

**St. Ambrose Catholic School
School Advisory Council Meeting
Wednesday, October 8, 2025
6:00pm – Pastoral Center**

MINUTES

Members Present: Erin Kochan, Ashley Lack, Justin Lacy, Stephanie Monroe, Carmen Serio

Ex Officio Members Present: Bob Baird, Father Steven Janoski, Deacon Jay Wackerly

Others Present: None.

Call to Order: Chairperson Erin Kochan opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Opening Prayer was led by Father Steven Janoski.

Committee and other reports submitted are included after the board minutes. The following notes are from discussion during our meeting about those reports.

Approval of September Minutes: A motion to approve the Minutes from the September meeting as previously distributed was made by Mark Terry and seconded by Justin Lacy. The motion was carried with unanimous approval.

Standing Committee Updates:

- Executive Committee (Erin Kochan/Justin Lacy/Ashley Lack): No report.
- Policy/Planning (Justin Lacy): The Council will begin looking at the Athletic Handbook. Bob Baird will send the current handbook to Justin Lacy, who will make an initial review/recommendations and present his change suggestions to the Council at the November meeting.
- Development (Mark Terry): See the attached SAPA report. Dress Down Day Pass sales were approximately \$1800. Applefest did very well; numbers coming soon. Football raffle profit was approximately \$4500. Dine to donate upcoming on October 26 at Bakes and Hale.
- Public Relations (Stephanie Monroe/Bob Baird): There has been positive feedback on the Saints Spotlight videos so far. Father Steve notes that there has been positive feedback on the baby blankets for newly baptized babies in the parish.
- Building/Grounds (Open; Bob Baird/Father Steve reporting): Roof project is mostly finished; some finishing touches (gutters, etc) need to be completed. A discussion was held regarding the recommendation from the Safety and Security Committee that all school Masses are to be held in the gym for the foreseeable future. This change is already in effect.

- **Athletics (Bob Baird reporting for Bob Baird/Justin Johnson):** The 8th grade boys' basketball team will need 6th/7th grade students to play up to have enough students for a team. Cheerleading will be getting uniforms this year. The 8th grade girls' basketball team will be combined with 5th-8th grade students to have enough for a team..

IT Update (Deacon Jay Wackerly): See attached report.

Principal's Update (Bob Baird): A question was asked about St. Ambrose purchasing our own bus for use for field trips and sporting events. Bob Baird notes that he looked into this last year when it was brought up at a SAPA meeting and it was cost prohibitive. We will continue utilizing the Marquette buses when they are available.

Additional Discussion: There was a discussion regarding the success of Applefest and highlights of changes this year, including adult gaming, which were well received.

New Business: Father Steve notes that a new faculty/staff position has been created: Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. Kim Wackerly will now officially have this role as a paid faculty/staff member. She was doing these tasks on a volunteer basis previously. See the attached job description. Father Steve also notes that Alton High Student Wyatt Kohl will have donation boxes in church for the ROTC collection for hygiene products. These donations will be distributed to the homeless through the Salvation Army. Justin Lacy asked if there was still an open Council position, as he has someone who is interested in joining. Erin Kochan encourages this person to apply.

Adjournment: At 6:30 p.m. Justin Lacy motioned to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Stephanie Monroe.

The next meeting is November 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. and will be held in the Pastoral Center.

REPORTS

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

CALENDAR

10/10	Faculty Retreat Day, NO SCHOOL
10/13	Indigenous Peoples Day/Columbus Day, NO SCHOOL
10/17	End of 1st Quarter
10/18	First Eucharist and Confirmation at the Cathedral
10/24	Report Cards Open
10/28	Trunk or Treat
10/29	Parent Teacher Conferences, 3:30-7:00
10/30	Parent Teacher Conferences
10/31	NO SCHOOL

MAP Testing

Our annual MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) testing is scheduled for the week of Oct. 20. Students in grades 3-8 will complete tests in Math, Language Usage, Science, and Reading. St. Ambrose completes MAP testing in the Fall and in the Spring. Individual results will be shared shortly after the completion of testing. Group summary results will not be available until sometime in December.

Religion Standards Update

Recently the Diocese of Springfield shared updated Religious Education standards for schools and PSR programs. These new standards go into effect at the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year. Along with Fr. Steve and our Deacons, our faculty are working on implementation plans. These plans will be finalized during the 2nd Semester in preparation for next school year.

