

School Commission Minutes – May 4, 2021 @ 6:00pm

Shepherd of the Hills- Coffee House

Present: Libby Bonen, Barb Welsh, Andrea Gade, Ron Smyczek (Principal), Sarah Benike-Immel, Jen Wilke, Barb Grzywinski, Abbey Carter, Alyssa Mogensen

Absent: John Laughrin, Chris Gellings

Opening Prayer

At the end of this school year we give thanks to God: For all the teaching and learning that has taken place in our school, both in and out of the classroom, For the talents and gifts that have been shared and the challenges that have been faced; For the burdens that have been lifted and the hurts that have been healed; For the respect and care that has been given. We give thanks for the friendships that have just begun and for those that have grown. For the faith that has been lived in our daily struggles, For the hope that has lifted our hearts on the dark days and for the love that has kept us going. We give thanks for the community that we are, and we ask you Lord - Bless our students as they sit their exams: may your Spirit inspire them with confidence and calmness Bless our families as we take our holidays, may our time together leave us with memories to cherish. Pour out your love on us that we may return renewed and refreshed to continue our journey together. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

Mission Statement

Walking the path of Christ with love and service through a Catholic education.

2020-2021 Theme: Faith over Fear

Today, with your help, no matter what I face, I will let faith and trust be my first response, instead of worry and fear. Help me to always remember, Faith over Fear. Amen.

School Reports - Ron Smyczek (Alyssa Mogensen, Abbey Carter)

1. School Good News

- a. Staff Good News:
 - i. Spring concert recorded today - everything went well
 - ii. Greenhouse is up and running, children learning how to plant and care for plants
 - iii. Some new Smart boards went up and kids are enjoying them
 - iv. Teachers are feeling very appreciative of the acts of kindness for Teacher Appreciation Week
 - v. 7th grade late night for group bonding filled with nerf wars, night hikes, pizza
- b. Easter- Lent/Alleluia was full of good traditions the kids really enjoyed
- c. Test results- Iowa and MAPS- solid, strong numbers a little north of 50th percentile

- d. Low COVID numbers still encouraging- 1 family quarantined in April
 - i. Current FdL and CDC- masks allow for no quarantine assuming no symptoms if one child in cohort tests positive
- e. Technology Update:
 - i. Faculty have new laptops
 - ii. Auction tech purchases are being installed- 2 SMART Boards, iPads and Chromebooks and storage ordered
 - iii. Recently approved for Tech Grant that should allow us to obtain a hard-wired internet connection for 2021/2022 school year to improve connectivity and allow for enhanced used of Wi-Fi for learning
- f. Staff Changes for 2021/2022: 3K/4K, K, Spanish
 - i. Kori Knuth leaving - looking for ½ day 3K and full day 4K teacher
 - ii. Corryn Gosse leaving - looking for 5K teacher
 - iii. Bonnie Rapkin left - looking for Spanish teacher; Sister Katie stepping in to complete 2020/2021 school year

2. Principals Report:

- a. **Re-enrollment** very positive: 86 current students, 73 eligible to re-enroll,
 - i. **67** students re-enrolled, 3 not returning, 3 undecided.
 - ii. **10 new/returning students enrolled so far: 77 students for 2021-22.**
 - iii. Decision on splitting the currently combined 1&2 and 4&5 and other group size issues tabled until June 1, July 1, August 1.
- b. EANS (COVID relief Act) funds to wire the campus internet being discussed at Parish Finance Committee (see note above)
- c. Curriculum updates:
 - i. Science program - expand current MS program to younger grades
 - ii. Social Studies- WI specific for 4th, looking for a full curriculum for 22-23
 - iii. Summer Suggestions for kids to stay sharp- to be collected and shared
- d. Busy May and Close of Year- Thanks for the Staff, H&S and general parent help!
- e. Dress Code review handbook verbiage
 - i. Saint Sebastian Catholic School: Our rule of thumb is..."Touch the sky, touch your toes, if anything shows, Go change your clothes." :)
 - ii. Extra uniforms on hand that they change into if an issue (e.g. their skirt length is noticeably short, no khakis, shirt gets dirty). In general, as we notice a child growing too tall for hers, we'll mention to the parents that it is a good time to look for a new one.
- f. Greenhouse- used for Art/Mother's Day project
 - i. Katie Abhold offering a connection to plan for summer/fall '21-'22
 - ii. Is there something we can do at the end of next school year? Springs football team looking to get involved.

