

Home & School Association Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2011

Present: Lauren Beckmann, Jane Boland, Jessica Carlson, Merridith Frediani, Susan Joy, Lisa Lesjak, Yvonne Luzney, Mary Poorman, Zular Rodriguez, Joan Schramka, Wendy Wallace, Kathy Wyatt, Alex Nicholich, Michelle Frazier

Excused: Barb Henderson, Dennis Reilly, Karen Hunt

I. Reflection

II. President's Report – Wendy Wallace

- **Committee Chair – Open Positions:**
 - President-Elect Introduction: Welcome Michelle Frazier to the President-Elect position! We are all very excited to have her join the board and are happy to finally have a complete board!
 - We still have open positions for various events such as; Catholic Schools Week, Grandparent's Reception, Graduation Reception, Emerald Auction, The World of Work and the Middle School Showcase costume-chair position.
- **Emerald Auction – Update:** Victor Torres stepped up to be one of the chairs and is very excited about it! He has had previous experience with event planning. Wendy is still trying to find other chairs to help him. Wendy has also recruited a few people to step up to chair various subcommittees. The first auction meeting is on Oct. 3rd. In the last board meeting there was a question on the actual cost of having the auction off site vs. offsite at the ICC. Last year the cost of decorations including Canopies and flowers was \$10,236 and the total cost with dinner last year was approximately \$23,592. The cost of dinner per plate at the Italian Conference Center is \$21 to \$37, so for about 300 guests it is about \$7K to \$12K. This doesn't include gratuities, tax, appetizers and extra decorations to personalize the event. However, there is a lot of room for potential savings.

III. Principal's Report- Lauren Beckmann

- The high point so far this year was the Superintendents' visit. The Superintendent, Dr. Cepelka and Mr. Lofton the Associate Superintendent started visiting every school in the archdiocese last year. The visits were designed to be a getting to know you visit since they are both new to the archdiocese since last year. We were part of a small group of schools that haven't been visited yet and we were first up for the start of the school year. It was a wonderful and affirming visit for both Lauren and the staff. The visit started at Mass, which was a great liturgy and then they spent an hour interviewing Father and Lauren. Afterwards they took about an hour to walk through all the classrooms in the school. It was amazing and a "Wow" moment to see the new reading framework unfolding room after room, with everyone on message, everyone doing the same thing and using the same language. After the visit, Lauren received a lovely voice message from Dr. Cepelka which said something like, I knew you were doing good work at St. Robert but I had no idea the extraordinary level of excellence and inspiration you are providing for the entire archdiocese. Mr. Lofton wrote a note that said something about the intentionality of everything that they do at the school that comes through so loud and clear. We were very excited about their impression and again it was very affirming.
- Changes this year include the changes in the language arts framework which is unfolding as a work in progress. Teachers are taking a yearlong course that supports them through the process of learning how to teach reading and next year writing according to the 21st century research and best practices which is how we make decisions for renovating our instructional programs.

Parents will learn more about it during parent preview night where they will receive detailed data and individualized goals in terms of reading and writing. This year's focus will be working on reading instruction and next year they will be taking the writing workshop model to the next level. Word Work is a big change for this year as it replaces the spelling curriculum that has been used where the children would get a list of words at the beginning of the week and then take a spelling test at the end of the week. Word Work is based on research on the development level on the way the words are built. All children will be going through an inventory process and each child will be working with different lists of words at their level. They are coming to a realization that there are some other resources that are needed to support the program. One of the resources that has been identified is an online tool that supports Word Work and will allow students to take the tests online. They are trying to be very strategic about what they purchase and how they use it. Lauren is proud of what the kids and teachers are doing to take it to the next level. The shift is teaching children how to think with text and not just teaching through the story.

- On an operation level this year, there is a strategic change on the placement of 1st quarter conferences. In the past, the conferences occurred after the first quarter report cards came out. We compared this with Shorewood public schools which are doing conferences mid-first quarter. Lauren based the decision to change the timing of conferences in part because of comments from parents last year saying the conferences seemed too late. The faculty decided to give it a try by having the conferences early. Conferences are now on Oct. 13th and 14th. The second set of conferences is set for third quarter.

