

School Advisory Board Meeting Notes

St. John Neumann Catholic School

Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025

Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Attendees: Father Mark, Father Bo, Kelly Mechelke, Chris Chandler, Mary Marlowe, Ashley Allen, Alex LaFasto, Hiram Morales, Jessica Louthan, Rachel Heller, Erica Morales, Andrea Gentile, Patrick Wade

Absent: Will Silverberg

Presenters/Spectators: Meredith Reddington, Tim Ramirez, Christina Spadara, Robin Andersen, Michael Souders

Opening (4:00)

- Meeting called to order
- Opening prayer offered by Fr. Mark

Presenters

- Meredith Reddington
 - Expanding and revising bullying/harassment policy [Supplementary Document](#)
- Jayni Linderman (sent in a presentation read by Jessica Louthan)
 - School lunches [Supplementary Document](#)

Old Business

- - **Approval of Prior Minutes**
 - Previous month's minutes approved unanimously
 - **Website Updates**
 - Advisory board website updates are complete.
 - Several bios (Jessica Louthan, Alex LaFasto, William Silverberg) are outdated and need revision.
 - Members will update bios and send to Stephanie.
 - **PTMO Update (Erica)**
 - Education Relations Committee replacement: Amy Wagers has expressed interest; Erica will follow up.
 - Middle School Room Parent Coordinator replacement: Krista Reed reviewing list of room parents; plan is to prepare someone for the role next year.
 - **Bylaws Review**
 - Formal review is required every four years (next due August 2028).
 - Agenda deadlines:
 - Current bylaw states presenter sign-ups close 2 weeks prior.
 - Agreed to adjust to 3 days prior.
 - Consensus to keep agenda distribution deadline (1 week before) aspirational, not strictly enforced.
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New Business

- **Communication Update (Stephanie Greiner)**
 - Since Aug. 2024, newsletter includes "Faith and Focus" section.
 - Social media highlights integration of faith into curriculum.
 - Advisory board members agreed faith integration is more visible and consistent.
 - Discussion:

- Consider soliciting parent feedback on communications.
 - Possible idea: advisory board “snippet” in monthly newsletter to increase visibility.
 - Translation support available if needed.
- **Meredith’s Presentation on Bullying & Safety**
 - Concerns raised about students not reporting incidents.
 - Discussion points:
 - SJN currently follows disciplinary and restorative practices, creates safety/behavior plans, and maintains records. Parent Code of Conduct includes expectations (including social media).
 - Suggestion to include Code of Conduct in parent handbook as reference.
 - Staff reaffirmed the need for trust in handling sensitive matters confidentially.
 - Suggested more student awareness efforts: posters in bathrooms, classroom talks, or leadership-led messaging.
 - Parent engagement ideas: Middle School Parent Night to prepare families for transitions and challenges before school begins.
 - Staff already conduct family outreach when families consider leaving; positive results in some cases.
- **Lunch Committee Discussion**
 - Parents and board members expressed concern about lunch quality and dessert frequency.
 - Historical practices noted:
 - Students used to be asked to try vegetables before dessert.
 - Dessert was limited (e.g., only ice cream on Fridays).
 - COVID-era changes simplified meals (one entrée, daily desserts) and some practices never reverted.
 - Suggestions:
 - Consider reinstating “try a bite” expectations.
 - Reduce dessert frequency.
 - Offer simple daily alternatives (PB&J, plain sandwiches).
 - Explore options other schools provide (e.g., St. Mary’s multiple sandwich options).
 - Begin with a parent survey to gauge how widespread concerns are.
 - Committee Formation:
 - Alex Lafasto volunteered to participate but not lead.
 - Other possible members: Cathy Spangler, Filipina Phan (technical background), Christina Reed, and possibly Riddle.
 - Erica to ask PTMO for additional volunteers.
 - Committee to create survey, collect data (e.g., PB&J usage), and explore feasible recommendations within budget constraints.
 - Staff member(s) may be invited to join for nutrition perspective.
- **Crisis Intervention & Safety Concerns**
 - Parents and staff raised concerns following recent incidents and social media threats.
 - Student fears reported (e.g., reluctance to attend Mass, sleep disturbances).
 - Clarifications provided:
 - These safety protocols or security procedures were shared with the board but will not be named here for security reasons.

- Broader discussion:
 - Parents concerned about lack of visible diocesan presence/support.
 - We appreciate the prayers, however, families and staff would much more appreciate for the Bishop or diocesan leadership to show pastoral support through presence.
 - Concerns raised about communication: parents desire reassurance while administration sharing and acknowledging legal/privacy constraints are a delicate and real issue with timely communication. Trust must be in place during delicate times although frustrating.
 - Diocese legal counsel is involved immediately in such cases, guiding language and responses.
 - Faculty and parents noted frustration with “soft” diocesan messaging and perception of limited support.

Mission and Catholic Identity

- a. Continuing Book study *Present over Perfect* by Shauna Niequist
- b. September 19 Catholic Presenter-Paul Miller - Library Precious gift of time, Good Energy, Most important story of my life, Beauty, Beautiful Music & Beauty in Nature, The amazing impact of teachers, Anti-bullying ideas from around the world, How art can help us overcome PTSD, The twelve virtues of a good teacher, The power of gratitude, Pair and share what YOU are grateful for, Reflection, 8 ways to add happiness to your classroom

Governance and Leadership

- a. SWOT team met in June to Discuss survey results from staff. Decided to redo more indepth and include one to families. Staff will be at October faculty staff meeting. Family one will be at Parent/Teacher conference. And then emailed for those that may have missed it...or in newsletter.
- b. Two new monitors that we have up live watching the school during the day in the dean's office and Dr. Mechelke's office. We can watch up to 13 areas at a time.
- c. Alpaca-monthly

Academic Excellence

- a. Book study *Behavior Breakthrough Twelve Skills to Transform Behavior at Home and in the Classroom* by Bailey Payne

Operational Vitality

- a) Update on the construction (1) Atrium should be done Halloween 2025 and (2) the building project portion approximately October 2026

Closing (5:30)

Next Meeting Thursday, October 16, 2025

Closing prayer offered by Fr. Mark

Action Items

Website Bios

Members to send updated bios to Stephanie.

PTMO Positions

Erica to finalize with Amy Wagers for the Education Relations Committee role.

Krista Reed & Erica to identify candidates for Middle School Coordinator (prep for next year).

Bylaws

Update agenda presenter deadline to 3 days prior.

Maintain flexibility on agenda distribution timeline.

Communication

Explore adding monthly advisory board message/snippet to newsletter.

Collect informal parent feedback on visibility of faith integration.

Bullying & Safety

Review and possibly update Parent Code of Conduct; include in handbook.

Consider creating posters/reminders for student rights & safe reporting.

Discuss potential Middle School Parent Night to address age-specific challenges.

Draft response to Meredith and Jayni summarizing steps currently in place and next actions.

Lunch Committee

Erica to gather volunteers and confirm committee membership.

Committee to design and distribute survey to assess parent/student concerns.

Collect data on current lunch participation (e.g., PB&J requests).

Develop recommendations balancing nutrition, student acceptance, and budget.

Crisis Intervention & Safety

Leadership to request stronger visible presence from diocese (e.g., bishop visit or prayer with staff).

Follow up on diocesan policies regarding firearms on church property..