



MCDONELL AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Est. 1882

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Our Mission: Centered on Jesus Christ and His Church, we partner with families to nurture young people's spiritual, intellectual, physical, and moral formation through a PreK-12 Catholic liberal arts education and vibrant student life of discipleship, athletics, and the arts.

Our Vision: MACS will be a beacon of faith, hope, and love by inspiring each student to embrace his or her identity as a beloved son or daughter of God, while discovering and developing their unique gifts. We will immerse students and families in an authentic Catholic culture which fosters love of truth, beauty, and goodness. We will challenge all students to pursue academic excellence, critical thinking, and intellectual inquiry. We will prepare McDonell graduates to be a transforming force within society, sharing the Gospel and working for the common good as productive, virtuous citizens.

Education Commission Minutes
Thursday, February 20, 2025, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
McDonell Library/Media Center

AGENDA	LEAD		NOTES
Welcome and Call to Order (5 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Prayer	Chad Priest	5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fr Burish led us in prayer.
Evidence of Mission/Vision (5 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Mission and Vision	Chad	5:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Congrats to Mr. Wedemeyer on his induction into the WBCA Hall of Fame Class of '25.• Mary shared that the school is buzzing profoundly around faith.• Mission trip to Peru has been extremely well received by our students and the orphans.• Father Kren shared that Mass participation in the school chapel has grown significantly
CONSENT AGENDA (10 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• January minutes• Finance and Facilities Report• Technology Report• Advancement Report• Long-Range Planning Report• Enrollment Report• Student Services Report• Principals' Reports• Dean of Academics Report	Chad	5:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No objections to approving January minutes, so approved.• No objections to consent agenda, so approved•
Reports from Parish and Student Representatives (15 Minutes)		5:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student council started planning community day - April 22nd Thursday• Fr Kren will take a group to Seminary for the basketball tournament.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer mentor program started - upper classman take an underclassman under their wings and meet with them periodically. • All States Parish in Stanley has bingo night every Tuesday night. • St Charles pancake breakfast this weekend. • Lenten play on Palm Sunday at St Charles. Mrs Proue is looking for entertainers to participate. Mrs Proue and Kathy Greenseth have info. • Construction on the ND chapel is well underway. Projected completion projected for June. • St Pauls has a faith formation event for Holy Week planned.
<p>Guest Presentation (30 Minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship Fund Realignment • Gift Acceptance Policy • Enrollment/Admissions • Technology 	<p>Amber Leibrandt</p> <p>TBD</p>	<p>6:05</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-10 Minute Presentation • 5-10 Minute Discussion w/Q&A • 5 Vote <p>Scholarship Fund Realignment - Community Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently 20 scholarships are managed in house. The management of these is taxing on the staff. • Staff would remain of course, as they have their regular duties. There would still be a committee for selecting recipients. • Management of the funds doesn't align with current staffing requirements and ends up being a burden on the staff. • With employee turnover, now is the best time to reorganize this work and assign this work to an entity that is set up already to manage scholarships. • All the details of what will be assigned to this other entity are outlined in the attached documentation. • Q&A - funds aren't comingled with other schools, they are committed to MACS. Fee would be ~\$9k per year as compared to our costs of much greater than that. • Tony recused himself from the vote. • Commissioners held a consensus vote and all were in consensus on the recommendations. <p>Gift Acceptance Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details of the policy are detailed in the attached.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the passage of the scholarship management change, adjustments will be made later to this policy as well as adding two appendices. • The new policy refines definitions of gifts and how they are processed. • We currently have funds being held that we can't use based on current policy because we need them to build up until there's enough to use for their respective designation. • There are determinations made based on the amount of a gift and what it would be called. • Q&A • New policy allows funds designation that are vague or no longer applicable can be moved to something in alignment with the original intent. • Also applies for designating restrictive funds based on a minimum of \$5k. • Goal is to reduce the number of buckets for restrictive funds, but at the same time honoring the wishes of the donors. • Commissioners held a consensus vote and all were in consensus on the recommendations. <p>Technology - Eric offered to provide some updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some blind spots in security cameras have been resolved. • Chromebook usage - elementary has been reduced significantly and mostly phased out. Middle School is looking to do something very similarly next year as what Holy Ghost is doing now.. • St Charles really only uses a smart board as a whiteboard. Holy Ghost has some in class usage, and nothing goes home. • Our goal as a school system is to focus on the human contact and interaction. The relationship!
Commission Chair (5 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Chad	6:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus given on revised approval matrix provided by Scott Sokup.
President's Updates (5 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing this month 	Chad	6:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA

NEXT Education Commission Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academics/Curriculum • 	Chad	6:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, March, 20 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mary Huffcutt and Diane Hietpas will present. ○ Tie in Nurturing our Students reports
Closing Prayer and Adjourn	Priest	6:50	•

