

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
Room 207

1. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Members in attendance: Dan Davis, Lisa Lesjak, Lauren Beckmann, Jane Connell, Laura Maly, John Dulmes, Matt Hietpas, Catherine Mercuri, Fr. Kevin McManaman, Marcia Velde, and Peter Christenson

Members absent: Fr. Dennis Dirkx, Liz Haas and Nancy Knight

2. Guest Comments

There were no guest comments at this meeting.

3. Feedback on Annual Meeting

Lauren received a few emails the day after the meeting stating that they felt it was a worthwhile meeting, and they were complimentary of Fr. Dennis' presentation. It was suggested that we need to advertise the meeting earlier next year in order to improve parental attendance. One suggestion was to include an announcement of the meeting in the summer registration packet. Lisa pointed out that the meeting has been on the school online calendar since May. Hopefully, as parents get used to using the online calendar, they will be made aware of this meeting far enough in advance so as to make it a priority and attend.

There was a request to make the sixth grade video available for parents to view on our website or on YouTube. Lauren explained this may not be possible right now because the video may be used by students at Marquette University and improved upon before it is released. Maybe this video could be used as a lure to encourage parental attendance.

There was another suggestion posed. This one concerned the information about our Google Domain. Is it possible to share the information presented with parents in another format, especially for those parents who didn't attend either Parent Preview Night or the Stakeholders' Meeting? It was suggested to check Google to see if they have some tutorials available that explain these issues, as well as cloud computing.

4. Playground Supervision

John announced that he is in the process of obtaining some quotes for fencing and/or gates for the three driveway entrances to the playground. Lauren stated that she was satisfied with the response from staff concerning the

incident with the man across the street from the school last week. She did, however, state that in the future, students will immediately be brought back into the school if there is ever a similar incident.

5. Third Reading – Restricted Fund Use Policy

Catherine is in the process of dividing this policy into two parts and will present that information at a future meeting.

6. Tuition Policy Review and other Policy Work

Currently, there is a policy that states any student who withdraws from St. Robert after July 1 and before the start of the school year, is responsible for paying the first quarter's tuition. It was stated that a policy is created to solve a problem. Is there really a problem with a high number of students withdrawing during this time period? Are we really incurring significant costs for these students? Catherine estimated that workbooks cost about \$50 per student. Are we really at risk of collapsing a class down from two teachers to one? A few years ago, there was a class where this was an issue, but not anymore. Are we possibly creating more ill will with the wider community as a result of this policy?

It was mentioned that the registration fees are not refundable. With the new registration fee policy, the later a student registers, the higher the fee, plus less of it applies to tuition, until after July 1st when none of it applies to tuition and all of it applies to the registration fee. Is this enough to offset any costs incurred when planning for the upcoming school year? Is this penalty even collectable? After much discussion, the SAB felt we should change the tuition policy to remove the penalty for students who withdraw after July 1st but before the start of the school year. In addition, the SAB agreed that once a student starts a quarter of the school year, they are responsible for the tuition for that quarter. Matt will rewrite the policy with these changes and it will be discussed at the next meeting in January.

7. New Policies

Lauren stated that the staff drafted a new policy for student use of the Google Apps for Education domain and shared this with the SAB. It listed the basic guidelines for students to follow, such as appropriate uses, privacy issues, proper procedures, and possible consequences for misuse of the domain. It was clarified that the domain is restricted to the users assigned by the school, the teachers and students at St. Robert. No one else can send emails to the users of the domain, for example. Students were informed of the new guidelines last week. Students in grades 4-8 are affected by these guidelines. Any suggestions for changes to the guidelines should be sent to Lauren.

8. Enrollment and Development Status

In terms of development, more money has come in since the invitations to the Annual Fund party were mailed. Remember, there is an incentive to contribute to the fund, or make a pledge to the fund, at or before the party. Lisa has some prizes to award for some of these people. A mixed group of parents and non-parents totaling about 80 people have responded to attend the party, including a large number of new parents. In the past, this party has generated about \$30,000 in contributions and/or pledges.

Enrollment is currently at 356 students. There is the possibility that another student from Michigan may enroll soon.

9. 2013-14 Budget Process

Catherine stated that she will need to break out the yearly budget into monthly numbers. More people are choosing to pay their tuition on the 10 month plan which means that the money is coming in at a slower pace than in the past. Catherine will develop tuition projections for next year. A small group of people, namely Catherine, Lauren, Lisa, Karen Raap and Jim Pittlekow, will meet next week Tuesday and continue to meet monthly to draft the budget. The first draft of the budget will be available in February and the budget should be approved in March.

This is Catherine's last year of her three-year term as Budget Chair on the SAB. A replacement needs to be recruited soon, so some job shadowing can take place. Lisa mentioned that we still need to find a chair for this year for the Marketing and Recruitment Committee. The work of this committee is getting done, but leadership is still needed.

10. Principal's Topics

Results of Technology Proposal for Personal Devices

Lauren said we are waiting for the Restricted Funds Policy to be developed in order to move forward. Home and School has already agreed to pay \$13,000 of the \$18,000 estimated cost to purchase ipads for the teachers in the building. The issue of funding the cost of ipads for the individual middle school students was mentioned. This needs to be decided soon because it will affect the budget for next year. After much discussion, the SAB agreed that Lauren should proceed with purchasing the ipads for the teachers right now, instead of waiting for the Restricted Funds Policy. We will lose at least three months of hands-on learning time for the teachers if we wait. The sooner they get started, the better prepared they will be for next school year when the students will have ipads, too.

Parent Survey

We are planning to use the same survey we have used for the past five years, with the exception of the Hot Topics section, in order to track results. The SAB felt it was important to ask parents about their understanding of the technology their children are using at school. Lauren said we need to find out how many families have wireless internet access at home in order to move forward with the mobile device initiative. The topic of ipad usage by middle school students should be included. We need to ask parents how they would like to pay for the plan of implementing 1-to-1 mobile devices for students. Another suggestion was to inquire if parents have noticed an increase in the amount of time their children are reading at home. We want to ask parents if they think their child is being challenged to his/her ability and is the school moving toward academic rigor and excellence. After going through the past list of Hot Topics, it was decided to remove the question about Bullying prevention initiatives. We will also change the question about inclusion to a personalized learning model. The remaining Hot Topics questions were left as is.

The teachers will also take the survey this year in order to get their input. Lisa will formulate a question concerning whether the current communication methods are working. Education and Formation committee uses the results of the parent survey to guide their agenda. They are currently working on after school enrichment/summer school programs, library acquisitions and a parent ambassador program as well as Principal Coffee topics.

11. SAB Calendar

The upcoming events on the SAB calendar were reviewed.

12. Other Topics

Matt Hietpas mentioned that we have not yet responded as a board to a parent guest who raised two issues at the May 2012 meeting (see prior minutes). Dan Davis will contact that parent personally to check if there are ongoing concerns and any open issues should be dealt with as a future item agenda by the board.

Matt also noted that some teachers feel they don't have a voice at the board level. The SAB used to have a teacher representative and then that moved to a monthly rotating teacher participating. However, with new curriculum demands there has not been any teacher representative on the board in several years. The SAB is open to ideas about how to best communicate with the teachers. Lauren will pass that information on at the next staff meeting, and she also suggested the possibility of a SAB member attending staff meetings perhaps quarterly and updating the teachers directly.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Catherine Mercuri, Budget Committee Chair and Jane
Connell, School Advisory Board Secretary.