IV. Other Reports

- **Marketing & Development** – Lisa Lesjak: The development committee is growing. Two new current parents are joining this year; they are Bill Schlise and Susan Callanan. Lisa is excited to have them join because they have both served on the Education & Formation committee. She is also asking a young alum to join and they are trying to use her as a resource to find out how we start to build a relationship now so that perhaps when they are in a better position to contribute they will think of the Annual Fund. She is also working on the Annual Report prior to the State of the School meeting on October 20th. There are plans for the Annual Fund kick off this year. Someone to host the party is still in the works.
- **Parish Council** – Kathy Wyatt:
 - The centennial committee gave a report last night on the plans that are being put in place for St. Roberts Centennial celebration. Currently they have a Mass in celebration of 100 years of faith and service of St. Robert parish on Oct 14, 2012 with Archbishop ListECKI presiding. A logo has been designed and it can be seen in the latest *InSpire* and they are also planning to sell an ornament of the rose window in the church as a keepsake.
 - Scrip Update: Last spring the financial committee was trying to find new ways to generate revenue other than the big event of the Parish Fair. So Kathy mentioned Scrip and it is the one program that can raise money for the church that doesn't cost anything. Last year we raised \$10K. Currently, 16 people that are monthly subscribers and we have a total of 150 participating/school parish families and friends. We are trying to increase the revenue from Scrip by encouraging everyone to get one other person to buy scrip. You don't have to buy a lot. Scrip is sold at church every other weekend on the 2nd and 4th weekend and can be purchased in the church office. Kathy suggested starting out small and starting out simple and soon it will become a habit. Wendy suggested also ordering from the Scrip Website.
 - There was a finance committee report and they are doing OK there but they need repairs on the church roof and the garage.

- Claire Anderson our Pastoral Associate will be leaving shortly. Claire's role will not be replaced; however there is a new position for a Parish Director of Stewardship and Communication.
- **School Advisory Board** – Lauren Beckmann: John Shied came to present the closing financial statement for the parish. He was helping lay the groundwork for the transition to new accounting software and cleaning up the process in the way of efficiency, financial transparency and clarity. He also wanted to dispel the rumors of the Parish being in a bad financial position and show the numbers that prove that we are in better shape since 2010. Something that they need to focus attention on is stewardship cash contributions which are down and projecting out it is not sustainable. Even though they have some good assets and no debt, they still need to pay our bills with cash. The rest of the meeting consisted of various committee reports and they talked about the annual update of the school improvement plan and talked about developing a process to get this year's iteration done and they will talk about that at the next meeting.
- **Treasurer's Report** – Merridith Frediani:
On the balance sheet for September there is quite a bit of activity. Under the assets there is a credit for \$44K in the Wells Fargo checking account. Under the funds & reserves \$7,247 went to finish paying for the smart boards which were approved by the board last year and of the \$181,400 total budgeted commitments we have so far paid out \$40,856 and have \$140,544 left to pay. On the Income Statement there is no activity on the first page and on the second page there was \$700 paid in startup cash for the rummage sale. There has been \$3,500 collected so far this year for the volunteer buyout which is well above budget. On the last page of the income statement it shows that we have made our first quarterly installment of \$34,250 to the annual school budget and paid out half of the amount committed for staff discretionary funds (\$5,500 of \$11,000 total). For Home & School events payments were made for the Fall Social expenses (\$478) and for the Welcome Back Coffee reception (\$176).
- **Volunteers** – Susan Joy:
She just went through the alphabetical listing of all the families still waiting to hear from 4 new families and because most of the events are full she has told them that they will help with the rummage sale or the emerald auction. Then there are four other families that refuse to acknowledge her and she is working to get payment for the buyout fee from them. Lauren thinks that the statements need to be mailed directly to the parents. If they can't make their volunteer commitment and they still want volunteer to make it up there are still some openings. Susan has a list of talents and skills taken from the volunteer forms and if anyone wants to have the list they should ask. She is also double checking all the SEC certifications and so far she caught 5 that are being certified or are in the process. Lauren would like the list of the parents that are certified so the teachers can know who can go on field trips.

