

Saint Ambrose School Board Meeting
Wednesday, July 12, 2023
6:00 p.m. – Community Center
MINUTES

Members Present: Maggie Kohl, Erin Kochan Ashley Lack, Paul Braundmeier, Abby Stephens, Stephanie King, Mark Terry, Justin Lacey

Others Present: Bob Baird, Deacon Jay Wackerly, Fr. Steven Janoski

Call to Order & Opening Prayer – Fr. Steven Janoski opened the meeting at 6:01 pm and led the group in prayer.

Committee and other reports submitted are included after the board minutes. The following notes are from discussion during our meeting about those reports.

Fr. Steve-Overview of a Catholic School Board- Father Steve gave a review of the mission of Catholic school boards. He highlighted information from the Guidelines for Boards from the Office of Catholic Education. There are two types of boards; the St. Ambrose School Board is a consultative board. The Bishop has ultimate authority at any Catholic school or university in his diocese. All policies from the Bishop's office are required. The St. Ambrose School Board is to be a support and promote the mission of the church and school. The St. Ambrose School mission was reviewed and it was emphasized that Board members need to support the school publicly and ensure the mission of the school is shared in messages we send out, in worship and to the community at large as the Board represents the parish and school. Father Steve will send out links to Board members including the bylaws and policies, faculty/student handbook, parent handbook and principal's handbook. Father Steve distributed the 2023 Higher Calling, Higher Standards packet to Board members present for review. Father Steve highlighted that the responsibilities of the Board include planning, policy formation, finances, development/PR/marketing, evaluation of the principal and of the Board's own effectiveness; assists with the hiring of principal, director of religious education, and youth minister. The Board does not discipline, develop curriculum, approve instruction, hire/fire, handle grievances. Father Steven emphasized that grievances should be taken to Mr. Baird as he needs to the first opportunity to address issues in the school. The Board does not need to be given details of what was addressed but notified that there was an issue which was addressed. Father Steven then gave an overview of the roles of the officer positions of the Board and the standing committees were reviewed; the bylaws give additional detail of what each role is responsible for and this information will be distributed to Board members. Father Steve asked Board members to message him if they are interested in any particular role on the Board and this will be discussed at the next meeting.

Strategic Plan – Erin asked the board to to review the Strategic Plan goals and give any recommendations or additions prior to August 1, 2023. Feedback from the Board will be taken to the August Strategic Plan Committee meeting and they will determine how to meet the objectives. Information will be shared to the Board monthly with updates from the Strategic Plan Committee

meetings. The goal is to have the Strategic Plan project completed by December; the evaluation/accreditation process will begin in the spring of 2024.

Standing Committees (additional comments and discussion)

Policy & Planning- no report

Finance- no report

Grant Writing & Development- no report

Buildings & Grounds (*Paul*)- Bids have been received for replacing the heating and air conditioning systems in the church. Also have received bids for the paving project. The Finance Council will need to include these items in the budget. More bids are expected. The outdoor garden is in process and will be going by the fall/spring.

Reports (additional comments and discussion)

SAPA (*Ashley*)- Mr. Baird will send an email to parents/guardians asking for volunteers to fill open SAPA officer positions and assist with fundraisers for the 2023-2024 school year.

IT (*Deacon Jay*)- The security certificate on the website expired and anyone visiting the website may have received a warning regarding this. Deacon Jay emphasized that this was not a virus. The security certificate has now been renewed. There is a new hire for the IT Department: Eli Hawkins.

Stewardship (*Deacon Jay*)- St. Ambrose has 129 tickets available for the Eucharistic Conference. School Board members will have first access to those tickets. This invitation will also be extended to SAPA, the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council before being opened to other parish members.

Principal's Report (*Mr. Baird*)- New staff members will be introduced at the Board meeting next month. Due to one new hire being a former police officer, there was a question of if he would be allowed to carry a weapon on school grounds. The diocese does not have a policy in place regarding this at this time; however currently no teachers/staff are being allowed to carry a weapon on school grounds due to the absence of a policy. The current staff assignments for the 2023-2024 school year are: PK3 Mrs. Jacobs, PK4 Mrs. Staten and Mrs. Hoefert, K Mrs. Bachman, 1st Mr. Farniok and Mrs. McCormick, 2nd Mrs. Kane and Mrs. Murphy, 3rd Mrs. Rose, 4th Mrs. Fessler, 5th Mrs. Stilwell and Mr. Johnson, Math Ms. Leeds, Religion and 6th/8th Social Studies Mrs. Baird, 7th Social Studies Mr. Baird, ELA/Composition/Public Speaking Mrs. Wielgus. There will be sections for math and science for 6th and 8th grades. Current enrollment is 231 students. Mr. Baird has been asked by the diocese to be a mentor for Kim Knight from Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Adjournment: At 6:59 Erin motioned to adjourn the meeting and it was agreed upon by consensus.

