



SACRED HEART
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

SAC Minutes
11-15-23
6:00-7:30 p.m.

SAC Members Present: Rebecca Lahr, Alicia Nordstrom, Molly McGraw Healy, Kevin Dempsey, Margaret Andersen, Christine Denton, Laura Carillo, ~~Elise Hedlund~~, Rikki Mortl, ~~Kelly Cunningham~~, Aimee Doan

Ex Officio Members Present: Karen Bursey, Mary Daugherty, ~~Fr. Pedersen~~

Opening prayer

Approval of minutes from October 2023

Meeting minutes were motioned, seconded and approved.

Principal Report

Staffing update

- Liz Gerads hired as Director of Advancement fundraising for securing large donations
 - o Liz will be in front of Gala-related fundraising efforts, including sponsorships, silent auction & live auction
- Sarah Svien will support Liz in the school's marketing & fundraising efforts part time (3 days a week)
 - o Sarah's focus will be on Salesforce and database management, annual campaign, gala support, etc.
- The budget for this additional staff with a focus on marketing and fundraising represents a conscious investment in the future of the school and parish.

Annual Campaign-letters/mailing

- Coordinating the mailing has been a huge challenge, the school hasn't undertaken an effort on such a large scale in recent history.
- Sarah Svien has been working day and night verifying accuracy of addresses through a number of different methods, to date she has confirmed 400 addresses.
- CSCOE subsidized use of national address accuracy check

Science from Scientists

- Title IV funds (\$2500) used to hire Science from Scientists to come in for 2 days, 11/20 and 12/4. The scientists will meet with grades 3-8, each for 50 minutes
 - o Grades 3-4: States of matter
 - o Grades 5-8: Look at the eye –will be dissecting a sheep eye!

Update on Breakfast/Lunch

- Discussion of some of the administrative and financial challenges the school has experienced with the breakfast and lunch program.
- Mary presented an Income and Expense report specific to meal plan expenditures and subsidies from the State of MN, accounting data shows a net deficit of -\$995.04, as of year-to-date October.

- The school does not get a full reimbursement for what the lunch costs. Root cause is related to a number of situations, including but not limited to:
 - o When a child is sick whom has ordered a lunch from the vendor, the school cannot claim a meal and receive reimbursement. The school has already incurred the costs of the lunch.
 - o The school cannot mandate a student take a lunch, even if a parent has ordered it. This has happened on a number of occasions, and again, the school cannot claim the meal for reimbursement, and has already incurred the costs.
- There are some steps being taken to help ease financial burden. The school received \$8K from the State of MN to purchase commodities, these funds are in a deferred account. To date, purchases have included milk, as well as fruits and vegetables. The administration is working with Trio to use more of these funds to cover other commodities that are contributing to the breakfast/lunch program deficit.
- Conversations with administration from other small schools indicate that Sacred Heart is not alone in these struggles, one school that Karen spoke to had to opt out of the program due to the administrative and financial burden.
- The committee discussed the need for communication to the school community about these issues. Parents are likely unaware how important it is that their children claim the meals that they have ordered from the vendor. There was also some discussion of ideas for dealing with food waste, which is another concern of the administration.

Gala update

- Give to the Max campaign for gym floor fundraising is on Nov 16, downside with any of these sponsored fundraising platforms is the fee structure, in this case, 6% of the donations go to Give to the Max
- Presale tickets for the Gala will be offered for sale after Thanksgiving, \$15 discount

Financials/Budget

- Deficit of \$41K is in the play for YTD October, currently the organization is showing a YTD deficit of \$19K, thus we're showing improvement vs. Plan. This positive variance is likely to be a result of timing and is not expected to carry over through the year.
 - o Salary planning did not account for the lag in hiring a new Director of Advancement, nor did it account for some of the changes to staffing for 5th grade
 - o The lag of hot lunch expenses is driving some of this variance
 - o 1st quarter St. Margaret Mary payment has already come in, driving up revenue ahead of the tuition expenses
- There are \$4700 of aged receivables > 30 days in TADs, and a couple house accounts that are also somewhat behind, Karen and Mary are working those on a case by case basis.

2024-2025 Tuition/Fees discussion

- The committee discussed their outlook on Tuition for the 2024/2025 school year.
- Mary passed out a summary of tuition history 2018/19 – 2023/24 years for the committee to review and discuss, coupled with K-8 enrollment data
- Retention of teachers and thus planning for salary increases is always top of mind, but there is a direct correlation when budgeting for these increases with tuition and enrollment
- 85% of the school's budgeted expense is teacher salaries, the committee feels that we could do more to advertise just how much of parent's tuition is directly associated with paying our teachers.
- Discussion of other local Catholic Schools that have gone away with or are working to adjust their tuition policies to remove parishioner discounts. The committee discussed Sacred Heart's tuition structure for parishioner and non-parishioner families, and indicated that some further analysis was needed. Any change to the structure would have to be rolled out with a phased approach. The committee discussed that it seems

- appropriate to, at a minimum, continue to take steps to get the parishioner/non-parishioner tuition rates closer together, there is still a significant delta between the two. The underlying reasons for maintaining two different tuition rates assumed parishioners offset that difference through donations to the church in other capacities. Donor data is not currently collected and compiled to substantiate or unsubstantiate if this is happening.
- Ricki is going to request a meeting with Father Michael Redding at St. Joes in New Hope about their connection with Good Shepard or Sacred Heart, and whether or not they would consider subsidize tuition for their parishioners.
 - A quick analysis was performed in the meeting showing that it would take 5 years to close the gap between parishioner/non-parishioner rates if a decision was made to increase non-parishioner rate by \$100 and the parishioner rate by \$500 each year. These values were chosen at random and are not necessarily being considered, but this analysis helps provide context on the need for a long-term strategic approach to any proposed change.
 - Arch is doing a feasibility study for a large capital campaign, one of the components of it would be focused on Catholic Schools.
 - 45% of families at Sacred Heart get tuition aid.
 - Budgeting for next year's tuition, revenue, and teachers' salaries needs to account for the large 8th grade graduating class, enrollment will likely need to assume 6-8 less students for the next school year.

MNSAA Self-Study Year

- Proposed revised Mission Statement from the staff was reviewed. The committee provided a handful of suggested revisions.
- Parent Survey was emailed 11/6, 57 people have responded so far, two comments from parents upset over the request at the end of the survey to provide students grade levels. This request was made simply to be able to incentivize parents to take the survey with a reward for the class with the most participation, not to undermine the anonymity of the survey. The concerns, however, are acknowledged, and in the future the administration will make a point of not requesting potentially identifying information from respondents in anonymous surveys.

New Business

- Fundraising initiative.org – this is an option for families to fundraise, Ricki is going to research if we could organize and volunteer as a way to raise general funds for the school. Karen to put this information in the newsletter.
- Is there an appetite for Pre-K or Pre-3's in the summer, or how about for full days? This could be a potential way to increase school income. Mary to discuss with father.

Closing Prayer

- Meeting adjourned.