

**St. Bernadette School
Advisory Board**

May 2019

Committee Recommendations

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FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION #1: Parish Finance Committee

Reinstate the parish finance committee with two seats reserved – one for the school principal (which would be ex officio) and one other seat for a member of the School Advisory Board.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Tuition Policy

The school should develop or refresh a well-reasoned written policy for tuition payments that will facilitate and motivate parents to keep current with tuition payments.

Actions:

- The policy should be developed by the Business Manager, Principal, and Pastor.
- It should be clearly communicated to all parents.
- It should include options for monthly credit card payments, ACH payments, and one-time cash payments in full for tuition and it should address the handling of delinquent accounts.
- Recommendation - Any new parents should be offered only the three options above. (Current parents can continue with other payment methods so long as they are not in arrears.) The policy should be strictly enforced and rare exceptions approved only by the finance committee for good reason.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Organizational Framework

Define reporting relationships with an understanding of clear decision-making authority in order for the School Advisory Board recommendations to be evaluated and acted upon.

Actions:

- Develop an organization framework that is conducive to quick and efficient decision making and action.
- It should be submitted to the SAB for their advice and counsel.

**St. Bernadette School Advisory Board
May 2019
Committee Recommendations**

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION #1: EITC

Promotion of EITC program as a means for raising scholarship dollars and supporting endowment growth.

Actions:

- Continue to strengthen relationship with Judi McLane-Neeld and Foundation for Catholic Education.
- Develop a small team of early adopters to assist in identification and solicitation.
- Identify at least 30 school parents/alumni/parishioners/ vendors to solicit in spring/fall 2019 for Fall 2019 participation in program.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Annual Fund

Create comprehensive Annual Fund program with an eye towards year over year growth in the 3%-5% range.

Actions:

- We need to get a firm handle on criteria for annual fund (what counts) and also past 3-5 year history.
- Develop timeline and budget to support plan that should include: Marketing materials, a volunteer structure (i.e. chair, parent class captains, alumni class captains, etc.) and measurable goals

RECOMMENDATION #3: Donor Perfect

Increase functionality of Donor Perfect which will in turn support efforts of recommendations #1 and #2.

Actions:

- Enlist alumni and parent volunteers to update and increase quality of information in our school data base.
- Collaborate/coordinate with Parish and various affiliated church groups (i.e. CYO) to increase quality of data.

**St. Bernadette School Advisory Board
May 2019
Committee Recommendations**

FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION #1: Conduct Annual Review of Facility Needs

Annually conduct a review of facility needs to establish priorities and cost estimates.

Actions:

- The School Advisory Board (SAB) should be presented with an annual (completed prior to the annual budget process) updated needs priority listing based upon input from the school principal and maintenance manager.
- The SAB should proceed to determine funding mechanisms and recommend next steps.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Priority #1 Maintenance Items

Complete the work necessary for #1 priority items as indicated in the attached "School Facility Needs" listing.

Actions:

- Work should be targeted for completion prior to the opening of the new 2019-20 school year. Three items listed include:
 - 1.) resurfacing of the staircase on the Harper Ave stairway. This is the highest use stairway with the most significant stair tread wear, and most significant slippery surface during inclement weather;
 - 2.) installation of keypad access capability for doors located on Bond Avenue side of the school, needed for the safety of school children for access into the building.
 - 3.) installation of air conditioning in the computer lab and lunchroom.
- Determine approval process and move forward with the three indicated top priorities.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Repointing of Exterior Brick Façade

Initiate an assessment of brick repointing needs for the exterior brick façade areas identified as having the greatest need. If large scale repointing needs are identified determine next steps and if multiple bids will be required. If only small areas are in need of work, determine if this can be accomplished with local parishioner involvement (with adequate knowledge, experience, and insurance).

Actions:

- Ask Tom McFadden to have local professional (s) examine the exterior of the school to determine repointing needs, with special emphasis on areas with reported water infiltration.
- Determine project scope and obtain cost estimates and for the work to be completed.

**St. Bernadette School Advisory Board
May 2019
Committee Recommendations**

ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION #1 Competitive Tuition and Fees

Keep tuition and fees competitive with neighboring Catholic parish schools.

Actions:

Cost seems to be the single biggest barrier to full enrollment. It does not help that St. Bernadette School is considerably more expensive than some of the neighboring parish schools, especially for families with multiple children. The committee recommends that tuition and fees should be set by the Pastor, Business Manager and Parish Finance Council in consultation with the Principal and the School Advisory Board, and that every effort should be made to keep tuition and fees competitive with those charged by neighboring Catholic parish schools so that cost is never the reason a family chooses a neighboring Catholic parish school over St. Bernadette School.

RECOMMENDATION #2 Allocation of Financial Assistance

Make targeted and strategic use of Archdiocesan Transfer Grants and other forms of financial assistance, including EITC funds and other tuition assistance donations, to bolster enrollment in grades with less than optimal enrollment and to assist families with multiple children of school age.

Actions:

In each grade from PreK 3 through 8, there is an optimal enrollment number that reflects a balance between too small (from both a social and financial sustainability perspective) and too big (from both an academic/classroom management and facilities perspective). The committee recommends that the Principal should think and act strategically when allocating available financial assistance, including Archdiocesan Transfer Grants, EITC funds, and tuition assistance donations, and use those available dollars to target prospective students in grades with low enrollment numbers and families with multiple children of school age.

RECOMMENDATION #3 School Visitation Tours/Opportunities for Prospective Families

Continue Catholic Schools Week Open House and ad hoc visitation tours and identify additional opportunities for prospective students and families to tour St. Bernadette School when school is in session.

Actions:

Anecdotal evidence shows that a high percentage of prospective students and families who visit St. Bernadette School decide to enroll at St. Bernadette School. This is a credit to the Principal, the Faculty, the Students, and the individuals and organizations that have worked hard to make St. Bernadette School a safe, warm, friendly, welcoming, clean and well-equipped environment for learning, friendship, and growth. The committee recommends that the Principal should build on successful events such as the Catholic Schools Week Open House and ad hoc visitation tours she provides to increase the number of opportunities for prospective students and families to visit St. Bernadette School when school is in session.