

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
Room 207

1. Call to Order and Prayer – Laura Maly and Lisa Lesjak

Members in attendance: Lisa Lesjak, Lauren Beckmann, Jane Connell, Liz Haas, Catherine Mercuri, Peter Christenson, Dan Davis, Trish Ognar, Laura Maly, Nancy Knight and Marcia Velde

Members absent: Michele Weinschrott, Fr. Kevin McManaman, Karen Hunt and Fr. Dennis Dirkx

Guest: Stacy VanAble

2. Pastor's Report – Fr. Dennis Dirkx

No report due to Fr. Dennis' absence.

3. Principal's Report – Lauren Beckmann

Teacher contracts were sent to the staff for renewal on April 2nd. Lauren attached a lengthy cover letter this year that explained the upcoming work of the compensation committee and what to expect in the next 3-5 years. It was pointed out that these changes would require adequate funding and parish approval in order to be implemented. She also attached an updated job description, which is done every few years. The Office of Schools has recommended that technology proficiency be included in the job descriptions, so that was included. The staff also received a copy of the revised salary scale and an explanation of expectations for the staff for the upcoming school year, including information about 21st century skills, arts initiative and reading/language arts curriculum. Staff members were given an opportunity to complete a form and submit it to Lauren to address their concerns. Three questions were asked on that form, including what part is unclear, any compensation concerns, and anything else that should be researched. Lauren received about 18 forms to peruse.

In the area of professional development, St. Robert will be moving in a different direction next year instead of completing year two of Reading/Language Arts in-services. The Office of Schools has said that all schools must develop a plan for professional development which is based upon their school plan. St. Robert is already doing this with their imbedded professional development. We should move in the direction of having Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which is basically having staff members become the professionals and teach each other. St. Robert is going to implement a "book club" model. Staff members will choose from among

pre-selected books to present. Lauren will provide them with incentives to meet and work over the summer, such as scrip cards at Alterra. Once they present their material to the staff, then they will be awarded some sort of small monetary gift from the restricted funds account, such as \$100. Jane Marko, a consultant already working with St. Robert, will assist any group that wants help.

As a follow-up to the Parent Survey, the faculty will respond to the new school rules. They will create a list of why those rules are helpful, sort of a “Top 10” list.

Lauren reviewed some goals from our Long Range Plan that the SAB should address. The SAB and the faculty should review the mission statement annually. We will have a structured conversation about that document at our meeting next month. We said we would develop guidelines for handling our restricted funds. The Finance and Development committees will work on that. The ad hoc compensation committee has been meeting and will develop a plan soon. Stacy VanAble, a graduate student working with Lauren, has volunteered to develop the rough draft of a crisis plan as her practicum project. She has over 20 years of experience working in a hospital environment and as a PE teacher. This gives her some unique perspectives on dealing with emergencies. The fire alarm system will be installed this summer. The Education and Formation committee will develop an acquisition plan for library materials. There needs to be a review of administrative salaries for Lauren. She should be compensated accordingly for her qualifications, experience, and work output. And, finally, the ITBS results just arrived and the individual results were mailed home to families today. There will be some sessions for parents to learn about how to interpret the scores of the test scheduled after school in the near future so teachers can be present.

4. Committee Reports

- Education and Formation – Liz Haas

The pocket garden will stay on the north fence of the playground for another year until a plan can be developed for placing the garden on the west side of the school. They want to wait and do it correctly, instead of rushing to do it this year. The Green Week volunteers are still deciding what to implement this year for Green Week, which is next week. Middle school students will be surveyed about possible options for their music elective. Some possible choices include: guitar, dance, bells, Orff instruments, etc. It was suggested that some sort of intermediate level of band be made available because combining the 6th-8th graders in the same level of band is making it difficult to engage kids when there is such a wide disparity of ability.

Some other topics discussed concerning music included: improving the school liturgy, adding a music appreciation class, creating an auditioning choir, and possibly adding a swing choir or “Glee” type of class. And, finally, the faculty will follow-up on the topic from the last Principal coffee, which was sex education.

