

St. Catherine of Siena Board of Catholic Education
Minutes for Meeting of 3/1/2022

Opening Prayer: Jenny Tallarigo

Roll Call: Present: Father Stef, Mike Jacks, Judy Newberry, Becky Schill, Kip Perkins, Juliane Brown, Jenny Tallarigo, Sarah Dinkelacker, Sarah Weinel, Raymond Schlosser

Absent:

Excused:

Pastor's Report (Father Stef)

Father is researching different security system options for the school building, e.g. cameras and card reader access. If installed inside the school (office, gym, hallways), the board discussed maintaining teacher and student privacy. The school office, principal, and Fr. Stef will be the only ones with access to the camera feeds. Fr. Stef will keep us apprised on what is decided.

Principal's Report (Mike Jacks)

Mike has 3 goals for this year: enrollment, teacher effectiveness, and academic rigor.

For enrollment, Mike has been busy with school tours. Eight new tours were added since the last board meeting: 6 were in kindergarten, 1 was in 4th grade, and 1 was in 5th grade. Majority of the families live in Newport.

To enhance enrollment, Mike would like to add more attractions and opportunities during and after school. This March, April, and May, a free chess club on Wednesday afternoons after school will be offered. This is sponsored by the Chris Collinsworth Foundation. Mike hopes to add more opportunities and electives next year. This year is more limited because the schedule has already been set. Next year, Mike hopes to revise the master schedule to allow more of these types of opportunities during the school day (may be electives once a week for students to choose electives).

For teacher effectiveness, Mike has been working with teachers in after-school meetings and walk-throughs regarding teacher clarity. Students should know what teachers expect of them in tasks and assignments and understand the success criteria. One good example of teacher effectiveness occurred when students were doing 2 voice poetry. They learned how to read part of the poetry alone and then together, which allowed the students to view an example and then test it out themselves and create their own poetry.

For academic rigor, we are focusing on deeper knowledge vs. difficulty level. One great, recent example of deeper knowledge was when some students were working on word problems. The teacher provided word problems without numbers and the students had to determine what the numbers were to make the word problem work. It forced them to understand how to solve the problem through subtraction, addition, etc. The students concentrated on the words vs. the numbers, and they successfully completed multiple step word problems. It made solving word problems a lot easier. We want to get away from lower-level learning and quick recall, which are important, but the comprehension and inferring are more important, and this increases the

rigor. Rigor is often not what most people think it is- to make it harder. It is more what students are doing with the material and diving deeper.

Noteworthy:

Night in Paris went well. Parents bid for Principal of the Day. A 5th grader and a kindergartener were both allowed to be principals for the day. Kelly was a huge help with this day. Both kids were clear on the big “Nos” for teachers on pay increases and more vacation time.

Our 4th and 5th grade governor’s cup is moving on to regionals. This Saturday is the actual quick recall. Both academic teams have moved to regionals. Junior High is moving on to state.

Our guest speaker, Deacon Poyo, shared some things that really stuck with the students. It is difficult to get a message across all ages K-8 but he really touched the youngest and oldest with his stories. He talked a lot about his own experiences, struggles, how he overcame some struggles, and it made an impact on the students.

We had a successful Junior High Play. All performed well and it got better with each performance. Every junior high student had a role in the play. We are hoping to launch the play again next year in the fall so we do not have to compete with bad weather.

Mike conducts 2 formal rounds of observations during the school year (one in the fall and one in the spring). Mike meets with the teacher beforehand, observes for 45-minutes to an hour and then conducts a post conference meeting with the teacher. Together, Mike and the teachers look at goals and what needs to be tweaked. The spring round will start this week.

Coming up:

Healthy Challenge Through the Health Department focuses on healthy food choices.

Journey of Love with Jesus kicked off today- this is the theme for Lent. We are looking for opportunities to pray more together (the stations, going to adoration, the 8th grade Passion Play, learn about and pray the Diving Mercy Chaplet). Lent will be broken into three 2-week themes: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Team Up with God will coincide with these events and themes.

Religious Education Report (Kip Perkins)

- Due to inclement weather, Reconciliation was moved to March 31st.
- ARC assessments in CCD will occur within the next month.
- The 8th graders are in their final round of confirmation preparation with a 90-minute retreat on March 14th and a full day retreat at St. Ann’s followed by Confirmation on May 9th.
- By April, we will be wrapping up for Jesus Day and 1st Communion.
- The CCD schedule is a little chopped up with Spring Break (we will be off on the 1st Sunday of Ft. Thomas Schools’ Spring break but in session for the 2nd week, which is before Easter).

Evaluation/Planning Committee Report (Becky Schill)

Binders have been updated with a new copy of bi-laws and the most up-to-date policies. Anything outstanding is highlighted in yellow. Becky requested recommendations for 2 new board members – they can be a parent or anyone in the parish who is interested.

Raymond completed the constitutional bi-laws and will upload to the Google drive. The board will review (most current version is in the binders). Motion for 1st reading occurred in this meeting. The motion for the 2nd reading will occur in the next meeting.

