

**BILLINGS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BOARD MEETING**

**September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**4:00 PM**

**St. Pat's BCS/BCSF Conference Room/Teams Virtual**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

**Minutes**

**OPENING – This meeting will be recorded**

<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Fr. Steve
<b>Approval of Minutes</b>	Minutes Sept. 1 – Alex moved for approval and Stella 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Approved Unanimously
<b>Public Comment Period</b>	<p>Rick – opened up public comment, asked to stay at a 3-minute maximum.</p> <p><b>Ashley Harada: Sent an email to the board – she was disappointed in the discussion and decision process around implementing the mask mandate. She thought there should have been a survey as previously done, and it should have been held in a larger forum with more parents informed and included. Moving forward she would like to see more cognizance regarding parents and their voices. She asked that meetings should be made public to all parents going forward.</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Jenny Andrus: She agreed with Ashley's concern around communication with parents. She is a single mom of 2 children in the system. She sympathized with the tough decisions the board has had to make and thanked the board for their efforts. She spoke of BCS being a family to her and the community as a whole supporting each other. Jennifer explained her parents gave her covid which she spread to her kids, which affected her family. She thinks it is important as the leaders of the BCS family community we protect others and think of other's health.</b></p>
<b>Attendance</b>	<p><b>Rick McCann, Joe Sylvester, Nate Haney, Fr. Steve Zabrocki, Jason Mueller, Shaun Harrington, Angel Turoski, Jenn Beckwith, Bobby Beers, Lisa Bruno, Donovan Kelly, Toby Maack, Alex McCready, Adrienne Reynolds, Brittney Souza, Stella Ziegler, Debra Hayes, Michelle Trafton, Danielle Watson.</b></p> <p><b>Guests: Amelia Bergum, Ashley Harada, and Jennifer Andrus</b></p>

**COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

<p><b>Business Committee</b> <b>No Meeting</b> Next meeting: 9/14/21 and 10/5/21, 4:00PM</p> <p>Boardroom/Virtual</p>	<p>Rick/Joe and Shaun</p> <p><u>Final Approval Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May Financials – Items were marked for follow-up; some receivables need to be resolved.</li><li>• June financials tie out the end of the year, which should be available at next meeting in October.</li><li>• October 4<sup>th</sup> is audit for Foundation, making goal for us to be prepared as well.</li><li>• Cash is positive, a big part is from PPP loans.</li><li>• Nearing end of 24-week period for using PPP loans, which are fully used. At that time, we will submit application for forgiveness.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nate invited members to suggest ideas for using funds – joining the next meeting or passing suggestions on.</li> <li>• Bank fees are over budget \$16k – possibly due to credit card transactions through the website. We could assess a convenience fee on credit card payments. A statement analysis will be requested to see what our fees are. Stella suggested negotiating fees with the bank.</li> <li>• Budget development and tuition review will be combined, and process will start at 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in October.</li> <li>• Nate requested approval of financials as presented, Alex 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed.</li> </ul> <p><u>Discussion and Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laurie Stergar was a guest at last night’s meeting and may join as a new member of the committee. She has accounting and marketing as her background and made helpful suggestions at Tuesday night’s meeting.</li> <li>• Brittney readdressed the possibility of security at Central and if that would be discussed in the budget. Nate addressed the lighting project at Central, but the security officer was not in there yet.</li> <li>• Shaun confirmed it will still be discussed and will be getting numbers to bring back to the business committee.</li> </ul> <p><u>New business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Enrollment</b></p> <p>Next Meeting: Pending –</p>	<p><u>Final Approval Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><u>Discussion and Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaun explained we lost 3 Kindergarteners to the mask mandate, but a family of 2 of them had issues with technology and snacks, as well.</li> <li>• 2 students came back that was out because we weren’t masking, which Deb could speak more clearly to.</li> <li>• 1 ECE student dropped.</li> <li>• 0 dropped at upper grades or high school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>Next meeting: Pending</p>	<p>Danielle &amp; Adrienne</p> <p><u>Final Approval Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><u>Discussion and Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alex inquired about informative videos for Schoology, etc. Danielle said there is a link on the website for parent help, that came directly from schoology. There are resources on the website.</li> <li>• Nate asked about Open Houses – Shaun said Shel wants to do his Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> with masks strongly encouraged, but it isn’t confirmed. Shaun will follow-up with Open House information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technology</b></p> <p>Next meeting: Pending –</p>	<p>Toby/Bruce</p> <p><u>Final Approval Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

	<u>Discussion and Updates</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NA</b></li> </ul>
<b>Catholic Culture</b> Next meeting: Pending	Nate <u>Final Approval Items</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <u>Discussion and Updates</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NA</b></li> </ul>
<b>Facilities Task Force</b> Next meeting: September 29, 2021 – 5:30PM - BCCHS - <b>Facilities Task Force</b>	Joe <u>Final Approval Items</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <u>Discussion and Updates</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

#### FOUNDATION REPORT

President	Adam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
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#### SCHOOL REPORTS

