



**Stella Maris Academy Board Meeting
September 7, 2017**
Diocese of Duluth Pastoral Center

Present: Bob Lisi (Chair), Fr. James Bissonette, Fr. Peter Muhich, Fr. Ryan Moravitz, Fr. Richard Kunst, Paul Fitzgerald, Mary Lou Jennings, Laura Schauer, Stephen Olson, Cynthia Zook, Karen Newstrom, Sister Edith Bogue, Interim President Hilaire Hauer *ex officio*

Excused: none

1. Opening Prayer
 - a. The meeting was convened at 4:03 pm with prayer led by Fr James Bissonette
2. Mission Moments

A family new to Stella Maris Academy have been at morning Mass each day this week with their enrolled children. Their two boys modeled the new uniforms. It was great to see a new family, people who had been homeschoolers, choose our school. It was great to see them interacting with the morning Mass crowd.

A Board member was impressed by news coverage this week. It was great to see the students at St. James speaking so proudly about their new Academy. I've been at the Holy Rosary campus every day this week, dropping off kids. I saw one family frustrated with paperwork, but that's pretty normal.

Two experiences at the St. John's campus convinced me that we made the right decision. Children themselves were thanking us for making this new school. It was fun to watch the children at that age level who were playing on the playground equipment just like little kids. Because they were in their own age group, no need to impress anyone.

I have been able to see the St. Michael's kids incorporate just as well as the other kids. I'm hoping that word of mouth might even prompt some other people to return to Stella Maris Academy who previously were at St. Michaels school.

The banner came and it's a striking image. Children were standing next to it to get their photos taken on the first day of school.

Bishop Sirba reported that he was on a tour of Great Lakes Fine Arts Academy in Duluth, located in the former St. Peter's Church. He met the director and a Catholic parishioner who has commissioned a work of art for the Holy Rosary Campus. It's an image of the Blessed Mother surrounded by children. It is in a classical style of art. He understands our programs, and is willing to collaborate with us in ways that might enrich the school. This is a great affirmation of the direction we are taking.

3. Public Comment

Jennifer Deming reports that the Family Association is up and running on all campuses. There are room parents in every classroom on two campuses; they are still working on achieving this goal at the St. James. A Halloween Party is being planned. The Welcome events are all going well, one more tonight at St. John's. Ms. Deming was asked to be part of the President's Team, and offered to be also be present at Board meetings.

4. Approval of previous meeting minutes

Fr Kunst moved (seconded) to approve the minutes of the August 2017 meeting. Carried.

5. Board Appeal and Development

The Appeal is deferred until the next meeting. All Board members will be asked to be involved. All Board members are asked to be involved with the Bishop's Dinner on October 29. Table sponsorship is \$1200, half a table for \$600. Last year, we were only able to find sponsors for 7 of 32 tables. Board members can approach organizations or businesses that might support a table. A generous donor is underwriting much of the event with a combination of personal and gathered support.

Initial donations received to date from a few sources total approximately \$9000.

President Hauer reported that she is re-examining the feasibility of moving forward with a Raisers Edge contract. Stella Maris Academy has access to CDM through its current contract. That program links directly with the accounting software, which Raisers Edge does not. Using Raisers Edge would require entering each donation twice. There is also a significant learning curve for using Raisers Edge, and we need to be up to speed more quickly. Although the expenditure was approved at an earlier Board meetings, the size of the expense and these pragmatic reasons point to studying the options more closely.

6. MNSAA Accreditation: Report and Strategic Plan

Ms. Julianne Blazevic distributed the draft of the Strategic Plan. She reports that the principals have been working hard on the profile and self-study. The last component is

narrative about Stella Maris Academy's strategic plan. The principals were working hard on the narrations all summer while also getting the schools ready for the transition.

The draft distributed today was developed based on the Called To Be One documents. The Principals identified four major objectives. Strategies were developed for each of these. Teachers worked in groups to provide the feedback which was used to refine the strategies. The required family-input component for these objectives and strategies is drawn from the Called To Be One process, which is now a year old. Therefore, stakeholder input is an important component of this strategic plan.

Objective 3 focuses areas that come under the Board's purview. Strategy areas were developed by the principals and teachers, but these will need to be fully developed by members of the Board itself, working in a short time frame to meet the submission deadlines. It was decided that Steve Olson will head up work on Strategy 1, Bob Lisi on Strategies 2 and 7, Erin Makela on Strategy 3, Hilaire Hauer on Strategy 4, Paul Fitzgerald on Strategy 5, and Jenna Kelly on Strategy 6. All the drafts will be sent straight to Julianne. Ms. Blazevic reminded the Board that this is considered a living document which can be changed over time. MNSAA requires that the Strategic Plan be updated regularly.

