

# St. Paul the Apostle School Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting held: March 15, 2010 [www.stpaul-school.org](http://www.stpaul-school.org)

**Present:** Lori Salva, Jeff Potter, Dale Manske, Lisa Gutting, Greg Lauria, Jen Brom  
Todd Mellema, Celine Terranova, Sam Ramos

**Guests:** Kathleen Gunning, Kris Russo, Beth Fausone, Sandy Bishop, Julie Hoffer

**I. Meeting opened with prayer.**

**II. Agenda reviewed and approved.**

**III. Opening Remarks - Jeff Potter**

School Board discussed the recent article in the Grand Rapids Press regarding Grand Rapids Area Catholic Schools and the new position of Diocesan Superintendent for K-12.

**IV. Principal's Report – Lori Salva**

**A. School Tours** – Tours are continuing this week with many interested new families. Last week 8 tours were given to potential new families. The tours are led by members of our parent to parent program. The school office has also had many phone calls inquiring about St. Paul.

**B. Registration Packets:** Packets are being returned slowly. Judy will be reminding our parents to turn them in soon so we can get our student counts into the Bishop (required weekly). Also, since many outside families are school shopping this time of year, it is important that returning students are registered for next year. We currently have a policy to not accept a student's registration until the current year's tuition is paid in full, but this has not always been enforced in the past. The Board will discuss and decide if the policy needs to be better presented to parents or adjusted.

**C. Letters of Intent:** Given out to current teachers/staff today and asked to be returned by Friday, March 26.

**D. Teacher In-Service:** Teachers will attend the in-service at Cathedral Square on Friday afternoon. The topic is "Providing a Catholic Cornerstone for Life."

**E. Confessions:** St. Paul students are going to confession with Fr. Ernie during February and the first part of March

**F. Smart Boards:** The SPAuction collected approximately \$11,500 designated for purchasing Interactive White Boards (Smart Boards) towards our goal of \$25,000 to equip eight classrooms (grades 2-8). Lori noted that she has been awarded approximately \$10,000 in Title funds that could be used to help offset the difference, or the funds could be used for equipping the Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade classrooms. Kirby Wallick also spoke with Lori regarding the Education Foundation giving the school a donation, and indicated they would consider donating towards the Smart Boards. A motion was made and seconded (ACTION ITEM) to use the \$10,000 Title funds for the Smart boards. The paperwork for Title funds is due the week of April 4<sup>th</sup>.

**G. Band Program:** A letter will be sent this week to all families who currently participate in our Band Program. Lori is considering a zero hour band that would meet at 7:15 am twice a week for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade band participants. IHM has a similar zero hour program for their band. Currently our students are pulled from regular class time for band and this interferes with class programming since the other students require a study hall. If there is not enough interest in the zero hour band option Lori will not pursue it further.

## **V. Teacher Update – Kathleen Gunning**

A few highlights of the many school activities happening during MARCH:

- March is Reading Month and Mrs. Armock has many fun activities planned! The Whitecaps mascot “Crash” is coming to St. Paul and will be reading to a large group of students on March 24<sup>th</sup>. TV-8 meteorologist, Laura Vasquez, is coming March 22<sup>nd</sup> to read to our K-2 students.
- “Reading is Growing” on the hallway display board is a vine with leaves for each of the books our students have read - an impressive amount. Every Monday after prayer, students from various grades perform on the “Readers’ Theater” using the intercom system like a radio.
- Pre-K (3 yr. olds) celebrated Dr. Seuss’s Birthday by making and wearing “Cat in the Hat” bowties. Pre-K (4 yr. olds) celebrated Chinese New Year with the Kindergartners and learned Chinese phrases and made dragon masks. They also ate rice and veggies with chopsticks.
- Second graders are putting together Easter Baskets for their annual donation to the children at God’s Kitchen.
- Third graders are knitting hats for preemies for a service project in Religion.
- Fourth Grade is attending Songfest this week. They are also starting to receive postcards and notes from around the world for their Flat Stanley project.
- Fifth Grade is completing their homemade rosaries out of magazine beads to be donated.
- Junior High students are preparing for Science Olympiad in two weeks.
- School-Wide – Mrs. Petz sponsored Pi day and held a contest to determine who could memorize the most digits of Pi. Winners took home a pie!
- Congratulations to Connor Leonard (grade 8) who placed among the top 100 students in the state of Michigan written test for the National Geography Bee. He will compete on April 9th at Western Michigan University for the top prize.

