

SAINT THERESA PARISH BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

OPENING PROCESS 2/16/2006

Attendees

Title	Name
<i>Board Members</i>	Barb Chicoine, Steve Kouri, Rick Prenger, Veronica Degen, Susan Downey, Paul Galloway, Beth Scheetz, Ellen Stemler, Father Larry Hoffman and Bob Wrobel
<i>Absent Board Members</i>	Jill Rodriguez, Kathy Wipf, Nancy McDean
<i>Guests</i>	Brett Toresdahl and Maureen Young
<i>Secretary</i>	Lisa Bourne

AGENDA ITEMS

- At 6:33 p.m. Rick called the meeting to order.
- Veronica led the Board in prayer.
- Rick asked if there were any corrections needed in the previous meeting's minutes. Pertaining to the kitchen update, Ellen clarified that Rhonda had submitted application for government subsidies, but that they had not yet been received. Regarding the finance report, Paul indicated that it would be better stated that the school year-to-date was slightly behind in its balance versus stating only that it was not balanced, because there was not a problem with the accounting.
- Father Larry moved approval of the previous meeting's minutes with the two proposed changes, which was seconded by Beth and approved by the Board.
- Rick asked if there were any changes to that evening's agenda. Ellen said that the school operations portion of the agenda with Elizabeth Johnson would be deleted, and that a dress code component would be added to her report.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Religious Education

- Rick introduced Parish Manager Bob Wrobel, who distributed the religious education report in Kathy's absence. The Board reviewed the report and Bob offered to take any issues back to Kathy.

Parish

- Bob Wrobel gave the Board some information on his background and clarified the pronunciation of his last name. He's been in the Ankeny area since 1996, was most recently employed at DMACC and remains an adjunct instructor there, teaching two classes in the entrepreneurs program. Bob received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and his MBA at Creighton. His background includes personnel, finance, facilities management and network administration. Bob told the Board he was coming up on the end of his first two weeks as parish manager and that he's really energized by the people he's met. As he was still learning the specifics of the report process, he said would have a more comprehensive report for the Board at the next meeting. Bob invited members of the Board to call or stop in for a visit, said that his door was always open and that he was real excited about being here. Rick told Bob the Board members were glad to have him on board.

Finance Report

- At 6:40 Paul distributed the financial report. He told the Board that he didn't have anything exciting to report, and that everything has held status quo.
- The school was still slightly behind, but was really looking pretty good.
- Regarding childcare, Paul had gotten with Amelia via voicemail and verified his thought that the issue with this year's budget was not the number of students, but rather that the mix of part-time to full-time had shifted causing the shortfall. He said that there should not be a deficit in revenue next year.
- The government subsidy had not come in for the hot lunch program yet.
- The bus was still ahead, the same as a few weeks before.

School

- At 6:43 Ellen began the school report, telling the Board that there was a lot of info distributed, and that she would show video from the diocese on continuous improvement for administrators. There was discussion about the budget process, and Father Larry said that different parishes do the budget differently.
- Ellen said that they had met with several vendors about software for the kitchen. Pat Stuekerjergen had spoken with Winsnap and as a result they would like to go with a request to the PTC. The cost is about \$6500 and will save an enormous amount of time for Rhonda. Paul asked if it would save time for the teachers too, and Ellen said yes. Rick asked if the system was paperless. Ellen explained that there would be a touchpad with each student's picture and students would have an ID number. Other pieces of the program had been looked at, and online payment was expensive. Veronica asked if parents could still pay lunch charges directly to the school, and Ellen responded yes. Steve asked if the \$6500 included all hardware and software, and Ellen replied yes. Paul asked what the ongoing fees would be. Ellen said it would be \$200 per year with full upgrades. Rick asked whether it linked with other programs. There was some discussion of linking other school programs with the

proposed lunch system.

- Ellen told the Board that the dress code had previously prohibited pants with rivets because pants without rivets generally had a more “clean” look as opposed to resembling jeans, but that currently it had become problematic to find pants without rivets that weren’t extremely expensive. She proposed a change in the dress code removing prohibition of pants with rivets. Ellen also proposed changing the rule on length for shorts to pertain to inseam length instead of measuring how far they fell above the knee, due to varying height dimensions of students. Ellen proposed adding a navy blue shirt for middle school as well. There was discussion of the current green polo shirts and how they fit on female students. Ellen said she would really like to implement adding the navy shirt this year. There was continued discussion of the dress code pertaining to shirt colors, fabrics, design, fit and product availability. Barb said that adding another color would get away from the idea of a uniform. Ellen said it was just middle school, and the new color would be dark enough to allow female students to get away from having to wear camis. There was more discussion of the subject. Barb said she liked the look of all white shirts at Mass and that she liked the school having a uniform. Ellen said some middle school girls wear their sweatshirts year round, and added that Maria Calhoun had done a good job with the STS apparel program. There was additional discussion. Father Larry suggested looking at keeping the current shirt colors but getting a different shirt. Steve concurred about looking at a different product. Ellen explained that particular change couldn’t happen this year, and that parents would soon be buying shorts for warm weather. Barb asked whether it was the PTC’s job to get vendors for apparel. Ellen explained that the school had a contract with Carpenter Uniform for the uniforms, but that it was for the uniforms only. Barb questioned whether the PTC could go to a different vendor for STS apparel. Veronica said that as a parent, she felt that the less choice and more uniform the better. Ellen pointed out that there was navy in the pattern for the uniform jumper. Rick asked for a vote on the dress code changes. Steve moved approval of the changes pertaining to rivets in pants, length of shorts and adding navy blue for middle school shirts. Beth seconded the motion. It was approved by the Board with Barb and Susan opposed. There was an abstention from the vote on the part of Veronica.
- Rick asked Ellen if she had anything else for the Board. Ellen thanked the Board’s members for their help during the school’s open house and kindergarten/pre-k roundup. The roundup resulted in 12 students registered for pre-k and nine for kindergarten. Ellen said they would compare the list to those who had already registered and contact those that needed to be. Veronica thanked Brett Toresdahl for speaking at roundup.
- An inquiry was made as to updating the school website with current information. Ellen mentioned that Renee was inundated with work pertaining to the website. Beth asked about having a back-up person to help. Ellen commented that Renee was a volunteer and had put in hundreds of hours.
- Ellen asked if the Board had any questions about school. Rick inquired how things were going in the lunchroom. Ellen said about 15-20 people were eating breakfast per morning. Rhonda has been in contact with the state, and Rhonda will have 4-5 days of training with them. Rick asked about lunch numbers. Ellen said they were at 310-320, with more adults eating as well. Steve asked if Ronda had expressed any concerns about any of the kitchen equipment. There was discussion on issues with the dishwasher, the kitchen and gym in general. Steve said that after casino night, his brother had questioned if there was enough of

the proper equipment, and suggested that Rhonda compile a list of what she needs. There was discussion of how best to procure kitchen equipment.

- Rick mentioned soft drink sponsorship for the basketball hoop area. It had previously been established that there was not consensus on the issue among the Board. There was further discussion by the Board. It was determined that soft drink sponsorship can be controversial, and exclusive rights can be problematic. It was suggested that rather than approach any one entity for sponsorship, various comprehensive advertising packages should be designed at the beginning of the year. Rick mentioned that acoustic work was needed more than a new scoreboard. Ellen had talked with a parishioner who could help with acoustics. There was more discussion and agreement among the Board that a wider approach to advertising would be more beneficial. Father said that the parish manager would need to be involved. Rick and Beth suggested getting with the previously mentioned volunteer parishioner, with which the Board agreed.
- Steve asked Ellen about the teachers updating Edline. She clarified that it was a requirement. There was some discussion of Edline.

