

School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
February 12, 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, Kathy Wyatt, and Fr. Kevin McManaman

Members absent: Fr. Dennis Dirx

Guests: Bill Schlise and David Olson

2. Guest Comments

No guest comments were provided at this time.

3. Parish/Pastor Report – Fr. Kevin McManaman

It was reported that the Parish is working on their mission and goals for the Parish. This process will involve both St. Robert and Holy Family Parishes.

4. Finance/Budget – Tom Dean

Tom disseminated three documents related to the budget. This included a finance agenda and two detailed budgets and actual financial statements. The SAB discussed at length the items on the agenda.

A. Parish family Stewardship commitments

As of this time, only about 40% of the school families have returned their stewardship commitments. The Parish is concerned that so many families have not sent in a pledge form. Families receive a substantial tuition discount of about \$1400 per child as a result of supporting the parish with a suggested donation of \$1000. Fr. Dennis will be sending a letter to these families in the near future. He will include a copy of their signed covenant and a blank Stewardship pledge form. He will need to clarify that this is not a request for new money, but rather a request to verify the amount of their weekly/monthly donations to the Church.

B. Parish/School budget reconciliations and cost to educate

A letter was sent to some school families about the cost of educating a child at St. Robert School. This letter alarmed some of those parents due

to some misleading information. Tom is working with Jim Pittlekow to reconcile these differences. If any of us on the SAB receive complaints from other parents, we are to instruct them to contact Tom or Lauren.

#### C. Parish facility expense allocation

The Parish has estimated that they spend about \$350,000 per year on support and maintenance costs for the school. There seems to be a disparity between the Parish estimate and what is actually spent. The total for the six months ending on 12/31/2013 was only about \$30,000. We are trying to get a truer picture of what is actually being spent on the school. Lauren reminded us that the school is not being assessed a fee or paying cash to the Parish for these items. It is just meant to illustrate what the Parish does for the school. On a positive note, it does help school parents understand that their parish stewardship contribution goes to pay for these parish allocations. Fr. Kevin summarized it well by reminding us that we need to work together, that the Parish would probably struggle to survive without the school and the school would probably struggle to survive without the Parish. We need to bridge that gap so that we all can benefit.

#### D. First draft of 2014-2015 budget

Tom created this draft with a few key assumptions, namely:

1. All current students return for next year,
2. We have an incoming K4 class of 25 students,
3. There is a tuition increase of 5%,
4. We will add one K4 teacher,
5. The Parish allocation will be \$100,000, not \$350,000, and
6. Many of the other expenses will remain the same.

After these factors, the budget is left with a deficit of just over \$200,000 for next year. We currently have 328 students enrolled in St. Robert School. Next year, we have a projected enrollment of 315 students. This is due to a relatively large 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduating class of 39 students that is not being replaced with as large of a kindergarten class.

Lisa distributed a copy of the enrollment projections for next year. As of now, 220 current students are enrolled for next year. Seventy-two are not yet enrolled. Nine students are probably returning, but their applications are incomplete. Two students are definitely not returning. There are 10 new students enrolled. Therefore, our current enrollment for next year stands at 230 students. If you add the probable students, the total is 239. Then, if you add the 72 current students that have not yet registered, our total climbs to 311, just shy of our goal of 315 students. Lisa will remind the remaining current families of the increase in the registration fee that will go into effect on March 1<sup>st</sup>. This should encourage some more

families to register before the end of February. Both Lisa and Lauren commented about the constant influx of inquiries about attending St. Robert School. There have been daily phone calls and tours. This is very encouraging.

Tom needs more accurate numbers to complete the budget. He is going to attend a meeting tomorrow with the Parish, and will continue building that bridge. Lisa and Tom will try to analyze the enrollment numbers to try to predict future trends.

Tom's agenda also included some additional information. He created a Summary Enrollment picture that clearly illustrated the projected drop in enrollment for future years. Some of the younger grades have 10, or more, fewer students than some of the upper grades. None of the lower grades have as many, or more, students than the upper grades. He also included some summary income sensitivities that addressed three areas: Tuition Sensitivity Analysis, Registration Fees, and Net Income pre-allocation and fund activity. The Tuition Sensitivity information illustrated various scenarios of total tuition collected based upon enrollment and tuition percentage increases. The Registration fees showed various amounts collected based upon \$150 per student. And, the Net Income pre-allocation and fund activity illustrated various scenarios for the net operating surplus (deficit) based upon different projected enrollment and tuition increases.

