



**CEDAR VALLEY**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

**Board of Education Agenda**  
**Thursday December 18, 2025 - 5:30 p.m.**  
**Columbus High School Room 128**

**Elected/Appointed Board Members**

Father Tom McDermott	Pastoral Rep - Saint Edward	Present
Eric Donat	Elect - Queen of Peace	Present-Zoom
Jake Schaefer	At Large – Blessed Sacrament	Present
Father Tony Kruse	Appointed Rep - Blessed Sacrament	Absent
Laura Schaefer	Elect - Saint Patrick	Present
Ki Park	Elect - Saint Edward	Present
Greg Stammeyer	Elect - Blessed Sacrament	Present
Eric Bearbower	At-Large - Saint Edward	Present

**In Attendance: Staff**

Tom Novotney	Chief Administrator	Present
Aaron Becker	Saint Edward Principal	Present
Nick Miller	Blessed Maria Assunta Pallota Principal	Present
Katie Friedly	Columbus Catholic Interim Principal	Present
Stephanie Kane	Director of Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction	Present
Sarah Smith	Advancement Director Present	Present
Dawn Pollastrini	Controller	Present
Amy Peters	HR Director	Absent
Julie Girsch	Activities Director	Present
Annie Zeets	Waterloo Parish Faith Formation Representative	Absent
Kelly Christensen	Finance Committee Chair	Absent

**Call To Order:**

Jake Schaefer called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

**Prayer:**

Fr. Tom McDermott

**Introduction of Guests-Correspondence, & Request to Address the Board**

N/A

**Adjustments to the agenda/Approve the agenda:**

Move #4 Action Item to Information and Discussion.

(Greg - motion, Ki Second) Motion carried.

**Consent agenda:**

- November 19th, 2025 Board Minutes
- December 11th, 2025 Finance Minutes
- Consideration of Monthly Revenue & Expense Reports
- Consideration of Personnel: hires, reassignments, resignations, & terminations

A motion to approve the consent agenda.

(Fr. Tom - motion, Greg Second) Motion Carried.

**Information & Discussion:**

1. Westminster update and PK4 tuition - Stephanie/Sarah

Preschool needs to be accessible to all families. The team reviewed what this looks like at other schools and is recommending to the board a model in which the 9:00–11:30 a.m. portion of the day would remain free and accessible Monday–Thursday, with time beyond that being tuition-based. This model allows CVCS to continue offering an accessible-to-all program and is similar to the model used at Xavier (Mon–Wed free, Thursday tuition-based).

To qualify for statewide voluntary reimbursement per pupil, the program must offer 10 hours of quality, non-faith-based instruction per week.

A 9:00 a.m. start time helps even out childcare needs before and after PK for families paying for wrap-around care.

**Motion:** CVCS PK4 will offer a PK4 program option totaling 12 hours per week, in compliance with state guidelines.

(Greg - motion, Fr. Tom Second) Motion carried.

2. State of System Presentation - Board discussion

Ella Smith is working on an updated presentation template for the Board to review. A run-through with the board will take place on Monday, January 26 at 5:30 p.m. The State of the System program is scheduled for Wednesday, January 28 at 6:00 p.m. in the BMAP Commons, with Board members arriving at 5:30 p.m.

### 3. Columbus Catholic presentation - Katie Friedly & Courtney Solberg

The presentation outlined CHS's 2025-26 academic goal, which is for 100% of teachers to consistently implement student engagement strategies within each class period. The focus on engagement is intended to shift instruction from teacher-led to student-centered learning, increase student voice, and strengthen academic outcomes while also reducing classroom management concerns. Implementation includes clear learning targets, alignment of engagement strategies, targeted peer and administrative feedback, ongoing professional learning, and intentional instructional support throughout the year

The role of Lead Teacher Courtney Solberg was highlighted as being centered on direct student support and behavior intervention rather than instructional coaching. Her responsibilities include working individually and in small groups with students, supporting behavior plans and re-entry meetings, assisting with attendance accountability, and facilitating grade-level team meetings.

An update was also provided on the Argentina Exchange Program, which is scheduled to begin with student arrival on January 3 and will run for approximately five weeks. The program includes nine high school students and one female chaperone.

### 4. K-12 tuition - Dawn/Sarah/Tom

The current budget reflects a 2% tuition increase (typical increase of ESA), a 3% increase for non-certified staff, teacher salary increases, and changes to PK4 tuition.

