

St. Patrick School Board Meeting Notes
April 23, 2013

Present: Bruce Beachnau, Tammy Bengel, Nikki Brown, Jennifer Davlin, Keelie Honsowitz, Joyce Kransz, Jennifer Meredith, Jill Scheurer, Sue VanLente, Nancy Wohlscheid, Randy Hodge

I. Public Comment:

Although no public comment has been requested, Jen M. did meet privately with a parent who would like to see increased communication regarding individual student progress and increased transparency regarding curriculum, especially standards at preschool and lower elementary. Mr. Hodge stated that a parent had a concern regarding the lack of spring conferences. Mr. Hodge said spring conferences have been offered in the past but there was very little participation. It was suggested that parents call teachers and make appointments if they want conferences. Jen M. stated that school board members should be thinking about who we are marketing ourselves to and to what extent we adapt to their needs and expectations. Bruce has heard comments about the school during the Restore and Renew Campaign. Bruce would like the marketing subcommittee to put together some good information regarding the school so that he can have answers for people who oppose the high school.

II. Approval of March Minutes: Minutes were approved as written.

III. Parish Update (Father Larry/Deacon Don)

IV. Principal's Report (Principal Hodge)

Mr. Hodge reported that there will not be any staffing changes at this time for next school year. Twenty-nine kindergarteners are enrolled so there will be two classes of kindergarten. Mr. Hodge said the cycle of large kindergarten classes every other year continues which means certain teachers will rotate back to the grade below. The Director of Student Life has not been posted because the Finance Council wanted job descriptions for principal, counselor and the director position. The Finance Council also wanted the school board president to write a letter of request to add this position, which has been completed and submitted. Mr. Hodge added curriculum coordinator and transportation director to his job description. The delay will move the interviews back a couple of weeks. Enrollment is ahead of where it was at this time last year. We anticipate 100 students in the high school and will lose approximately 6 students in general in the high school because of the difference in size between this year's senior class and next year's incoming freshman class as well as the loss of two exchange students. The 2013-14 enrollment should be close to this year's enrollment for DK -12 overall. There will be a morning program for three-year-olds and a morning and an afternoon class for four-year-olds. Mr. Hodge does not have the calendar finalized because he is waiting for the diocese. The diocese has given us more flexibility with the calendar. There were 13 no bussing days this year and next year there will be 8 days. Teachers have asked for professional development days directed at MAPs testing and making changes based on testing results. Two schedules will run on the no bussing days except half days with an 11:30 release. Turnout for freshman orientation was good with 20 out of 24 families attending. The junior class attended teen court

last week. Mr. Hodge attended the Scholar Athlete dinner along with 16 St. Pat's scholar athletes. Five or six of the scholar athletes are going to continue their Catholic education by attending Aquinas College.

V. Follow-Up Items

A. School Board Nominations

Shayla Schneider, Lisa Bartlett and Mike Cook all agreed to serve on the school board. Shayla will work with Tammy on the finance subcommittee, Lisa will work with Bruce on the policy subcommittee and Mike will work with Jen D. on the mission effectiveness committee. Jen M will invite them to the installation meeting on June 11th.

B. Parent Survey:

Mr. Hodge will include survey information in the newsletter and have teachers include the information in the Friday folders. Sue will put survey information on the website.

C. Presentation of Athletic Handbook

Bruce and Jill presented the St. Patrick Athletic Handbook. Jill said it was a team effort. The committee started with the handbooks from PW and Battle Creek St. Philip and because there was so much similarity between the two, the committee used a lot of the same information. Battle Creek St. Philip included Catholic views. Jill stated that Bruce and Pat Russman worked side by side drafting the language and then the committee worked through the language to make sure words were not misinterpreted. The committee met eight to nine times to work on the language. Jill highly suggested there be a meeting with all of the coaches in order to review the athletic handbook. Jen M. commented that the school board can make sure a mandatory meeting is done as a stipulation to the approval process. School board members agreed there should also be coach-to-parent meetings as well. The St. Patrick Athletic Handbook will be voted on at the June 11th school board meeting. Bruce pointed out the handbook is an evaluation tool as well and that parents must read and sign the policy. Prayer will be allowed before games. Jen D. asked why the handbook says "varsity" and Bruce explained it is because the national anthem takes place before the varsity games. Mr. Hodge said there will not be prayer before the 7th and 8th grade games because many times there are only game coordinators in charge and not an administrator.

D. Policy on Prayer and National Anthem at Sporting Events

See V.C. above.

VI. Sub-Committee Focus

A. Marketing and PR (Nikki and Sue)

As part of the diocese marketing plan for Catholic schools, the school board must do a SWOT analysis. The school board must also do a surrounding school (five schools) analysis as well. Nikki directed the brainstorming and Sue recorded many ideas for the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Much discussion followed and it was agreed the major weakness is technology and the major opportunity is

preschool/DK feeder.

School board members agreed we must demonstrate to parents that they are getting their money's worth in tuition. It was also agreed that perceptions of the school need to be changed. Jen M. asked the question: Do we change to meet the needs of the new consumers or do we continue on with what we know is working. She also asked how should the school individualize curriculum next year.

C. Strategic Planning (Keelie and Mike)

Keelie presented the St. Patrick School Strategic Plan to school board members and she asked everyone to send any comments or concerns to her. She stated that it is an ongoing document with continuous updating. Mike will be leading the technology portion of the strategic plan and a facility walk-through has been scheduled for the team on May 1st. Following the walk-through, Keelie predicted it would take less than a week to finalize the technology survey for teachers. The school board will vote on the strategic plan at the June 11th meeting.

VI. New Agenda Items

- A.** School board and principal evaluations
- B.** 2014 commencement

VII. Review of Tasks and Action Items

- A.** Send invitations to new school board members
- B.** Finalize and disseminate School Survey

Closing Prayer (Mr. Hodge)

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at 6 pm

Adjournment: School Board meeting adjourned at 9 pm

--Notes submitted by Nancy Wohlscheid