V. Event Wrap up

- **Icebreaker/New Family Ice Cream Social** – *Jessica Carlson*: The event went really well and there were a ton of new families. It went from 6:30 to 8:30 and it was a very nice night at Lake Park and they went through 150 ice creams. She also talked to Rhiana Vella about the budget and she said that if she doesn't need to worry about the new family gift then she be fine with the budget the way it is. Jessica said that she should turn in receipts but she didn't really bother with it. However the board expressed that even though she is willing to underwrite the event she should still document what the expenses are so we can account for it in future years in the budget. Another thing that difficult for her is when she gets a list of host families from Susan it is was hard for her to know what

grades the kids are in and their gender. Rhiana tries to match up according to age and sex. Susan can change the form to let her know the ages and gender for next year.

- **Welcome Back Coffee** – *Jessica Carlson*: Jessica got some nice feedback on the coffee and everyone thought it was a great location. She thinks the people had a nice time. However this year Yvonne bought two cambro's of coffee but there was a still a lot of leftover coffee. Mary Poorman thought that next year an e-mail from Karen reminding them about it before the start of school would help parents to remember.
- **Blue Book**- Susan brought up the fact that many parents would like to have both parents e-mails listed in the blue book. On the school side of things for Edline the parents are the ones that enter the e-mail addresses. Lisa mentioned posting the blue book on Edline. There are already changes that need to be made to the blue book and Sharlene Byrne would like to be able to update quarterly and post it on Edline. There are extra copies for \$3 that will be available in the office. Lauren would like to streamline the process for updating the blue book by having existing families update and initial a copy of the blue book at registration instead of the spread sheet and then just have the spreadsheet for the new families.
- **Fall Social** – *Zular Rodriguez*: She still needs to contact the chairs for the Fall Social to get an update on how the event went. Mary Poorman mentioned that there weren't enough volunteers for cleanup. However, the chairs were fine with it and they were fine with the event going late. Several of the new families were there and she estimated about 150 people showed up.

VI. Ongoing Committees/Events

- **Class Parties** – *Zular Rodriguez*: 4th grade and 7th grade still need someone to host the class parties.

VII. Upcoming Events

- **Magazine Sale** – *Jane Boland*: Joe O'Neil is now at about \$2K of sales for the first month which is a good start. There is \$7.5K in the budget to earn by the end of the year.
- **Rummage Sale** – *Jane Boland*: The Rummage Sale is going well, however there is a concern that there is only 1 weekend of drop off and they are hoping that people will remember the event is taking place. Next year they need to plan ahead in terms of a storage location. They can no longer use the garage, because Father Kevin is leasing the garage space now and there was no communication that they needed the garage space. Next year they will need to verify when the garage can be used and if they need additional storage space, they may have to consider an alternative storage solution.
- **Calendar Raffle** – *Jane Boland (Wendy)*: The calendar will cost about \$20 and there is a drawing every day of the year starting in January. Different amounts of money can be won on different days. Jane will be meeting with Amy to get more details and we will learn more about it at the next meeting. Amy will probably need more volunteers. H&S can support selling the calendars at Mass, just as we had with the Holy Moly Raffle. They will probably start selling the calendars at the end of October in time for holiday gift giving.
- **Apple Sale** – *Jane Boland*: A chair is not needed, because Jane is doing the sale. The forms are online and will have a flyer out next week. The date is set for Wednesday Oct

19th for apple delivery in the morning. She needs volunteers in the morning on Wednesday for delivery.

- **Effortless Fundraising** – *Jane Boland*: Haven't been able to contact the chair. Refer people to the website. Margaret DeMichele e-mailed her about a possible Qdoba night for fundraising on Tuesdays. Jane will try to set something up.
- **Boo Bash/8th Grade Fundraising** – *Jane Boland*: Margaret Wittkowske doesn't need any help for the Boo Bash other than start up cash.

Next H&S Meeting – Wednesday, October 19th, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne Luzney
Home & School Secretary