

WEST CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

November 15, 2023

MAK Boardroom
West Catholic High School
1801 Bristol Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Mission: To form disciples of Christ through a dynamic, excellence-driven Catholic education

Attendees: Suzette Colon, Michael Curry, Tania DeVries, John Frey, Molly Nawrocki, Fr. Tom Simons, Dave Veneklase, Tom Wesholski

Absent: Emmanuela Chukwuezi, Duane Kluting, Joe Ricord, Sr. Damien Marie Savino, FSE

Resources: President/CEO Jill Annable, Principal Tony Fischer, Communications Director Natalie Scalabrino

Agenda Item	Discussion/Conclusion/Action	Responsibility
<u>Opening</u>		
1.1 Call to Order & Welcome	Wesholski called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.	Tom Wesholski
1.2 Opening Prayer	Opening prayer led by Wesholski	Tom Wesholski
1.3 Roll Call	8 of 12 present at time of roll call	John Frey
<u>Comments from the Floor/Community Topics</u>		
	Wesholski congratulated Annable and staff for successfully hosting the CC/WC game. Bishop Walkowiak relayed that it was a fantastic opportunity for the two schools to come together; other members of the committee congratulated WC team on event. CC president Tyrrel shared his thanks, stating that WC set the bar high for hosting this rivalry game. WC came out slightly ahead on the night monetarily. Athletes, students and coaches congratulated for respectful behavior during the game. Previous incident with WC band not being invited, rumor that CC wanted the game moved to a bigger venue; wanted to make sure issues like these are addressed if this matchup continues; board agreed to promote positive actions moving forward.	
<u>Presentations/Information</u>		
3.1 Communications Director	Scalabrino is 2012 WC grad. Gave overview of job and department to board. WC doesn't currently have a formal published marketing plan, hoping to finalize by end of school year 2024.	Natalie Scalabrino

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness: internal, strategic plan, brand guidelines, communications guide (accessible to staff). 2. Reputation: building strong positive reputation, first is word of mouth, next is Website, media highlights, building relationships. Social media has over 9900 followers over 4 platforms. 3. Engagement (besides online): weekly chatter – 1600 email addresses; Westword mailed twice per yr – 9500 individuals; Alumni emails – Find the Falcons campaign, goal is to reach all alum. 4. Recruitment- (admission): Falcon Flyer – electronic 5-8th grade emails; Finals site Enrollment –direct messages sent back if someone fills out online enrollment form. <p>#GoWest</p>	
<u>Approval/Discussion</u>		
4.1 Review & Approval of Minutes	Motion to approve September Board meeting minutes: Curry; seconded: DeVries; unanimously approved.	Tom Wesholski
4.2 Progress of Strategic Plan	<p>Strategic plan broken into 16 areas, multiple tactics for each; Annable wants board or executive committee to assign individuals/committees to various areas; idea from St. Thomas at DOGR Board Summit to create document for each area containing brainstorming, goals, etc. Annable working on Accomplishments: weekly interdepartmental meetings with staff; production of the annual report (finished by goal of JPPII feast day); Find the Falcons campaign currently in motion. Hopes entire staff will use strategic plan to focus activities moving forward.</p> <p>Curry impressed with update and noted that progress is being made in all areas; Veneklasé praised framework, stating WC was ahead of most organizations, also suggested that Annable present thoughts about who should be in charge of what and bring ideas to executive committee for review. Nawrocki agreed in terms of committee delegation.</p>	Jill Annable
4.3 Prelim Budget Approval	<p>Annable stated that last year had a 5% tuition increase, community handled change well; Kathy Purcell produced analysis of student body regarding need. Nawrocki shared focus is tuition and salary for teachers/staff; increase is necessary due to inflation but almost makes it more difficult for families. Veneklasé: what percent of body received financial aid, Annable: 39%. Proposed increase of 7% for next year (all students); cost to educate a student in 2023-2024 is \$16,500.</p> <p>Annable shared that tuition increase needed for international students as well to help close the gap. Public teacher salary reviewed by finance committee, Catholic school staff significantly lower first-year salary. Salary increases cannot be higher than tuition increases; hoping to do 4-7% salary increases; planning to roll into 3-year salary cycle.</p>	Jill Annable Molly Nawrocki

