

St. Luke School Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 2, 2014, 7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

In attendance: Andy Bauer, Matt Behringer, Andy Borland, Beth Leffler, Sue MacGill, Tim O'Brien, Eileen O'Brien–Metzger, Terri Moore, Phil Poirier, Teresa Schutzman, Suzanne Sherby, Rob Shumaker, Steve Weber;

The November 4, 2014 meeting minutes were approved with no dissent.

Principal's Report – Steve Weber

Math Goal and Latin Feedback: The addition of Latin is seen as positive, but challenging to accomplish in the one lesson per week model. Teachers recommend goal of one lesson every two weeks to be most effective. Some concern with grades 5 & 6 having both Latin and Spanish in the same year.

Following is feedback from November Faculty meeting on how teachers are meeting the SIP math goal action step of two computation “tests” a week intended to improve problem solving and computation skills:
Kindergarten: Math uses flash cards and numbers 1-30, working on geometric shapes.

- Gr. 1: Uses Fast Facts in class and flash cards sent home to learn basic facts. Parents see the progression of flash cards as students master facts.
- Gr. 2: Twice weekly fact testing done in class and sent home in weekly packets
- Gr. 3: Twice weekly 100 facts in 3 minutes, sent home in weekly folder
- Gr. 4: Twice weekly fact facts 80 points,
- Gr. 5: Computation test weekly stressing multiplication and division
- Gr. 6: 80 point/2 minute weekly computation test, 10 problem mental math 4 X weekly

Letters of Intent: A letter of intent has been submitted to Msgr. Schaedel indicating that Mr Weber would like to return for the 15-16 school year. Teachers and staff were asked for their letters of intent by November 25. Three teachers indicated “unsure” and three wanted to discuss possible change of role. One hourly employee is not returning. All others seek to return.

Budget Issues to Consider:

Assistant Principal: I will post the position in January looking to hire as of July 1.

Admissions Assistant: While not certain, this is a position to consider for the future.

ELL teacher: We currently have 36 students listed as English Language Learners by state definition. Several Catholic schools have added an ELL teacher to help support these students. We currently consult with MSDWT on these students and can receive some funding for resources but not enough for a teacher.

2015-16 Calendar Notes: After a discussion at the faculty meeting, there is a draft.2 calendar attached. The major change is that there was a recommendation that since we had two “flex days” on the original calendar before Memorial Day that those days be shifted to the week of Thanksgiving, so the full week is off. This matches all of the public schools and several private schools in our area. Note that the calendar can't be finalized until later this week when we confirm fall and most especially spring break with the major Catholic high schools our families attend.

Catholic School Accreditation: The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the other Catholic dioceses in Indiana have decided to develop a Catholic School Accreditation to replace the state “freeway” accreditation, which is scheduled to change. Most of the principals’ feel that this actually adds a burden, especially with the rushed timing and that most of the work falls on us. OCE has extended some of the due dates but is still on the same track. OCE has scheduled a “listening session” to hear our concerns in each of the deaneries.

Prayers Needed: Our 7th grade teacher Kathy Chapman fell and broke her right shoulder and right arm this weekend. She will be out until at least January.

Business Items

Edits to Bylaws and Standing Rules: Comments submitted to date were sent by email. Any additional comments or suggestions for changes should be emailed to Tim O’Brien. Discussion and a vote on changes will be scheduled for the February meeting

Ratification of Strategic Plan: Sue MacGill presented the final version of the Strategic Plan with the updates to the language outlining the foreign language goals. The plan was ratified by Monsignor. A copy of the Strategic Plan will be posted on the website along with the December meeting minutes.

Multi Child Discount Structure: A brief discussion of the discount structure included the following points:

- The tuition discount schedule could be adjusted to fully reflect our Catholic values
- There is an actual cost to each child attending the school
- Some local schools do have structures that cap tuition at 3 children
- The current structure does significantly reduce the overall rate per child with each additional child

Some members favor a complete restructuring that would go as far as eliminating tuition after the third child, and others favor implementation of steeper discounts with each additional child. Monsignor indicated his approval of the general idea and also stated that parish subsidy funds could absorb the additional cost without resulting in higher tuition for all. Varying opinions were offered, but there was no consensus other than an agreement that further study of this topic is warranted. Ultimately, the commission agreed that any discussion comes too late to allow any changes to the structure for the 2015/2016 school year, and that adequate time will be allotted to discussion of this topic in upcoming meetings to ensure that changes could potentially be made for the 2016/2017 school year.

2015/2016 Tuition fees: Three potential tuition scenarios were presented which show tuition increasing by amounts of 1.65%, 2% and 2.4%. The increase at 1.65% amounts to a \$65 increase in the base amount for the first child, at 2% to an \$80 increase to the base amount, and at 2.4% to an increase of \$95 to the base tuition amount.

The administration favors the 2.4% model, as it allows the most flexibility in dealing with several unknown cost factors, including healthcare costs.

Tim O’Brien presented research which shows that our base tuition is in fact the lowest in our area, but also pointed out that the fees levied throughout the year (music, book and supply, etc) are among the highest, essentially putting us nearly on equal footing.

