

Saratoga Central Catholic School
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on March 12, 2015

Members in Attendance:

Stan Weeks, Chairman
Jerry Leone, Vice Chair
Lew Benton
Kathy Carson
Fran Dingeman
Dawn Martinez
Michael Naughton
Becky Stauffer
L. Stephen Lombard, Principal

Other Attendees: Steven Towne, Catholic Diocese Board Member

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Weeks.

- **Dr. Weeks welcomed Dawn Martinez to the group and it was noted that there is an absence of paperwork from the Bishop for Mrs. Martinez.**
- **Dr. Weeks offered a prayer for Catholic School Boards**
- **Mr. Benton made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2014 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Carson and unanimously approved.**

Introduction of Guests

- **Mr. Lombard introduced Mr. Ernie Casile, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, who offered a presentation and discussion of the Common Core.**
- **Mr. Casile gave a brief overview of the Common Core as well as a Catholic School perspective highlighting what's different in a Catholic School vs. a public school. In 2009 it was determined that NYS learning standards needed to be adapted because tests showed that the U.S. was pacing behind other countries in reading, writing and math. The Common Core was the result. It provides standards that are focused on the skills and outcomes students will have at the end of grade levels. Mr. Casile stressed that the Common Core does not dictate the curriculum and that at the diocesan and local school level we can pick and choose where we want our students to be at the end of each school level. We are not adopting, we adapt the standards and do what's right for our schools. Mr. Lombard commented that these standards added depth to our curriculum. Mr. Benton commented on a couple of criticisms of the curriculum cited as students being taught specifically for the exam and an inordinate amount of stress being placed on the students at test time. Mr. Casile expressed the thought that the teachers pass their stress onto the students. Mrs. Stauffer commented that by the**

time a teacher gets the score they are onto a new group of students. Mr. Casile informed us that now teachers get the results within a more timely period. He stressed that these standards are a tool and our teachers and schools map out “how to get there”. The Common Core focuses on the skills students need to go out in the world and be successful. He noted that SATs and ACTs are changing to model the Common Core.

State of the School Report was presented by Mr. Lombard.

- Enrollment is 240 (a decrease of 1 student to Saratoga High School from last month after February Break). The pacing expectation based on last year is that the number will change by the end of the month especially with the Open House scheduled from 6 to 8 on the 25th of March.
- Mr. Lombard asserted that at this point in time, word of mouth numbers coming to us from our feeder schools are strong.
- Mr. Lombard noted a little concern over the re-enrollment number of 117 out of 203 as just over half with a deadline of March 15. As of March 15 the enrollment fee goes from \$100 to \$150. Our school tends not to follow deadlines so numbers are not too surprising. We have about ½ in every grade level filled for 2016. Mrs. Stauffer noted the same trends at St. Clements.
- Mr. Lombard reported on tuition in arrears as \$34,389, which has shown a decrease.
- Mr. Lombard reported on MSA/CAP income, not in the current operating revenue budget, as \$7,247 as of a check received on March 3, 2015.
- Mr. Lombard asked the Board to write a letter of advocacy to enact the Education Tax Credit proposal recommended by Governor Cuomo as part of his 2015-16 budget recommendations. We need to continue to make our voices heard during the budget negotiations in the upcoming weeks so that it becomes a law.
- Mr. Lombard reported that \$8,000 was raised for the Mantia family through recent fundraising efforts. Due to an infection, surgery originally scheduled for March 17th has been put off until mid-April.
- Mr. Lombard reported that two Dave Matthews tickets for the July 4th show have been generously donated to the school as a fundraiser in support of the Mantia family. A drawing will be held and tickets will be sold for \$25 each with a limit of 100 total sold.
- Mr. Lombard reported that an alum has been brought in to cover for Mrs. Mantia in her absence – Mary Guarnieri. Mrs. Mantia will be asked to take over a greater aspect of communications going forward.
- Mr. Lombard reported that 29 of 37 students (78%) were selected at a college or university. Merit money so far equaled just over 4.3 million dollars. One student out of a class of 37 will be enlisting in the military.
- Mr. Lombard informed the Board that he suspended a student for 3 days and offered further discussion on the matter upon request.

