

St. Patrick School Board Meeting Notes
August 6, 2013

Present: Bruce Beachnau, Tammy Bengel, Nikki Brown, Mike Cook, Keelie Honsowitz, Jennifer Meredith, Shayla Schneider, Sue VanLente, Nancy Wohlscheid, Randy Hodge, Sarah Townsend, Father Larry

I. Review of Mass

Jen M. expanded on Father Larry's message of helping others who are afraid by saying we should not be afraid to work hard to make the school and parish better. Bruce commented that we are not here to make ourselves feel better but to make the school better.

II. Final Approval of Minutes

June minutes were approved as written.

III. Introduction of Sarah Townsend, Director of Student Life

Sarah gave some background information about herself. Sarah graduated from Portland High School, Alma College and Marygrove College. She is married with three children and excited to be working at St. Pat's. Sarah commented that her first two days have gone well. Jen M. asked if she has anything specific she wants to accomplish and Sarah said she wants to get to know the students and the students to know her. Mr. Hodge said they will be spending time next week at the Diocese attending several meetings.

IV. Athletic Director Report (Pat Russman)

The Office of Civil Rights is conducting a gender equity investigation against Fulton due to the girls basketball team not getting any Friday night game time. Because Fulton is in the CMAC, Pat said in essence the investigation involves the teams in the CMAC. Pat attended an athletic directors meeting on Monday and they voted to switch the boys and girls basketball schedules halfway through the season. Pat commented that since we are locked in to what Portland Middle School can offer us with facility use, it will be a very hectic winter sports season. The OCR definition of "prime time night" is a non-school day the day after a game. Discussion followed regarding the need for two facilities to meet the demands of all sports. Middle school and high school are required to play on Wednesday nights (winter sports). Pat said winter season has the most demands on the facilities. Jen M. asked if numbers are being gathered for long range facility goals. Mr. Hodge replied that the numbers have been there since the volleyball /basketball seasons were switched. Jen M. said some people may have the perception that we are "getting by" with our current resources. Jen suggested we need to change that perception and that investing in a new gym would demonstrate our long-term commitment to this St. Patrick's School. Jen suggested we build a case and show specifically why we need gym facilities. Pat talked about the demands on our students who juggle family, community, church, homework and sports.

Jen M. asked how the new athletic handbook will be given out. Pat will be holding a coaches meeting next Wednesday explaining the new athletic handbook. Volleyball is the only sport that will be making cuts this year and this will be explained to the coaches. The Athletic Association is donating \$3,000 to Portland Middle School to help refinish the basketball court

floor. Thanks to John Vallier our gym will be getting a new scoreboard. Thanks to the Shamrock Auction we will have two scoreboards in the gym. Regarding the gym, there have been some problems over the summer with cracked and loose floor tiles. The tiles have been replaced but a new floor will be needed in the next year or two.

V. Principal's Report (Randy Hodge)

The Principal's Report is up-to-date. Mr. Hodge reported the facilities are looking very nice. The new commercial wireless will be ready to go by the time school starts. Mike Johnson has a plan in place for replacing lights and carpet and adding drop ceilings. The work will be done little by little. Staff members are picking up their new laptops. Mr. Hodge has been in contact with Kevin Robydek, Portland Middle School's principal, regarding the vacant shared-time music position. Sue asked Mr. Hodge if he anticipates more student enrollments and he said he expects enrollment to be 350 when school begins. There are nine less DK enrollments this year. The four-year-old enrollment is high this year but only 11 three-year-olds are enrolled right now. It is possible that there will be two kindergarten classes again next year which would break the pattern of big and small. Baptisms are down significantly.

Jen M. asked how closely we track the lists of students entering and exiting. Mr. Hodge said he thinks Luann has records for the last ten years of students entering and exiting and the reasons why they leave. Nikki will ask Luann for the records. Mr. Hodge said the records also contain where the students go. Jen suggested the primary goal of the board this year should be to capitalize on meeting the needs of our immediate customers- the parents. Jen said we need to: 1) carefully review the parent survey results, 2) develop an action plan to improve on glaring issues and opportunities for improvement, and 3) continuously communicate the improvements out to parents so that they know we are committed to improving the school experience.

