

Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting November 10, 2016

In Attendance: Diane Starkovich, Maureen Schumacher, Betsy San Miguel, Paula Brosnan (by phone), Rebecca Hammel, Robert Heilmann, Jeff Thomas, Mark Uebelacker, Brad Wilson, Marcos Arias. Absent: Augusto Elias, Brian Weick, Diedre St. Julien, Craig Wade.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**

Maureen Schumacher welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Diane Starkovich led the council members in the opening prayer.

- **Approval of Agenda**

Maureen thanked everyone for their hard work since the last council meeting and asked for a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was given and seconded.

- **Approval of the August Minutes**

Maureen asked for a motion to approve the August 2016 minutes. Motion was given and seconded.

- **Committee Reports**

Finance Committee – Brad said the budgeting process is starting now with a particular focus on teacher salaries and block grants for next year. Diane said the goal is to be between 80-85% of the average of ten public school district salaries. We have been able to maintain that average in our elementary schools. Diane said in the past we have given a 3% raise to the elementary school teachers and a 1.5-2% raise for the high school teachers. The archdiocese will continue to pay the employee's health insurance at 100%, which is considered part of their total compensation. Insurance costs are expected to be up by a minimum of 7.5% this coming year. The challenge in all of this, Diane said, is trying to keep the tuition levels with no more than a 2-3% increase. Since there is no ASAC meeting before the schools budgets are due, an email will be sent to council members from the finance committee with the proposed salary increases. Once the salaries are set the schools must follow them.

Marketing Committee – Marcos Arias updated the council on the Archdiocese-Wide research plan and provided a timeline for the online and paper questionnaires (English and Spanish) which have been distributed and will be in progress until November 27th. The analysis will take place Nov. 28th – Dec. 14th and the final report is targeted for December 15th. Forty-six (46) parishes have agreed to participate in the survey and only 7 asked for paper copies, all others opted to use the link. Rebecca explained that this is a market research project which targets a specific audience and therefore not all participants may qualify based on their occupation or the age of their children (must be between the ages of 3-17). Rebecca commented that the schools are also promoting the survey primarily to capture the non-Catholic families. The Catholic families should receive the survey through their parish and information should be in the parish bulletins.

Marcos said that the marketing committee continues interaction with schools on enrollment advisement. St. John Neumann in particular has implemented parish ambassadors, pulpit announcements, and an action plan for their Open House with some good preliminary feedback. They have set goals and made them known and plan to target surrounding parishes PSR parents. Our Lady of Victory enrollment advisement has been put on hold for the time being. Marcos said that the Marketing

Team will assist any other schools that ask for help. Rebecca said the viability index scores will help the marketing team determine what schools may need help in this area.

Maureen Schumacher is transitioning social media assignment to Paula Brosnan.

Nominating Committee –Nothing to report

New School and Expansion Committee – Nothing to report

Policy Committee – Diane Starkovich directed the council to their copy of the drug & alcohol policy draft as it will appear in the Policy Manual, as well as a copy of the letter that each high school and 8th grade family received advising them of the mandatory random drug testing starting next August in all 3 high schools. Diane said the meat of this policy is not what you see in the policy manual, but the implementation of it which will be explained in detail in the parent handbook. There will be a 2-page addendum requiring a separate signature on this policy in the handbook. The 3 high school principals are presently working on the contract for the handbook. Diane said there will be 9 parent meetings (3 at each high school) to explain the policy in person and take questions and concerns from parents. After the parent meeting, the faculty and staff will be informed and then all of the students. In August all new families/faculty members and students will have the same presentation. The company which has been hired by the Archdiocese to do this is quite reputable and works with many well-known private schools in the Atlanta area. Jeff Thomas proposed a motion to proceed with the drug and alcohol policy, Maureen Schumacher seconded the motion. Diane said she will mention the new drug policy the next time she meets with the priest council as well as putting it in the communique. A discussion followed.

- **Superintendent's Report**

Diane referred everyone to her written report and commented on her recent trip to the Washington DC area for the Blue Ribbon Award Ceremony. Diane said there were a little over 300 schools that received the Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award this year, which represents the top one half of one percent of all the highest performing schools in the country. Out of those 300, fifty were private schools and out of those, 37 were Catholic Schools. It was a wonderful celebration with a motivational speaker, lunch and lots of energetic music. Each individual school went up to receive its award. Diane said that each Catholic School received a 10 page marketing plan from NCEA outlining how to leverage their blue ribbon status.

- **Local Advisory Council Meetings**

Maureen said there were 4 local advisory council visits since the last meeting and she asked Betsy San Miguel to start with feedback on her visit to St. Peter Claver on September 15th. Betsy said her visit to St. Peter Claver went very well. She spoke of their community outreach program and how it resulted in enrollment of 3 new students at St. Peter Claver. Diane said the current enrollment is 110 this year compared to last year's enrollment of 91. Betsy said there was discussion regarding working on an alumni network. She said St. Peter Claver's future is looking very promising.

Jeff Thomas visited Holy Redeemer on Monday, November 7th. He said the members of the council were very engaging and decisive. The main topics of discussion were upcoming parent/teacher conferences and marketing the school and their new webpage. Jeff said Holy Redeemer's council is high functioning

and he experienced very positive conversation. He said he came away from the meeting wishing he had been given a set of talking points to share with the council at the meeting. Maureen Schumacher shared that she asked BT at her last visit to allow her about 3 minutes on the agenda to introduce herself and explain her purpose for being there and outlined key initiatives from the Archdiocesan School Advisory Council. Maureen offered to put together a draft for council members to use as a guideline for future visits. Jeff said that he was headed to St. Joseph, Athens that evening for their council meeting. Diane asked that Jeff use Maureen's approach by asking the council for a few moments on the agenda.

Maureen Schumacher visited Blessed Trinity and said she saw a shift from last year's visit. She said the council seems very engaged and willing to work hard. There was transparency on the strategic plan and everyone's involvement and feedback was encouraged. Mark Uebelacker was also present at the meeting and there was discussion on finances and future investment plans. Mark also commented that he attended BT's open house and how professional and impressive it was.

Rebecca Hammel asked for an opportunity to speak about the 11th grade vocations day (11 Alive). She said all Atlanta area Catholic Schools were invited to attend (Archdiocesan and Independents). It took place at All Saints' Catholic Church and was concert type atmosphere with praise and worship, music, separate keynote speakers for the girls and guys and at day's end Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Rebecca said it was an uplifting and moving experience and wonderful to see our students in this setting.

- **Future Business**

- A. Presentation of Schools' Strategic Plans - Diane reminded the council members that beginning next year schools will be invited to come and present their strategic plan and get feedback from the ASAC. Diane said the idea came during one of her accreditation visits at another diocese.
- B. Scheduling Town Hall Meetings – Diane said once the data from the surveys are received and analyzed there will be 3 town hall meetings scheduled at our high schools to cover the different geographic areas. This will be after the 1st of the year and dates to be determined. Invitations will go out to stakeholders which include parents, teachers and clergy.

- **Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**

Meeting adjourned at 9:00am. Next meeting is at the Chancery, Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 7:30am.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler
Schools Program Specialist