



THE BASILICA SCHOOL OF SAINT MARY

Founded 1869 - Alexandria, Virginia

The Basilica School of Saint Mary Home and School Association Agenda and Committee Reports Thursday, March 13, 2025 - 6:00 pm Zoom Meeting

HSA MISSION

The mission of the Association is to provide a structure where parents partner with the administration and faculty to support the spiritual and academic excellence of the School's children. The Association supports the School through four core activities:

- School community development
- Fundraising to support the school
- Assist with the facilitation ministry outreach to the school community
- Providing parents of students with knowledge about school functions and activities

AGENDA

1. Call to Order 6:01 p.m. – Sarah Magruder Lyle, HSA President
2. Opening Prayer and Pastor's Report - Father Hathaway

UPDATE

1. Feast Days
 - a. March 17: Feast of Saint Patrick.
 - b. March 19: Feast of Saint Joseph, including a Holy Hour in the parish and a Saint Joseph Altar event in the evening.
 - c. March 25: Feast of the Annunciation.
2. Lenten Observances
 - a. Every Wednesday: Confessions offered throughout Lent.
 - b. Fridays:
 - i. Meatless meals in the parish hall; approximately 100 attendees last Friday.
 - ii. Meals are different each week and sponsored by various apostolates.
 - iii. Stations of the Cross each Friday evening, with Confession available afterward.
3. Confirmation for 8th Graders
 - a. Scheduled for March 22.

- b. Bishop Burbage will preside over two sessions.
 - 4. Laetare Sunday – March 29:
 - a. 2nd Grade Class Captains will attend the 5 PM Mass, followed by a pizza dinner reception in the hall.
- 3. Principal’s Report – Mr. Robert Loia, Principal

UPDATE

 - 1. Academic and Administrative Updates
 - a. Second Trimester: concluded on March 7; grades will be released on March 24 when PowerSchool has reopened.
 - b. Admissions:
 - i. First round of acceptances sent, and initial responses received.
 - ii. Waitlists remain active; second-round offers are now being extended.
 - c. Recruitment for Next Year:
 - i. The recruitment process is underway.
 - ii. Two hires have already been made with minimal expected turnover.
 - d. Science Lab Prep: Progress is moving forward.
 - e. Re-accreditation Process:
 - i. Started the Design for Excellence (DFE) process through the Diocese.
 - 2. Faith-Based Activities and Celebrations
 - a. Ash Wednesday Mass: celebrated with beautiful Mass; began Stations of the Cross observances.
 - b. Feast of Saint Patrick & Saint Joseph celebrations:
 - i. Saint Patrick: hosted an assembly with Irish dancing.
 - ii. Saint Joseph: held Mass and a food drive, with each grade responsible for collecting specific items.
 - c. Feast of the Annunciation: students will attend Mass in observance.
 - d. 8th Grade Vocation Mass:
 - i. Students attended Vocation Mass with the Bishop.
 - ii. A record number of 8th graders participated.
 - 3. Events and Community Engagement
 - a. Gala: The event was a great success with thanks extended to all involved.
 - b. Service Day – March 29:
 - i. 4th Grade will participate in a gathering that includes spreading mulch followed by a pizza lunch.
 - c. Inclusion Week
 - i. Begins on Monday, March 17.
 - ii. Focused on accepting and appreciating students with learning differences or disabilities.
 - iii. The week will kick off with a guest speaker and include a variety of activities exploring different types of disabilities.

4. Teacher's Report

UPDATE

1. Faculty thoroughly enjoyed attending the recent gala event.
2. A yogurt parfait bar was provided for breakfast and was well received.
3. Teachers have just completed grading and expressed appreciation for the half-day on Monday, which gave them the time and space to finalize their work.

5. Committee Updates

a. Spring Clean-Up

UPDATE

1. Date rescheduled for March 29

b. New Family Committee - Amy Jones/Kristina Reynolds

UPDATE

1. Admissions decisions were sent out on Friday, Feb 21.
 - a. The deadline for applicants to respond was 3/7 and admissions is now reviewing the late applications and waitlist candidates to send out more acceptances.
2. We have requested time to brainstorm with Bella and Megan C about ways we may bolster the new family mentorship program over the summer.

c. Youth Apostolate, including overview CYO Fall and Winter Sports - Marian Staron

