

Minutes

Atlanta Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council Meeting

Tuesday, 8/13/24

7:30-9:00am

In Attendance: **Patty Childs, Tony Bonta, Kim Shields, Karen Vogtner, Lauren Schell, Brian Hershberger, John Cryer, Joey Nordmark, Fr. Valery Akoh, Kevin Murray, Jennifer Prindiville, Patrick Lowther, and new members: Alexandra Balzer, Hilary Dixon, Brandi Kler and Vivian Vu.**
Absent: **Pam Tennell, Brad Wilson.**

- **Welcome and Opening Prayer**

Patty Childs welcomed everyone to the first ASAC meeting of the 2024-2025 school year and led the council in an opening prayer. Following the prayer, the mission statement was recited by all.

- **Introductions of OCS Staff and Members of the Council**

Each member of the OCS introduced themselves to the members. Then all members of the Council introduced themselves and gave a little history of their connection with our schools/parishes. After the introductions were given, Brian Hershberger thanked all council members for their willingness to serve.

- **Approval of Agenda**

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

- **Approval of the June 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Brian asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 2024 meeting. The motion to approve was given and seconded.

- **Accreditation Summary Report and Additional OCS Goals – Karen Vogtner**

Patty Childs asked Karen to present a summary of our Accreditation Report to the council.

Karen said with 4 being the highest level, we received Level 4 in 14 out of 30 areas and Level 3 in the remaining 16 areas. Our score was 360 out of 400. The average score is 253, so Karen said we should be very pleased with our score.

Karen explained that there are 4 key elements used in scoring accreditation with 4 being the highest possible rating. These elements and our scores in each area are as follows:

Culture for Learning: 3.7

Leadership in Learning: 3.7

Engagement in Learning: 3.5

Growth in Learning: 3.1

Karen then went through each element and gave highlights of what the accreditation team found. Some of these highlights are as follows:

Culture for Learning – 3.7

- Our stakeholders know our mission, fulfil our mission and live to sustain our mission.
- They liked that we support our lower resourced schools (i.e. equity).
- They praised our new Open Doors program which invites children (of our current families) with moderate special needs to attend our schools.
- They saw a unified approach in all our schools to maintain and shape a strong Catholic identity.
- They saw good engagement and support from our parents and school advisory council members.
- They complimented Measuring What Matters which we have been implemented in all our schools as a systemwide coaching method and highlighted it as a very effective tool.

Leadership for Learning – 3.7

- Strong leadership in the Office of Catholic Schools
- Equitable resources
- Use of data in academic and non-academic areas
- Emphasis on continuous improvement
- Strong Curriculum – Rigorous with faith connections
- Strong leadership in teachers, students and parents in advisory council roles
- School viability and the protocols in place to keep our schools strong

Engagement in Learning – 3.5

- Catholic Identity and recognizing the dignity of every child
- They commended our SST (Student Success Team) process
- Our student support services, enriching programs and adjusting curriculum as needed
- **Areas for improvement are:**
Integrating faith in every content area to deepen students' faith by making authentic connections in all areas.

Growth in Learning – 3.1

- Data driven across the board
- Well-managed classrooms and students on task and engaged in learning with peers and teachers
- **Areas for improvement are:**
Digital learning as it relates to collaboration research.
Setting goals for teachers and students
Suggestions were given to have teachers visit other schools to have instructional tours.
Continue to get feedback from our students

Karen read off several comments that were very positive to our system of schools ending with the phrase "Archdiocese of Atlanta is a model for other districts to follow". Karen thanked the council for all their hard work in supporting the superintendent with policies and protocols that support our schools.

John Cryer asked how long this accreditation will last. Patty Childs said it lasts 6 years but at year 2 ½ we will begin writing our mid-accreditation report indicating what progress has been made toward our goals. Then in the middle of year 4 we begin writing to get ready for the visit in year 6. Karen explained how there are 4 internal visits each year by a team of administrators and teachers to observe

how they are fulfilling the goals we have set. The data we receive from these visits help determine what areas are needed for professional development.

Brian Hershberger asked if we do the viability index every year. Patty confirmed that this is done each year but since the accreditation process, adjustments to the form we use will be needed. Patty showed the council a copy of the current viability index and how we come up with the score for each school. It has proven to be an excellent tool for the Office of Catholic Schools as well as the local school advisory councils to enable them to see where improvement is needed.

