



SAINT MARY SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday- January 15th @ 7-9pm

Mission Statement: Saint Mary School is anchored in Catholic faith, values and proven academic excellence. We inspire students to be lifelong learners and servant leaders of our local and global community.

In attendance: Msgr. Michael Rose, Jeannie MacDonough, Stephanie Muzzy, Roseanne Mungovan, Tom Kennedy, Suzette Braun, Beth Berg, Courtney Mayo Silvani, Sue Sullivan, Philip Varghese, Kristin Scheffel and Erin McLoughlin

Call to order:

Roseanne Mungovan

- Opening Prayer/Snack/ Beverages
- November Minutes Accepted

Updates:

- Principal's Report

Jeannie MacDonough

The fall and early winter is an extremely busy and fun time at Saint Mary School. Students participated in events such as the Senior Luncheon, Elves Workshop and the Christmas Play. Many thank you notes were received from parishioners praising the students who helped at the Senior Luncheon.

The generosity of our students and their families is overwhelming. During the month of January, students and their families provided gifts for members of the Refugee Ministry, with the help of Cecile Cote. Students also raised almost \$4,000.00 for the Red4Roy fundraiser for local resident Ava Roy.

The students in the fourth, fifth and sixth grade participated in the Martin Luther King Jr. Art Contents. There were two first place, and second place winners as well as two honorable mentions. This contest was sponsored by Worcester State University.

As part of the Strategic Plan, the administration, teachers and the Curriculum Committee has been developing an evaluation and review cycle for all components of the curriculum. The development of the Social Studies curriculum is well underway. Teachers have been using the Archdiocese of Hartford standards to revamp the current Social Studies curriculum.

Catholic Schools Week will take place from January 26th- February 1st. The Opening Mass and Pasta Festival will take place on Saturday, January 26th. There will be an Open House on Sunday, January 27th from 1-3pm and a daytime Open House on Thursday, January 31st from 8:30-10:30am. This will surely be a wonderful week celebrating the specialness of our school and all Catholic schools.

- Financial Overview

Beth Berg

The committee met in January and reviewed the forecast from the Enrollment Committee. The forecast is for a decline of 5% or 12 students. There is a recommendation for a tuition increase of \$150.00. There will be no change to the registration and technology fee. Expected Health insurance increases as well as the enrollment decline in additional revenue has contributed to a projected loss for next year. The budget excludes any salary increase but any teacher that is having a step increase will receive that step. Another area of a concern is the current hot lunch program, which is currently operating at a loss. It will be reviewed and reevaluated. The School Advisory Board discussed increasing the hot lunch fee as it has remained the same price for the last 3 years. The After School Program remains a strong revenue stream. Sports programs project a loss due to the cost associated with renting gymnasium space for practices. There has been a \$20,000.00 contingency placed in the budget for the 2019-2020 school year to cover expenses not yet known due to the nature of the early budget cycle.

The finance committee has recommended an increase of \$150.00 tuition increase. The board voted and approved the increase for the school year of 2019/2020. With this increase, tuition for the 2019/2020 school year will be \$6,500 in parish and \$6,900 out of parish.

Curriculum Overview

Suzette Braun

The committee originally began looking at the Science Curriculum. The Massachusetts Department of Education and the Archdiocese of Hartford have based their curriculum on Next Generation standards. Mrs. Suzette Braun, has gathered copies of the Frameworks for K-12 Science and passed them along to the administration. It has been determined by the Curriculum Committee and the administration that Science will be the primary focus beginning in the fall of 2019.

The primary focus for curriculum development this year will be Social Studies. Teachers are working together and are developing and implementing lessons based off of the Archdiocese of Hartford curriculum. Teachers and the Curriculum Committee have done an evaluation of the curriculum and how it aligns to the Massachusetts Common Core Standards and the Archdiocese of Hartford Standards. Within the standards/frameworks, there are 4 strands: History, Civics, Economics, and Geography. Teachers reported back to Mrs. MacDonough with evaluations and lesson plans as to what they have implemented thus far and how their prior curriculum has needed to be changed or modified. Some of the grade levels prior curriculum has changed to a different grade level. Third grade will be revamping due to the change in grade level materials taught. There are some decisions that need to be made about where certain standards are taught. Some of the standards earmarked in Social Studies are actually taught in other content areas such as Language Arts, Science, and Religion. There will be a specific template provided to teachers that will help them build a lesson plan. This will allow for continuity throughout the grades. Teachers will list topics. Then they will map lesson plans by term, then by week. Currently, some of the grades are teaching the same topics because students have not been taught the content yet due to prior standards. The expectation is to broaden our teaching practices to include the use of virtual classroom experiences,