Laura moved (seconded) that we express our thanks to the principals and teachers for the immense amount of work that went into getting the accreditation documents ready while also preparing for the transition to Stella Maris Academy.

7. Board Communication and Transparency

The Stella Maris Academy website (<http://stellamaris.academy>) is ready to launch. Board minutes are ready to put the Board minutes on the website. The new By-Laws will also be posted. Board pictures and brief bios will also be posted on the website. If any information needs to be updated, Board members should contact Erin Makela.

One member proposed holding at least some of the meetings at various campus sites. This increases visibility of Board action to the parents, staff and teachers. This is seen as desirable, if it can be accomplished without disrupting after-school activities. Chair Bob Lisi and President Hauer will explore how this might be accomplished.

8. High School Task Force

This year must invest heavily in planning. A task force of subject leaders is being developed, drawing on expertise beyond the Board. As soon as the task force is assembled, it will plan a series of meetings for community involvement in the planning. The goal is that families of children in Grade 9 and 10 are able to enroll at the same time as families with children in Pre-K through 8. Chair Bob Lisi will lead the opening phase of the Task Force, with the goal that new leadership will be developed over the course of the year. Bishop Sirba is committed to supporting this Task Force and the vision.

9. Staffing Update

Stella Maris Academy welcomed a 5th grade teacher at the St John's campus, a Physical Education teacher at the St. James campus, a teacher for STEM and art working on both the St. John's and St. James campuses, a Faith Formation Director for all campuses with a focus on Middle School, a cook at the St John's campus and 2 new kitchen helpers. Erin Makela is our new Director of Marketing Development. The Admissions and Communications Assistant and the Business Manager positions are open. Interviews with applicants will be taking place before the next Board meeting.

The Board expressed its appreciation for the good work that President Hilaire Hauer is doing with the staffing and more broadly.

10. Committee Updates

Development Committee reported above, with a major focus on the Scholarship Dinner in October. The Board is asked to pray for a potential major donor who is discerning a major gift. The Pastors are helping Mary Lou Jennings to meet possible major donors.

Finance Committee distributed a final budget and request that it be approved by the Board. It was developed using a combination of projections based on start-of-the-year information and historical information from the three campuses. The budget is an important tool for planning and for monitoring revenue and expenditures.

Finance Committee moved to approve the budget. Carried unanimously.

There will be on-going work to connect with the Finance Councils of the parishes that host a campus, especially regarding capital investments that could benefit both parish and school. There might be need for a shared-use committee. The Finance Committee is also working on developing a staff spending policy.

Paul Fitzgerald moved (seconded) that we recognize with gratitude the wonderful contributions of the parishes to put the school facilities into good order at the start of the year, and this really eased the burden of starting the school.

Bishop Sirba expressed gratitude to the Diocesan Pastoral Center staff for all of their support in these hiring and financial transition ideas. Merging multiple ways of operating requires tremendous effort, but it also produces numbers and perspective that we have not previously had. The detail that we now have about costs and revenues can help us to be better stewards. Stella Maris Academy has over 70 employees, and involves more than 500 students and their families. Pastors on the hosting campuses are experiencing new roles.

Facilities Committee: The lease template document has been created; Franz Hoefflerle is finalizing the specific details with each parish. President Hilaire Hauer will sign the leases documents on behalf of the school.

Formation Model. Jennifer Boran, the new Faith Formation Director, is added to the ad hoc committee on the Formation Model. Her specific duties are still being defined.

11. Executive Session

The Board with Bishop Sirba went into Executive Session at 5:45pm to discuss staffing during the transition. The Board returned to Open Session at 5:55pm.

12. Closing Prayer was led by Bishop Paul Sirba. The meeting adjourned at 5:58pm.

Important Dates for Board Members

Board Meeting (4:00-5:30pm)	Executive Committee Meeting
October 5	September 21
November 2	October 19
December 7	November 23 or alternate date
<i>January 4, 2018</i>	<i>December 21, 2017</i>
<i>February 1, 2018</i>	<i>January 18, 2018</i>
<i>March 1, 2018</i>	<i>February 15, 2018</i>
<i>April 5, 2018</i>	<i>March 22, 2018</i>
<i>May 3, 2018</i>	<i>April 19, 2018</i>

All-Campus Mass is Sept 26 at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral.

Bishop's Scholarship Dinner is on October 29, 2017

MNSAA Accreditation Visit occurs October 22-26.

Respectfully submitted,

Sister Edith Bogue, O.S.B.