

St. Luke the Evangelist School Board Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2018

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the School Board was called to order following prayer at 6:33 p.m. at St Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church by President Licia Pettit.

Members present: Amy Thompson, Kelly Royal, Scott Ciochetto, Licia Pettit and Shawn Althaus

Members absent: Anna Schaffer, Katherine Rafferty,

Staff absent: Principal Tonya Eaton, Father Larry Hoffmann, Father Adam Westphal

Visitors present: Susan Grebasch, Emily Pollpeter

Approval of Minutes from Prior Meeting

Minutes approved prior to meeting via email.

Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved as submitted.

Open Forum

4th grade teacher Emily Pollpeter shared a bit about herself and about 4th grade at St. Luke's. This is Miss Pollpeter's first year teaching. She attended St. Francis of Assisi School and Dowling Catholic in Des Moines, then graduated from Loras College in Dubuque. Her class at St. Francis was the first to go through Kindergarten through 8th grade, so she feels an affinity for our new school here at St. Luke's. She is very happy to be at St. Luke's and truly enjoys her job. While she may be new to teaching, she feels that she arrived at our school with many ideas to implement from her teaching degree. She teaches science for both 4th and 5th grade. Some projects they have been working on are green screen technology, meteorology and designing a dog house with a light source provided by the environment, i.e. wind turbines or solar panels.

Reports

Principal

Report submitted by Tonya Eaton.

Discussion: The current registered enrollment for next school year is 147 students. The kindergarten class stands at 38. Mrs. Eaton has been working on interviewing new hires and will announce them soon. Kendra Smith is the new parish secretary. Her position is still serving both church and school. A new person will be hired as a Parish Growth Coordinator and then Kendra will be solely the school secretary.

Finance

Report submitted by Scott Ciochetto

Discussion: Per Father Adam, there are reportedly 5 or 6 students still planning to register for next school year. This will get us closer to our goal number of 154. Perhaps we need to increase this goal.

We have numerous students from other parishes. It seems that a couple of those parishes may not be able to subsidize their student parishioners.

Marketing

Report submitted by Kelly Royal.

Discussion: None

Policy

Report submitted by Katherine Rafferty

Discussion: Katherine found many items in the student and teacher handbooks that need updates. The Staff Grievance policy needs to be expanded upon. Amy, Katherine and Licia need to meet with Tonya to discuss this. The Policy Committee may need a new member to work on this as Katherine will be on maternity leave soon. Licia will fill in on the committee for now. We need to put a priority date on this so that the new hires will have the updated handbooks when they arrive. Discussion about whether St. Luke's needs a more formal on-boarding process for new hires.

Family School Association

Report submitted by Anna Schaffer.

Discussion: Jacki Dunn, Susan Grebasch and Tonya Eaton have been working with a new vendor to for distributing school and parish spiritwear. They are developing designs and creating a website that will be available year-round. They hope to have samples available on Fire Arts Night.

Discussion Items

Whole Life Curriculum

This curriculum was presented to the board at the last meeting. If implemented, it would be in addition to the current religion curriculum. There is some concern about finding the professional development time to present the program to staff. Board members are in favor of it, what do the teachers think of it? A decision will be made at the June meeting. The binders are available in Mrs. Eaton's office.

New School Board Members

It is time to announce the open board member positions. All new members of the tri-councils will on-board at the same time. Do we need to look to recruit a specific skill set? Perhaps members with human resource experience, school administration experience, financial experience and building/construction skills would be valuable right now.

Timeline of Tri-Council Meeting

This will be at 6:30pm on May 8th at the Rectory. We need to develop a ten-year school timeline to get big events/plans plotted in advance. This will be done together with Finance and Parish councils so everyone can see where we are headed.

School Timeline

The school board plotted a timeline beginning in 2018 until 2025 with goals and plans for the school. Some aspirations include: hiring a reading specialist, more extra-curricular sports, exploratory classes, developmental kindergarten, an 8th grade retreat, adding statues and relics to our learning space, building athletic fields and adding an auditorium.

Action Items

- Look at Katherine Rafferty's comments on the handbooks.
- Amy, Katherine and Licia meet with Tonya to do handbook revisions.
- Kelly and Katherine will work on graduate profiles.
- Licia will draft the letter to parents on the classroom fee increase.
- Board members will read the Whole Life Curriculum binders.
- Attend Tri-Council Meeting on May 8th.
- Announce board member vacancies.

