

**St. Patrick School Commission Meeting
February 14, 2012
Notes**

Present: Nikki Brown, Ken Cook, Jennifer Davlin, Jennifer Meredith, Jill Scheurer, Randy Hodge

I. Review of Mass

II. Public Address:

III. Discussion/Decision Items:

A. Documentation of Policies and Procedures – All

1. Development of Enduring Policies and Procedures Handbook

Regarding the establishment of school board committees, Jennifer Meredith suggested that some type of measure will be needed for the committees and the policies that will be created. She asked the commission members if an enduring copy of the policies should be put in place with the first policy being the exit interview for students. Currently the exit interview policy is in the meeting notes but not formally documented. How will the school board capture the roles and responsibilities and who will be responsible for capturing it? Will the responsibility rest on each committee or the secretary? Mr. Hodge replied that the school board should have a policy handbook. The book should have the date. Mr. Hodge said the school has a Diocesan policy book. He thinks the chairs of each committee should have the handbook and one should be in the office as well. Jennifer M. added that a standing action item for each committee will be the update and review of the book. Jennifer M. suggested the exit interview policy go into the student handbook and Mr. Hodge agreed. Jennifer M. asked if it should be captured in a school board handbook as well. Everyone agreed that the school board needs a handbook and the policy committee should take the lead in the development and maintenance. Mr. Hodge said the minutes from meetings where policies are developed should be kept, in order to know how the committee reached consensus. Jen M. stated we need instructions on how to be a school board member.

Action Item: Jen will send Dave Faber an e-mail to see if the Diocese has handbook. Begin development of a handbook for SPS school board roles and responsibilities as well as a handbook on SPS policies.

IV. Principal's Report – Mr. Hodge

A. Enrollment/Student Retention Rate:

Mr. Hodge has enrolled five new students from St. Edward's Parish in Lake Odessa. He took a family of four on a tour yesterday. He stated his phone has been ringing off the hook with inquiries.

1. Early Registration:

Currently 40 students are registered for 2012/13.

2. Exit Interviews/Standard Procedure: See above (IIIA.1.)

B. Facilities

C. Technology

D. Miscellaneous

Mr. Hodge said the Lansing Mall is hosting a back to school fair on Saturday, March 24th. The fee is \$125. Nikki reported that only five families showed up to the Catholic schools open house in Grand Rapids and the families were more interested in the Grand Rapids schools.

Action Item: Determine whether or not St. Patrick's can be promoted at the Lansing Mall because it falls within the Lansing Diocese.

Mr. Hodge is working on a running calendar for the school. Mr. Hodge distributed a tentative 2012/13 calendar. There are some variances from the Diocesan schedule. PPS added four staff development days which means, at minimum, students will have eight days without bussing. There will be one less Diocesan in-service day. There will not be a mid-winter break because we will have two extra days for Christmas break. The no-bussing days will have one schedule for all grades. Mr. Hodge reminded everyone that this is a tentative schedule and that Mr. Faber, Superintendent of the Diocese, must approve the variances.

Jennifer M. will submit a school commission article to Sue Vanlente for *The Shamrock*. Jennifer M. will report on the progress of the school board, the new committees, timelines, and one or two priorities of each committee. Jill suggested that if readers are interested in serving on a committee, they contact one of the school commission members. Ken asked if alumni could "virtually" be part of a committee from across the country. Jennifer M. will include that we are working on a strategic plan.

Action Item: Jen complete article tonight and e-mail it to commission members for feedback before it is submitted for print. Nikki will provide Jennifer M. with the highlights of the CSW breakfast as well.

Jennifer M. asked commission members if they would be interested in leading the Stations of the Cross and participating in the Lenten soup supper again this year. Commission members said yes.

Action Item: Jen to follow up with Ken S. on available dates for hosting stations of cross and Lenten soup dinner.

V. School Board Transition Planning:

Jill asked about the doubling up of committees throughout the parish. This was discussed at the FFF meeting regarding PR for the school. Mr. Hodge said because the parish and school are one entity, we promote both; however we can't force the parish on students who belong to

other churches. Jennifer M. stated we will work to get the committees established and then meld things together. Ken stated it will be tough to ask some people to serve when they are already committed to other committees.

