

St. Monica School Board Meeting Minutes
6:00pm – Parish Conference Room
October 23, 2017

Attendance

Board Members

Present: Liesl Mayerson, Larry Brown, Jeff Jordan, Cecilia Martin, Jenny Gamble, Claudia Mathison, David Martin, John Isbell, Karla Armendáriz

Others Present:

Pastor: Father Michael Guadagnoli

Principal: Phil Riley

Business Manager: Debbie Diaz

Pastor's Report

- Father Guadagnoli called the meeting to order with a Scripture at 6:09pm.
- Karla Armendáriz passed out September's minutes for review. Liesl Mayerson had two minor changes on the report.
- Cecilia Martin motioned to approve as amended. David Martin seconded.

Principal's Report

- Mr. Riley reported that enrollment remains at 809.
- Focus has been to bring up Kindergarten enrollment. Kathy Leitnick and Lesley Jordan hosted a meeting for preschool directors to help open those doors.
- On the week of 10/30, SMS will be hosting the big open house of the year. The January open house has been done away with given the lack of attendance. However, Fridays with Phil will continue throughout the year.
- Reported that the 8th grade retreat at the Pines was the past weekend.
- Also, Dallas Ministry Conference took place 10/19 – 10/20. Attended a session where Janet Bozeman talked about the Gifted & Talented program. She provided informational that was practical to teachers and talked about the program from the kids' perspective
 - Mr. Riley mentioned that he would like to invite her to come over to talk to teachers.
- Reported that Parent/Teacher Conferences will be coming up at the end of this week.

Board President's Update

- Liesl Mayerson followed up about last month's topic regarding the changes to the Board's Constitution.
- She had the opportunity to speak to Ivette Konstanzer about the Finance aspect of it, and confirmed that the board is doing all that we are supposed to be doing - reviewing financials every month, etc. She also confirmed that there is no Board involvement in the audit.
 - Typically, the process consists of the board reviewing a preliminary budget at the beginning of the school year. This allows the board to make an informative

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decision for tuition rates. Then the budget is approved later in the year - in the Spring.

- The budget is then reviewed by the Priest, Principal, Business Manager and Board President.
- The Diocese is then reviews the budget on a consistent basis to do analysis, reporting, etc.
- The Board can drive things in the budget with a strategic perspective. From an oversight perspective, the board is doing what it needs to be doing.
- Liesl Mayerson also touched on the communication process of and to the Diocese. All issues must go to the board via Mr. Riley and to Dr. Alonzo. The board must do this to ensure there is order and to demonstrate that the board is running the school in order.
- On the standing committees front, Liesl Mayerson also stated that if these remain, they must be strategic and focus on moving the school forward.
- John Isbell suggested that perhaps they remain in the Constitution given that if removed it will be difficult to put them back in.
- Liesl Mayerson addressed a question regarding Strategic Pillars, and reminded all that anyone who owns a pillar can engage other board members or non-board constituents. Cecilia Martin inquired about whether any follow-up had been done with the diocese on the questions about the pillars vs the standing committees. Mr. Riley responded that he spoke with Veronica Alonzo, the Assistant Superintendent for the Catholic Diocese, and that the standing committees were an old, more traditional school model.
- Cecilia Martin reported the Diocese has a model constitution as a resource for school boards. Matt Vereecke, Diocesan Superintendent, sent a copy of the Model Constitution of the Diocese in response to an independent phone call by Cecilia Martin to the Catholic Schools Office inquiring about school board constitutions. He stated that he has been going to visit the Diocesan schools and would be happy to come to the St. Monica School Board and discuss any questions we may have about the role of the board. Cecilia Martin noted that the Model Constitution does a good job of marrying the strategic plan elements and the standing committees into one document and is a good source for our review. She previously sent a copy of the Model Constitution to Liesl Mayerson and has it available for the rest of the board's review.
- Mr. Riley stated that if the board follows the National Standards book, the board's needs will be met.
- Liesl Mayerson stated that wording will be revised and brought to next meeting for review.

Financial Report

- Debbie Diaz reported on and reviewed the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2017.
- She also presented the preliminary 2018 - 2019 budget. It was based on an 810-student enrollment and a \$200 increase in tuition for parishioners and \$400 for non-parishioners.

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Growth Mindset Mathematics - Strategic Pillar Activity Vote

- As part of her Academic Advancement Pillar, Claudia Mathison presented an initiative that she is currently exploring called on Training and Implementing Mindset Mathematics.
- Growth Mindset Mathematics rejects the notion that there are “math people.” This program supports and grows intrinsic motivation and optimal brain development in each student.
- The Idea is to introduce this method early on to kids to train them to think this way as opposed to the step-by-step math problem. It allows students to take a real-life problem and look at it mathematically, using the ideas of math with the ability to factor.
- Claudia Mathison’s proposes that this be a long-term strategic item and introduce it to teachers gradually and implement it. At the same time, educate parents about it.
- This will then allow the school to put it in places to grow organically, like iPads. Eventually, this will free our students to become learners and want to learn.
- Larry Brown asked how this changes/affects the grading system, and Mr. Riley mentioned that “constructive grading” would be something to explore as well.
- One important thing to note is that the end product needs to be 8th grader with a GPA for HS, tests, etc. so more needs to be explored.
- Board requested that a case study be presented before placing it in the strategic plan
 - Some of the questions would be: What does success look like? What potential challenges would the school/ students be facing? Is it currently used in high schools? How will learning it here serve them for higher education?
- Furthermore, the next step would be to put a timeline together and fill the holes within the timing, along with its tangible markers.

Other Business

- Jenny Gamble closed our meeting with a closing prayer at 7:57pm.
- Minutes submitted by Secretary, Karla Armendariz.