



## **SAN JOAQUIN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**Retreat – August 21, 2021**

**Willinger Hall, 9:00 am**

#### **BOARD PRESENT**

Michael Thomason '88, Chair

John D. Amendola '98

Hillary Bell '89

Fr. Robert Borges

Frank Hambalek

Michelle Kusch '87

Ronald Wathen '86

Joan Bouchard, Superintendent (ex-officio)

Msgr. Robert Wenzinger, Rector (ex-officio)

Michael C. Burke, Head of School (ex-officio)

Pete Dalena, Faculty Rep (ex-officio)

Lucina Myers, Secretary

Opening prayer by Msgr. Wenzinger. Mike welcomed all and proceeded with introductions.

President Mike Burke - Nuts & Bolts

The new faculty includes some very strong new hires. Partner schools number keep declining, which means we must get a bigger percentage of a smaller number. Elementary numbers are up over a year ago in the lower grades; but are those kids going to continue to the 8th grade level? Cost of tuition at Memorial is \$13,600. Now spending \$7200 per students (teaching, technology). The International enrollment revenue declined by \$1.5M. This hits us hard as international students pay all tuition by the first day of school. International tuition is \$40,000, which is low for the west coast. The Capital Campaign has \$1,580,000 in commitments and \$4,040,150 verbal for a total of \$5,620,150 total. Cash collected is \$867,025. The breakdown for the Campaign is as follows: \$4.4M for physical plant; \$3M for Academic Community; and \$1.6M for Turf. Projects worked on this summer include: Paint all arcades, renovate inside the academic center; new phone system; new PA System; air conditioning in main gym; conference room in the Campos Boarding School; shade structure and tables for students to eat and gather outside the cafeteria; and a security gate at back side of Ryan's Gym. Our vision is to be the most innovative school in the Central Valley, not just in technology; all must think outside the box.

This includes the Emerging Scholar Program, a program with City College which allows our students to earn enough units to enter college as 2nd year college students (a great savings in college tuition). The Academy Program is designed for hands on experience. Guaranteed college acceptance is where our students after meeting a certain matrix, are guaranteed acceptance with Catholic colleges.

Innovator of the Month is a cash award of \$250 which begins October 1. Everyone is eligible. Innovation Grants for teachers of \$5,000 awards will also be available. Selections will be made by the Board; the specific criteria is under development. This stipend is not for teachers but money to be used to make the classroom better.

Consultants will be here September 13-15 to conduct the feasibility study for the junior high school. Maria Ribera will meet with partner schools and others about the study. A survey will go out in late August, early September. Just as a point of reference, Memorial started as a junior high.

There is a new organizational Chart outlining the changes in staffing. Mr. Goston is the interim principal. In October the principal search will begin. Fr. Borges asked if his coaching status would be affected if he remained principal beyond this year. Remaining principal would mean he would not be able to also be the football coach.

Learning Lab serves both spectrums of kids learning. It works to ensure that all students are academically supported by utilizing one-on-one tutoring, technological support, and practicing self-discipline.

Dual Enrollment & AP Programs are with Fresno City which is still virtual.

6-week grading periods is our attempt to be more proactive. Returning students who are currently ineligible can regain eligibility in the first 6 weeks. Ineligible status is determined by 12th week grades.

Consultant Maria Ribera of Catholic School Management

The objectives for the day are to review the Board roles, responsibilities, and the way it functions. What is a Consultative Board? What are the bylaws that guide the way it works? What is the role of the Board in the implementation of the Strategic Plan? The day will conclude with an evaluation of the Board functions. What comes next?

Why do schools have boards? Couldn't president do it all? Catholic schools were founded by religious orders, priests with no need for policies. It was long hours and hard work by few individuals.

As schools grew, it became evident that there was an increased need for a formal structure, formalized communication channels, formalized policies and procedures, and a separation of responsibilities.

At SJM the board is a consultative board of delegated responsibility. SJM is owned by the Diocese, but there are other types of school ownership, including religious communities, parishes, or separate corporations. We have some partner schools that are run by parishes and some that are run by the Diocese.

