



CSJ Mission Education Committee
Monday, May 18, 2026; 1:30-3:00 p.m.
In-Person: 2nd Floor Conference Room, CSJ Admin Center

Meeting Minutes

Present: Steve Kenney; Susan Oeffling, CSJ; Andrea Pearson Tande, CSJ-C; Kris Smyth; Jill Underdahl, CSJ; Karen Zeleznak, CSJ-C

Staff: Matt Halley; Lacy Sietsema

Excused Absence: Andree Aronson; Angela Schreiber, CSJ

The CSJ Mission Education Committee convened on Monday, May 18, 2026 at 1:37 p.m.

DEI Statement: Andrea read the DEI statement.

Spiritual Centering: Led by Matt.

Minutes: The February minutes were presented to the committee for approval. Hearing no changes or corrections, Kris moved to approve and Jill seconded. All present members voted to approve the minutes.

Steve thanked Lacy for taking excellent minutes.

Agenda: The agenda was presented for approval. Hearing no changes or additions, the agenda was unanimously approved.

Accola Update

Matt shared that budget season is currently a major focus. While Accola is unlikely to fully meet its budget and revenue goals this year, the organization performed better than expected and came much closer than anticipated. He credited much of the progress to Andree's work and the Advancement department. Matt also noted that Accola has adapted well to current needs despite the impact of Operation Metro Surge.

Matt reported that Tiffany is on a 10-week medical leave. Haven has returned after a two-week absence. The co-directors at LIS will not return next year as directors, but Elisabeth will continue in a different role. Matt is conducting first-round interviews for two director positions. He reported receiving strong resumes and plans to move top candidates through a review process involving staff and leadership committees.

The Board is engaged in important strategic discussions about Accola's mission, priorities, and scope. Conversations include balancing earned revenue opportunities with commitments already made to programs. Concern was expressed that the current mission may be too broad to effectively guide

decision-making and said the organization needs to revisit its core services and determine how broad or narrow its focus should be.

The Soul Conference has shifted from a weekend event to a series of events throughout the summer. The updated focus will center on environmental justice.

Matt estimated that commitments and pledges from the 2026 Impact Breakfast totaled approximately \$130,000. A key goal is securing more multi-year pledges. The event sold out, feedback was very positive, and the organization exceeded expectations for a first-time event.

Congressional Directions

Susan presented a draft of how the Congressional Directions can be presented to the full Board. It was suggested that this draft could be included in the June packet and that the Board could take a few minutes at the June meeting to reflect on these statements.

The committee reviewed the 2025 Direction Statements and reflection questions, focusing on how they align with Accola's mission, values, and future direction. Matt noted that the statements reflect Accola's consistent values and priorities and help distinguish Accola from the CSJs, though he believes Accola needs greater clarity and precision in its daily work. Members discussed using the statements as part of broader conversations about clarifying the Accola's mission, vision, and values following the recent Board retreat.

The committee also discussed the importance of continuing to educate the Board about the CSJ community and values through programming, communications, and organizational storytelling. Several members reflected on how recent experiences, especially Operation Metro Surge, demonstrated Accola's commitment to diversity, equity, and responding to community needs in practical ways.

Discussion centered on how Accola should respond to "pressing" community needs, balancing immediate direct service with broader organizational goals. Members reflected on examples of grassroots response efforts during Metro Surge and considered how values-based decision-making, leadership structure, and consensus-building shape organizational action. Susan shared historical context about St. Joseph's House evolving into Hope Community, illustrating how meaningful initiatives can grow organically over time.

The group discussed how to better share the Accola's stories and connect them to clarifying its mission and vision. These stories can help guide programming and future work. Steve reflected on the Sisters' strong sense of community and concern for real-world needs. He stressed the importance of preserving Accola's unique spiritual heritage rather than becoming just another secular nonprofit. Matt highlighted the Sisters' inclusive spirituality as central to the CSJ identity and asked how it developed. Susan explained that it comes from both ongoing engagement with theological thinking and lived experience. Jill suggested using the Spiritual Centering portion of each Board meeting more intentionally by reflecting on what Board members hear or learn, possibly using CSJ St. Paul YouTube videos as preparation. It was suggested that this could be tested out at the May Executive Committee meeting. Lacy emailed the CSJ St. Paul YouTube channel to the committee.

Adjournment: The committee adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lacy Sietsema, Accola