Cotter Schools Board of Directors
April 28, 2026

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

Board Members not present: Father Russ

Erica called the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. Father Arens led our prayer.

Agenda**:** There was a review of the 4-28-26 Agenda. Barry McRaith made a motion to approve the Agenda; Jennifer Miller Gutierrez made a second. Motion passed.

The following Minutes were reviewed:
Board of Directors minutes (3-31-2026)
Committee Minutes:
Mission Effectiveness (4-10-26)
Governance (4-14-26)
Operational Vitality (4-21-26)

Barry McRaith made a motion to approve the Minutes; Jennifer Miller Gutierrez made a second. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Operational Vitality Committee:
Mary Eileen reported the following:

- The Business Office reported that our FY27 budget planning remains a key focus. It will be presented at the May Operational Vitality Committee meeting for final discussion and presented to the full board in May for approval.
- Our St. Teresa elevator is requiring a considerable maintenance upgrade at a cost of $170,000.00. We are checking to see when we are required to have this completed by to remain compliant.

Board members were then invited to ask any questions they may have following the review of the April Operational Vitality meeting minutes.

Governance:
Our Governance Chair and Mary Eileen reported the following:

- We continue the process to recruit potentially two new members to the board. We will have an update for the Board in May

- The President Evaluation process is moving forward. Evaluations from the Leadership Team have been completed and will be provided to our Board Chair.
- Mary Eileen met with Deacon Sean at the NCEA Conference and subsequently a large group met, which included Mary Eileen, members from our Business Office, a member from the Diocesan Business Office and the Diocesan insurance brokers, via a Zoom meeting to discuss insurance benefits and options. The meeting proved to be very informative although it is not certain that they will be able to find a cost savings for Cotter's employees. Assurances were made that the Diocese insurance brokers were going to conduct some research to provide potential options. This group plans to reconvene in July to discuss their findings.

Board members were then invited to ask any questions they may have following the review of the March Governance meeting minutes.

Mission Effectiveness:
Our Committee Chair reported the following:

- We spent much of our time reviewing the progress made in Year Four of our Strategic Plan. A year-end summary will be provided to the Board at our June meeting.
- We also discussed how we may strategize Year 0 or Year 1 for the planning and preparation of our next Strategic Plan.

Board members were then invited to ask any questions they may have following the review of the March 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:

- **STEM Tour**: Ron Wanek and members from the Ashley Foundation, along with Mary Burrichter, visited Cotter Schools for an informational meeting and tour of our STEM labs. We received an email from their Director with high praise and comments about our excellence in education referencing our many accomplishments and developments with our STEM curriculum. A Fastenal Team also visited and toured our STEM labs and were enthusiastic about potential ways in which they can grow their partnership with us.
- **Enrollment**: We are still in our enrollment period, but there is hope that we may reach a 2% increase. We continue to review whether a soft cap at the elementary level will be necessary sometime in the future as we prioritize class size. We are not to this level, but will continue to watch enrollment numbers.
- **Jazz Fest**: We have heard from our band directors, students and numerous attendees as to the huge success of our Jazz Fest. The band program is very appreciative of the wonderful support that they have received.
- **Cotter Auction**: Mary Eileen thanked all our board members that were able to attend. It was a very successful evening and our rough numbers indicate that we may have surpassed last year's numbers. We will have more accurate numbers to report at our next meeting.

Our President requested that we move into Executive Session at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Guzzo, Secretary