

St Wenceslaus School Advisory Board
Regular Meeting
Monday August 28, 2017

Meeting opened at 6:30 PM. Members present: Fr. Faulkner, Mike Weiss, Steve Sladky, Eric Lanik, Nathan Cernik, Tammy Sassaman, Jill Chapek, Joni Cantrall, Fred Meis, Tracey Johnson, Julie Swanson, and Jennifer Whitney.

Fr. Faulkner opened with a prayer.

Opening comments were made by Mike Weiss about the role of the Advisory Board and the members.

Start of School Year items –

- Eclipse - Mike Weiss explained the year was off to a good start & that the Eclipse especially put students in a good mood as things got going. He expected things to settle into a better routine in the coming weeks.
- Anti-Bullying Lessons – Mr Weiss is looking at replacing the “Anti-bullying” lessons with studies focused on the “Beatitudes” which also focus on kindness and should lead our children to the same end result. Some board members were hoping these lessons could somehow be tied into more community outreach, or have a “call-to-action” component.

Enrollment – Historical enrollment figures were discussed as presented on the Agenda. The current year decrease (despite bringing in 13 new students in grades 1-6) was explained as a decrease in the size of the Kindergarten class in comparison to the exiting 6th grade class, as well as losing a few students to area schools (simply b/c of older siblings who attend these area schools) and a few people moving out of the area. It was discussed that some of the new families moving in were from the west Omaha area, who were looking for more affordable Catholic tuition costs (especially when considering high school tuition). Nathan Cernik asked if the decreasing enrollment could be compared to enrollment in other schools in the area (wondering if it was a matter of smaller families) and Eric Lanik further questioned if we have data to show what percentage of St Wenceslaus parishioners have children attending the Catholic grade school versus other county schools, and how that has changed over the years. Fred Meis asked what the “Goal” was for enrollment? Mike Weiss explained that if there are two classrooms for each grade, the goal would be to have both rooms full at about 25 kids in each room, or a total of around 50 kids per grade. Currently grades have around the mid to upper 30’s for student counts. Fr Faulkner added that according to classes he has attended the target audience for enrollment discussions is mothers of 2 year olds, who are looking ahead to preschool and then elementary school. This leads into other topics on the agenda of childcare options being offered.

Fundraising Update – Mike Weiss explained that the food fundraiser would be coming up and they were looking into options where the company that is used might deliver the food orders that are placed online to out-of-town relatives/etc. Tammy Sassaman asked if apparel might be considered as an alternative fundraising method, in particular hoodie sweatshirts that list both Neumann & St Wenc on the shirt. It was explained that it might be hard to do that as Neumann & St Wenc are two separate financial systems so who would get the profit from the sales of these. The board was open to discussing this further as with any other ideas that arise.

Miscellaneous School Items:

- Emergency drills - started this week. Children’s safety is always a priority.
- Dukes Before/After school program – 36 are signed up & usually around 20 are there after school & a handful before school. The program seems to be doing well.
- Dress Code for 2018-2019 Year – Mr Weiss mentioned perhaps bringing the dress code more in line with Neumann’s so that the parents of 6th graders wouldn’t have to get all new clothing (bottoms) as the kids moved over to Neumann. Since shirts are the same, discussed whether St Wenc would want to look at pant color similar to Neumann (black and/or khaki). No one seemed to like idea of light colored pants on elementary kids who can stain them easily. Joni Cantrall brought up that if we made the change, while the 6th graders would benefit, then the younger kids would all have to buy new clothes versus wearing the hand-me-downs they had from older siblings. Mr. Weiss mentioned there could be a “grandfathering” period of time if a change was made. Someone brought up the idea of shorts, which Neumann has & so does St Johns. The shorts would be a cooler option for boys in the warm months. If this would be enacted, then many board members felt there should be dates set for which months they could be worn & when they could not be worn, due to colder weather months. Mr Weiss asked Board Advisory members to go out and discuss these various topics as well as any others regarding the dress code with other parents to see what they think. We then can use this information for good discussion at next meeting.
- Summer Care Program – St. Wenceslaus School has received a grant to set up a Summer Care program this upcoming summer, but the details have not been ironed out yet. Hopefully more will be known by December.

Superintendent Comments (Fr. Faulkner):

New School/Hall Addition – Fr. Faulkner & Mike discussed how there is a letter being put together that will be sent to all the donors of this project within the next few weeks. The week the letter is sent out Fr. Faulkner will then discuss it at all the St. Wenceslaus Church masses that coming weekend.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 18th – 6:30 pm.

Closing Prayer by Fr. Faulkner

Recording Secretary: Joni Cantrall