Membership

EX	Chad Brady	Construction Consultant Executive Committee LRP Committee Finance/Facilities Committee	Chair Holy Ghost Rep Term 2.1
X	Andy Shakal	Staff Engineer Executive Committee Strategic Plan Steering Committee	Vice-Chair St John's Rep Term 2.3
X	TJ Proue	Attorney von Briesen & Roper S.C. Long Range Planning Committee Co-Chair	St Charles Rep Term 3.2
	Brian Eslinger	Eslinger Insurance Committee Assignment - Open	All Saints Rep Term 2.1
EX	Tamara Bohaty	Bohaty Trucking	Holy Cross Rep Term 2.1
X	Erin Brick	Biology & Theology Degrees & Homemaker Strategic Plan Steering Committee Ad Hoc Dress Code Committee	Holy Ghost Rep Term 2.3
	Bill Eddy	HVAC Project Manager Committee Assignment - Finance/Facilities	Notre Dame Rep Term 1.1
EX	Scott Siegenthaler	Assistant Director Financial Aid UWEC Long Range Planning Committee	Notre Dame Rep Term 3.2
	OPEN		Sacred Heart Rep Term
XV	Tracy Bormann	Director of Human Resources Advancement Advisory Committee	St Bridget's Rep Term 2.2

	Justus Busse	Deputy Chief Fire/EMS Safety and Emergency Procedures Co-Chair Ad Hoc Pandemic Committee	St Charles Rep Term 3.1
	OPEN		St Paul's Rep Term 1.3
X	Diane Herron	Medical Degree & Homemaker Faith Boosters	St Peter's Rep Term 1.3
X	Tony Willkom	Committee Assignment TBD	At-Large Rep Term 1.1
	OPEN		At-Large Rep Term
			Guests

Ex-Officio

XV	Fr Jesse Burish	Chippewa Falls Deanery	Dean
X	Fr Alex Kren	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Chaplain
EX	Molly Bushman	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	President
X	Mary Huffcutt	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Dean of Academics
X	Eric Wedemeyer	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Principal ND/McD 6-12
X	Gwen Doyle	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Holy Ghost 3-5
X	Jamie Dodge	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	St Charles 3K-2
X	Scott Sokup	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Controller

Student Representatives

X	Ben Siegenthaler	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Senior Representative
X	Lilian McDonald	McDonell Area Catholic Schools	Junior Representative

Director of Finance and Facilities Scott Sokup

- Please welcome Mike Fischer to the Finance team, he started last week as our new Finance Manager. Mike will be managing many of the day-to-day operations of the finance department..
- Josh McCormick has resigned as the Director of IT. We want to thank Josh for all of his work and leadership, he will be missed. Grayson will be taking over his duties till we have a replacement.

- In the hiring process for custodial position at Holy Ghost, if you have anyone who is interested, please have them talk to Mary Beth Pfeiffer in Recruiting.
- Narrowed our search on a new payroll software. We will be working through a contract with Paycor over the next week, and then hopefully begin the transition process.
- Policy change for purchasing approval matrix has been proposed to the Executive Committee via email. We are making this change to reflect our new organizational structure and adding a column for the new Finance Manager. In addition, this is an opportunity for us to increase the dollar amounts to reflect inflation and larger orders for items due to increased enrollment. The previous matrix was approved in 2015.

Director of IT Josh McCormick

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Director of Advancement Amber Leibrandt:

- **A.B. McDonell Vision Fund:**
 - Annual Fund Goal of \$300,000 update: We are at 145% of goal at \$435,871 with 354 gifts from 253 donors. 26 new donors to the organization.
 - What can the Commission do to support? We continue to post monthly to educate on the importance of the Annual Fund. Education is the key. Like, Engage, and Share SM posts, consider supporting the vision fund with any size gift and encourage others to be engaged. It would be amazing to say that we have 100% support from our Education Commission.
 - The MACS Alumni Giving Competition will launch by the end of February. This is year two of a grassroots effort to primarily engage the 2022-1980 alumni in annual giving. The effort encourages school engagement and class comradery through peer reach out.
- **Major Gifts/Capital Campaign Prep:**
 - We continue to cultivate feasibility study members. We have secured Partners in Mission (PIM) to start the feasibility study pre-work. We have a working timeline, documents, and due dates in place. Katie Theiman, PIM Consultant, presented the key elements of the case statement development, financial rationale, presented a timeline, and answered any campaign related questions. She also provided a video to share if there is interest. I will be sending out an email letter requesting submissions of names to add to the feasibility study from the Education Commission and the Finance Committee in the next week.
- **Planned Giving:**
 - We are still on track to hard launch the new planned giving program in the Spring with letters confirming current McDonell Hope of the Future Alliance declarations by end of February. The Advancement article for the Spring Mack Messenger will include an article about the impact of an estate gift, the Dupey Estate which enabled us to make the recent land purchase. We will also publish a list of Future of Hope Alliance and Legacy of Hope members.
- **Events:**
 - **January 26th:** MACS Spaghetti Spectacular and Kids Carnival served over 800 meals in two days raising over \$27,000, and the Kids Carnival doubled its attendance. The overall meals served on Sunday were down from the previous year by about 300 meals. The total revenue in baskets were also down. We made a number of changes this year, but all the feedback we received was very positive. The Committee meets soon to review the event and make the necessary changes for next year. We also used this event as an enrollment event since it kicked off Catholic Schools Week. We

