



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, April 10, 2025 - 7:00 pm St. James Library Media Center

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 at 7:02 p.m. – Stephanie Dolan, HSA Vice President
2. Opening Prayer and Pastor's Report - Father Hathaway

UPDATE

1. Confirmation Updates
 - a. Two confirmation sessions were held since the last meeting with the Bishop, both of which went beautifully.
 - b. The Bishop expressed interest in returning next year for an early evening session.
2. Easter Sacraments
 - a. 44 adults will be coming into the Church and receiving Sacraments at Easter:
 - i. 16 individuals will be baptized.
 - ii. Several baptized Christians will be received into the Church.
 - iii. Two BSSM parents will be baptized/received into the Church.
3. Holy Week & School Schedule
 - a. Holy Week begins this Sunday.
 - b. Spy Wednesday (the Wednesday of Holy Week) will be the last school Mass before Spring Break.
 - c. First Communion – May 10

- i. Two ceremonies are scheduled.
 - ii. Discussion around establishing clear arrival expectations and logistics
 - iii. Mrs. Gray will support the coordination and send out a communication with event details in advance.
 - 4. Clergy Update
 - a. Father Noah has been appointed Vocation Director for the Diocese.
 - b. He will begin his new role in June and work directly with the Bishop
 - 5. March for Life Recap
 - a. The event was meaningful and went well, though turnout was modest.
 - b. Attendance included approximately 30 people from the parish and 43 from the school.
3. Principal's Report – Mr. Robert Loia, Principal

UPDATE

- 1. Student Experiences & Events
 - a. March for Life:
 - i. 40 students participated in the voluntary field trip with chaperones.
 - ii. The group received a Capitol tour and met Senator Durant.
 - iii. Sarah Lyle gave a well-received pre-trip presentation on advocacy.
 - b. Service Day:
 - i. Now in its third year.
 - ii. Activities included painting an office and laying mulch (4th grade).
 - iii. Students enjoyed pizza; many thanks to the supportive parents who attended.
 - c. Inclusion Week:
 - i. Organized by Monica Davin; celebrated different types of learners.
 - ii. Each day highlighted a specific difference (e.g., blindness, dyslexia).
 - iii. Very positively received by students and staff.
 - d. Saint Patrick's Day (March 17):
 - i. Irish dancers performed for the students.
 - e. Saint Joseph's Day:
 - i. Parents organized distribution of more than 400 pastries to students.
 - f. Field Day:
 - i. Scheduled for June 4th.
- 2. Academic Updates
 - a. Math Program Engagement:
 - i. Ms. Costello hosted an evening for middle school parents to review the math program; well received and slides posted in The Messenger.
 - b. ACRE Testing:
 - i. Completed by 5th and 8th grade students to assess faith understanding and practice.
 - c. Accreditation Process:
 - i. Underway through the Virginia Catholic Education Association.

- ii. Includes a self-evaluation followed by an external team review.
 - iii. Visitation week: Last week of October 2025.
 - iv. Mrs. D'Angelo is chairing the steering committee.
 - 3. Enrollment & School Growth
 - a. Enrollment for Next Year:
 - i. 758 students registered (current enrollment is 735).
 - ii. Most applicants are parishioners.
 - iii. Class size max is 81; most classes are currently between 78–81 students.
 - 4. Mater Dei Program / Porto Charities Grant
 - a. Funding:
 - i. Received a \$20,000 grant from Porto Charities.
 - ii. Plan to hire one additional Special Ed teacher and two instructional assistants for the 5 students in the program.
 - iii. Emphasis on celebrating and increasing community awareness of the Mater Dei program.
 - 5. Facilities & Resources
 - a. Middle School Faculty Lounge:
 - i. Near completion thanks to last year's fundraising efforts.
 - ii. Photos will be featured in *The Messenger*.
 - 6. Arts, Music & Extracurriculars
 - a. Guitar Group: A small group of five students has been formed.
 - b. Baseball Program: Efforts underway to revive the program for both boys and girls.
 - 7. Branding & Communications
 - a. New School Logo:
 - i. Inspired by the school crest, it will be featured on the new website.
 - ii. Guidelines for use are being developed.
 - iii. Not yet formally rolled out.
4. Teacher's Report - Ms. Luechtefeld
- UPDATE**
- 1. Inclusion Week: Encore teachers integrated the Inclusion Week theme into their lessons using real-world stories and meaningful situations.
 - 2. Appreciation: A heartfelt thank you for the First Friday bagels—very much appreciated by the staff.
 - 3. Upcoming Events & Excitement
 - a. Teachers are looking forward to spring break.
 - b. Many exciting activities are planned for May.
 - c. Lenten Retreat
 - i. Scheduled for Thursday (4/18)
 - ii. Mrs. L and Ms. Rose will lead a Living Stations presentation with the 6th grade students.

