Cotter Schools Board of Directors
June 24, 2025

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

Board Members not present: Father McNea, Father Arens, Kurt Knuesel

Board Chair, Amy Donnenwerth, called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m. Father Russ led our prayer.

Agenda**:** There was a review of the 6-24-25 Agenda. Jennifer Miller Gutierrez made a motion to approve the Agenda as amended; Barry McRaith made a second. Motion passed.

The following Minutes were reviewed:
Board of Directors minutes (5-27-25)
Committee Minutes:
Operational Vitality (6//17-25)

Barry McRaith made a motion to approve the Minutes; Kevin Gorman made a second. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Operational Vitality Committee:
Our Committee Chair reported that our fiscal year will conclude on June 30 and that our financial numbers are ending as projected. A significant amount of time at the meeting was spent focusing on our dining hall numbers and ways in which we hope to see improvement next year. We will continue to follow the numbers and any concerns during the year, especially in the beginning so as to make adjustments, when possible.

Another focus for the upcoming year will be the hopeful financial improvement with MCA and MSM.

Governance:

Motion brought forth from the Governance Committee to appoint the following slate of officers and leadership positions for the board. Motion approved.

Officers of Board of Directors for 2025-2026 (terms to conclude on the date of 2026 annual meeting):

- Erica Jerowski – Chair
- Barry McRaith – Vice Chair
- Andrew Kieffer – Treasurer

Board Committee Chair Positions for 2025-2026:

- Erica Jerowski – Executive Chair
- Andrew Kieffer – Operational Vitality Chair
- Amy Donnenwerth – Mission Effectiveness Chair
- Kurt Knuesel – Governance Chair

Motion brought forth from the Governance Committee to appoint the following corporate officers for 2025-2026. Motion approved.

- Mary Eileen Fitch – President
- Jeff Aspe – Treasurer
- Dawn Guzzo - Secretary

A motion was made by Tom DeMarais to approve the 2025-2026 Slate of Officers and Corporate Officers. Jennifer Miller Gutierrez second the motion and the motion passed.

We had 12 members participate with the Board of Directors Self-Assessment Survey. The results reflected areas of desired improvement and ways in which we feel very strong in our mission. Governance will assess the results in more detail and there will be a formal discussion at our August meeting.

There was a motion to approve the amended By-laws reflecting that members could be asked to serve a third term. There was a motion by Barry McRaith to approve the amended By-laws and a second by Jennifer Miller Gutierrez. The motion was passed.

Mission Effectiveness:
Our Committee Chair reported that over the summer, work will be done to reformat the structure of our Mission Effectiveness Committee meetings for next year. The tentative plan is that board members will serve as committee members and that building leaders/directors, as well as our Advancement Team, will report a couple of times throughout the year at the Mission Effectiveness meetings. Our primary work will continue with Year Four of our Strategic Plan.

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:

- New Hires/Transitions: Our current A.D. will be leaving his role and transitioning into a new position, Student Success Coach. This is a new position for the Jr. High/High School level. He will be providing academic support and ensuring a positive school culture by working proactively with our students. Our Asst. A.D. will move into the lead A.D. role and we will be hiring a new Assistant A.D. We are also very excited to announce that Seth Hahn is returning to Cotter Schools and will serve as a Math Teacher as well as in a TOSA role for the upcoming year.
- Admissions: VISA interviews had been put on pause, which caused concern for recruiting any potential new international students. Thankfully this pause was just lifted and our International Enrollment Director is working with families to secure their admission, if possible. Our local enrollment is up and we continue to provide tours and information to potential new families throughout the summer months.

- Crescendo Fundraising: We are pivoting our campaign into potentially establishing an endowment. A feasibility study will be conducted this fall. Mary Eileen has communicated with HEF about our plans. They have been supportive and have expressed assurances of future support.
- Residential Program: Our committee met to discuss the objectives and financial requirements to make our Residential Program a success going forward. We will continue to keep the board updated.
- Lourdes Hall: Although we have received some concerns from the community, we have also received support with our anticipated project. Demolition is scheduled to start on July 22 and will take a few months to complete.
- Parish Updates: We have not yet received the amount of fees that we will be charged for the use of Chapel of the Angels for our high school weekly Masses that are now required by the Diocese. Due to the closure of two Winona parishes, our subsidies may change, but we have not been advised by how much. St. Mary's is in the process of reallocating their parking lot in conjunction with their plans to demo St. Mary's school and the site improvements they will be making. We are hopeful that we can continue to have access to their parking lot for our families and visitors who attend games at our Cotter fields, but certainly desire an agreement that is amicable with St. Mary's Parish.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Guzzo, Secretary