

Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting

Tuesday, 3-16-21

Zoom Meeting – 7:30-9:00am

In Attendance: Hal Plummer, Beth Clark Morrison-Chair, John Cryer-Vice Chair, Marcos Arias, Brad Wilson, Brian Dooling, Maureen McAbee, Michelle Raney, Brian Hershberger, Fr. Neil Dhabliwala, Stacy Lewis, Cathy Kennedy Harris, Bob Heilmann, Jennifer Prindiville. **Absent:** Chris White.

- **Call to Order and Opening Prayer**

Beth Morrison called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and asked Fr. Neil to lead the council in prayer.

- **Approval of Agenda**

Beth asked for a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was given and seconded. All were in favor to approve the agenda.

- **Approval of the Minutes from the January Meeting**

Beth said she was aware of two changes to the minutes requesting Brian Hershberger's name be added to the Finance Committee report and Chris White and John Cryer to be added to the Marketing Committee report. Beth then asked if there were any other changes to the minutes. Jennifer Prindiville indicated that the January minutes marked her present when she was in fact absent for that meeting. Beth asked that these three changes show up in the final version of the minutes. With those changes in mind, Beth asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was given and seconded.

- **Superintendent's Report**

COVID-19 Update – Hal Plummer said we have favorable data from the schools. Most cases are related to off campus activities. Outdoor spring sports including feeder programs are happening with safety protocols. A letter from the Hal went out to the schools regarding spring break. Hal is expecting to soon hear guidelines from the governor regarding next school year. He feels there is anxiety in the school community regarding next year and hopes to have more clear directions in the near future.

Southside Consolidation OLM/OLV - Consolidation of OLV/OLM has been approved by Archbishop Hartmayer for the Fall of 2022 on the campus of Our Lady of Mercy. This will be a PreK-12 academy. Weekly meetings are taking place to discuss branding, messaging, policies, construction, curriculum, summer camps, faculty needs, parish visits etc. The OCS team long with OLM/OLV administrators have met with an architect to discuss necessary modifications to the campus. For the first time, OLM will introduce a Summer Camp called "Camp Invention". Another press release should be coming out soon.

Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) – All 18 Archdiocesan schools, with the exception of those applying for the second round of PPP funds, have applied for the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS). This funding is provided upon the receipt of an application from the state governor and can be used to address new educational needs or to reimburse pandemic-related purchases made during the reopening of schools. The funds will be weighted for use in schools

with higher low-income populations. Those schools seeking additional PPP funds are ineligible for EANS funds.

School Leadership Transitions – The new leaders are as follows:

St. Pius X – John Favier (President) and Edye Simpson (Principal)

St. Catherine of Siena – Kelly Wood (Principal)

Immaculate Heart of Mary – Laura Cichanski (Principal)

Christ the King – Melissa Lowry (Principal)

Blessed Trinity President's search has been postponed and will be looked at again this fall.

Compensation Analysis & Review – Hal announced that he would like to form a committee from the ASAC members to conduct a compensation review and make appropriate recommendations. Hal said that some Archdiocesan schools with means have been able to give extra bonuses to their employees that other Archdiocesan schools cannot afford. He also wants to look at more competitive teacher salaries for the 2022-2023 school year.

Curriculum Committee Updates – Committees continue to move forward with piloting the updated standards in the 2021-2022 school year for Math, Music and Technology.

SST (Student Success Team) Committee Updates – Hal considers this a high priority and said the SST team is now broken up into two sub-committees. One committee is working on resources to make the SST manual more of a tool to utilize throughout the SST process. The second committee is working on the mission and value statements and focusing on modifications on how to become more welcoming in our schools. He would like to have a member from the ASAC join the planning to ensure the focus remains on improving support for exceptional learners.

IOWA and CogAT Testing – Iowa tests are currently being administered in all the elementary school until March 19. ACRES will be administered in April. Hal is especially interested in comparing the data on the students who attended school virtually as opposed to those who were in person.