BUDGET

- At 7:10 discussion of the budget commenced. Paul had been to the parish finance meeting. About \$418,000 comes to the school. There is still a positive variance of about \$15,000 based on the proposed tuition structure. Barb asked if pre-k tuition was being raised to \$1675, and Paul said it was \$1600. There was some general discussion among the Board. Paul said that the current budget information needed to be adjusted to reflect that pre-k would be \$1700 with \$100 registration. There was discussion of the number of families used for that variance, as well as the number of families with four students. Ellen said there were four families now with four students and that there would be three next year. There was more discussion. Ellen said that she would like to have the letter to parents on the new tuition structure ready to go the following day. Ellen would be contacting families with two or more students personally after the letter was sent. There was discussion about varying letters to go out to parents regarding tuition. Steve suggested that Board members hold special office hours to be available to talk to parents. Paul emphasized that it should be well known that parents can contact Board members. Father suggested that the Board be proactive in its presentation of tuition structure change. There was discussion of the plan for informing parents. Ellen mentioned tuition angels. Father said that some possibilities would have to be offered in lieu of parents' ability to absorb tuition increases, or some might be forced into a decision they would not otherwise have to make. Paul stressed Ellen's message that they do not want finances to be the reason any child does not attend St. Theresa. He said that the Board would need to know the extent of parental need before taking action. There was discussion about stewardship and tuition assistance. The Board also discussed donations for tuition and how they related to tax breaks. Ellen asked if the Board could look at the letter over the weekend with the intent of having it ready to send the following Monday. There was continued discussion among the Board. Barb said she liked the idea of having a check-off on registration forms for additional tuition donation to help other families. The Board reviewed the tuition letter. Tuition donations may be tax deductible, Ellen will contact families with two or more students and all Board member names would be added to the letter along with the statement asking parents to please contact the Board with questions.

Veronica suggested placing a table for tuition concerns at conferences. Ellen said it was a good idea provided it could be adequately manned. Brett Toresdahl reminded the Board that the next PTC meeting would be the following Monday evening, offering the perfect opportunity for the Board to talk about the new tuition structure. Steve would attend the upcoming PTC meeting, with other members to possibly join him. Paul said the letter needed to come down from three pages to two. Ellen mentioned the tuition payment policy and removal of the semi-annual option. She reminded the Board of the varying discounts for diocesan employees, as well as the fact that some families won't know if they will have bus or band charges by July. Paul said the 10-month payment option needed to be removed too. The Board discussed tuition payment options and deadlines. Beth moved approval of changes in the tuition payment policy to include two methods instead of three, adding 9 monthly payments for families that opted for one annual payment and missed the deadline, wording pertaining to tuition payment changed from "may" to "shall," and the 10-month payment option to be eliminated. The policy revision date would be changed to reflect the current date. Paul said that the wording of the due date was confusing. Beth added deletion of the due date line to her motion. Veronica seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by the Board.

Miscellaneous Discussion

- At 7:55 Beth said she would write thank-you notes to the foundation for its help on the budget. Ellen added that a thank-you should be written to former Board secretary Lisa Chiodo.

Report on January Action Items

- Rick brought up the welcome visitors letter discussed at the January meeting, as Sue passed out copies of the letter. Sue mentioned that Barb had posed a question on Board by-laws regarding to whom the Board's meetings were open. There was discussion of whether meetings were open to just the parish or the public. It was determined that attempting to define to whom the meetings should be open would create more difficulties than it would alleviate, and that sensitive issues would continue to be reserved for Executive Session. Beth moved approval of the letter welcoming visitors to Board meetings and informing them of meeting protocol. Barb seconded the motion, which was approved by the Board in a unanimous vote.

Continuous Improvement Plan video

- At 8:05 Ellen put in the diocesan video.

CLOSING

- At 8:33 Rick entertained a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Beth moved adjournment to Executive Session, which was seconded by Paul and approved by the Board.

Next Meeting-March 14 at 6:30 p.m.