The commission members named five committees, besides the executive committee. The school board will have eleven members. The president will be assigned to the executive committee and two committee members will lead each of the five committees. Committee member names will follow at a later date. Jennifer D. pointed out that the parish finance committee probably already has a full-plate. Mr. Hodge agreed and said a member of the school finance committee will have to be a school representative of the parish finance committee. Mr. Hodge said we may want to tie in a representative of the Father Flohe Foundation and the treasurer of SPS athletics to the school finance committee. Ken pointed out there will have to be good communication in order to stay on the same course especially when it comes to marketing. Mr. Hodge stated marketing should fall under one committee.

Action Item: Jen and Randy to inquire about the feasibility of implementing “global” marketing and finance committees to maximize talent and efforts while reducing redundancies.

A. School Board Committee Review

School board committees are listed below:

- Executive Committee – School Board President, Principal, Pastor or Pastoral Asst.

This committee is responsible for setting the agenda for overall school board meetings and for any minutes from committee meetings. The committee will also be responsible for drafts of policies.

- Planning Committee: technology, strategic planning, facilities
- Policy Committee: athletic policies, academic policies, handbook
- Public Relations Committee: CSW breakfast, open houses, advertising, website, communications, recruiting/retention
- Finance: FFF, review of school budget, fundraising (Shamrock Auction, 20 Grand In Your Hand)
- Mission Effectiveness (Deacon Don): PTO, Spirituality (Catholic Identity)

Overall board responsibilities will include, but are not limited to: recruiting new members, overall training for new members, annual board evaluation, CSW breakfast, athletic director report, annual evaluation of the principal.

SPS athletics will report to the school board. SPS athletics is responsible for fundraising for facilities, uniforms, salaries, equipment.

The athletic director will report to the school board. It was suggested that SPS athletics appoint one of their board members to the policy committee; policies will be made for SPS athletics.

VI. Budget Review

Mike Johnson addressed school commission members and asked what the commission would like improved, besides technology. Mr. Hodge has concerns about the elementary growing so much that more teachers may have to be hired. Commission members pointed out that Mr. Hodge could use another administrator. Mr. Hodge replied a half-time administrator would help immensely. He pointed out that he won't know until May or June if more teachers need to be hired. Mike said starting teacher salaries are within 20% of the public school starting salaries but within ten years there is quite a gap. Mike will have a preliminary budget next month. Mike commented that the daycare/preschool pricing structure needs to be reviewed. He feels the budget is in good shape and if enrollment numbers are up, then another teacher can probably be hired. When Jennifer M. asked how tight the budget was, Mike replied there is no fat. Ken asked what the magic maximum number is for students per classroom. Mr. Hodge stated 4th/5th is 28 according to the Diocese. Ken said we try to cover what we absolutely need and then rely on fundraising for the wants. Jennifer M. asked Mike where the money comes from and Mike replied that tuition covers the education portion. Mike believes the offertory needs to be pushed more in order to stay away from fundraisers. He thought it would be best to focus on the good fundraisers. He also said the Father Flohe Foundation donation goes directly into the budget. Last year was close to breaking even if we took the maintenance out. Jennifer M. asked Mike if there were competing needs at the parish level. Mike said we are all working toward the same thing. Mike said our biggest concern is adding a new teacher. Mike said the teachers will be getting their step this year and if there is money left over it goes to raises. Mike would like to get Mr. Hodge extra help. Discussion followed regarding qualifications. It costs \$20,000 to \$30,000 to take a teacher from part-time to full-time depending on health insurance needs. Jennifer M. asked if there are areas in the budget that can be tightened. Mr. Hodge replied no, because salaries are the majority of the budget. Jennifer M. asked Mike if he had any updates for technology. Mike said the whole system is being monitored right now and since we have to keep moving forward he is sure there will be expenses coming up. Mr. Hodge said we probably don't have the bandwidth capacity for the high school students to have laptops plus it would require a full-time IT person. The academic year 2012/13 will be the year teachers will need new laptops.

March agenda items:

- Committee member suggestions and how many per group
- Timeline for committees and when they will meet

Adjourned: 9:05 pm

--submitted by Nancy Wohlscheid