

St. Mary Education Committee

February 26, 2025 – 5:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Amanda Wurth, Colleen Stovesand, Lynn Thompson, Andrew DuPerrieu, Matt Durbin, Austin Smith, David Gavin, Blake Cvengros, Paul Humm

Members Not Present: Krista Lee, Kristen Stone, Fr. Gary Clark

St. Mary /Diocesan Staff Present: Monica Hayden, Mary Smith, Ashley Wright, Doug Shelton, Robin Mowers

Meeting Called to Order – 5:30 pm

Opening Prayer

Approval of Minutes – Approved by consensus

Episcopal Vicar Update – No Report

Administrative Updates

Director Updates – Verbal & Written

Mr. Shelton stepping down at the end of the school year.

Intent to return forms have been sent out to teachers. There are two teachers we already know will not be returning.

The district basketball tournament is ongoing. There have been no issues during the games thus far. Dehumidifiers were brought in to keep the floors from sweating, which had been an issue in the past. McCracken has petitioned that St. Mary's doesn't host the tournament anymore. It was nice to have the auxiliary gym for teams to warm up in. Parking has been an issue, with people parking along the street.

Tom Deshler is still out and will be at least through mid-March. We only have custodian for both campuses. He is doing the best he can. We are pursuing a cleaning service to clean the elementary school.

Paducah Water contacted us as they noticed the usage was up at the elementary school. Contacted Ballard Plumbing and they worked through the weekend to find the leak and repair it. Came back on Monday and brought water for all the students while they went through the system and flushed the pipes. We received the invoice, and it was a lot less than expected. We are thankful to them for helping us. The Jr. Vikings had to use the auxiliary gym during the water outage.

Elementary School – Verbal

The Academic team is moving on to the regional competition. Writers started this week, and the team competes this weekend. Based on how they qualify there is an opportunity to compete on a national level. Can compete virtually. Mrs. Duncan does a wonderful job with the team, and they have a high level of support from the families. We are very proud of the team and it's nice to showcase academics.

Jr. Vikings season has wrapped up. Season had a few bumps along the way but was very successful. Proud of the students and their continued growth. We have a need for referees going forward. This was a challenge during the season because the boys and girls teams played on Saturdays throughout the season.

Have multiple open positions. Have a custodian position, and another full-time position (30 hours per week) for lunch monitor and aftercare helper.

The sound system in the chapel has been an issue. Adam Horbovetz has looked at the system and made some improvements, and given some suggestions on how to improve the system. PIE has a budget to help support these improvements.

We had a meeting with middle school teachers, including with Mrs. Birdsong the resource teacher, to see how to make the middle school transition easier for the students. Made notes on the conversation and hope to make improvements and build on the process.

High/Middle School – Written and Verbal

4H speeches were given this week. They are required to give speeches and not demonstrations. They were as prepared as they have ever been. The speeches were well written and well delivered.

At the last Professional Development discussed better ways to onboard new students. Discussion included ways to close the academic gap. Public school students have not had a lot of in-person instruction. There has been a lot of screen time for these students. Grades are often not a good indicator of future performance of students transferring into the system. There is the potential for using standardized tests to try to identify students where the academic gap may be too large. There are other catholic schools that require an entrance exam for all students, both current students and newly applying students.

Middle school is going to join in the Fund Run this year.

Committee Reports

Advancement/Enrollment – Written and Verbal

Good retention from pre-k 4 to kindergarten.

Annual fund is seeing additional donors and existing donors increasing their donations. About 74% of donors have increased their donations.

Finance – Written and Verbal

Father-daughter dance this Saturday (March 1). Expecting about 180 total dads and daughters.

Commend Liz Mangino for her work on this event.

Have been working on getting an external audit or review of the schools' financials. The cost of an audit is more than a review. A review will be beneficial for any grants we will apply for. Waiting on one additional estimate, and then will plan to start in the fall. They will review the current year financials and then the prior year. Would start in July, and then finish up in October or November. For non-profits a review is sufficient. There is funding for this review so it won't affect our operating costs.

