

**GRACE Board of Trustees**  
**February 11, 2025**  
**Minutes**  
**6:30 p.m., GRACE Riverside Office**

**Present:** Sue Amtmann, Nick Anderson, Dan Bins, Bridget Erwin, Eric Guzowski, Ed Kippley, Chet Lamers, John Peterson, Samantha Wagner, Marv Wall

**Others Present:** Francis Dempsey, Kim Desotell, Ty Little, Carrie Mahlik, Gerene Thom, Lori Ashmann-Recorder

**Not Present:** Kelly Williams, Melissa Wolcanski

Nick Anderson called the meeting to order with an opening prayer.

1. St. John the Baptist School: Principal Gerene Thom was welcomed and introduced. The school's SAC Chair, Sarah Baye, was not able to attend but shared her input with Principal Thom. Principal Thom reported that the school's parent-led events and community building are going well. Succession of SAC leadership is a challenge, but the Council is robust. Facility improvements were reviewed including, in part, the school main office move which allows for increased safety and security. Enrollment, retention, gym floor fundraising, student engagement, and before and after care were also addressed. School tradition, history and legacy are strong with growing vitality. Discussion followed. President Desotell extended appreciation to Principal Thom in her first year with the school and ongoing positive transition.
2. Father Allouez Catholic School: Principal Francis Dempsey and SAC Chair Carrie Mahlik were welcomed and introductions commenced. Principal Dempsey reported on the transition from Principal Franz, uniqueness of the two campuses, vibrant middle school, enrollment growth goal, new activities, curriculum integration, partnership with UWGB/STEM Innovation, increased security, and faith cornerstone of the community. Carrie Mahlik, second year Chair, reported on the SAC-led auction, facility improvements, and engaged facilities taskforce. The SAC envisions a need for a project manager via GRACE to leverage common ground among the schools to address similar needs and complexities of each site. Discussion followed regarding the SAC Bylaws template being finalized which will allow customization by the SAC and concerns regarding the follow-up involved with Family Engagement requirements. Discussion followed including that regarding facilities. Chet Lamers, Chair of the Facilities Committee, reported on the available facilities grant for which applications are now being accepted for safety projects. The grant and application process was outlined. Nick Anderson extended appreciation to Principal Dempsey and Mrs. Mahlik for their collaboration and contributions.
3. Minutes: Motion made by John Peterson and seconded by Marv Wall to approve the December 10, 2024 Board meeting minutes and the presented Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.
4. President's Report: Kim Desotell presented her report and highlighted the following.
  - a. NFL Draft: Preparations were reviewed. Focused safety plans for the draft days are being finalized. A more robust safety plan will be in place at Holy Family due to its proximity. Discussion followed.
  - b. Immigration: Any concerns being presented are being addressed on an individual basis. System and the principal leadership team are keeping informed. Focus remains on teaching, learning and attendance.
  - c. St. Norbert College: Support to our CatholicLink partner has been extended.
  - d. Feasibility Study: A report on progress with the study was provided. Work with Partners in Mission (PIM) is going well. Timeline and current state were reviewed. Melissa Wolcanski and Nate Tackaberry will be attending the PIM conference in June – National Summer Institute for Catholic Schools – with focus on enrollment management and

fundraising. Discussion followed. A request was made for an update on Advancement and the Development Process which will be arranged for the April meeting. The Board was made aware that it may require to meet prior to the GRACE Board of Director's meeting to review recommendations from the Feasibility Study.

5. Board of Trustees Chair Report:

- a. New Member: Mr. Ty Little was welcomed, and introductions ensued. Mr. Little was presented as a trustee candidate, representative of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. Discussion followed. Nick Anderson moved to nominate Ty Little to the Board of Trustees. Motion made by Chet Lamers to approve; seconded by Dan Bins; motion carried. The appointment will be brought to the Board of Directors at its next meeting.
- b. Strategic Plan: Year 1 initiatives continue to grow and vision. Enrollment growth goals were discussed.
- c. Academic Calendar 2025-26: Appreciation was extended to the Board for their electronic review, vote and approval of the 2025-26 Academic Calendar (finalized December 18, 2024). The electronic action enabled timely provision of information to families.

6. Committee Reports:

- a. Finance: Marv Wall reported that the committee is working on budget. Requirements of the Choice Reserve are on target to be met. Work will involve feasibility study aspects upon any approvals of study recommendations. Question raised regarding feedback from parishes regarding the rent schedule and discussion followed.
- b. Education: Sue Amtmann reported on her attendance at the last principal team meeting and the extent of the principal workload. Star assessment information will be reported on in April. The Technology Services area has engaged a managed services provided to cybersecurity services and the Technology Advisory Team remains beneficial. Discussion followed regarding unique aspects of each school's offerings, i.e. makerspaces, etc., and how these layer over curriculum standards. Discussion continued regarding formalized marketing to support enrollment growth and staffing aspects involving teacher retention and teacher substitutes.
- c. Governance: Nick Anderson reported that positive, constructive feedback was obtained from the 360-degree performance appraisal of President Desotell. Reports from the Development and Facilities Committees were as aforementioned in the prior meeting business.

7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 8, 2025