

Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting

Tuesday, 11-16-21

Zoom Meeting – 7:30-9:00am

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

- **Call to Order and Opening Prayer**

Beth Clark Morrison called the meeting to order and Fr. Neil led the council in prayer.

- **Approval of Agenda**

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

- **Approval of the Minutes**

Beth asked if there were any changes to the August 2021 ASAC Meeting Minutes. With no changes stated, Beth asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion to approve was given and seconded and all were in favor to approve the minutes.

- **Superintendent's Report**

Hal started out by advising the council about John Dilly's (Nancy's husband) sudden death. He asked for prayers for her and her family.

COVID

Hal said since the beginning of October, when everyone was masked up, the Covid case numbers dropped lower than ever. He said a letter will go out to parents later this week stating that masks will be optional effective December 13th, which is two weeks after Thanksgiving break. He expects a pushback from a certain group but stated that a mandate will not be enforced. Fr. Neil asked what the difference is between optional masking and hybrid masking. Hal explained that hybrid masking means there are times when masks are required (i.e. large gatherings such as mass or assemblies) and optional masking means there is no time when masks are required. Elementary volunteers are still required to wear masks.

Hal said he has asked schools to remove screens as research shows that the screens inhibit air flow which is most important in fighting the transmission of this disease. Jennifer Prindiville asked if we know the percentage of teachers who are presently vaccinated. Hal responded that 80-90% have been vaccinated and that the unvaccinated are required to wear a mask.

St. Mary's Academy

Renovation plans are moving along great and there is much excitement about St. Mary's Academy.

Hal said he and his team are continually reviewing plans, budget and additional needs. A very successful open house and meeting was held with all the southside pastors to garner support and raise awareness. Works are in place with a marketing firm to develop a plan to effectively promote the school. Extensive time and effort is going into making this school a success. We are exploring professional development and letters of intent from current faculty. Hal encouraged everyone to check out the website at St. Mary's bobcats.org.

News from the Office of Catholic Schools

In response to both our growing non-English speaking population in the schools and to our Cognia accreditation goal to serve non-traditional populations, we hosted a daylong seminar on September 14 on identifying and responding to the needs of our English language learners. All the principals and counselors from the Archdiocese schools attended the event, which involved presentations by West Ed educational group. As a follow up to the event, personnel at the schools have enrolled in a WIDA training. WIDA is the instrument by which ELLs are identified and which diagnoses their educational needs.

A Diversity Discussion was held at Blessed Trinity High School on October 20. The event, which was attended by the counselors and principals of the Archdiocesan schools, was the second in a series of presentations focused on identifying and addressing the need for increased sensitivity with all in our community. The day included presentations from student panels from our high schools and parent representatives from the elementary schools. Feedback from attendees indicated gratitude for opening this discussion and ideas on how we can both continue to dialogue and respond to the issues raised. There is a third Diversity session scheduled for April 2022.

Associate Superintendent Kellie DesOrmeaux Report:

We are presently preparing for 2022-2023 budgets, contracts, job descriptions, & documents to go out prior to Christmas break.

A nurses' meeting was held to review progress on handbook revision and recently announced our plan to shorten quarantine for certain exposures.

Curriculum Updates - Currently in review: Science, Visual Arts, & Physical Education/Health.
In pilot year: Math, Music & Technology - feedback from field throughout this year to make final updates for implementation beginning 2022 for 4 years.

Business Managers Meeting - This was the first time having just school business managers in a meeting. They all appreciated the focus on schools. Discussed a variety of topics and needs - budget template, contracts, FACTS, advance accounting etc.

Assistant Principals and Curriculum Coordinators Meeting - Discussed best practices – UDL - collaboration, student-centered engagement

Technology Meeting - Included technologist and technology managers/administration - had four presenters and then an open forum to discuss needs, concerns, best practices, next steps, resources, and conferences.

Teacher Resource Website - Staff members from all schools have registered to share and collaborate with lesson plans and connect with best practices - email directory included since domains of every school is different – the site provides a common place to ensure outreach is successful.

Summer Institute - Working on Summer Institute presenters for theme (best practices meeting all students' needs). There will also be a Technology Day and Father Ketter will present on Catholic Identity day. The dates are set for June 7-9, 2022.

Fall School Visits by Superintendents - Fall school visits are underway - will complete in December.

Lastly, Hal said plans are in the works to introduce Theology of the Body for grade schools. More information to follow.

- **Committee Reports**

Compensation Benefits – Brian Hershberger

Brian reported that the template was sent to Business Managers to fill out and are presently in the data collection process.

Finance Committee – Brad Wilson

Brad said teacher salary increases are in conversation right now. The cost of inflation along with being more competitive are things to consider. Brad gave a plug for GRACE Scholars and encouraged everyone to promote GRACE.

Fr. Neil said he feels we should be a more intentional in promoting Catholic Education in the Archdiocese. Hal agreed and said he would like to see this a part of priest formation. Brian Dooling suggested attending deanery meetings would be a good way to get the message out to the priests.

Policy Committee – Marcos Arias

Committee met on November 11, 2021 to review goals, assignments and cadence of meetings. Objective is to review current policies and to refresh/update in light of current market/school conditions.

Review 5000 Policy Section with specific focus on:

Elementary Admissions – Beth

High School Admissions – Brian

Exceptional Learner – Marcos

Targeting Dec 6th for next team review of each section with benchmarking from other archdioceses (e.g. Baltimore, Chicago, Arlington, Washington DC, and/or Savannah).

Executive Committee – Beth Morrison

Met on November 8, 2021 to plan the November ASAC meeting and discuss progress on new and pre-existing initiatives and issues.

Marketing Committee – Brian Dooling

Enrollment is up overall by 9%. Some schools are still struggling and we continue to help them as best we can. Open Houses are taking place this month and Discover Catholic Schools Week is happening this week. Catholic Schools' Week is January 30-February 5, 2022 and there are a variety of Archdiocesan events planned. To kick off Catholic Schools' Week will be our Annual Education Banquet on Saturday, January 29th at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church. We will have our annual Spelling Bee at the Chancery on Tuesday, February 1st and the 8th Grade Liturgy will be held on Wednesday, February 2nd.

Brian reminded everyone that the I Give Catholic Campaign is approaching and also asked everyone to promote GRACE Scholars.

Local Council Visits

Beth Morrison asked Brian Dooling about the status of the Local School Council Meetings sign-up. Brian responded and said he would check and advise the council members where and when we needed coverage.

Adjournment – Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is Tuesday, January 11, 2022. We will advise everyone closer to the date as to whether the next meeting will be in person or on zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler
Schools' Program Specialist