



## FEBRUARY MEETING OF THE BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS AND AGENDA

The Basilica School of Saint Mary Home and School Association  
Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 7:00 PM  
Christ Child Hall

*\*Pre-submitted Committee Reports are in blue.*

- I. **7:04 -- Call to Order** – Jonathan Day, HSA President
  
- II. **Principal's Report** – Mr. Robert Loia, Principal
  - a. **Catholic Schools Week:** We had a successful week, which started with the campus reveal; around 200 people came through. The book fair did very well throughout, and we just finished and packed it up. We were able to gather items for Christ House on Monday, and we went there in the evening to recognize them for all their service. On Tuesday, the students watched a movie. That was a little different for us, and a little challenging the morning. The middle school students gathered to watch in their classrooms and in Christ Child Hall, and that worked well. The students got popsicles that day, and they didn't have homework that night. On Wednesday, we gave out cookies to school families and the students wrote parent letters. We recognized the seminarians and delivered spiritual bouquets at mass on Friday. The faculty luncheon was nice, and want to thank Sarah and Jonathan for being there. Thank you, too, for the blankets that were purchased for us.
  
  - b. **Encore Schedule:** The new schedule went out for Encore; we explained everything today in the letter that went out. We hired a new teacher to be our principle teacher for that period. If you look through the curriculum, there are multiple goals. We hope that this will help with scheduling with our Encore teachers, and will provide differentiated instruction in grades 5-7 that will help with specific teachers. **Suggestion:** *Could the grade level teachers send out even more specific information?*
  
  - c. **Ash Wednesday/Valentine's Day:** Ash Wednesday is coming up quickly, and because it is the same day as Valentine's Day, we will celebrate Valentine's on

Tuesday, February 13.

- d. **Feast of Saint Joseph:** We will start working with the room parents to prepare for the Feast of Saint Joseph on March 19. Will look into whether there is a local bakery that can make the zeppole pastries.
- III. **Treasurer's Report** – Joe Young, HSA Treasurer
- a. Through the end of January, we have an operating profit of about \$45,000, and a paper loss of about \$2,100, which was a transfer to the HSA capital improvements fund. We are operating at a healthy profit.
- IV. **Secretary's Report** – Erica Dempsey, HSA Secretary
- a. **January Meeting Minutes**
  - b. **HSA Communications:** A reminder that all communications relating to HSA-sponsored events, fundraisers and initiatives for *The Messenger* and for social media should be coordinated through the Secretary, and requests for content must be received by the Friday of the week preceding the posting to allow for time to generate content and graphics.
- V. **Mary Lead Us Campaign** – Anne Mathis
- a. It has been over five years since the Mary Lead Us campaign started. We currently have a gap of about \$400,000. We have raised close to \$12 million, and of course part of that went to the Mater Dei program. Coming Home to Mary was in part to engage everybody to come in and see the facilities. We intend to do it again next year, and hopefully we will then have elevators which will allow us to expand the invitation list. The next thing in terms of the Mary Lead Us Campaign is the donor recognition opportunities.
  - b. **Coming Home to Mary:** The Honor Society tour guides were really wonderful during the event. They were given a script, they did a great job, and by the end of the event, they were walking around like they'd been doing it a thousand times.
- VI. **Annual Fund Report** – Eva Domotorffy, Magda Patrick, Ted Fyock
- a. **Status of Annual Fund Campaign as of February 2, 2024:** *See chart below.* In January, the campaign will continue with Saturday morning Go Saints! Fund Emails to non-donors only. In February, we will work on Challenge Gift Month, have a Tuesday pick-up carpool Go Saints! Fund rally with volunteer 8<sup>th</sup> graders, and an email to kindergarten non-donor parents.
- Year End Goal:** \$100,000; 118% of goal!  
**FY24 Goal:** \$150,000; 79% of goal.  
**FY 24 Stretch Goal:** \$200,000; 59% of goal.