Graduation Planning – Archdiocesan high school graduations will all be in person on Saturday, May 15. Archdiocesan elementary graduations will also be in person on various dates at the end of May. All of these will be using safety protocols.

OCS Spring School Visits – Hal said half of the school visits have been completed for this year. These visits are divided among the Superintendent and Associate Superintendents. Hal said it has been interesting to see the schools' creativity in meeting the protocols in this year of COVID.

Professional Development Opportunities Update – Hal mentioned a live event recently offered by Tim Elmore to all our administrators, counselors and resource teachers on Social and Emotional Learning. This event addressed the mental fatigue and challenges many of them are experiencing during this time.

School Nurses Committee - Nurses continue to meet and discuss best practices. This group of employees has been particularly important this year in handling issues related to the pandemic. We will be forming a nurses committee to update the 2010 manual. This committee will continue into the 2021-2022 school year.

School Budgets & Planning – Hal said Brad has been leading the budget process for all the schools. The focus is on historical trends, liquidity and any COVID needs. Tuition at each school will be announced after budget is approved.

Hal opened the floor to questions and/or comments. Michelle Raney asked whether mask wearing restrictions have changed recently. Hal answered by saying that mask wearing rules still apply in all the schools and at all school events.

Brian Hershberger asked about the current status of vaccinating teachers. Hal said the number of our teachers getting vaccinated keeps increasing as more and more options become available.

Maureen McAbee brought up the topic of teacher compensation analysis that Hal discussed in his report. She said that at her school council visit to OLA the principal there seemed concerned that she might lose several experienced teachers to retirement due to COVID fatigue. Maureen asked if this was a trend forming at other schools. Hal said he has not heard about any trends from our administrators.

Beth asked Hal if there were any additional items he needs assistance with from this council. Hal thanked Beth for always offering the help of this council and just asked them to continue to be the ears and eyes in their school community. He mentioned that he is hoping to develop a strategic plan for the schools based on Archbishop Hartmayer's strategic plan for the Archdiocese. The timeline on the Archdiocese new strategic plan is unknown at this time.

Beth addressed the two areas Hal asked for ASAC support which both involve teacher compensation and bonuses. She asked for volunteers to join this effort along with the finance committee. Bob Heilmann said that this was a project started by Diane in 2019 which was halted due to Covid. He said he would like to continue on this project. Brad declined being involved since this should be an outside committee to gather data. Stacy Lewis, Brian Hershberger and Fr. Neil will join Bob Heilmann to work on this project. Beth offered her help as well if needed. Brad suggested, if anyone on the council has HR experience, to look at all the Archdiocese's non-cash employee benefits. Hal agreed that enhancing our communication on the non-cash benefits would be very helpful.

- **Committee Reports**

Marketing Committee

Brian said the Marketing Committee is going to review and update the Marketing Toolkit, originally developed in 2009 and last revised in 2016. A Google Form has been developed to send out to Enrollment Management Directors to find out their specific needs so that our update will be most useful to their marketing efforts moving forward. Each marketing committee member has been assigned several schools to oversee the responses to questions sent out. All members of this committee will regroup and discuss next steps once all responses are collected. The goal is to have this ready for next school year.

Brian continues to host periodic Zoom Meetings with Advancement Directors and Enrollment Management Directors in order to allow them to collaborate and share best practices with one another. GRACE Scholar's tax credit cap has not been met. There is still \$23,709,241 remaining in the cap. The schools are being encouraged to continue to promote GRACE to their families. Brian asked the council to promote this tremendous opportunity within their community. The 2021 registration is now open at www.gracescholars.org.

Tips and helpful resources go out on a weekly basis to our Advancement and Enrollment Directors. School promotional videos are being encouraged this year because of limited access to schools. Brian provided a link to the latest videos submitted. Each school's Employee of the Year and our Principal of the Year have been recognized through social media. Brian has added some school promotional videos and Catholic Schools' Week videos on social media.

