



**BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
STELLA MARIS ACADEMY  
DECEMBER 7, 2017**

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

1. Opening Prayer
  - a. Chair Bob Lisi opened the meeting at 4:04pm.
  - b. Bishop Paul Sirba led the group in prayer.
2. Mission Moment
  - a. Several members shared experiences of families coming together and making Stella Maris more and more a part of their lives and even planning for future children.
3. Public Comment
  - a. Jennifer Deming, President of the Family Association, reported that this is a relatively quiet time for the Family Association. Room parents are working on classroom events. St John's campus had a family football event. St James Middle School had a lock-in event. Family Association is looking ahead to Catholic Schools Week. They are planning for volunteer and teacher appreciation events in April and May.
4. Approval of previous meeting minutes. **Moved and seconded. Carried.**  
Approval of minutes of Executive session. **Moved and seconded. Carried.**

5. Approval of Policies

The Finance Committee brought forward an Internal Control Process policy.  
**Paul Fitzgerald, committee chair, moved that they be approved. Carried.**

Future policies: Change of configuration means that Pre-K sites need to have an entirely new license as Stella Maris Academy. License is per location, and policies are slightly different at each of the two locations. The two policies will need approval after the State of Minnesota determines who is the controlling party.

6. Financial Model Vision

SMA currently operates with a tuition model supplemented by fund-raising. A stewardship model is an alternate approach. Bishop Sirba isn't proposing rapid change, but planting seeds for a move that would take considerable time to implement if adopted. With help from Joe Lichty's arrival as



Diocesan Director of Development/Stewardship, see if we can move from a "fee for product" approach to one that reflects our relationship with Christ, from whom all is gift.

Some Finance Committee content needs to be brought to Executive Session.

#### 7. Middle School Model

Principals have been discussing the two different configurations at our two middle school locations. Currently have grades 5-8 as middle school on St John's campus, 6-8 at St. James campus. Principals ask whether alignment needs to be identical on this issue. Discussion ensued. Next steps include each principal visiting the other campus, and principals work on a recommendation that includes the pros and cons for their suggested outcome.

**Motion by Sister Edith Bogue, seconded: That the School President bring a recommendation on the grade level model for the middle school in the 2018-2019 school year to the Board at its January meeting. Carried.**

#### 8. High School Task Force Update

Initial discussion focuses on what we mean by having a high school. One view proposes that 15-20 ninth-graders, a continuation of our current program, could be enough. It could be at one of our existing locations or a new location. Others question how such a small pool of students could be adequate in financial terms. Tuition would not cover cost of teachers. The minimum program needs a sound financial basis, which is not present now. Discussion about current year's budget, income, and cash flow. Our fund-raising efforts have produced more than budgeted for those events, but overall, we are well below budget and operating at a deficit.

Discussion moved to the question of timing. On the one hand, Bishop announced a high school and it was one of the "givens" of the Called To Be One process. We have had fits and starts in the diocese about a high school for years.

- One view says that putting it off will foster the view that it's not going to happen – again. That view proposes that, if there is a critical mass of students that is financially sustainable, we can start small with a 9th grade and add a grade each year.
- Another view states that we are in the midst of tremendous transition with the unifying of the parochial schools. All of our staff is stretched very thin, working long hours, and stressed. We are not yet breaking even financially. Adding the start of a high school may be more change than can be managed well.
- Members brought up the situation that representatives from the ISD 709 high schools come onto campus in February and March to recruit students. We need to have made a public decision before then, with publicity, if we plan to start a high school.
- Other points include the need for integrated fund-raising (high school integrated with other SMA fund-raising for one budget, not separate), defining a curriculum and hiring model for qualified teachers in that model, what co-curriculars would be available to high school students, the advisability of having a range from 5th grade through high school in one building (if in a current site), and the cost of readying an alternate site (security, technology, classrooms, support spaces).

High School Task Force is working to generate a solid enough plan in terms of logistics, location, curriculum, staffing, and financing, to be able to make a recommendation to the Board for a September 2018 opening.

9. Executive Session

10. Closing Prayer was led by Fr. Richard Kunst.

Respectfully submitted,

Sister Edith Bogue

2018 Board Meeting Dates

(First Thursday of every month from 4-5:30pm unless noted otherwise)

Board Meeting (4:00-5:30pm)	Executive Committee Meeting
January 4	December 21
February 1	January 18
March 1 (Annual meeting)	February 15
April 12 (due to spring break)	March 22
May 3	April 19
June 7 (board retreat)	May 24
July 12 (due to July 4 <sup>th</sup> holiday)	June 21
August 2	July 19
September 6	August 23
October 4	September 20
November 1	October 18
December 6	November 22