



**CEDAR VALLEY**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

**Board of Education Minutes**

**October 01, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.**

**Blessed Maria Assunta Pallotta Middle School Art Room - Door #25**

**Elected/Appointed Board Members**

Father Scott Bullock	Pastoral Rep - Saint Edward	Present
Jeff Fitzpatrick	Elect - Queen of Peace	Present
Brian Holthaus	At Large – Blessed Sacrament	Present
Father Tony Kruse	Appointed Rep - Blessed Sacrament	Present
Bill Rhomberg	Elect - Saint Patrick	Present
Jake Schaefer	At Large - Saint Edward	Absent
Al Schott	Elect - Saint Edward	Absent
Mark Sinnwell	Elect - Sacred Heart	Present
Greg Stammeyer	Elect - Blessed Sacrament	Present

**In Attendance:**

**Staff**

Aaron Becker	Director of Elementary Programs	Present
Tanya Cutsforth	Operations & Human Resource Director	Present
Aaron Ferrie	BMAP Principal	Absent
Tony Harrington	CHS School Administrator Manager	Present
Taylor Hotek	Activity Coordinator	Absent
Tom Novotney	Chief Administrator/Interim CHS Principal	Present
Jo Schwarz	Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction Director	Absent
Sarah Smith	Advancement Director	Absent
Jim Thielen	Finance Committee Chair	Present
Josh Van Besien	Business Manager	Absent
	Waterloo Parish Faith Formation Representative	Absent

**Call To Order:**

Mark Sinnwell called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

**Prayer:**

Prayer was led by Jeff Fitzpatrick.

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

Motion to approve the adjusted agenda to move Old Business before Information.

(Jeff Fitzpatrick, Bill Rhomberg) Motion carried.

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

1. John Farley
2. Connie Molbeck

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3. Susan (Sinwell) Joyce
4. Tim Lane
5. Helen Hellman
6. Debbie Lanich

**Consent agenda:**

A motion to approve the consent agenda.  
(Father Tony Kruse, Greg Stammeyer) Motion Carried.

**Old business – Action Items:**

1. Board Response to Columbus Catholic High School Name - Board

A motion to approve the following board statement on the name of Columbus Catholic High School. (The Board Statement is located at the bottom of the minutes.)  
(Jeff Fitzpatrick, Brian Holthaus) Motion carried.

**Information:**

1. GREER Funds Update (Google meets/family internet) - Tom Novotney  
Tom noted that part of the CARES Act funding through the government was set aside for internet connectivity for families in need of services. Funding is available for our families currently. Additional devices are another option for the funding.

2. BEDS Official Enrollment Count – Tom Novotney

Preschool 3 - 22 down 7 from 19-20

Preschool 4 - 48 down 41 from 19-20

Kindergarten - 56 down 6

1st - 53 down 17

2nd - 62 down 1

3rd - 62 up 16

4th - 43 down 16

5th - 55 up 11

6th - 56 down 3

7th - 59 down 16

8th - 67 down 14

9th - 86 up 23

10th - 65 up 3

11th - 58 down 3

12th - 58 down 13

780 down 36 students K-12 from 19-20. Budgeted K-12 numbers for 19-20 was 790.

3. Updated COVID Quarantine Guidance - Tom Novotney

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IDPH updated guidance on “When to Quarantine”. Staff is continuing to education students, staff and families with changes.

**In-service:** Next section of Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizens; paragraphs 13-16

**Adjournment:**

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 7:11 pm.  
(Father Tony Kruse, Bill Rhomberg) Motion carried.

**Next meeting:**

Thursday, November 04, 2020 at 5:30 PM  
Blessed Maria Assunta Pallotta Middle School Art Room - Door #25  
Prayer – Bill Rhomberg  
Executive Board Meeting - October 19, 2020 at 5:30 PM

**STATEMENT OF THE CEDAR VALLEY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BOARD  
REGARDING THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE NAME OF COLUMBUS  
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

We have heard from a number of voices, both in writing and at the July 2020 and October 2020 meetings, proposing a change in the name of Columbus Catholic High School. It was suggested that the use of the name of Christopher Columbus in association with a Catholic high school was not appropriate, due to his association with the colonization of the Americas and the negative effects upon its indigenous peoples. For the following reasons, we would not support such a change of name.

