



School of St. Mary
Meeting of the School Advisory Council (SAC)
March 18, 2026
Minutes

Council Members Present: Natalie Agostinelli, Kate Burke, Erica Cook, Maeve Curran, Jimmy Griffin, Kelly Graham, Melissa Haak, Diana Hand, John Hancir, Margaret Hogan, Sabrina Jerina, Liza Jessen (virtual), Michelle Kijek (virtual), Kristina Madsen Lowery, Ashley Madsen, Maria Monroe, Fr. Ted Munz S.J., Derek Sarmas, Emily Sturges, Kathy Thompson, Eileen Weber, and Jen Zeit

Council Members Absent: Katelyn Belcore, Courtney Bott, Kathleen Brill, Rob Busam, Justin Fisk, Meredith Leggitt, Christine Porter, Brittany Ruef, and Chris Schenkel

SOSM Visitors Present: Alyse Alban, Rob Belcore, Itzel Franco, Peter Hartman, Elizabeth Hitt, Janice Krakora Looby, Mary Kate Strittmatter, Carol Teitz, Emerson Tornatore, and Morgan Wilkie

Agenda Highlights:

1. Opening

- Council Chair Eileen Weber called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and welcomed our newly appointed Pastor Fr. Ted Munz S.J.
- Fr. Ted Munz S.J. led the Council in an opening prayer.
- Chair Weber welcomed visitors and reviewed meeting protocols.
- Approval of Minutes: The January 21 meeting minutes were approved by the council.
- Chair Weber introduced visitor Mary Kate Strittmatter, nominee for SAC Secretary for 2026-2027 school year. The election for all Executive roles will be at the May 20 meeting.

2. Pastor Administrator Report (Fr. Ted Munz S.J.)

- Fr. Munz S.J., expressed his gratitude to the council for the warm welcome into the parish and school community. He shared his confidence that the school is on a strong upward trajectory, crediting both the leadership of the school administration and the collaborative partnership with the SAC.

3. SOSM Student Council Presentation (SOSM Students: Emerson Tornatore, Morgan Wilkie)

- Morgan and Emerson presented to the SAC, highlighting the role of the SOSM Student Council and key events from this academic year. They also reflected on what they've learned through their leadership experience and the skills they will carry with them beyond SOSM.
- SAC members thanked the students for their leadership and for sharing their perspectives with parents and the school community. SAC members noted the opportunity to highlight more student-led initiatives at future meetings.

4. Student Life (John Hancir)

- John Hancir shared that a new athletic director, Joe Miller (a current SOSM parent), has been hired. Joe brings a strong background in coaching to SOSM and is excited to help continue to rebuild the athletic department.
- Former Student Life Committee member Peter Hartman shared more about Joe's plans, which include athletic camps, with opportunities for older students, PGC participants, and alumni to be involved. Peter encouraged all parents to consider SOSM athletic activities and support Joe as he enters this role.
- The school is working in coordination with the parish Building and Grounds Committee on the gym floor project. The SAC will be updated on timing and project scope at a later date.
- The basketball season has recently concluded, and spring sports will be kicking off after spring break. Offerings this year include: the return of boys volleyball, track, and golf.
- The Council discussed the opportunity to celebrate the conclusion of each sports season to recognize student athletes and continue to build community and school spirit.

5. Principals Report (Kathy Thompson and Maria Monroe)

Principals Thompson and Monroe submitted a written Administrative Report to the SAC and shared the following updates:

- Principal Thompson expressed appreciation for the work of all SAC committees and the PA, noting their meaningful contributions to moving the school forward has helped contribute to such a positive and successful school year to date.
- School enrollment continues to grow, with six new students welcomed since January.
- 2026-2027 teacher contracts will be issued March 19, with the PA supporting retention through sign-on incentives for returning staff. Contracts begin August 17, with the first day of school scheduled for August 25.
- The contracts mark the first step in the 2026-2027 budget development process. Additional staffing needs under consideration include: a development director (a candidate was recently interviewed for a shared parish/school role), an on-site technology director, an SRO, additional teaching aides, and administrative support. The budget will be submitted to the Archdiocese on April 11.
- Families are encouraged to complete and submit the 5Essentials Survey.

6. Faculty Comments (Margaret Hogan and Natalie Agostinelli)

- Margaret Hogan and Natalie Agostinelli expressed the faculty’s sincere appreciation to the entire Parent Association (PA), as well as to Kelly Graham, Mila Sobinsky and her team, for the recent Teacher Appreciation Week. They shared that staff felt deeply supported and valued by the school community.
- They also noted a noticeable increase in prospective student tours and credited new admissions director Rebecca Hartman for her outstanding efforts in introducing the School of St. Mary to new families.

