

# St. Mary Catholic School Advisory Board Minutes

## December 15, 2009 - Approved

### Call to Order at 7:00 pm by Mary McLoughlin:

- Attendees: Fr. Donald Franks, Carlton Rider, Cindy Albert, Ben Boyden, Kellie Boyden, Jamie Bryant (St. Mark Parish Rep), Kaylene Corcoran, Elaine Hartman (Pope John XXIII Rep), John McGraw (St. Mary Parish Rep), Mary McLoughlin, Milea Quaintance (St. Bernadette Rep), Jean Robertson, Diane Stuckey, Kathy Wotruba
- Faculty Attendees: Anne Probasco, Anita Yaple
- Excused: Jane Dodds (Fisher Catholic Rep)
- Guests: Yellot Canby (parent)

### Opening Prayer: Kellie Boyden

Approval of Nov. Minutes: Kellie Boyden motioned to approve. Kaylene Corcoran seconded. The board approved.

### Reports:

- Budget Report: The report was presented and summarized. Collection of tuition is progressing well.
- Pastor's Report: Priests of the Deanery are assisting each other with reconciliation at the various local parishes. Fr. Franks' assistance with reconciliation at both Seton and Pope John XXIII parishes (outside of the Deanery) provides a wonderful opportunity to market our school.
- Administrator's Report: SchoolAnnouncement.com will be the tool for communicating school closings and emergency notifications such as power outages or early dismissals. The school is currently collecting phone numbers from families. Additional information can be found on the school website. The school phone system will be upgraded to include voice mail for all faculty and staff. Shelley Gavin will be the new part-time second grade aide starting after the Christmas break. The Catholicity goal involves a program that deals with violence education for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. Student Council has participated in multiple service projects and the entire school community provided generous donations to Heartbeats in the past month. Marketing announcements will be in the parish bulletin over the Christmas season to take advantage of the increased mass attendance, especially of non-parishioners.
- Faculty Report: The teachers expressed appreciation for generous support of the annual Poinsettia Sale. The first annual St. Mary School Science Fair will take place January 20, 2010. There will be 117 exhibitions. The teachers have selected a new reading assessment system, Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. The school is also exploring a math assessment system. These systems will be important to track students not only throughout the year, but from year to year. This is the third year of the Simple Solutions system and the school is beginning to have enough data to assess the effectiveness of it through the Terra Nova testing.
- St. Bernadette Report: The Honey Baked Ham sale completed last week. The Advent Service Project involved donations to a local shelter. Every Monday during advent is an Advent Prayer Service. Additional security is being installed surrounding the playground. Fr. John Reade was ordained at the end of November and is assisting Fr. Kessler at St. Bernadette Parish. Fr. Reade is also serving as the chaplain at Fisher Catholic. The St. Bernadette Parish Sunday mass will change from 8:00am to 10:30am in January 2010.
- St. Mark Report: The Christmas Cantata took place this past Sunday. The Easter Cantata will take place on Palm Sunday. These programs are free, although donations are accepted to pay for the musicians in the orchestra. Christmas Caroling will take place on December 30<sup>th</sup> after mass for shut-ins. A blood drive will occur on January 7, 2010.
- Pope John XXIII Report: An Advent Penance service will take place tomorrow. Christmas Eve will now have two services at 5:00pm and 5:15pm in two locations to accommodate the overflow. The church is sponsoring several service projects supporting St. Lawrence Haven, Adopt-A-Families for Christmas gifts, and providing meals for the local emergency service providers (fire, police) on Christmas Eve.
- Fisher Catholic Report: The Kairos Retreat was awesome. Fr. Reade is already active in his new role as chaplain. A high school youth ministry is currently being explored and developed for all students in Fairfield county. A team is working on a new mission statement and school vision.
- Parish Council Report: Written report was distributed. The next meeting will take place in January.
- Home and School Report: Angie Seimer has been selected to replace Diane Stuckey as the new president. Religious author Elizabeth Ficocelli will present an enrichment program to the entire school at the end of January. The Decorative Arts Center's pARTnership Program will provide an art enrichment program for all students. Other enrichment programs are taking place monthly. Holiday Happening profits are anticipated to be \$40,000–

\$42,000.

**Old Business:**

1. Marketing subcommittee: Enrollment of future and current students remains a focus. Catholic Schools Week will provide an opportunity to have an open house and have student speakers at mass. Other avenues of marketing include articles in the Catholic Times, letters to families of children baptized at St. Mary Parish, and fostering the relationship with St. Bernadette families through pen pals and outside-of-school events. John McGraw suggested working on promoting test scores and other academic achievements. Kathy Wotruba also brought up the concept of “educational safety” where academics contain Catholic/Christian core beliefs and morals.
2. School Improvement Plan: see the Administrator Report above.

**New Business:**

1. Home and School Marketing Role: defer to the Marketing subcommittee
2. Communication Survey: See November minutes for a summary of the survey results. Organization of email notification for Thursday Folder information and general announcements are in process.
3. Student Safety: A request was made for either additional staff presence or additional crossing guard time at morning drop off and afternoon pick up to avoid dangerous situations at the cross walks of Chestnut and Pearl Streets. Mr. Rider proposed having the crossing guards stay at their posts until the 8:00am bell.
4. Home and School Policy-Making: It was reaffirmed that the board operates in an advisory capacity only and is not responsible for setting policy. The school administration is responsible for setting and enforcing policy. Punitive policies are only implemented after all assistive solutions have been explored. Mr. Rider set the policy regarding fees for late pickup of Spanish Enrichment students. He will defer the decision to expand this policy to the entire E2 Enrichment Program to the Home and School Association.

**Close of Meeting at 8:45pm:** Cindy Albert motioned. Ben Boyden seconded. Mary McLoughlin adjourned the meeting.

**Next meeting:** January 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm

Submitted by Jean Robertson, St. Mary School Advisory Board Secretary