FACTS isn't set up to require a family to pay before a student is enrolled and attending classes. There is a family enrolled that hasn't made a payment yet, which is showing up as past due in the accounts receivable. Need a way to require money upfront in the future.

The investment club is doing a good job managing their funds.

If a family has a hardship during the year (job loss or other hardship) we ask for communication and we will work with them. If a family that receives tuition assistance isn't current on payments, they don't qualify for tuition assistance for the next year. Money may still be set aside for them, but will not be awarded until they are current on payments.

Finance Committee and SMEC approved financials by consensus.

Committee Reports

Academics

Last meeting discussed teacher onboarding.

Advancement

(See above Advancement/Enrollment)

Catholic Identity

Focus is student participation in liturgy and paraliturgical activities. Met with Fr. Mike and Ann Marrow at STM to see how they engage families and students to be involved in parish masses. They are kicking off a stewardship campaign for the first time in 5 years. Fr. Mike is motivated to train families and students. Want to collaborate with all the parishes. Have been looking at the student surveys to see what the student perspectives are in the masses and liturgies. Have moved forward with understanding the planning of the music and role assignments for all masses. There are specific roles for Catholic and non-Catholic students.

Enrollment – No Update

Facilities

Have a proposal from a SFM Service to provide a facility management service. They have proposed to spend 80 hours on an initial assessment to provide us with a site-specific facility plan. The conservative cost estimate is \$10,000. Monica to discuss with the finance committee with the intent to move forward with this service. The approved safety grant was a federal grant. Unsure of the status of the grant at this time due to reduced government spending. Will provide an update when we know more. The quote for the engineering for the proposed elementary school parking lot was much higher than anticipated. The initial assessment did not provide a complete project cost projection. Will see if a cost estimate can be included, and will then consider whether to move forward with the engineering phase of the project.

Finance

Working through modeling costs with tuition rates. Have had discussions around talking with the priests about subsidies.

Governance – No Report

Student Life – No Report

Old Business – Finance – SMEC Member input on information provided at January meeting
Will leave this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

New Business – Chiller for MS/HS

Chiller is at end of life and needs to be replaced. We have a quote from Jetts in the amount of \$97,860 to replace the chiller. It has a 12-16 week lead time. There is a donor that gave a gift of \$100,000 in restricted funds who has agreed to fund this project. Fr. Gary has to approve the project and then it goes to the diocese for approval. The cost of the unit itself is \$62,000 with the balance being installation costs.

Concern from a parent over content being taught in the high school. This specific incident is already known to the administration. The parent wants to know what the vetting process is to ensure that inappropriate doesn't make its way into the classroom. Next year there will be department committees at the high school and middle school that will help provide support to review content. Part of the Strategic Plan is a review of the evaluation process. The evaluation process will allow for additional review of content being taught in the classroom. This specific incident has been addressed and corrected. Potentially needs another follow-up with the parent who raised the concern.

Director's evaluations are being handed out. Completed evaluations should be sent to Andrew who will forward them all together to the diocese.

Next Meeting – March 26, 2025

Closing Prayer

Strategic Plan, Catholic Identity Domain

Student Participation and Role Assignment- Example Tracking Tools

Catholic vs. Non-Catholic Parts

Role in Mass	Catholic	Non-Catholic
Altar servers	X	
Cross bearer	X	
First Reading	X	
Responsorial Psalm	X	
Prayers of Faithful	X	X
Gift bearers	X	
Eucharistic ministers	X	
***Introductory Reflection	X	X

Example of Tracking Tool for teachers to assign Speaking vs. Non-speaking roles systematically

First / Second Semester Mass

Date: _____

Student name	Speaking part First reading Responsorial Psalm Prayers of Faithful Introductory Reflection	Non-reading role Altar server Cross bearer Gift bearer Eucharistic minister
1. Sally Sue	X	
2. Tom Tally	X	
3. Bob Bark		X
4. Janet Jackson		X
5. Rick Stick		X
6. Rebecca Roe	X	
7.		
8.		

Mass Date: _____

Speaking roles	Non- speaking roles
Sally Sue	Bob Bark
Tom Tally	Janet Jackson
Rebecca Roe	Rick Stick

Make sure second semester mass, roles are switched.

