

St. Paul the Apostle School Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting held: September 15, 2009 www.stpaul-school.org

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

Guests: Sue Gamsby, Kathleen Gunning, Natalie Jackson, Courtney Minnema, Kris Russo, Denise Pavey

I. Meeting opened with prayer.

II. Agenda reviewed and approved.

III. Opening Remarks/Committee Goals: Jeff Potter handed out information and reviewed the responsibilities and goals of the School Board committees for 2009-10 school year. The committee chairs were assigned and approved at our July meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the committee goals (ACTION ITEM). Jeff encouraged the committee chairs to recruit members of our school and parish community to help as needed.

IV. Principal's Report – Lori Salva

A. Enrollment: We currently have 213 students registered for the 2009-10 school year, with 26 of those being preschoolers.

B. Teacher Committees: Lori has asked teachers to serve on two committees that will begin the process of reviewing and updating our Crisis Plan and Manual. There is also a committee of teachers that will create a parent survey to be handed out at the November conferences to let us know how we are doing and how we can improve. This survey will also be given out at the end of the 3rd quarter.

C. 8th Grade Leadership Opportunities: Last week at the first school Mass, Lori asked the 8th grade students to come forward in a short commitment ceremony in which they were given a blessing and commissioned to be our student leaders. Catholic schools exist to help create future leaders of the Church and what better way than to start in the 8th grade! Please help support our “young apostles” by letting them know they are doing a good job when you witness them in their leadership roles here at St. Paul in the classroom, on the playground, or maybe even at a sporting event.

D. Blessing of the Animals: October 4th is the Feast of St. Francis and in honor of this day we will hold Blessing of the Animals on the lawn in front of church. The students will also be participating in each of the three liturgies on this weekend in celebration of creation. The Blessing of Animals will take place on Sunday, October 4 at 1:00 pm (weather permitting). We ask that all animals be on a leash or in a cage during the event.

E. School Office: The office will be closed on Thursday mornings from 8:30-9:10 am for Mass. This has been published in the Halls of St. Paul and a sign will be posted on the door.

F. Fundraisers: Sally Foster wrapping paper and the magazine sale fundraisers will end this week. Entertainment books will be available until Thanksgiving.

G. Hand Sanitizers: Gene Couture has ordered hand sanitizer dispensers for all of the classrooms.

H. Bottled Water: Mike Marshall to create a label for bottled water so that we can sell it in the snack shop, at hot lunch or at sporting event concessions. Price will be 50 cents per bottle.

V. Teacher Update – Natalie Jackson

Ms. Jackson reported on the professional development opportunities many of the teachers attended over the summer. Staff members have been at the school since mid-July meeting with Lori and preparing their classrooms. Most of the staff attended the Open House held on Sunday, August 23rd and the Parent Information Night held on August 31st. The teachers have also had website training with Todd Mellema on navigating and adding information to the school website.

Staff goals set for the school year:

- 1) The St. Paul the Apostle School staff community will actively demonstrate our Catholic Faith and identity in our relationships and through our service to others.
- 2) The St. Paul the Apostle staff will consistently strive as a team to promote positive interactions for spiritual, social and professional growth.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Finance - Dale Manske

- 1) Dale met with Fr. Ernie and the Finance Council to discuss forming a policy regarding tuition rates for school families from Parishes without a school (i.e.: St. Robert, St. Mary Magdalene). At this time, students from these parishes can attend St. Paul at the current parishioner rate if their home parish subsidizes \$885 per child. This may be re-evaluated if we reach 90% of enrollment. Dale suggested the Board commission Jim Rabaut to draft a formal policy. A motion was made and seconded (ACTION ITEM) to have an official policy written by Jim Rabaut.
- 2) SPAuction Proceeds – Board discussed whether all proceeds from SPAuction this year will go directly to the school budget for 2010-11 or possibly a percentage to the Foundation. Jeff will consult with Fr. Ernie and Kirby Wallick to get a recommendation and present it to the School Board. Currently 4% of the Foundation proceeds are given back to the school each year.
- 3) Tuition Collection: recently purchased and installed new MS Quick Books software to enable us to better track tuition payments and run statements.
- 4) Contingency Fund – Proceeds from Irish Fest and Fall Garage Sale will go into the Contingency Fund for St. Paul School. The goal is to have \$20,000 in this fund.

