

Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting August 21, 2018

In Attendance: Diane Starkovich, Marcos Arias-Chair, Robert Heilmann-Vice Chair, Fr. James Duffy, Mark Uebelacker, Paula Brosnan, Craig Wade, Brad Wilson, Brian Dooling, Catherine Kennedy Harris, Stacy Lewis, Maureen McAbee, Beth Clark Morrison, Michelle Raney. By phone: Augusto Elias.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**

Diane started the meeting off with a prayer.

- **Introductions and Ice Breaker**

For the benefit of the 5 new advisory council members, Marcos Arias invited those in attendance to introduce themselves and give fellow council members some fun facts about themselves (i.e. School/Parish affiliation, favorite snack food, book and travel destination).

- **Approval of Agenda**

Marcos asked for a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was given and seconded.

- **Approval of June 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Marcos asked for a motion to approve the June 2018 meeting minutes. The motion was given and seconded.

- **Council Goals and Expectations – Bob Heilmann**

Bob Heilmann outlined the 6 goals and expectations established by the Executive Committee. The goals are as follows:

1. We will work to build trust among all School Advisory Councils and the ASAC by increasing communication, attending school council meetings, demonstrating leadership, and providing support and advice to the Archbishop and Superintendent.
2. We will maximize our effectiveness in ASAC by our continued diligence & preparation for decisions, attendance & participation in meetings, and more clear structure on deliverables in our committees.
3. We will provide support for the approved strategic plan for Catholic schools through committee work and updating archdiocesan policies as needed.
4. We will maximize enrollment in all our schools in the Archdiocese.
5. We will continue to provide training to council members on the financing of our schools which includes the work of the finance committee to annually recommend teacher salary scales and financial aid (block grant) awards to all schools.
6. We will help the ASAC to facilitate the goal of providing Catholic education to all those who wish to receive a Catholic education which includes supporting the work of GRACE Scholars, Inc., to provide scholarships for qualifying families.

Diane explained to the new council members that there is a training session in which they have signed up for that will go over what it means to serve on a school council. Members of this council will stay an additional 15 minutes after the regular training to go over specifics that only apply to the ASAC. She added that if any of them have served on a local school council, this council operates in the same manner except that the focus is on improving all of our 18 Archdiocesan schools.

Marcos said his intent is to keep addressing these goals at each meeting in order to keep aligning them to our agenda.

- **Review of Committee Assignments – Marcos Arias**

Marcos went over the committee assignments and said that each committee will have a lead assigned to that committee. They are as follows:

Executive Committee: Marcos Arias (lead), Bob Heilmann, Diane Starkovich

Nominating Committee/Council Evaluation: Paul Brosnan

Marketing Committee: Augusto Elias, Maureen McAbee, Mark Uebelacker, Craig Wade (lead)

Strategic Planning Committee: Cathy Kennedy Harris, Michelle Raney

Ad Hoc Committee: Bob Heilmann

Finance Committee: Stacey Lewis, Brad Wilson (lead)

Policy Committee: Beth Clark Morrison

Diane asked if a committee meets to please submit a report outlining any action taken and present this for discussion at the next advisory council meeting. If the committee does not meet, simply submit a document stating Committee did not meet and no business to report at this time.

- **September 29, 2018 – All Schools’ Advisory Council In-Service**

Marcos advised the council of the upcoming All Schools’ Advisory Council In-Service which will be held at the Chancery on Saturday, September 29. Marcos said this is always a great opportunity for all to come together and share best practices. Diane said the morning will begin with an optional Mass at 8am celebrated by Archbishop Gregory and followed by morning hospitality at 8:30am. The program will begin at 9am. Brian Dooling, our new Director of Marketing and Enrollment, will be heavily involved. The agenda is still being finalized but there will be discussion on advertisements, social media, how to run an effective meeting, strategic planning and developing a parent ambassador program. Diane encouraged the ASAC council members to be there if at all possible.