The next meeting is August 9, 2023.

REPORTS

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE (*Erin Kochan*)

- 1 Personnel & Governance
 - 1.1 Goal 1- Look to retain and recruit highly qualified teachers when openings occur
 - 1.1 Objectives – Identify and obtain new outlets for sharing posting employment opportunities
 - 1.2 Salaries, Benefits, stipend opportunities
 - 1.3 Maintaining Teacher Morale
 - 1.4 Check in with teachers more throughout the year
 - 4.1 Reflection on practice
 - 1.2 Goal 2 - Full Time Assistant Principal / Dean of Students – Administrative Interns
 - 2.1 Objective 1 – administration can deal with students and issues as they arise
 - 2.2 Objective 2 - Create more structured time to allow for administration to address and investigate serious, emotional, and disciplinary incidents.
 - 1.3 Goal 3 - Teacher/Parent/Staff Communication
- 2 Curriculum & Instruction
 - 2.1 Goal 1 – Curriculum MAPS
 - 2.1 Objective 1 – Continue working on updating the outdated curriculum (Social Studies & ELA)
 - 2.2 Goal 2 – AR/STARS/Reading Assessments
 - 2.1 Objective 1 – DRA assessment
 - 2.2 Objective 2 – Tracking monthly progress
 - 2.3 Goal 3 – Improve MAP Scores
 - 3.1 Objective 1 – Add Language Arts into testing
 - 3.2 Objective 2 – Incentives for showing up, taking their time
 - 3.3 Objective 3 – Plan in place for helping those students in the lower and middle score areas
 - 2.4 Goal 4 – Financial planning for older students
- 3 Planning, Development, & Enrollment
 - 3.1 Goal 1 – Increase enrollment by 3-5% Annually
 - 3.2 Goal 2 – Provide tuition projections that look 5 years' out
 - 3.3 Goal 3 – Determine ways to continue to improve fundraising and grants that support improvements and help keep costs down
 - 3.4 Goal 4 – Work on updating school website / Technology
 - 4.1 Objective 1 – Alumni
 - 3.5 Goal 5 – Student Recruitment in more than just PK & K-8
- 4 Catechesis
 - 4.1 Goal 1 - Improve ACRE Scores
 - 4.2 Goal 2 – Provide opportunities for spiritual growth and collaboration
 - 4.3 Goal 3 – Our Parish Community to share their talents in the school community
- 5 Facility & Safety
 - 5.1 Goal 1 - School Resource Office / Security Officer
 - 5.2 Goal 2 – Ensure student safety throughout the school day
 - 2.1 Objective 1 – Can Grants be used
 - 2.2 Objective 2 – Crisis plan is reviewed twice a year – next up August 2023
 - 5.3 Goal 3 – Safety & Security team meeting twice a year

6 School & Community

6.1 Goal 1 – Getting students more involved in the church & community

1.1 Objective – importance on citizenship and service

1.1 Required service hours for the students too – middle school – 6 (6 hours), 7 (8 hours), 8 (10 hours)

6.2 Goal 2 – Marketing Plan – sharing good news of the St. Ambrose Community

6.3 Goal 3 – Saints Helping Heroes

3.1 Objective 1 – Nursing Homes, Cards, Oasis Center, Rock Springs Christmas Lights

SAPA REPORT (Ashley Lack)

- Currently there are 3 vacant officer positions on SAPA; a minimum of 2 of these will need filled for the organization to exist within the bylaws
- There is a desperate need for volunteers on the committees and chairs for events; currently there is a risk of no SAPA fundraisers for the 2023-2024 school year due to no chairs for events.
- There is still interest in replacing the SCRIP program with the Cash Bash Fundraiser. This will require approval of Father Steve/Finance Council/School Board and support from the parish/school that would require each family to sell a certain number of tickets. This will also require volunteers to chair and assist with running the Cash Bash in order for the fundraiser to exist.
- SAPA is planning to host the uniform resale at the Backpack Blessing at the start of the school year. We are also planning to have the Dress Down Day Pass sale.

