

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2013, 6:30 p.m.
Room 207

1. Call to Order and Prayer

Members in attendance: Lisa Lesjak, Lauren Beckmann, Jane Connell, Laura Maly, Matt Hietpas, Marcia Velde, Kristen Reynolds, Molly Gallagher, John Dulmes, Kelly Schmidt, Marion Gottschalk, and Tom Dean

Members absent: Fr. Dennis Dirkx and Fr. Kevin McManaman

Guest: Jacob Hanson

2. Guest Comments

No guest comments were provided. But, the newest member of the SAB was introduced.

3. Parish/Pastor Report

Lauren said that she has something to share from Fr. Dennis during the discussion about the State of the School meeting later during this meeting.

4. Principal's Report – Lauren Beckmann

Lauren provided a status report on three issues. The first issue is the Safety Plan. It is currently in draft form and is almost ready for the SAB to have the first official reading at the November meeting. Some critical components of the plan include the following issues:

- The staff had a full day of training in August. This included training in CPR and using the AED.
- The school implemented a new visitor badge system this year and it is being utilized in a cooperative manner.
- Classroom teachers have been informally conducting lockdown drills. Lauren will soon stop by each class to observe how they are doing this. The State mandates that schools perform formal lockdown drills twice a year. These will occur later in the school year. The students are adjusting to these drills. They are being given information about them in an age-appropriate manner.
- All of the necessary supplies for the evacuation bags have arrived and they are ready to be assembled. These bags will include such items as a class

roster, parent contact information, and medical kits. Teachers will be allowed to add some comfort items, such as books to read.

- The automatic phone system was recently installed. It was tested this week with a message for families.

Some future safety issues include installing cameras at doors and in hallways, installing an electronic card access system at entrances, and improving the PA system so announcements can be heard in the hallways and outside. Bill Brousseau is currently investigating our options for the cameras and card access system. One idea that may not be able to be implemented due to fire code restrictions is to remodel the main office so that when you walk up the stairs, you automatically enter the office.

The Parish finance committee has requested the school spend some previously donated estate funds totaling around \$45,000. We will see how much can be accomplished with that amount of money.

The second issue is the Nutrition Policy, which includes a low sugar policy. After a few quiet weeks, some concerns from parents arose. There has been some misunderstanding about the policy development process. We need to do a better job of explaining the process, where it came from and the research behind it. There is a perception that birthday treats are not allowed and as a result, many parents and students are sad. Matt suggested a compromise that would allow treats to be share with the class at 2:45 p.m. Another concern mentioned is the loss of chocolate milk at lunch. Milk sales from cold lunch students have gone down from 82% to 54% since the removal of chocolate milk. Students seem to be drinking juice boxes instead. One other concern is the inconsistency between our policy of the lunch options offered by Taher, which included such things as French toast and syrup. Lauren said that has been removed from the menu. There was a survey added to Family Matters that asked parents how much more they would be willing to spend on a healthier lunch option, zero, \$.50, or a \$1.00. As of the time of the meeting, 24/38 responses voted for \$1.00, 7/38 voted for \$.50 and 7/38 voted for zero.

The third issue is the Bring Your Own Device Policy. It is going very smoothly. All middle school students are certified to use a device, whether they have their own or not. There has been a gradual use of these devices. Only a few students do not have a device and it seems to be a choice made for reasons other than economic. It does not appear to be an equity issue.

5. Committee Reports

A. Technology Committee – Marion Gottschalk

She and her committee members are trying to agree on a meeting time. Marion is willing to meet early on alternate months but would prefer a later time because she works full-time outside the home. She met with Laurie Yingling for about an hour to find out what happened on the committee last year.

B. Education and Formation Committee – Kelly Schmidt

Her committee met for the first time last week. They discussed the Dramatic Reading event that will be held at Boswell Books on Saturday, December 14th. They will have a giving tree, whereby families can donate a book to St. Robert's library.

They also discussed the differences between classroom ambassadors and room parents. Home and School is taking over what used to be considered host families. Now, there is one parent per grade level that helps new families as a classroom ambassador. The room parents help teachers, set up party schedules, etc. This committee is contemplating establishing another person, one per grade, to help enhance communication between the school and families. They may have quarterly social gatherings to assist with this process. They have a marketing goal in mind, one that would have this core group of people to help spread the word about issues, and also would serve as community builders around child development issues. Karen Parr will solicit parents to be on this team.

Kelly also mentioned that this committee should try to write some grants and she has friend that is a professional grant writer that will help her.

C. Policy Committee – Kristin Reynolds

The allergy action plan needs a subcommittee to address this issue. Kristen has read the plan, but some improvements would help with the flow of procedures. Possibly some people with medical backgrounds and/or family members with children with severe allergies could join the subcommittee. We are required to maintain the Archdiocese's accommodation plan, but we need to write our own policy.

D. Budget and Finance Committee – Tom Dean

The budget process will start soon, after enrollment projections and salary estimates are done.

