



THE BASILICA SCHOOL OF SAINT MARY

Founded 1869 - Alexandria, Virginia

The Basilica School of Saint Mary Home and School Association Agenda and Committee Reports Thursday, September 3, 2026 – 7:00 pm

HSA MISSION

The mission of the Association is to provide a structure where parents partner with the administration and faculty to support the spiritual and academic excellence of the School's children. The Association supports the School through four core activities:

- School community development
- Fundraising to support the school
- Assist with the facilitation of ministry outreach to the school community
- Providing parents of students with knowledge about school functions and activities

AGENDA

1. Call to Order at 7:02 pm– Ashley McCurry, HSA President

Introductions of 2026-27 HSA Members and attending Committee/Event Chairs.

2. Opening Prayer and Pastor's Report – Father Hathaway

Opening prayer for the start of the School Year.

Father Hathaway shared the following literature:

- "How to Make a Holy Hour" Eucharist Adoration Pamphlet in honor of Archbishop Fulton Sheen: timestamped guidance for how to create a holy hour at home.
- Amendment Voter Guidance Flyer on Ballot Questions 1&2– "VA Right to Reproductive Freedom Act;" "VA Remove Constitutional Same-sex Marriage Ban." Families are encouraged to vote NO.

Information was shared on a Mothers' Apostolate initiative, with groups of seven mothers or grandmothers each committing to a weekly day of prayer for their children. Information will be shared through the Messenger, and a volunteer is needed to help lead the initiative. A Basilica Mass will be held September 8 in recognition of the Nativity of Mary.

3. Principal's Report – Mr. Robert Loia, Principal

Mr. Loia shared his appreciation for Board and Committee Members; reminder of the HSA's Mission and promotion of community via Class Captains, Events and Fundraising efforts. Enrollment opened at 765 students; the school's maximum enrollment is 777.

Funds raised through the Go Saints Fund helped the school recruit and retain a strong faculty, expand instructional offerings, and provide greater staffing flexibility.

New faculty assignments and curriculum updates include Latin and 5-day Encore schedule for K-2, 6th Grade Math, Religion and English; K-2 music; 3rd-4th Grade Mythology; 2nd, 3rd and 5th Grades; 7th Grade Faith and Science, and the Nursing Office.

The school-year theme is: "Lord, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you," with an emphasis on service and the Jubilee Year of St. Francis.

There will be no school September 25 or 28 due to faculty retreat and diocesan professional-development days.

Beginning October 1, Sergeant Blackwell will serve as the school's contracted armed security officer.

4. Teacher's Report – Ms. Hunt

Faculty is looking forward to the Parent-Teacher Social on September 18th "Saints & Spritzes."

MAP testing will take place over the next two weeks.

Drama rehearsals are beginning; the production will be announced later.

Ballet registration was very well received and has closed at capacity.

5. Treasurer's Report – Joe Young

2025-26 was the most successful fundraising year in the history of the school

HSA donated more than \$230K to the school and begins the new fiscal year with approximately \$20,000 carried forward.

Whenever possible, committees should use the school's established vendor accounts (Amazon, Costco or Wegmans) for expenses.

Reimbursement requests require the completed online form and original receipts submitted to Kelly Cates. Expenses over \$500 require advance approval.

6. Events + Committee Updates

- a. **Parent/Teacher Social** – September 18 at 7:00 p.m.; invitations have been distributed.
- b. **Room Parents** – Several positions remain open. Families are encouraged to volunteer if interested.

- c. **New Family Committee – Amy Jones/Kristina Reynolds** – Twenty host families supported incoming families. The New Family Coffee is scheduled for October 1. Class Captains shared feedback that new families felt very welcomed. New families will/may continue to contact their mentors throughout the year with any questions.

- d. **CYO + Youth Apostolate Overview – Mariane Staron**

Fall participation is strong, with more than 400 registrations across programs. Fall Sports offered are Basketball, Tennis, Cross Country and Track and Field. Basketball registration remains open through September 25. The American Heritage Girls Tea Party is September 12, and the first middle-school F3 gathering is September 11.

Flanagan Anderson and Casey Bongiorno serving as admin support for CYO programs and Fr. Burchell is serving as CYO Chaplain.

- e. **Hospitality Committee**

Ice Coffee Bar for teachers last week was well received and well timed for participation.

7. Extended Day Overview

Administration will prepare an overview of the program's daily schedule, activities, and rotations for publication in the Messenger.

8. Annual Fund

Office of stewardship is off to great start, "Go Saints Fund" activities to begin shortly with returning 2025-26 Co-Chairs.

Last year's campaign raised approximately \$400,000 to support operating costs and faculty recruitment and retention.

This year's first mailing will be sent soon, and Fund organizers are making an emphasis on increasing family participation regardless of donation amount.

Grade-specific talking points will be developed for class captains to relay how the Fund has directly impacted specific grades.

Reminder that recurring gifts via ParishSoft is an option for families.

9. FIS Overview – Erica Dempsey/Molly Conway

Priority is to assign room parents; they are still short at least 1 room parent in 6 Homerooms as of 9/3.

Interest form responses are significantly lower than last year. Communications and the back-to-school webpage will be reviewed for clarity.

10. Class Captain Updates

All scheduled events are starting to be marketed via the Messenger.

Families are encouraged to share questions and concerns with class captains, who can communicate them quickly to school leadership for prompt resolution.

Activity Scheduling: As a result from parent feedback, the HSA will explore better coordination among sports, ballet, STEM, cheer, drama, and other programs to reduce conflicts when possible.

11. New Business

a. Items to be emailed to HSA@smsva.org by 5pm on day of meeting

- **Gala:** The gala will be held April 10 at Army Navy Country Club with an Italian Renaissance theme. Rising gala chairs for school year 2027-28 will serve on the committee and were introduced during the meeting.
- **Spirit Store:** The committee is exploring updated merchandise and winter items, with additional information forthcoming.

12. Next HSA Meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2026 7:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment – Ashley McCurry, HSA President