



**St. Joseph Community School**  
216 N. Broadway Ave. New Hampton, IA 641.394.2865

## School Board Minutes

<b>Date:</b> 7.21.25	<b>Time:</b> 6:00-7:15 pm
<b>Attending Board Members:</b> Amber Kurash, Connie Njus, Emily Schwickerath, Phil Eichenberger, Jaydon Mitchell, Father Chris & Michele Nehls  <b>Absent:</b> None  <b>Guests:</b> None  <b>Called to order at:</b> Meeting was called to order by Amber Kurash at 6pm on Monday, July 21, 2025.	
<b>Roles</b> Facilitator <u>Amber Kurash</u> Notetaker <u>Emily Schwickerath</u> Agenda Monitor <u>Connie Njus</u> Prayer Leader: <u>Father Chris</u> Time Keeper <u>Phil Eichenberger</u> Process Observer: <u>Michele Nehls</u>	
Agenda Item	Action Steps
<b>Introductions / Welcome New Members</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Father Chris</li><li>• Jaydon Mitchell</li></ul>	Each board member introduced themselves as well as learning a bit more about Father Chris and newest board member Jaydon Mitchell.
<b>Review Previous Meeting Minutes</b>	<a href="#">LINK</a>  Approved By: Emily Schwickerath Second Approval By: Connie Njus Unanimously approved previous meeting minutes from May 2025.
<b>Officer Elections '25-'26</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chair</li><li>• Vice Chair</li><li>• Secretary</li></ul>	Chair: Amber Kurash Vice Chair: Connie Njus Secretary: Emily Schwickerath

(continued)

<p><b>Shout-Outs &amp; Celebrations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer KidZone - Taryn Smith</li> <li>• School providing supplies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Taryn Smith</b> was a great addition to the <b>Summer KidZone</b> program.</p> <p><b>Michele</b> is looking to have Taryn assist with <b>wrap-around care three days a week</b> during the school year as she continues her <b>Early Childhood Education</b> studies at <b>UNI</b>.</p> <p>Taryn has expressed interest in <b>returning next summer</b>, ideally with <b>more versatility</b> to explore and lead <b>new programming opportunities</b>.</p> <p>St. Joes is again providing school supplies to each student, free of charge. All items have been delivered and are being disbursed to teachers.</p>
<p><b>Items to Discuss (Prioritize Order)</b></p>	
<p><b>Principal Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer PD Days</li> <li>• Welcome Back / School Picture Day 8/20</li> <li>• Enrollment Forecast</li> <li>• Staffing Update</li> <li>• Celebration of Faith 2026</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Professional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All teachers completed a minimum of <b>5 professional development days</b> this summer.</li> <li>• Several staff members completed <b>additional days</b> of work and training.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Welcome Back to School Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduled for <b>Wednesday, August 20th</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Packets</b> will be mailed to each family on <b>August 1st</b> to allow time for review prior to meeting with teachers and staff.</li> <li>• <b>Picture Day</b> will also take place during this event.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. 2025–2026 Enrollment Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>82</b> Full ESA</li> <li>• <b>4</b> Full STO</li> <li>• <b>7</b> 4-year-old PK</li> <li>• <b>17</b> 3-year-old PK</li> <li>• A few families are still undecided, currently homeschooling.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Outreach &amp; Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families with children baptized at <b>Holy Family</b></li> </ul>

have been encouraged to enroll in **4-year-old PK**.

- Each of these families received:
  - A **\$1,000 voucher**
  - A **school/program information packet**
- **St. Joe's baby blankets** with the school logo have been ordered for distribution at baptisms.

#### **5. Staffing Update – Special Education/PE**

- **Laura Larsen** is being considered for hire as a **Special Education Teacher** and **PE Teacher**.
  - Laura is in her **13th year of teaching**, previously at NHCS D for the past two years.
- Michele has asked **Superintendent Erik** to cover **¼ of Laura's salary**, since she would serve **St. Joe's students with IEPs**, eliminating the need to send them to the public school.
  - Payment arrangements were to be discussed at the **NHCS D board meeting**, with Erik to follow up by **Friday 7/25**.
- **Motion** to hire Laura Larsen made by Emily, **seconded by Amber**, and **approved unanimously**.

#### **6. Celebration of Faith – Save the Date**

- Scheduled for **Saturday, February 21st**
  - Begins at **5:00 PM** with **happy hour**
  - **Dinner** by New Hampton Country Club
  - **Entertainment** by "**The Juice**"
  - **Live music** by **Travis Turpin**
- **Live auction** of student projects and **silent auction** for donated items
- **Tickets**: \$50 each
- Event details will be included in the **back to school packets** for early promotion.

### Finance Committee Reports

- Recap '24-'25 Budget
- '25-'26 Forecast
- Lunch Program Update
- Vote to approve milk bid
  - [Milk Bids](#)

### Budget Update – 2024–2025 Recap

- The **2024–2025 budget** broke even, marking the final year **without full ESA funding**.
- The school received **\$423,500** in **parish support**, slightly under the typical **\$435,000** contribution.
- Despite the shortfall, the school was able to **maintain a balanced budget**.

