



Gratitude and Looking Ahead to our Transition Process

On behalf of The Frances Xavier Warde School's Board of Trustees, I am writing today with gratitude as we share important news about the future of our School. As we come to the close of his 11th year of service to The Frances Xavier Warde School, Michael Kennedy has informed the Board of Trustees that he will transition from FXW at the conclusion of the 2026-2027 academic year (June 30, 2027).

This announcement follows thoughtful conversations with the Board and reflects Michael's desire to begin a well earned next chapter after guiding FXW through one of the most transformative periods in our young history. We are deeply thankful for the clarity and advance notice, which allows us to steward a smooth and deliberate transition.

Over a Decade of Impact

Michael's tenure at FXW has been defined by a clear commitment to mission, a steady focus on excellence, and a deep care for this community. Under his leadership, FXW has grown stronger in every dimension, academically, spiritually, and institutionally. The scope of what has been accomplished is remarkable, and the Board is profoundly grateful for the leadership that made it possible.

From a governance and institutional perspective, Michael has been a strong partner to the Board in strengthening the School's foundation. Together, we have advanced key operational and leadership initiatives, completed operational and facilities audits, and developed a long-term financial and investment policies that support sustainability. These efforts have positioned the School for long term stability and excellence.

Under Michael's leadership and guidance, FXW also launched its most comprehensive campaign, securing the largest gifts in school history while establishing a true culture of philanthropy that will benefit generations of students. Michael had a vision to expand alumni engagement, launch the Charism Magazine, create the Maggie Daley Speaker Series, strengthen the high school guidance program, financially support the curriculum enhancements and DEI efforts, and initiate a global travel opportunity to Milan for students.

Michael provided a steady hand during a unique period for our School. In the last few years alone, FXW navigated the complexities of COVID, advanced its commitment to the learning experience, enhanced its brand and reputation across Chicago and within independent schools, and invested meaningfully in curriculum, faculty compensation and benefits, facilities, and strategic planning.

A steadfast guardian of our Mission and Charisms, these accomplishments reflect not only Michael's leadership but also the passion of an incredibly talented and dedicated administrative team, faculty, and staff. Ensuring that the spirit of FXW is inextricably tied to Old St. Patrick's Church and Holy Name Cathedral, Michael has made it a priority to be a steward of the FXW Mission.

The Transition Process

The Board has already begun a thoughtful and inclusive search for our next Head of School. To guide this process, we have engaged Carney, Sandoe & Associates, a nationally respected search firm. A Search Committee composed of trustees and community representatives will lead the work, and we will soon share opportunities for parents, faculty, staff, and alumni to provide input through surveys. Our goal is clear: to identify a leader who will honor FXW's Mission, build on the strong foundation we have today, and guide the school confidently into its next chapter.

Looking Ahead

There will be a time to celebrate Michael's leadership and the profound impact he has had on our community. For now, please join me in expressing our deepest appreciation for his service, vision, and unwavering commitment to our students and Mission.

FXW is strong. Our community is strong. And with your partnership, we will navigate this transition with the same purpose and unity that defines our School.

With gratitude,

Steve Waller
Chair, Board of Trustees