Monsignor stated his preference for the 2% proposal, stating he believes the lower rate best sends the message that Catholic education is of primary importance and that the Parish is willing to stand behind it

fully. He further stated that the difference from the 2% versus the 2.4% increase can be covered by discretionary funds in the event of an emergency or if unforeseen costs arise. Monsignor's overall concern in all tuition discussions is to ensure that no child ever loses the opportunity to receive a Catholic education over cost concerns. Steve indicated that he was comfortable with the 2% increase in light of Monsignor's support.

A vote was held and the 2% increase was approved by a count of 9-0, thereby making the base tuition rate for the 2015/2016 school year \$4015.

Strategic Planning /Updates and committee reports

- **Technology** – Phil Poirier: The committee met and began discussions about visits to peer schools. Contacts will be made with local high schools to ensure that we have an understanding of what they are doing technology wise so that we can attempt to ensure our efforts make sense in light of the next step. Discussions have also been had about increased integration between parish and school systems.
- **Development** – Sue MacGill: Sue encouraged SGO donations prior to year end. She commented that the website for donations is extremely clunky and awkward and that they will be looking into making it less so as soon as possible. Of particular note is making it more obvious that your donation is earmarked for Saint Luke.
- **Facilities** – Andy Bauer: A sub-committee has been working on a punch list with Steve over the summer. The process is underway to re-energize that work and identify and prioritize remaining and additional items.
- **Academic Excellence** – Beth Leffler: The committee is still working to determine the scope of its work and what the best interaction with faculty and staff might be. Of major concern is ensuring that all activities are seen as supportive rather than as interfering. The committee is planning a meeting with Monsignor and Steve to nail down these items prior to Christmas

Committee/Liaison Reports

- **Finance** – Wendy Mehringer – absent
- **Nominations** – Phil Poirier – no report
- **Faith Formation** – Teresa Schutzman– no meeting has been held
- **Buildings and Grounds** – Andy Bauer:
 - Space utilization is still under discussion.
 - A plan to remodel the boys locker room is being discussed. The current layout allows a direct line of sight when the door is opened. Plans for some type of partition or screen will be developed in the interest of privacy.
 - The work on the front entrance is underway and should be complete by Christmas
 - Removal of geese is an on-going problem which is being discussed. The suggestion of “hiring” some dogs to control them was earnestly discussed by the School Commission.
 - The need to replace the playground equipment is still being discussed. The total cost is estimated at \$40,000 - \$50,000. It is possible that this project will be the beneficiary of the next Fall Festival.
 - The Cubby project intended to remodel the storage in the 1st thru 4th grade classrooms has been moving along. Teachers have revised and simplified the design. The bid is not yet complete but the projected cost is \$30,000 - \$40,000. Building and Grounds tries to budget and prioritize according to need rather than a rigid schedule and is looking to the School Commission to clarify the urgency of this need. Andy will forward more

information about the proposal to members. It was suggested that the real input should come from the teachers affected. It was also noted that the closets are 50 years old and do look shabby.

- **Stewardship** – Matt Behringer
 - The meeting was postponed until later in December.
- **PTO** – Terri Moore on behalf of Jen Schaefer
 - The November Fab “Philanthropy” Friday was a pasta drive for a local food pantry. Children who brought in pasta were allowed to wear jeans.
 - Saint Nick will visit the school children this Friday.
 - A teacher appreciation luncheon is planned
 - Santa will visit December 19th
- **Pastoral Council** – Eileen O’Brien Metzger/Rob Shumaker
 - Youth ministry is the primary current discussion. Who is in charge of the ministry remains a key and as of yet unidentified question. It is felt that this must be resolved in order to bring proper accountability to the ministry. Another youth meeting is planned for the upcoming weekend.
 - About 50 youth attended the November youth mass, which was followed by a bonfire at the rectory. The youth were surveyed and those interested in leadership positions within a youth ministry were identified.
 - Monsignor’s primary concern in the development of a Youth program is to reach our youth who are attending non-Catholic High Schools as they are not getting any exposure in their day to day lives.
- **SLAC** – Andy Borland
 - The raffle and pasta dinner did not meet expectations. These events will be re-evaluated for future, particularly the \$100 raffle ticket cost.
 - The possibility of raising revenue through ad placement in the facility remains an on-going discussion..
- **Parish Communications** – Suzanne Sherby – no report

Teacher Appreciation Breakfast – The breakfast will be planned for Catholic Schools week. Beth will send a Sign-up Genius for School Commission members to participate.

Pastors Comments - Monsignor asked that all members hold Mrs. Chapman in their prayers. He stated that Mrs. Chapman is just about the classiest teacher he’s ever met and that she will be sorely missed until her return. All agreed.

Monsignor also requested that we try to make contact with realtors in the area to ensure that they include Saint Luke on their listings as a nearby and excellent school choice.

Closing Prayer was said.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Suzanne Sherby, School Commission Secretary

Important Dates:

Next Executive Committee/Finance Meeting: Thursday, January 22, 2015 at 7:30 am

Next School Commission Meeting: Tuesday February 3, 2015 at 7pm