Billings Central Catholic	Shel –
Saint Francis Catholic	<b>Deb</b> and Jim – <b>Things are going well with masking but using a lot of disposable masks (avg. 100/day).</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All new teachers are doing great, fitting in well and doing well with their classes.</b></li> <li>• <b>Deb encouraged board to come visit the school and meet teachers, etc.</b></li> </ul>
Early Childhood Center	Michelle – <b>Things are going well and off to a very good start this year.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sue and Michelle have visited with mostly all parents about masking. It seems 50/50 but parents have been good about it.</b></li> <li>• <b>Children are taking their masks off during the day, but they are doing their best to monitor the situation.</b></li> <li>• <b>1 student left but 1 student came in that was hoping for masking.</b></li> </ul>
President	Shaun <u>Final Approval Items</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity and Extra-curricular recommendations from the Leadership Team</li> </ul> <u>Discussion and Updates</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>UHC Data Charts – UHC weekly report shared – UHC Guidance is that at 3 or 4 indicators, UHC advises schools to consider other mitigation measures, but this is at individual district discretion.</b></li> <li>• <b>Capacity of Healthcare is now RED.</b></li> <li>• <b>Riverstone is unable to keep up with cases and investigations. They are getting 160-200 cases/day. 135 cases are 0-19 age category have not been called yet.</b></li> <li>• <b>Capacity for hospitals isn't only about beds but staffing for the beds.</b></li> <li>• <b>0–19-year-olds are about 25% of all new cases. High school is an area of major concern. But we are seeing the younger grades “catch up”.</b></li> </ul>

- Daily cases per 100k is at 70 – has continued to rise
- 6508 tests administered with 888 positives, a 13.64% positivity rate in Yellowstone County.
- This week all 4 indicators are **RED**.
- Toby posed questions about other reasons the beds are taken at hospitals and if there is a wave of other disease we are seeing. Shaun did not have additional numbers or data. Shaun did say that some COVID tests out there are tracking if it is COVID, flu, etc. What is the usual census in the hospitals?
- The board discussed different tests such as home tests and how they aren't included in most data either positive or negative.
- It will also be necessary to know what the positivity rate is in our schools and relying on parents to report that to us.
- Adrienne shared a story about her own child and family and how doctors cannot force families to stay home, and it is a scary fact that some children may be positive and still choose to attend school or can be symptomatic and go to school. \*Deb added that parents in K-4 have been cautionary with keeping kids home and are doing a great job.
- Stella mentioned that our hospitals have patients from out of our county.
- At this time, they will not be deputizing school personnel from Public Health.
- Shaun continued to share data from the UHC reports while the board discussed questions around COVID, cases in adults, and other open-ended discussion.
- Concern from John Felton is that we keep seeing the incline in the 0-19 age group.
- Stella asked how many children have passed away from COVID, Shaun thought there were 302 deaths from the alpha variant, but 6 states had no childhood fatalities, Montana is one of them.
- Montana is the 9<sup>th</sup> highest state for reported COVID cases, but they are hoping the spike will start to go down.
- There has been an uptick in cases and in vaccinations.
- Shaun clarified there is no medical group we have met with regularly for specific answers, but there are doctors within the BCS community we can refer to for guidance.
- Joe asked what the other group Shaun used to get information from was doing. Shaun said it is an Interdisciplinary Group and they just started up again 2 weeks ago and he has not been able to attend yet but plans to as he has time and availability.
- Questions were raised about other communities going remote and how decisions are made. Shaun explained those communities must have looked at their data and chosen that decision, but John Felton isn't directing what we do. John provides data for us to use at our discretion and make decisions.

- BCS Data – Being in activities are a choice – whereas attending school is not a choice in this sense. Recommendation from Leadership is to strongly encourage masking for students in activities. There are 5 indoor activities between now and Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, everything else is outdoors.
- With activities, we can ask our own students to mask but it is hard to require students from other cities or visitors to mask.
- Brittney asked if there is a thought to restricted attendance to events? Shaun confirmed that is correct we aren't restricting activities or events at this time; it is all their choice to be there.
- Nate voiced his opinion and identified the inconsistency between mandating masks for the students at the school during instruction and having them optional in school activities outside of instruction, e.g., extracurricular activities. He was disappointed that leadership presented the same language for approval at the meeting that the board specifically did not adopt at the prior meeting.
- Adrienne said the guidance is out there for masking (in a public sense), but many everyday activities are discretionary – school hours are not and there are different rules and protections in place.
- Alex agreed with Nate that it is inconsistent and should be a rule across the board if students are inside the buildings, whether it's an activity or not. Yet, Alex understands the concerns of leadership.
- Shaun asked to clarify that the board wants masking for students at indoor activities – but not outdoor?
- Nate and Brittany shared concerns about asking kids to mask but not parents.
- Bobby suggested a committee be put together to discuss masking, health concerns, and other data that comes together outside the board and brings suggestions to the board meetings just like the other committees do – that way it is not over taking all the board meetings like it has been. Committee should have board member(s), parents, administration, and staff. Ad hoc committee specifically to look at COVID issues
- Rick agreed with the idea of a sub-committee taskforce around COVID, suggesting it may be good to have a medical advisory group as part of it.
- Stella argued that the committee would need a range of opinions and representation.
- Bobby opened a motion to form a committee for covid related discussion and policies – Stella 2<sup>nd</sup> – all in favor except Shaun. Stating he does not have a problem with people having input, but he does not think things were rushed.
- Shaun clarified that this committee would be on all COVID guidance – it was noted to have constituency and Ashley requested that everyone be let known of the meetings.

