



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, January 16, 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	Andy Priest	5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fr. Burish led the opening prayer.
Evidence of Mission/Vision (5 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Mission and Vision	Andy	5:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gwen: HG had adoration in the new HG church. Fr. Nowicki had students come up and kneel at the front of the church during a certain point in mass. A large amount of kids wanted to be closer to God during Adoration.• Fr. Kern: 15 students attend daily mass on Tuesday which is more than normal. It was just beautiful to see.• Scott: Coming into the commons this time of year with all the play props being made and seeing the joy on the kids' faces as they prepare for the play.
CONSENT AGENDA (5 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• December minutes• Finance and Facilities Report• Technology Report• Advancement Report• Long-Range Planning Report• Enrollment Report• Student Services Report• Principals' Reports• Dean of Academics Report	Andy	5:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The enrollment report was the additional hard copy that was passed out during the meeting.• Consent Agenda items were approved.
Reports from Parish and Student Representatives (15 Minutes)		5:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NA

<p>Guest Presentation (15 Minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith/Campus Ministry 	<p>Michael Van Hemert and Fr. Kren / CMC</p>	<p>6:00</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casa Hogar Trip - Everything is where it needs to be to move forward with this trip. They leave on February 14th for 10 days. 13 students and 3 chaperones are attending. Michael has Casa Hogar 2027 & 2029 in the books for June of those two years. Fr. Kern is continuing to do his discipleship groups. He is enjoying that time with students and it is going well. Monsignor came out to bowl with the discipleship group. Fr. Kern has been having daily mass again this year but doing it during the day instead of the morning on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. We have a prayer team at McDonell this year. They come in at 10 am on Tuesdays before mass. Pray that we can fill the Campus Ministry position soon. Students from other schools want to attend the Seminary Basketball Trip from February 28th - March 2nd. We are still looking for a chaperone:) Ut Fidem (sp?), if successful, 75% of people go on to practice the faith after high school. It is relational and gives kids the space to ask questions that they wouldn't ask in a classroom.
<p>Commission Vice Chair (5 Minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chad will follow up with Tony and others for orientation. Need volunteers to sign up and speak at their respective Masses. Please discuss this with your parish Priests. Wrestling meets tonight in the gym, come check it out after our meeting, it's a first for McDonell. 	<p>Andy</p>	<p>6:15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gwen let the commission know that she added to her report under HG.
<p>President's Updates (20 Minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing this month 	<p>Andy</p>	<p>6:20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
<p>NEXT Education Commission Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarship Fund Realignment Gift Acceptance Policy Enrollment/Admissions Technology 	<p>Andy</p>	<p>6:40</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday, February 20, 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amber will present on the scholarship fund and gift acceptance policies. Molly will present on enrollment/admissions. Josh will present on technology.

Closing Prayer and Adjourn	Priest	7:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fr. Kern closed in prayer with a Glory Be.
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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	Homemaker (Biology and Theology degrees) 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	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

- Fall Audit is complete. We did have a few findings, they did find two Choice students were not eligible due to some misfiled paperwork. This finding was contested, and they did not find in our favor. Then we had a finding where we followed the Diocese policy which was less restrictive than the DPI policy on background checks for a few high school students working over the summer; we have since corrected these.
- The decision has been made to separate out Facilities meetings from Finance meetings. This was voted on by the Facility and Finance Committee in December. We will be working on the frequency and meeting dates for Facilities meetings.

- We are currently working on some quotes for remodeling of some of the spaces in the Auditorium. More to come as we get further into this work.