Regardless of ownership, Board members need to understand what is in the bylaws to determine their status. Are they:

- \* split personality advisory board - the Administration can choose to seek advice before making decisions.
- \* Consulting - bylaws indicate Administration must consult before making policy type decision; this does not mean the Administration has to take the advice.
- \* Delegated responsibility - what you can do is limited.

Powers of the Board - things the Board can do:

Create, promulgate, and implement written policies with respect to matters affecting SJM.

Assure that the administrative officers of SJM implement the written policies of the Board and Diocese.

Oversee all fiscal matters.

Establish and evaluate strategic and annual planning goals.

Assist in maintaining and promoting the Catholic identity of SJM and preserving a close relationship with the Bishop.

Integrate the academic disciplines in such a way that they offer a single unified system of student formation.

Article III lists items reserved by the bishop—what the Board cannot do, such as you can't sell the property or engage on big financial contracts without Bishop approval.

Board responsibilities include:

Clarify and enunciate the Mission and Catholic identity of SJM.

The Board shall develop, prioritize, and implement short and long-range, strategic goals and plans for SJM.

The Board shall formulate and communicate policies for SJM which are in accord with diocesan policies and regulations. School policies can't be in opposition to what is Diocesan policy.

The Board shall guide the development of SJM's financial plans and annual budgets and monitor their implementation.

The Board shall direct, review, and evaluate the advancement and development activities of SJM.

The Board shall participate in evaluating SJM's general performance, the president, the implementation of school policies and goals, and its own effectiveness.

The primary responsibility of the Board is to ensure and secure the long-term viability and vitality of the school.

Board work usually occurs in committees, not at Board meetings. Committee charges should be in writing and reviewed and approved annually. All committees should be chaired by a Board member with a resource person assigned (this is staff member there to facilitate communication). All committee members would not be Board members, just the chair. Committees would include, though not limited to: Executive, Finance, Facilities and Maintenance, and Alumni.

President Mike Burke asked if the Board must meet monthly, as this is more typical for elementary schools. Superintendent Joan Bouchard said the current by-laws call for monthly meetings. She, too, would like to see a change in that. Maria Ribera of Catholic School Management recommends meeting four times a year. When transitioning, it might be good to meet every other month. Board Chair Mike Thomason expressed concern as to how to stay connected. Three communication vehicles include: President's letter (goes out to Board and Donors); Adding Board members to the list of those receiving the Faculty and Staff updates (goes out every other week); and making sure Board gets communication going out to parents. Ideally what will eventually happen is that the committee reports will go into the Board packet that you receive at least 10 days before a Board meeting. Expectation is that you will receive and read all the committee reports. At the Board meeting, it becomes part of the consent agenda, where it just gets approved unless you have questions.

In addition to budget figures, the Finance Committee can provide information to the Board to be better monitors of trends, evaluate potential future considerations, possibly watch more closely specific areas of giving, especially scholarship donations. Alumni may want to monitor giving by alumni. Other items to consider: What % to put in for plant renewal and special maintenance on an annual basis; what % will go towards endowment on a regular basis from annual campaign; what % will go into reserves (Administrative Handbook specifies amount).

Facilities and Maintenance Committee is included in the by-laws. Safety and security would be the main things to focus on. Add to that curb appeal. Do we have a sign that says, "Welcome Visitors?" John Hodges would be the resource person for this

committee; the business manager would be on the Finance Committee; someone from Advancement would be on the Alumni Committee.

The Alumni Committee is one that needs to be started; it's not specified in the by-laws. In preparing a charge for this committee, make sure it aligns with the strategic plan. This committee needs to be chaired by a Board member. Board Vice-Chair Eddie Fanucchi was nominated to chair the committee.

Ms. Ribera had the following Board membership recommendations: 25% current parents; alumni and parents of alumni; local business and civic leaders; local area pastor; partner school principal; and teachers from partner elementary schools (especially from middle school). Term limits are 3 years, renewable once, for a total of 6 years, ideally staggered so it's not all new members at the same time. It is the job of the whole Board to always be looking for new Board members. Cultivate people. Have them come to events at the school. Have them work on a committee. She recommended having a sign-up showing which Board members will be attending the school events so they may be introduced at the event. If you don't Board members out in front regularly when you can promote them, people won't understand what the Board does, and they won't see themselves as potentially being Board members.

