

**Saint Ambrose School Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 14, 2020**  
**6:00 p.m. – Community Center**

*Mission: St. Ambrose School provides a foundation of Catholic truths and values. Students will leave with the knowledge and skills necessary for life in the modern world.*

**Members Present:** Julie Osborn, Delfina Dornes, Chris Brown, Abby Stephens, Dan Clasby, Sue Wickenhauser, Paul Braundmeier, Maggie Kohl, Scott Droste

**Others Present:** Bob Baird, Deacon Jay Wackerly, Fr. Steve Janoski, Jules King, Scott Rose

**Opening Prayer** - Chairperson Osborn opened the meeting at 6:01 pm and asked Mr. Baird to lead the group in prayer.

**Approval of Minutes** - Julie asked if there were any changes for the September minutes that were emailed. There being no changes, Maggie moved to accept the minutes as presented. Paul seconded the motion. With no dissent, the Chair indicated that the September minutes were approved as shared.

**Principal's Report**

- Upcoming calendar items:
  - 10/15 - Earthquake drill; Immunization records & handbook form due
  - 10/16 - First quarter ends
  - 10/23 - Report cards open
  - 10/28 & 10/29 - Parent/Teacher Conferences
  - 10/29 - Trunk & Glow event following COVID guidelines
  - 10/30 - No school
  - 11/11 - No school in observance of Veterans Day
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 fire drills coming up
- We completed the first MAP Testing in September. This is the test that is replacing the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Approximately 12 million students across the country took the first test, including 450,000 Catholic school students, in grades 3-8. Every student in the Springfield diocese will take the MAP Test. The faculty participated in a webinar to help understand how to interpret the data. This week a family report will be sent home (math, reading & science). The week before parent/teacher conferences, they will send home more detailed report. This is a benchmark for the students – it is just one tool that they will use to determine where students may be struggling. Mr. Baird found out that there is no additional expense for the 3<sup>rd</sup> test date (December), so the faculty thinks we should go ahead and take the third test to gain a third data point. The board agreed that if the teachers feel it is beneficial, then we should go ahead and do it. Mr. Baird reported that 3<sup>rd</sup> grade exceeded the national and diocesan averages. At higher grades he and the teachers felt that math scores dropped off a bit, but we have addressed that already by switching back to Saxon Math. Science scores were higher than averages.

- Title I Reading and Math Support began two weeks ago. There are currently 25 students in grades K-5 who are receiving services. This year's funding is allowing teachers to work one-on-one with students. (Title I focuses on curriculum, and Title II is for teacher development. We should receive \$11,200 in Title II funds.)
- Catholic Times will feature our 2 students who are the latest winners of the Office of the Missions Christmas Card Art Contest. Mr. Baird noted that St. Ambrose has had multiple winners over the years, and he commended Mrs. Preston on our wonderful Fine Arts program.
- Alton School District food/meal options –The Food Service Director for Alton CUSD 100 has not gotten back with us about a program in which we could purchase lunches from them. During remote learning any taxpayer in the district can get free breakfasts/lunches for their children by picking them up at designated locations.
- John Simmons reached out regarding a possible arrangement with Theodora Farms as a source for school lunches. Mr. Baird will share more information as it becomes available.
- Magic Match Class Funding – all classes have received sponsorships, which include \$500 for each teacher to use for his/her classroom.
- ALICE Training –The Madison County Sheriff Department provided this training for the faculty and staff. It is the most widely used school violence and active shooter training, and it is especially helpful in allowing teachers to think through their responses if that type of situation were to occur.
- Emergency Drills (Evacuation/Reunification Location) – Other schools, particularly AHS, have plans in place to transport kids from the first evacuation location to a different reunification location. Mr. Baird questions if that would be feasible or recommended. He would like for the board members to consider if this would be a good or bad idea. Dan suggested that Mr. Baird speak with the sheriff's office to see what streets might be cordoned off in an emergency situation, which could possibly affect whether a second location would be necessary in order for parents to be able to pick up their children.
- Sports Update – The diocese says schools are to follow IESA guidelines. The current plan is for basketball to begin practice December 14 with games starting January 4.
- Immunizations/health records and Student-Parent Handbook forms are due tomorrow.
- Trunk-n-Glow event Oct. 29, 2020
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade clothing drive was a massive success based on the number of bags. Over 310 bags collected. We receive 20¢ per pound, and we probably raised over \$1500 for space camp. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders are supposed to have their trip in the spring.
- Sue suggested checking into a program with Washington University in which education students come into schools to help teachers free of charge. Bob said ISU reached out on behalf of the Illinois university system. He is open to that but would like to have a way to somehow screen the potential students.
- Scott asked Bob about the morale of the teachers. Bob thinks the change in the math program has been a positive move. He has received positive feedback about the approach we took in discussing with the teachers the way we were going about it. He believes everyone is happy to be back in school.

## **Class Size Policy**

- The class size of each preschool class is 20 students, per state guidelines. The recommended capacity of each kindergarten-8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom/homeroom is 25 students. The class size is dependent upon room availability, educational characteristics of the students, and the discretion of school administration. Should enough students register to support additional sections, the principal will consult with the pastor, finance council, and school board to determine if additional sections are warranted. If warranted, additional assistance in a classroom will be considered.

Dan motioned to approve, and Scott motioned. With no dissent, the new wording for Class Size Policy was approved. The policy will be sent to Fr. Steve for his final approval.

**Volunteer Accident Waiver** – Deacon Jay thinks we need something in our handbook that states that volunteers accept a certain risk as a volunteer. They should agree that their insurance will cover any accidents that occur. Julie suggested we table this until Fr. Steve can seek advice from the diocese attorney.

## **Standing Committees**

*Policy & Planning- Abby & Sue*

*Finance-Dan*

*Grant Writing & Development-Delfina* – Erin Kochan is the new grant writer for the school. She is working on another grant – possibly for security cameras—from Alton Foundation.

*Buildings & Grounds-Paul*

## **Reports**

*SAPA/Marketing -Maggie* – SAPA held its first meeting of the school year, and there are many new active members. The auction is still being planned for February (probably virtual). We are working on a new fundraiser called Cash Bash, although it has not yet been approved. It would involve selling 500 tickets, and there would be a drawing for different prizes. The drawing could possibly happen on New Year's Day, but there is another meeting about it next week. The hope is to raise \$30,000. Magic Match was successful, and the free t-shirts for students were paid for by Magic Match. SAPA is trying to come up with ways to join efforts with 7<sup>th</sup> grade for their space camp fundraising efforts so there isn't overlap. Jules King said Tony Cain is going to chair the Christmas tree fundraiser again, but this will be his last year. He is looking at different vendors—there may not be as large or nice of trees as last year since we were late making the decision.

*Athletic Association-Scott*

*Website/Technology-Deacon Jay* reported that we had a network assessment done, and we increased the network connectivity by 10%.

Fr. Steve said that the bishop will be delegating pastors to do Confirmations and First Eucharists. As soon as we have more info, we will send that out.

**At 7:06pm Scott motioned to adjourn meeting, and Maggie seconded. Next meeting is Wednesday, November 11, 2020.**