kids in and out, the LEAF program, partnering with local businesses, the daycare contribution tax credits, and communication about state subsidies.
 - c. There is a contract with the Hospital in progress – they are very interested in some sort of contract with the daycare to help their employees and also help sustain the daycare. They are looking at a first draft of the contract and will get it back to the daycare to review.
 - d. Jared requested to add how many openings exist at each level on future daycare reports. Austin noted that right now, babies are full but there are some openings in the other rooms. There is a wait list for infants.
 - e. Chloe has mapped out the next 9-10 months of enrollment in each of the daycare rooms.
 - f. Fr. Stoley explained the tax credit a little bit more. This allows a donor to divert some of their tax money to the daycare since they're already going to be paying the taxes to the state. Each donor can give up to \$100,000. Checks must be made to Holy Family Early Childcare Center. There is a total pot of \$2.5 million for daycares throughout the state for the year, and \$2.39million is covered so far for 2025.
7. Aquinas High School/Middle School - Sandy VanCura highlighted the following from her report:
- a. John Wehrs did a fantastic job with homecoming week.

- b. There is discussion about revamping Honors Night might this year to avoid it being a 3 hour evening. There will still be an honors event in the spring, but without a meal and speeches by all the coaches.
 - i. Ron is hoping that the Honors Ceremony would be to announce the top students of each class, top 10 academic students, Athlete of the Year, Teammates of the Year, Cardinal Newman Award, and Thespian of the Year. Coaches could still have their own end of the year or end of the season awards nights of their own. People are busier now, so if we can be more streamlined that would be helpful, and he pointed out that athletes are already receiving recognition throughout the season, so this night would probably focus more on academics.
 - c. Sandy highlighted topics from the school's Professional Development days (included in her written report)
 - d. The safety grant is due October 31st – she noted that we are unable to request doors, and upgrades on intercoms, etc. through this grant. There is currently a case at the Supreme Court determining how this grant will be enforced. Right now, it is recommended that schools do not use it for permanent things due to the need to report to the federal government, which could result in issues as the government may try to require schools to promote causes that might not fit within the school's mission and values.
 - e. Kidwell will be coming tomorrow to look at increasing the number of cameras (both interior and exterior). M & O Door company out of Columbus coming to look at our doors. Scott Samek will be looking at exterior lighting.
 - f. We have a student teacher from Concordia with the music department.
 - g. She asked for suggestions on the school's sweatshirt policy, specifically regarding the elementary school fundraiser sweatshirts. Jody Pelan reminded the Board that the sophomore sweatshirt sales are the sophomore fundraiser. It is used for prom, as well as defraying costs throughout their senior year. She wouldn't want any decision regarding the elementary sweatshirts to influence the impact of the sophomore sweatshirt fundraiser. It was pointed out that the other sweatshirts say "elementary" and it introduces more variety instead of having students remain uniform. It was pointed out that elementary students cannot wear the elementary sweatshirts except on spirit days, which is consistent with the current policy at the middle/high school. The Board was of the opinion that no change was needed regarding elementary sweatshirts.
 - h. She also asked for input regarding wearing polos under their sweatshirts. Ryan Meister moved and Colleen Storm seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously that polos will be required to be worn under students' sweatshirts again starting in January.
 - i. One high school recently transferred out. There was a follow-up phone call with the family.
 - j. She reviewed the calendar. Maggie Miratsky asked where spirit day funds go toward and Sandy and the other high school teachers noted that they are used for retreats, homecoming floats, and other things that benefit the students. Usually the designation of the funds is announced in the announcements ahead of each spirit day.
8. Activities Report (Ron Mimick)
- a. The Board voted on 8-man football. Austin opened the floor for final comments before voting:
 - i. Size-wise, we belong in the middle class of 8-man football.
 - ii. Kyle Eller pointed out that with the change in NSAA numbers, it makes it very difficult to stay in Class C/11-man.
 - iii. It was noted that athletes' safety is a concern.
 - iv. All present members advised in favor of 8-man football. The Board voted to play in the class where we belong for all sports, and to vote in the future if we want to play in a class other than that to which we belong.

