

**Ascension Catholic Academy
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 6, 2020
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Ascension Catholic School Community Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Fr. Dale Korogi, Ben Jaffray, Suzie Colianni, Mike Halloran, Fr. Kevin Finnegan, Stephen Imholte, Patrick Mahoney

MEMBERS PRESENT CONFERENCE CALL: Quentin Moore, Jan Conlin, Sharon Ryan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Rauenhorst, Josie Johnson, Fr. Erich Rutten, Ann Dayton, Barry Lieske

EX-OFFICIO PRESENT: Patty Stromen

STAFF PRESENT: Laura Wagner, Pat Exner, Benito Matias, Terese Shimshock, Tricia Menzhuber, Brad Huard

PRAYER: Fr. Dale Korogi

MISSION MOMENT: Benito Matias

CONSENT AGENDA

a) Approval of February 6, 2020 agenda

Motion to approve, seconded and motion carried

b) Approval of December 5, 2019 minutes

Motion to approve, seconded and motion carried

Chairperson's Report -Suzie Colianni

Suzie mentioned that the reading curriculum at JPII is great and that scholars are making good progress. She congratulated Ascension School scholars, teachers and principal for being named a Changing-the-Odds School by Great MN Schools. This designation is given to schools where students from low income backgrounds academically out-perform students in Minneapolis Public Schools. Ascension is one of only 25 schools to achieve this designation.

Also mention the Board Executive Session is always available if members request it.

President's Report – Patty Stromen

Patty highlighted from her report the 4 areas where she has been focusing on vision and strategy. They are:

1. Talent Life Cycle - Competencies and Descriptors. This work is continuing through the development of competencies and descriptors for principals, as well as development of year end evaluation tool for teachers that incorporates the competencies and descriptors. The draft of Competencies and Descriptors for School Leaders is on the portal. We will be discussing this during New Business.
2. The Partnership Framework continues to be developed and implemented. The work continues to be strategic as we develop strong practices of implementation and stewardship of resources.
3. Early Childhood Learning Center – This will be discussed during Old Business on the agenda.
4. The Archdiocese has released the *Roadmap for Excellence in Catholic Education*, as well as a *Preliminary Draft – Archdiocesan Policy Manual for Catholic Schools*. We will be work over the coming months to understand the implication of these documents for the Academy.

Over the past month a critical mission moment has occurred in our Academy Schools in the area of mental health resourcing for scholars. As our staff and partners become more engaged, aware and informed on the social-emotional needs of our scholars there is a request to bring additional mental health resources to our sites. After reflection and consultation Patty has decided this is a “critical mission moment” in the development of the Academy. It is important that thorough research, consultation and dialogue we build an educational model for mental health for Academy schools. While this model may be implemented differently at each site, it is important that our Academy Mission, Guiding Principles and educational processes are in line with the various ways mental health resources are utilized at our sites. This will be a significant focus of her work during the coming 3-6 months. She will be developing a team to respond to this mission critical question.

Also, enrollment is an area that is set as a high priority for principals, as well as Leadership Team. Through reflection on strategies, goals and actions we will develop an Enrollment LifeCycle and refine the various roles in Enrollment in order to increase our effectiveness of outcomes and use of staff resources. The two areas of priority continue to be retention and new enrollment.

Each principal gave an overview of their enrollment efforts. Benito noted that ASC Kindergarten sign up has been good and is working with NAZ on Early childhood development. Terese had several tours resulting in new enrollments and SPC and will have an Open House the end of February in hopes of generating more enrollment. Tricia created an Admissions Team to provide monthly events to keep families who are enrolled connected to the school. Also noted her Kindergarten class enrollment is growing.

Principals' Reports - Terese Shimshock, Trisha Menzhuber, Benito Matias

Tricia mentioned that her reading curriculum is great and that all teachers need to be equipped to be reading specialist. She also noted that it feels like there is a "creative buzz" atmosphere this year in the school which is very exciting.

Patty noted that ACA Leadership is attending a Latino enrollment seminar sponsored by Notre Dame.

Terese had a great Catholic Schools Week. She is using Catholic Financial Raffle tickets as an enrollment tool and for getting the SPC school name out into the community. Groves Academy has provided additional online professional development for teachers as well as individual coaching this year which has increased our teachers' knowledge base. She also noted an increased growth in those scholars that have had two years of the Groves curriculum. She invited board members to attend SPC Black History Program on March 5 at 6:15 pm.

Benito mention that as part of Catholic Schools Week, SPC - STEP Team performed at ASC and scholars and faculty really enjoyed them. The continued blended learning implementation and partnership with Notre Dame has allowed teachers to maximize differentiation and the blended learning reading software tools to support scholar learning.

Committee Reports

Academic

Pat Exner noted that the committee has been reviewing the Principal Competency Plan. Patty also noted that Barry has been very helpful with helping us with the academy Brand and Policy.

Finance

Jan Conlin has not yet received the financials but will have a meeting in the next couple weeks to review them.

Governance

Sharon Ryan reported that the Governance Retreat is happening today

Advancement Committee and Department Report – Mike Halloran, Laura Wagner

Mike noted that the Advancement Committee met on Tuesday, February 28th at the Ascension Offices. The meeting included a positive progress report from Laura Wagner including: overall ACA fund raising stands at 62% of goal (with St. Peter Claver making the most progress), the JPPII Gala will be held on May 1 at Jax Café, three advancement staff positions are open and working to fill, reviewed the overall ACA Calendar for the year, and a grants update. The committee also discussed opportunities for greater committee and board involvement in the area of advancement. Laura shared new event ideas for Advancement with the goal of engaging and thanking donors and identifying and cultivating prospective new donors. These ideas included President's Gathering, thank you calls, and donor socials.

Laura continues to work with Casey Breen for ways we can work more efficiently. Ben stressed the need to engage new younger donors in support of the academy as older CEO's move on.

Laura stated there is still a need to work on cultivation on a one-on-one level as well as to a broader audience. Gave a hand-out listing types of donor activities and what is involved in each and asked each member to fill it out. She also highlighted the Sending Forth Breakfast event on May 13 as a new way for us to cultivate donors. At that event, donors and our 8th grade scholars from all schools will celebrated what we have achieved.

Old Business - Early Childhood Learning Center

Patty is moving ahead with preparing start up and opening for one Early Childhood Learning classroom at SPC and ASC and possibly at JPPII. She has formalized a committee which Pat will lead and is working to secure a grant to hire a director. The state provides the funding for children to attend and an increase in funding will likely go before the legislature this year. We will announce the start of the program once we have state approval and funding.

New Business - Principal Competencies

Patty asked members to review the competencies to see if they align with mission and guiding principles or if we are missing anything.

Fr. Kevin had some word-smith suggestions.

Patrick Mahoney asked if we have the right school leaders based on the competencies.

Patty said that we will move forward to be sure we have the right indicators and that it will reflect the academy brand.

She also noted that the Archdiocese will have 4 – 5 pilot school programs for Catholic Identity. Tricia and JPPII will be a pilot school for this. The focus is on Catholic Identity and discipleship.

Quentin asked if the website and printed materials could develop a way to include how kids and parents are feeling in our schools once they are a scholar.

Patty noted that this happens more in the MNSSA process and this could be helpful for our donors. Not just for advancement but as a way to effect climate and culture.

Suzie stated that it would be good to follow up with our 8th graders once they are in their 1st year of high school and then when they graduate from high school to find out what impact the ACA had on their lives.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Members did not go into Executive Session.

MOTION TO ADJORN

Motion to approve, seconded and motion carried