

## Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting  
Tuesday, June 11, 2019

**In Attendance:** Diane Starkovich, Marcos Arias, Mark Uebelacker, Craig Wade, Brad Wilson, Brian Dooling, Maureen McAbee, Beth Clark Morrison, Michelle Raney, Paula Brosnan, Bob Heilmann, Fr. Jim Duffy, Stacy Lewis. **Absent:** Catherine Kennedy Harris, Augusto Elias.

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**

Marcos Arias called the meeting to order and Diane led the council in a prayer.

- **Approval of Agenda**

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

- **Approval of August Meeting Minutes**

Marcos asked for a motion to approve the March 2019 meeting minutes. The motion was approved and seconded.

- **Council Self-Assessment – Paula Brosnan**

Paula thanked members who responded to the self-assessment survey saying she received 10 responses. She said she will leave it open for an additional week to give the members who have not yet responded an opportunity to do so. Paula broke down the results by section with feedback being mostly positive throughout. Suggestions for improvement included more recruitment of members from the East and South side of Atlanta, a reiteration of goals at each meeting, timeliness on getting survey out, more training for new council members and sharing more marketing and enrollment success stories. Diane reminded everyone that new policies are on hold until we have our new Archbishop. This affects the Ride Share Policy (Uber/Lyft) that we had hoped to implement this year. Recommendations and research may continue in the interim.

- **Nominating Committee – Paula Bosnan – New Council Member Discussion**

Paula thanked Craig Wade for his service as he will be leaving the council. The new council member replacing Craig will be John Cryer, recommended by Brian Dooling and Lauren Schell. John is a member of St. Brigid Catholic Church, he has 3 children who attend Holy Redeemer Catholic School (rising 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders). He is employed by Comcast Cable and has marketing expertise. Paula asked the council if they had any questions about our nominee. Diane said if everyone agrees, she will move forward with the paperwork and bring it to Bishop Konzen for approval.

- **Marketing and Enrollment Updates – Brian Dooling**

Brian said he sent out an update on the current zones on the schools. There have been adjustments made based on the latest poll of where each school stands from an enrollment perspective going into the fall. Diane went over a review of the individual schools present enrollment vs. what was budgeted for the coming year. A discussion followed.

Brian gave an update on the 42 welcome grants we have offered to new families with children entering K-2 or 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The welcome grants are not based on financial need but instead a way of introducing our schools to Catholic families who have not yet considered a Catholic Education for their children. The grant gives the family \$2500.00 the first year toward tuition costs and \$1500.00 the second year with the hopes that after the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in our school they will want to stay. This grant does not prevent the family from receiving other financial resources. Schools with full enrollment will turn their welcome grants back in so that another school in need might be able to benefit from them.

Brian said work is being done to create a new website for Catholic Schools. This will be separate from the Arch website and will focus on digital marketing and promoting enrollment. The target date for completion is the end of July 2019. Parent ambassador programs continue to be encouraged at the schools because of their proven success when implemented. Another strategy Brian is working on is setting up meetings with local deaneries to promote Catholic

Schools and getting feedback from priests. Also, school fairs at various parishes are being encouraged where the schools that feed into that parish can set up a booth and give out information to parishioners that may not have thought about a Catholic school for their children. Brian is working with Georgia Bulletin on ideas to get more exposure of our Catholic Schools on a regular basis, i.e. regular articles/updates from Diane. Lastly, Brian presented the Atlanta School Guide's latest publication which shows our joint school ad and an article about the benefits of Catholic Education. This publication goes out to 850 locations in the Atlanta area. Our joint Catholic Schools advertisement appeared earlier this year in the Atlanta Parent Magazine as well on the back page of the Georgia Bulletin to raise awareness and recognition.

- **Superintendent's Report**

Diane gave a report on the recent World Congress on Catholic Education which was held in New York City. The main theme of this 3-day worldwide conference was on leadership and the lack of applicants worldwide for Principals and Superintendents. The explanation for this is partly because of the shortage of leadership programs and training being offered. Recently, a few universities have begun to offer this leadership training. The other big discussion was on formation of teachers, both in academics and in faith. We had a substantial number of teachers resign this year due to retirement, staying home with children and taking positions in other private and public schools. Diane said she will once again offer a Principal Formation class to any teacher that may feel the call into Leadership.

