

Diocesan Catholic School Board (DCSB)
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 10, 2022

I. **Prayer** offered by Tim.

II. **Roll Call**

Present: Andrew Blum, Cheryl Butkus, Dave Faber, Sarah Grey, Sue Haas-Williams, Kristina Martinez-Precious (virtual), Sr. Colleen Ann Nagle (virtual), Patty Schrand, Tim Thimmesch, Leah Wareck (virtual)

Absent: Damon Bouwkamp, Rev. Darrel Kempf, Rev. Godfrey Onyekwere

Others Present: Shelley Hofmann, Luzia Tartari (virtual)

III. **Admissions and Enrollment Update**

Luzia Tartari addressed questions about her written report.

- **Why is preschool enrollment for next year lower than usual?** In some cases, schools have not yet entered preschool enrollments into Infinite Campus.
- **What is the difference between budgeted and targeted enrollment numbers?** Budgeted enrollment is a conservative estimate, often based on current enrollment. Targeted enrollment is a more aggressive enrollment goal.
- **Continuous enrollment** rolls students over to the next year without having the family re-enroll. If a family decides not to attend, then they withdraw and are taken out of Infinite Campus and the enrollment number.
- **Vocation scholarships** - With two students interested, would we split the scholarship or award only one? There is no limit on the number of vocation scholarships. Each interested student must be part of a discernment group either through his school or through the diocese.

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

V. **Committee Reports: Questions from written report**

A. Mission Effectiveness (ME) - The ME committee met this afternoon and discussed the idea of having student retreats on Theology of the Body (TOB) in every school this coming school year. The committee would give ideas and make themselves available to local ME committees to assist if needed. Local ME committees would design their own retreats based on their individual school communities. A suggestion was made that it would be helpful to have the diocesan ME committee develop a plan for a student retreat including resources. This may be helpful for religious education directors as well. Another suggestion was to pilot a retreat with one or two schools, and target one or two grade levels, in the fall. Sister Colleen Ann would like to use the student retreat experience as a topic for the fall Summit. Another consideration, of particular importance in the Hispanic community, is to involve the

family in the retreat. The diocesan ME committee is also researching resources in Spanish and other languages.

The diocesan ME committee discussed that each school's ME committee should have at least five members.

B. Strategic Planning - The strategic planning committee is moving along on the refresh of the Bridging Faith and Future. Sue and Dave will be synthesizing the tactics next. Sue is also working with St. Thomas the Apostle and IHM on their strategic planning processes.

VI. Superintendents' Report -

GRACEAC - Conrad Cuncannan, who recently resigned as GRACEAC Athletic Director, offered suggestions for organizing GRACEAC. Dave is reviewing the suggestions and evaluating ideas.

Gender and Identity Advisory Committee - Bishop Walkowiak has asked the committee to assist him in addressing these issues and providing resources for schools and parishes.

Safety grants - Four of thirteen schools received safety grants. How does this compare to past years? In the past, schools have received higher dollar amounts. One school was rejected because it did not have a school safety plan approved by the Michigan State Police. Other schools successfully used the diocesan Emergency Operational response Plan (EOP) with no issues. Dave will look into what the diocesan EOP may be missing. Tim would like to know why the nine schools were denied. Dave said that schools are not usually denied, there are just not enough funds to go around so certain kinds of projects get prioritized. This year the state did not give parameters about what kinds of projects would be prioritized. Tim suggested that maybe school safety grants can be a focus for the Building and Grounds session at the fall Summit.

EANS funding - In Michigan, EANS transactions are managed through Class Wallet.

Teacher Recruitment - Sarah shared that we are continuing to actively recruit teachers. The number of open positions right now seems manageable, and we are hoping the number does not increase significantly.

Assessments - Schools are actively assessing students through MAPS testing and ACRE testing. Sarah will share results this summer. There may be an opportunity to look at proficiency compared to local public schools. A board member suggested looking at data for comparison to similar dioceses. There is a cost to this so we are going to take a look at what additional information may be available through information that is already available before pursuing additional cost.

VII. Discussion topics

- A. **Spring Summit** - Participants value discussion and would like less presentation and more discussion time.

Bishop mentioned the development of a “parental covenant”. What is Bishop’s goal, and are there less controversial ways to accomplish the goal versus requiring a parent to sign a covenant? Would a statement or bullet points from the Bishop regarding parent expectations achieve the goal? There was discussion about whether this should be communicated as an expectation of parents or an invitation. How can this be worked into evangelization efforts? The board would like a clearer understanding of Bishop’s intent.

- B. **COVID update on schools** - There have been limited cases since our last meeting. It’s beautiful to see schools re-engage their communities and host in-person events.
- C. **Update on feasibility study for new school in the northwest deanery** - The kickoff meeting went very well, and there is a lot of enthusiasm among committee members. Many creative ideas were discussed. Divine Providence Academy is a great model, and Father Andrew and Kate will be instrumental in sharing their experiences and what they have learned. There was consensus about approaching St. James in Montague about engaging in the process. Childcare was also raised as a need among parents in the area.
- D. **Update on Let MI Kids Learn (LMKL) Petition Drive** - Although we do not have a report on the current numbers of signed petitions, the campaign has increased the number of paid circulators. The deadline has also been extended to May 17 for mailed petitions and May 23 for overnight shipment of petitions.
- E. **Next steps for the BFF plan** - Dave, Sue and the strategic planning committee will work on the revised tactics based on the principals’ feedback. The tactics will be shared at the fall Summit, and participants will be asked to give feedback. The goal is to have a final updated BFF by Spring 2023.
- F. **Officer nominations for 2022-23** - Andrew is willing to serve as Chair, and Tim is willing to serve as Vice Chair. If you want to nominate yourself or someone else, please let Sue know before the June 14 meeting at which time voting will take place.

VIII. **Action Items** - none

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

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:18pm.

Last 2021-22 DCSB meeting is June 14 (Prayer: Leah) at 6:30 p.m. at Cathedral Square.

[2022-23 Meeting Schedule](#) - Shelley will send calendar invites after the June 14 meeting.

MISSION

We prepare students to seek and fulfill God's plan for learning and life.

VISION

Be a collaborative and strategically focused body delivering leadership, mentorship and expert recommendations that enhance the quality and growth of our Diocesan schools.