Director of IT Josh McCormick

Director of Advancement Amber Leibrandt:

- **A.B. McDonell Vision Fund:**
 - Annual Fund Goal of \$300,000 update: We are at 139% of goal at \$416,563.00 with 336 gifts from 244 donors. 25 new donors to the organization.
 - End of Year Giving results to date: 2 donors matched up to \$150,000 through December 31st. We exceeded our match with a total of \$179,337.76 in end of year gifts.
 - What can the Commission do to support? 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.
- **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. The entire Strategic Leadership Team which includes the principals will have a meeting with Katie Theiman, PIM Consultant, to review the key elements of the case statement development, financial rationale, present a timeline, and answer any campaign related questions that arise.
- **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 Feb. 1st. The Advancement article for the Spring Mack Messenger will include an article about the impact of an estate gift. 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 will kick off Catholic Schools Week! Raffle Baskets are on the website and pre-sales have started. Continue to look for, share, and comment on the social media posts. Both committees are very excited for this event.
 - **March 29th:** MACS Spring Spectacular offers a new opportunity to join the community and have a fun evening out. Featuring a TBA Entertainer (rumor has it that we might have a comedian), plated meal by the same catering company that serves Country & Rock Fest VIP & Corporate, silent auctions, a fund-a-need, and more. The Fund-a-Need focus will be an auditorium revamp. We will have more of a formal presentation by the February meeting.
- **Grants:**
 - The United Way grant was denied. The Rotary Club is still pending. The 4Q Annmarie Foundation and the Community Foundation grants were partially funded. The Community Foundation connected us with an additional foundation to hopefully fund the remainder of the grant. Mary Huffcutt and I will meet with them this month. The Community Foundation awarded \$1,749.00 in Tuition Assistance from the Dr. Bertha M. Bresina Endowment to Holy Ghost. Four teachers received \$350 each from Northwestern Bank Mini Grants. The BEET Grant, 1Q Annmarie Grant, Pablo Business Directed Giving, US Bank Community Play Grant, and two additional grants will be applied for before the end of January. Total Grants awarded YTD: \$197,064.00
- **Operations & Administration:**

- Mid Year Review Results: Advancement is on track to meet or has met all goals and objectives, most of the action steps within the strategies, and almost all metrics. (If you are interested in seeing the Advancement Director Goals, please reach out). The action steps or metrics at risk are: Reactivation of 15 or more lapsed donors of 1 year or more, hitting the benchmark target for events, hitting the metric target for major gifts, and the facilitation of quarterly meetings with Advancement and the Booster Clubs, HandS, Alumni Association, and Event Committee chairs and vice chairs to encourage collaboration. Additional areas of opportunity lie with the volunteers, building a culture and atmosphere of volunteerism, and volunteer hour tracking.
- Our current year active donors is down by 40 donors and our retained donors is up by 43 donors since Jan, 2024. Our active 2 year consecutive donors is up by 43 and 3 years is up by 5 donors. We have a large Last Year But Not This list of 135 but there is time to improve our list of active donors and our retention numbers.
- WTD collected \$14,423.04 YTD of the \$35,000 that is still outstanding to collect.

Enrollment Coordinator

Enrollment 2025-2026

1. Enrollment

1. Opened for current families on Jan 3, 2025, one month earlier than the prior year.
2. Current students had 3 weeks to enroll prior to the parish student's enrollment opening.
3. Open enrollment begins on Monday, February 3, 2025.
4. As of 1/16/2025, half of the current students have re-enrolled. All grades average 50% re-enrollment
5. We are offering a ½ option for our 4K grade.

2. Marketing and Recruitment Efforts:

Our team has been actively implementing strategies to enhance the enrollment numbers, such as:

1. WWIB Radio promotions – 14 weeks, started a few days ago. I have already received 3 inquiry calls for 3K
2. New Niche Premium – website geared to promote schools
3. 8000 household postcards – MACS School and Parental Choice information
4. Flyers are distributed to all child care centers in the Chippewa Falls area.
5. Postcards to all parish families and inquiring families
6. March 1, 2025 – Preschool and Kindergarten Open House and Playdate
7. Referral program
8. Key Trends and Insights:
 1. Middle School tours are up
 2. Continued interest in our CGS Program
9. Moving forward, we plan to monitor our marketing efforts and track where new families have heard about us.

