

St. Paul the Apostle School Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting held: April 21, 2009 www.stpaul-school.org

Present: Julie Palmer, Dan Springer, Dale Manske, Lisa Gutting, Jim Rabaut, Laurie Daum
Jen Brom, Jeff Potter, Bridget Mull, Todd Mellema

Visitors: Natalie Jackson, Kathleen Lowing, Christine O'Driscoll, Mark Meijer, Courtney Minnema,
Loretta Armock

I. Meeting opened with prayer.

II. Agenda reviewed and approved.

III. Principal's Report

- A. Enrollment:** Our total enrollment is currently at 221 students in grades Preschool-8, with the addition of a new 3rd grade student (returning former student).
- B. Accreditation Update:** Julie distributed a copy of the Accreditation Site Visit Report to each Board member for review. The document is considered confidential and should be returned to the Board president at the end of the member's tenure on the School Board. Per the report, one major area of needed improvement is in the area of technology. The Board is aware of this, but due to the enrollment decline, our focus has been in other areas. As we look to the future, however, it is imperative that we seek funding for an updated computer lab and formulate an updated Technology Plan. Jeff Potter has agreed to head up a Technology Committee for this purpose.
- C. Registration Packets:** Packets were distributed to school families with the formal due date of May 1st. Some have been turned in, and parents are encouraged to return the packets to the school office as soon as possible. For those turning in packets early, checks can be post dated for May 1st.
- D. Kindergarten and Preschool Enrollment for 2009-2010:** We currently have 23 students on the Kindergarten pre-registration list. We have 11 students pre-registered for the 3-year old preschool and 8 students pre-registered for the 4-year old preschool. Another school open house will be held on the weekend of May 2-3. Julie is also placing an advertisement in the Grand Rapids Press.
- E. Transportation Update:** GRPS will be distributing \$20,000 to St. Paul School to subsidize bussing our students that reside in the city of Grand Rapids. Catholic Secondary Schools will be evaluating the costs of bussing St. Paul students for next year, and any additional amount required over the \$20,000 allotted by GRPS will be passed on to those families using the transportation service.
- F. In Appreciation:** Many thanks to everyone on the School Board and in the school community for all of their awesome efforts this year. Sub-committees this year have been more active than at any other time in the past and we are seeing the fruits of their labor in the excitement and enthusiasm within our school community. Thank you so much for your gifts of time, treasure and talent for St. Paul the Apostle School!

IV. Committee Reports

A. Finance - Dale Manske

Dale presented the Board with a draft Budget based on a conservative enrollment number of 193 students for the 2009-10 school year. The enrollment number is based on the Intent to Register Forms, along with information Julie gathered on the students graduating (leaving) and those we anticipate adding in the Pre-K and Kindergarten programs. Dale indicated the budget will continue

to be monitored in the upcoming weeks as registration packets are returned and until school begins in September 2009. At the present time the budget indicates a deficit of approximately \$13,500 that will need to be made up by increased enrollment, additional fundraising or difficult expense cuts.

A motion was made to accept the draft budget presented for 2009-10 school year and was seconded (ACTION ITEM). The budget will be sent to the parish office for review and final approval.

The Board also discussed the current Referring Families Incentive Policy for families that bring in new student(s) to St. Paul School. A motion was made to extend the Incentive Policy for the 2009-10 school year. The motion was seconded (ACTION ITEM).

B. Fundraising and Grants - Jim Rabaut

- 1) Irish Festival - The Fundraising Committee met recently and established a new “Irish Festival” fundraiser to be held in the Fall of this year to replace Casino Night. Ms. Gunning will be chairing the Irish Festival and Mrs. Lowing has offered to be on the committee. Dennis Teed and Ron Neary have volunteered to help also, but many additional volunteers will be needed. The event will be held in mid-September (date to be determined). A flyer highlighting the event will be distributed in the upcoming weeks. Irish dancing, music, crafts, food and a beer tent are tentatively planned.
- 2) Grants – A new technology “challenge grant” program will be kicked off before the end of the school year to help fund upgrades to our computer lab. The Home & School Association is donating \$10,000 towards technology upgrades and the goal of the challenge will be to solicit donations to match the H & S gift. Jeff Potter is in the process of evaluating our technology needs with Barb Kopfensteiner to determine how much funding is needed. Barb is also investigating other potential technology grants, and Jim is checking into a student grant writing program through GVSU, whereby their students are assigned to find and write grants specifically for our school.
- 3) SPA Alumni Fundraising Initiative – Paul Korte is spearheading an alumni fundraising program similar to the Angels program. His goal is to develop a St. Paul alumni database with the help of our teachers and administrators. The Website is also a way to reach out to our alumni. An alumni event chaired by Steve and Dorothy Cole is scheduled at Ridgemoor Pool in June.
- 4) Miscellaneous Fundraising – Tony MacDonald (World of Floors) will be offering a percentage of his flooring sales to customers from St. Paul Parish back to the school (details to be determined). The 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament was very successful this year with a large number of participants. The H & S Garage Sale is scheduled for this weekend, and potentially another Garage Sale will be held in the Fall.

C. Marketing - Todd Mellema

Todd reviewed the numerous marketing events that took place at St. Paul in the last month and planned for in the future, including:

- New Postcards highlighting St. Paul School have been created and will be sent to new families moving into specific zip codes in our area.
- An article was published in the GR Press recently highlighting St. Paul and IHM.
- Website – Still fine-tuning and updating links. Todd passed out a graph highlighting the number of “hits” in the past month on our Website and what people were viewing and how much time was spent at the site.

- PR/Communications – Molly Klimas and Bob Young are working together on creating text for our new information packets for prospective families.
- A new electronic school sign for out front is being considered. Todd is working with Hillary Embrey and Mark Meijer to design and coordinate.
- Todd encouraged all Board Members to go onto the Parent link in the website and “rate” St. Paul school for others to view. He will also contact Julie to put a note in the “Halls” for parents to access the link so that they can also give the school a positive rating.

D. School Improvement Committee (SIC) – Laurie Daum

Laurie Daum presented the Board with information The School Improvement Committee has gathered on providing a Special Needs Program at St. Paul. Funding is the main hurdle at this point (financial cost still needs to be determined), but the Board agreed this is a worthwhile program to further investigate. A motion was made recommending the SIC continue to explore a Special Needs Program and meet with the new school administrator to further assess and discuss the potential of developing and implementing a program at St. Paul. The motion was seconded (ACTION ITEM).

V. Principal Search – Dan Springer

The Principal Search Committee received 14 applications for the principal position, and after careful consideration recently interviewed four very qualified candidates. The Committee will be meeting again this week to further evaluate and perform second interviews. Dan plans to send a note out to school families to update them on the search. Overall, the Committee is very pleased with the candidates and is confident a decision will be made in the upcoming weeks.

VI. Open Discussion

Agenda Items - Next Meeting:

- School Survey
- Technology Needs – Jeff Potter to research and present information
- School Board “Elections” - discuss procedure and present candidates
- Update on Principal Search

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Regular Meeting: May 18, 2009

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa Gutting,
Secretary