

St. Paul the Apostle School Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting held: January 19, 2010 www.stpaul-school.org

Present: Lori Salva, Jeff Potter, Dale Manske, Lisa Gutting, Greg Lauria, Bridget Mull
Todd Mellema, Celine Terranova, Sam Ramos

Guests: Mark Meijer, Kris Russo, Denise Pavey, Suzanne Petz, Donna Couture

I. Meeting opened with prayer.

II. Agenda reviewed and approved.

III. Opening Remarks - Jeff Potter

- A. St. Paul Policies Update: Jeff has completed his review of the current St. Paul Policies and has determined those that will need to be added or updated to follow Diocesan Policies. Jeff and Lori will begin working on these adjustments.
- B. Parishioner/Non-Parishioner Tuition Rate Policy: Jeff distributed the proposed policy and the Board discussed the new policy establishing a tuition rate for students from other parishes. A motion was made to accept the new policy, with one minor adjustment. The motion was seconded (ACTION ITEM). The new policy will be added to the St. Paul Policy binder.
- C. Open School Board positions: Jeff indicated there would be three School Board positions open for next year and he will put an announcement in the Halls of St. Paul.

IV. Principal's Report – Lori Salva

- A. **Preschool and Kindergarten Pre-Registration:** Registration information was sent out on January 8th, and so far we have pre-registration for five kindergartners, three 3-year olds and seven 4-year olds. Lori noted that IHM will be re-instating their 3-year old preschool program in the fall. Letters of Intent were sent out to St. Paul families last week and 121 families have responded “yes” for returning, one “no” and one maybe (both due to moving out of area). Also, 93 letters were sent to prospective families of 3, 4, and 5 year olds from the parish announcing openings for the fall and inviting them to call for information or schedule a visit to our school.
- B. **Budget:** Lori is working on the budget for next year and has indicated to our staff the potential of changes or cuts depending on enrollment numbers. The budget will be based on a 3% tuition increase and teacher salaries staying where they are at currently. Her goal is to have budget set and registration packets ready to go the first week of March.
- C. **Catholic Schools Week:** Scheduled for the first week of February with St. Paul students participating in the weekend liturgies for the kick-off. Mrs. Gamsby is working with some of the students to create props for Father Ernie to use in his homily. A student council officer will be present at each liturgy to speak about how being a St. Paul student has helped them grow in faith. Students will also serve as greeters and sing in the 11:00 am choir. A school Open House will be held after each of the Sunday liturgies. In addition, Student Council officers and representatives will be attending the Mass with Bishop Hurley on Tuesday at the Cathedral. Details of Catholic Schools Week will be sent home on Friday.
- D. **IOWA Test Results:** Copies of the test results for each grade level were distributed to the Board and reviewed. Overall St. Paul did well in comparison to the Diocese and in particular our junior high students (grades 6-8th) were higher in most areas compared to the Diocese. This was the first year of standardized testing for the second graders, and they also compared favorably.

V. Teacher Update – Suzanne Petz

A few highlights of the many school activities happening this month:

- Second graders received First Reconciliation and are working on the Catholic Schools Week.
- Teachers attended a Diocesan in-service day. Pre-K through 5th grade teachers learned how to utilize Curriculum Crafter and discussed the availability and purpose of a variety of assessments. The 6th through 8th grade teachers, along with the high school teachers from Catholic Central and West Catholic, worked on determining what constitutes a valid assessment.
- Students at St. Paul collected \$637 for Haiti relief through a jean day held on January 15th.
- Junior High Students are working on their upcoming play “Honk” to be performed during Catholic Schools Week.
- Geography Bee winners were Connor Leonard (1st place) and Joey Puglessi (runner-up). Spelling Bee winners were Will Bottema (1st place) and Michael Kline (runner-up)
- 8th graders are going to the VA home on January 29th.
- Junior High Math Counts group is preparing for competition on February 12th with an after school competition scheduled for February 8th. A team of 4 students will be competing this year. All Junior High students will compete in the one-day Michigan Mathematics League competition against other area schools.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Finance - Dale Manske

- 1) Collections are going well with the new software. Statements and letters will now be sent after the 15th of each month for all overdue payments.
- 2) Budget: Preliminary numbers are being drafted based on different enrollment scenarios. A 3% tuition increase is planned. The Finance Committee will meet at the end of January and Dale plans to present a summary of the Budget for 2010-2011 school year to the School Board for approval at our February 16th meeting.
- 3) New Student Tuition Incentive Program: The incentive policy was approved for the 2009-10 school year, but the Board will need to decide if we will offer it again next year. If we decide to continue the program for next year, a suggestion was made to better promote the incentive through the school website.

B. Marketing – Todd Mellema

Todd reported on the following marketing items:

- 1) New Marketing Folders – Celine Terranova is working on the content pages and Hillary Embrey is working on the folder design/layout. They will be complete and ready to go to print soon.
- 2) Search Engine Optimization – Todd is planning on purchasing key words and phrases that will link internet users to the St. Paul website. Todd noted that there are two areas people hear about our school: word of mouth and the Internet. For the website, the focus should be on preschool and Kindergarten content as these tend to be the “landing pages.” The key to getting website “hits” is to keep our website content updated regularly.

- 3) Signage – New St. Paul School sign was installed on the school canopy and it looks very nice. Many people have commented on it. The LED sign for the front of church (near the street) should be installed in the next few months. Mark Meijer or Father Ernie will attend the GR city planning meeting on January 28th in order to get the permit for the new sign.

C. School Enhancement Committee – Celine Terranova

- 1) Display Case – A new “St. Paul the Apostle School” sign for above the display case has been installed and brings more attention to the case.
- 2) Celine is working on the final copy and the packet contents for the new school information folders. She hopes to get with Molly Klimas in the next week for final review of the copy.
- 3) Celine noted that the new LED sign in front of the church will also have school information scrolling along with parish information.

D. Fundraising and Grants – Greg Lauria

- 1) SPAuction planning – Final auction details were discussed at their last committee meeting. Greg noted the vast amount of time and effort that goes into putting the auction together. There will be some new events this year, and under the live auction format Greg indicated there will be a “Reverse Auction” whereby people can donate specific amounts of money towards an item such as a computer White Board. We hope to have a White Board on display at the auction as a visual aid. All proceeds of the SPAuction will go to the general school budget again this year.
- 2) Grant Update – Sam Ramos is diligently gathering the data necessary for the GVSU grant writing project.

VII. Open Discussion

- 1) **Friends of St. Paul School** – collections from this fundraising effort granted each St. Paul student a tuition credit of \$85 to be applied towards their tuition account for this school year. Cards were sent to each school family over the Christmas holiday indicating the credited amount. Our school families were very appreciative of this unexpected gift!
- 2) **SPAuction Donation** – Bridget Mull collected donations from the Board members to purchase items for a school supplies gift basket as our donation to this year’s auction.
- 3) **Town Hall Meeting** – Todd Mellema suggested we hold another Town Hall Meeting in the near future to talk about the many positive changes and upgrades to St. Paul School in the past year, and to review the enrollment and tuition for next year. The Board agreed this was a great idea to keep the school energized and focused on the challenges ahead. It will be a positive, informational meeting. Todd will put together a tentative agenda for the Board to review, and Lori will contact Fr. Ernie and the parish office to schedule a date for the THM, tentatively during the first week of March.

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Regular Meeting: February 16, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Gutting, Secretary