- b. Ron gave an update on the situation for softball – As of now, there are 7 girls who have played/plan to play next season.
 - i. Ron has reached out to 7 schools who have not responded or responded negatively regarding a coop. One option that could still play out is Scotus, but he hopes to have a definite answer by December. However, there are difficulties due to their current coop with Columbus High.
 - ii. Another option is to recruit the halls for more players or to cultivate 7th-8th graders to be interested in playing. Volleyball has about 20 girls currently.
 - iii. He plans to make a final decision in March.
 - iv. It was recommended that Ron email all the parents with his report.
9. Aquinas Elementary - Katie Smith reviewed the following items from her report:
- a. During the afternoon of their recent PD day, School Improvement teams came up with some goals – their focus is especially on the reading programs, especially with the new reading curriculums. They will be working to track fluency in younger grades and comprehension in older grades. They are also seeking ways of encouraging a love for reading.
 - b. They're also focused on behavior; they are implementing friendship groups with girls, 5th grade Student Council, and leadership groups during lunch time.
 - c. Robotics will start this week.
 - d. The Book Fair is running now, All Saints Day party is upcoming, Cortny Hein did pro-life presentations, and St. John's in Weston sent some teachers to observe their reading program.
 - e. A rosary challenge and AR challenge are taking place this month.
 - f. She applied for the Bulter County Foundation Grant for the gym floor.
 - g. One student is transferring out. There are 6 new families interested in attending the elementary school next year.
10. Campus Ministry - Melissa Yindrick submitted a written report and Colleen Storm highlighted the following:
- a. They are beginning 1:1 spiritual mentoring with sophomores – they are still seeking two male volunteers to meet once a month on a Monday afternoon to meet with a student. Let Melissa know if you're interested.

Subcommittee and Pillar Reports
--

11. Finance
- a. The development of next year's budget is underway. Financial statements were provided for review.
12. Alumni Outreach (Michaela M.)
- a. 13-14 reunions are completed. All Souls Day Mass letters were sent out. This is for alumni who have passed away – family members are invited and she encouraged all to attend. It will take place at 8am in the North gym and is a very special experience.
 - b. Phon-a-thon will take place on November 9th. Volunteers are needed! Contact Michaela if you'd like to volunteer.
 - c. There will be an alumni Pickleball Tournament on November 29th.
 - d. A Foundation Presentation is coming up on November 19th 2pm and 7pm at the Didier Room.
13. Enriching Student Life Pillar Report - Sara Miriofsky submitted a written report. Here are a couple of highlights:
- a. The main goal continues to be finding some additional pillar members. Amy Didier (PTO president) is joining.
 - b. Some things that are implemented to help cultivate a positive school culture include PAWS and Monarch Dads at the elementary, and Society groups and Frassati Fridays for the staff at the middle/high school.

Other Items

14. Snow Removal Policy

- a. Maggie Miratsky will discuss this with the finance committee.
- 15. Sick Leave Policy Acknowledgement
 - a. State laws and regulations changed, and this affects our policy for teachers. The policy is from the diocese and the State of Nebraska. This went into effect October 1st.
- 16. Principal/CAO Discussion/Search for Next School Year – see above
- 17. Roof Repair Update- this is beginning to move, see above.

Closing Procedures

- 18. Next Meeting – November 17th, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m. Adoration @ 6:30p.m.**
- 19. November 5th – next Pillar Meeting for all pillars
- 20. Closing Prayer led by Austin at 8:50pm.

Listing of Board of Advisors

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Father Lawrence Stoley | Interim Chief Administrative Officer |
| 2. Austin Witmer | Board President |
| 3. Maggie Miratsky | Board Vice President |
| 4. Kelly Koranda | Board Secretary |
| 5. Sandy VanCura | Middle/High School Principal |
| 6. Katie Smith | Elementary School Principal |
| 7. Kristy Andel | Holy Family Early Learning Center Director |
| 8. Alina Strong | Business Manager |
| 9. Melissa Yindrick | Campus Minister |
| 10. Michaela Moravec | Alumni and Foundation |
| 11. Laura Adair | Marketing and Enrollment |
| 12. Ron Mimick | Activities Director |
| 13. Michael Moravec | Board Member |
| 14. Christina Podolak | Board Member |
| 15. Colleen Storm | Board Member |
| 16. Brian Birkel | Board Member |
| 17. Jared DeWispelare | Board Member |
| 18. Trent Jakub | Board Member |
| 19. Philip Zegers | Board Member |
| 20. Kyle Eller | Board Member |
| 21. Ryan Meister | Board Member |
| 22. Father Brian Connor | Dean, David City Deanery |