	FY24	FY23 (7/1/22-1/2/23)
<b>Total Gifts</b>	\$117,745	\$110,528
<b>Total Donors</b>	217	203
<b>Average Gift</b>	\$510	\$481
<b>Total First Time Gifts</b>	\$12,560	
<b>Total First Time Donors</b>	47	
<b>Total Grandparents Gifts</b>	\$18,055; 17% of total giving to date	
<b>Total Grandparent Donors</b>	13	
<b>Total # of gifts \$1,000 and above</b>	39; \$67,059; 61% of total giving to date	
<b>Specific Initiatives</b>		
<b>Patrick Family Email (11/18/23)</b>		\$2300
<b>Saint Nicholas Winter Festival Email (12/2/23)</b>		\$900
<b>McMorris Family Email (12/9/23)</b>		\$1600
<b>Leah Hays/Library Media Center Email (12/16/23)</b>		\$1500
<b>Chase Hollas Email</b>		--
<b>Average Email Opens</b>		84.1%
<b>Average Email Clicks</b>		8.5%

- VII. Hospitality Committee Update –** Cara Burke, with Stephanie Scott and Rebecca Stalnaker
- a. Hospitality’s January events include First Friday Bagels (upon learning several teachers have dietary restrictions, we’ve added gluten free options), the Winter Open House (who doesn’t love Misha’s coffee and Firehook pastries?), and adorable rolling snack carts loaded up with all our teacher’s favorite delectables for Catholic Schools Week.
  - b. **ACTION ITEM – Extended Day Staff Luncheons:** Extended Day staff are indispensable to working parents and we need to show them appreciation. Should we offer two lunches from the same vendor on half days where we treat teachers (teachers lunch at 12, and extended day staff at 3:15)? *Jonathan will reach out to discuss with the Hospitality Committee.*
  - c. **Discussion:** Mr. Loia said he thought it would be nice to have something for the extended day staff, but it’s a question of when. There was a nice spread for the extended day faculty. Per the note about special needs (dietary, etc.), requested that if staff has a special need, the communication about that should be streamlined through Mrs. Touchet. Administration should convey this to the teachers.
- VIII. FIS Update –** Erin Donnelly and Anne Heishman
- a. **Reminder to Committee Chairs:** Please email [fis@smsva.org](mailto:fis@smsva.org) with the names and

hours of volunteers participating in events outside of school hours. Chairs should confirm that registered volunteers fulfilled the hours/tasks they signed up for via Sign Up Genius links.

- b. School Hour Volunteers:** Parents should continue to check in AND out when volunteering at the school.
- c. FIS Share Status Emails:** On February 6, emails will be sent with FIS share status – completed or outstanding.
- d. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:**
  - i. CYO Volleyball:** CYO is looking for a “shadow” coordinator this year to take the lead coordinator position next year. Parent must be OPCYP-compliant. Contact [fis@smsva.org](mailto:fis@smsva.org).
  - ii. Trivia Night Coordinator:** The Trivia Night team is looking for a co-coordinator to stay on in future years. Contact [fis@smsva.org](mailto:fis@smsva.org).
- e. Discussion:** Are FIS shares credited to families when grandparents volunteer? A: Mrs. Cantwell said when she was here that families should get the credit because they are helping in the school. Must be a family member.

**IX. Room Parent Update – Laura Pfeffer Coleman and Ashley McCurry**

- a. Teacher and Staff Appreciation Day:** Room Parents were pleased to play an active role in the Teacher and Staff Appreciation Day during Catholic Schools Week. Each homeroom teacher received a class gift valued at approximately \$100. Each class aide received a class gift valued at approximately \$50. Additionally, thanks to each homeroom’s \$400 contribution to the pooled gift fund, the assistant room parent coordinator purchased 20 Amazon gift cards (\$50 each) for faculty (without homerooms) and 44 Amazon gift cards (\$25 each) for school staff. This group of individuals includes the Encore teachers, administrators, office staff, kitchen& facilities staff, learning center staff, and extended day staff. The room parent program would not have been able to purchase these gift cards for all the faculty without homerooms and school staff, totaling \$2,100, without each class’s support. THANK YOU to our school families for helping us to celebrate the School’s faculty and staff!
- b. ACTION ITEM – Request for Earlier Notification for Volunteer Needs:** The Room Parent program was able to support 2 relatively last-minute requests for volunteers for Catholic Schools Week. We received on request on January 25 for volunteers needed on January 30. We received another request on January 28 for volunteers needed on January 29. Because these volunteers did interact with students, we sought to recruit only OPCYP-compliant volunteers. We sent the names to the Parish Liaison to the Office for the Protection of Children & Young People to confirm the volunteers were compliant. While the Parish Liaison was