SMEC

February 26, 2025

Directors Notes

Principal's search - committee has been formed and we are advertising the position throughout the area. Applications are open until March 21 where they will be reviewed and interviews set up in early April.

Intent to returns were sent to all faculty and staff, with a due date of this Friday. We do expect to have open teacher positions and will post for those in March.

I have been very impressed with all the work that has gone into hosting the district tournaments. Teachers, staff and administrators, along with many parents, have stepped up to help. I had some visitors compliment the school both nights on a number of areas.

Maintenance - Tom has still not been released to return back to work and we continue to make due with a very limited cleaning staff. We are looking at using an outside agency for custodial work at the ES - our one custodian is having to clean both schools and it is just too much.

We had an issue at the ES with an underground line. PW informed us that our water usage was up. We were able to get a plumber in over the weekend to find the leak and fix it. The only disruption was to Jr. Viking games on Sat, and flushing the system on Monday. I was very grateful to Ballard plumbing for their quick response, support for the students (providing bottled water on Monday until drinking faucets were all reset) and what I am sure was a discount on the emergency services.

ST MARY MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL
Principal's Report – Douglas Shelton
February, 2025

This February, heck this whole second semester, has had an abundance of activity, athletics, and weather to keep everyone more than busy and active with all things St. Mary! Now in this final week of February, despite hosting the HS District Basketball Tournament, routines by day seem to be normalizing again in the classroom and students/teachers can settle in for the next 6 weeks until Spring Break. There's been a lot happening at St. Mary MS/HS, and here's a few of the highlights from this month....

Academic / Culture Accomplishments

- Our district winning MS Academic Team is now qualified for state next month after finishing 2nd at regionals. 4 additional students qualified through writing comps. or content assessments.
- We managed through a period of NTI with overall satisfaction reported by parents/students in course load during this time. This keeps students from having to make up these days in May.
- Our MS Academic team finished 3rd of 18 teams participating in the challenging 170th DOE Science Bowl.
- 3 of our Juniors were named Centre Fellows, which could lead to 26K in Scholarships, should they attend Centre University

Athletic Accomplishments / Notes

- Our boys and girls HS basketball teams completed amazing regular seasons, and the boys have already clinched their trip to Regionals next week! St. Mary is proud to host the district tournament this week, and we appreciate the "all hands on deck" approach of our personnel and families making this event possible for us to host and show off our wonderful schools and facilities!
- Luke Sims achieved 2,000 points, becoming the fourth player as a St. Mary Viking to do so.
- Our Varsity boys defeated Paducah Tilghman to obtain the #1 seed in districts, and then later took down the defending state champ in Lyon County Lyons. They are a perfect 14-0 at home this year, with just the district final left to play.
- Our girls HS basketball program has put up their largest win total in almost 15 years.
- 7th Grader Cash Miller sunk a half court shot to win the McDonald's Half-Time Bank Shot during Monday's district game vs. CCA.
- MS Soccer, HS Tennis, HS Baseball, Track and HS Softball all are about to open seasons, and early practices have begun or will start very soon!

Spiritual / Service Notes

- Random Acts of Kindness were everywhere at St. Mary this month, with students cleaning, prepping, constructing a word wall, etc. Words of encouragement can still be seen up and down the HS Hallway.
- A Student Ambassador group has been formed and will be crucial in welcoming new students, as well as, highlighting various things at St. Mary from a "student perspective".
- The freshman class has started their annual crochet project to benefit Hope Unlimited.
- Two MS Masses and two HS Masses were held this month, along with multiple trips to the chapel for Adoration throughout the month.

Shadow Students:

- An 8th grader is scheduled to shadow on Wednesday, February 26th.
- Two students (6th and 7th grade) shadowed on February 6th and will be enrolling for the next school year.
- Two students (5th and 1st grade) are scheduled to shadow on March 10th and are enrolled for the 2025/2026 school year.

Tours:

- Six tours were conducted this month, with four additional tours scheduled for this week.

Alumni:

- Plans are underway for the upcoming alumni reunion in May, as well as a potential alumni night in downtown this spring.