Cotter Schools Board of Directors
September 30, 2025

Board Members present: Amy Donnenwerth, Barry McRaith, Erica Jerowski, Shelley Stewart, Andrew Kieffer, Kurt Knuesel, Kevin Gorman, Jennifer Miller Gutierrez, Andrew Guzzo, Eric Errthum, Tom DeMarais (remote) Mary Eileen Fitch and Dawn Guzzo

Board Members not present: Father Arens and Father Russ, who were attending a Ministry retreat

Board Chair, Erica Jerowski, called the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. Mary Eileen led our prayer.

Mike Swenson - Vice President of Advancement

Mike presented several Advancement updates and initiatives. A few of the highlights included:

- Expressed ways that our board members can show their support of Cotter's advancement efforts which includes the consideration of being donors, committed ambassadors within our community, referring prospective families and our attendance at Cotter events
- Highlighted our 69.21% growth since 2015-2016 and advised that our local enrollment is up 4.6% for Fall, 2025.
- We have made considerable progress with expanding our alumni relation plans and are looking forward to future alumni outreach efforts and growth.
- Reviewed our 2025-2026 fundraising goals
- Shared our three new Community Partners and the work being done to grow these efforts.
- Covered our funding priorities: Teacher Fund, Financial Aid, Athletics Facility and Cotter Fund

Agenda**:** There was a review of the 9-30-25 Agenda. Shelley Stewart made a motion to approve the Agenda; Amy Donnenwerth made a second. Motion passed.

The following Minutes were reviewed:
Board of Directors minutes (8-26-25)
Committee Minutes:
Mission Effectiveness (9-12-25)
Operational Vitality (9-23-25)

Barry McRaith made a motion to approve the Minutes; Amy Donnenwerth made a second. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Operational Vitality Committee:
Our Committee Chair reported on a few highlights from our meeting and noted that we have had an uptick in staff hiring, which has led to an increase within our salaries budget. Members were invited to ask any questions they may have following their review of the September Operational Vitality meeting minutes.

Governance:
Our Governance did not meet in September. There is no report at this time.

Mission Effectiveness:
Our Committee Chair reported as to our new meeting strategy for the year in which we will have a rotation of building leaders and Directors of Departments reporting at our monthly meetings. The hope is that we will be able to ascertain with more certainty how our Strategic Plan goals are being met and/or where our focus should be to enable success towards these goals. Board members were invited to ask any questions they may have following the review of the September Mission Effectiveness meeting minutes.

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:

- Cotter Safety Protocols: Following the tragic event that happened last month at Annunciation School in Minneapolis, we had many concerned parents contact our school to voice their concerns as to our school safety protocols. We assured our families that our efforts and training remain steadfast in keeping all of our students, campus buildings and our places of worship as safe as possible. Our community police continue to show a high level of diligence and support as well.
- Academics: Due to our position of the importance of having a a strong intervention system, we test our students early in the year at the elementary level so that we can identify the needs of our students. There has been a trend that the older the students join Cotter, the more likely they are to be behind in curriculum, which can be an extra challenge for our teachers. There is a consideration to look at a zero hour and/or an after-school academic program to aid those who need extra help.
- HEF communication update: Mary Eileen continues to communicate with the HEF representatives and have received reassurances of continued support.
- Lourdes Hall: The discovery of a critical sewer pipe has somewhat sidelined our demolition scheduling efforts. It is imperative that the sewer pipe be relocated. We have two issues at hand which include the relocation site and the party(ies) who should be responsible for the sizable cost of the relocation. This sewer pipe was not disclosed to us at the time of the purchase. Time is of the essence due to the need to relocate it prior to winter.
- Residential Enrollment: Our residential enrollment planning meeting took place on August 27, wherein the committee worked with our Residential Director to discuss student recruitment plans for 2026-2027, as we are hopeful to grow our residential enrollment numbers for next year.

Our Board Chair then requested that the meeting move into Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Guzzo, Secretary