	<p>Colon inquired about if salary increase accounted for benefits. Annable: benefits on top of salary increase, not including; Don St. Andre presents full package of salary and benefits when someone signs on at WC. Nawrocki inquired about benefits vs public schools - Annable: can't make comparison, doesn't have enough data.</p> <p>Curry shared comparison of other schools' business models; created a culture of giving back immediately upon graduation; focus should also be on value proposition, need more people willing to pay full price and grow endowment to offset increase, inflation not going away anytime soon. Committee agreed tuition increase is necessary but there may be some enrollment dropoff with increase.</p> <p>Annable stated WC has one of the largest endowments of any Catholic school in the country; tuition raise may increase number of students needing tuition assistance (up from 39%, closer to 50%, which has been average in the past).</p> <p>Finance Committee presented board with motion for '24-'25 school year, recommending a 7% increase in tuition for domestic and international students and 4-7% base compensation increase for staff.</p> <p>Motion to approve: Veneklase; seconded: Nawrocki; opposed: Devries; motion approved.</p>	
4.4 Cash Reserve Policy Discussion	<p>Nawrocki: \$500,000 in rainy-day fund, criteria needs to be improved and target amount should be increased. Proposed increase to \$2-3 million (3-6 months operating), used to cover unforeseen shortfalls and one-time non-recurring expenses such as infrastructure bills, staff development. Requests to use funds must be brought to the board for approval along with a plan to refund ASAP and not to exceed 2 years.</p> <p>Veneklase asked for clarification regarding recommendations; Nawrocki, Annable clarified recommendation by finance committee with support from executive committee.</p> <p>Motion to approve: Veneklase; seconded: Frey; unanimously approved.</p>	Molly Nawrocki
4.5 President's Report	<p>No additional notes. Asked for questions, clarifications, shared joy in attending class reunions with Freddie the Falcon.</p> <p>Fr. Simons praised FAN event, both award recipients and Tony did an excellent job presenting WC in a positive light. Annable shared that it was well attended by current Board members, broke even monetarily for the first time. Mulder scholarship announced. Frey, Veneklase, and Curry praised Annable for soft ask at the end of the night, positive response.</p>	Jill Annable
4.6 Principal's Report	Volleyball team in state semi-finals, farthest they've advanced to date, student bus to game.	Tony Fischer
Organization Minutes & Reports		
5.1 Finance Committee		Molly Nawrocki

5.2 Development Committee		Tania DeVries Duane Kluting
5.3 Facilities Committee		Joe Ricord John Frey
5.4 Catholic Culture Committee	Committee has not met yet this year, no report	Sr. Damien Savino
5.5 Marketing Committee		Michael Curry
<u>Open Discussion</u>		
	Annable shared that Kluting hopes to have minimum of two board members on each committee to help maintain high level of activity..	
Potential Board Candidate	<p>Wesholski presented candidate for board seat: MK Britenfeld, investment advisor, has student at WC, member of Holy Spirit, currently on WC Marketing Committee. Curry: she has background in marketing, formerly with Whirlpool, smart, tough, tremendous resume, has brought focus, value to committee meetings. Shared thoughts on how to better use LinkedIn for networking and alumni; great brand ambassador.</p> <p>Process: diocesan superintendent approves potential new board member, Board of Governors makes motion and votes, superintendent sends appointment letter.</p> <p>Motion to approve: Curry; seconded: Simons; unanimously approved.</p>	
Alumni Memorial Mass	Fr. Simons shared his appreciation for Alumni Memorial Mass, larger crowd than usual.	
<u>Adjournment</u>		
6.1 Closing Prayer	Closing prayer led by Simons	Fr. Tom Simons
6.2 Adjournment	Wesholski adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.	Tom Wesholski

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Nov. 29: CC/WC Exec Boards Collaboration Meeting
- Dec. 2: WC Christmas Craft Show
- Dec. 13: Christmas Open House
- Dec 18-22: First semester exams
- Dec 21: Choir concert Holy Spirit
- Jan 8: Second semester begins

Respectfully submitted by John T. Frey, Secretary, WC Board of Directors