



Board of Education Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2025
Administration Office

Members Present: Jennifer Rose Bass, Jacki Kelly, Brent Olson, Rick Bertrand, Ben Uhl, Jessica Felix, Fr. Randy Schon, Dan Kriener, Fr. Tim Friedrichsen, Fr. David Esquiliano, Fr. Brad Pelzel, Rhonda Bridges, Joe Malsam

Absent Members:

Staff Members: John Flanery, DJ Faller, Marisa O'Connell

1. Opening Prayer – Fr. Brad Pelzel
2. Welcome DJ Faller, Director of Finance
3. Approval of August 19th Board Meeting Minutes
 - Motion by: Fr. Brad Pelzel
 - Seconded by: Fr. Tim Friedrichsen
 - Abstained: Fr. David Esquiliano
 - All in Favor: Aye
4. Campus Ministry Update
 - Department is fully staffed with 3 employees
 - Grace Johanson
 - Nick Scheffers
 - Deacon Kevin Poss
 - Steubenville Conference
 - 56 students attended
 - Cost was under \$500 per student
 - Total of \$12,000 in funds given to assist students to keep costs down
 - \$8,000 in Grants
 - \$4,000 in donations
 - 12 full scholarships were awarded (students did contribute \$100)
 - 3 partial scholarships
 - Broom Tree Retreat
 - Helped host retreat in June for principals and administration staff
 - Discussed the Eucharist as a source of leadership
 - Held High School “Vision and Mission” 3-hour staff retreat
 - 3-year plan to nurture this culture in schools
 - Offered mass and confession
 - Positive feedback from staff
 - Bible studies for all schools
 - Crusaders for Life
 - Leader - Deacon Poss

- Connecting sports and prayer
 - Meeting with athletic groups and coaches
- 1:1 discipleship with students
- 8 High School students interested in becoming Catholic

5. Committee Reports

- Academics – Joe Malsam
 - No meeting
 - Meeting with CDLA Principal, Jodi Ferris next week
 - Sarah Karpuk, parent, will be new committee member
- Catholic Identity – Jacki Kelly
 - No Meeting
- Enrollment and Marketing – Jennifer Rose Bass - see attached minutes
 - Hoopla was very successful
 - Annual Report sent out
 - Annual report received positive comments
 - PBS Advancement, Alumni and Enrollment video for institution
 - Interviews will be done with John Flanery, Laurie Dougherty, Fr. Shane Deman and student, Ava Lloyd
- Finance – Brent Olson and John Flanery
 - Tuition receivables report – not available
 - Parish Receivables – see attached
- Leadership & Governance – Ben Uhl
 - No meeting

6. President's Report

- Finance Team Update
 - Finance team along with Rhonda Bridges worked diligently to get tuition ready for families
 - Finance team is working to resolve any tuition errors on family accounts
- Advancement
 - 2025-2026 – see attached
 - Monthly score card was not reconciled yet due to work on tuition as priority
 - ESA full paying families – school choice vs donor choice
 - School choice vs donor choice progress is slow
 - Families are saving on tuition for the first time and are not interested at this time
 - Legacy Event on Thursday, October 16th honoring individuals with 50 plus years of teaching in Catholic schools
 - Teachers being honored are Brendan Burchard, Pat Sitzmann, Mary Kay Augustine
 - Fall Events
 - Kansas City – October 30th
 - Omaha – November 13th
 - Possible event in Des Moines
 - Walk of Faith update
 - Nick Haugen is working with Doug Rose at Bacon Creek Design
 - Need permit from City of Sioux City
 - 3 people under contract
 - Mercy Medical gifts donated to Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools
 - Statue of Mary from the round-about in front of Mercy Medical
 - Mercy Medical stain glass windows
 - Trinity Heights was gifted some items as well
- Enrollment updates
 - ESA numbers – 1668 last year; 1685

- Verified ESA's - 1299
- ESA's to confirm - 38
- Hold Numbers – 5 families (12 – 14 students) that departed due to financial reasons
- Enrollment/Admission process in place for new incoming students
 - Need to communicate this process to parents
- d. Memorial Field – lights and donors
 - Discussion - no vote tonight
 - Have some safety and liability issues with lights and poles
 - Bids from 2 or 3 companies
 - Musko – bid at \$290,000
 - Spoke with Ward Electric & Mid-American regarding project
 - Mid-American would be responsible for repairs if issues occurred
 - Mid-American would provide better electrical input
 - Project cost
 - Total project could be approximately - \$450,000
 - We have two donors gifting \$100,000 each
 - Bishop Heelan Catholic School cost - approximately \$250,000
- e. Cathedral shared parking lot – see attached quote and design
 - RJ Tide bid - \$192,000
 - Cathedral of the Epiphany board approved a 50/50 agreement with Bishop Heelan to move forward with project
 - Working permit expires December 31, 2025
 - Approval of \$96,205 from Capital Expenditures bucket to be used for this project
 - Motion by: Jennifer Rose Bass
 - Seconded by: Ben Uhl
 - All in favor: Aye
 - Abstain: Fr. David Esquiliano and Dan Kriener
- f. 1025 Douglas Street
 - September 30, 2025 closing on property
- g. Strategic Plan – see attached
 - October 14, 5:00 pm at High School with 9 available
 - Goal is to finalize and be ready to move forward
- h. Safety initiatives
 - Sheriff Sheehan meeting
 - Budgets and needs coming soon
 - Consider a Director of Safety and Security position for 2026-2027 school year
- i. Inclusive education initiatives
 - Scheduled Sioux Center and Kansas City visits this fall
 - Fire Foundation continued collaboration
- j. Dates and events
 - Hoopla – around 500 in attendance
 - Hall of Pride event – September 12-13
 - Weekend was very successful
 - Bill Drexel – Word on Fire
 - Volume 1 – he purchased 550 copies
 - Volume 2 – he purchased one for each religion classroom
 - Volume 3,4, & 5 – he will purchase one set of 30 of each for the High School
- k. Stacey Besch
 - Presented to the high school on human trafficking in United States