Policy Review Committee Report (Juliane Brown and Sarah Dinkelacker)

The promotion policies for grades K-5 and 6-8 have been separated. We added the following: the final decision rests with the principal, the ALP is based on an individual plan, and failure in 1 or 2 of the following classes would need to be made up through an approved summer program or through private tutoring. We plan to separate grades 4-5 and 6-8 because science and social studies is not as much of a focus in grades 4-5. We discussed social and emotional maturity as being important for the younger grades when being promoted. The board discussed how there may be extenuating circumstances that impact a student's success and this would be taken into consideration by the principal. The board will approve the final version of the policy via email.

Both the diocese and St. Catherine's wellness policies are from several years ago. Most schools have a brief paragraph but ours is several pages long. We plan to update by shortening, making it clearer and more relevant, and omitting redundancies. Much of the content in the policy is already in place in the school. Julie Rafferty covers health for the 1st 15 minutes of each PE class (2nd recess in K-2 allows for additional vigorous exercise). Nutrition is also covered in science class. The plan is to keep the policy as broad as possible and if a wellness committee is established, they can dive more into the specifics. We can only dictate what's served in the classrooms. We do not have any oversight on the cafeteria menu (that is all managed by the diocese).

There used to be screenings for hearing, sight, scoliosis, blood pressure, etc. once a year. Sarah's sister-in-law is part of the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Community Ophthalmology Outreach program and is willing to visit the school to conduct the sight testing. The health department may be able to provide other screenings.

Public Relations/Marketing Committee Report (Sarah Weinel and Jenny Tallarigo)

February meeting minutes were approved.

The board reviewed the National Catholic Educational Association's Catholic School enrollment data brief for the 2021-2022 school year. Their key findings include:

- Catholic school enrollment across the nation increased by 3.8%, the first increase in two decades and the largest increase by NCEA. Catholic schools saw a decrease in enrollment 6.4% from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.
- Catholic schools provide at least 22.7 billion dollars a year in savings for the nation.
- Catholic elementary schools had a 5.8% increase in enrollment this year while secondary schools had a slight decline of 0.4%.

- Pre-kindergarten enrollment increased by 33.5% from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022.
- The lowest number of Catholic schools closed or consolidated in two decades at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
- Overall, Catholic school enrollment is 2.8% lower than 2019-2020.
- The largest dioceses are losing enrollment at more than double the rate of other dioceses over the last two years, including Cincinnati.
- Catholic schools have adapted to the nation's changing needs by expanding their offerings in recent years. Some schools are offering international baccalaureate programs, foreign languages, etc.
- Nationally, 6.8% of Catholic school students utilize a parental choice program and 20.2% of Catholic schools enrolled students using parental choice programs.
- 89% of principals and 86% of teachers were retained from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 school year.
- According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 3.7% of all US students (elementary and secondary) are in Catholic schools. According to the National Catholic Education Association, 80% of students in Catholic schools are Catholic. This means about 2.96% of US Catholic students are in Catholic schools.

Father Stef would love to get a preschool here, but we do not currently have the room.

Jenny asked Father Stef if it looks like we will start to combine parishes like they are doing in Cincinnati. Father doubts this will happen. A lot of consolidations already took place in Covington, Ludlow, Bellevue, etc. whereas Cincinnati still has a lot of parishes. We only have 53 parishes. Percentage wise, we likely have more priests than Cincinnati does. There have been no discussions of Bishop Iffert making drastic changes any time soon.

In the junior high committee meeting, we discussed the geographic data by grade. Key findings included:

- In junior high, Newport residents dominate (n=8) followed by an even number of Ft. Thomas and Dayton residents (n=5 each).
- In the 8th grade, we do not currently have any Ft. Thomas residents.
- Kindergarten: The good news is there are significantly more Newport residents in kindergarten- this could be good news for their junior high class as many will not shift to Highlands. Word of mouth seems to be the best marketing tool to reach Newport families.
- For 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade, it's relatively even among Ft. Thomas and Newport residents.
- For 3rd grade, it's interesting that we do not have anyone outside of Ft. Thomas and Newport.
- For 4th and 5th grades, Ft. Thomas dominates, and we'll likely lose some in the next few years to Highlands.
- This data is saved to the Google drive for the board's access (called Family Data).

Kelly Lorenz did a great job reaching out to recent grads and their families to see how St. Catherine prepared them for high school. We received feedback from a few families. Here's one piece of helpful feedback:

1. *“Mrs. Seta’s Reading definitely prepared me for high school English. The books we read and the time we spent learning how to interpret, question, and summarize what we read has me well prepared to write high school essays.*
2. *In religion, we might be over prepared. I seem to be way ahead of most of my peers in this subject.*
3. *Mrs. Garlich’s Advanced Math is the best thing St. Catherine offers in the middle school. I’m definitely prepared for Algebra 2.*

St. Catherine could improve on DGP quizzes.”

Juliane proposed having a Spring Scavenger Hunt for preschoolers to 2nd graders on April 30th from 10am-12pm. This will bring current and prospective families on to the campus. Our invitations and scavenger hunt will reflect a Catholic theme.

Sarah is asking for quotes from all students and teachers and will include the quotes in the bulletin, on the Stable, etc. This month's kudos will go to Kelly Lorenz for all her hard work this year.

Representative Updates

PTO Update: (Mike Jacks)

No meeting in February, meeting this week

Father/Daughter and Mother/Son dances will be held again this year

Looking for new board members

Next meeting is Tuesday, April 5

Closing Prayer: Sarah Dinkelacher

Adjournment: