

# **St. Robert Home & School Association**

## **Minutes for December 16, 2009**

**Present:** Lauren Beckmann, Karen Hunt, Lisa Lesjak, Yvonne Luzney, Dennis Reilly, Joan Schramka, Kathy Wyatt, Sally Zale, Pam Mattox, Sara Coffou

**Excused:** Wendy Scherwenka, Susan Joy, Amy Hietpas

### **I. Reflection**

### **II. President's Report – Sally Zale**

Sally has been getting a lot of e-mails and comments from people for fundraising ideas. Some of the ideas that came up were selling Entertainment books that Sally will look further into. Some other ideas that were discussed were the following:

- Walk-a-thon: get pledges and raise \$ per mile walked.
- Knowledge-a-thon: get pledges for correct answers to questions.
- Hosting a dinner: spaghetti dinner, fish fry, soup & chili

Pam mentioned that Sara Coffou is getting in touch with a company called Buyseasons.com. This company will hire the parents at the school for a weekend day and donate all the earnings for that day directly to the school.

Lauren mentioned SchoolMall.com which sells magazines as well as several other items related to the magazine categories such as health & beauty, travel, children's toys, etc.

Pam Mattox and Sara Coffou are going to work together to find a system to evaluate fundraisers to determine what fundraisers to focus our efforts and what fundraisers might not be worth the effort. Some strategies would be to pick a specific fundraiser to determine which efforts are worthwhile in terms of revenue gained and work required.

**Pajama Day:** Sally has gotten feedback from several parents that they thought the pajama day fundraiser excluded students who possibly couldn't afford to buy new pajama's to donate in order to be able to wear pajama's to school. We don't want to single out the student for not donating and then not let them participate in a fun day at school. The discussion lead to further discussions on limiting and controlling the number of projects by having projects reviewed by student leadership as well as limiting events to certain times of the year especially during Advent and Lent. Have them prioritize, communicate and calendar out. Possibly limit projects to one or two grades at a time and stretching them across the year. Some important questions to consider are how will the events be communicated and advertised. What elements need to be included in the communication and assigning and determining a gatekeeper? Also, do we want to incentivize giving to charity or should it be something that doesn't have to have an incentive for participation?

### III. Principal's Report – Lauren Beckmann

Pack the Mass on Sunday, Dec. 13 was very successful. Many people stayed a ½ hour after Mass for hospitality. Additional events are possibly in the works for February through May and may include a children's choir and having families doing the readings and music. In January, the mass will celebrate Catholic Schools Week along with the Pancake Breakfast. A Catholic Schools Week music assembly has been confirmed which will feature Rev. Rich Rubietta. The assembly is titled Prayer Celebration with Music, Movement and Media. The website description states "The Assembly introduces K-8 students to a way of **prayer** and **worship** that joyfully engages the whole person: body, soul, heart and voice!" St. Robert School will also be hosting a regional Scripps Spelling Bee that week as well.

The date has been confirmed for Tuesday afternoon on February 2<sup>nd</sup> for national speaker and author Milton Creagh to give his lecture to middle school students from St. Robert School. The title of his presentation is, "The Mask", which specifically addresses drug use and will be directed to the middle school student as well as parents. Lauren discussed this as a presentation for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students but asked the board for their thoughts on whether the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students should be included in the assembly. Most of the opinions were that they should be included, however; Lauren will discuss this issue further with the teachers to make a final decision.

Lauren just recently had a conversation with Wayne Tews about overall event management. The thought was that the structure needs to be set up for event management and not just tech crew. The need is much broader than audio visual support. A training program or shadow training program for evening event management needs to be set up. A comprehensive plan should be in place. One gap that was identified was event wrap up. It seems that nobody is really responsible for wrap up activities such as sweeping up, turning off the lights and locking the doors after an event. Lauren has asked Peter to create a checklist of all the items that need to be considered after an event and in order to secure the facility. Some questions that came up were who owns this responsibility? Should the "Tech Crew" include a more facility wide perspective? These questions should be addressed by possibly assigning the Facility/Tech crew to events and possibly include more volunteers to manage all the events that the Facility/Tech crew would need to be assigned.

Several hardware problems have come up lately with computer hardware in the Media Lab. The hardware is starting to fail as several of the computers are over 5 years old. Bill Brousseau thinks he can rebuild about 3 of the computers, but it is obvious as time goes on they will not have the extra hardware laying around to manage the failures as more computers age. They are also looking into getting donated machines that can be refurbished for a possible shorter term solution as well. The Technology committee has estimated the cost of replacement of the computer lab as being between \$25K to \$40K depending on whether they go with a Mac Lab or a PC lab. The committee has been visiting several Mac and PC labs at area schools in order to do a cost benefit analysis to make the decision on what type of lab they want. Lauren said that by February the Technology committee should have a good financial

estimate as to the initial cost and future maintenance costs of building a new lab and be ready to present something to the H&S Association so we know how to build the plan for the technology budget. Currently, H&S only budgets approx. \$9,000 per year for technology.

