

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2014, 6:30 p.m.
Room 207

1. Call to Order and Prayer

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

Members absent: Fr. Dennis Dirkx, Fr. Kevin McManaman, and Marion Gottschalk

Guest: Mariann Willing

2. Guest Comments

No guest comments were provided.

3. Parish/Pastor Report

No report was provided.

4. Committee Reports/Discernment

a. Technology

This committee has been working on a technology plan and is making progress toward developing a master plan google document that contains a vision, goals, inventory, network map, expenses and cost analysis. They should be ready to present it in the fall. Then decisions will need to be made about purchasing and faculty professional development in conjunction with Laurie Yingling.

A question was raised about the success of the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. Mrs. Beckmann said that an instructional transformation of this magnitude is expected to be a bit messy. Lesson plans had not been designed to anticipate or incorporate these devices. We have work to do in aligning our units of instruction with the new technologies. The program has gone well from the management side (safety, responsibility), however parents need support in establishing home routines that find a balance between using devices as both tools and toys.

b. Education and Formation – Kelly Schmidt

They did not have a meeting in May, but here is a summary of their issues. They are following up with the graduating 8th graders from last year via phone calls. So far, only three people responded to the survey and they would like more data. There are no new developments in the library other than a meeting was held to plan to create an acquisition policy. The outdoor garden is on hold. The *Coffee with the Principal* sessions have been successful, especially the last one on school finances. It was suggested that these sessions also be offered in the evening for working parents, especially for major topics, like finances. The Common Core State Standards is an excellent topic for next year's sessions. We need to explain what it is and how it is used at St. Robert.

The committee may need to develop a plan for evaluating the progress and success of their initiatives. Their basic mission is to support the educational program of the school. They need to find a way to arm the parents with more accurate information. Kelly is willing to continue as chair of this committee.

c. Environment – John Dulmes

Security upgrades to the doors and video surveillance cameras are moving forward. They have been approved by the Parish, but are now waiting for approval from the Archdiocese. As soon as that happens, they will be installed. Hopefully, this will be taken care of this summer.

In addition, we need to make sure there is an active Parish Grounds Committee at the Parish. Dan Davis left a year ago and now Patrick O'Loughlin has volunteered to take on this responsibility after he finishes his term on the Athletic Board.

d. Finance – Tom Dean

There are no new issues to discuss after the lengthy discussions held during previous meetings. Tom and Lauren met with Fr. Mike Hermes from Bishop Ward High School in Kansas City, Kansas today to gain his insights into raising money as he has been uniquely successful in this area. He suggested that we hire a professional grant writer on a per-application basis to write grants. Kelly said that her committee would pursue this task. It would help for us to compartmentalize the budget first, so it will be easier to ask for money to assist with very specific areas, such as the performing arts. He toured our school and was impressed with our instructional model. He inquired as to our willingness for a follow-up visit for assistance in thinking through the physical design of a new school they will be building in about three years.

e. Policy – Kristen Reynolds

Two major policies were written this year, the Wellness Policy and the Allergy Policy. But, we need to assess how well these were implemented. It is one thing to write the policies, but it is another thing to see if they are working. One question that still remains concerns the epi pens. Will the school provide them, or will parents continue to do so? If the school provides them, how many do we need? How much will they cost? Where will they be stored? Is it possible to get them donated by Children's Hospital or a drug company? They will meet this summer to decide these issues. In regards to the lunch program, they will investigate alternate ways to fund the more expensive lunch options.

f. Marketing – Molly Gallagher

There have been many other people that have helped this committee throughout the school year. When the year started, they had two main goals. The first goal was to improve communication methods with both parents and the community at large. This was certainly achieved through a variety of methods. The second goal was the new marketing campaign, Life Smart. This new campaign will utilize radio spots, lawn signs, 4,500 mailed postcards, new posters around our campus, and a video posted on our website. They also developed a more consistent way to follow-up with families that have shown an interest in St. Robert. They made personal phone calls that were very effective in getting a few students to enroll, as well as to convey a sense of friendliness and concern from our school. Next year, they plan to redesign the website and to advertise in the *First Stage* brochure. She contacted Rosemary Murphy to let her know that they will market the school and parish together. They will place an article in the *Blue Print* that will explain how this new campaign was developed. And, finally, Molly has agreed to continue as chair.

g. Development – Marcie Velde

This committee has been trying to meet the goal of raising money, but they are also trying to develop and maintain friendships and relationships. Some graduating 8th graders can sometimes leave here with unhappy feelings and this can carry over to the future. They are trying to change that mindset. They gave each graduate a gift for their upcoming class trip. They requested the students to “friend” St. Robert on Facebook and to follow Lisa on Twitter after they graduate. Some of the students donated to the Annual Fund already. They were instructed to use their own money, not to ask their parents for money.