6th Grade Attends Vocations Day & Mission Mass

Last week on Sept. 29, our 6th grade attended the 3rd annual 6th grade Vocations Day in the Diocese of Springfield for the Alton Deanery. Twelve Catholic elementary schools were present at Holy Angels in Wood River, with almost 300 students in attendance. Today, our 6th graders attended the Mission Mass in Springfield. At today's Mission Mass, our 6th grade represented St. Ambrose. Schools from across the Diocese were in attendance.

Faculty Retreat Day

As part of ongoing development, our faculty will attend the annual retreat. The day is hosted by the Catholic Education Office for the Diocese as well as the Norbertine priests of the Corpus Christi Priory in Springfield.

Security Update

The Safety and Security Committee met on Sept. 22 and provided two primary recommendations. The first was to continue school Masses in the gym. The second was to eliminate outdoor recess in the lower parking lot. Both of these recommendations were immediately implemented. The exact details of Grandparents Day are still under consideration and will be shared soon. Additional intruder safety drills were conducted Sept. 24 and 25. From these drills we have improved and updated processes. Following these drills we will regularly remind students of emergency procedures.

PR Opportunities & Saints Spotlight.

Recently, Mr. Baird visited with CJ Nasello on *the Daily Show*, and with Mark Ellebracht at WBGZ. During these visits the community was reminded of our Applefest festivities as well as good news from our school. There are opportunities to regularly visit these shows and notify the community of our St. Ambrose happenings. Recently we created a video feature called *Saints Spotlight*. This will be a weekly set of videos highlighting upcoming events at St. Ambrose as well as pertinent school news. Student Council members are helping create the content.

Scheduled Field Trips

Several classes have already scheduled field trips for the 25-26 school year. When available, we will continue to utilize MCHS busing. When MCHS buses are not available we will utilize Alton School District buses.

SAPA REPORT

St. Ambrose Parents' Association
SAPA Meeting: October 1, 2025
Location: St. Ambrose Community Center

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chris Varady, President.

OPENING PRAYER: Jesus, our friend and our brother, please guide us with your wisdom and love today. Help us to do your will and to be open to hear your voice as we speak and listen to one another. Amen.

PRESIDENT REPORT- Chris Varady

- No report.

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT- Joy Stanton

- No report.

SECRETARY REPORT- Ashley Lack

- Approval of Minutes from the September 3, 2025 meeting
 - A motion was made by Mark Terry and seconded by Susan Kasten to approve the Minutes as previously distributed.

TREASURER REPORT- Mark Terry

- Checking account balance: approximately \$23,000
- Income
 - Dress Down Passes: \$1750
 - Football has raised about \$9000; we will distribute \$4500 to the winners and SAPA will receive \$4500
 - Spiritwear sales for September 1-30 is \$1115.70; SAPA will receive \$111.57
 - Dine to Donate: Scooters raised \$300

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT- Tenisha Phelps & Marli Nixon

- Saints Spotlight video is ongoing weekly. The team is open to ideas for future videos. Please share the videos!

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES REPORT- Kylie Gregory

- Completed events:
 - **Dine to Donate: Scooters**
 - **Applefest**
 - Big thank you to Lynne and Mike Adams, all of the organizers, volunteers, donators, and patrons!

- Upcoming events:
 - **Alton City-wide Litter Clean Up**
 - Chair: Ashley Lack
 - Date: Saturday, October 4, 2025
 - Time: 9:00 am-12:00 pm
 - You can volunteer for the entire event or the length of time of your choice.
 - Sign up: <https://signup.com/go/fsthnwU>
 - All students must have a parent/guardian present. This is a great way for students to get their student service hours. No family service hours are given for this event.
 - **Halloween Parade**
 - Chairs: Amy & Brad Watts
 - Date: October 31, 2025
 - Theme: Super Block Party (i.e. Mario)
 - **Grandparents' Day**
 - Chair: Peggy Kory
 - Date: November 7, 2025
 - It will be an afternoon event with 2 group sessions.
 - Registration and volunteer links will be going out soon.
 - **Trivia Night**
 - Chair: Jason Lack
 - Date: Saturday, November 8, 2025
 - Theme: Christmas
 - Volunteer link coming soon.
 - **St. Ambrose Community Christmas/Toys for Tots Drive**
 - Chair: Susan Kasten
 - Date: November 30, 2025
 - Location: Krueger's Orchard
 - **Family Movie Night**
 - Chair: Chris Varady
 - Date: Friday, December 12, 2025
 - Movie: The Grinch (2018 animated film)
 - **Christmas Feast**
 - Chair: Sue Stirnaman and Lauren Hoefert
 - Date: TBD
 - **Scholastic Book Fair**
 - We have \$200 expiring 10/25 that needs to be used.
 - **Football Raffle**
 - Chair: Matt/Mel Bechtold
 - Event is ongoing
 - Currently raised about \$9000; distribute \$4500 to the winners and SAPA will receive \$4500
 - **Spiritwear**