B. Marketing – Todd Mellema

Todd reviewed the following marketing items he and his committee have been working on:

- 1) Website training for all teachers and encouraging them to update regularly. Bios and photos of teachers will also be added to the website.
- 2) SPAuction is now located on the school website. Chairs were trained on how to update.
- 3) New Electronic Sign for front of church. Mark Meijer is coordinating and he and Todd will present the new design and cost to Fr. Ernie for approval.
- 4) Folders with school information for new and prospective school families.
- 5) Display Case for Narthex. Lori will talk to Fr. Ernie to confirm location and contents.

- 6) Alumni Newsletter – Ms. Gunning is coordinating with help from Kris Russo to create a database of St. Paul alum (names and addresses) in an effort to reach out to them with a newsletter.
- 7) Website testimonials – encouraged Board members to write a brief statement on why they chose St. Paul. Todd also encouraged people to write positive ratings for St. Paul at gradeschools.org.

C. Technology – Jeff Potter

Barb Kopfensteiner and Jeff Potter updated the entire computer lab this summer utilizing the \$10,000 donated from Home and School Association and an additional donation of \$12,000. A total of 49 computers were upgraded to Windows XP and MS Office Suite software (30 of these were brand new computers). The Technology Committee plans to also establish a long-term budget to maintain and update the computers. A suggestion was made to investigate purchasing “smart” boards for classroom use. This would replace the use of overhead projectors for a more interactive classroom.

D. Fundraising and Grants – Greg Lauria

- 1) Greg is reviewing the spreadsheet of St. Paul fundraising activities created by Jim Rabaut and committee. He will be contacting all chair people of the various activities/events in the near future.
- 2) Denise Pavey proposed a holiday wreath sale to be held this school year. Preliminary orders would need to be placed in mid October with delivery in November. The Board agreed it was a good idea. Greg will consult with Fr. Ernie for approval before proceeding.
- 3) Irish Festival – Ms. Gunning presented in detail the events to take place for our first “Halfway to St. Paddy’s Day” Irish Festival to be held on Friday October 9th from 5 pm – 12 am in Damascus Hall. Ms. Gunning is coordinating the event with the help of volunteers. The Irish fest will have traditional Irish food, beverage, and entertainment for the event. We are still in need of a sound system. Sam Ramos will check into this and get back with Ms. Gunning.
- 4) Grants – Emily Teed and Jeff Potter are consulting with Mrs. Gamsby to complete the application for the GVSU grant writing program. It was recommended the teacher’s create a list with specific ideas for grants (a wish list). Getting “Smart” Boards for the classrooms was suggested by the Board members.

E. School Enhancement Committee - Celine Terranova

(note name changed from School Improvement Committee)

SEC is implementing the following ideas:

- 1) Parent Ambassador Program – linking new families with current school families to answer questions and help with transition into our school community. A list of current parents is being created to volunteer for this program. Information folders were given out to prospective families during tours this summer with very positive feedback.
- 2) School Tours – Lisa Leonard has been coordinating tours for prospective families and utilized 8th grade students and parents to help. Lisa will continue this practice and work with Ms. Gunning to get student volunteers from the 8th grade class.
- 3) Celine and committee will get feedback from St. Paul school parents to formulate improvement plans and establish/prioritize goals for the SEC in the upcoming school year.

VI. Open Discussion

- A. Crosswalk/Parking Lot:** Still need to address the ongoing issues of parking lot and crosswalk safety. It is important that proper Entrance and Exits be used during the school drop off and pick-up. Cones need to be placed in the parking spaces near the crosswalk to stop cars from parking there. Lori will send out information in the Halls of St. Paul and encourage parents to pay attention to the proper procedures. It was suggested we have a person in the parking lot before and after school to direct traffic and facilitate the safety of our students.
- B. Peanut Allergies:** Lori and the School Board discussed the question of a “peanut-free” school since we currently have two students with severe peanut allergies. It was agreed at this point it would be best to address this issue through staff and parent education and awareness.
- C. Agenda Items - October Meeting:**
- Parking Lot Safety
 - Alumni Dinner – Catholic Schools Week

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Regular Meeting: October 20, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Gutting
Secretary