

Board of Education Meeting
January 20, 2022
Schrup Family Board Room

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

Staff Present: Phil Bormann, Bob Noel and Christin Smith

Guest Present: Danielle Moore

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

Danielle Moore, parent of students at Our Lady of Guadalupe, addressed the board regarding her concerns with Holy Family's COVID-19 protocols.

Danielle expressed that she is troubled by Holy Family's lack of a mask mandate when COVID-19 cases are surging and asked why Holy Family does not have a threshold to implement masking similar to the public schools. Brian Kane confirmed that the Archdiocese of Dubuque has advised all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese that the ability to implement a mask mandate is only limited to public schools and cannot be imposed at non-public schools.

Also, with the decision to scale back COVID-19 protocols beginning January 31, Danielle feels as if her options to protect her children from COVID are being taken away. The decision will allow for volunteers and parents to come into all K-12 sites and will remove the virtual learning option currently offered to K-5 students. Danielle feels the virtual option should be continued, especially when there will be no other mitigations in the schools. Danielle requested that the board reconsider scaling back protocols and continue with a virtual option for students.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the December 16, 2021 Board of Education meeting were included in the packet for review.

- **Fr. Phil Gibbs moved to approve the December 16, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Sharon Wulfekuhle-Hefel seconded. The motion carried.**

Consent Agenda Items

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

Dan Walsh questioned what the faith formation for faculty entails, which was noted in the Religion and Mission minutes. Phil shared that Holy Family is making an intentional effort to help catechize lay staff to make sure staff is formed in the faith so they have the tools to guide students.

- **Dan Walsh moved to accept the committee minutes and reports as presented. Todd Link seconded. The motion carried.**

Chief Administrator Report

Catholic Schools Week is coming up the week of January 31. Holy Family's Advancement Office is teaming with principals to encourage families to attend Mass and wear their spirit gear to show support for their parishes. Phil Bormann encouraged board members to do the same. The Advancement office is also working to host socials after Mass.

Assistant Principal, Mariah Reeves, was welcomed into the Catholic Church at a ceremony on Sunday, January 16 at Nativity Parish. There were more than 50 Holy Family community members in attendance at the 9:30 a.m. Mass.

The registration season has begun and we have already surpassed last year's Pre-K numbers for registrations. There are thirty places still available system-wide to hit our projection. Kindergarten at Our Lady of Guadalupe has a waiting list and tours have been taking place at each site. There was a great turnout at the recent 6th Grade Activity Night at Mazzuchelli.

Options for the 2022-2023 J-Term were recently sent out to Wahlert students. J-Term will be held the first two weeks of January 2023 and will run for nine academic days due to the return from break on a Tuesday for next year. Future years it will be held for ten days. All 9-12 students will participate in J-Term and will receive five credits. Courses are evaluated on a pass/fail basis and the final assessment/demonstration of learning is predetermined and clearly communicated to students in the course upon entry. Course options will include opportunities to take classes at NICC, a mission trip to Costa Rica, internship opportunities and much more.

Holy Family was granted more than \$1.9 million for our early childcare programs. This will enable us to nearly finish renovations at Holy Ghost and get a great start on St. Joseph the Worker. Funds will also go toward transportation for early childcare and summer enrichment programs, which will include purchasing activity buses and vans that will help with site-to-site transportation, field trips, etc.

Holy Family continues to look more deliberately at a centralized kitchen model. The design is being tweaked and will be reviewed by the Facilities Committee before making a decision.

Food Services Update

Christin Smith, the newly appointed Director of Nutrition Services, updated the board on the food service program at Holy Family. Christin has been working at Holy Family for several years as a cook/baker and, more recently, as the food service administrative assistant prior to her new role as Director.

Christin's most recent efforts include exploring the possibility of a centralized kitchen and visiting other schools that use a centralized kitchen to gain more insight. Christin has also been working on improving communication with parents as well as looking into different menu items for students.

The board requested feedback on some of the challenges Christin faces. Staffing is definitely an issue and with staff turn-over, the food service department seems to be in a constant state of training new employees. Christin has been working on issues with food quality and the sites have been implementing more batch cooking that has helped. A centralized kitchen would also help

keep food standardized across the system. There have also been some issues with food availability that they are working through.

The board thanked Christin for all of her hard work.

COVID-19 Update

At the last meeting, a decision was made to scale back COVID-19 protocols, which will include removing the virtual learning option and allowing volunteers and parents into all K-12 buildings beginning January 31, 2022. COVID-19 numbers in the system and community-wide have been at an all-time high. The board discussed concerns expressed by Danielle Moore and the current state of COVID transmissions in-depth.

Phil Bormann reported that the need for a virtual option has been very limited across the system with one family using the option full-time and a few across the system using it temporarily. Virtual equipment will still be available; however, it will be the teacher's decision to offer the virtual option to a family requesting it and the decision would need to be worked out between the student/family and the teacher.

The board also discussed the decision to allow parents and visitors into the buildings. Volunteers coming into the building would be very minimal and parents would mostly be coming in to attend Mass with their students.

After much discussion, the board decided to continue with the decision to update the COVID-19 protocols as approved at the December meeting beginning January 31, 2022.

Facilities Update

The St. Columbkille School project is moving forward with Origin working on a topography of the site. The decision was made that there will not be a full kitchen included in the renovation, rather a warming kitchen will be added. If Holy Family decides not to do a centralized kitchen, lunch will be catered.

The first stage of the Holy Ghost renovation project will be completed by February 28. Jeff Rusch, Director of Building and Grounds, is serving as the general contractor for the project and is doing a fantastic job.

Parish Employee Benefits

Fr. David Schatz recommended recently that Holy Family consider offering a tuition discount for parish employees similar to what is offered currently to Holy Family employees. An email was sent out to parishes to gauge how many of their employees are also Holy Family parents. The board agreed that this would be a great way to show good will with the parishes and could help with their hiring process as an added employee benefit. This will be included in the budgeting process.

Notification of Reductions

In compliance with Archdiocesan policy #4111.22 regarding reduction of contracted staff, the Holy Family Board of Education requested that Holy Family administration conduct a review of

staffing needs for the 2022-2023 school year. If necessary, as per policy, staff reduction recommendations must be made no later than the regular March board meeting.

- **Scott Leibfried moved to approve the request that Holy Family administration conduct a review of staffing needs for the 2022-2023 school year. Sharon Wulfekuhle-Hefel seconded. The motion carried.**

Executive Session

At 6:24 p.m., Dan Walsh moved and Kelley Schiesl seconded to convene to executive session.

At 7:05 p.m., Fr. Phil Gibbs moved and Scott Leibfried seconded to conclude executive session.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.