- **GEORGIA GOAL, CMS, Partners in Mission, Marketing & Strategic Plan – Tony Bonta**

Tony briefly gave a schedule of upcoming events the Office of Catholic Schools will be hosting. He then explained the SWOT exercise which will be used at this year's school advisory council in-service. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SWOT is designed to be a self-assessment exercise for schools to be aware of where they stand in these 4 areas and will assist with strategic planning. Also, in gathering the schools SWOT data, the Office of Catholic Schools and ASAC have the necessary information to put together a district-wide strategic plan.

Tony then touched on Georgia GOAL (Greater Opportunities for Access in Learning) Scholarship program. GOAL has a team of 10 who are ready to assist our schools in marketing and communication efforts. GOAL representatives will give a presentation at the principals meeting on August 27th. GOAL weekend at the parishes is set for September 14-15. GA GOAL will replace GRACE Scholars.

We have a contract with Partners in Mission for this school year where they will hold four workshops throughout the year to help our schools with admission/enrollment, advancement, marketing, etc. Our first workshop will be on September 17th.

Lastly, Tony mentioned he has been working with Catholic Metro Sports (CMS) on their mission and by-laws to ensure Catholic identity in the organization.

Patty gave a breakdown of the agenda for the All-Council In-Service on Saturday, September 28, 2024. A discussion was had on enrollment issues and various marketing strategies including empowering our students to sell our product and pulpit announcements. Families and students in our schools are the best advocates for our product.

The Georgia Promise scholarship will be offered to students in failing schools beginning next school year.

- **Superintendent's Report**

Patty went over this year's goals set forth at the last principals' meeting which are as follows:

1. Integrating our Catholic faith in all aspects of learning in our classrooms.
2. Striving for high academic standards and continuous improvements in student performance.
3. Implementing innovative strategies, such as Measuring What Matters.
4. Empowering students to grow in leadership roles as student ambassadors.
5. Focus on social and emotional health of students, families, faculty & staff. (stress management)
6. Educating students on different cultures to gain their respect for each other.

Patty asked everyone to sign their confidentiality statement before leaving the meeting. She asked them to indicate their address and best phone number on the form for our records. In addition, Patty asked council members to review the School Council Visit Assessment form to see if it is still meeting our needs. Pam Tennell will be the new scheduler for school visits. Brian Hershberger asked those who have visited schools to look over the form and let him know of any suggestions/changes. We are still collecting dates and times of school council meetings. Once all received, we will forward to Pam.

- **Committee Reports**

Brian said he sent out an email asking what committees ASAC members would like to serve on. We have a good number on the marketing committee. Brian mentioned that committees can get outside help to form sub-committees to serve on their committee. If you do this, we just ask that you advise Patty of their names and what committee they will be on.

Patty Childs indicated that the principals are asking for an AI policy. Patrick Lowry, chair of the policy committee, said he will start the research on this project. A discussion followed. Patty thanked Patrick for helping us with this important policy.

Brian presented a recommendation to add another member to this council. His name is Brent Herrin and he is a BT parent and would be a great addition to the Policy Committee. Kevin Murray asked for a motion to approve Brent Herrin to the Archdiocesan Schools' Advisory Council. The motion was given and all approved. Brent's name will now be given to Archbishop for his approval. This will bring us to 12 total members, which is within the number recommended in our by-laws.

Brian said that he and Kevin will assist with the New Council Member Training with Kevin covering Saturday, August 24th and Brian will cover Wednesday, August 28th. Brian asked if there were any other items to bring up for discussion.

Kevin asked Patty to give more details about the Promise Scholarship. Patty said it begins with school year 2025-2026. It will apply only to students in failing schools. The failing schools list does not come out until June of the school year that just ended. Because of the late reporting on the failing schools, this will mostly benefit our Catholic schools with lots of openings, but students would still need to go through the screening process to see where they are academically. The amount we would receive in funds for each student being admitted to our school would be \$6,500.00. The family would still be eligible for financial assistance if qualified. However, they would not be eligible for GA GOAL. A discussion followed.

Brian then asked for a motion to adjourn.

- **Adjournment and Next Meeting Date Proposed: Tuesday, November 5, 2024**

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wheeler
Schools Program Specialist