

St. Cecilia Parish Board OF Education Meeting January 2005

Members Present:

Monte Streit, Vice-Pres., Susan Vernon, Todd Clancy, Gary Gorman, Mark Gannon, Pat Halbur, Rev. Terry Rasmussen

Member Excused:

Gina Isebrands

Administrators Present:

John Hayes, DRE, Duane Siepker

Ex-Officio Member Present:

Kris Gross, FSA

Others Present:

Susan Campbell

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by vice-chairperson Monte Streit. Todd Clancy led the group in prayer.

Special Report: Susan Campbell reported that the transition from half-day to full-day kindergarten has gone smoothly. There are currently 27 students in the program with 26 staying for the full day. She reported that with a short naptime mid-day, all the students are doing well and able to handle the demands of the longer day. Benefits she has seen to the program change are more time to practice and reinforce skills, freedom to tackle projects at an appropriate pace and follow them through to completion and students learning their sight words more easily. Without a formal assessment to confirm her feelings at this point her personal assessment is that students are performing very well and the first grade program next year may need adjusted to accommodate for the additional learning kindergartners are experiencing. She and Shari Hammer are working closely to discern and accomplish this. She sees no drawbacks to the full-day kindergarten.

Administrative Reports:

Director of Religious Education:

John highlighted several points on his report. There are now 19 participants in the RCIA program. The preschool Christmas play was a hit and the preschoolers have been asked to sing at Mass in Feb. and April while the Good Samaritan Fund black bag collection takes place. Concerns were raised about the heavy attendance at 5:00 Mass the previous week as a result of the First Eucharist Rite of Enrollment and John indicated additional factors leading to the heavy attendance that week. Ways to improve this may be looked at in the future but the hope is the new church will answer this concern without adjustment.

Principal:

Duane briefly highlighted the report on Catholic Schools

Special Reports:

Committee Reports:

FSA: No meeting since November. Kris reported that Catholic Schools Week will begin with the lasagna supper Jan. 29. Kris expressed concerns over how SCRIP funds are spent indicating some parents may prefer more funds be spent on school needs than RE needs as the bulk of money raised in this program comes from school families.

Parish Council: No report

Finance: Monte reported that the HVAC system will be upgraded allowing for greater control of the heating system by administrators within the building. The cost will be approximately \$3000. The school endowment fund will be moved to the Archdiocesan bank where the funds will be invested for us.

Long-Range Planning: Susan reported that the long-range planning group met January 12 to view a video tape on the Generations of Faith model for whole parish Catechesis. The group is optimistic about this program and she expressed a desire for the board to give John their support as he continues to explore and learn about this unique program.

Preschool: With the deadline for pre-registration still a day away, Susan reported that 19 students had pre-registered for the 3 year-old program for next fall and 15 students for the 4 year-old program. Pre-registration numbers will tell us whether our preschool is a morning only program or needs to offer morning and afternoon sessions. Once this is determined, a teacher will be hired. The need for parents to understand admittance to preschool does not ensure admittance to kindergarten was stressed.

School Budget: Monte indicated that the loss of the revenue from the 6th grade next year may result in some budget concerns. Duane will continue to explore how to deal with this and it will be discussed at the Feb. meeting.

Unfinished Business:

RE Budget Process: John met with Arlene to determine how the religious education budget has been created in the past. She will provide John with a budget amount which he will

then allocate appropriately. He invited board members to join him in this process and Monte and Mark agreed.

SCRIP: John indicated funds had been allocated from SCRIP to replace the room dividers in the classrooms and the work would be done soon. At the board's request the DRE and DYM had indicated needs for the SCRIP funds within their programs. Discussion of the concerns Kris expressed about the use of SCRIP funds ensued. Susan indicated that SCRIP is not exclusively a school fundraiser and is meant to be used to meet the educational needs of the parish as a whole and that the entire parish benefits when all of its educational programs have what they need to run smoothly. Discussion of Joe Lawlor's request for a pool table for the adult/youth room followed including concerns that the table may take up space in an already crowded room. John explained the table will have a cover allowing it to take the place of other tables in the room for serving refreshments etc. and emphasized the importance of providing social and recreational opportunities for youth in our youth ministry program. Pat motioned to approve Joe's request that \$1500 be spent on a pool table with a cover for the AY room and John's request that \$1850 be spent on a digital camera, religious education videos, and a white marker board. Todd seconded the motion which passed without dissent.

Catechist Dinner: Report will follow at the Feb. meeting

New Business:

Generations of Faith: The board viewed a segment of the video describing the religious education program John is considering for next year. Marshalltown currently uses this program and John will attend their class on Jan. 16. John, Duane, Joe, and Bob Hauser will attend workshops on this program beginning in Feb. Questions and discussions about how the program works ensued. John hopes to get many questions answered at the workshops.

All Day Every Day: In light of the report given by Mrs. Campbell and the apparent success of the all day kindergarten program, Duane asked the board to consider making kindergarten all day for every student in 2005. Susan motioned to approve making kindergarten full day for every child in the 2005-2006 school year. Todd seconded the motion and it was approved without dissent.

ITBS: Duane reported ITBS results to the board, indicating areas of success and areas where improvement is needed. Though our students perform very well overall, the need to continue to work on math computation skills was stressed as well as a desire to motivate older students to do their best on these tests. Gary asked if we could move the tests to later in the school year after students have been taught the grade level skills on which they are being tested. Duane indicated the Arch-diocese sets the test dates and they are non-negotiable. We are meeting our No Child Left Behind goals.

Pastoral Comments: Father Terry reported that the religious education program in Jewell is continuing to do well and that they are very happy with the arrangement they have with St. Cecilia that allows them to continue this program.

Safety Concerns: Pat expressed concerns that the large amounts of snow have created limited walking space for students causing them to walk too close to the parking lot. Ways to remedy this were discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Submitted by **Susan Vernon**