IT STATUS REPORT (Deacon Jay)

Last Report – 05/07/23

- 1 Removed unneeded wiring and equipment from rooms and dressed-up cables in 2 room. Need to rout audio out of the smartboards to the amplified speakers. Not all teachers may need/want this, but this will be the normal configuration.
- 2 Covid Funding- 20 Teacher Chromebooks received and given to teachers. Student Chromebook (185), cases and charging carts received. Unfortunately, the new cases don't fit in the new cabinets. In work with Archangel to resolve the problem. Grades 8 through 6 don't use cabinets so these Chromebooks are done.
- 3 Clever integration & training on-going. Working to have classroom needed applications ready by the beginning of August e.g., Sadlier, Google Classroom, etc.
- 4 Eli Hawkins started on Wednesday 5 July. He is coming up to speed quickly. Eli H. is implementing a Google IT calendar to manage his time, tasks, and availability. He also plans to improve the IT room layout.
- 5 Working on an inventory to the grant processor/state for the technology items we received through the EANS grant.
- 6 Temporarily installed and tested an AXIS zoom capable camera courtesy of Utilitra in the Church. Looks fine. Working out details on the audio configuration.
- 7 IT Tickets 5/7/23 to 7/8/23
 - 7.a 26 New this period, 21 Resolved this period, 24 In Progress, 15 Not Started, 4 Deferred, 734 Total

Near term tasks:

- 1 Implement Clever to streamline student/teacher Chromebook use and FACTS/SIS rostering to apps less time consuming.
- 2 Test Chromebook docking station. Verify large keyboard and monitor interface.

- 3 FACTS “How To” change Facts SIS user password
- 4 Update Camera view names
- 5 Verify we have Rob F. Widows laptop and Chromebook

Long term tasks:

- 1 Gym H&A/C System Software
- 2 Security Doors & Cameras integrated plan
- 3 WIFI Network documentation
- 4 New/better cantor mic in the Church
- 5 New/better microphone in the Community Center
- 6 Clean up/organize the basement e.g., store spare Chromebooks.
- 7 Gaylord container for recycling e-waste.

Open Ticket Status by Staff/Volunteers

Eli (12), Jay (2), Jean (1), Mark (2), Mel (2), Peggy (12), Tom (7)

STEWARDSHIP REPORT (*Deacon Jay*)

- 1 The web site security certificate has been renewed. The web site was throwing a not-secure warning.
- 2 The Diocese is hosting a Eucharistic Congress at the BOS Center on Saturday Oct. 28, 2023. St. Ambrose has 129 seats. Asking Pastoral Council, School Board, SAPA Members, and Finance Council members first. The speakers include Dr. Scott Hahn; Sister M. Karolyn Nunes, FSGM; Fr/ Chase Hilgenbrinck; Fr. Denis Robinson, OBS.
 - 2.1 SACO/SAPA/Parish Council/School Board/Finance Council sign-up priority.**
 - Contact Parish Office**
 - 2.2 Should we charter a bus? Flocknote survey created.**
 - 2.3 Flock sign-up created.**
- 3 Welcoming Brochure – example
- 4 IT Administrator Hired.
- 5 Audio assist devices available, limited use.
- 6 Tested a new Live Stream Camera located above the clock at the front of the Church and have ordered the camera. The exact configuration is TBD.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT (*Mr. Baird*)

Staff Updates

PE – Lindsey Hamberg

5th Grade – Justin Johnson

IT Coordinator – Eli Hawkins

PreK Aide – Alisha McKee

Middle School Science – We are in conversation with a highly recommended, recently retired Science teacher.

State & Diocesan Accreditation

Last school year, into this Summer, the faculty and Mr. Baird have been working on the components of the State & Diocesan Accreditation. Examples include personnel files documents, curriculum maps, policy updates, and required documentation.

Safety & Security Updates

In late June Mr. Baird communicated with the representative from the state for the IEMA (Illinois Emergency Management Agency) grant. The latest update was that the webinar to explain the process for accessing the funds is to happen in the near future. All projects tied to the grant funding continue to remain on hold until the IEMA gives the go ahead. Other projects will proceed as soon as possible. Before the beginning of the school year, St. Ambrose faculty and staff will receive CPR/Stop the Bleed training as well as 4E training from Lt. Christner with the Alton Police Department.

Principal Evaluation

In an effort to improve upon necessary areas identified within the Principal's evaluation Mr. Baird has established a mentoring relationship with Mr. Alex Pulido. Additionally, Mr. Baird has set 4 main goals/area of focus for the upcoming school year. There are many other goals for the future and many of these other goals will be identified, established, and later presented through the 5 year strategic plan. These main goals include;

I Spiritual Leader

GOAL: To offer more opportunities for parents and family at home to be engaged with spiritual growth activities with their children.

II Managerial

GOAL: To more effectively market St. Ambrose Catholic School during the upcoming school year to share the good news of St. Ambrose more consistently with our local community.

III Educational Leadership

GOAL: To improve MAP and ACRE standardized test scores.

IV Miscellaneous

GOAL: To work on ALWAYS conveying effective listening skills and empathy.

Submitted by Ashley Lack, Interim Secretary