

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2015, 6:30 p.m.
Room 207

1. Call to Order and Prayer

Members in attendance: Lauren Beckmann, Tom Dean, Matt Hietpas, Lisa Lesjak, Kelly Schmidt, Marcia Velde, Mariann Willing, Kathy Wyatt, John Dulmes and Kristen Reynolds

Members absent: Laura Maly, Fr. Dennis Dirkx, Molly Gallagher and Soley Somma

Guest attending: Margy Cain and Barb Dietz

2. Guest Comments – none

3. SAB Membership

There will be three vacancies on the SAB next year (starting August 2015) due to the departures of Matt Hietpas (Chairman) and John Dulmes (Environment Committee Chair), who have finished their terms and Molly Gallagher (Marketing and Recruitment Committee Chair). We should think of possible candidates that we can reach out to. If anyone is interested in any of these positions please contact Matt, John or Molly.

4. Parish/Pastor Report

No updates at this time

5. Principal's Report

For first through 5th grade we had nine teachers, but have accepted the resignation of one teacher and will not be hiring a replacement. Since we have eight teachers for the upcoming school year we are taking a look at how we will structure the teachers and have come up with some ideas, but will continue to work on this.

Prior to spring break Lauren and the teachers met and looked at moving forward with cutting the budget. They continue to review different ways to make changes to the current classroom models for Kindergarten through 5th grade. What might it look like for the near future? They have taken a look at three to four different options and will continue to work on this topic. Through this process there have been a lot of emotions from the staff in regards to what is happening. Lauren is trying to help the teachers work through this.

6. Tuition letter and enrollment update

a. Tuition letter -

Tom and Lauren presented to the board a draft of the tuition letter they put together. The board took some time to review it and provided their feedback. Tom will make some changes and send it out for our review and comments no later than tomorrow. The finalized letter will be sent via mail to the families of SRS this Friday, April 7th. Given the change in the tuition structure it was decided we would hold a school wide meeting to discuss the change and offer parents the opportunity for comment. We will be scheduling two “Hear it Here” meeting options: Tuesday, April 28th in the morning and Thursday, April 30th in the evening.

b. Enrollment update –

Lisa provided us with an update of the current enrollment projecting for the 2015-2016 school year. As of April 23, 2015 there are 262 registered, but with the commitment of the probable, incomplete, verbal and non-registered the enrollment would be at 303 students. We have 21 students registered for junior kindergarten, leaving one opening available before we start a waiting list. Taking a look at the enrollment numbers for the incoming first, second and third grade classes we are really too small for two classrooms each; however it’s too late to make any creative changes. We will need to be more creative for the 2016-2017 school year and provide advance communication of any changes.

With the presentation of the current enrollment figures an in-depth discussion ensued on a number of topics.

Topic one: classroom model change. Matt mentioned that as we work on future models we can’t keep playing games of how many students we will have each year. Instead let’s build our models on 300 students per year. Barb Dietz (5th grade teacher) provided comment that we are state of the art and cutting edge with our current class structure, but when we make changes (ex. 3 teachers across 2 classrooms) it takes away from what we achieved in the past four years. The fifth grade has been far more specialized for the past couple of years. Barb teaches three subjects while Katie teaches the other two subjects. It’s been advantages not only to the teachers, but the students to offer this specialization. When each teacher is able to focus on a smaller number of subjects it enables them to provide a deeper, well rounded curriculum for the students. We are able to nail everything when you have fewer subjects to focus on. It would be difficult to go from two teachers to one. We have worked so hard on becoming specialized that to switch the current model would take time for the teachers to factor in the additional subjects. Lauren mentioned that at the elementary level it would be difficult to specialize due to the current curriculum structure. It was also mentioned that it is not an easy task to switch gears between classes. For example, teaching third grade math to teaching fourth grade math. At

this time we have focused the model changes around the elementary level, but at some point the middle school will need to be included in these discussions. For the 2016-2017 school year the currently single section fifth grade class will move into sixth grade. It was also mentioned that classroom size does make a difference with learning; smaller class sizes of students have a better chance.

Topic two: focus group. It was mentioned that the teachers feel that a focus group is really important to help with gauging what we really need to do for future models. A question was raised as to the number of people we envision to participate in the focus group. This question would best be answered once the planning process begins.

Topic three: school tuition and classroom sizes. Lisa noted that during the school tours prospective families always ask about the size of the classrooms. However, more so now than years ago the cost of tuition has become an important question. With the economy families are taking a closer look at this. In our past discussions we have provided various different tuition ideas, but the one variable that remains, we need to be cautious in what we do. If we raise our tuition too high how many current and prospective families will we lose to other schools? Tom mentioned that our overriding issue is that the church is down from \$1million in contributions to \$700,000. Older parishioners are “leaving” and with new families the donations are down. It takes about 10 new families to replace one elder parishioner who is “leaving”. Taking a look at the school enrollment Lisa inquired as to what the magic split number would be to have two classroom sizes say for example, junior kindergarten. Tom mentioned that if we are able to pull kids into other classes that would tip the scale and we could afford another half teacher for junior kindergarten.

7. Committee Reports

a. Development Committee

Letters will be going out shortly to those who have not made a donation to the Annual Fund.

b. Policy Committee

Per the archdiocese request, we are in the process of making revisions to the allergy policy.

c. Environment Committee (updated provided via email)

The Environment and Building & Grounds Committee is hoping to replace our very old, metal folding chairs (used for events in the gym and Reilly Hall) with new steel-framed composite stacking chairs. We need 350 chairs and storage dollies, which would cost about \$17,000. We have sold 144 to date (44 at the Emerald Auction and 100 from the generous donation of \$5,000 from the SR Athletic Association). At \$50 each, we are \$10,300 short. If anyone would like

to donate/purchase, please submit a check to Lisa Lesjak payable to the Home and School Association. Thanks to Marcia Velde for “buying” a chair during the SAB meeting.

d. Marketing and Recruitment Committee

We have an ad in the First Stage Theatre program and a monthly ad for one year in the North Point Magazine. The Shorewood Today Magazine is currently being revamped and we are hoping to get an ad in there.

e. Education and Formation Committee

The committee has been working with the Marketing and Recruitment Committee. They have been their hands, legs and ears.

8. Parent Survey – Lisa Lesjak

Lisa needs to dig into Survey Monkey and make some edits. Matt was wondering if we need to put a survey out this year. If we do not need to make dramatic changes we are okay to do the survey this year. It was mentioned that if the survey goes out in May or later we could input a question, “did you attend the Hear It Here meeting”. No new deadlines were provided for the survey.

9. 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. Therefore, the meeting dates are:

- May 13, 2015 – John will provide the snack and prayer
- June 10, 2015 – Tom will provide the snack and prayer

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mariann Willing, School Advisory Board Secretary.