

**St Luke School Commission
Minutes from Tuesday, April 6, 2010**

Meeting called to order: 7:14pm

In attendance:

Steve Weber-Principal
Michele Tillery- Asst. Principal
Donna Bennett-PTO
Father Noah Casey

Voting Members:

Walt Kuhn
Jen Money-Brady
Doug Derringer
Kathleen Leppert
Tracy Miller
Jim Archer
Pat Crossin
Adam Nelson
Jeannine Goldner- Pastoral Council

Excused

Steve Berenyi
David Daniels
Michael Cloran- Pastoral Council

Guests: Mary Jo Linn, Heather Garrison

Opening Prayer- Tracy Miller

Roll- Jen Money-Brady

March & Special Meeting Minutes Approved
By Walt Kuhn Seconded by Pat Crossin

President's Report- Bridget Kennedy (see report)

Bridget discussed the agenda for the meeting and the performance evaluations. The Marketing Committee is meeting and in a developmental phase. Bridget had a parent volunteer to help with the Marketing Committee and she will provide her professional experience in customer service. The tuition rate with percentages will be addressed by the Marketing Committee as well as the church subsidy, so that the message is clear. Michele and Steve will help the Marketing Committee with this effort.

Principal's Report- Steve Weber (see report attached)

Steve talked about the Easter weekend he experienced. He also spoke about the homily he heard while he was in New York. The homily applied to our challenging situation with enrollment.

Kindergarten and Enrollment Data

We have several families that are leaving the school due to various reasons. This shift in numbers along with the shift in kindergarten numbers makes our projected enrollment for next year at 556 instead of the 569 that we had previously discussed. This represents a cash loss of \$32,000 in addition to the potential loss that we like to have as a cushion, which will be about \$50,000. We will need to cut this from the salaries. There are four positions that will help with this shortage (two higher paid teachers are leaving, the library/enrichment position will not be filled and the ¾ office position will not be filled). We need to control the costs instead of raising tuition. It doesn't mean losing a job, but rearranging what people do.

Steve spoke about transferring credits to the high school level. He will be accommodating the various high school grading scales by supplying the high schools with a transcript that contains only percentages instead of letter grades, so that the high schools can make their own decisions. Bridget asked if the high schools will be willing to work with our transcripts, but Steve said that he can't control what the high schools decide to do. Pat asked if the high school will see the letter grade and the answer is that only parents will see the letter grade, high schools will not see the letter grade.

Safety Report-Michele Tillery

The binders and the flip charts are ready to be distributed. They will be in place by the end of the month. The front office will be renovated with funds from the PTO. Safety and aesthetics will be the focus of this renovation. The desks are too high for volunteers and employees to be able to see the people coming into the office. Michele discussed another situation in which a teacher had her wallet stolen or lost, and someone used the credit card at Target that morning. The school is confident that the wallet was not stolen, but was lost along the way to school, and none of our students were involved in this situation. This situation brought up a good point that no one should leave belongings in their car and they need to be mindful of their belongings in the school. Bridget mentioned that the entire Archdiocese has been going through the safety reevaluation.

Committee Reports

By-laws: Nothing to report.

Communications: Nothing to report.

Nominations: Bridget covered Steve's report. Bridget asked if Father Noah had received a copy of the list of people willing to run for school commission. There are four school people that are running, and no at-large members running.

Strategic Development: Surveys are being analyzed. We will present the results at the May meeting. We had a lower participation by about 50 people. Kathleen will present the details with graphs and the school commission will receive a full document with all of the comments and data. Recommendations will be made within the full document. This will be an official presentation in May and the final document in June.

Finance was moved to the end of the meeting.

Written Reports

Pastoral Council: No meeting.

Faith Formation: No meeting.

Buildings and Grounds: Jim missed the meeting.

Stewardship: Steve was unable to attend.

PTO: The office renovation is the last big project that the PTO will address this year.

SLAC: No meeting.