will need further analysis to see if this was effective and to see what can be added for the future.

- **March 29th:** MACS Spring Spectacular features the nationally renowned comedian, Dan Deibert, a plated meal by the same catering company that serves Country & Rock Fest VIP & Corporate, silent auctions, a fund-a-need, and more. The Silent Auction Committee is hard at work securing fabulous prizes for our first ever online auction. The Fund-a-Need focus will be an auditorium revamp. The MACS Spring Raffle is doing very well. The committee is hoping to sell 2,500 tickets at \$20 per ticket securing \$50,000 just in gross raffle revenue. We encourage our Education Commission Members to join us in supporting this new event. Raffle tickets and Event tickets are available online.
- **Blessing of the New Land:** We will be creating a blessing event to celebrate the new land purchase. We have some special dates in mind thanks to Father Kren and Father Burish. More information to come.
- **Grants:**
 - The Rotary Club was approved for \$2,000. The 1Q 2025 Annmarie Foundation, BEET grants, and an additional foundation grant are pending. The Community Foundation connected us with an additional foundation, the Dwight and Linda Davis Foundation. We have been invited to submit a grant by Feb. 27th. The US Bank Community Play Grant and one additional grant will be applied for before the end of February.
- **Operations & Administration:** End of Year donation statements went out on time. We continue to work with Jillian to finalize process documents and workflow. Data management and updating continues to be both a key component to success and a definite area of opportunity. The Finance Department and Advancement continue to work on streamline workflows and ways to enhance reporting and reconciliation. The area of volunteerism is an additional area of opportunity as well as the continuation of collaboration between all MACS Boosters, committees, and organizations.

Enrollment Coordinator

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Long Range Planning - TJ Proue

- Following the announcement of the acquisition of land earlier this month, the Building our Future committee will be meeting to further discuss planning. The LRP committee will then reconvene to be presented with progress by the Building our Future committee.

PRINCIPAL REPORTS

St Charles Grades 3K-2 - Principal Mrs Jamie Dodge:

Recap of January/February:

- Catholic Schools Week was a tremendous success, filled with fun and memorable experiences for the kids! Some of the highlights included the creative dress-up days, the energy of rally day, inspiring presentations from international students about their home countries, and the 5th graders' engaging lessons on the lives of the saints.
- The 2nd grade took an exciting field trip to the Chippewa Valley Museum as part of their Wit & Wisdom curriculum on pioneers. This experience brought history to life, allowing students to connect what they've learned in the classroom with real-world artifacts and exhibits.
- Kindergarten had a fantastic trip to the Chippewa Valley Children's Theatre to see *The Three Little Pigs* after diving into fairy tales in their Wit & Wisdom curriculum. The performance was the perfect way to bring the story to life and connect their learning with an interactive experience!
- In January, the Chippewa Steel Hockey team visited and read books with our students. It was a huge hit! The kids absolutely loved the experience, and it was a fun way to bring a community connection into the classroom.

Happening Now:

- On Friday, February 21st, we'll have a math expert visiting to observe teachers and demonstrate lessons. This will be a great opportunity for our staff to learn more about using our curriculum effectively and enhancing their teaching strategies. It's an exciting way to strengthen our math instruction!
- The trimester ends on Friday, February 21st, and report cards will be sent home on Friday, February 28th. So proud of how hard our students have been working.
- Parent-teacher conferences have been rescheduled for Tuesday, February 25th. These conferences will be by request only by teacher or parent.
- I've been focusing on enrollment lately. We have 17 inquiries for 3K, but we can only accept 16, so we're getting close to full capacity. For 4K, we currently have 7 students interested in half days, so we'll be moving forward with that option. If you know anyone who might be interested in St. Charles, please refer them for a tour to learn more about our amazing school!

Coming up...