- Mr. Lombard noted that the visibly decorated hallways were in celebration of Sprit Day taking place tomorrow, March 13, from noon to 2:20 in the Gym. Each class bid for a country and decorated their hall for that country.
- Mr. Lombard asked the Board to make note of the Beacon of Hope Gala on Friday, April 24th, at Albany CC. This is a fundraiser for the Beacon of Hope Scholarship.
- Mr. Lombard reminded the Board that Seussical the Musical will perform Friday and Saturday, March 20 and 21 at 7pm and Sunday March 22 at 3pm in the Parish Center.
- Mr. Lombard asked the Board to make note of the Finance Symposium on Saturday, March 28th at 8:30am at NDBG.
- Mr. Towne informed the Board that attendance at this event is viewed as an item of consideration on Diocesan School grant applications which are very competitive. Of 23 Catholic schools only 7 did not apply.
- Mike Naughton commented on how many school Board Members were in attendance at the recent Alumni Appeal Phonathon.
- Mr. Lombard reported that Friday morning Rosary took place throughout the season of Lent. It would take place tomorrow morning at 7:45 in Mrs. McHale's office.
- Mr. Lombard reported that next month's Board Meeting has been moved to April 23rd. At this meeting, Mr. Pizzingrillo will be joining us to discuss with the Board Mr. Lombard's evaluation.

Committee Reports

Enrollment Committee

- Mr. Naughton reported that the next meeting is the night of the Open House, March 25. Good success has come from getting members there when the meeting is scheduled that night.
- Mr. Naughton reported that Mrs. Bailey has 4 parents helping out distributing flyers and palm cards throughout the area about the Open House. They also contacted Roohan Realty to update the signs. Mr. Naughton noted the importance of keeping the signs for re-use each year.

Development Committee

- Mr. Benton reported that Ms. Tarkleson brought those in attendance up to speed about the list of capital and major maintenance needs. She mentioned that there are people in the community who are interested in filling some of those needs.
- Mr. Benton reported that Ms. Izzo joined the committee for a brief report on the Alumni Appeal. She reported a little under \$13,000 as donations that had come in. Mr. Lombard increased that total to a reported \$17,000 that had come in as of this afternoon. The goal was \$50,000, which was a little less but a more reasonable budget than last year's. An attempt to identify class captains and have them come in and work the phones is in the plans for 2016.
- Ms. Dingeman suggested an effort to update alumni phone numbers so time spent at the Phonathon is more effectively spent reaching alumni by phone rather than wrong numbers or former contact information. Mr. Benton noted that Ms. Izzo is looking into efforts to go beyond the White Pages for student numbers and that she will continue to attempt to get updated numbers at class reunions.

- Mrs. Martinez suggested collecting email addresses and trying to reach students in that way.
- Mr. Benton reported that the committee reviewed a rough draft of a Strategic Development Plan based on Dr. Weeks' request. The Development Committee will review it at the next meeting and then bring it up to the Board for review at the April meeting.
- Mr. Benton reported the development of a list of community members not connected to the school who might be a target for donations (especially in light of the possible government Education Tax Credit).
- Mr. Benton reported the development of a Foundation and Scholarship Guide, an attempt to identify local Foundations and what their application deadlines are in generation of a Formal Sponsorship Program.

Golf Tournament

- Mr. Naughton reported that the committee met at the Mantia Fundraiser. The next meeting was scheduled on the 23rd of March at the Barrelhouse Restaurant. A request was made to move the meeting to Mingle on the Avenue for the Saratoga Central Catholic Attitude of Gratitude night. Mr. Naughton would ask the committee to meet at Mingle in support of the school. Arrangements would be looked into by Ms. Dingeman to have a section in the upper room at Mingle set aside for the committee once an attendance number is arrived at.
- Mr. Naughton reported that \$9,700 was collected so far for the Golf Tournament. He extended a sponsorship package sheet. Mrs. Martinez asked if the committee could let the Board know who has already been approached for donations and Mr. Naughton said that a database would be made available to Board members. Information could also be obtained by contacting Mike, Sandy or Mark Welcome directly.