Long Range Planning - TJ Proue

PRINCIPAL REPORTS

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

December Review:

- For Community Day, our students created nativity ornaments, which we distributed to various long-term care facilities.
- The Kolbe Club organized a fun interactive activity focused on the virtue of generosity.
- Although our students were disappointed to miss the Paw reward on Thursday, December 19th, I was able to reschedule it for January 3rd, when we returned from break. They were thrilled and had a fantastic time.
- Our Giving Tree raised a total of \$368, which will benefit MACS families in need.
- On January 9th, our students participated in the Jump Rope for Heart Association competition. It was a great success! Two boys and two girls qualified for the Bloomer Competition at the end of January. Congratulations to all the winners!
- We also had Kate Bobholz, a Kindergarten parent and former audiologist, come in to provide hearing screenings for our 4K-2nd grade students. Thank you, Kate, for taking the time to assist with this!

Current/Future:


- First & Second grade had adoration on Monday, January 13th with Monsignor.
- 4K and Kindergarten will have adoration on Friday, January 17th with Fr. Kern.
- The Kolbe club is coming to SC on Friday, January 17th to talk to our students about the virtue of Humility.
- Second graders will be going to the Chippewa Valley Museum on Friday, January 17th to learn about the history of Chippewa but also talk about the pioneer days which they have been learning about in school.
- Ignite the Light has been going so well and is a huge success in being able to offer an extracurricular activity for primary school that brings in our faith and the fun of science.
- Catholic Schools week is coming up, January 27th-31st. Below you will find all the fun activities that we have planned. Also, I have created this fun Catholic Schools Week Presentation for teachers to do with their students during catholic schools week. Click [here](#) to view.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
CSW Theme	Celebrate Our Community: Focus on Goodness	Celebrate Our Students: Focus on Truth	Celebrate Our Nation: Focus on Piety	Celebrate Our Vocations: Focusing on Listening for God's Call in Our Lives.	Celebrate Our Faculty: Focus on Self-Gift
Dress Up Days	Dress Up: MACS Spirit Wear (Jeans are appropriate)	Dress Up: Sweats Day (No Pajamas)	Dress Up: Uniform	Dress Up: Dress like a teacher/principal	Dress Up: Flannel Friday (shirts only & jeans are appropriate)
SC Activities	Start of the Change War. Create cards for local nursing homes.	- Teachers share one thing you love about each student in your class. -Teachers will create a video about What makes our students special.	*Rally Day at McDonell	- 5th Graders Present on Saints (In classroom rotations) @ 12:45? - Thank you cards to Priest.	- International Students from 8-9 am in the gym. - Thank you cards to teachers & staff. - Teacher Kahoot Game - Snowflake Dance @ SC from 5:30-7:30 pm (Neon Dance)

- We have had our data talks with each grade level this week to talk about student's needs and created plans to help support those students who need a little extra support. We will be having parent-teacher conferences on February 18th for Teacher/Parent requests only.

Holy Ghost Grades 3-5 - Principal Mrs Gwen Doyle

Have you signed up to speak at a Mass this weekend?

 Education Commissioner Schedule to Speak at Parishes Jan. 12/19

Review:

Our Community Day on December 20th went very well! The highlight was being able to visit SEVEN different long-term care facilities in Chippewa Falls to bring some Christmas cheer. After lunch and recess, we had a badminton tournament and classroom Christmas parties. I especially appreciate our teachers and staff and volunteer bus drivers who made the activities and day happen.

Our Giving Tree totals were \$362. These proceeds went towards MACS families in need.

Present:

We are very excited to be back in the church! Each grade level had a tour given either by Fr. Burish or Mrs. Doyle. Our first Mass back was beautiful! We also began offering confession before Mass again and will be training in sacristans in the near future.

