



President's Report – October 2023

Beginning of Year Board Survey

Thank you to those that already completed the beginning of year board survey. If you have not already done so, please do as soon as possible. This data helps inform where we will focus our energies in the year ahead and provides the baseline data we need in order to determine our progress throughout the year. Your response is critical to this process!

<https://forms.gle/uKrRQzYr6Cr2yCxe7>

Building Level Highlights - Saint Franis Catholic K-8:

Fall sports are wrapping up with over 120 students participating (40 FB, 20 VB, 30 SB, 30 XC). The student council is up and running with projects and events for students. Fall concerts are scheduled throughout the next two weeks and the horticulture class will begin their poinsettia project soon. The renovation of the chapel is moving along, and SAINTS groups have met twice already this year to bring together students from across all grade levels. Field trips to Pompey's pillar and Grandpa's Farm have been huge hits with the kids and Fall MAP testing is wrapping up across all grades.

Both Jim and Deb want to specifically shout out the Religion team of teachers for all their collaboration, communication with the rest of the staff, and their work planning the SAINTS activities, school Masses, and other religious activities for the staff and students.

BCCHS

Athletics

- Boys and girls golf qualified for State
- Girls golf placed 2nd, Jori Haugen placed 4th individually
- Boys and girls soccer qualified for the post-season

Academic

- FOUR National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: Hank Jagodzinski, Casey Rah, Matthew Rah, and Aiden Milloy
- Student body and staff participated in Stop the Bleed training provided by Billings Clinic. This was student organized and motivated.
- Mr. Byer's Health Enhancement classes participated in the Distracted Driving course. Students had a great time and learned the effects of texting and driving and drinking and driving.

Service

- Neighborhood clean-up completed in mid-September
- Clubs and groups have helped with Refresh the Rims, Chalk the Walk, Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk, ROF, and more!

ECE

Building highlights- In the spring of 2023, the childcare license was increased from 80 to 105 children, the license was renewed on Friday, October 13. The current enrollment is 170 preschoolers. Of the 170 preschoolers, 115 use some form of childcare (mostly full time). Sue and I are working through



challenges with staffing the childcare. Overall, the transition from summer program to the school year went well. We are blessed with supportive and understanding families.

Academic highlights-The preschool teachers have been busy with beginning of the year assessments. The preschool teachers have embraced the new religion curriculum. We are using a new curriculum from Sophia Institute called His Little Way.

Staffing-This school year is the first year since the 2019/2020 school year that there were no changes with preschool staff.

Brenda Pankratz and Daria Haney will be presenting a session at “Think Catholic” on Thursday.

Sabrina Benner recently returned from a pilgrimage to Poland that was led by Fr. Leo.

Academic Data

Montana recently released academic data from across the state for all public schools. We are in the process of comparing achievement levels for Billings Catholic Schools students and state averages for release to the community during parent teacher conferences in November. Expect to see an article as part of the upcoming President’s newsletter and for more detailed information on student achievement data during our November Board meeting.

Think Catholic: Montana Catholic Educators Conference

On October 19th and 20th Billings Catholic Schools is hosting “Think Catholic” a conference for Catholic educators. Educators, priests, parents, and experts from our community will host breakout sessions on topics such as A Catholic School Parent’s Perspective, The Mass, The Ministry of Teaching, Integrating Laudato Si concepts into Curriculum, Educating for Eternity, and many more. We will be joined by teaching staff from Miles City and Livingston for portions of the event. To view the conference schedule and to register as a board participant, please visit:

<https://montanacatholiceducatorconf.sched.com/>

We would love to see you there!

Admin Leadership Team

This year, administrators from across the system are meeting monthly for intentional conversations of leadership and some of the most pressing issues facing our schools. We have covered building level enrollment and capacity numbers, budget connections to enrollment, the 24-25 calendar, staff and teacher evaluation models, unified goal setting process for all employees, PTO/time-off requests, and faculty/staff handbooks issues. This team has also engaged local level leadership teams to solicit and gather local level feedback on these issues to ensure all voices are involved in the decision-making process. Functioning ideally, this team will identify areas of focus, begin the initial conversation, take the issues to their local teams, bring feedback back to the system level, and then I will bring the issues or their thoughts to the board for discussion and feedback. A big thank you to all the building administrators for engaging in the process and taking on the additional work that it entails.

Budget Updates



We are beginning the 24-25 budgeting process in committee and with administrators. You are welcome to come to the November Finance committee meeting on 11/7 for the full conversation about preliminary budget, tuition rates, and salary schedules if you are interested. The meeting will be held at the admin offices beginning at 4:00 pm.

Softball Field

We are continuing to work with Rocky and a group of community supporters to coordinate the efforts to develop Urbaska field into a softball complex for spring 2024. We have received a notice to proceed from Rocky and expect construction to begin shortly.

Safety & Student Reporting Updates

On October 12th and 13th, the BCS counseling department, along with counselors from several surrounding districts came together for a Trauma Response Seminar and have been trained in a unified method for responding to a crisis in the community. In working alongside other districts, if the need arises, we are all able to support one another and can utilize staff across district lines to help ensure we respond in a unified, community, and kid focused way. A big thank you to both Kristin Colloton and Angela Hirt for spearheading this effort and bringing the school counseling teams together. Also, a big thank you to St. Patrick's Co-Cathedral for providing the space for them to meet.

Save the Date

The BCS Foundation Christmas Party is on December 13th – please save the date and plan to join the school board and foundation board for a celebration of the Christmas season and a way to say thank you for all you do for Billings Catholic Schools!

Wednesday, 10/25 – Turn the Table (Women's Social Event)