- **Superintendent’s Report**

Diane asked all council members to read her report that was sent prior to the meeting if they had not already done so. Diane stated that some of our schools have gone down in enrollment and some are up and said Brian Dooling’s report will cover that in more detail. Diane advised that Associate Superintendent, Rebecca Hammel, has resigned her position here at the Archdiocese of Atlanta and is now going to be the Superintendent for the Diocese of Nashville, TN. The Associate Superintendent’s position will be posted in November in hopes of filling it next July. All of Rebecca’s duties have been divided up between Diane, Connie Urbanski and Brian Dooling and some of the principals have offered to step in and help.

- **Brian Dooling, Director of Marketing and Enrollment**

Brian Dooling said he’s been busy since July getting to know each of our schools. Brian said each school has its own unique personality and he has been very impressed with the quality product we have to sell. Based on the enrollment status of each school, Brian has broken the schools down into 3 zones; red, yellow and green. The schools in the red zone are the ones in most need of assistance; their enrollment numbers are continuously going down and they need help in figuring out a strategy to build back their enrollment. The schools in the yellow zone are the ones starting to see a decline in enrollment and need some guidance as to how they can get back on track. The schools in the green zone are in solid shape, their enrollment is at capacity and they are thriving. Brian said he’s been speaking with other dioceses around the country to see what they are doing to combat declining numbers. In his research he learned about success in having a parent ambassador program. Brian said this is something we can help with. Social Media is another wonderful tool the schools could be taking advantage of and Brian said although some schools are doing this very well there are others that need assistance in this area. Also, he will be taking a look at the schools websites to make sure the information is accessible on mobile devices as well. This is where most millennial parents get their information; otherwise we could be missing that segment of the population. In addition, Brian will be targeting the parishes PSR parents and working toward establishing better communication with the priests and church personnel so that parishes and schools can work more closely together. Other things like creating a fast facts sheet for each school to use in selling their school to prospective parents. Brian witnessed at one of the schools he visited a TV monitor in the reception area continuously running videos

of the students. This is something very simple but very effective. We are presently 85% full with about 1,000 empty seats. Brian will be working on all these marketing techniques and more in the coming months with the hope that the efforts will make an impact on future enrollment numbers. A lengthy dialog on marketing and enrollment took place including discussion on the "A Better Chance" (ABC) program. This program could especially benefit Our Lady of Mercy High School's enrollment. The prime time to target these families is when the student is in 7th grade. Diane asked Catherine Harris, who is very familiar with the ABC program, to connect with our Marketing Team.

- **School Advisory Council Visits & Sign-Up**

Diane passed around a sign-up sheet for members to attend school council meetings and said that each school should receive a visit during the school year. The new council members normally buddy-up with a more senior member of the council for the first visit. Diane said there is a checklist members can use to help determine what sort of information is needed for their report. Diane asked those who felt comfortable signing up now to do so, but she will re-address this at the November meeting for those who are new because by then they would have all had their council training. Diane expressed how important it is for this council to build relationships with the local school councils in order to learn what their concerns are and in determining what we can do to help them in their efforts. She asked for members to pick a different school from the one their children attend and also that members wear their ASAC name badge when attending.

- **Binder Tabs/ Council Member Information Update**

Diane explained the binder and binder tabs to the council members. The new members received an entire binder containing necessary council information along with binder tabs for each council meeting this school year. All others received the tabs to insert in their binder as well as one revised page to the policy manual which is located in their binder. Each year Diane goes through the policy manual and makes the necessary changes. Before publishing the change, legal counsel looks it over for approval. Diane touched on the different committees and explained that some of them will not have any action to report on for a while, while others (such as marketing) will keep very busy. The finance committee will give an upcoming training session to explain the budgeting process. The date will soon be advised and all are encouraged to attend either by phone or in person. Diane also offered to arrange a tour for any council members who might want to visit a school they are unfamiliar with.

- **Adjournment – Next Meeting Date**

Next meeting date will be at the Chancery, Tuesday, November 13th at 7:30am. The meeting adjourned at 9:00am.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler, Schools Program Specialist