

St. Thomas More Catholic School Commission September 2018 General Meeting Minutes

Date, Time, and Location: Thursday, September 6, 2018, at 7:00 P.M. in the teachers' lounge

Meeting called to order by President Bob Brown at 7:00 P.M.

Attendance: President Bob Brown, Vice-President Kevin Foley, Secretary Pam Michel, Mary Aydt, Michael Mesina, Leni Pedres, Humberto Perez, Principal Sonja Keane, and Father Richard Rosinski.

Absent: Frank Celarek

There were 9 members in attendance; a quorum was reached. No guests in attendance.

Prayer: Prepared by Leni Pedres - Commission recited together.

Welcome: President Bob Brown

Approval of Minutes: Vice-President Kevin Foley motioned to approve and Michael Mesina seconded the motion to approve the June 7, 2018 School Commission Minutes.

Pastor's Report: Given by Father Richard Rosinski

- The vast majority of the roof over the 1st gr. - 8th gr. classrooms has been completed. There is still a spot check and then the final payment will be made for this work that was started the end of July and was worked on most of August. A vision for the rest of the roof (which is a bigger section) will start with bids going out in January or February, 2019. Then the work on the roof will start within days of school ending in early June, 2019 and finishing in July, 2019.
- The gutter system that has emptied water from the roof section that was just worked on this past summer was not working properly. It was discovered that the courtyard (between the older school building and the preschool/kindergarten building) had gutter water running through an underground tunnel. Debris was cleared but the tunnel had caved in. It was costly to have the courtyard torn up, replace the tunnel, and the landscaping would not be included and that would be an extra cost. There has been discussions to cut sections of the cement sidewalk, add pea gravel in those sections, and the downspouts would empty water into the pea gravel. This was a suggestion because having downspouts laying across the sidewalk to empty into the grass would be a safety hazard for anyone walking on the sidewalk and possibly tripping on the downspouts. Vice-President Foley suggested looking at another possibility to run the gutter system. The downspouts would go under the sidewalk, run through a trench to an emitter that pops up once the water pressure builds enough, allowing the water to disperse over a larger surface area, so it doesn't cause erosion. There will be further discussions as to what would be a viable solution for dispersing water from the gutters to the courtyard.

Principal's Report: Given by Principal Sonja Keane

- There is a 6-day report that is sent to the State of IL to show enrollment numbers on the 6th day after the first day of school. This year our enrollment is 196 students which includes preschool. For the end of the 2017-2018 school year, the enrollment was 177 students. Our 2018-2019 preschool has started with 25 students - 13 four-year-olds are mostly full time with 2 of those four-year-olds part-time and 12 three-year-olds two days a week - Monday & Wednesdays or Tuesdays & Thursdays.
- Tiffany Searls is our new preschool teacher. She had taught 7th grade and technology at our school previously. She has just come from teaching preschool at St. Peter's School in Geneva. Julie Tandy, our music teacher, will also be our librarian for the school. There will be 1 day for library and 1 day for Spanish through the Discovery Program for our students.
- During the summer, the front hall was painted and red and black lines were painted on these walls to connect the hallways with Roberts Hall and the gym. Two walls were painted in the preschool.
- New STEM tables were purchased for the library. The tables are made to move and take apart to use for different activities or discussions.
- Lisa Foley volunteered to run the new Buddy Family Program. Our school has 37 new families this school year. Current families were asked and matched up with a new incoming family for this 2018-2019 school year. Lisa Foley ran a welcoming hot dog dinner for the new and their matching families to start off the new school year. It was followed by the ice cream social with the rest of the school families, staff, and faculty. There will be reminder prompts sent to the matching families to help their new families throughout the school year for information, school events, and activities.

Old Business:

- Vice-President Kevin Foley gave instructions to Secretary Pam Michel on how to add our STM School Commission Minutes to the Team App. The Chat section is now on for discussions. Under Schedule, the School Commission members can RSVP for meetings. The school's weekly newsletter is available on School Speak or under the School Website section on the app. There are more features and functions if you go to Team App on your browser on your home computer. Vice-President Kevin Foley is always looking for continuous feedback from the Commission Members on any of the features of Team App.
- Vice-President Kevin Foley mentioned that the school yard signs have been placed correctly in people's lawns according to the sign ordinances since he has heard no complaints. He suggested that a reminder be sent out to parish and school members to take down the signs until Feb. 1, 2019. He suggested Mrs. Keane survey the new families to see what attracted them to send their children to St. Thomas More. Mrs. Keane stated that she heard many of the new families came because of "word of mouth" from our present school families on how wonderful the school is and the dedication of the staff to educate the students to the best of their ability. The increase

of students in grades K - 8 happened in all the grade levels but most of the increase of students was for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade.

- Vice-President Kevin Foley has spoken to a third party lady, who works through a state grant, and she has an upcoming event offered in Dist. 300. The upcoming event is about special needs, what is available, educate parents, and guide them through the process. District 300 will offer this parent education program with a monthly agenda. It was expressed that any St. Thomas More parent is invited to come to any of these events. They don't need to sign up but just show up. Mr. Foley will speak to this lady to send information to Mrs. Keane on upcoming programs. Mrs. Keane will follow up on the topics that will best suit our school families and distribute the information.

New Business:

- Principal Sonja Keane stated that Bob White, the Rockford Diocese IT person, helped set up the proper way to have a Face book page for our school. There is a school link on the newsletter and school website page to connect to the Face book page.
- Principal Sonja Keane has met with Ms. Rebecca Jurs, principal of Lily Lake School and Safety Coordinator for District 301. Ms. Jurs, a St. Thomas More parishioner, is willing to help with our school to improve safety measures for students and staff. A few changes have happened since their first meeting. The Principal, Administrative Secretary, Custodian, and any teacher or staff member that is outside with students will have walkie talkies on them for more immediate contact in case of emergencies instead of cell phones. Mrs. Keane collected all keys and had them numbered and logged in as to who has keys to the school building. A camera was installed at the school's main entrance door so that the office can talk and see the person or people before buzzing them in. Parents and students have been instructed not to let people in if they are standing in the entrance hallway because of safety measures. People need to buzz in and speak to the office before they are allowed entrance to the building. Any visitor to the school building must report to the office, sign in, and will receive a bright yellow badge that is visible to all staff members and students. There will be keyless entry for outside doors with fobs assigned. The administration will have control of the fobs, who can use them and for which outside doors. The fobs will help identify who is in the building and certain times they are in the building.
- A School Safety Committee is being formed to keep informed and implement safety measures for the school building. A police officer, who runs our drills, and a fireman, who is a current school parent, Ms. Jurs, Mrs. Keane, a couple of School Commission members, and a Community member will be on the School Safety Committee.
- The Fundraising Committee will be added to Article 7, Section 1, Letter A of the St. Thomas More School Commission Constitution and By-Laws under Committees Report to the School Commission. The update will be done on the School Commission webpage.

Topics for Next Meeting:

- Discussion on water dispersing in school courtyard
- Discussion of School Safety Committee and recommendations

Adjournment: With no further business to come before the School Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 P.M. A closing prayer was led by Father Richard Rosinski.

The next meeting of the St. Thomas More Catholic School Commission will be held on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 7:30 P.M. in the teachers' lounge.

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted:

Pam Michel
St. Thomas More
School Commission Secretary

Mary Aydtt moved and Vice-President Kevin Foley seconded the motion to approve the September 6, 2018 School Commission Minutes.