

Scattergood Friends School
School Committee Meeting
Open Session Minutes
20 September 2025

Mission Statement

Scattergood Friends School challenges students with a college-preparatory curriculum, farm experience, a shared work program, and community living in the spirit of Quaker faith.

Present: Aaron Woolfson, Katie Jacoby, Roy Helm, Alex Lippitt, George Bergus, Eric Stakland, Nancy Jordan, Ruth Hampton, David Wilcox, Monica Beals, Kristin Hilgendorf, Linda Corbin Pardee

Regrets: Kent Tjossem

Staff Present: Ethan Huelskamp, Matt Gauder, Sam Taylor, John Zimmerman, Sonja Sponheim, Kim Jones

Friends settled into silent worship in a timely manner. The clerk shared with us:

"I think 99 times and find nothing. I stop thinking, swim in silence, and the truth comes to me." ~ Albert Einstein

Minute: We approve the minutes, both open and closed, of our meeting on July 23, 2025.

Note: We will put bios and photos on the School Committee website page. Monica has offered to coordinate this process. Much thanks to Monica!

Minute: We affirm our Non-Discrimination Policy.

Development Report. The Foundation \$550k pledge has been received. Ethan and Sam met with potential donors. One donor is interested in funding the geothermal – an additional \$150k over what's in the report. The additional funds may be spent to pay down the solar loan, expand the scope of the geothermal system or increase insulation to maximize efficiency. At the end of the campaign the steering committee will make recommendations to the school committee. Once the Roots & Wings campaign ends the role of the development director will change. They will also get bids to increase ADA compliance on the bathroom in the west dorm. The Annual Report will be coming out soon.

Spiritual Life Report. The subcommittee could help determine (alongside IYMC Representatives) the use of IYMC \$5,000 in funds to build on the relationship between IYMC & SG. SG needs more concise timelines for scheduling especially for MYM to have a student and/or staff presence at Midyear Meeting, they need to know dates well in advance. Roy will coordinate with MYM planning clerk(s). Work is ongoing on process for Friends in Residence process.

Facilities & Farm. The sprinkler system is ready to go once pump arrives. The Health and Human Services inspection was good. Lots of projects are going on but contractors work on their own schedules. It looks unlikely that we will receive the federal rebate money for geothermal.

Energy use is affected by things like students opening windows despite a/c or heat settings. Heat is uneven in the West Dorm rooms. With the new system each room will have its own settings.

Business Manager. Kim shared with us that the vacation policy has changed to a use-it-or-lose-it each year. There is a new reimbursement policy: \$200 limit for any one staff person – signed off on by the business manager. This will lead to better cash flow predictions. There is a 90-day period to seek reimbursement. There is currently a remote staff person to assist with these requests and BillPay is used instead of a check on demand.

Head of School Report. John reported that the school year launched successfully. However, staff members are carrying additional workloads due to budget constraints, which is not sustainable long-term. We need to explore how the School Committee (SC) can contribute to supporting and nourishing both the staff and the broader school environment. Increasing transparency around the pay scale/compensation packages and clarity on realistic job expectations in terms of hours and responsibilities is needed. An evaluation of the school's benefits provider is being considered. They are also comparing the current tech service option to a potential alternative, Grant Wood AEA.

What data does the SC want included in the HoS report?

The Head Report will continue to include updates on revenue, admissions and projections, including numbers of inquiries and other relevant numbers that provide insight into school trends. Details about electives, trips, and other school programs and events are welcome additions to give the school committee a well-rounded view of what's happening across the school.

Strategic Planning and Campus Master Planning

The School Committee reviewed progress on strategic planning and campus master planning (CMP) efforts. The school has entered into a partnership with the University of Iowa, engaging three law students for 27 hours per week to help with this work, including assistance to the Structure and Governance Exploratory ad hoc committee (SAGE).

Two ad hoc committees will be formed to guide this process: one focused on strategic planning (a five-year plan) and one on the campus master plan, with considerations such as the chestnut grove harvest and additional housing. We can recruit School Committee members (and others) to serve on these committees, and other suggestions for participants were discussed. Facilities-Farm subcommittee will be involved in the campus master planning work.

During the fall and spring semesters, the ad hoc committees will collaborate with the University of Iowa to gather data that will inform the planning process and end-of-year discussions will guide the next steps. The overall project follows a two-year timeline, with the goal of unveiling the plans in 2027 at the Roots and Wings Gathering.

Minute: We approve John working with the Trustees committee on creating two ad hoc committees, 1) the Strategic Planning Committee and 2) Campus Master Planning.

Minute: We approve the Subcommittees and Officers slate for the 2025-2026 year.

Subcommittee Definitions and Handbook update

We discussed the updates to the handbook but are unable to approve them at this time as there are some edits that are pending for the Spiritual & Community Life committee and potentially for the C & F committee. There was some discussion as to the blending of the Farm & Facilities – much overlaps but there's lots that's separate. The committee will work with Mark to provide info to the committee while not necessarily needing him to attend each meeting.

ISACS Trustee Series discussion (Independent School Trends) and plans

We are all encouraged to take advantage of these online sessions. The next one is October 16.

Odds and Ends:

- Add treasurer description to handbook.
- Add a sidebar on website with dates of meetings and other relevant dates – maybe the ISACS series dates?
- When sending out school committee emails head the subject line with **SFSC** to help when searching for emails.
- Distribute an Associate Members contact document.
- Roy will contact IYMC about planning/communications around midyear meeting.

The clerk moved the meeting into closed session.

Katie Jacoby, recording clerk

Next Meetings:

- November 8
- January 17 (*Zoom only*)
- March 14 (*Zoom only*)
- May 9
- ~~July 28~~ (*Zoom-only*) (*An add-on note: this has now changed to **July 18***)