

**Grand Traverse Area Catholic  
School Advisory Board**  
Regular Board Meeting Minutes  
St. Francis High School Library  
Wednesday, September 18, 2019 / 5:30 P.M.

Present: Greg Donahue (SF, Chairperson), Janet Wolff (SJ), Eric Mulvany (member-at-large), Mike Buell, Kevin Endres (CK), Monty Hegewald (IC, Vice-Chairperson), Debbie Ritchie (SP), Father Don Geyman

Absent: none

Introduced Debbie Ritchie, newest SAB member representing St. Patricks. Nominated by Mike Buell and approved by Father Gerald.

**PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

**I. Opening Prayer**

Opening prayer was led by Father Don

**II. Public Input**

none

**III. Administrative Reports**

1. Priest Report -

Father Don reported on a few items:

- a. Recent pastors meeting went smoothly. Items on agenda included discussing various retreat options and scheduling.
  - b. Second Annual Blue Mass honoring first responders to be held at SF as part of high school mass.
  - c. Deacon Ben will be ordained during a SF school Mass, on February 20th. excited that high school students will be able to attend.
2. Holy Angels/Immaculate Conception - attached
  3. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton - attached
  4. St Francis - attached
  5. GTACS - Mike Buell
    - a. New IC school was on the cover of Momentum Magazine, the National Catholic Education Magazine with upwards of 100,000 circulation. Big PR for our system. Mike was at a conference in Rhode Island for superintendents shortly after magazine came out

and was asked lots of questions about how money was raised, school was built, etc. This also helps us in our discussions with Dominican Sisters.

- b. Kevin Baxter, President of the NCA is very impressed with our system and has been looking at how we do certain things, example is our Right to Life trip and how it has impacted our AKR scores which are in the top percentage nationally among Catholic Schools. This test, which is given to our 5th, 8th and 11th graders measures our students affectedness (what the Church believes) and effectiveness (personal beliefs). Also looked at our students SAT scores which have been steadily rising vs national trends which have stayed steady over the past 20 years.
- c. There was some discussion of the label of “Classical Schools” and while we are supportive of this trend, feel it is simply a label. As a school system, yes, we do a lot of “classical” teaching but we will not label as such. Mike stated “we are ‘simply a Catholic school.’”
- d. An internal goal set by GTACS in 2012 was to be considered one of the best Catholic Schools in the Country by 2025. We were recently recognized in the Top 50. Would like to set a new goal for the next 15-year plan....

## **BOARD CLOSED SESSION** **(starting at 5:58pm)**

(Note: All meeting notes for board closed sessions will be noted and filed separately)

### **I. Correspondence received or distributed - none**

### **II. Advisory Board Action Items**

- 1. Approval of new Meeting Minutes from September 18 2019 (attached)  
Motion made by Eric Mulvany, 2nd by Kevin Endres. Motion carries
- 2. Mission Trip approval - only for out-of-state travel, not out of country. Let the record show that while the SAB acknowledged and will make a recommendation to approve such, this topic of mission trips in general was merely discussed and not voted on.
- 3. 8th grade DC Trip - discussed as presented....great trip, great format. No formal vote was taken.

**III. Old Business**

**St Patrick Board Vacancy - Mike Buell - see above**

**Dominican Sister Visit – Mike Buell**

**IV. New Business**

**V. Recognition of Excellence**

To Wayne Mueller, Kathy Britten, Janet and Dale Troppman, all committee chairs, decorations crew and volunteers for another fabulous Gladhander event.

Lots of sports acknowledgements:

To Girls and Boys Cross Country teams - 4th in State

To our Girls Varsity Volleyball team - quarter-finalists in state

To our Boys Varsity Football Team - Regional Champs

To the GTACS Tennis program - #4 in the State and #1 Doubles team of Brendan Chounaird and Ben Schmude and #1 singles champ Cody Richards

To Simon Chadwell, 6th grader who raised over \$10,000 for Father Fred by hitting tennis balls and gaining individual and community sponsorships

To all of the priests who are on rotation doing the masses at SEAS...the kids are really enjoying the diversity and getting a lot out of it.

To Father Mitch Roman who is spending time in classrooms at various grade levels.

To all of our priests and clergy... a shoutout for all you do, we appreciate the dedication of time and talents to our students and staff.

**VI. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Mike Buell, seconded by Janet Wolff at 6:43 pm

**VII. Closing Prayer**

Deacon Endres closed the meeting with prayer

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet Wolff, Secretary