Finance/Budget

Walt passed out the spreadsheet for current and future budget numbers as well as enrollment numbers. This morning the new enrollment numbers were presented. Enrollment does affect tuition, but we are trying to be conscious about raising tuition anymore than we previously discussed. Walt presented the assumptions under the presented 2010-2011 Budget: the main point being that there will be a \$50 increase to the first student base rate within tuition. Other assumptions and facts were presented within Walt's written report. Tracy asked Walt what the 556 families have paid. Steve answered that families have paid the deposits that were required. She was concerned about the summer melt that typically happens. There is a cushion within the budget for 3 non-parishioner/5 parishioner families to leave. Jim asked if the unsure families were accounted for in this budget and the answer is yes- 17 are not returning and 3 are returning. Bridget concluded that despite our estimate of families that would stay/leave from the last budget meeting (we tried not to include them in our numbers), but they were included in the final number, because we are feeling this loss now. Father Noah asked about kindergarten "competitors" for St. Luke. Michele clarified that there are 6 students who will be going to a competitor's kindergarten, but they will start first grade with St. Luke. Steve talked about Lilly employees that utilize their child care benefits instead of sending their students to St. Luke. Michele said that she had one family say that they didn't want to pay for kindergarten when it is not required of them. Bridget said that we definitely compete with the Carmel public schools. Pat said that we lose people to the Bureau of Jewish Education's kindergarten program. Adam asked for clarification about financial aid applications. 47 students applied for financial aid (25 families) by the deadline. There was \$73,000 of identified need and we can meet 56% of that need (\$41,000). Not all families qualified for financial aid. Adam asked about the size of families, and Bridget clarified that we don't have a lot of 4 and 5 kid families, and we don't have many that will be at St. Luke at the same time (due to different schools or high school). Doug asked how this would affect the families that applied for aid and their enrollment. Steve said in our previous experience, we have not lost families due to not receiving financial aid. Bridget asked how many families did not receive any financial aid support, and Steve said that 7 families did not receive a financial aid recommendation, which is similar to last year's families that did not receive financial aid. Steve said that Brebeuf and Chatard use the same outside system (PSAS), so they can also provide data. Steve said that they try to use the guidelines from the outside system. Father Noah is the only person that can override a decision from PSAS. Father Noah addressed that in the beginning he felt that we were giving "the whole farm away", and he wanted to hold some money back for families that are in need during the school year. He said that he will stick to this plan again this year in case it needs to be used in the future. Doug said his fear is that we will lose families due to this plan, and that is a bigger risk right now for us. Father Noah said that we have to choose a figure and make a decision. Father Noah said that a lot of families that were unsure, but have since said no due to convenience, but some was due to financial reasons and education reasons as Bridget clarified.

Walt asked if there were any other questions. Jim asked about our projected salary numbers. Pat asked for a clarification on the replacement salary of the teachers that are leaving. Pat wanted to make sure that we have

wiggle room. Steve said that in fairness to the market, he has had more applications than he has ever had before a hard to fill position, and the applicants are within the breathing room that was budgeted. Walt also wanted to clarify about the multi-child discount as it applies to kindergarten. An example was presented. Full day twins would receive a +550 adjustment for each child and half day kindergarten twins would receive -\$770 adjustment. Actual figures were presented as it applies to the multi-child discount percentages. **A motion was made and approved for kindergarten tuition as it applies to families with multiples in kindergarten. The family will apply the multi-child discount formula (for example, twins in kindergarten and one other child at St. Luke will be considered a Three Child family) then the kindergarten adjustment will be applied for each kindergarten child.** This was the “cleanest” way to present the tuition to families. In the tuition packet for kindergarten families, there will be a note about families with multiples. Pat asked for clarification and Bridget used her family as an example. This decision fits with our policy for multi-child discounts.

