

St. Joseph School
School Board Minutes
January 14, 2009

Members Present: Joan Boddicker, Mark Bradshaw, Ken Palattao, Tony Kirsch, Lisa Nielson, Susan Wright

Ex-Officio Members: Maggie Smith, Father Blake,

Others: Bonnie Delaney, Diane Evander, Missy Isaacson, Kim Heuer, Jenny Peitz, James Johnson, Colleen Crowell

Call to Order 6:30

Approved minutes from November and for December with changes

1. Discussed enrollment issues surrounding opening the 5th grade class.

- The idea of 26 students has been around for some time. It was removed from the handbook so that it could be a guideline, but not a mandate.
- There is concern by both board members and other school parents that it is inappropriate for the 5th grade parents to voice their opinions to the administration by e-mails.
 - * But we want parents to be able to contact the school if they have an issue they want discussed.
 - * Setting things on the board agenda is not always fast enough.
- If we don't have a process for deciding what to do in these circumstances, parents may claim favoritism if their child doesn't get in but another does.
 - * We don't want the administration to appear to be making decisions based on the number of parents making requests for one outcome or the other.
 - * There are too many factors to consider to have the decision be based on a bright line rule.
- This is an administration decision, so doesn't really involve the board.
 - The administration will make a decision based on all factors.
 - Parents should not be discouraged from contacting the administration if they want to voice an opinion on a situation.

2. We have to consider what to do about growing class sizes.

- Having one class room teacher and breaking the children into groups for different subjects is one possibility.
 - * That is difficult to do with younger children (K-2 or so) because subjects are taught throughout the day, not in isolated time blocks.

- * One school in Iowa accomplished it in the younger grades by having groups of 8-10 students come to the teacher's desk for instruction while the others sat quietly and worked on their assignments.
- Older students (grades 6-8) are more able to be split for separate subjects.
 - * There is a limit to the size of classes for older students because of the size of the classrooms and the kids.
- Various alternatives will have to be discussed during budgeting.

3. New standardized testing for the end of the year.

- Maggie and Kim are looking at the MWEA tests.
- Maggie has looked into the Stanford 10 test.
- The Iowa tests are going to computer based testing only.
- A decision on which tests to take will be made by February 11th so we can get the tests ordered if they are paper tests.

4. Kindergarten and PreK tuition and registration

- A comparison of the other Pre-Schools shows:
 - * 2 day at \$90 or \$112, or 3 day at \$130 or \$158 per month.
 - * Registration (and supply) fees are \$20, \$75 and \$95.
 - * Class sizes seem to be 18 – 20 based on telephone inquiry.
 - * 5 day (2 ½ hours) is \$195 monthly.
 - * St. Joe's is currently \$100 per month and \$144 per month for 2 and 3 day, respectively.
- Annual rates will be \$1008 for 2 day, \$1422 for 3 day and \$2250 for 5 day.
- The registration fee will be \$95.
- Registration for current families will be mailed the week of Feb 16th and it will be due March 2nd.
- A fee for late registration should apply so we can get accurate enrollment numbers for the budgeting process.

5. The Apple 1 to 1 program

- Joan and Colleen both attended the Apple program at Our Lady of Grace. The program is great, but is very expensive.
- Colleen talked to teachers and students. The teachers found that it was a lot of work the first year. Some try to take one project per quarter to the computer.
- Students used their computers to different extents for different classes.
- It could take some costly upgrade of the infrastructure to have wireless networks everywhere as well as getting all teachers laptops to work with first.

- Smart boards in the class rooms might be a good middle ground for St. Joe's to look at doing in the future, as it would take advantage of the projector system we have.
- The board will continue to discuss this as part of the technology budget.

6. Fundraising

- All fundraising should be scheduled to keep track of the different projects.
- Susan will work on a calendar.

(Closed session 9:20)

Open session 9:50

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

There will be a budgeting meeting on January 28, 2009 at 6:30.

The next regular meeting will be February 11, 2009.