

St. Gerald School Board Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2014

Present

Fr. Malcolm, Pastor
Al Theis, Principal
Jen O'Reilly, President
Paulina Bednarek, Secretary
Theresa Munoz
Daniel Cerceo
Nicholas Suh
Jennifer Cronin

Absent

Joanne Chavez Buchanan
Michael Johnson
Gail Stearns-Hussein, Vice-President

Guests

None

Called to order at: 7:05pm

Opening Prayer: Mr. Theis

Principal's Report

- Inoculations - Tribune article was discussed where St Gerald's Immunization percentage was disclosed as 87% - other local schools were around 95 - 97%
 - Mr. Theis looked back through the records and apologized. On November 10th report was put in, we had 86% of required forms in. Which does not mean that 14% of the school is not up to date with immunizations, just that their forms were not accounted for. Our actual immunization percentage is 95%
 - Mrs. Colesby plus helpers are getting paperwork in - medical forms for 48 children were not accounted for. Out of those 35 are in.
- In the future the numbers will be in accordingly
 - Mr. Theis is going to send a letter home, explaining the situation.
- Tomorrow the teachers will have an in-service
 - It will be in house regarding test data deliberations
 - 1st and last page of the paperwork submitted to diocese
 - discuss test scores
 - set goals
- May 29
 - Started with advanced ed
 - 20% of schools will be visited in April

- February 24th we will know if they will come to St Gerald
 - We still work on it as if they are coming
 - Every school will be visited in a 5 year period
- March 2012
 - We were visited
 - 2nd to last school to be visited under the old regime
 - Every March we revisit 5 year goals and assess what still needs to be completed.
- Board reviewed old versions of Assessment summaries
- Something we haven't offered and maybe should is offering to parents to look at the scores deeper - they are always available in the office for parents to request.
- Our local goal is to take the Archdiocese Religious curriculum map and go through it and see how we compare
 - In the past we were missing social teachings (there are 7 of them)
 - Maybe we ought to do a little more of those
- Dan Cerceo asked about comparison data between schools
 - Mr. Theis said data is given in clusters and areas but not school to school directly
 - In regards to scores we are in the middle, Mr. Theis will try to bring data to the next meeting
 - Blue Ribbon status is for schools scoring higher than 80/85% on testing
 - Ours are 50/60 percentile range and in Junior High in the 70% range
 - Nicholas Suh brought up Chicago Magazine and in that our scores were comparable to other schools
 - One of the school's goals is how to raise scores.
 - Jen Cronin said that it will be interesting to see how the 3rd graders do on testing as they are the ones who are the first class to stare with the Super Kids Reading program
- Mr. Theis went on to explain more about Blue Ribbon status and that even though we are not a Blue Ribbon school we have other accomplishments to show for it such as the Academic Bowl and Spelling Bee placements
- Board mentioned all the discussions currently on Facebook about Catholic Schools as parents make their decisions this time of year
- Teresa Munoz said our Preschool program always does well
 - Discussion ensued about how we have the 2nd largest population of the local Catholic Schools, moderate tuition, family atmosphere, traditions and now a gym.
 - Friday night Polish might also help bring in more families
 - Teresa mentioned the economy does play a role and maybe if vouchers are offered by new governor it will make a difference
 - We can also encourage families to apply for scholarships
 - Nicholas Suh asked through whom are the scholarships available.
 - Saint Gerald does have some but there is limited availability. Scholarships are also offered through the Diocese.

- The Action for Children Department for example is used by parents of extended day students and they may use some of those funds towards tuition
 - We have 10 families using it and it ranges between \$100-\$600 a month
 - It depends on the age of the children and income level
 - It is a graduated scale
- Discussion ensued about Open House and how they can be improved upon
 - Some unexpected things to occur at the open house included a family who needed a spanish speaking tour guide, and parents asking questions that don't usually come up such as lockdown drill questions.
- Procedure of lockdown will be reviewed with help of a Sergeant with the Oak Lawn Police Department
 - They came last year and will talk to us regarding what they are doing Oak Lawn wide
 - There are differences between soft and hard lockdowns in classroom
- Fundraising for dinner dance is ongoing
- There will be a 1pm mass for Ash Wednesday
- February 27 will be confessions worldwide
- Mission Boxes are going home and Mrs. Brennan is organizing that program
 - In the past years we have been in the top 5 parishes for generosity

Pastor's Report

- Money issues
 - Deficit needs to be reduced
 - Last year we ran a \$85,000 deficit
 - \$35,000 uncollected tuition from 2013/2014
 - At St. Daniel the school board ran the collections
 - If anyone was more than 2 months behind they would contact them
 - School board members are being asked to step in and contact a few families who are behind in their tuition payments.
- We need parents to register to be parishioners
 - We have 30 letters going to people who need to register
- Teresa Munoz said maybe we can look into electronic payment to the church however Father Malcolm wants to get people to come to Mass
 - Teresa also asked why there is no crying room to make it easier on families with young children.
 - Fr. Malcom said he encourages families with young children to have them sit in church and that it is not an issue if they cry.
- Class sizes and enrollment were discussed
 - It was mentioned that maybe our enrollment will go up if we open classrooms
 - The week before school started we had to open a 2nd classroom because of numbers and then a couple students didn't return and we could have kept it

at 1 classroom - this affects the school's bottom line because a 2nd teacher had already been hired.

- Dan Cerceo suggested we raise tuition for parents who are not parish members
- Another thing that make St. Gerald's also very marketable and appealing to families is that there is no mandatory fundraising or volunteering
- In regards to the electric and heating company
 - The mild winter will be good for us, we are on a budgeted monthly payment plan and may get money back in June if we have not used the estimated amount.
 - last year we had a \$20,000 bill in June due to the excessive cold.
- We still have gym debt to pay off
 - Indoor soccer, hockey and yoga are currently going on in there
- Nicholas Suh asked how late we let the tuition go before we start calling
 - Currently it is around 5-6 months
 - This coming Fall would like to implement policy that families need to be caught up at least by 2 months
- Jen Cronin and Dan Cerceo will be making calls to families who owe money

President's Report

- Vaccine discussion was to be brought up but it was already covered earlier in meeting.

Committee Reports

- None

Old Business

- Jen Cronin brought Wish List of the 4 teachers who asked for items.
 - A Signup Genius will be created and posted on Facebook
- Nicholas Suh brought up the website
 - There is outdated information on there
 - He did a tour with Ben Kingston from the company who helps us
 - Nicholas will get correct information to Mrs. Slifka to update the computer program information
- Wi-Fi in the building was discussed
 - The question is if there is an academic justification for it
 - Dan Cerceo can get the equipment at no cost to us
 - Will have upcoming discussions on this
- We will also have Mrs. Slifka add the school's Facebook link on the website
 - It is public and anyone can like it

- o Maybe we can post it on Moms of Oak Lawn for others to follow the page

New Business

- Teresa Munoz brought up issues regarding Coach Reif
 - o He is not very active with the students, and many parents have voiced their concerns.
 - o Mr. Theis said he is contracted out through Mac Educational and they will review his renewal with us for next year

Announcements

- None

Comments/Questions from the Floor

None

Motion to approve minutes from December 2014: Jen Cronin **Second:** Paulina Bednarek

Motion to Adjourn: Jen Cronin **Second:** Nicholas Suh

Closing Prayer: Fr. Malcolm

Adjourned: 8:16 pm