The Catholic Foundation of North Georgia (CFNGA) granted \$2.4 million and established 37 new funds this past year. The Catholic Foundation stewards more than \$85.2 million in charitable assets on behalf of its many donors to meet the needs of our local community. Catholic schools apply for grants in the spring and these grants are extremely helpful in providing funding for new projects that are unbudgeted.

Brian advised that the Welcome Grant program, previously funded by the parish assessment, will not be offered this summer due to the payoff of the bonds. The schools have been told that they can continue offering it on an individual basis if they have the funds in their budget to do so. We will fulfill the obligation to the 2nd year students who entered the Welcome Grant program last year.

Brian provided links to two presentations that may be of interest to council members. The first was from Dr. Tim Elmore's talk on Social and Emotional Learning, which Hal talked about in his report. The second was a brilliant talk by Dr. Scott Hahn on lessons from his newest book, *It is Right and Just: Why the Future of Civilization Depends on True Religion*.

Other items of interest:

Pinecrest, one of our independent Catholic schools, has hired a new head of school. Jake Rodgers will begin serving in this role on July 1, 2021.

Blessed Trinity's Director of Enrollment Management, Mark Tolcher, has created an Exit Survey to try and formalize the process and collect helpful information from families that have chosen to depart the school. This information can be used to monitor trends and make necessary improvements based on confidential feedback. This survey has been shared with other Enrollment Management Directors to possibly use at their own schools.

In closing, Brian asked the council to follow the Office of Catholic Schools on Social Media and tag us on any school postings so we can better promote the wonderful benefits of a Catholic Education.

Beth said she was surprised to hear of the large untapped amount for GRACE Scholars and wondered if we knew a reason for this. Brian said he was not sure why this was the case but said the schools are reaching out to donors who have participated previously. In the past, parishes would allow promotion of GRACE Scholars at their Sunday masses. With lower attendance this year at masses, the word has not

gotten out as much as before. Brad said that in spite of that, the amount GRACE received this year is close to the same amount received last year.

Nominating Committee – Bob Heilmann & Stacy Lewis

Beth raised the question as to what steps need to be taken by the Nominating Committee to replace members who will be rolling off in June. Brian Dooling said he will put together a list of all those members rolling off and potential candidates that may have been recommended by the principals.

Executive Committee – Beth Morrison, John Cryer, Hal Plummer and Brian Dooling

Beth said the Executive Committee met to plan this meeting and discuss progress on new and pre-existing initiatives and issues.

- **Local Advisory Council Visits**

Maureen McAbee visited Our Lady of the Assumption school council meeting. Maureen said the meeting was primarily focused on finance and getting the budget approved. The council was very engaged and supportive of the principal. There was discussion about admissions and how the school has received an abundance of applications for next year with only a few openings. Very positive meeting.

Stacy Lewis visited St. John the Evangelist. She said most of meeting was devoted to preparing for the stakeholders meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for transparency on what the council is doing and keeping all stakeholders up to date on the school. There was discussion about the merger of OLM and OLV and concerns that, being a feeder school for OLM, some parents would choose to go to the elementary school on OLM's campus instead of continuing with St. John the Evangelist. The new principal, Bernadette Boisis, asked for feedback from Stacy after the meeting. Stacy said it was a very positive and productive meeting.

Marcos Arias visited Saint Jude the Apostle on January 25th. Based on the report he provided, Marcos indicated that Saint Jude's council meeting went extremely well with great engagement and all committees were well informed. Clergy was not present. COVID numbers were up but under control. They anticipate full enrollment next year based on the large number of applicants.

- **Adjournment & Closing Prayer**

Beth thanked everyone for their attendance at the meeting. Next meeting date is Tuesday, June 15, 2021, 7:30-9:00 AM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler
Schools' Program Specialist