7. PA (Kelly Graham)

- The 2026 Crusader Annual Gala was both an enjoyable and record-breaking event, raising over \$440,000. Appreciation was extended to Gala leads Maria Vernon, Christina Nugent, and Ali Zelenuich for their leadership and dedication.
- Teacher Appreciation Week, moved from May to the last week of February, was a tremendous success. Appreciation was expressed for Mila Sobinsky and her team for their thoughtful planning and execution.
- The Fish Fry, held on Friday, March 13, was very successful and well-attended, with over 435 Church of St. Mary parishioners participating. The event raised \$5,200 for the Crusader Annual Fund. Gratitude was extended to co-chairs Molly Sweeney and Tessa Schenkel for their efforts.

8. Ad Hoc Security (Jenn Zeit and Derek Sarmas)

- Derek Sarmas provided a recap of last week’s “Meet a SRO” program held at the PGC campus. The evening’s conversation highlighted how the SRO program is integrated into the school, emphasizing student engagement, cultural awareness around safety, and the SRO’s educational and coaching roles in addition to providing security.
- Funding for a full time SRO is under consideration from Principal Thompson. Derek Sarmas noted that private contributions may be needed to support the program.

9. Marketing & Enrollment (Melissa Haak)

- Six new families joined SOSM since January, resulting in a net growth of 10 new students this academic year. Current enrollment stands at 383.
- Re-enrollment numbers for the 2026-2027 school year are currently at 378, with final enrollment projected to be closer to 400 by fall 2026. Forty new families are expected to start in the fall.
- Since October, 76 new student inquiries have been received, with 70% of those submitting applications.
- Upcoming events include: “A Taste of UGC Night”: 3rd grade introduction to the UGC curriculum on April 8 and a PGC Open House (date TBD).
- Current marketing efforts are focused on middle school engagement and team-based messaging. The remaining marketing budget is limited as previous parish leadership requested that the majority of funds be spent on 150th Anniversary advertisements.
- The school will mark its 110th anniversary next year, and SAC noted this milestone should be celebrated. Alumni reunions should be considered in the future as well.

10. Finance Committee

Committee members were unable to attend the meeting; however, Chair Weber shared the following updates:

- Committee members have conducted several meetings with the Principals, the Parish Finance Committee, and the Business Office regarding the budget. Chair Weber noted that this has been the most engaged and involved the committee has been able to be in the budget process in the past 10 years.
- The committee has not yet received February financial documents, and financial documents have not been consistently shared in prior months.
 - Fr. Munz S.J. clarified that going forward, documents will be provided by the Business Office by the 20th of the preceding month.
 - Previously, the expectation was for documents to be shared by the 15th of the preceding month. SAC noted that 2026-27 meeting dates should reflect this new financial timeline to be most effective with providing financial support.

11. Other Committee Highlights:

- **Development (Maeve Curran, Diana Hand):**
 - Several upcoming *Dine, Shop, and Donate* events are planned, including partnerships with Sophia Steak, Petite Plume, and Rosati's Pizza Thursdays.
 - An anonymous donor has pledged \$25,000 toward the Spanish curriculum if the amount is matched. The Development team is planning a Cinco de Mayo fundraising effort to leverage this opportunity. Additional details will be shared in the coming weeks.
- **Catholic Identity (Erica Cook):** Alyse Alban will be joining the Catholic Identity Committee for the 2026–2027 school year. A primary initiative will be introducing a “Saint for Each Grade” program, along with exploring other ways to integrate faith-based learning across all aspects of the SOSM curriculum. This committee will also assist with the initiatives developed by the Faith Formation Commission of the Parish.

12. Visitor Comments:

- Guest Rob Belcore noted that pursuing Catholic Identity initiatives throughout the school is an excellent idea, highlighting that the Catholic faith distinguishes the school and provides a meaningful, faith-based education for generations of St. Mary's families.

13. Next Steps

- The Executive Committee will be sending out a parent survey to help inform development of the long-range strategic plan on March 21, with submissions being accepted through April 8. They will then present the strategic plan during the all-staff in service on May 1 and roll out the final plan to all SOSM families and COSM parishioners by the end of the school year.
- All Committees should continue their independent work and collaborate with the Executive Committee, Kathy, and Maria as needed.

- Chair Weber encouraged all council members to be present and actively contribute to community-building.
- Next SAC Meeting: Wednesday, May 20, 2026 with an end-of-year dinner prior to the meeting. More information to come.

14. Closing

- Chair Weber closed the meeting with prayer.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Kate Burke, SAC Secretary