5. Committee Updates

a. Spring Clean-Up

NO UPDATE (See Principal's Report)

b. New Family Committee - Amy Jones/Kristina Reynolds

UPDATE

1. Admissions is preparing to welcome all incoming new students and their parents to our campus gym the morning of May 14th for the New Student Welcome! It will be a great opportunity for families to learn more about their upcoming journey as a Saint, Steward and Scholar. We will be in touch with the FIS should we need additional volunteers.

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

UPDATE

1. Volleyball Registration is complete with 97 registrants with registration closed.
2. Track registration is 95 track registrants with registration remaining open.
3. Basketball has ended with our 8th Grade girls winning the championship. Thanks to all the coaches and coordinators that made this season successful.

d. Hospitality Committee - Cara Sims

UPDATE

1. Knowing that many of our teachers gave up sweets for Lent, Hospitality set up a "yogurt parfait bar" in both the lower school and middle school teacher's lounges on March 7th. From what we've heard, everyone loved it (and appreciated that we didn't do our usual sweet treat which would've been too tempting for Lent).
2. We did our usual "First Friday Bagel Breakfast" for staff following Mass on Friday, April 4th.
3. We plan to bring back our "St Mary's Flower Shop" in the lower school teacher's lounge for DIY bouquets for the family Easter table, on Wednesday, April 16th. This was incredibly popular with teachers 2 years ago, when we first set it up. We will forward along all the pictures of the final result.

e. Annual Fund - Anne Mathis

NO UPDATE

f. FIS - Erica Dempsey/Anne Heishman

DISCUSS:

1. New check-in system at front desk; understanding how to generate appropriate reports for FIS tracking.
2. Suggest putting QR code on the website parent app page so parents can register in advance and have badges printed

g. Room Parent - Ashley McMurry

UPDATE

1. Room Parents are prepared to support the May Crowning as we have done in the past. I will have the room parents find out which teachers need vases.

SUPPORT:

1. Should I arrange volunteers to prepare the flowers and transport them back to school after Mass?

DECISION:

1. I will just need to know what time Mass will be to arrange for the volunteers.

NOTE: The procession for May Crowning will begin at 9 am with the service following around 9:15 am

h. External Fundraising - Kara Fiala

NO UPDATE

i. Family Wellness - Erin Bell

NO UPDATE

j. Trivia Night - Eva Domotorffy

UPDATE

1. Trivia Night was a success with about 50 parents and staff members in attendance. The 7th grade parents were the winning team!
2. Forms for reimbursement and receipts were submitted and waiting on response on this and reimbursement.

k. Movie Night - Allison Gracey

SUPPORT/DECISION

1. Propose moving the date to May 31st.

DECISION: Movie night approved to move to May 31st at 6:30 p.m.

6. New Business

1. The 7th grade is organizing a parent social to take place during the next student dance on May 2nd. They are currently exploring location options, with Christ Child Hall as a potential venue.
2. The next HSA meeting will be held in the Rectory Courtyard.

7. Next HSA Meeting: May 8, 2025 7:00 p.m. in the Rectory Courtyard
8. Adjournment at 8:17 p.m. – Stephanie Dolan, HSA Vice President