Walt asked for any questions. Adam asked about the \$50 increase and the multi-child percentage correction. This was covered in Walt’s report. Tuition is actually 3650+954.20 for each child, but the parish provides a subsidy of \$954.20 per child. Kathleen asked if our cushion is enough for the summer melt. Bridget said that historically we are not allowing enough of a cushion, and Steve agreed that if we lose more families, he will have to do more work on cutting costs. Walt said that he is concerned by our low enrollment compared to our total enrollment possibility. Bridget clarified that we are using census data to see how large pool actually is, and it might be getting smaller (i.e. we might need to go to two classes instead of three). Adam asked if we have any information about parent income. Steve said that we do have data from the parish if families returned this information (only 85 families completed this OCE survey with the income question). Adam asked if we know enough about our parishioners and who might attend St. Luke (i.e. parishioner income vs. tuition and the people who leave). Steve said that we are in the mid tuition range as compared to other area Catholic schools, but we offer a great product. Adam asked if we could ask this question. This is a touchy subject and we do not have a lot of data. Steve said that we have the highest participants of the free/reduced lunch program we’ve ever had. Steve said that within the last five years, we have gone from no free/reduced lunch families to 25 families that participate in the free/reduced lunch program. Steve said that as the school as gotten bigger, the curve of incomes has gotten equally bigger. Father Noah said that we are in a unique situation with our family income levels as compared to other Catholic schools/parishes in Indianapolis. Father said that we compete with other private schools (i.e. St. Richards and the area that they draw from in Indianapolis). We have to concentrate on the fact that we are a parish school, but not a neighborhood school, like IHM. One big difference is that we don’t have sidewalks. Father said that there are a lot of factors that make us different. There is a demographic shift. Father would really like to promote the Alumni program. Father asked why people return to St. Luke and why they leave (convenience is a big factor)? All of these factors weigh on our enrollment situation. Bridget said that we are stretched between two township schools and two private schools that are within a few miles of us. This can be related to OLMC’s historically strong enrollment record that is now in the same situation as St. Luke. Steve said that transportation is a big issue (gas prices and distance). Steve said that our tuition compared to what people pay in taxes is another point that people consider even though we offer a better end result for families.

Bridget asked for a motion to recommend a budget and approve the tuition increase (it is a two-fold process). Steve said that the “big” numbers are salary. Bridget asked about the change in salary from this year’s budget to next year. Walt asked Steve about the cafeteria revenue, and Steve clarified that this revenue has increased. The projected budget does show this increase in revenue from this year with a contingency amount. Steve said that because of budget cuts from the state, we had to change some of our projections

within the budget (TCE Grants and In-service staff). Bridget pointed out the differences. Steve said that he hopes he can work the projected budget and the title monies into St. Luke's favor. Steve pointed out the increase in the administrative costs due to the increase in the marketing budget. Walt asked if there is room to make additional cuts if needed. Steve said that you can cut a thousand dollars in various areas, especially textbooks. Steve would like to maintain our textbook replacement cycle, and the school is conscious of this area by only ordering books until enrollment numbers are guaranteed. Technology is another option that can be cut as a large block item if needed. Adam asked if we have a posted salary schedule for instructional staff. Steve said we will have this schedule based on the Archdiocese's recommendation. Adam asked if we have a public document. Steve said he has given out this year's salary schedule, and he can show us an example if needed, but next year's salary schedule had to have changes made by the Archdiocese. Doug asked for clarification on the textbook adoptions that are done (last year, we adopted books for Reading and Social Studies, this year we adopted books for Math). This area can be restricted. Bridget clarified that the DOE has changed its textbook plan for Math textbooks, the state gave us the option to wait to adopt books until the DOE provides new standards and we are taking this option, so that money is not wasted.

Bridget addressed the procedure that is needed to approve and recommend the budget. Walt motioned that we approve the budget version 5.0 as written for the school year 2010-2011. Pat seconded this motion. Walt motioned that we approve a parishioner tuition increase of \$50 to the One child base rate (3650 for the 2010-2011 school year from 3600 for the 2009-2010 school year) and the tuition is \$6390 for the Two child family, \$8580 for the Three child family, \$10,220 for the Four child family, and \$11,870 for the Five child family. The non-parishioner tuition increase will be \$50 per child for the 2010-2011 school year (\$5785 for the 2010-2011 school year from \$5735 for the 2009-2010 school year). The kindergarten adjustment is +\$550 adjustment per child for full-day students and -\$770 adjustment per child for half-day students (refer to previous motion regarding multiples within kindergarten). Kathleen seconded Walt's motion. Doug, Jim, Tracy, Jen, Bridget, Kathleen, Walt, and Pat agreed with this motion; while Adam did not agree with this motion.

Open Forum

Heather Garrison said that we need to look at our school commission calendar so that we propose a budget, then we approve a budget at the following meeting. We need more concrete book fees/enrollment numbers before we approve a budget. We should not ask for enrollment/re-enrollment applications at the same time as the book fee, because it is not enough.

Katrina Schnieder said that families who request financial aid should have to donate their time in place of this request.

Mary Jo Linn said that in the financial aid application it does not cover debts

Closing Prayer by Tracy Miller.

Walt motioned to close, and Jim seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

Tracy motioned to go into a closed meeting, Jim Seconded.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jen Money-Brady