

Diocesan Catholic School Board (DCSB)
Executive Session Google Hangouts Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, May 12, 2020

I. **Prayer** offered by John.

II. **Roll Call**

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

Absent: Phil May, Rev. Godfrey Onyekwere

Others Present: Shelley Hofmann

III. **Approval of April Minutes:** approved as written.

IV. **COVID-19 Response and Recovery Discussion**

A. Schools finish strong remotely

Jill gave an update on current remote instruction and teacher development. We are very excited about the work that continues to be done in our schools. Weekly teacher, grade-level cohort meetings continue to be well-attended and productive. The focus has shifted from “what do you need” to more professional development and overall sharing of best practices. For example, teachers have accepted that tests and quizzes are now “open book” and assessments need to become more analysis-focused. Teachers are also realizing that each child needs something different, which requires individualized learning plans. Erin is scheduling weekly one-on-one tech support with teachers by appointment. Some teachers are burning out quickly, but overall they are very responsive. We have also realized the need for common technology platforms.

A board member inquired about what guidance parents have been given to help their children learn. Teachers have learned that they have to do some one-on-one meetings with students. Parents are exhausted and are starting to question next year. Parents are concerned about being able to maintain the learning-at-home schedule and workload while going back to work full time. Some parents may have to hire someone to be home with their children which may jeopardize the ability/desire to pay tuition for Catholic schools.

1. CARES Act provisions for schools: PPP, ESSER, GEER, and ESF-REM

We have received confirmation that all schools who applied for the CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) have all received funding. We have federal guidance that is favorable to non-public schools. Schools are hearing from their Local Education Agencies (LEAs) about their allocation of Elementary and

Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. The Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds have been allocated to states, although we do not yet know how these funds will be utilized in Michigan. Strong federal advocacy led to non-public schools receiving an equitable share. Finally, Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models (ESF-REM) grants provide support to State educational agencies (SEAs) in States with the highest coronavirus burden to address specific educational needs of students, their parents, and teachers in public and non-public elementary and secondary schools. We do not yet know how this fund will be allocated.

Our schools are well positioned to receive an equitable portion of this CARES Act funding for K-12 schools.

2. Childcare update

Divine Providence Academy child care has reopened. Children will not be admitted with temperatures over 100.3. Teachers are wearing masks; students are not. Our other child care centers are determining when is the right time to reopen based on viability.

3. Planning Teams for 2020-21

A. Plans for Fall 2020 school start on-time (at school, remotely, or hybrid)

B. What will DOGR Catholic schools look like in the fall - Planning doc

1. Technology platforms and equipment

2. Governance and leadership

3. Health and safety

C. Timeline to start school on time

We have begun to assemble planning teams based on the four domains for the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools (NSBECS) - Mission & Catholic Identity; Governance & Leadership; Academic Excellence; and Operational Vitality. We collected questions from principals during the April principals' meeting, and we then organized the questions by domain. We asked principals to join one of the four planning teams based on their expertise. Teams are meeting every other week to draft answers, raise new questions, and plan for different scenarios for reopening schools. Planning teams will be adding to the draft messaging document "What Will Catholic Schools Look Like". We recognize the need for communication to our families, and we plan to send this week our first letter to families that begins to explain general plans for the fall. Dave asked DCSB members for their input on this letter. A suggestion was made to include a promise for "more specific information will be coming soon". The board recommended to stay in constant communication with families to provide reassurance that we are working to create the best possible scenarios for their

students. A letter every two weeks would be beneficial. The board made some additional suggestions including:

- Continue to thank parents for their hard work and dedication in working with teachers to help educate their children
- Acknowledge that the end of this year has obviously been very different for everyone, and we have heard parent concerns for what our schools will look like next year
- Indicate we are working on plans to get back to a more “normal” school schedule, given the present circumstances, and that we will continue to find ways to keep the time parents spend helping their children consistent with past years
- Focus on why choose **Catholic** schools during COVID-19
- Provide some considerations like staggering attendance, hybrid model, etc. to give parents some things to ponder
- Include examples of religious education as part of students’ daily work.
- Include in the value proposition how we will help families get back to a more “normal” school schedule given the present circumstances; how we can mirror the school day in a remote setting.

A board member raised the question about the timeline for a specific recommendation, so parents have an expectation for what the school year will look like and so faculties can plan accordingly. Dave asked for assistance from the Marketing Committee to help determine the ideal timeline for communications to be delivered. Then, the planning committees will work backwards to prepare communications.

A suggestion was made to script some talking points for principals to use with parents who present objections or obstacles.

Dave has asked schools to prioritize CARES funding for five technology priorities:

1. All teachers and students have high speed internet access with security
2. 1:1 teacher-to-device and student-to-device ratios
3. Join shared Google domain. Will provide options to pastors for parishes to have separate domain if needed.
4. Common Learning Management System - the hope is that DOGR/OCS can provide financing for the first year based on reallocated budget dollars
5. Swivls or similar recording equipment in each classroom

Funding for health and safety equipment will also need to be prioritized.

A board member questioned if OCS have enough resources (financial and staff)

to manage these changes? OCS is working closely with the DOGR I.T. Department to understand resource needs.

A board member suggested that schools should convey these technology priorities to parents at some point this summer. It would give parents confidence that their child's experience will be as close to in-person in the classroom as possible.

Schools will closely follow the local health departments and CDC guidance to provide a safe school environment for all. School boards are meeting remotely; however, committee work seems to have diminished. Dave asked the board for suggestions on how to re-engage our local boards to help schools.

In response to a question about which planning committees Dave needs the board's help with, Dave asked the following considerations:

Sue - Operational Vitality Planning Committee
John - Governance and Leadership Planning Committee
Sr. Rosita - Mission and Catholic Identity Planning Committee

Shelley will send meeting invitations.

B. Emergency Financial Assistance –

Schools are anticipating a great need for emergency financial aid for families in the fall. We need to think about what this means and how we might be able to create something that will help all of our schools in this area.

The board went into Executive Session to further discuss emergency financial assistance and funding.

V. Superintendents' Report - Questions from written report - none

VI. Committee Reports - Questions from written report

1. Strategic Planning - none

VII. Action Items

A. Recruitment of new members: Finance, Admissions, Clergy, Hispanic Community, Next-Gen (Outgoing members - Dave, John, Rosa, Fr. Tom, Phil)

Rosa has a potential new board member. Shelley will send a board application form.

Leah has a name to share with Dave.

John has a candidate also. Shelley will send the board application form.

VI. **Closing Prayer:** Prayer for *Bridging Faith & Future* was prayed by all.

VII. **Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., in Cathedral Square Room D/E. Please note, this may be moved to a virtual Google MEET depending on COVID-19 reopening progress.

This meeting may need to be rescheduled due to tentative WC graduation.