hands on activities, connecting with other schools, etc. and less lecture-based teaching. Teachers will also need to implement the Catholic teachings from the Archdiocese of Hartford. Weaving in the Catholic Identity into the social studies curriculum is the biggest change. However, much of the Catholic Identity component is included in Religion class and/or Family Life classes.

As part of the strategic plan, the curriculum will be a continuous development and evolution. Each year, a new curriculum area will be a main focus.

- Advancement Overview

Stephanie Muzzy

The Fund for Saint Mary School is currently at \$37,066. There are 51 donors at present time. Giving Tuesday provided a few dollars through donations. Many past donors that have donated again have increased their donations. There will also be a National Day of Giving from January 29th-30th. This is for all catholic schools as part of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). There was discussion as to whether or not donors that have donated continue to get requests. Donors do receive all information even after a donation. This has not seemed to be counter productive as occasionally the donor contributes again. One suggestion was to write a small note on letters to donors being sent that just says “Thank you for your prior donation” so that donors do not feel as though they are constantly being asked for money. Mrs. Stephanie Muzzy, Advancement Director, mentioned that donors also receive correspondence that is not asking for money such as Christmas and Easter cards written by children, as well as updates throughout the year.

Mrs. Muzzy is continuing to reach out to grandparents. In February, she will send out an email to grandparents promoting getting involved in the school. Included will be ways that grandparents can help their grandchild’s school such as volunteering in the classroom, volunteering at school events, making specific donations to their grandchild’s classroom and/or a monetary donation.

There will be a matching gift campaign again this year. The Advancement Committee would like to kick off this campaign earlier this year than last year. The ideas of March Madness or something in early April were mentioned. Emails and social media will direct donors to the website. The Advancement Committee is hopeful that this campaign will yield as much if not more than last years matching gift campaign.

There will also be an Easter mailing this year. Student artwork will be created to design Easter cards. The cards will be mailed out to recurring donors for our gratitude for their continued support.

- Marketing and Enrollment Overview

Stephanie Muzzy

There will be two Open Houses at the end of January. One Open House is on Sunday, January 27th from 1-3pm and the other is on Thursday, January 31st from 8:30-10:30 am. School Advisory Board Members are invited to participate in the Sunday afternoon Open House. Personal invitations will be sent to new parishioners and families registered for Saint Mary Religious Education Program. Small class sizes and learning environments in Grades 1-8 will be promoted in these invitations.

There is a new sign on Main Street advertising the Open House. This image has also been added to the Saint Mary Website as well as the Saint Mary Facebook pages. This update provides consistent branding for the school.

Preschool is a feeder for our school and the committee is hoping to increase enrollment in all 3 of the Preschool Programs. Four times a year, the preschool will host a play group to promote the program and view different areas of the school campus. It also builds fellowship and allows families that are unavailable during the week an opportunity to visit the school.

This year, Mrs. Dolan, Mrs. Muzzy and the Kindergarten teachers hosted a play date for current preschool families that will be eligible for Kindergarten next year. There were 10 families that came to see the Kindergarten, talk to the teachers, and socialize with their peers in the Kindergarten classroom. The event seemed to be well received.

There will be a Public Service Announcement that the students will provide by the end of the school year. The current Video Club Members are just learning how to produce something of this nature so that is a goal for them to be working on throughout the year. The Marketing Committee has requested members of the School Advisory Board Members view and recommend information that they find useful from other Catholic Schools that can be included in the PSA.

It was noted that the addition of language explaining the availability of tuition assistance has been added to the tuition page of the school website per a recommendation of the Marketing sub-committee.

Next Meeting- March 19, 2019