



**Ursuline Education Foundation  
Sponsors Council Meeting Minutes  
March 26, 2024**

Present for the meeting at Ursuline Academy in Dallas were Sr. Ann Barrett, Sr. Mary Ann Dooling, John Grimes, Margaret Hesse, Karen Jakuback, Gretchen Kane, Kate Levesque, Tom Merkel, James MacLaren, Sr. Peggy Moore, Karen Mortillaro, Eugene Priestly, Stacy Shoulta, Peggy Slater, Regina Sullivan, and Erin Valentine. Also present was Sr. Elisa Ryan, provincial. Invited to attend were the principals and mission directors of our schools.

John opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their continued commitment to the Ursuline Education Foundation, UEF. After the prayer he introduced Srs. Elisa and Peggy Moore who gave some updates on the UEF.

Sr. Elisa also thanked everyone for their willingness to serve and then gave a brief history on the UEF and the MPJP. Sr. Peggy explained the process for appointing stewards and indicated it is a more complex process than usual. She also explained the annual allocation each school is asked to pay to support the UEF and Sponsorship offices. She said they hope to hold the amount steady as the expectation is the UEF will become a 501c3 and have an endowment.

Sr. Elisa also spoke about finances, and while the province has been supporting the UEF all these years, it is hoped that the UEF eventually becomes self supporting. She also explained the need to revise school documents (Articles and Bylaws of the school corporations), making them consistent with the new sponsorship and the UEF documents. The notes for the purchase agreements will also require some revision, because they include the reserved financial decisions which the province holds until the note is fully paid.

Work on these revisions is at various stages among the schools and the work is ongoing. Once the revisions of the documents are complete and approved the transfer of sponsorship to UEF will happen.

The provincial team and the schools must also do the process of canonical alienation of the property. (Dedham already completed.) This was not done

when the property agreements were signed a few years ago. Once this is completed the real estate will be alienated to the school corporations and will no longer be ecclesiastical goods. The UEF civil corporation documents will also be revised.

Regarding allowing other schools to join the UEF, Sr. Elisa explained that this would not happen in the near future. There are schools which have asked or shown interest in joining but it is felt time is needed for the newly established UEF Sponsors Council to learn and implement its role and responsibilities. A document regarding this issue, *Pathways to Membership*, is in the process of being written.

Karen Mortillaro was then introduced; she explained she was in the process of making some changes in the Identity Assessment.

John Grimes then explained the role of the stewards and their committees. He said the stewards are available to listen and help as needed.

There were no questions from the principals and mission directors; the meeting continued without them after a break.

Sr. Elisa then gave out the *Pathways* document and asked that any comments or suggestions be sent to her by April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Several issues were then discussed. Gender identity is a big issue in the schools and the heads are looking for guidance in how to deal with it. There is confusion since Catholic Church doctrines/policies are black and white, but practice is grey. There seems to be different views regarding a church policy by various church groups, bishops and the Pope! Is there a one-pager on Catholic Church policies; are there any non-negotiables? These questions were left unresolved but it was mentioned that perhaps communication with each school's diocese/archdiocese is most important.

There was a question about the setting up of an endowment fund. Will this be taking money a person would have initially given to the school? Sort of robbing Peter to pay Paul?. Also, one head of school said the Ursuline Education Network asks for an annual membership fee and that she feels obligated to pay it while wondering if membership is still valuable to her school.

**The Sponsorship Council plans to meet again next April in St. Louis following the Leadership of Schools meeting.**

**Following this meeting the Stewards met to discuss their thoughts regarding the two previous meetings.**

**The Presidents seemed to say the Stewards should stick to their mission responsibilities; perhaps they have a concern about the Stewards getting into issues not related to the mission.**

**The local UEF steward should develop a relationship with the local school president.**

**The local board of trustee's chair of the host school should be invited to this meeting.**

**These three ideas need to be discussed further by the Stewards to determine pros and cons.**

**There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.**

**Submitted by**

**Sr. Ann**