

**Board of Education Meeting
November 18, 2021
Schrup Family Board Room**

Board Members Present: Dan Walsh, Kelley Schiesl, Diane Rambousek, Brian Kane, John Meinert, Fr. Jim Goerend, Sharon Wulfekuhle-Hefel, Todd Link, Scott Leibfried, Fr. Phil Gibbs

Staff Present: Bob Noel, Phil Bormann and Rebecca Mueller

Meeting began with prayer at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the October 21, 2021 Board of Education meeting were included in the packet for review.

- **Todd Link moved to approve the October 21, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Scott Leibfried seconded. The motion carried.**

Consent Agenda Items

Committee minutes and reports from system administrators were included in the packet for review.

- **Dan Walsh moved to accept the committee minutes and reports as presented. Sharon Wulfekuhle-Hefel seconded. The motion carried.**

Chief Administrator Report

The Religion and Mission Committee is providing different Advent resources for families. Parents and staff were surveyed for their material preference and books will be distributed prior to Thanksgiving.

Holy Family is hosting a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for ages 5 and older and those wishing to receive a booster shot. All slots filled up quickly!

Wahlert Catholic is working to establish new timelines for communicating course offerings for students, which will be timely for recruitment and retention efforts. Lisa Krapfl and Katie Lenart are researching apprenticeship opportunities for the high school level.

The Holy Ghost Early Childhood construction is going well and there has been positive feedback from families.

There are several grants available for childcare opportunities similar to the grant received by Holy Ghost for their remodel. Holy Family is pursuing additional grants on behalf of St. Joseph the Worker Early Childhood. Phil Bormann, Fr. Jim Goerend, Tim Tranel and a few employees toured the St. Joseph the Worker building recently to gauge needs.

Holy Family will convene with parish priests to learn about the health of their parishes and to realign ourselves for parish assessments, which includes using a three-year average of parish

income. We are moving into the second year of a three-year plan to get Tier I parishes to 40% and Tier II parishes to 60% of their line-item income.

The possibility of a centralized kitchen continues to be explored. Holy Family has started the process of hiring someone to give a detailed idea of what it would take as far as a remodel.

Former Holy Family employee, Todd Wessels, pleaded guilty in federal court to one count of wire fraud. An impact statement will be given on behalf of Holy Family at the upcoming sentencing date.

Holy Family is in the early stages of learning more about upcoming retirements and resignations for the upcoming school year. The board will be updated at the December meeting.

A water main break occurred on the central campus on Monday, November 15, causing all classes to be canceled Tuesday for Wahlert, Mazzuchelli and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Portzen Construction did a great job of finding and repairing the leak in a timely manner so classes were not interrupted further. A suggestion was made to reach out to the City of Dubuque to see if Holy Family will be charged for water wasted. The missed school day will not need to be made up at the end of the school year.

COVID-19 Update

Holy Family is at an all-time high for positive COVID-19 cases at the elementary level. Phil Bormann has been in contact with the Archdiocese for guidance. Holy Family and the Archdiocese of Dubuque continue to have no legal ability to mandate masks at schools regardless of the current COVID numbers. A reinforcement message highlighting COVID safety will be sent to families prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. Holy Family continues to do everything in its power to mitigate the situation and educate parents if their student has a close contact with a positive case. The board will discuss guidance going into the new year at the next meeting.

The Office of Catholic Schools at the Archdiocese has communicated the need to begin gathering voluntary information from staff regarding their COVID vaccination status. A letter will go out to staff members in the coming days.

Recruitment Update

Rebecca Mueller, Director of Enrollment, updated the board on the current status of student recruitment and retention. Board members were provided information pertaining to certified enrollment, enrollment projections, and retention. Annual enrollment data disaggregated by race and gender were also reviewed.

Enrollment:

A total of 1,567 students are currently enrolled in grades K-12, an eight student decrease from last year, but 107 percent of budget projection.

Pre-K retention at Resurrection had a dramatic increase this past year. Our Lady of Guadalupe had a nearly 30 student increase. St. Columbkille continues to hold steady.

Mazzuchelli Middle School saw an 18 student decrease from last year; however, this is in-line with budget projections. Wahlert High School also saw a 23-student decrease, but is above budget projections by a total of ten students.

Overall, elementary school enrollment is going well. Middle and high school enrollment and retention will need to be an area of enhanced focus going forward.

Projections:

Holy Family follows a model of looking at the previous three years as well as a three-year average per grade when determining budget projections. Projections for the 2022-2023 school year show a 1.4 percent decrease. The following enrollment goals have been established for transition grades: kindergarten = 150 students; 6th grade = 110 students, 9th grade = 120 students. If goals are met, budget projections will be exceeded and Holy Family will see an enrollment increase next year.

The following initiatives have been put in place to help with recruitment and retention:

- School Admin, an enrollment management system, is being used to house all communications to families on one platform including tour scheduling and the application process.
- Looking into the FACTS tuition management software to help with tuition billing and move to an auto-enrollment where students are continuously enrolled unless they choose to opt out.
- Launching a Parent Ambassador program, which will consist of a group of parents who are already advocates for the system. The goal is to give parent ambassadors the tools they need to engage new families, promote our school system, and overcome misconceptions.
- Rebecca is working with Bonnie Sigwarth, Director of Finance, and Katie Tracy, Tuition Coordinator, to look at all scholarships currently offered by Holy Family and determine a way to apply scholarships sooner so families know in advance what sort of tuition assistance they will receive.

The board requested a market share breakdown by grade compared to the community. Todd Link recommended requesting baptismal records from the parishes to help indicate possible class sizes.

The need to market the value proposition and to overcome misconceptions were discussed. The Parent Ambassador program will be instrumental in this work. Student testimonials would also be a great way to provide feedback and promote the full student experience.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.