Cotter Schools Board of Directors
February 25, 2025

Board Members present: Amy Donnenwerth, Barry McRaith, Kurt Knuesel, Erica Jerowski, Shelley Stewart, Andrew Kieffer, Kevin Gorman, Jennifer Miller Gutierrez, Ann Renk, Tom DeMarais, Father McNea, Father Russ, Mary Eileen Fitch, and Dawn Guzzo

Board Members not present: Father Arens

Board Chair, Amy Donnenwerth, called the meeting to order at 7:33 am. Father McNea led our prayer and included special blessings for the passing of Father Lovas, Bob Kierlin and Sara Gabrick.

Agenda**:** There was a review of the 2-25-25 Agenda. Barry McRaith made a motion to approve the Agenda; Father McNea made a second. Motion passed.

The following Minutes were reviewed:
Board of Directors minutes (1-28-25)
Committee Minutes:
Governance (2/11/25)
Operational Vitality (2/18/25)

Barry McRaith made a motion to approve the Minutes; Andrew Kieffer made a second. Motion passed.

Campus Ministry Presentation:
We welcomed Gary Meyerl, our Director of Mission Integration, along with Marisa Corcoran and Mike Hagarty, from our Campus Ministry Department, to present to our board the many faith based projects and initiatives that have taken place this year at Cotter. They presented a slideshow which highlighted many of our student's service projects, faith formation opportunities, student retreats and prayer and mass celebrations.

Committee Reports:

Operational Vitality Committee:
Our Committee Chair reported on our FY25 updated budget numbers that were reported from our Financial Director. February minutes were reviewed by the board and there were no further questions at this time.

Governance:
The Governance Committee Chair reported an overview from the surveys that were taken from our Board Retreat. All surveys were posted on the Board of Directors website for anyone who wished to view them. There were many complimentary remarks with key takeaways being that meeting with and hearing from our key benefactors was very beneficial, that our retreat schedule

next year should allow for some more group discussion time and that the board would like to have administrators present more regularly, perhaps at our board meetings.

President Evaluations will be sent out in March. There will be an evaluation for the Board of Directors to complete and an evaluation for the President's Leadership Team to complete. Our chair reminded the board that 100% participation is a useful tool for the President's annual evaluation.

Mary Eileen then took some time to explain the history of our board member term limits. Currently a term limit is for three years with an option to serve one additional term. However, Mary Eileen explained that in some instances how it would be beneficial for someone to serve an additional third term when needed for board chair positions. This matter was opened up to the board for discussion. Barry McRaith then made a motion to amend our bylaws to include an option of a third term for board members. Kurt Knuesel seconded the motion and a vote was taken by the board. The motion passed to amend the bylaws accordingly.

Mission Effectiveness:
No report at this time. Sub-committees continue to meet. Our next meeting is scheduled for March 14

President's Report: The confidential President's Report had been posted for the board to review and Mary Eileen made the following comments at today's meeting:

- Crescendo Fundraising Campaign: Mary Eileen shared with the board a few more details regarding the launching of a four-year fundraising campaign that will be led by Crescendo, but with strong collaboration with our current Advancement Department. The goal is to raise $1.5M in funds for our operational costs each year for the next four years. There is potential that we may need to hire additional staff within our Advancement Team. This will be determined at a later time. There will be a formal kick-off party in November, 2025. Mary Eileen will continue to provide updates to the board.

- Advancement Team: Ann Renk has accepted a position within the Advancement Team as a temporary Independent Contractor. As an Independent Contractor, she will be allowed to retain her position as a board member. If her employment status would become permanent, she would then be required to resign as a board member per our bylaws. The board agreed to this plan.

- Residential Enrollment Updates: Due to the substantial scholarships that were allotted to this year's international students, our costs to run this program have been an area of concern. Due to these concerns, the board had previously recommended that we do not accept any new students for 2025-2026 whose tuition commitment is less than 80% of our listed tuition. Mary Eileen advised the board that to date, we have no commitments from students for next year at this rate. Following discussion, the board again recommended that we hold at accepting students at a higher rate of tuition, allowing for some flexibility.

- Co-op Program: In the Spring of 2024, our Athletic Director advised those schools who have co-op students with Cotter, about our new co-op fees policy that would begin in the 2024-2025 academic year. Mary Eileen shared with the board that no payments have been made to Cotter for the fall and winter athletic seasons and that after recent conversations, they are advising that they do not wish to pass this expense on to their students, nor do they have the means to cover the invoices that have been billed to them. There was discussion within the board as to the best way to handle this matter going forward, including the option to eliminate co-op participation with Cotter. Mary Eileen will continue to keep the board updated.

Amy thanked everyone for attending our meeting today. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Guzzo, Secretary