

Saint John the Apostle Catholic School
School Advisory Board
Minutes of the March 3, 2009 Meeting

- Dave Smith called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. and led the assembled group in an opening prayer.
- Members in attendance were: Dave Smith, Karen Fittler, Joe Badali, Jennifer Edwards, Rob Parker, Rich Arnold, Terry Kane and Davy Smith. In addition to the members of the Board, George Sorrentino, School Business Manager, Wayne Lombardo, School Facilities Manager, and a guest attended the meeting.
- The minutes of the February meeting were presented and approved.

Pastor's Report – no report given.

Principal's Report – Joe Badali reported the following:

- The current status of enrollment for next year is at 176 students, not including the “Mini-Rays” 3-year old program.
- Rob asked how we recruit. Jennifer reported that we put ads in the local private education guide. Jackie Grasman has also visited other schools. Additional marketing tools include word of mouth, our website, open houses, and the new sign. We have advertised in the Church bulletin that enrollment is open. Postcards went out last year to all CCD kids.
- Joe noted that the price reactions are quite varied from “great price” to “too expensive”. The current economy may have an affect on reenrollment. We are also situated between 2 very good public schools. We target families that are looking for a faith-based education at a good price.
- Joe noted that the current plan, subject to change, is to have 2 Kindergartens, 1st grades, 2nd grades and 4th grades. All other classes are currently planned to have one class per grade level. He also noted that Red Mill Elementary is limited to 24 students per classroom. Class size is a fine line that we must walk. We had negative feedback on size of K at beginning of year – 22-23 at beginning of year. Class size appears to be a large driver with our parents. There is no hard research that says lower class size is better for children; however, they smaller classes are much easier to manage. We must be able to pay for the teachers for each class – again, this is a fine, fine line to be walked.

- Currently there is a grandfather clause for faculty discount for children currently in school. Joe is a strong proponent of this policy, noting that it is a tremendous recruiting and retention tool. Dave noted that the tuition discount issue that was passed last year is merely a recommendation that was made to Father Biber. Terry queried whether the discount is just for faculty or extends to staff also. Joe noted that he looks at employees rather than delineation between the faculty and staff. Dave discussed history of recommendation, as it was used to address the \$19K projected budgetary shortfall last year. The SAB looked at who was benefiting from the policy and recommended that it be eliminated for future employees, but those currently benefiting would be grandfathered. Rob asked whether it would be offered to all or used flexibly and he recommended that it be applied consistently. Terry noted that it would be implemented through attrition. Joe intends to use it as a recruiting and retention tool.
- Joe asked Wayne Lombardo to present the plan for improved security monitoring at the school. Wayne noted that the issue was raised initially when the Parish offices were to be moved here. He received 4 bids to put cameras on the interior and exterior of school. The estimated cost is \$15K for 19 cameras. We can reduce the cost by running wiring using school personnel. The cameras will cover the exterior of the school and will cover all hallways inside. Part of the Gala profit may be earmarked for this security system. Wayne has agreed to provide additional info to the security company to get a firm quote. The system can be reviewed at any networked computer at the school or from the home computers of staff. Footage from the cameras will be recorded digitally and stored 2-3 weeks. We will have the ability to retain specific portions if necessary. The quoted system does not provide zoom capability, as it is cost prohibitive. The system has the flexibility to be altered and upgraded in the future.

Chairman Dave Smith reported the following:

- We are drawing close to the end of the school year. There are only 2 more SAB meetings this year. Dave has provided Joe with a roster of the current members, including their tenure on the board. Dave asked that members communicate their desire regarding serving on next year's board to Joe as soon as possible. Joe noted that those that still have time left to serve are very welcome to do so.
- Dave welcomed Rich Arnold to the School Advisory Board. Rich is the parent of a 4th grader and has been asked by Joe Badali to fill the position opening created by Cathi Reade's resignation.

Finance Report – Rob reported the following:

- George provided a summary of the financial activity through the end of February and noted that the Diocese is now looking for interim reporting against budget. Based on the current results, it appears that we will need to cut expenses prior to end of year. Most of the projected shortfall is tuition related – 5 families are late in tuition payments. Additionally, Development funds are down as we are seeing effects of the current economy. Also, cafeteria income is down about \$7K. On a positive note, expenses in the cafeteria are also down about \$3-4K. We are anticipating the gas bill to come in near budget. 6 people have now applied for financial aid for next year.
- The application to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign will be submitted soon. The deadline is April 15.

Strategic Planning Committee – no report was given.

Development & Grants Committee reported:

- Rob asked if the school is getting emails from IPSD regarding marketing and development ideas. Joe reported that Marilyn Ertel is receiving them.

The Physical Plant & Building Committee reported:

- Terry has been working on getting an awning for the front entrance. He has met with 4 companies to submit proposals. The proposals are due this week.
- Davy is working on the bus situation with Sullivan House. Dave noted that Catholic High has procured 4 or 5 15-passenger buses. He queried whether we use them during the day when the high school is not using them for field trips, etc.?

Legislative & Advocacy Committee - no report given.

Old Business

- No old business.

New Business:

- Karen provided a PTO update including the upcoming meeting and Student Variety Show. She invited the Board members to attend.
- Karen questioned whether we could look into obtaining reporting and grading software that would provide parents with more visibility into students' grades between report cards. Dave noted that Catholic High is using some software of this sort. Joe reported that the Diocese is looking into some sort of automation.

There was a prayer request made for the Chris Roy, a friend of George Sorrentino.

The next meeting will be held on April 7th at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 7:26 p.m.