#### Executive Committee Goal 3: 3-1-3.3

Goal #3: San Joaquin Memorial High School will continue to build the talent, expertise, and operations of the Board of Directors through increased training, population of committees, and development of partnerships that support enhanced desirability of Catholic education in Fresno and surrounding communities.

- \* 3.1: To provide for training focused on enhanced understanding of effective Catholic school Board and committee roles, responsibilities, and operations. Ideally there is training at least once a year.
- \* 3.2: To engage in regular and formal annual evaluation of Board operations and effectiveness. She will introduce the format on how to do this.
- \* 3.3: To produce annual Board operating plans that align with strategic priorities as well as identified areas for growth in Board functioning. That is what the training session is all about.

#### Finance Committee Goal 5, 5.1 & 5.2

Goal #5: San Joaquin Memorial High School will prepare for and respond to changing markets and market opportunities through the development of data-informed annual and long-range plans for finances, facilities, enrollment management, marketing, communication, and advancement.

- \* 5.1: To prepare a long-range financial plan that outlines best, like, and worst-case scenarios.
- \* 5.2: To develop comprehensive policies for all aspects of school financial operations.

Superintendent Bouchard requested the Finance Committee to share things they feel should be addressed by the Advisory Committee that may benefit all the schools.

Facilities Committee Goal 5: 5.6 and 5.7

Goal #5: ask Mike what this is

- \* 5.6: To identify membership and populate a Facilities Committee of the Board of Directors.
- \* 5.7: To charge the Facilities Committee of the Board of Directors to work with the Facilities Director to prepare a comprehensive Facilities Management Plan. Have facilities management plan even though committee members change, plan still exists. Want a plan to be prepared financially and be able to keep addressing those things that need attention.

Alumni Committee Goal 5, 5.23-25, 5.28

Goal #5: ask Mike what this is

- \* 5.23: To adjust communication to alumni so that it is more reflective of alumni interests vs. emphasis on current student and family news.
- \* 5.24: To engage in deliberate outreach to local alumni with children of school age to attend on campus events.
- \* 5.25: To establish a formal alumni association charged with support of a multi-strategy plan designed to serve alumni as well as increase alumni contact records and collection of regular data regarding alumni accomplishments. Usually, the president of the Alumni Association sits on the Board.
- \* 5.28: To ensure the regular production of an Annual Report to provide increased transparency and regular reporting as to progress on attainment of strategic plan goals and objectives. It is important to include alumni news in the Annual Report.

To make sure everyone stayed on track, Ms. Ribera recommended using quarterly status updates. These would be part of the Board packet at least twice a year.

Board Responsibility 3.4

To initiate outreach to school and Board leadership of partner schools for purposes of collaboration to market the value of Catholic education and explore expanded possibilities for program and resource sharing. Board needs to work with partner schools to market our school. Good item for Board to have on agenda for regular discussion each time they meet. Other thoughts on this objective that surfaced were:

Board member Ron Wathen suggested working with the parents of elementary children to develop a vision of coming to Memorial, possible by starting a savings account at

Memorial for the time when their students would reach this age so that the jump in tuition payments would not seem as great.

President Mike Burke would like to see our Board interact with the other partner school Board members to help create the mindset of one Catholic education system, K-12. It is important for our Board members to visit elementary campuses. Partnering with elementary schools can be as simple as asking them what they need, maybe a bus for a field trip. It could also be partnering with them during National School Week on social media to promote Catholic education.

Board Operations - self-evaluation is typically done in spring so that you have a chance to discuss the results as a Board before the end of the school year and be able to set goals for next year. Ms. Ribera had the Board fill out the Catholic School Board Assessment Instrument for self-evaluation of the Board. She tabulated the results while people ate lunch. (See Assessment at end of retreat minutes.)