**1. Christopher Columbus is not the patron of Columbus Catholic High School.**

Much of the discourse regarding the naming of CCHS has suggested that Columbus, either because of his personal actions or his contribution to the larger process of colonization of the Americas by Europeans, is not a fitting role model for our youth, nor a fitting namesake for any Catholic/Christian institution. In fact, when the pastors at the time of the school’s naming made their choice, they were well aware that Christopher Columbus was not a canonized saint, nor were they expressly holding him up as a role model. As reported by Msgr. Walter Brunkan, long-time principal of the high school, the pastors who were responsible for the naming of the school chose the name “Columbus High School” not because any specific personal qualities of Christopher Columbus, but instead because of the spirit of exploration and venturing that the explorer represented, as the newly consolidated high school too was at the beginning of an unknown future, a future filled with the confidence that, in the unknown voyage ahead, God would lead the

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way. There have been no known artifacts or pictures commemorating Christopher Columbus on the high school campus.

**2. Our faith has never identified holiness with perfection of behavior.**

In fact, in many ways just the opposite is true. Holiness is associated with a willingness to let the grace of God convert our failings and sinfulness into virtue. Some have suggested that, because no human being can be perfect, we ought to forego the naming of any Catholic institution after any fallible human person, which would exclude everyone except the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Lord. Besides the fact that this is contrary to our Catholic tradition, much would be lost by failing to hold up the example of an ordinary human being who, subject to God's grace, became an instrument of God. The list of canonized saints is long who exhibited sinful and/or immoral behavior, and then were transformed by grace. We would do a disservice to exclude any human name attached to our Catholic institutions because s/he was not perfect. Every saintly role model (except the Blessed Virgin Mary) was holy specifically because s/he experienced redemption.

**3. We are not served by “white-washing” history by removing from our consciousness those who might have failed in charity.**

The lesson could be taught that anyone who has failed to live up to certain standards ought to be removed from our society's consciousness. This is a dangerous road down which to travel—and often the hallmark of totalitarian regimes. For better or for worse, Christopher Columbus is an influential part of our cultural history. If we forget about history, we run the risk of repeating it.

**4. A name change in response to racial injustice is a superficial act before the more important formation of our students in the Christian obligation of respecting the dignity of each human person.**

The name of the institution is not really the issue. It would be the rare student who has even wondered about the origin of the name of Columbus Catholic High School. More important would be how our institution decides to react to the legitimate issues that have gained new focus in our nation's consideration of racial justice and how we will form our students to be agents of more perfect racial justice. If our aim is truly to contribute to a change in our society's treatment of racially disadvantaged persons, more is needed than a name change; rather, a culture change ought to be our goal.

**5. If the word “Columbus” was to be removed from the name of the high school, it seems a similar case could be made to remove “Catholic.”**

Just as some have presented historical reasons why the name Columbus is, in their judgment, not appropriate for our Catholic High School, historical evidence could be harvested to reject both calling our school “Catholic” and teaching from that perspective. The approach to assessing the moral and historical appropriateness of names seems, in this imperfect world, endless, with the exception of maybe calling us something so bland as to not distinguish the specific mission of our school.

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- 6. While some have expressed the opinion that the “Columbus” name should be removed, at least an equal number of persons have expressed the opposite position.**  
Any process of considering a name change cannot simply be based on who “speaks” the loudest. In most controversial situations, a large number of folks fear such discussions and will simply not enter the conversation. Measuring the “heat” of an initiative such as this simply by how many folks speak out may not represent the actual level of support for a change of this importance. We board members can testify, anecdotally, that as many persons have supported preserving the current name of the high school as have spoken in favor of a change.
- 7. The principle of “hard cases make bad law” would caution against making a quick change in a time of protest.**  
If in fact it was envisioned that any name change would be considered, it would need to be the end of a longer, more measured process, rather than reacting to a charged and controversial societal time. History is filled with tragic situations of decisions made under pressure of contentious public debate. The very fervor of the current situation makes it perhaps the least desirable time to consider such a change.
- 8. We need to take seriously the reality of original sin.**  
It has been suggested that Christopher Columbus is responsible “for the deaths of millions.” Obviously, he is not personally responsible for the actual deaths of millions. Instead, the implication is, with his primary role in the colonization of the Americas, and since the colonizers brought disease with them, that Columbus is responsible for all deaths traced to colonization. The deaths brought about by the interaction between the colonizers and the indigenous peoples of the Americas have a complex series of causes. It is simplistic to hold one man, Christopher Columbus, responsible for the effects of a larger historical reality that was advanced widely. The exploitation of indigenous peoples has a long and pained history, not rooted in an individual, but a long history of the sinful inclinations of humanity that our faith would call “original sin.” The remedy for original sin, our faith teaches, is not human effort, but instead the actions of grace of the Savior and his redemptive death and resurrection.

We are grateful for the thoughtful engagement of those who took the time to express their opinions on this matter. May we together go forward to support our common concern to provide for all students entrusted to us a quality Catholic education, which includes our students being formed with a respect of the sacredness and dignity of all human persons.

CVCS Board  
October 1, 2020

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Mission: To Provide an exceptional Catholic education to every student, built on the foundation of faith, discipline, knowledge and service.