

Great Hearts Northern Oaks AAC Meeting Summary

September 18, 2026

Board Meeting Recap

Mr. Funes opened with a recap of the recent board meeting. Anyone who wants more detail on what is discussed at board meetings can find it on the Great Hearts Texas website.

Fischer Tract Update

After receiving approval from TXDOT, engineers and consultants surveyed the Fischer Tract land last school year. This is the piece of undeveloped land across Jones Maltsberger from the Lower School entrance. This year, a feasibility study will assess whether a multi-million-dollar capital campaign to develop the land is financially viable. Plans have not yet been finalized but include a turfed sports field, additional parking spaces, access off of 1604 and a field house with restrooms and concessions. GHTX does not intend to build another school there. Because students will not be attending across the street, the project will not receive ADA money or state funding, so donor interviews with parents and others will begin to gauge how much support is available. AAC members also floated the idea of an additional gym and an auditorium space for concerts and graduation, but traffic relief was identified as the strongest motivator for donors.

GHNO Athletic Field

The full field renovation cost \$130,000, funded through Community Investment, the Gala, and CAPX. The water bill was \$10,000 the month after the field was built. The goal was a usable, beautiful, and safe field, and the school thanked Dr. Dyke for approving the project. The field will now be zoned, with scheduled rotations for formal use and continued closure to informal play. Parent members of the AAC supported closing the field to informal play to protect the investment.

Upper School Grade Visibility Initiative

The upper school plans to open a weekly grade portal for parent access that is not a live gradebook. Parents will be able to see the assignment list with corresponding grades for each course each week, including SOW/DOI, major assessments, minor assessments, and daily work. Faculty were overwhelmingly supportive, seeing it as a way to strengthen the partnership among teachers, parents, and the student support team. The portal is expected to open sometime in Quarter 2, though no date has been given. The grading practices are already in place, and the school is validating technical readiness, including PowerSchool, permissions, and the parent experience. The hope is that this will reduce communication about uncertain grades and increase conversations about student habits. The group also discussed which day of the week the portal should open. Monday through Thursday all seemed viable, with a stronger preference for later in the week, but avoiding Friday.

Lower School Lyceum Structure

The school is focused on math growth as it works to recover from a pre-COVID slump seen across the state. In kindergarten through 2nd grade, teachers will receive resources to identify scholars who are struggling to acquire or maintain math skills. In 3rd through 6th grade, teachers will lead lessons first, and students will then use the IXL program for additional drill and practice. The key message for parents is that IXL is not computer-based instruction used to replace any in-person teaching. It is simply a way to build skills through drills and repeated exposure to concepts. Lower school conferences are a good opportunity to explain this to parents before it begins, and parents will also be shown how to use the program at home, logging in through Clever first and then IXL.

Latin in Lower School

The school is considering introducing Latin in kindergarten through 2nd grade, replacing Spanish. A curriculum has been identified that is already succeeding in 3rd and 4th grade and partially used in 5th, and the curriculum includes K-2 components. Parent members expressed support. Their reasons included that Latin's unchanging structure gives students a foundation for learning other languages, that dissecting words builds depth of inquiry, and that an earlier and more consistent K-8 sequence might encourage more high school students to continue with Latin. It also fits the school's identity as a classical school studying the Western tradition. Anecdotes shared included scholars using Latin at home, in jokes with friends during recess, and on family vacations or trips to places that have Latin inscribed on buildings. It was noted that Great Hearts Irving already teaches Latin in K-2. The consideration is for the 2027-2028 school year.

Traffic Concerns

Parents are waiting in line longer in both the morning and afternoon, and members feel enforcement is not being carried out so that the procedures work as designed. They asked that current policies be enforced before the plan is changed or restructured and requested more officers at different points along the road. Specific problems included people forcing their way out of neighborhood entrances and side roads, church lot exit cars struggling to merge into the line, and the church lot failing as a holding lot because of cars lined up along Jones Malsberger.

The school pointed out that enrollment size has not changed, and that it has the fewest new families ever because of sibling enrollment. The change is in the surroundings and how people are using them, since Jones Maltsberger has physical space for roadside parking and the Autry Pond neighborhood has filled with houses. Mixing residents with school traffic is raising the "emotional temperature" on the road. SAPD and the city previously encouraged the school to close the campus. Next steps are to ask SAPD for support on Jones Maltsberger and to use the upper and lower school newsletters to explain how parents can and should call 311 to report roadside parking to the local police substation.

Next Meeting: November 6

Traffic updates will be on the agenda, and other topics will be identified closer to the date.