Easy CBM and MAPS testing is happening throughout this week. These tests help us analyze data so that we can modify our instruction and identify the students who need help.

Our two winners with the most jumps last Friday were Harvey Smiskey (53) and Emma Berg (47).

In our building PLCs, we are working on clarifying math attainments and if students are meeting them.

Future:

Catholic Schools Week will be January 26-January 31st. Here is what Holy Ghost has planned:

	Monday January 29	Tuesday January 30	Wednesday January 31	Thursday February 1	Friday February 2
Theme	ICLE - Celebrate Our Community	ICLE - Celebrate Our Students	ICLE - Celebrate Our Nation	ICLE - Celebrate Our Vocations	ICLE - Celebrating Our Faculty, Staff & Volunteers
Dress-Up Days	Wear MACS Spirit Day	Wear Sweats	Wear Uniform	Dress like a teacher or principal	Flannel Friday
HG	1. Kahoot: MACS History for classrooms. 2. Create a spiritual	1. Priest offers blessings on Terrific Tuesday. 2. Students write thank	1. Post-It notes of community in AM: students write to another student in the	1. Saint Stations in the basement @ HG 12:00pm and @ SC 1:00pm	1. International Students 8-9am (Little Theater)

	Bouquet for 2nd graders, prayer time in the church (5 minutes)	you to extended members of staff (create list).--To be delivered Friday.	building. 2. Teachers could have a post-it note for students on their desks or write one for them.		
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January 16: Priest Visit: Msgr. Gorman

January 17: Mission Day: Casa Hogar (support those going on the trip with a monetary donation)

January 20: No School (Staff Retreat)

January 22: Mass: Miller Van Dyke

January 26: Spaghetti Spectacular and Kids Carnival

January 29: Rally Day @ McDonell

February 7: Priest Visit

February 12: Adoration

February 17: No School

March 5: Ash Wednesday

March 10-14: Spring Break

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

3rd Annual Denny Laramy Classic

On Friday, December 27, both McDonell girls & boys basketball programs hosted the third annual Denny Laramy classic. This year was just a one day event where teams from Luck, St. Croix Central, Clear Lake and Spooner participated in the tournament.

Winter Assessments

An essential part of servicing our students is having the data to diagnose areas where specific students are struggling. This information also helps us evaluate our curriculum and teaching strategies. During the week of January 10 through 17 our middle school started and completed their winter MAPS assessments. Teachers will evaluate the data and discuss interventions for students that are struggling in the coming weeks to determine the best path of intervention

High School Mid-Winter Carnival

Our middle winter high school dance was originally scheduled for Saturday, January 18. Due to a scheduled MAXX tournament at our McDonell building on that day we have decided to move the Winter Carnival to Saturday, February 8. This year's dance has a Northern Lights theme and will take place in the McDonell high school commons from 8:00-10:30.

Coursebook and Handbook updates

In time for the start of registration some updates are being made to our High School coursebook and also with our student/parent handbook. The handbook updates are mainly some clarification with the student dress code and some consistency with the language in our system wide behavior/discipline policy. No major changes will be made.

Dean of Academics Mary Huffcutt

- We are creating a plan of action to help with the strategic plan objective of our schools being recognised by the Cardinal Newman Society. One of the first steps will be analyzing our policies which include these topics: human sexuality in Catholic education; literature and arts; admissions; outside speakers; secular programs and materials in Catholic education; moral expectations for

employees; formation of the human person in Catholic schools; awards and honors; mission, philosophy and faith statements; financial investing; nondiscrimination statement; facility use. The process also looks at Catholic curriculum standards. The process is similar to accreditation by providing evidence but we do not have external visitor visits. The timeline for working on this should be completed and submitted by 2029.

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	
Listening Session	All	Oct.	Try to do fall survey in conjunction with the fall feedback survey
Safety Committee/EMEROPS	Safety Comm Chair	Oct.	
Advancement/Alumni	Amber Leibrandt and AA	Nov	