The Strategic Planning Committee discussed that Archdiocesan tuition guidelines are based on the cost to educate, which on paper reflects the current status quo—teachers paid below public school levels and aging facilities. As the system plans for the future, the question becomes what CVCS wants to build toward. Historically, the system has not operated with excess funds, and discussion centered on how additional dollars would be used if available. Ongoing needs such as facility growth and maintenance indicate continued reliance on parish subsidies and donor support, and the budget alone may not fully reflect these realities. Strategic Planning is reviewing long-term scenarios related to salaries, tuition, benefits, debt reduction, and capital needs. Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) are now in place; however, there is a continued need to encourage families to reinvest financially in their parishes. Sarah and Dawn will work to develop funding scenarios and bring back a recommendation regarding a potential tuition increase.

### **Old business – Action Items:**

N/A

### **New business – Action Items:**

1. Out of State baseball trip request - Julie Girsch

There is an opportunity for the baseball team to play at Target Field in Minneapolis against Grundy Center on Wednesday, June 3. The experience would include players attending the Minnesota Twins vs. Chicago White Sox game, access to locker rooms and facilities, and then playing a game on the field. This would be a day trip and would include transportation needs for the team. The stadium is discounting ticket prices, and the schools would be able to sell tickets to fans. There would be no cost for the team to play.

There is also an opportunity for fans to ride a coach bus, with ticket pricing set accordingly. The plan would involve an \$8,000 investment, utilizing funds from the baseball lights account, with money raised being directed back into the baseball lights fundraiser. This event also presents an opportunity to reach out to alumni in the Twin Cities to support the baseball lights project. Options being considered include an alumni gathering before or after the game, along with other engagement opportunities.

(Greg - motion, Eric D Second) Motion Carried.

2. Guest presenter language - Tom

The Exec Committee recommended changing the guest speaker time limit from 2 minutes per individual to 5 minutes per individual, with a 30-minute maximum total remaining in place.

Guest speakers must contact the central office/Amy Peters in advance and share their topic. The board will not respond during guest presentations and will take comments under advisement.

#### **Introduction of Guests-Correspondence, & Request to Address the Board**

Guests requesting to address the board need to contact the CVCS Office at 319-232-1422 or Amy Peters at: [apeters@cvatholic.org](mailto:apeters@cvatholic.org). Guests will need to provide their name and topic for discussion to be added to the agenda. Addressing the board will be limited to 5 minutes per guest. There will be a 30 minute maximum time allowance per meeting. The board will not respond and will take all comments under advisement.

Motion to change the individual time limit to 5 minutes per individual

(Laura - motion, Ki Second) Motion Carried.

3. EOY25 options - Tom/Dawn

The Finance Committee has discussed and reviewed the EOY FYE25 report for CVCS and recommended not making a parish subsidies adjustment at this time.

Motion to approve end of year 2025 options  
(Greg - motion, Eric B Second) Motion Carried.

4. 2026-2027 Academic Calendar

The August 10th/11th mandated professional development with the Archdiocese was discussed. If attendance is not required, those days would become floating workdays for teachers to prepare classrooms. Conferences have been moved back to February due to how Easter falls next year.

Motion to move the January 4 Professional Development day to January 15.

( Greg- motion, Eric B Second) Motion Carried.

Motion to approve the 2026-27 academic calendar with the above change.

(Greg- motion, Ki Second) Motion Carried.

**In-service:**

- Fr. Tom

**Additional Documents/Reports:**

- Faith Formation Report - absent
- Advancement Office Report - in packet
- Chief Administrator Report
  - Letters of Intent were discussed as a tool to identify staff who do not plan to return. These are not binding contracts, and formal contracts will be issued in March prior to Spring Break. At this time, 100% of PK4 teachers plan to return, 96% of staff at St. Edward plan to return (with two retirements), 98% at BMAP plan to return (with one staff member not returning), and 96% at CHS plan to return (with one retirement). No staff members have expressed a desire to leave for employment elsewhere.
  - The new stage lights were highlighted following last night's concert, which was well attended with bleachers and chairs completely filled. Eileen Salkowski decorated the stage, adding a festive and welcoming touch to the atmosphere.
- News from Principals and Activity Department - in packet
- Board Announcements - There have been significant deaths within the alumni community in recent weeks, and the Board asks that these individuals and their families be kept in prayer.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion to conclude Board meeting at 7:41 pm**

Monday, January 12, 2026 - 4:30 PM

Prayer - Jake

**High School Office**

**Next Board meeting:**

Thursday, January 15, 2026 - 5:30 PM

Prayer – Eric B

**Columbus High School Room 128**