ultimately able to check the names for us before the volunteer opportunities occurred (preventing the Office from being forced to potentially have to turn away non-compliant volunteers), the Liaison reminded us that the policy for checking volunteers for an activity is that the names should be submitted to the Parish Liaison at least 2 weeks prior to the date. Going forward, we request the school send us requests for volunteers at least 3 weeks before the activity.

**X. Community Health and Wellness, Family Wellness – Jen Szymanski, Erin Bell**

**a. Community Health and Wellness:** The Wellness Committee has a variety of activities planned for Heart Month to help raise awareness around heart health and encourage students to increase daily heart-healthy actions like increasing movement and making health food choices.

i. There will be an inspiration wall outside of the health clinic with photos of students taking part in their favorite heart healthy activities, including sports, recreation and play. Families are encouraged to submit a photo with the student's name, grade and parent signature on the back.

ii. There will be a school-wide Heart Walk on February 9. The route and time are still being worked out, but it will likely be at the end of the day.

iii. There will be a Heart Month dress down day on February 13. For \$2 donations, students can wear red and the proceeds will go to the Children's Heart Foundation.

iv. BINGO cards with various heart healthy foods and activities will be available in the health clinic for students to pick up and fill out throughout the month of February. **ACTION ITEM – Would the HSA support some sort of small trinket or prize for those who complete this activity?**

**b. Family Wellness:** Mr. Loia has reached out to other schools to see if they want to share in the event with Dr. Sax. We still need to decide where we will host it and logistics for the event.

**c. Inviting Other Schools:** The way that Dr. Sax has done this in other schools is that if the school wanted to use it as a fundraiser, they could open it to the public and sell tickets. At the January meeting, we agreed the HSA could cover his contracted fee. There was concern about mixing in high school students to ensure that the presentation was appropriate for the grade level and for our community. We want to get as many families here as possible. The gym should be available. We should start advertising as soon as possible, and do a registration so we can figure out how many people are coming, and give them a chance to submit a question in advance.

**XI. Youth & Young Adult Apostolates – Mariane Staron**

**a. F3: Faith, Fun, and Friends** (*led by the Office of the Youth Apostolate staff, young adult leaders, high school leadership team, and parent chaperones*): In place of the regular F3, we will be bringing the middle schoolers to play laser tag on

February 23.

- b. **Small Groups** (*led by parent volunteers in coordination with the Office of the Youth Apostolate staff*):
  - i. Blaze for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls continue to meet at Christ Child Hall on a bi-weekly basis.
  - ii. St. Dominic Savio Group for middle school boys met on January 31<sup>st</sup> where they cleaned up the cemetery, assisted Mrs. St. Pierre with a project, as well as participated in prayer and fellowship.
- c. **CYO** (*led by the CYO Athletic Director, coordinators, and the Director of the Youth and Young Adult Apostolates*):
  - i. Registration for spring co-ed track and field grades 3-8 and girls' volleyball grades 3-8 will open up within the next two weeks. Track will have 120+ participants. Volleyball, in its third year with CYO, will have 70-80 participants. Emails regarding registration will be sent to all CYO families as well as posted on the Messenger, Bulletin, and parish Newsletters.
- d. **Save-the-Date:**
  - i. CYO Volunteer Appreciation reception will be held April 21.
  - ii. CYO Day will be the afternoon of May 4.
- e. **Other Groups:**
  - i. **Junior Catholic Daughters of America:** Continue to meet monthly. Next meeting is scheduled for February 18.
  - ii. **American Heritage Girls:** Continue to meet on a biweekly basis and working to offer the girls a Lenten Retreat.
  - iii. **Trail Life:** Continue to meet on a monthly basis, plus offer other opportunities for continued growth and fellowship within the troop.