E. Environment Committee – John Dulmes

John said he will contact Bill Brousseau tomorrow about the camera and card access issues. He is also in the process of obtaining estimates for an enclosure for the dumpsters.

6. Development Committee – Marcia Velde

This committee has two main responsibilities. The first is the Annual Fund campaign which has a budgeted goal of \$200,000 that goes toward the operating expenses of the school. The second is alumni development, the building and maintaining of relationships with our graduates. There will be a kick-off party for the Annual Fund in November. Prior to that, a solicitation letter will be mailed to donors. Right after that, the non-parent donors will be contacted. We strive to get 100% parent participation, in whatever dollar amount is possible. Last year we had less than 50% participation, though. Previous donors are another group that is contacted heavily. The alumni are contacted 10 years after they have graduated, when they are 24 years old, and hopefully, done with college and settled in a career. This committee is having trouble finding past graduates. They are using Facebook, and will consider using LinkedIn, as was suggested by Tom. Parent participation is crucial and needs to improve. The leadership at the school, both the School Advisory Board and the Home and School Association Board, needs to set the example by participating at 100%. Lisa handed out our giving history and a pledge form. We were asked to either complete them tonight or have them ready by the November meeting. This will enable them to put our names on a board at the Kick-off party to encourage others to give.

Lisa is working on getting the Donate Now button working on our website by November 1st. Also, we need a way for people to update their contact information online, too.

7. Marketing and Recruitment Committee – Molly Gallagher

This committee met last week. They see a need to increase communication. Family Matters serves a certain segment of the population, but with not everyone reads it. They decided to put up signs or banners at the doors with important information for parents.

Matt will be the first guest writer for the Principal's Pen column this Friday. He will explain the upcoming State of the School meeting and explain why it is important for parents to attend.

This committee wants to create an elevator speech for parents to use when asked why they send their children to St. Robert. Betsy Wyatt works at Cramer Krasselt and one of their branding experts agreed to help us pro bono. This person will solicit information from 8 staff members and 8 parents about the good things about St. Robert. This information should be ready to develop a new marketing strategy for Open House in January.

Our school's web site needs to be found easily when people search the internet. We may need to purchase key search terms that help our school be found when people are searching, especially around key times of the year, when people are investigating school options.

State of the School Meeting

We need to explain to parents to parents the who, what, and how of what we do, that we do not govern the school, but merely advise the principal. We need to encourage parents to join the various committees at any time. Matt will introduce the people who serve on the SAB via the issues they oversee. Some examples include:

- Ask Us Why – Marketing and Recruitment Committee
- Nutrition Policy – Policy Committee
- Playground gates – Environment Committee
- Enrichment activities – Education and Formation Committee
- BYOD and other computer technology – Technology Committee

The tentative agenda will go as follows:

- A. Matt will start the meeting.
- B. Fr. Dennis will provide the prayer.
- C. Lauren will give an update on academic issues, such as common core standards, how the report card system will work, curriculum mapping, and will briefly introduce the faculty.
- D. Fr. Dennis will present his information about the Parish.
- E. Kristin will discuss the new Nutrition Policy, focusing on the positive outcomes.
- F. Bob Stelter will discuss the Safety Plan status.
- G. Home and School Association will have a few minutes to talk about their organization and its leadership.
- H. Maybe play some uplifting music at the end.

Molly has volunteered to coordinate the refreshments, both beverages and dry snacks, for the meeting and the other SAB members will reimburse her at the November meeting. Kristin volunteered to obtain a veggie platter from Beans and Barley and the members will reimburse her, too. In the past, much of the food brought by members has gone uneaten. Therefore, the amount of food will be reduced for this meeting.

Lisa has volunteered to contact Fr. Dennis to encourage him to discuss the positive things that are happening in the Parish and to steer away from monetary requests at this time, which was his intention. We feel that would send the wrong message to this group of parents who are already contributors.

Matt suggested that all the SAB members send an email to every parent they know to encourage their attendance at the meeting next week in order for them to get the “big picture”.

8. Tot Lot

Some of the issues from last month will remain for another month, namely the uniform policy and the field trip payments. Two additional items will be added, the SIP and the safety plan. The upcoming Synod preparation session for the Parish, on November 3rd, was briefly discussed. Matt has graciously volunteered to attend and ensure our voices are heard. He hopes that someone else from the SAB would also agree to attend.

9. Remaining meeting dates

The SAB will continue to meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., with the exception of July, when no meeting is held. It is still undecided if there will be a meeting in December. Therefore, the remaining meeting dates are:

- November 13, 2013 – Marion will provide snacks and prayer
- December
- January 8, 2014 – Kelly will provide snacks and prayer
- February 12, 2014 – John will provide snacks and prayer
- March 12, 2014 – Kristen will provide snacks and prayer
- April 9, 2014 – Molly will provide snacks and prayer
- May 14, 2014 – Laura will provide snacks and prayer
- June 11, 2014

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jane Connell, School Advisory Board Secretary.