SAB members should think about what size tuition increase we should implement for next year. This needs to be communicated to parents before April. Tom also mentioned that the two biggest areas of the budget to watch on a regular basis are building costs and technology. He suggested that in the future, certain key people should analyze or review these figures on a monthly basis. Kelly suggested that we should look for ways to reduce expenses, such as with conserving energy.

#### 5. Principal's Report – Lauren Beckmann

Lauren introduced the two guests at our meeting and said they are here because of a presentation that would take place in a few minutes. She then explained the history behind the classroom garden idea. This curricular area grew into the pocket garden. Even though this was not successful, we haven't lost our commitment to environmental education.

The Emerald Auction Committee wants to have grandparents underwrite a project. St. Monica's School does this each year. This won't be directly tied to the auction itself, but rather the auction will be a vehicle for promoting it and acknowledging the generosity of the donors. The next big concept is to create an outdoor classroom for the school. This has the potential to be a natural fit, with

grandparents “planting the seeds” for future generations. We may try to link this with Grandparent’s Day this year because it coincides with Earth Day. We may also use the middle school students to help with the design.

Then, we reconvened in a classroom to hear a 45-minute presentation from Linda and Mark Keane, parishioners, who teach in Chicago and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, respectively. They have a passion for environmental education. They have created a free website with 200 journeys, 1000 activities and 5000 links that offers information and activities connected to the larger earth, air, water and energy systems. These are all linked to the National Environmental Education Standards of 2007. The material is currently written for middle school students, but it could be used for more capable students starting in about third grade. Their website can be found at: [www.NEXT.cc](http://www.NEXT.cc) Their proposal includes looking as the St. Robert property and creating an outdoor classroom space. It involves three areas: teacher workshop, student workshop, and community workshop. They would begin with teachers, and then, a few weeks later, introduce the topic to students. The project could be completed in phases, over multiple years.

## 6. Committee Reports

### a. Education and Formation Committee – Kelly Schmidt

They will further investigate the issue of creating an outdoor garden after the presentation from Linda and Mark Keane.

### b. Policy Committee – Kristen Reynolds

Lisa emailed a copy of the Nutrition Policy to the SAB members prior to the meeting. We should read the policy on our own time and let Kristen know if we approve it. The Wellness Policy is moving forward. They are investigating revamping the hot lunch program.

### c. Technology Committee – Marion Gottschalk

They have updated the technology questions for the parent survey. In addition, they are in the process of revising the technology plan. It is a lengthy document, but they hope to present it the SAB at a future meeting.

### d. Marketing Committee – Lisa Lesjak

Lisa disseminated copies of a document detailing the number of families and students that attended the Open House, with supplementary information about referrals, etc.

### e. Development Committee – Lisa Lesjak

The Development Committee will be meeting next week. This is typically the time when this committee is not very active in pursuing donations due to the Emerald Auction.

f. Home and School – Laura Maly

Home and School has done a serious review of its procedures, seeing if they fit within their mission. As a result, there are probably going to be some changes next year. There will be some questions in the parent survey from Home and School, especially things dealing with fundraising. They also will reevaluate the line item amount of their contribution to the school to determine if it sustainable. And, finally, they are reviewing some of the activities under the area of enrichment to determine if they really fall under their area of responsibility.

g. Parish – Kathy Wyatt

There was no report given at this time.

h. Environment – John Dulmes

This committee looked at the 5-year plan for the school and grounds and determined three main areas to address in the area of security.

1. Door access

- a. There are 15 doors that would need to be outfitted with a card access system.
- b. Estimated cost - \$31,000

2. PA system

- a. Need to install ip phones in all classroom and speakers in many areas.
- b. Estimated cost - \$6,000

3. Video surveillance

- a. Need to install 18 cameras, both inside and outside the school building.
- b. Estimated cost - \$8,000

These estimates include some volunteer work, for example, pulling wires. The next step will be to have Bill Brousseau come to an upcoming SAB meeting to explain the details of these estimates before we can move forward. There may be some investment funds that could be used to pay for these improvements. But, Lauren mentioned two additional improvements that need to be addressed, too. The first is the lights in the school. They are very old and the bulbs are no longer available for sale. The school bought enough in advance to last through next year. A

decision will need to be made to either replace the ballasts in each light fixture or replace the entire light fixture. This issue cannot be ignored because we need lights in the building. Another need is to replace the folding chairs. They are in very poor condition and this replacement has been delayed multiple times over the past years. We will need to decide how to utilize our limited funds to cover all, or as many as possible, of these expenses.

7. Parent Survey

Matt, Kelly and Lisa will meet to finalize the survey so it will be ready for parents very soon.

8. 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:

- 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 9:08 pm.

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