NO UPDATE

d. Hospitality Committee - Cara Sims

NO UPDATE

e. Annual Fund - Anne Mathis

UPDATE

1. The Annual Fund has currently reached \$245,000, which is a strong and encouraging milestone.
2. The goal is to reach the \$300,000 mark by the end of the school year.
3. We are deeply grateful for our incredible parent community, whose generosity helps bridge the gap between tuition and the full cost of providing a high-quality education.

f. Gala and Auction - Summer Bravo

UPDATE

1. Gala Event Summary & Preliminary Financials
 - a. Final Report Pending: Awaiting a few remaining figures to finalize the full event report.
 - b. Preliminary Financials:
 - i. Expenses were approximately \$73,000.
 - ii. Net income reached \$244,000 — the highest recorded in the event's history.
2. Key Contributing Factors:
 - a. Strong corporate and parent sponsorship significantly supported the success.
 - b. The silent auction featured 160 items (compared to 116 last year), with only about 11 items going without bids.
3. Event Highlights
 - a. The evening was a huge success, with excellent execution from the venue, which smoothly accommodated over 400 guests.
 - b. The revised event flow allowed for more time to dance, mingle, and enjoy the evening, achieving all planned goals.
 - c. Feedback suggests the overall experience was elevated and well received by attendees.
4. Looking Ahead
 - a. Next Gala Date: Save the date – April 25, 2026.
 - b. Feedback from Mrs. L.: Experiences involving teachers (e.g., teacher-led activities or outings) are attracting higher bids than the "Teacher for a Day" offerings—something to consider for future planning.
 - c. Action Item: Connect with Summer to begin succession planning and ensure key knowledge and processes are carried forward effectively.
 - d. A comprehensive report will be shared once all remaining data has been collected and finalized.

g. FIS - Erica Dempsey/Anne Heishman

UPDATE

1. FIS sent out emails to all parents on February 18 with an update on their share status as of Feb. 15.
 - a. More than 400 emails were sent and we had inquiries from less than 10% of the families about shares, all of which have been answered.
 - b. The volume and nature of emails was on par with what we typically receive after sending out status updates. Most of the inquiries relate to missing shares, which can usually be attributed to the parent not using the school check-in system.
2. We added a co-coordinator for the lost and found closet.

h. Room Parent - Ashley McMurry

UPDATE

1. St. Joseph's Feast Day - I have plenty of volunteers lined up to deliver the Zeppole on 3/19. I would ideally like some more volunteers for 3/18, but can make do with the number I have now.
 - a. No Support/Decision Here
2. Next event for the room parents will be the May Crowning. I will start on that after St. Joseph's.
3. 8th Grade Class Gift - The 8th Grade Room Parents are starting to work on this.
 - a. **SUPPORT** - Are there any specific needs the school has right now that may be an appropriate gift? If not, are there any "wish list" items?
 - b. **DECISION** - HSA/School Administration will provide a wishlist I can pass along to the 8th grade parents.
 - i. **The team is currently exploring options for an appropriate 8th grade class gift.**
 - ii. **Mr. Loia has been in ongoing dialogue with Mrs. Hayes regarding possibilities.**
 - iii. **One idea under consideration is a beautifully framed world map—either historical or contemporary—to be displayed in the library.**
 - iv. **The proposed budget for this gift is in the \$500-\$700 range.**

i. External Fundraising - Kara Fiala

NO UPDATE

j. Family Wellness - Erin Bell

UPDATE

1. BSSM parent asked about exploring the idea of a bike-to-school day.

k. Trivia Night - Eva Domotorffy

UPDATE

1. Scheduled for this Saturday, March 15th at the Lyceum
2. Currently, 40 families have registered for the event. The goal is to reach 60 registrations by March 14, with a maximum capacity of 80 families.
3. A professional trivia host has been hired, and it's important to ensure strong attendance to make the event a success.
4. Encouraging advance registration is a priority. Registration will officially close at 9:00 AM on the day of the event.

1. Movie Night - Allison Gracey

UPDATE

1. Request to see if there is flexibility in moving to another date as Allison will be out of town that weekend.

DECISION: Will work to find another mutually beneficial date in May

6. New Business

UPDATE

1. RL has been in discussion with Fr. Searby about creating a 4-part series focused on *Thriving Marriages* and *Flourishing Families*, with the intention of launching it next year.
2. RL will draft a program description for review and distribution to the group.
3. A request was made to consider whether the HSA would be willing to help promote the series.

7. Next HSA Meeting: April 10, 2025 7:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment 6:42 p.m. – Sarah Magruder Lyle, HSA President