- Chair: Mel Bechtold
- September 10% check: \$111.57

DEACON JAY'S REPORT- Jay Wackerly

- Recorded this week's All School Mass so only friends of Aurelius Ambrose can see the Mass live. The Mass video will be posted to the public after Mass is over.
- Planning to have a Parish Wide email (Newsletter) with invitations to volunteer for our various ministries using an updated SOS form [St. Ambrose Stewardship - Service](#). The tentative plan is to put out a monthly note the second week of the month.
- Created a Facebook and bulletin post to acknowledge our 8th graders' good behaviors at Camp Ondessonk.
- Had a Zoom meeting with Ashley with Magis Center. Our 7th & 8th grade "Speak the Faith" aka effective speaking/apologetics is handled by Sophia Teachers. I've received administrative privileges for access to the curriculum. Provided logins for Jennifer Baird (religion) and Abby Wielgus (Language Arts). The plan is to use this curriculum for the 2nd semester.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT- Bob Baird

- **MAP Testing**
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- **Security Drill Update**
Additional intruder safety drills were conducted Sept. 24 and 25. From these drills we have improved and updated processes. Following these drills we will regularly remind students of emergency procedures.
- **PR Opportunities**
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- **Scheduled Field Trips**

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- **Basketball & Cheerleading Update**

At our meeting on 10-1-25, an updated count will be provided with final numbers of participants for basketball and cheerleading. Coaching assignments will also be shared.

NEW BUSINESS

- No new business was brought forward.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION- Open Forum

- No additional questions were raised.

CLOSING PRAYER: We give you thanks, Lord, for helping us to learn more and how to love one another. Please help us to always be instruments of your perfect peace in our school. Amen.

With no further questions/discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m. by Chris Varady, President.

Next meeting: November 5, 2025

Respectfully submitted by Ashley Lack, Secretary

ATHLETIC REPORT

Basketball & Cheerleading Update

At our meeting on 10-8-25, an updated count will be provided with final numbers of participants for basketball and cheerleading. Coaching assignments will also be shared.

IT REPORT

No report.

FATHER STEVE'S REPORT

New Position Job Description

Title-Dean of Curriculum and Instruction

Responsibilities-include but not limited to:

Substitute Teacher

Substitute Administrator

Substitute staff member

Observe Classrooms and assist teachers as requested

Observe and evaluate curriculum and consult with teachers

Conduct formal and/or informal classroom observations as requested

Meet with teachers as requested or needed

Supervision of students as needed

Instruction of students as needed

Assist with student needs as requested

Assist with students as requested

Member of Safety Team for All School Mass

MAP Testing implementation

MAP Testing Accommodations Coordinator

Faith Families coordinator

Chapel Time leader for events involving Faith Families

Coordinate Catholic Schools Week activities

Other duties as needed

Hours- as needed for above duties and schedule allows

Pay- Substitute pay when working as a substitute

All other work, hourly pay depending on job responsibility

DEACON JAY'S REPORT

Recording Masses so only friends of Aurelius Ambrose can see the Mass live. The Mass video will be posted to the public after Mass is over.

- Our Facebook video stream link for non-Facebook users is not working. It lasts for 30 seconds then goes blank. The problem is being investigated.
- SE/CMG – Safe Environment
 1. Church has 146 Active users with 0 action needed.
 2. St. Ambrose School 111 (+2) Active users with 14 (-4) Action Needed.
- Provided Facebook and bulletin article to acknowledge our 8th graders' good behaviors at Camp Ondessonk.
- Had a Zoom meeting with Ashley with Magis Center. Our 7th & 8th grade “Speak the Faith” aka effective speaking/apologetics is handled by Sophia Teachers. I’ve received administrative privileges for access to the curriculum. Provided logins for Jennifer Baird (religion) and Abby Wielgus (Language Arts). The plan is to use this curriculum for the 2nd semester.

Respectfully submitted by Ashley Lack, School Advisory Council Secretary