



**BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
STELLA MARIS ACADEMY  
September 5, 2019  
St. James Campus**

**Present:** Bob Lisi (Chair), Fr. Rich Kunst, Fr. Drew Braun, John Matthews, Paul Fitzgerald, Karen Newstrom, Barry Bigelow, Fr. Jim Bissonette, Sharon Mollerus, Fr. Peter Muhich, John Kenney, Hilaire Hauer (President, *ex officio*), Cynthia Zook (Director of Schools, *ex officio*)

**Absent:** Nick Minardi, Steve Olson

**Guests:** Julianne Blazevic, Peggy Frederickson, Jesse Murray, Mike Mazzio, Betsy Kneepkens

**Opening prayer:** The meeting began at 3:01 with a prayer led by Fr. Jim Bissonette.

**Agenda approved**

**Mission moments:**

- At the SMA Picnic in August, a mother shared how her non-Catholic first grader begged to be, and was, baptized into the Church last year.
- A daughter shared that a fellow student's family was praying for discernment on becoming Catholic.
- A Stella Maris Academy parent proclaimed, "How can you not send your children to Stella Maris?"
- When a second grader was asked what their classroom rules were, the response was, "We have to live like saints."

**Public comment:**

A parent whose children graduated from Holy Rosary and now attend Marshall School spoke in support of the proposed MSHSL continuation agreement between Stella Maris Academy and Marshall School. She advocated that it provides an advantage to small schools that otherwise may struggle or be unable to support high school level athletic teams on their own.

**Approval of August 1 board meeting minutes with an amendment replacing "Approval of wellness section in the Faculty/Staff Handbook" to "Approval of Wellness Policy to be included in the Faculty/Staff Handbook and Family/Student Handbook." Moved by Sharon Mollerus, seconded and carried.**

### **Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) continuation agreement proposal:**

Four parents have contacted leaders asking for approval of the proposed MSHSL continuation agreement between Stella Maris Academy and Marshall School. The agreement would allow Stella Maris Academy seventh and eighth grade students to play up to the high school level on Marshall School teams. If approved, Marshall School will be responsible for administering the program and supporting SMA families with the necessary information to participate. Stella Maris Academy will continue to offer elementary and middle school level activities in athletics, fine arts, and life skills. The SMA activities program is open to the public. Discussion followed on the effect a MSHSL continuation agreement may have on the SMA activities program, such as potentially reducing the number of participants due to the option for students to play up on high school level teams. Conversely, having an option for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade SMA students to compete at the high school level may support their continuation at SMA through graduation.

**Motion that Bob Lisi, Mike Mazzio and Hilaire Hauer meet with Marshall School representatives to finalize the MSHSL continuation agreement with the option to present a final agreement via email to the board for electronic approval moved by Barry Bigelow, seconded and carried.**

### **Homeschool access to SMA classes:**

- A homeschool family inquired whether elective-type courses such as band, art, and music would be available for their students. Discussion recognized the confidence in the current model which values enrollment on a full-time basis, subject to school policies, reporting structures and liability as points of discussion. Homeschool students can participate in SMA activities. Currently the band program at St. James can accommodate homeschool students because it functions like an activity and is not a course/grade-based offering. No action taken.

### **Financial Update:**

- July's financial report posed no surprises with a strong close to the 2018-2019 fiscal year.
- The Casshie Trust distribution will be listed as an extraordinary contribution in financial reports.
- The finance committee will further develop the documentation to establish a permanent endowment for operational expenses and a 5-year term endowment for specific initiatives. A governing body for overseeing the endowments will need to be created.
- Work continues on evaluating staff compensation.
- A new timesheet submittal software will be piloted with anticipated roll-out to all staff this year.

### **Campus security improvements:**

- Request for Proposal documents for security enhancements will be sent to two local contractors with the goal of awarding a contract at the October board meeting.

**Bishop's Dinner:**

- The date of the dinner is Sunday, Oct. 27. The theme is Building Upon a Legacy, with efforts to finalize the events speakers in progress.
- Board members are encouraged to identify table sponsors and help fill at least half of the available tables with attendees.

**Meeting with area pastors:**

- The executive committee along with Teresa Kenney and Jenny Boran will meet with Bishop Sirba and area pastors September 19 at 5 PM.
- The focus will be on building a common understanding of our shared mission and identifying opportunities to help SMA thrive.

**Executive session** entered into at 4:37 PM.

**Adjourned** with closing prayer at 5:19.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Newstrom