

Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting

June 15, 2017

In Attendance: Diane Starkovich, Rebecca Hammel, Marcos Arias, Jeff Thomas (by phone), Mark Uebelacker, Brad Wilson, Rondell Hassanali (Brad's intern), Craig Wade, Robert Heilmann, Brian Weick (by phone), Paula Brosnan (by phone). **Absent:** Augusto Elias, Diedra St. Julien, Monsignor John Walsh, Maureen Schumacher, Betsy San Miguel.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**

Diane Starkovich welcomed everyone and asked Marcos Arias to lead the meeting in place of chair Augusto Elias and vice-chair Maureen Schumacher who could not be present. Marcos greeted everyone and started the meeting off with an opening prayer.

- **Approval of Agenda**

Marcos asked for an approval of the agenda. Diane requested that we add the Marketing Committee Report to the agenda. The agenda was then approved and seconded.

- **Approval of the March Meeting Minutes**

Marcos asked for an approval of the March 2017 meeting minutes. The approval was given and seconded.

- **Presentation of Research Study to Principals – Marcos Arias**

Marcos reported on his presentation of the research study results to the principals at their meeting June 8th. He stated that the principals were quite surprised with the findings of the survey. They had many questions and he sensed that the principals took these results very seriously. Diane commented that the principals had a similar response, as did this council regarding the perception of our schools. We know the excellent quality of our schools, but the importance of communicating that quality to the general public is now very evident. In the survey the two driving factors for parents in choosing a school for their children were quality of the teaching staff and academic excellence. In response to that, Rebecca said the principals gave suggestions such as making sure our teachers are certified and bragging more on our statistics and student success. Diane said a professional marketer may be needed to get this marketing endeavor off the ground and mentioned possible strategies from testimonials to billboards. Marcos said high quality staff is the key and thanked Diane for communicating to the principals that teachers must be top notch and that ineffective teachers must be coached and assisted or removed if no progress is made.

- **Committee Reports**

Marketing Committee – Marcos Arias

The marketing committee met on May 4th and had an overview of the survey findings. The team essentially narrowed the potential solutions to “product” and communications. (Product encompasses Academic Quality & Teacher Quality; Communications references the need to promote the value that exists in our schools in order to change the perception in the community.) ***Refer to Marcos' Marketing Meeting Summation for more specific details.*** Next step is to develop a strategic marketing plan.

Regarding enrollment, Marcos spoke on the marketing committee's efforts with St. John Neumann. He said there were 25 on track for kindergarten instead of the projected 30 from 3 months ago. The total enrollment number is 242 vs. the projected budget of 255. Welcome Grants got off to a quick start at St. John Neumann but some were ineligible. New principal, Dr. Julie Broom, will begin on July 1, 2017. Next steps for St. John Neumann will be a new updated website for the new principal to update and communicating marketing efforts and vision with the new principal.

Welcome Grants Report – Rebecca Hammel

Rebecca gave an update on the current status of the Welcome Grants that became available on June 1. The total number of applications (inclusive of duplicates) is 62, with **38** being active. The breakdown by school is as follows:

OLM—10 applications for 5 available grants
5 active, 5 ineligible (already enrolled) or duplicate app

OLV—19 applications for 10 available grants
10 active, 3 on wait list for grant, 6 ineligible (already enrolled) or duplicate app

SJN—14 applications for 10 available grants
6 active, 8 ineligible (already enrolled)

SMS—4 applications for 5 available grants
4 active

SPC—15 applications for 10 available grants
13 active, 3 on wait list for grant, 2 duplicates

Nominating Committee – Mark Uebelacker

All council members will be returning with the exception of Monsignor John Walsh. Fr. James Duffy from Our Lady of the Assumption Parish will replace Msgr. Walsh. To honor Fr. Duffy's day off, ASAC will meet on Tuesday mornings instead of Thursdays beginning this August with first meeting of the new school year.