- Technology Committee – Peter Christenson

They are working on the financial aspect of the ipad pilot program for next year. They are hoping to submit a proposal to Home and School for 8 ipads for the younger grades and enough for a 1-to-1 ratio for middle school students. It was mentioned that in order for this technology to be fully utilized, it needs to be in the hands of the teachers first, which is an added expense. There are two ipads in rotation from the library right now. Some students bring their own from home, too.

- Budget – Catherine Mercuri

She is working on developing a three year forecast. A letter to parents will go out tomorrow about the tuition increase for next year, including the reasons for the increase, as well as an explanation of how teachers will be sharing that burden.

- Marketing and Recruitment Committees – Lisa Lesjak and Trish Ognar

The new registration fee schedule was a big success and motivated families to register in a timely manner. There is a new surge of interest in the school right now. Another issue of *Blueprint* should be published in time for the Parish fair in June. And, they are continuing to send t-shirts to new families when they register. The publicity and good will is well worth the cost.

- Environment – Dan Davis

The new fire alarm system will be installed this summer. Because of the increased speed at fire detection with this new system, teachers will be allowed to hang more student work in the hallways and classrooms. Other improvements were presented to the parish council this past Monday. They need some volunteers to maintain the gardens on the west side of the school building because the current volunteers are about 75 years old. It was proposed that we should have two weekends per year where families come together as a community building event and help with that sort of work.

- Development – Marcia Velde and Lisa Lesjak

They will meet tomorrow. Donations to the Annual Fund have been flat lately, but there will be a big push during the coming months to finish strong before the end of the fiscal year in June.

The Parish Finance Committee met this week and decided that families who don't meet their stewardship commitment to the parish will be charged non-parishioner tuition. Some families, about 7-12 of them, have been identified as being in jeopardy of losing their parishioner tuition discount if they haven't made any contributions during 2011 and haven't submitted a pledge for 2012. Fr. Dennis is in the process of contacting these families. The next step after that is sending a letter from the school explaining their new tuition category for next year.

- Policy – Michele Weinschrott

No report due to Michele's absence.

5. Parish Council – Nancy Knight

Next Tuesday night, there will be a meeting for parishioners to offer their input on restructuring the parish. A rough draft has been developed and the parish is looking for ideas from parishioners as how to further develop this document. You can view this document by going to the parish box on the St. Robert home page or by going to the parish council section. They will place a reminder in the next issue of Family Matters about this meeting in order to encourage more people to attend. They will use the advertisement from the church bulletin.

6. Home and School – Karen Hunt

No report due to Karen's absence.

7. Discussion Topic – Principal Evaluation Tool

The SAB will conduct the evaluation of the principal before the end of April by asking SAB members and staff members to complete a survey online. The results will be compiled by Laura and Dan and shared with Fr. Dennis, who will then discuss them with Lauren. Next year, this process should take place in January, prior to awarding Lauren another contract, which should be done by March 1st, because teachers need to know who their principal is before they agree to their contract offers. Laura and Dan will also discuss with Fr. Dennis the need to officially offer Lauren a contract along with

adequate compensation. Lisa said she will send the email link with the survey information tomorrow.

8. Discussion Topic – Election of new SAB members

Three members will be rolling off of the board this year, Laura, Trish and Michele. Trish volunteered to revise the application/invitation for people to apply to serve on the board. Dan hinted that he would be willing to be the chair for next year and he has someone in mind to take over for Environment. Laura and Lisa will ask Home and School to allow serving on the SAB to fulfill both volunteer requirements due to the large amount of time needed for complete participation on the board and the surplus of volunteers due to the increase in enrollment and the changes to various volunteer activities.

9. New Business – Uniform Policy

A small committee has met to discuss changes to the uniform policy. They should have the revisions done by the next meeting, so there can be two readings completed before the end of the year. This will enable the changes to take effect in time for the upcoming school year.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

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