

Diocesan Catholic School Board (DCSB)
Cathedral Square Center - Room D/E
Minutes
Tuesday, December 3, 2019

I. **Prayer** offered by Sue Haas-Williams.

II. **Roll Call**

Present: Jill Annable, Andrew Blum, Rev. Tom Cavera, Dave Faber, Rosa Fraga, Sue Haas-Williams, Phil May, Sterling Morse, Sr. Rosita Schiller, John Vande Guchte, Leah Wareck

Absent: Rev. Godfrey Onyekwere

Others Present: Conrad Cuncannan, Shelley Hofmann

III. **Communications: Questions related to Conrad's report**

Conrad reviewed the new use of TeamSnap to improve scheduling of games and communication with parents. The newly updated GRACEAC handbook was approved by the GRACEAC representative council. Seventh and eighth grade football was separated by grade which was GRACEAC's goal for these levels. It was nice to join a league that accomplished this goal. The new calendar with Winter I and Winter II is going well so far.

For the GRACEAC handbook, a suggestion was made to change Christian values to Catholic values in the first paragraph. GRACEAC will need to consider that all schools who participate in GRACEAC are not Catholic; yet, the league is Catholic.

IV. **Approval of October Minutes:** approved as written

V. **Committee Reports**

A. **Admissions Committee:** no report

B. **Mission Effectiveness Committee:** The sole focus of the January 21 DCSB meeting will be the retreat. It was determined that the Mission Effectiveness (ME) committee will lead the retreat. How will Janet from Wichita be involved in the retreat? It was suggested that the ME committee ask Janet to introduce the Wichita experience and explain the history of how the diocese of Wichita became a stewardship leader. In preparation for the retreat, each board member received a copy of the book, A Grateful Response to God's Abundant Gifts and was asked to read the book prior to the retreat. As a side note, the ME committee will use Theology of the Body as their topic for their Spring Summit session.

- C. **Development Committee:** no report. There is a significant divergence with where our schools are in terms of development efforts.
- D. **Finance Committee:** no report. There were many positive comments and a lot of interest in the co-op purchasing presented by Xperience Inc. More than one person asked why the diocese wasn't mandating this effort of all schools and parishes.
- E. **Strategic Planning Committee:** no report. Participants asked for more sample strategic plans. There were a lot of questions about how to get people engaged at strategic planning events. Sue graciously offered her assistance to the schools present; however, there may be a need to look at additional assistance depending on how many schools reach out to Sue.
- F. **Marketing Committee:** no report. There was a lot of idea-sharing and discussion. Due to more than expected number of participants, we needed more chairs.
- G. **Executive Committee:** no report. Jill commented on feedback from three different principals who found great value in this session.

VI. Superintendent/Asst. Superintendent Reports: no questions about the report. Sr. Rosita thanked Jill for her focus on Scholastic book fairs and finding alternative options. Significant discussion took place about the best way to continue encouraging schools to seek alternative programs. Jill and Dave will continue providing information and potential communication re: changes to book fairs that the schools can use if they find them helpful. Dave presented the desire to talk with NCEA about Scholastic as an exhibitor at their conventions.

A question about tuition delinquency was raised. Is a \$30,000 improvement considered to be good? It is encouraging that both September delinquency and October delinquency are down from last year. According to Smart Tuition, the schools in the Diocese of Grand Rapids have very low tuition delinquency compared to other schools with whom Smart Tuition works.

Dave presented an update on the Promise Zone progress.

VII. Discussion Topics

A. Summit Feedback

There were 69 yes votes that the Summit was effective; there was only one no vote that the Executive Committee session was not effective. Overall, participants are asking for more time to share ideas and best practices and less time on presentations. A suggestion for allowing submission of questions ahead of time was offered. The DCSB needs to select topics early in advance and publish them to build interest. The board discussed polling the cohorts for topics of interest.

There is some disconnect with not getting everyone back together at the end of the Summit. Would it be worthwhile to allow school teams to meet at the end of the Summit to share what they learned with each other? The suggestion was made to designate space for each school in attendance to meet at the end of the Summit.

Can we incorporate remote meeting capability for schools who cannot be in physical attendance?

B. School Revenue as a Percent of Parish Offertory

School revenue is directly linked to parish offertory, even in parishes without schools. Parish revenue has generally been steady or declining. This is a challenge for many of our schools, and all school boards should be aware and consider collaboration in improvement efforts.

Parishes need to consider other ways of giving including text to give, automated giving, etc. The challenge is how to engage parishioners, especially younger generations who often do not carry cash or have checkbooks. There is a variety of tools available; however, there needs to be a solid, overall plan for communication and implementation.

VIII. Action Items

a. Plan for Talent Recruitment/Catholic College Visits

Dave shared an updated plan for recruiting and hiring teachers. However, one find is that many of the schools are looking for ways we could help them grow their programs. It will take some time to develop relationships.

Dave has drafted an initial letter inquiring about how colleges/universities could help our recruiting efforts including specific recruiting activities and opportunities on campus in which we could participate. Some suggestions include: shorten the letter to one page, mention Bishop's award/support for Catholic education, include action item that we will call you in x number of weeks, and include preference for bilingual candidates.

b. Frontline Education Electronic Recruitment Tool

There is no update yet on this particular tool, except for inquiring of the colleges and universities in which we are interested in recruiting teachers what tools they use and encourage their students to use.

c. Visits

Once schools are identified, we will work on assigning who will visit.

d. Budget

Once we have a better understanding of our opportunities, a more detailed budget can be developed.

e. Messaging Recommendations for Pastors Update

Dave Sipka is willing to put together a best practices toolkit for pastors with schools and pastors of parishes without schools.

We have sent a small token of thanks and certificate of recognition to Dave S. John suggested inviting Dave S. to our June meeting, so board members can thank him in person.

f. Pastor Collaboration Meetings Update

Dave F. is contacting Fr. Peter Damian, and John is contacting Fr. Mark Peacock to inquire about hosting fellow priests in a best practice sharing/collaboration gathering. The goal is to have these gatherings in January or February.

IX. New Business: DCSB Building and Grounds Committee

There was some discussion about the need for a diocesan Building and Ground Committee when the board doesn't have school facilities to maintain. It is important to help schools create models, generate ideas, and share best practices for maintenance, facilities, and risk management. This would be very valuable for smaller schools. Sr. Rosita motioned for the establishment of a DCSB Building and Grounds Committee. John seconded the motion. Board members shared a few names of possible committee members and were asked to forward any other candidates to Dave.

X. Closing Prayer: Prayer for Bridging Faith and Future was prayed by all.

XI. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm.

DCSB Retreat is Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 6:30pm in D/E.