

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2014, 6:30 p.m.
Room 207

1. Call to Order and Prayer

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

Members absent: Fr. Kevin McManaman

2. Guest Comments

No guest comments were provided.

3. Parish/Pastor Report – Fr. Dennis Dirx

Fr. Dennis stated that the Archdiocese renewed his term of office as Pastor of St. Robert and Holy Family for another six years. Fr. Kevin will be getting his own parish when his term is up in June.

The Parish Finance Committee will start working on the Parish budget for next year. At this point, we are ahead of last year in terms of contributions, but we didn't collect what we said we would collect. Nevertheless, the Parish will contribute \$160,000 to the school budget for next year. Just as an aside, he said that there are about 7000 people listed as parish members between the two parishes. But only about 20% of those people attend mass on the weekends, 600-700 people at St. Robert, and 700-800 people at Holy Family.

4. Principal's Report – Lauren Beckmann

In regards to curriculum and professional development, the focus this year has been on the writing curriculum, which is moving toward a workshop model. In K4-5th grade, the students are being taught using the highly respected Lucy Calkins Method. One of the specific features of this method is utilizing mentor text examples when writing. In middle school, the students are using the Smokey Daniels Method. The content areas are focused on teaching literacy, which is one of the fundamental elements of the common core standards. These content areas will include teaching disciplinary literacy skills, developing consistent rubrics and assessing student writing. The teachers are currently collaborating on their first comprehensive middle school learning unit of study. They are utilizing the common planning time made available by the 40 minute music classes twice a week, as well as one Wednesday meeting time per month. The topic of this first unit of study will be looking at responses to war. Next fall, there will be more

comprehensive writing units, to give the students authentic voices utilizing modern technology.

Lauren has to hire two substitute teachers. One will be for Mrs. Reipenhoff, who will probably be on bed rest for the foreseeable future until her due date in May. The other will be for Mr. Reitman, who will take a month off after the birth of his second child in spring.

Some concerns were raised about the new format used in the fourth grade combined classroom. Lauren assured us the two teachers are working very hard, planning and delivering good lessons. One of our goals is to develop our students to be flexible thinkers, to prepare them for middle school and beyond. Lauren will share the concerns with the teachers, including the possibility of holding another parent meeting.

5. Housekeeping

a. Crisis Plan

Adjustments will be made to the plan very soon.

b. Parent Survey

The Parent Survey will need to be adjusted. Some questions will be removed because they are no longer necessary, and some questions will be added. Home and School will discuss some financial questions with Lisa. Matt volunteered to look over the current topics in depth and try to decide on new questions to add. He will compare the questions to the results from last year's data. Kelly said she would help with this task. Other members of the SAB should review the survey questions and be prepared to discuss them at the February meeting.

6. Review Allergy Policy – Kristen Reynolds

There was an extensive discussion concerning this policy. Two documents were provided for the SAB. One was the Allergy Policy and the other an educational outreach document. A subcommittee worked hard to produce these documents. There are about 30 students enrolled at St. Robert with allergies, and about 10 that need epi pens. An Allergy Action Plan should be completed for each of these students. We currently have a nut free table in the cafeteria for students to use in grades K4-4th.

One of the points of the policy states that the school is allowed to stockpile epi pens. One question about these epi pens is how to pay for them. Lauren will contact a lawyer to get more information about stockpiling epi pens.

Some minor changes will be made to the plan, such as consistent wording in the titles of each section. Another change will be made to clarify that classrooms will enforce a no nut policy when a student with a nut allergy is enrolled in that classroom.

A corrected draft of this Allergy Policy will be placed in Family Matters to give parents an opportunity to respond to the policy. Remember that this policy simply codifies what is currently happening; it is not indicative of major changes. Next month, we will have the second reading of this policy.

7. Beginning Discussion of SRS Financials – Tom Dean

Tom will be meeting with the Parish on January 24th to discuss the budget. This topic will be at the top of the agenda for the SAB's February meeting. Tom produced five detailed reports and shared them with the board.

- a. Summary Financials – This includes revenue and expenses for the past three years and the current year. The only significant change is the inclusion of the estimated amount the Parish pays for items that support the school for the current year, such as utilities, estimated at \$350,000. To clarify, we do not owe this amount to the parish, but their contribution is reflected in this statement.
- b. Per Student Financials – This document divides the previous numbers on a per pupil basis.
- c. Common Sized Financials – This document presents the information as a percentage of revenue.
- d. Detailed Budget and Actual Financial Statements – This is the detailed, line item budget.
- e. Enrollment by Grade – This graph clearly illustrates the high enrollment in the upper grades and the low enrollment in the lower grades. This will be problematic as we move forward unless more students are recruited for those lower grades. Therefore, some incentives may be developed for current families to recruit students for those lower enrolled grades. Also, we may try to solicit more scholarship money to help keep families here that leave because they can no longer afford the tuition.

Tom will present this information at the next Home and School meeting. Home and School is considering a change in how they financially support the school. The centennial anniversary of the school is looming and it may present an ideal time to obtain some cash reserves to operate the school.

8. Committee Reports

a. Education and Formation Committee – Kelly Schmidt

Dramatic Reading went well. This committee is in the process of developing some more after school enrichment programs, as well as summer school opportunities.

b. Environment Committee – John Dulmes

He is still getting bids on the key access system. One company just withdrew from the process, but others are still being pursued.

c. Technology Committee – Marion Gottschalk

They are assigning specific tasks to committee members about the technology plan, especially in the areas of asset tracking, planning the budget, and looking into grants.

d. Marketing Committee – Molly Gallagher

The Open House is scheduled at the end of the month. Tour guides will write a personal note to families with their contact information and also that of Lisa's. They will try to use this open house as a relationship building tool. They will have a table dedicated to grandparents and one for alumni. The results from the focus group were shared with board members. These ideas will be joined with photographs to produce marketing materials.

e. Development Committee – Lisa Lesjak

As of December 31st, the pledged amount is \$128,027, with actual contributions totaling \$93,882. We took in about \$10,000 on the last two days of December. We are ahead of last year at this point. Lisa is pleased with the online giving process. There will not be a Holy Molly raffle this year, which should help improve contributions from current families. It was suggested that contributors should be made aware of the option of donating appreciated stocks to St. Robert. Lisa will add that to the list of options.

f. Home and School – Laura Maly

Home and School will participate in a special retreat about their financial situation, and how it may need to be restructured.

10. 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. Therefore, the remaining meeting dates are:

- 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 – Tom will provide snacks and prayer

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

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