

Board of Education Meeting
April 20, 2023
Schrup Family Board Room

Board Members Present: Sharon Wulfekuhle-Hefel, Fr. Dennis Quint, Dan Walsh, Aaron Burke, Brian Kane, Scott Leibfried, Cole Cluchey, Fr. Phil Gibbs, Isabelle Pattarozzi, Kevin Mullen, Diane Rambousek, and Kelley Schiesl (via Zoom)

Board Members Absent: Scott Leibfried

Staff Present: Phil Bormann (via Zoom)

Meeting began with prayer at 5:31 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the March 9, 2023 Board of Education meeting were included in the packet for review.

- **Brian Kane moved to approve the March 9, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Sharon Wulfekuhl-Hefel seconded. The motion carried.**

Consent Agenda

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

- **Cole Cluchey moved to accept the committee minutes and reports as presented. Fr. Dennis Quint seconded. The motion carried.**

Chief Administrator Report

In regards to Catholicity, Phil Bormann shared that earlier in April he met with a Holy Family parent and supporter that shared their experiences with Catholic schools both within the state and out of state and the power of parish partnerships within those. We should be intentional about jointly moving forward in terms of expectations and engaging parents to reimagine what it means to be a part of our Catholic community. This includes evolving how we view faith formation and also share in the sacrifices of time, talent and treasure as members of our community.

Recent visits by teachers and catechists to local parishes in Dubuque and schools/parishes in Madison, have ignited a fire to look into and discuss the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd programming with our parishes. It would be a wonderful opportunity to partner with our parishes in a beautiful way and would be great for students.

The Wahlert Open House had more than 50 students and families attend, with several being out-of-state families from St. Joe's Sinsinawa. Enrollment numbers are strong and we continue to see interest coming in. With tuition assistance awards coming in May and the upcoming ESA application rollout coming, Rebecca Mueller expects to see enrollment continue to climb in grades where space is available.

Since the last board meeting, communication has been sent out regarding the tuition rate increases and an informational community night was held with a Q & A session about ESAs and tuition rates. It was attended by about 60 parents. A team of principals, advancement/central office staff, and Phil are attending an Educational Choice Summit in Ankeny April 20-21.

The Early Childhood rates were also increased to get to a level to make a sustainable model to account for pay and program enhancements. Those rates were communicated with families. Dan Walsh inquired about the type of feedback that was received from it. Phil shared that Lis Ernst, Director of Early Childhood, has received some pushback, but is handling it well and showing empathy towards families as it will be a change for them.

Circle of Celebration had one of its most successful events. Phil thanked Bob Noel, Christine McAllister and their team for all their work and expressed appreciation for all those that helped volunteer and donated.

A subcommittee made up of lay members and priests are going to meet with Bonnie Sigwarth and Phil to look at a 5-year budget to bring it together into a larger strategy.

As discussed at the last board meeting, Origin is taking a deep look into the available space in the existing buildings. We are hopeful to have a rough draft soon and will continue those discussions on how to move forward.

As far as the water main replacement, the project has been awarded to the lowest bid, Smith Dirt Wrx and will begin in the summer.

Certified contracts were distributed on Friday, March 31. The hiring process for certified staff has begun for the 2023-2024 school year to fill staffing needs.

Mazzuchelli Catholic Middle School is currently filling a music and fine arts specialist position that was brought back for next school year to fill the needs as the enrollment grows.

Jim Nuti, Technology Support, has announced his resignation for June 30th. Jim has been an integral part of the technology team and Phil is working with the ITS team to create a strategic plan to move forward with this position to cover the needs and possibly change the staffing model of it.

School Safety

Phil shared an update on school safety. Through Governor Reynold's safety initiative, Tetra Tech ran a safety assessment for all sites earlier in the year. As part of the initiative, a safety grant of \$50,000 per qualified school building will be made available through the School Safety Improvement Fund for schools to implement the recommended safety measures identified through the safety assessments. All of Holy Family's school sites have qualified for the grant, as well as St. Joseph the Worker, but Holy Ghost has not.

From those safety assessments, Phil and his team have taken a look at what measures can be taken for additional safety at all the sites. Some of the additional safety that is being looked into includes bulletproof ballistic film for doors and windows, a security sleeve to jam doors shut,

adding/updating security cameras, updating the phone system to give all teachers access, and RAVE - an alert system for emergencies that alerts the entire building and calls 911.

A safety radio has been installed at every site in the main office as well. It includes a red button to push in an emergency situation that automatically goes to dispatch and opens the microphone in the office.

Cole Cluchey asked if Holy Family would consider adding School Resource Officers to each site. Phil shared that it is a good thing to discuss, the challenge would be the cost and availability as the elementary schools currently share one SRO among them. Cole also inquired if having an armed staff member should ever be considered. Aaron Burke commented on the inherent risk of arming staff members. Brian Kane suggested that we should aspire to the best practices, whether that's reaching out to Cathy Walz at the Archdiocese or the State Board, and staying knowledgeable on what other schools are doing and cooperating with them.

Continuing to improve the safety and safety plans at each of our sites has been a focus and will continue to be a focus. Improving the communication between administrators, staff, and families when drills are taking place was also suggested. Going forward, safety will be discussed annually at the board level to review current measures and update any if necessary.

Verification of Email Votes for Teacher Candidates

- **Brian Kane moved to verify the email votes for the hiring of Beth Neuhaus, Autumn Burgmeier, Molly Pfohl, and Bailey Vance. Cole Cluchey seconded. The motion carried.**

Catholic Identity - Hiring Process

Phil shared the Archdiocese Policy 4111.4a policy with the board regarding the qualities of teachers and their faith. The policy states that as much as possible, all teachers in a Catholic school should be a practicing Catholic, living according to the precepts of the Church, but there may be circumstances that the teacher is not Catholic. Phil included data on Holy Family's percentage of Catholic certified staff members and non-Catholic certified staff members compared to the Archdiocese's reported data on certified staff members. Holy Family is ahead of the Archdiocese of Dubuque in terms of percentage of certified staff members that are Catholic compared to non-Catholic.

Cole Cluchey expressed that he felt there was a level of integrity missing in Catholicity on the candidate recommendations that were sent to the board for approval and shared his concerns regarding the hiring process. To add clarity and transparency on the candidate recommendations to be approved by the board, a Catholic Identity piece has been added to the recommendations from the principals going forward. Any concerns by the board in regards to the hiring process in the future will be addressed with Phil directly.

Aaron Burke questioned if there was a component at the elementary level that they're having the Catholicity connection within the lower levels and what that looks like in the upper levels. Phil shared that there is not a strong enough component in the upper levels, but Daniel Thole's goal is to have a focus on those connections at the middle school level.

Verification of Email Votes for the 2023-2024 Budget

Since the last board meeting, the 2023-2024 budget was sent electronically to the board for review and email approval. Fr. Dennis Quint expressed a need for the continuation of prayer as the parishes and schools continue to work together in finding a good way to move forward with financials.

- **Brian Kane moved to verify the email votes for the 2023-2024 budget. Aaron Burke seconded. The motion carried.**

Band Trip Approval

Emma Schmidt-Denner, Band Instructor at Wahlert Catholic High School, has proposed a trip to Chicago for the 2023-2024 school year. An itinerary of the trip was included in the packet for information.

- **Fr. Quint motioned to approve the band trip to Chicago in the 2023-2024 school year. Isabelle Patarozzi seconded. The motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.