Most people on this committee do not have students enrolled at St. Robert anymore and they feel they need more current parents to serve on the committee. They need to address bequests in the future. Also, they feel

that it would be helpful if they had access to the database so Lisa would not be overburdened by requests to provide various lists of people to contact.

Lisa distributed the development spreadsheet. We are still short of our goal, but we are in better shape than last year. The committee will meet tomorrow to start calling past donors. Lisa is hopeful that we will meet our goal by the end of the month.

Marcia has agreed to serve another term, with the understanding that she may miss a few meetings and other people may have to sub for her.

h. Home and School Association – Laura Maly

The Emerald Auction was extremely successful, making a profit of around \$150,000, which is about a 50% increase over the past few years.

i. Pastoral Council – Kathy Wyatt

They have a meeting coming up next week. And, the new associate pastor will be moving in this weekend, one day after Fr. Kevin leaves.

j. Secretary – Jane Connell

The new secretary of the SAB was introduced. Her name is Mariann Willing.

k. Chair – Matt Hietpas

Matt summarized how the year went and stated that we started off dealing with two major policies and finished with financial issues. He raised a concern about the length of some of the SAB meetings, and asked for ways to shorten the meetings without creating severe time limits. The committee members felt it was important to discuss topics at these meetings. One suggestion for future meetings was to focus on a few pertinent topics at each meeting. Another idea was to have a few people create the agenda prior to the meeting and to try to keep the meetings to two hours.

The two open committee spots have been filled. Marcia Velde has agreed to serve another term and Mariann Willing is replacing Jane Connell.

5. Principal's Report – Lauren Beckmann

Graduation was held last night. They are trying to finish printing report cards so they can be distributed on Friday. Mrs. Beckmann provided staffing updates for

next year. Two teachers just earned their Master's Degrees: Mrs. Schumann earned one in Music and Mr. Reitman earned one in Administration. Both Mrs. Frankenberry and Mrs. Teipel are leaving, one due to retirement and the other due to a pregnancy leave. They will be replaced with two part time employees that will specialize in special education and literacy. They hope to add a math specialist in the future. Mrs. Tryba is moving to Chicago and they are looking for someone to take over the band program. Apparently, this is a coveted position because the band students are capable of playing music at a level comparable to high school students. Also, the position is .8 FTE, which is much higher than most elementary band jobs. Mrs. Staab will move down to third grade next year and be paired with Mrs. Yannett. The upcoming fourth grade will have only one class next year. Mrs. Riepenhoff is still undecided about her return because it is dependent upon her husband's employment. At the very least, she will continue to oversee the school newspaper. She may even teach a creative writing class after school.

6. Parent Survey

Lisa sent the SAB members some information about the parent survey via email yesterday. This included a comprehensive list of all comments, except those that mentioned specific teachers. She also included two versions of pie charts that Mr. Reitman created from the data.

A few general themes were discussed. The first one concerned the classroom webpages. Lauren said this issue is already being addressed. They will be updated for next year. They may decide to have one webpage for each grade level, instead of each classroom. That way, teachers can work together and use their individual strengths in the process.

A second theme dealt with grades and related topics, such as trimesters, and parent teacher conferences. Lauren said that trimesters are here to stay and are the model that other schools are beginning to adopt. But, there needs to be some sort of interim progress report so parents know how their children are doing prior to the end of 12 weeks. Also, there will be a system in place next year that will allow all parents to be able to check their children's grades online.

The culture in the building was mentioned as a third theme. A concern was raised that we may be losing our Catholic identity and becoming a school for elitists. Mrs. Riepenhoff recently held two seminars with the current sixth graders to help them understand issues around inclusion and exclusion, and the differences between public and private situations.

The survey results will be discussed in greater detail in the fall. In the meantime, Matt will send an email to all parents to let them know their results have been received and they will be analyzed and dealt with in the near future.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

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