**XII. Special Events Coordinator – Brianna Neasham**

- a. See attached list of HSA events.
- b. **ACTION ITEM – Mother-Son Event date selection.**
  - i. Bowlero was a successful event last year, although not all the moms got to bowl. Thinking this way we take away the prize giving to create more time. Would charge \$50 per family. The actual cost is \$17 per person, which includes bowling for two hours, pizza and soda, and a \$10 arcade card. The facility in Springfield maxes out at 240 people. Decision: Hold it on April 14<sup>th</sup> at the Springfield Bowlero.
- c. **ACTION ITEM – Father-Daughter Dance theme selection.**
  - i. Tapping into the Taylor Swift frenzy, theme will be “Eras”, but will focus on different eras at St. Mary’s.

**XIII. Gala and Auction – Haydee Moore**

- a. We have a new date and venue confirmed for the Gala – Friday, May 31 at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington. We have new app contract for Auction and Ticket sales. Ticket sales should kick off soon.
- b. **Planning:** We have a new app approved to use for at least the next three years. We have started the solicitation for auction items. We have discussed raising the ticket prices from \$100 to \$120. We have secured about \$15,000 in sponsored support for the event. Tickets will go on sale as soon as we get the vendor to make the site for the auction; they will release the app to us once they are paid – the invoice just came in so that will be paid soon. The venue has been donated to us, and its capacity is 400.
- c. **8<sup>th</sup> Graders/New Parents:** Have heard some feedback from 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents that their wavering on whether they will go given the late date of the event (the week before graduation). A suggestion was made to do a separate appeal to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents, and also making a special appeal to new parents coming in next year. We are discussing the possibility of a mailer or invitation to new parents, and we can target the 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents, too. Given some current frustrations with among the 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents, helping to turn this into a good farewell celebration for them might drive more interest.

**XIV. External Fundraising – Muffy Day**

- a. We have had some interesting ideas come in, including renting out a theater as a fundraiser. We also have some artist parents who are looking to help us, and we are working through some approvals with Mr. Loia.

**XV. New Business**

- a. **From Mrs. Luechtefeld:** On behalf of the teachers, thank you for all you do for us, including those of us who don't have homerooms. The teachers really appreciate it. For the auction, recommend reaching out to the teachers for the auction (thinking about doing a karaoke party with milkshakes) – teachers are willing to offer things in the auction.
- b. **Gym Scoreboard: When will the scoreboard in the gym be fixed? This has come up during CYO basketball games, both from BSSM coaches and visiting coaches.**
  - i. **From Jean-Marie:** The issue is that the scoreboard is fairly old, and is a size that no longer exists. It was within the first couple of weekends of play that it blew out. Any other scoreboard that we can get now runs by WiFi, and therefore needs a remote. There is an issue with the electrical panel on the stage which is causing the scoreboard not to work. We are getting some quotes from some companies and finalizing the measurements. Hopefully we can get some recommendations for the scoreboard within the next

couple of weeks. Once we get the go head, we should be able to have it installed quickly. Goal might be to have it installed by the time of the Colin Casey game on March 20.

- c. **Field Trips:** The calendar is showing several days for field trips for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Gettysburg is to be determined, and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be going to the Spy Museum on June 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - d. **School Calendar:** We are discussing the start date. There are guidelines that the diocese provides, and this year they say we can start between August 21<sup>st</sup> and August 26<sup>th</sup>, and August 22<sup>nd</sup> is the recommended start date. Wednesdays will be short days again. We need to have 183 days on the calendar, which accommodates three snow days. We want to schedule professional development days. We are allowed 12 half days; we are not allowed to combine those into single days. Hope to have the start date and vacation dates within the next 10 days, but that is pending approval from the diocese.
  - e. **School Athletics:** We do have an athletic director, and we are pushing to establish a baseball team, a softball team, and to have a soccer camp.
- XVI. **8:37 --- Adjournment** – Jonathan Day, HSA President