Diane handed out a snapshot of results from a survey recently done by NCEA. The survey asked questions about top risks, most vulnerable issues and the biggest concerns in the Catholic Schools. In the Midwest and Northeast where schools are closing, the biggest concerns were Tuition Dependency, Financial Issues, Admissions & Enrollment, Alumni, certification of teachers, compensation and benefits etc. Diane offered to send the full 70 page report to anyone interested.

Diane said in talking to the high schools, there is a concern about the shift in athletics based on enrollment. Mercy will stay in Single A. St. Pius is being bumped up to 6A, which means they will be playing very large high schools with 3-4 thousand students. This is a great disadvantage because of the numbers and increased chances of injuries for our students. Blessed Trinity and Marist will stay 5A. The changes are due to reorganization supported by the Georgia High School Athletic Association and appear to be targeted to large private schools that have experienced much success in prior years.

Ave Maria Academy in Newnan closed recently and will be reopening as a hybrid school. A discussion followed.

Diane mentioned that we were in the second day of a 3-day Summer Institute for the teachers here at the Chancery. Day 3 will be 4 hours of Catechist Formation with Fr. Mark Starr, Fr. Daniel Ketter and Andy Lichtenwalner (Director of Formation and Discipleship) as presenters.

Diane opened the floor up for questions. Marcos commented on the impressive scholarship/tuition ratio at the high schools. Diane said it was mentioned in her speech at every high school graduation and is something to be very proud of. Blessed Trinity and St. Pius had a 2/1 scholarship/tuition ratio and Our Lady of Mercy had a 4/1 ratio. This 2019 high school graduating class were in kindergarten the year Diane began as Superintendent at the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Diane gave a brief recap of Archbishop Gregory's installation in Washington D. C.

- **Committee Reports**

There were no additional committee reports.

- **School Visits**

Marcos asked if there were any visits to report on since our last meeting. Maureen McAbee visited Queen of Angels and St. John the Evangelist. The Queen of Angels committee were very concerned about the new payroll system. Both meetings were very different but equally engaging and enthusiastic. Craig Wade visited Holy Redeemer and commented on their well organized and heavily engaged council. Brian Dooling has visited all the schools this year and commented on how each one is unique in its own way. Beth Morrison said she has worked under several principals on school advisory councils

and that the principal sets the tone for how involved the committee becomes. There was a discussion on the schools' transition from semi-monthly to bi-weekly paychecks as well as the new payroll software.

- **Election of Officers (2019-2020) – Paula Brosnan**

Marcos Arias will continue to serve as Chair and Bob Heilmann will continue as Vice-Chair of the Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council.

- **Council Meeting Dates – 2019-2020**

Diane sent the proposed meeting dates for next school year in her email prior to the meeting. Next year's dates are mirrored from this year and will remain on Tuesdays at 7:30am at the Chancery. She asked if there were any objections to the proposed dates. These will also appear on the Archdiocese website under Office of Catholic Schools, along with previously approved minutes. Diane mentioned that there will be two trainings in August for new school council members. Also mentioned was the Archbishop's Banquet for Catholic Education set for Saturday evening, January 25, 2020. Bishop Konzen will be present and will fill in as our Administrator if a new Archbishop is not assigned by then. A discussion followed.

- **Committee Assignments for 2019-2020**

Diane said she will meet with Marcos and Bob in the next month to assign committees. She asked members who would like to remain on their committee or would like to move to a different committee to please email her or Marcos indicating such.

- **Recognition of Outgoing Council Member**

Marcos thanked Craig Wade for his dedication and service to this council and presented him with a parting gift.

- **Adjournment – Next Meeting Date**

The meeting adjourned at 9:03am. The next meeting will be Tuesday, August 20 at 9am.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler  
Schools' Program Specialist