Business Reports

3. **Review and Approve March Meeting Minutes:** Approved
4. **Parent/Parishioner Comments:** None
5. **Pastoral Council:** None

Committee Reports

6. Executive and Policy:

- a. May Dress Code Review: <https://sothschool.weebly.com/dress-code.html>
 - i. Proposed Change: Students are allowed to wear khaki shorts to Mass on Wednesdays. Khaki shorts must be of knee length. Khaki shorts can be worn from the start of the school year until September 31 and again from May 1 to the end of the school year. The reason for my proposition: Our "no shorts" rule was created by (Fr.) Kevin Wester when we first moved to our new complex in 2004. Times have changed dramatically, and I believe that having students wear knee length khaki shorts would be appropriate. If students choose not to wear khaki shorts, khaki pants or skirts should be worn.
 1. Vote: In Favor: 3; Not In Favor: 2
 2. Reasons for Not In Favor: Church is a place of reverence where we dress our best for Jesus; should be a school expectation; church is a huge part of our catholic education; some families do not allow their children to wear shorts to church and would appreciate there not being the option
 3. Field Trips would still be required to wear long khaki pants and maroon shirt? Why are field trips deemed more "special" than mass? Shouldn't mass be held in the highest regard?
 - ii. No other proposed changes.
 - iii. Ron to review with Fr. Mark to determine path forward and communicate final decision to Nici Colwin to coordinate with Lands' End rep.
- b. School Commission recruitment:
- c. Libby (Vice Chair) and Chris (Long Range Planning) coming up on end of four-year term; Tim Hanlon (Pastoral Council) has not participated in all of 2020/2021 so will need to recruit to replace three positions in addition to secretary – 4 open positions in total
 - i. Potential Leads:
 1. Leah Bode (Andrea)
 2. Becky Pauscha (Sarah)
 3. Tanya (Jackson and Alexis's mom) (Barb W)

4. Jen Pelz (Libby)

- d. Andrea Gade and Jen Wilke at end of two-year term but willing to stay on

7. Budget and Fundraising- Jenn Wilke:

- a. Book fair scheduled for week of 5/3 in the Coffee House; proceeds will be used to purchase new books

8. Long Range Planning- Chris Gellings:

- a. Chris and Ron to meet on Curriculum, EANS funds, Auction funds, other specific directed fundraising needs.
- b. May need to replace Chris as Long-Range Planning chair, but Libby to confirm if she started mid-year then would be eligible for one more year

9. Marketing and Recruitment- Andrea Gade:

- a. Re-Enrollment above
- b. Radio ads- campaign running through June
 - i. Decision on adjusting for one more month in July and what to do in 2021/2022
- c. Looking at doing some new little videos for Facebook
- d. Mentor family follow ups to finish out school year
- e. Will participate in Eden Parade
- f. Alumni Campaign - looking for Marketing intern/college student that could help us with our social media platform (good at Facebook but need help with Instagram, Twitter, etc.); have alumni make posts for #wherearetheynow - Where do they go? Who do they become? How are they successful?
- g. Early Childhood meetings in Summer
- h. Available over summer for 1 on 1 tours
- i. Ron following up on Inquiries from Semester 2 and March Early Childhood Meeting

10. Home and School- Barb Grzywinski:

- a. Thank you for Teacher Appreciation Week
- b. May Crowning scheduled for 5/5
- c. Muffins with Mom scheduled for 5/12 (Jeff Kuhn, videographer donating time, will be around to capture videos of "Why we love our school")
- d. Scholastic Book Fair running May 7-11
- e. Help with graduation and end-of-year events – looking to plan reception but may be outdoors
- f. Field Day 5/28 being planned by Mrs. Bengel
- g. Steak Fry scheduled for 9/25
- h. Run for the Hills scheduled for 10/2
- i. Next Meeting Thursday 8/19

Next Meeting: Tues, Sep 7, 2021 @ 6:00 pm
SOTH Coffee House