Father Borges said lunch prayer

After lunch - Board Evaluations

Broke the group into 3 groups. Results of the ratings are: 1 is 3.6; 2 is 2.5; 3 is 3.5; 4 is 3.3; 5 is 3.7; 6 is 3.3; 7 is 2.3; 8 is 4.2; 9 is 3.6; 10 is 4.7; 11 is 2.7; 12 is 2.3

Discussion of findings:

Group 1

Board Chair Mike Thomason expressed the need to continue ongoing training for the Board, possibly having Ms. Ribera come back again next year. He and Frank Hambalek both just listened their first year, which was not effective. Superintendent Joan Bouchard believes this training needs to be extended to the committee members as well to not derail the process. She also spoke of possible partnering with partner schools for training by using some of the Title I funds not used by these schools.

Group 2

A priority should be reengaging the committee work that fell off during COVID. The Finance Committee remained active, but not the others. Committees need members and need to be given specific jobs; the school would provide the resource person. The President would check in with committee chairs.

Group 3

Pete Dalena was surprised at rating for #11 being so low; he feels that the last 3-4 years we have done a great job on institutional advancement and the strategic plan. Prior to working with Ms. Ribera, there was not a strong Strategic Plan. President Mike Burke emphasized the importance of continuing to be very transparent on all the metrics, comparing us from year to year; it's about trends vs. results.

To summarize: 1) the Finance Committee will take the lead on building data dashboards for the most critical metrics and trends the Board wants to monitor. 2) Each committee will be chaired by a Board member. More members need to be identified and recruited for committees. The committee does not need to be all Board members, but every Board member should sit on a committee. 3) Ongoing training will be provided on a regular basis for new board members on an annual basis.

Ms. Ribera spoke of planning, identification of immediate and long-term (A goal without a plan is just a wish - from My Little Prince).

Board Chair Mike Thomason reiterated this is a working Board. He totally agrees with. The idea of less Board meetings, more committee work. He wants to focus on Memorial as a business. Our job as a board is to challenge things. There is no reason that we should not balance our budget without using endowment funds. We must try to implement the junior high on campus, but it is going to have to be the data that drives this decision. He would also like to get the facilities plan on auto pilot, needs to

formalize it with the committee. We're here for our kids, we all need to be cheerleaders. We need to be a bullhorn.

Superintendent Bouchard reviewed our bylaws and said they stipulate a minimum of 6 meetings, not locking us into 12 meetings.

President Mike Burke thanks all for attending the retreat. It is our responsibility to make sure whoever follows us keeps the school moving forward. Where will we be in 5 years. Board member Ron Wathen commented on the many active projects we currently are doing that show we are not in a bad financial shape. Board member Michelle Kusch expressed her thanks for having our kids back in school before anyone else and wanted this message passed along to all our teachers and staff. Per Superintendent Bouchard, our elementary students did not have a learning loss in any year; in fact, the partner schools have increased in numbers.

And on that good note, Msgr. Wenzinger closed the meeting with prayer.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT**  
(Sample)

Use this rating system for each numbered item:

Uncertain 0	Not-in-Place -	Not 1	2	3	4	Tru 5	Does Not Apply 0
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
1. Individual Board members have a thorough understanding of the school's philosophy, mission, and vision							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
2. The board has a process for training new board members with regard to the board's roles and responsibilities.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
3. I personally understand well the board's roles and responsibilities.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
4. Board committees play an active role in implementing the school's strategic long-range plan.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
5. Board meeting agendas and information packets are well-prepared and distributed to all members well in advance of the board meetings.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
6. There is a high level of participation and discussion at board meetings.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
7. Committee reports are published in the board packet in advance of meetings.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
8. The board receives detailed and adequate information with regard to the statement of financial position as well as the statement of activities with supporting data.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
9. The board plays an active role in setting financial policy in light of the school's strategic long-range plan.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
10. The board has a positive working relationship with the school's chief executive officer.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
11. The school has a formal program of development or institutional advancement which is based on and reflective of the school's strategic plan and which has been approved by the board.							
							0 -1 1 2 3 4 5 0
12. Board members are actively involved in major gift solicitation.							