Facilities Committee

- Dan Shea was not present. Mr. Lombard reported that the committee was pulling together a list of what was needed within the school and that 2 variable speed fans were being installed in the gym which should make it warmer for games.

Financial Aid Committee

- Mary Gavin was not present. Mr. Lombard reported that the Financial Aid Committee met last week and looked at the policies and procedures in place. The pluses outweighed the minuses.

Finance Committee

- Mr. Leone reported that there are 4 months left to the school year and we are in line with the budget. In fact, we have a projected surplus of \$11,000. We have a fundraising deficit of \$21,000. Mrs. Angelini deserves kudos for bringing in a surplus of \$9,399 through her school breakfast and lunch room efforts.
- Mr. Leone reported that the committee is asking for a wish list of projects to support with any budget surplus before the end of the year (June 30).

- Mr. Towne commented on how the Diocese sees Saratoga Central Catholic as having good management of dollars over past years. He asserted that the school has been recognized for this. Mr. Leone commended Dr. Weeks and Tom Gould for their concerted goal of tightening the budget. Mr. Lombard added the role played by additional enrollment dollars and tuition increases as a significant contribution toward this end as well.
- Mr. Lombard added that budgeting for 2015-16 will start late April or early May.

Nominating Committee

- Mr. Leone reported that he left a message for potential new Board Member at the suggestion of Ms. Dingeman. Mr. Towne and Mrs. Stauffer commented favorably on the potential member, a former student at Saratoga Central Catholic, for the last Board Member seat.

Mission Enhancement Committee

- Jenn Claeson was not present. Kathy Carson reported that Spiritual posters and Biblical sayings were distributed to classrooms for posting on February 27th. The committee received positive feedback for the Word of Wisdom written daily on the white board in the entry way.
- Mrs. Carson reported that the committee was presently working on ideas they can bring to families in the process of educating their families in the Catholic Faith. Parents indicated a need for help with this. The committee would be looking into videos on the subject.
- Mrs. Carson offered a sheet of possibilities for the new school Mission Statement. She was interested in feedback from the School community.

School Liaison Reports:

- Mr. Leone reported that the SMSA meeting was on the same night as the Finance Committee meeting and so he was not in attendance.
- Dr. Weeks attended the St. Clements' monthly meeting where they discussed their (1) tuition policy and (2) Annual Spring Ball. (1) Mr. Weeks explained a St. Clement's tuition policy statement to Board members. He brought to the Board's attention the fact that St. Clements offers families with children at both St. Clement's School and Saratoga Central Catholic, a discount of \$200. This discount will not be offered if financial aid has already been awarded in an amount equal to or more than \$200 (effective Fall 2015). (2) The upcoming Annual Spring Ball has generated \$130 k in hand through sponsorships already. They promoted that proceeds go to their STEM Project. It was noted as a possibility for next year's Saratoga Central Catholic Gala to pinpoint where proceeds will be applied so parents can relate to a specific advancement to the school that their donation is helping.
- Dr. Weeks announced that there will be a joint Board Meeting on April 30th when all 4 local Catholic School Boards will get together (including our 3 feeder schools).
- Mrs. Stauffer requested that activities and events that go on at our school be communicated to St. Clements. Many felt badly about not knowing about the Mantia Family Dinner at the K of C. Mr. Lombard said Ms. Tarkleson will take care of that communication in the future.
- St. Mary's – no report provided.

Additional Agenda Items:

- **Dr. Weeks reported that a discussion on where we want to be 5 years from now will be on the agenda for April.**
- **Mr. Lombard reported that after the February Open House several got together to discuss the school website. Mr. Lombard asked the Board members to contact him if they were willing to help in reviewing and offering feedback on the website.**
- **Mrs. Martinez asked if the school wish list consisting of Capital items and teacher needs could be communicated to school parents. She suggested doing so because there are many parents who would be interested in contributing toward those needs.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15am with a prayer offered by Mrs. Stauffer.

Next Meeting date: April 23