Next Meeting

Next regular meeting will be held May 22nd at 6:30pm.

Adjournment

After prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm.

Minutes submitted by: Margery Pierce

Committee Reports

MARKETING

Group is working on a promotion video to use with social media as well as the Summerfest Video Screen Commercial sponsorship that we purchased through the Ankeny Chamber of Commerce.

Student-led mass was April 22nd. Felt successful as we had a full church (350 counted), and family ambassadors invited their paired family to join them for mass and donuts afterwards.

Also invited the Bike Walk Run committee to promote their event happening May 20th.

Next Student-led mass is July 8th to celebrate Fr. Larry's retirement.

Working to promote more of what is happening at the school - committee is reaching out to teachers to see if we can get more photos and copy of activities in the classroom.

Working on year-long calendar for next year to better plan for upcoming events to promote school (fish fry, quarterly student-led mass, open house etc.)

April/May Action items

Work on Summerfest 30 second video due May 14. Received samples from last year.

Community greetings research.

Website - Add key words to website, to metadata.

Look into free SEO (search engine optimization) options.

Add FAQ to the website. Work with Mike for web stats a week after each new ad runs; compare also with FB stats at the same time.

FAMILY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Teacher Appreciation week is the week of May 7. FSA has special things planned for the teachers for each day, such as providing lunch, candy gifts, etc.

Funky Zebra is hosting a shopping event May 17th. They will offer wine while you shop and donate 20% of the sales back to St. Luke's.

We are working with a new Spirit Wear company and looking at different things we can do with this.

The Parent Ambassador program is up and running. All families have been matched and some were able to meet at the doughnut event after the Student Led mass last weekend.

FINANCE

We are still using 154 for an estimated enrollment for next year. Based on that number, it will cost us a total of \$1,163,325.33 to educate the students. This does not include lunch or before/after school programs.

From what I hear, our enrollment numbers are looking very good. We can't stop at our target of 154, however; we need to keep going! We should probably consider increasing our goal to about 160 with a stretch goal of 175 by the start of the 2018-2019 school year. That sounds like a lot but those who don't have goals having nothing specific to strive for and thus don't put as much energy into the objective.

POLICY

In general both handbooks have several glaring issues. I will note a few of them below:

- The mission, vision, and educational objectives need to be addressed/reviewed ASAP by the Board (problem areas include, but are not limited to: many of the sentences contain ambiguous or vague language, learning objectives are not worded in a way that is measurable). This is one of the first pages of both the Parent and Teacher Handbooks and in its current form does not provide a clear and purposeful presentation of who we are as a Parish and/or School.
- The length of both handbooks is exhaustive (90 pages for the Teacher Handbook, 42 pages for the Parent Handbook) and could be more succinct.
- There are several areas of redundancy where we discuss a policy/issue and then re-discuss it later in the Handbook (eliminating redundancies could help with length).
- There are inconsistencies between the two Handbooks (things mentioned in the Teacher handbook that are not mentioned in the Parent Handbook, and vice versa).
- The overall presentation of the material needs significant improvement (how items are spaced, formatted, bulleted, bolded, use of fonts). There are lots of inconsistencies that make these documents difficult to read in its entirety.
- There are several policies about Middle School in the Teacher Handbook, so we will want to make sure that these get put in the Parent Handbook and revisited as we start the Middle School.
- We will want to consider what policies are missing from both Handbooks - (Some things I noted is that the Dress Code for teachers is not spelled out and I know that this has been a concern from some parents about what certain teachers are wearing. Amy and I worked on a Grievance Policy for Parents. Would we want to consider a Grievance Policy for Teachers? The disciplinary section of the Teacher Handbook should be edited.)
- Many policies in the Teacher handbook, in particular, where I question whether we are actually follow what is being stated.

In sum, **both Handbooks need a lot of work and an extensive review completed at multiple levels if we want them to be the best reflection of who we are as a School.** Given that we have a lot of teachers onboarding over the summer and we are starting a new academic year I think that this should be a priority for the Board. This is an opportunity to really provide a clear vision of who we are in our current state, but also allow us to focus on where we want to go. My suggestion is to have the first layer of review completed by Tonya and Father (to ensure that things are within their vision of the School, as well as consistent with State and Diocesan protocol). The second line of review should be done by Secretary

(particularly working on the overall formatting, copyediting, and presentation of the document). Then, the Policy Committee and School Board can provide another level of review.