

GRACE Board of Directors
Special Meeting
November 5, 2025
2:00-3:00 p.m.
Virtual

Members present: Fr. John Girotti, Nick Anderson, Dr. Becky Walker, Fr. James Baraniak, O.Praem., Fr. Jason Blahnik, Rev. Canon Antoine Boucheron, Fr. Adam Bradley, Fr. Mike Brennan, O.Praem., Fr. Andrew Cribben, O.Praem., Fr. Michael Ingold, Fr. Robert Kabat, Fr. Ryan Krueger, Fr. Jose Lopez Vargas, Fr. James Lucas, Fr. Quinn Mann, Abbot Gary Neville, Fr. Erick Ondieki, Deacon Jeff Prickette, Fr. Mathew Simonar, Fr. William Stout, OFM, Fr. Juan Zarate

Others present: Kim Desotell, Melissa Wolcanski, Lori Ashmann-Recorder

Members not present: Bishop David Ricken, Fr. Don Everts, Fr. Robert Kollath

- Call to Order and Opening Prayer: Fr. Girotti called the special meeting of the Board to order with an opening prayer.
- Agenda Review and Approval: Motion made by Fr. Kabat and seconded by Fr. Ingold to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
- Holy Cross Catholic School
 - Background: Fr. Girotti presented the school's potential relocation opportunity, which is being made a possibility through a donation offer of a generous, anonymous benefactor. Fr. Girotti provided a review of the potential new site and current school site considerations. The potential new site was identified as the former Wequiock Elementary School of the Green Bay Area Public School District which closed after the 2024-25 academic year. The fiscal piece of the opportunity lies with Holy Cross Parish, execution with GRACE, and involvement of all aspects by the Diocese. There are many approvals still necessary.
 - Opportunity for GRACE: Kim Desotell reviewed the history of communications and the evaluation to date. The offer presented was a surprise; with due diligence in exploring this opportunity, research and evaluation were conducted by a focused study team. All activity has been and remains confidential. President Desotell proceeded to review the school's enrollment; recruitment; retention; capacity; building age, accessibility, attributes and amenities; cost support through system shared services, recent updates and required upgrades.
 - Opportunity for Holy Cross Parish: Abbot Neville reported on parish leadership involvement and evaluation. The sections of the current school building and their respective ages were reviewed. The oldest section of the school is one hundred years old. Repairs have been completed but the school is a challenge to maintain and attract students and families. However, the school is an important piece to parish life and there is multi-generational student pride.

Overall, the school facility presents significant challenges to school vibrancy and vitality in order to move forward and continue operations. The potential new school site provides a significant upgrade – capacity, library, STEM Lab, etc. – but it is not perfect citing the gym is commensurate with that of the existing school and there is HVAC equipment challenges. The distance from the church is also a factor. The Board was also informed that the sale of the former Wequiock Elementary School to the now owner/donor included a clause that the building cannot be used as a school which will be reviewed by the owner/donor if relocation were to be approved by both Holy Cross Parish and governance of GRACE School System. A decision is also imperative in alignment with the launch of 2026-27 enrollment in January 2026 so that prior appropriate communications take place.

Discussion ensued centered on clarifications and questions/answers regarding the potential relocation.

The donor who owns the proposed property would manage any next step to the sale contingency, though success is not guaranteed.

Upgrading the current school would require a multimillion-dollar investment, while developing the new site would also require funding but presents long-term opportunities. Abbot Neville cited Holy Cross Parish, having recently paid off its new Parish Center, is in a position to take on measured risk and reaffirmed its commitment to both parish and school growth.

Under the GRACE model, Holy Cross Parish would own the new building, and GRACE would lease it consistent with existing governance structures. Financial analysis indicates maintenance costs between the current and proposed facilities would be approximately break-even, with no impact on parish subsidy structures for other schools.

Accessibility at the current Wequiock building was confirmed as ADA compliant, and its 10-acre site also provides opportunities. A review of current student distribution showed families are not limited to the immediate neighborhood, suggesting relocation would not adversely affect enrollment. In fact, the new site could attract families from nearby housing developments without competing with other Catholic schools.

The proposed Mass plan would include weekly liturgies in the gym and monthly Mass at Holy Cross Church via bus transportation.

If the new site proves unviable, GRACE leadership would initiate a reset and strategic review of other options.

Both Fr. Girotti and GRACE leadership reaffirmed that GRACE schools remain parish-owned and GRACE-operated. Dr. Walker highlighted the benefits of the new site, including enhanced facilities such as a library, STEM lab, additional space, and potential chapel.

Motion presented: The Board of Directors of Green Bay Area Catholic Education, Inc. approves the relocation of Holy Cross Catholic School from its current location to the former Green Bay Area Public School District Wequiock Elementary School location pending removal of the clause placed in the sale documents. Motion made by Fr. Kabat and seconded by Fr. Baraniak. Motion carried unanimously, no objections; no abstentions. Dr. Walker will facilitate completion of the required unanimous consent document.

Directors wishing to walkthrough the Wequiock building site are to contact President Desotell to make arrangements. President Desotell also outlined next steps and timeline involving proxy to Bishop Ricken, donor communication, parish/school communications, open house, announcement, and 2026-27 admissions and enrollment.

The continued confidentiality of this subject was emphasized.

- Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m. with a closing prayer provided by Abbot Neville.