

**Board of Advisors Agenda**  
**Monday, November 17th, 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. Welcome & Call to Order (Austin Witmer called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.)
2. Opening Prayer (Father Connor led an opening prayer.)
3. Roll Call of BOA Members (Kelly Koranda- Secretary)
  - a. Members Present: Austin Witmer, Fr. Connor, Ron Mimick, Sara Miriovsky, Alina Strong, Laura Adair, Kelly Koranda, Melissa Yindrick, Christina Podolak, Mike Moravec, Jared DeWispelare, Philip Zegers, Kyle Eller, Ryan Meister, Trent Jakub, Katie Smith, Sandy VanCura, and Colleen Storm. Fr. Stec was also present.
4. Approval of Previous Board Meeting Minutes (Austin Witmer- President)
  - a. Kyle Eller motioned and Trent Jakub seconded the motion to approve the minutes. They passed unanimously.
5. Amendments to the Agenda (Austin Witmer- President)

**School Reports**

6. Chief Administrator Report (Fr. Connor)
  - a. Fr. Connor noted that he is getting acquainted with faculty and staff members, getting settled into his office, looking at the endowment some, and visiting with Alina Strong about Aquinas' current situation; Michaela Moravec and Fr. Connor called some people regarding donations for the roof project. They have had some success and he is feeling very hopeful.
7. Holy Family Early Learning Center (Kristy Anandel)
  - a. The Holy Family board will meet this week - Kristy provided a written report with some highlights:
    - i. There have been some staff sicknesses and absences, which have been difficult.
    - ii. Their board updated some of its goals.
    - iii. They have started a newsletter similar to the one at the elementary school.
8. Aquinas High School/Middle School - Sandy VanCura highlighted the following from her report:
  - a. One of the pillar goals was to increase engagement for middle school students - Mrs. Mayo invited UNL extension office to do some DNA hands-on lab activities which were very successful.
  - b. Calculus students recently attended Math Day with Mrs. Sypal - they won 2 of the 5 rounds, and she was very pleased with their performance.
  - c. Police Chief Marla Snell will be coming to talk with students about the intersection outside of the school (many people have expressed concerns). She will be here Thursday to talk at both lunches.
    - i. There was some discussion about the traffic situation. It was suggested that it could be possible to put some flashing lights for a school zone during high traffic time. Sandy noted that there is a process that takes some time to get through but the police, as well as Mayor Jessica Miller have been involved in conversations.
  - d. She reviewed some aspects of the School Improvement Process - they have a goal to increase and promote data collection from testing; at the completion of this school year she plans to have a handout with 6-11 MAPS data (including a comparison among grade levels). This can help teachers identify

gaps in instruction. It may also include an ACT chart, as well as key pieces from a Catholic identity survey that she is developing with Melissa Yindrick.

i. She noted that ITBS is still given for grades 6-8, but it is limited in its comparative data ability.

ii. This was one of the goals given by the external team that visited for accreditation.

- e. Nov. 25 there will be a 1pm dismissal. The day will begin with an all-school Mass at 8:30am, followed by a variety of activities for the students, including visiting the Villa & Brookestone, cleaning in the chapel, and doing yardwork. For the middle school, a variety of speakers will come in and they'll rotate between speakers.
- f. The Hamilton security grant application was sent October 31, applying for about \$80,000 in improvements; she is not sure when we will hear back.

9. Activities Report - Ron Mimick reported on the following items:

- a. Bishop Conley has given approval for girls' wrestling, Ron has been discussing with Roy Emory what it might look like to bring it here for next year with practice facilities, he is looking for a female coach, and plans to move forward with this for the high school level next year.
- b. A softball co-op opportunity has arisen with Cross County. The team will go by "Polk County/Aquinas", using Polk County uniforms. It is a 2-year commitment, and they will adjust the schedule a little bit to pick up some of the schools Aquinas has previously played, including Neumann. 6 of our girls will play and hopefully Coach Gahan will take the position because then they can drive over together, and Cross County wants us to have a coach on staff. Our financial commitment is to help pay for transportation and one coach. Overall this received very positive feedback from the parents.
- c. He has set a full Junior High & JV football schedule for next year with 8-man (with the majority of these games played on the same days).

10. Aquinas Elementary - Katie Smith reviewed the following items:

- a. She spoke positively of the November 3 Professional Development day - Dr. Eve Rosno spoke to the teachers about self care including both basic health and mental health. The teachers started a wellness committee - last month they had a walking challenge, and this month the challenge is to write 3 they're grateful for every day (the kids are doing this too).
- b. The elementary school continues to focus on reading goals for School Improvement - they looked at the STAR program and AR point goals. They have completed their second round of testing - 84% of students showed growth. She hopes to reach out to North American Martyrs to learn how they promote AR.
- c. The 5th grade student council has 8 students. Their first goal is to help with the food drive. They set a goal of 1,000 food products and decided to have a hot chocolate celebration if they meet the goal. The goal is to build strong community and promote leadership in that class.
- d. They completed a successful book fair (though it fell a little bit short of last year's totals) - the grandparent night had at least 150, and they are discussing whether they need one during the day sometime too.
- e. The All Saints party was also very successful and fun. She noted that having it on the Wednesday before Halloween provides a fun opportunity to interact with the CCD kids too.
- f. For their rosary challenge, they prayed 41 rosaries, 208 decades of rosaries prayed as a school during October.
- g. She would like to look at the pants/shorts dress code to consider adding a khaki option to match the high school. The Board noted that it would make sense to keep the schools having the same. There was some discussion about differing colors of khaki and whether they would need to buy from the same source in order to match.