### Budget Outlook – 2025–2026

- The **2025–2026 budget** looks **favorable** due to the implementation of **100% ESA funding**.
- **Parish support** has been adjusted down to **\$400,000**.
- As long as **82 students** are present on **the first day of school**, the budget projects a **small surplus**, assuming no major unexpected expenses.
- Planned improvements include:
  - **ADA-compliant door upgrades**
  - Implementation of a **new or updated security system**

### Lunch Program & Pricing Adjustments

- The **lunch program** continues to operate at an **annual deficit of approximately \$25,000**.
- Generous **donations last year** helped offset part of this shortfall.
- To help reduce the deficit:
  - **Breakfast prices** will increase from **\$1.85 to \$2.00**
  - **Lunch prices** will increase from **\$2.75 to \$3.15**

### Milk Bid Approval

- Two bids were received for the school milk

	<p>program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The selected bid came from <b>WW Homestead</b>, offering <b>farm fresh milk</b> served via <b>milk dispenser</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Motion</b> to accept the WW Homestead bid made by <b>Emily, seconded by Phil</b>, and <b>approved unanimously</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Golf Outing Recap</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds raised</li> </ul>	<p>The golf outing was very successful - netting almost \$48,000, just slightly over our budgeted amount. Some of those funds are directed specifically toward the security upgrade.</p>
<p><b>Enrollment Committee Reports</b></p>	<p><b>Food Truck Rally / Back to School Fundraiser</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <b>Food Truck Rally &amp; Fundraiser</b> is being planned in conjunction with <b>Back to School Day</b> on <b>Wednesday, August 20th</b> &amp; will be open to the public.</li> <li>• Planned participants include <b>3 food trucks</b> and <b>1 dessert vendor</b> (ice cream or cookie dough), serving from <b>11:00 AM to 7:00 PM</b>.</li> <li>• Each food truck has been asked to contribute <b>10–15% of their profits</b> and will also feature <b>donation cans</b> for additional fundraising.</li> <li>• <b>Permits</b> and logistics are currently in process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Food truck permits</b> are being completed.</li> <li>○ Coordinating with the <b>Public Works Director</b> to ensure <b>street closures</b> and safety measures are in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Buildings/Grounds**

- Internet Upgrade
- Preschool Playground
- Security/Doors System

**Internet Upgrade**

- The school's internet is being **updated the week of August 4-August 8**.
- Total project cost: School responsible for **\$21,000**, to be paid from the **D&L account**.
- The **remaining 60%** of the cost is being **covered by an E-rate grant**.

**Preschool Playground**

- The **preschool playground** was not reassembled correctly.
- Michele is currently **gathering quotes from professional companies** to properly lay the **rubber tiles**.
- There is also a growing need to **replace the wooden playground structure** in the near future.

**Security System & ADA Door Upgrades**

- Initial **bid for the new security system** came in at **\$35,000–\$40,000**.
- An additional bid of \$35,000 came in to **upgrade doors** to be **ADA compliant**.
- Michele is working to obtain **one more bid** to comply with the **approved bidding process**.
- Based on current budget projections, it appears **both projects can be funded** within the new fiscal year.

<p><b>Announcements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Totus Tuus July 20th-25th</li> <li>• Fall Festival Aug. 24th</li> <li>• First Day of School Aug. 25th</li> </ul>	<p><b>Totus Tuus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The daytime program has been <b>well attended</b> with <b>over 50 students</b> participating.</li> <li>• The evening session has averaged <b>8–10 students</b>.</li> <li>• All <b>four seminarians</b> are doing an <b>excellent job</b> engaging with and leading the students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fall Festival</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Fall Festival</b> is shaping up to be another <b>fun and successful event</b> to kick off the school year.</li> <li>• <b>Parishioners will be receiving informational fliers</b> about the event in the coming days.</li> <li>• </li> <li>• Fall Festival Committee is still looking for volunteers to sit in the dunk tank that day</li> </ul> <p><b>Start of School – Key Dates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>First day of school is Monday, August 25th.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ There will be <b>early outs on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday</b> of that week due to the <b>Labor Day holiday</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Preschool classes</b> will begin on <b>Thursday, August 28th</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Next Board Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed 3rd Wednesday of the month at 12:30 pm</li> <li>• Pros / Cons</li> <li>• Approve date/time change</li> </ul>	<p>It was decided that <b>monthly board meetings</b> will be held on the <b>3rd Wednesday of each month</b>, beginning at <b>12:00 PM (Noon)</b>.</p> <p>The goal is to <b>keep meetings to one hour</b>.</p> <p>The new schedule was <b>approved unanimously by all board members</b>.</p>

<b>.Open Board Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there operational matters to discuss?</li> </ul>	None
<b>Agenda Items for Next Meeting</b>	
<b>Adjourned at:</b>	Meeting was adjourned by Amber Kurash at 7:43pm