- **Superintendent's Report**

Diane said there is much happening in the Office of Catholic Schools and asked if there were any questions regarding her written report. A summary of her report is as follows:

Summer Institute - June 12, 13 & 14 over 100 teachers will gather to attend professional development sessions that Rebecca has put together. Dr. Julie Broom, the new principal at St. John Neumann, will be the keynote speaker.

Graduations – Diane confirmed that our high schools had 100% graduation rate. The graduation ceremonies were wonderful and our 560+ graduation seniors earned in excess of \$60 million dollars in scholarship offers (exclusive of the Georgia Hope) – a new record for our schools!

New Principals - We have hired 4 new principals for the upcoming school year and one interim principal. Our new principals are Dr. Julie Broom – St. John Neumann Regional Catholic School, Jamie Arthur – Queen of Angels Catholic School, George Wilkerson – Our Lady of Victory Catholic School and Bill Dooley – Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School. There will be an interim principal selected to serve at St. Joseph Catholic Parish School in Athens.

Office of Catholic School Staff – Terry Graham, Director of Parish Preschools will be retiring in August and interviews will be conducted soon to replace her. Our receptionist/administrative assistant decided to stay at home with her baby rather than return to OCS. Interviews for her replacement will take place in early July.

Parent Handbooks – Diane will be reviewing all schools' handbooks this summer in their entirety before they can be released to the parents and teachers. This is to ensure all are accurate and support all Archdiocesan policies including the new employee substance abuse policy.

AdvancED Visit - Our AdvancED visit is scheduled for February 19-22, 2018. Interviews with major stakeholders will be on February 20th. Council members from all schools as well as the Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council will be asked to be in attendance that day.

Strategic Plan – Our Strategic plan needs to be completed this fall and there will be 3 stakeholder meetings in September and October (one at each high school). Diane would like this council to be represented. More information will follow.

New Employee Orientation – There are 2 full days planned for new employees this year. First day will be an overview of Archdiocesan policies and expectations along with a benefits review and VIRTUS training. The second day is for teachers and school counselors only and will cover Catholic school history, traditions and mission.

Enrollment – There are concerns with lower enrollment numbers at some of our schools this fall. In light of our survey study, marketing efforts will be increasing from the Office of Catholic Schools.

- **School Council Visits**

Maureen Schumacher visited St. Catherine of Siena on January 23, 2017 and St. Jude on March 13, 2017. They were both very well run meetings. A school assessment sheet was emailed to each council member in advance of the meeting with more specific information about these meetings.

- **Council Self-Assessment – Mark Uebelacker**

Mark thanked everyone for their participation in the self-evaluation and provided them with written results of the study. He said the council looks very different this year with 6 new members on board. Because of this, he expects next year's evaluation to provide more valuable information as we compare the 2017 with the 2018 responses from the same council members.

- **Election of 2017-2018 Officers – Mark Uebelacker**

Augusto Elias was re-elected as 2017-2018 Chair for the Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council and Marcos Arias was elected as Vice-Chair. Diane said she would meet with the Chair and Vice-Chair sometime in July to set strategy and work on a presentation of our research study to members of the secretariat.

- **New Council Member Training**

Diane announced the dates of this year's new council members training which will be Saturday, August 11th from 9-11am and Wednesday, August 23rd from 5:30-7:30pm. Proposed council members cannot be seated with this training.

- **Council Meeting Dates – 2017-2018**

Diane proposed our future council meeting dates to be on Tuesday mornings instead of Thursdays to accommodate Fr. Duffy's schedule (our upcoming ASAC pastor/member). The council accepted the change and Diane said she would present the proposal to Archbishop Gregory.

- **Future Council Business**

Assistance with the Strategic Plan

Review of the Mission Statement for Catholic Schools

Diane said the Executive Committee would meet in July. Diane asked Bob Heilmann if he would serve on the Ad Hoc Committee to help Our Lady of Mercy get started with a Dual Enrollment Program. A brief discussion followed about the state of today's education system and where we are right now.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:54am. The next meeting date is set for Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 7:30am.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler
Schools Program Specialist