- h. She applied for a \$37,000 grant for an updated intercom system - the application has been submitted, and she is waiting to hear.

#### 11. Campus Ministry (Melissa Yindrick)

- a. Catholic Schools Week - she is in the initial stages of the planning and is trying to get someone exciting to come, or possibly arrange a Livestream with someone like Fr. Mike Schmitz.
- b. She is also still looking for male mentors for the 1:1 sophomore mentoring program.
- c. This Academy rotation is "Be His Light" which works well moving into the Advent season.
- d. She has begun promoting Steubenville and looking for fundraising opportunities.
- e. She is also looking to increase attendance at TEC.
- f. The students will get to hear the Pope's address livestreaming from NCYC on Friday on the big screen. Sandy has created a special schedule for this.
- g. The annual service day moved to spring.
- h. There has been another First Friday adoration, and Fr. Stec strongly encouraged attending adoration and praying in the chapel.
- i. All retreats are finished except senior spring retreat.

### **Subcommittee and Pillar Reports**

#### 12. Finance

- a. Mike Moravec reported that the financial summary shows a \$116,000 loss, but Gold Rush doesn't come in until spring, so we are not too far off where we should be.
- b. At this point, the Finance Committee is focused on the budget for next year - at the January Board Meeting, we will look at this in depth.
- c. Austin noted that he attended a web call about the federal credits coming in 2027. The first contributions can be made Jan. 1 2027 and these go back on 2027 tax returns. Right now the wording allows for \$1700 per tax return, but there is legislation to change that for couples who are married filing jointly. Those who can qualify for the scholarship would be those under 300% of local area median income (which would be \$66,000 for Butler County). We need to investigate and choose an SGO carefully because they decide what percentage they keep and when Aquinas gets the money.

#### 13. Guidance Report - Sara Miriovsky highlighted the following items from her report:

- a. She reviewed information about MAPS and ASVAB testing.
- b. She has met with seniors and is working with other students on their second semester schedules.
- c. There has been more of an ACT push - quite a few didn't take it the last few years because many colleges no longer require it for entrance, and most 2-year colleges don't require it even for placement exams (they'll use MAPS instead for placement). She explained that typically, community colleges look at GPAs for scholarships and they have supplemental scholarship applications to fill out. They also use the FAFSA for more need-based scholarships.
- d. Since covid, there has been less of a focus on the ACT, but now colleges are going back to it more, especially for scholarships such as the Regents Scholarship, and for placement exams. With this in mind, she would like to see more of our students take it again. Falls City Sacred Heart was able to offer an ACT date during their school day, which could be a possibility for the future.
- e. There is also some increased push to take the pSAT as sophomores for the National Merit Scholarship.
- f. For some public schools, the FAFSA is a graduation requirement.
- g. There was some discussion about scholarships/tuition/entrance, etc.

#### 14. Supportive Community Pillar (Ryan Meister)

- a. The group met and especially discussed marketing - they would like to get fliers into as many households as possible and to as many places in Butler County as possible as well as Seward and Osceola.

- b. These would include highlights of the school such as testing scores, service hours, class sizes, the ag program, student or parent testimonials, Sacraments, a QR code to Mrs. Rachel's video, and info about who to contact if they would like to enroll. They hope to have them on a nice quality, glossy paper so they look professional. They also hope to have a copy in Spanish available on the website.
- c. They continue to seek ways of engaging alumni; the pickleball tournament has several teams registered as of now.
- d. It was noted that there is often an overlap in the work done by various pillars. At the next pillar meeting, we can plan to have time to share amongst the pillars. This meeting is scheduled for February.
- e. It was suggested that the broadcasting class could help with some of the marketing pieces.

#### **Other Items**

##### 15. Principal Discussion for Next School Year

- a. Sandy and Fr. Connor have been discussing plans for next year. They have a plan in place and there is no need to advertise for the principal position. Sandy will be around next year in some capacity, and more details will be given about the plan when they are able to.

#### **Closing Procedures**

##### **16. Next Meeting – January 19th, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m. .. Adoration @ 6:30p.m. (Special Budget Approval Meeting & Enrollment update)**

17. The meeting adjourned after closing prayer at 8:30pm.

## Listing of Board of Advisors

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|------------------------|--|
| 1. Father Brian Connor | Chief Administrative Officer, Dean; David City Deanery |
| 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   |