#### **IV. Other Reports**

- **Marketing & Development – Lisa Lesjak**

Lisa wanted to thank everyone for their efforts in helping out and participating in the success of the St. Nick's Party and the Parish Senior Christmas Party. It was so gratifying to see the Seniors use the elevator and recognize that this is a main reason for installing the elevator.

The annual fund is doing well; so far \$82K has been pledged with 30% parent participation. This is slightly less dollars and participation than the same time last year, but she is not worried about it and thinks we are on track. People are coming forward and being very generous when they can contribute. Any amount is much appreciated.

On the recruitment side of things, there has been a lot of early interest in K4 for next fall. In December she had 6 tours. Lisa gave us all a personal challenge to try to recruit Senior Kindergarteners (K5) for next year. This class is very small right now and there is only 1 class and they would like to get it to 2 classes eventually.

- **Parish Council – Kathy Wyatt**

The financial health of the parish is currently very bleak. If this situation continues the parish may have to dip into the capital reserves to cover the budget shortfalls. Donations are not what they used to be and they are finding that parishioners have been going elsewhere. The parish council continues to work on trying to increase attendance at Mass. They are currently doing counts at each mass to determine what masses are better attended. They are also trying to figure out what is bringing people to Mass and what will keep them coming to mass. The Environment Committee will be working on getting the church to feel warmer, more welcoming and inviting for people to want to move up to the front to feel more engaged with the Mass.

In 2010/2011, Father Dennis will be starting the process of educating parishioners on the new translation of the Roman Missal (Order of Mass) the new translation is more faithful to the Latin of the Roman Missal. The Roman Missal is the ritual text for the celebration of the Mass. The English translation of the *Roman Missal* will also include updated translations of existing prayers, including some of the well-known responses and acclamations of the people. The new translation will be a more direct translation of the Latin Mass and will give the words more meaning.

- **School Advisory Board – Karen Hunt**

Karen was not able to attend this month's Advisory Board meeting but she has received all the reports. Marketing and fundraising ideas were discussed. One of the ideas, was to partner with the Milwaukee

Brewing Company to create a St. Robert labeled beer. The beer could possibly be sold at events such as the St. Robert fair, used for fundraisers and distributed locally. The beer would be approx 8.99 per six pack and the school would need to buy a minimum of 400 cases. The funds raised could potentially be \$8,000; however that is assuming that all cases can be sold.

The board is close to finalizing the wording on the tuition reimbursement policy. To summarize, the policy would allow 100% tuition reimbursement if the student withdraws before July 1<sup>st</sup>. After July 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the start of school they will need to pay for the entire 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. After the start of school until Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> the reimbursement will be progressive. After Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> the family will be responsible for the full school year tuition. The wording still needs some fine tuning and is expected to be approved in January. Some issues that still need to be worked out are how to collect the tuition if it wasn't all paid in full prior to school starting.

The SAB is currently engaged in an internal assessment of the school in preparation for an accreditation visit in the fall. There are seven standards that the school must meet. The school must complete a self-study of the standards in a shared leadership model. The SAB will be presenting narratives in January for addressing Standard 5 – Resources: Human, Financial, and Physical.

▪ **Treasurer – Dennis Reilly**

Dennis stated that currently only \$9,000 has been planned to be budgeted every year for the technology fund. We will have to plan and build into the budget any additional funds for replacement and maintenance of the technology lab into future budgets. We need to get a proposal from the technology committee to start to consider this for next year's budget. The current funding was a onetime expense against the discretionary funds budget for this year only.

Dennis distributed the balance sheet for 12/15/2009. Dennis pointed out that he made a withdrawal from the Baird Account to cover current commitments to the school operating fund and upcoming expenses for the Emerald Auction (see balance sheet 12/15/2009 for details).

Overall, from the Income Statement everything looks to be on track. This year the rummage sale came in approx \$5K over the budgeted amount while the magazine fell short by approx \$7.5 K (the magazine drive can still raise funds all year so it is hoped that more can be raised) so, it will probably even out. Dennis discussed the updates on the discretionary funds budget outlined on the last sheet of his hand out. Lauren stated that Donna Bailey would like an extension until January to spend the \$1,500 requested for art supplies. Dennis stated that he hasn't received the bill yet for the 1,500 for the Spanish Text books. Lauren will forward that bill to Dennis. Dennis added the Milton Creagh Presentation to the open project budget this month. The person responsible for this item needs to be changed from D. Bailey to L. Beckmann. Under the long term technology fund, Dennis added a separate line item for the speakers, due to the speakers not being included in the original order/invoice for the replacement of computers & software.