- On March 4th, we will celebrate the tradition of burning the ashes and burying the Alleluia. It's a meaningful way to mark the beginning of Lent and reflect on the season's significance. On March 5th, Ash Wednesday mass at St. Charles is at 12:10 pm.
- Spring break is March 10th through the 14th.
- On March 18th, we will have a nutritionist visiting during PE classes to talk to the students about healthy eating. It's a great chance for them to learn more about how good nutrition supports both their physical health and overall well-being.
- On Saturday, March 22, we'll host a playdate for current and incoming 3K, 4K, and K students and their families at St. Charles from 9:30-11 am. The event will include fun activities in the gym, a craft, and a snack. It's a great chance for kids to play and for parents to meet with the principal to ask any questions they have about the school. The enrollment coordinator will also be available for any enrollment-related inquiries. Plus, it's a wonderful opportunity to build community with other families!

Holy Ghost Grades 3-5 - Principal Mrs Gwen Doyle

Review:

- Catholic Schools Week was a success! Highlights were the dress up days, saint presentations that 5th graders created (we hope to do these annually), and Rally Day.

Present:

- Easy CBM and MAPS testing is complete, and we continue to have monthly data talks with each teacher to be sure that we are not only monitoring, but communicating specific goals to parents in an effort to better partner with them.
- This week, a math consultant will be visiting on Thursday to observe teachers and give feedback on the new curriculum they are using this year.
- Student Council has given two tours to potential new students.
- We have started to offer reconciliation before Mass on Wednesdays. This has been going well. We also have 15 4th graders interested in serving. They are currently shadowing and are being trained.

- Our virtue of the month is Circumspection, which is “careful consideration.” I use it in conversation with students DAILY and find that it goes hand-in-hand with self control. The student council will be creating a bulletin board each month based on the virtue of that month. They worked today on the bulletin board for next month: perseverance.
- We have also started book clubs! Each class has 4-5 students who are reading a novel and engaging with group members about the novel. They are very excited even though they have some reading to do outside of school to keep up.

Future:

- We have a quiet month ahead until spring break. The second trimester report cards will go home next Friday and we will have Chippewa Steel Hockey athletes coming in to read to students next week.
- Longer term (next year), the teachers and I have started talking about having the students write in cursive more often (as well as how to support this).
- We have also started conversations about what should or should not be done on chromebooks next year in an effort to try to minimize screen time in our classrooms with a greater focus on truth, beauty and goodness.

Notre Dame and McDonell Grades 6-12 - Principal Mr Eric Wedemeyer

Winter formal dance

On Saturday, Feb. 8 a Northern Lights themed dance was held in the McDonell High School Commons. The event was organized by the HS Student council and the Freshman class. Thank you to the Freshman teacher advisors, Mrs. Brehm (lead), Mrs. Rohloff, Mr. Gilbertson and Mr. King for chaperoning and organizing the dance.

Peer Mentor Program update

Our High School mentors have been trained and paired up with their middle school mentee and each pair has met at least twice since the meetings began. These groups will meet once a week through the remainder of the school year.

Coursebook and Handbook updates

Some updates are being made to our High School coursebook and also with our student/parent handbook. AP US History and AP Environmental Science are now back as options for our 11th grade students. The handbook will have one major change for the '25-'26 school year. Our attendance policy will be changed to include a minimum attendance requirement for students to earn credit for a course.

Casa Hogar Mission Trip update

Our Mission Team members safely arrived at their destination last Friday, Feb. 14. We have been getting updates from Mrs. Rohloff and some of the students. The trip seems to be going great!

High School course registration

Our returning high school students as well as next year's freshman (current 8th graders) will have the opportunity to register for courses for next school year coming the first week of March. This is essential to make sure that each

student stays on track with graduation requirements and also provides us with the need for the number of sections that we need to build into next year's schedule.

Dean of Academics Mary Huffcutt

- Continue to work through the history curriculum refresh for next year
- Developing summer opportunities for teachers to help reinforce the mission of Catholic Liberal Arts education
- Summer school has changed its name from Macademia to St. Aquinas Summer Academy. Students are selected for this program to help with learning needs. The program will also include nature study experiences as well.
- Nurturing our Students team has continued to work on its objectives. One area of discussion is objective 1.3 "Develop and implement a written policy and learning standards governing students' use of technology." We are working on our philosophy around technology and will look at what is appropriate for each grade level.

Meeting Dates for 2024-25 Education Commission Meetings	
August	Thursday, August 15
September	Thursday, September 19
October	Thursday, October 17 (Listening Session)
November	Tuesday, November 19 Joint CFAUSD (CFAUSD hosts this year)
December	Thursday, December 19
January	Thursday, January 16
February	Thursday, February 20
March	Thursday, March 20
April	Thursday April 10
May	Thursday, May 15 (Listening Session)
June	Schedule Only If Needed
July	Generally, No Meeting

Commission Presentations - Topic/Presenter/Meeting			
Club/Committee/Department	Chairperson or Dept. Head	Month	Topic of Presentation/Notes
Mental Health	School Counselors	Sept	
Dress Code Update/Dialogue	Ad hoc committee chair/principals	Sept	