Plan A – Tuition model proposal starting year 4 full ESA implementation

7. Tuition proposal starting year 4 full ESA implementation

- Tuition for all BHCS students is \$10,200 (full tuition) regardless of Catholic or Non-Catholic status or IA ESA eligibility status (ie tuition adjusts up yearly based upon previous year allowable growth % dollar amount)
- Tuition for all BHCS Non IA ESA eligible Catholic student(s) (family) will Cap at 7.6% of Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) model
- IA ESA eligible families pay full ESA allotment only starting after the 2nd student
- Immediate implementation for new families regardless of status entering or transferring into the system
- This model is inviting, simple, predictable and provides equity and fairness across incomes

Vote to Approve Plan A Tuition Model

Motion by: Rick Bertrand

Seconded by: Ben Uhl

All in favor: Remaining board members vote no

Motion does not pass

Plan B – See page 4 for Plan B discussion - Tuition model proposal from the NE and SD Task Force

8. Committee tuition model proposal

- Tiered Tuition for current families (enrolled in 2025-2026) and new Catholic families
- K-5th grade - \$6,500
- 6th-8th grade - \$7,500
- High School - \$9,000
- 3rd student receives 50% off scholarship, 4th plus students free
- AGI remains at 7.6%
- Minimum payer (\$3,000) remains the same
- 3% increase each year to align with overall tuition increase
- New non-Catholic families at the full tuition rate
- If you leave and then return, you are not considered a current family even if you are Catholic

Vote to Approve Plan B Tuition Model

Motion by: Joe Malsam

Seconded by: Jennifer Rose Bass

After a lengthy discussion over the merits and concerns with this model, the board voted to defer this option and consider a 3rd tuition model option

Motion by: Rick Bertrand

Seconded by: Dan Kriener

All in favor: Aye

Motion passes to defer Plan B and consider another alternative

Plan C – Tuition model proposal for 2026-2027 school year from Board of Education Members

9. Many suggestions and ideas were discussed to consider the impact on current Nebraska and South Dakota families. Discussion questions included:

- How are we preparing our institution for the future if we provide deep discounts?
- How do we keep current families and take care of them under a new tuition model?

After many points were made from a variety of angles, the following proposal was created.

Board of Education tuition model proposal

- Current Families
- K-8 \$7000 to 3% increase
- HS - \$8000 to 3% increase
- Max 7.6% of Adjusted Gross Income or min \$3000
- 3rd child 50%
- 4th child free

Vote to Approve Plan C Tuition Model

Motion by: Dan Kriener

Seconded by: Jessica Felix

Opposed: Joe Malsam

All others in favor: Aye

Additional Proposal

10. Proposal introduced by Rick Bertrand

"To align BHCS Executive Board leadership with the existing BHCS administrative leadership IE President, Principals etc. qualifications and requirements. BHCS Executive School Board Members must be confirmed in the Catholic Faith. Non-Catholic "At Large" board members are limited to one."

- Effective upon passage
- This language does not govern the makeup of Non-Board Committee participation

The discussion also included this language from the Diocese

"Application forms and credentials of potential candidates are to be shared with and reviewed by the Diocesan Superintendent. After potential candidates are approved by the Diocesan Superintendent, the search committee will determine who will be invited for an interview. Special consideration should be given to candidates who exhibit instructional leadership and strong Catholic identity. Successful candidates must be practicing Catholics. Exceptions to this must be approved by the Bishop."

Amended by: Fr. Randy Schon

Seconded by: Dan Kriener

Move to amend the motion by replacing the words "effective upon passage" with the language "after the current cycle of executive leadership."

"To align BHCS Executive Board leadership with the existing BHCS administrative leadership IE President, Principals etc. qualifications and requirements. BHCS Executive School Board members must be confirmed in the Catholic Faith. Non- Catholic "At Large" board members are limited to one. This policy will go into place after the current cycle of executive leadership."

The amendment passed. The motion as amended was then approved 7-2.

- a. Motion to Adjourn: 8:00 pm
 - a. Motion by: Ben Uhl
 - b. Seconded by: Dan Kriener
 - c. All in Favor: Aye

Next meeting Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.