



I. Welcome and Prayer - Mrs. Krusky

II. Saint Thomas Aquinas - Who we are - Melissa Long

- Melissa Long has three children, one of which is in 6th Grade at STA. Her eldest son has just graduated from Lansing Catholic and her middle child is in 10th grade there.
- Melissa spoke of the importance of our history as a parochial school and how integral faith is to our parish school community. We must continue to promote a positive, faith-based culture and parents need to be included in this process as St. Thomas Aquinas once said, "Love takes up where knowledge leaves off."
- Lastly, as a parochial school, and not a private school, it is first and foremost the parents' responsibility our duty to work with STA to promote a positive culture in our parish and school, for our children to see.

III. Why do we need the TPO - Mrs. Krusky

- Mrs. Krusky noted that current school year has been a difficult year for a number of reasons; some out of our control. She believes the Tartan Parent Organization (TPO) will give the STA community (parents, teachers, administrators) a formal organization to come together to rebuild our community and strengthen our commitment to raising our children within a parochial school.
- Along with enhancing our educational opportunities, the TPO creates an organization that will house STA initiatives and events to create opportunities for parent engagement as well as a transfer of knowledge from our veteran parents to our new families. Both veteran and new families have a lot to offer our community and we want to be inclusive and representative of both perspectives.
- The TPO belongs to all of us; not just to its officers, volunteers or school administration. This is a parent's chance to bring their expertise, passion and dedication to better our school and bring new opportunities to our children to help them grow in their education and faith.

IV. TPO Introduction - Robin Celeski

- Officer Introduction
 - Robin Celeski - Chair
 - Dr. Melissa Long Co- Chair
 - Regina Stout - Secretary
 - Caroline Miceli - Treasurer
 - Kerry Roberts - Communications
- History of TPO
 - During the 2018/19 school year, the Parent Education Council (PEC) charged a veteran parent and council member with creating an organization that would lead STA events and engage parents. Through her leadership and vision the Tartan Community Builders was created. Over the last 9 months, we have learned a tremendous amount and experienced many challenges with

a few opportunities of growth sprinkled in. As a result of lessons learned, we realized the Tartan Community Builders needed to be a formal organization. It needed structure, a defined purpose and leadership that could dedicate the time to create a viable organization.

- In Mid-April, the reins were officially handed over and the current officers began meeting and sharing ideas to create the Tartan Parent Organization. The officers were chosen based on their involvement and dedication to STA through the Tartan Community Builders, while also keeping in mind that some are veteran parents and others are newer families.
- Because the TPO belongs to STA and not to the officers, the officers have spent the last 5 weeks engaging in conversations with veteran parents, newer families and teachers to explain the vision and to ensure to veterans that the TPO is not here to take over events or replace them, we want to partner with those who have been leading events to support them and to ensure that when their kids graduate from STA, someone else will be ready to step in. Please know, if we have not chatted with you, we intend to...the last 5 weeks have flown by!
- Mission
 - Because we have created a new organization under STA, we also created a mission statement to help guide us and remind us of why we exist.
 - As such, our mission is: **The Tartan Parent Organization (TPO) aims to enhance our faith-based community by providing support to school teachers, staff and administration in organizing and communicating educational, enrichment and fundraising opportunities that benefit students, staff, families and members of our parish.**
- TPO Meetings
 - Meetings will be held the third Tuesday of each month and are open to all STA parents and parish members
 - Every STA event and meeting will start and end with prayer
 - Meetings will alternate between morning and evening and meeting dates and times can be found in the TPO 101 Document, the Tartan Times and on the school calendar
 - Officers will meet the week before monthly meeting to set agenda and meeting minutes will always be made public
 - Pillar leads are responsible for touching base monthly with their pillar chairs
 - Events chairs are responsible for consistent and continued communication with event volunteers and the TPO officers

V. **How to become a TPO Officer - Robin Celeski**

- a. TPO officer term limits
 - With the exception of this first year, TPO officers will serve two-year terms. Term end dates will alternate each year, with two ending after next school and the other three ending the following year.
- b. Self-nominate - Parents can self-nominate to become a TPO officer, however, self-nomination alone does not guarantee that you will receive an officer position.
- c. Officer positions are the core of the TPO and those in leadership roles need to have demonstrated a commitment to the TPO through participation in events and initiatives. The STA Principal, STA

Parish Priest and TPO Chair will select officers from those who self-nominate and who have a positive and beneficial history with STA and the TPO.