## **VI. Committee Reports**

### **A. Finance - Dale Manske**

Budget for 2010-11 school year has been approved by the Parish office. We are continuing to focus on collections for the current school year. Dale plans to review with Lori the current policy regarding not accepting school registration until all current school year tuition is paid in full.

### **B. Marketing – Todd Mellema**

- 1) New LED sign has been installed and will be up and running with school and parish information scrolling soon! Many thanks to Mark Meijer for coordinating with the city and the contractors.
- 2) Website Optimization: Averaging 250-450 viewers coming to our Website through the purchased Ad-words.
- 2) Marketing Folders – Todd presented the Board with the new folder. The quote for printing 1,000 folders is \$1,200 and for 2,000 copies is \$1,500. The Board agreed to purchase 2,000 folders.
- 3) SPA Pre-K and Kindergarten Open House will be held Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup> after 9 and 11:00 a.m. Masses. Bulletin announcements regarding the Open House will run in various church bulletins (St. Roberts, Holy Family, and St. Mary Magdalen).

### **C. School Enhancement Committee – Celine Terranova**

- 1) Town Hall Meeting – Positive feedback from many who attended the meeting. Celine heard many comments from parents who are excited about the current leadership and direction of the school. Celine recommended the notes from the THM be posted on the school website. A few suggestions for next year: hold the meeting earlier (6:30 pm), offer babysitting from the Jr. High students during the event, and send email (“e-blast”) to families encouraging attendance.
- 2) Parent Survey – plan to send out a survey in the next month to parents regarding the parent to parent mentoring program and ask for any ideas to improve or change the program to enhance it.
- 3) Special Needs Program – will meet with Christine O’Driscoll to further pursue the idea of offering a special needs program at St. Paul. Work was done on this last year and Celine would like to have her committee further investigate the possibility of implementing a program here.

### **D. Fundraising and Grants – Greg Lauria**

Upcoming fundraising events include the 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament. This is an important fundraiser for SPA athletics and raises approximately \$8-10,000. In addition, the Home and School Association will hold the Spring Garage Sale on the April 15-17<sup>th</sup>.

Grants- Sam Ramos noted that all the forms for the GVSU grant writing program have been sent to the professor coordinating the program. He will notify the Board when he hears back from her.

## **VII. Open Discussion**

- 1) **Ms Gunning Retiring** – Kathleen announced to the Board her retirement after this school year. She has taught at St. Paul for 27 years and has decided to spend more time with her family and pursue personal endeavors. The Board thanked Kathleen for her many years of dedicated service - she will be greatly missed by staff, students and parents! A letter to parents announcing her retirement will go home at the end of this week.
- 2) **Open School Board Positions** – Board members should encourage people to send in their applications as soon as possible for the three open positions. Deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- 3) **Class Size Policy** – Briefly discussed our current policy of a maximum 27 students per class with the option of the school principal in consultation from the School Board making exceptions on a case by case basis in the event we have a potential family with children in classes that are at capacity. Policy was updated in 2004 and notes were added in the March 2006 Board Minutes.
- 4) **E-Mail (E-Blast)** – Consider setting up an account to send messages to parents using group email. Todd will present more details to the Board with the cost.

**Meeting Adjourned.**

**Next Regular Meeting: April 20, 2010**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Gutting, Secretary