



FINAL

Accola Programs & Opportunities Committee
Monday, January 12, 2025; 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Hybrid

Attendees: Anita Duckor, CSJ-C; Karen Gervais; Steve Kenney; Colleen O'Malley, CSJ; Adele O'Sullivan, CSJ; Sandy Vargas; Anne Weyandt

Staff: Andrée Aronson; Haven Green; Matt Halley

Excused Absence: Comfort Dondo

The Accola Programs and Opportunities Committee convened online at 2:33 p.m.

Spiritual Centering: Anne led the committee in spiritual centering.

Minutes: The November minutes were presented for approval. Hearing no changes or corrections, Karen moved and Sandy seconded to approve the November minutes. Six out of seven present members voted to approve the minutes, with one member abstaining due to an excused absence.

Open Floor Discussion – Recent Events

Committee members discussed recent events in the Twin Cities regarding ICE activity. Committee members discussed ways to be involved and ways to support neighbors and community members. Observer training courses are being offered throughout Minneapolis and St. Paul. Immigrant rapid response funds are being established throughout the non-profit sector to help those directly affected by current ICE policy. Strategies are being developed locally to keep people safe. There was a discussion about legislative action and advocacy.

Both the CSJ Community and Accola have put out statements that reiterate mission and values. Matt emphasized the importance of making sure needs are met. Accola has an opportunity to advocate and find areas of strength (bringing people together, sharing information, building community, etc.). It was pointed out that Wisdom Ways is uniquely positioned to create space for community. There was a discussion about the upcoming Open House at Learning In Style School and safety protocols that are in place to protect staff and students.

The committee discussed outreach and how Accola can communicate with its donor base and partners about how current events are impacting its programs. Anne added that the Board Retreat will be at the end of February and Atum Azzahir will be facilitating a conversation about moral leadership. The committee discussed what the Province is doing during this time and what Catholic leadership has said. Haven reported that they will be hosting a ritual that will create a space for safe grieving.

Discussion Follow-Up:

1. Board Retreat
2. Next meeting: February 9, 2026

3. Matt and Haven will refine the ideas discussed at this meeting.

Adjournment: The committee adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lacy Sietsema, Accola