VI. TPO Structure - Kerry Roberts

- a. Explanation of the pillars and pillar chairs (for further detail, please see the TPO Organization Chart and TPO 101 Document)
 - In order to get a true handle of everything our parent volunteers do, we created a structure that relies on four pillars, each representing a different area of focus. Pillars include: Teacher Support, STA Events, Parish Community Events and Matthew 25 Service.
 - Each pillar will have a dedicated chair or chairs depending on pillars size. The pillar chairs will have assigned events that they are ultimately responsible for. Each event/activity will have an event lead who will report to their pillar chair and who will be responsible for managing and organizing and implementing the event or opportunity.
 - Event leads will work with teachers, admin and their volunteer teams to ensure the event is successful. They will be responsible for reporting challenges to pillar chairs and asking for help when necessary. Conversely, pillar chairs will be aware of the event and needs and will check in consistently. Pillar chairs will then report to the TPO to relay successes and challenges and to request additional support. To better understand our vision, please reference the TPO org chart and Chair and Lead Job Description Document.

VII. Volunteer Opportunities - Kerry Roberts

- a. There are currently many volunteer opportunities available for event leads. We encourage families to take a look at the Org Chart and determine an event or theme they are passionate about. Our aim is to create the best events and opportunities for our children and parish school community.
- b. Position descriptions are available online and may be edited, as needed, to effectively meeting the needs of the TPO and STA.
- c. Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, every family will be responsible for completing a mandatory 10 volunteer hours. Volunteer hours will come from being a pillar or event lead, volunteering at events or being a room parent. Volunteer hours will be tracked and evaluated at a regular basis. STA has a true need of bringing together our community and the more family involvement we have, the better off our children will be.
- d. Recess duty will no longer be required and instead will be a "paid position" for parents who are interested in earning a rebate towards tuition.

VIII. Call to Action - Mrs. Krusky and Robin Celeski

- In order to be successful, we need parent engagement! The TPO cannot exist or function without each of you. Please know your time, expertise, passion and dedication to STA are appreciated. We thank you and look forward to working with you to strengthen our community and enhance our children's educational and spiritual experience.
- As this is our first TPO endeavor, we are always open to suggestions, feedback and growth recommendations.

- Q&A

- Q. Has there been any thought to adding or deleting events from the current list? There is interest in adding cultural and heritage events to expose our children to greater diversity and celebrate our country's diverse history.
 - A. The TPO warmly encourages families with a passion to come to us and lead events within any of our four pillars! At this time, we will not be deleting events, but adding is always an option! At the end of next year, during evaluation time, we will then see which events need more work, have growth possibility or need to be reformatted.
- Q. What are the consequences for families that are not doing the 10 hours of service?
 - A. Father Gordon and Mrs. Krusky are currently working on a tracking system and rules regarding the new 10 volunteer hour policy. They both firmly believe that in order to create a strong parish school community, we need parent involvement and ten hours of volunteer time seems very reasonable compared to what other Catholic schools in the area mandate. Much more information will be coming on this topic!
- Q. Our children have witnessed this difficult year in our parish and school, especially our older students, in order to build community within them and their peers, can we please ask the children what they want? This could include educational, enrichment and fundraising opportunities but we also need to build community and leadership and a support system for our students.
 - A. This will absolutely be included in our TPO priorities and it is a wonderful observation. We will be meeting with parents of older students to brainstorm more ideas and to come up with an impactful plan for next year and beyond.
- Q. Middle Schoolers need different opportunities, especially in becoming leaders within their parish school community. We should involve them in decision making and encourage them to give us ideas about how to bring our school together and show leadership to our younger students.
 - A. There was a great discussion on teaching leadership qualities and what leadership opportunities could be available for our children. One item discussed and brought up is the recreation of a Student Government. With the hiring of our new social studies teacher, this will happen for next year and more details to follow. The TPO will also work with parents to brainstorm other leadership and emotional well being opportunities to work through student character building, how to properly express themselves and how to be part of a greater community.
- Q. STA must become stronger with behavioral expectations of students and parents. Each year, our students sign a code of conduct, but increasingly bad behavior is not always held accountable. Is there a way to implement a family code of conduct to allow us to involve families at the beginning of the year to detail expectations and consequences so everyone is aware what is OK and not at STA?
 - A. This is an incredibly important aspect of STA that the TPO will discuss further with administration. Please note that while we will offer suggestions and opportunities for the TPO to help in these matters, the TPO will have a limited scope. Our goal is to create a positive, supportive community to allow our teachers and administration to do their jobs to the best of their ability. When we work together with our teachers and admins, our children can be well educated, grow in their faith and we will lead by example.