- **Volunteers – Sally for Susan Joy**

Susan continues to receive the buyout fees requested by the families that have not fulfilled their volunteer obligations. Susan e-mailed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents that have not received their SEE training. There has been some question as to what level of participation these parents can have in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade fundraiser when they haven't received their SEE certification. It was determined that they should probably not be put in a leadership positions for the activities. Susan should e-mail Lauren the names of the parents so she can be aware of who has it and who doesn't have the training.

## V. **Wrap –Up Events**

- **Trivia Night – Wendy S.** Trivia Night went very well on Nov.21<sup>nd</sup>. The committee forgot to make the announcement during that they are looking for replacements and would like to recruit the new team so they can shadow the outgoing committee at the next Trivia Night this spring. However, Wendy did get something out in Family Matters and the Church Bulletin to get the word out that they need a new group of volunteers to run it next year. Nobody has come forward yet to take over.
- **Breakfast with Santa – Wendy S. (Sally)** This event went well as usual, with no problems.
- **Dramatic Reading – Wendy W.** This event that was hosted at Boswell Books this year on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> was a great success. Participation was good with 45 students. Some perks were free hot cocoa from Starbucks, % of sales of books that day went to the school and everyone received a \$5 gift card to use at the book store. Everyone benefited from an event held at a wonderful venue.

## VI. **Ongoing Committees/Events**

- **Alterra Coffee Sales – Pam** Sales are going well and they think they are on track to raise the \$ according to what was budgeted. They are, however, down 1 major buyer that did not choose to participate this year.
- **Class Parties (Updates) – Wendy S. (Sally)** The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class party is planned for January 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be hosted by the Coffou's
- **Adopt a Family – Joan:** They will be able to fulfill the wish lists for 10 families. All items will be delivered on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- **Magazine Drive – Pam:** An additional push for the magazine drive has been advertised in Family Matters. The deadline for class participation incentives is Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>.
- **Painless Fundraising – Pam :** Barb Monnat is planning an all day dining fundraiser for Bella's Fat Cat for early May. A percentage of sales for that entire day will be donated to St. Robert School. Other fundraisers that will be pursued are for Culvers, Panera Bread and Bakers Square. We should also advertise these dining fundraisers with Holy Family so they can support us and vice versa.

- **Middle School Service-Sally:** There will be 2 service days. One in February and 1 in April. Each of the 3 grades will be assigned a specific target service as shown below:
  - 6<sup>th</sup> grade-Children
  - 7<sup>th</sup> grade-Elderly
  - 8<sup>th</sup> grade-Physically/Mentally Disabled
 All planning is going well.

## VII. Upcoming Events

- **Mother/Son Bowling (Jan.23<sup>rd</sup>) – Wendy S (Sally).** Merridith Freidiani and Mary Poorman are currently organizing this event and it is on track.
- **Pancake Breakfast (Jan. 3<sup>1st</sup>) – Amy** This event is moving along and is on track.
- **Book Fair (Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>) –Pam** This year the book fair will be held with Usborne Books instead of Scholastic Books. Pam has been receiving updates from the women that are chairing it this year and everything is going along fine. Setup for the book fair this year will be in the Gym. Right now they are trying to coordinate with the athletic association with conflicts on a game that will be held that evening.
- **Catholic Schools Week (Jan 31<sup>st</sup> –Feb 5<sup>th</sup>) - Wendy W.** Several events are planned for Catholic Schools week and will be advertised throughout January in Family Matters and in Flyers. Wendy has noted that only \$600 has been budgeted for Catholic Schools week and the speaker will cost \$500. That only leaves \$100 for the cake, which has typically cost \$180 to \$200. Do we need to have a vote approve \$100 in additional spending for the cake? It was determined that \$100 dollars is a small amount and can be dealt with in the budget. Wendy should go forward with purchasing the cake. Kathy Wyatt also mentioned a person that she knows that makes and sells decorated shaped cookies. It might be fun to buy cookies in the shape of a school. Wendy will also look into how much this might cost and possibly order cookies instead of the cake.
- **Middle School Showcase-Wendy W.** Wendy will get some more information together for the next meeting in January to discuss securing a stage director, estimated costs and drafting a contract.

**Next H&S Meeting – Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup> 6:30-9:00 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Yvonne Luzney  
Secretary