Shayla asked Mr. Hodge if Infinite Campus will be up and running when school starts. Mr. Hodge said it the teacher portal will be ready but the parent portal will not. Mr. Hodge let the Diocese know that we need it as soon as possible. Four teachers will be trained on August 19th and they will train the other teachers. Sue asked Mr. Hodge to write a paragraph explaining why it is not ready and she will post it on the website. Jen asked Mr. Hodge to make a Plan B for parents. Jen also asked Mr. Hodge if he had a Plan A and Plan B for technology and Mr. Hodge replied that he does not because he just found out the school was getting a commercial wireless network. Mr. Hodge said all staff will have to be trained in order to incorporate the technology.

Bruce asked Father Larry if David McHugh will be replaced. Father Larry stated that a notice will be placed in the bulletin and surrounding area in two weeks. It will be a 30-hour position. Father reported that the Capital Campaign is more than \$25,000 over the goal. The security locks are much more than anticipated and we will have to wait for the money to come in. Mr. Hodge said Mike Johnson is working on getting more quotes. Father reported that the chiller is ordered. The new bathroom construction will involve concrete work and the contractors will do their best to keep dust at a minimum. The small house on West Street will be torn down and a parking lot will be made.

VI. Follow-Up Action Items

A. Vote on Senior Polo Shirts

Discussion. Bruce motioned that we accept the senior polo shirt privilege. Tammy

seconded the motion. Motion carried. Randy will meet with the senior class president to make specific plans.

B. Fundraising Idea to Administrative Meeting (Randy Hodge)

Tabled.

C. New Board Member Bios

Jen reminded everyone to get bios to Sue as soon as possible.

VII. Sub-Committee Focus (discussion of 2012-13 results & top priorities for 2013-14)

A. Marketing and PR (Nikki and Sue)

Sue received a packet from the Diocese regarding the new marketing program. The marketing plan suggests 60% of time and money should be invested in the school parents; 30% of time and money should be invested in the group who goes to church every Sunday and sends their kids to public school; 10% should be invested in the rest of the population. Nikki said in regard to building strong relationships with existing families, we want to make sure parents know we are listening to their survey concerns. In addition, we will communicate information through the *Review and Observer* and newsletters. It was suggested that Mr. Hodge talk about tuition assistance and the Try Us You'll Like Us program. Mr. Hodge said he is not sure if he can publish an article like that in the *Review and Observer* because Tom Thelen will not run a recruiting article. Wording will have to be chosen very carefully. The Marketing and PR committee would also like to see articles about the following: Sarah's new position, early childhood education changes, technology changes, and dual eligibility. Another article will be about Sarah, another about early childhood and changes made. Marketing and PR would also like to have a stronger outreach to parents of children who are newly baptized including follow-up contacts. The committee also discussed a direct mail campaign to parish family children. Sue is working on a St. Patrick School app for smart phones. Six window signs have been ordered at a cost of \$360. The signs are printed on both sides so that they are visible in the big window facing Grand River Avenue and inside the school stairwell.

B. Strategic Planning (Keelie and Mike)

Keelie reported the technology survey went out to the teachers and the main concerns were issues with the wireless network and the training. Keelie said due to the lack of calendar time, the teachers may have to be trained via webinars or one teacher may be trained who will then train the other teachers. The committee is going back and identifying things that were missed. They are also going through survey results which helps them resolve issues and make things better. Keelie asked if yearly updates were sufficient and Jen said yes.

C. Mission Effectiveness (Jen D. and Mike)

Diane Simon is on the committee representing DK-5 teachers and someone from the 6-12 teaching staff will join. The religious data scored high on the survey results.

D. Finance (Tammy and Shayla)

Tammy reported they will be getting into the budget later. Fundraising is a priority and will be reviewed.

E. Policy (Bruce and Lisa)

Bruce reported that the cell phone policy has been a big issue. The committee will be reviewing policies page by page. Mr. Hodge reported that a few more policies will be added concerning concussions, senior polo shirts, and dual enrollment.

VIII. New Business

A. Future school board meetings: 9/24, 10/29, 12/10, 1/28, 3/4, 4/22, 5/27.

B. The ACT scores were good and about the same as last year. Mr. Hodge will look into the low MME math score.

Closing Prayer (Tammy Bengel)

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 24th at 6 pm

Adjournment: School Board meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm

--Notes submitted by Nancy Wohlscheid