

ASCENSION SCHOOL BOARD
November 10, 2008 Minutes

DATES TO REMEMBER:

11/15/08 Auction
11/22/08 Staff Meeting with PK parents at 9:05 AM
1/22/09 ALMS meeting @ 7:30 PM in the Pine Room
1/25/09 Open House
2/18/09 Open Registration

PRESENT: Father Larry McNally, Mary Jo Burns, Chair Jill Pollard (08), Patti Farlee (06), Craig Shannon (06), Terry Thiese (06), Kurt Mackey (07), Michele Joubert (07), Pat Hess (08), Wendy Schmiedeler (08)

LAST MONTH'S MINUTES: Approved as amended by noting that the Special Needs issue affects both Oak Park and other students.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment.

PASTOR'S REPORT: The Ascension Parish annual Thanksgiving Day Mass will be held at 9:30 AM on Thanksgiving Day morning. The Christmas Angel program will begin this weekend. Father Larry is requesting that the Youth Ministry be resurrected and reenergized, making use of our Parish parents and teens. The Sports Advisory Committee is formed and will begin meeting.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: Parent/teacher conferences went well. Home and School is organizing the Buddy lunches. Mrs. Burns requests that all attend the school Auction. See also Long Range Planning and Old Business below.

DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Terry and Jill reported with regard to their meeting with Lynn. Our funding priorities currently include an icemaker for the gym. The compressor in the cooler is going south. On the second floor, it is requested that the lockers be removed from the classrooms. These may be Christmas or summer projects. Efforts continue to fully account for all account balances, including our Best Use Fund. There was discussion of forming a "Thank You" Committee, which would send personalized thank you notes to those who donate to the school. It is thought that this committee would not be a School Board committee. It is hoped that we will obtain school management software prior to the Open House for use in our preparation for the 2009 – 2010 school year. This year's Fund a Need is Technology. Consultation with the Archdiocese will be undertaken for recommendations of the software. Michele Joubert will help.

FINANCE: The school will enjoy a decrease in utility payments this year, due to an overpayment last year. Our current tuition receipts are ahead of budget. Given the current state of the economy, our Parish Capital Campaign solicitations have been

suspended. Our Scholarship Fund is exhausted. St. Vincent DePaul has been stretched thin. However, Sunday collections are not down.

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE: The committee is continuing its meetings with the Wellness Committee. The Archdiocese guidelines with regard to nutrition are being reviewed.

Technology: The Board continues to search for an individual to head our Technology Committee. Ed Yala will be consulted with regard to the necessary attributes of technology chair.

Math & Science: The differentiated learning math program in the junior high is going well. Both groups of students are grading higher than expected.

LONG RANGE PLANNING: Ms. Burns requests that the Board assist with long-range planning for our centennial. She believes that we should begin by recruiting facilitators. The Board will be requested to assist with this long-range planning group. After assembling the long-range team, a kickoff will be planned. She has provided the Carmel High School template as a schedule to be used in our planning. Our goal is to be ready with an answer if someone approaches our school with an open ended offer to assist the school. Further, the long-range plan should prepare for possible school closings in the surrounding schools. The seven Catholic schools in our area are meeting on a monthly basis in an effort to increase enrollment at all schools.

Maintenance: The East Avenue fence project is currently on hold. Corrections have been made in the extended Day stairway to ensure that the stairway posts are safe for toddler traffic.

Enrollment: Although the enrollment committee was dissolved, thought should be given to whether or not this committee should assist in registration and Open House in 2009.

PARISH OUTREACH:

Home and School: Buddy lunches are being planned for the Ascension school students.

ALMS: ALMS will meet on January 22, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Pine Room.

Extended Day: Extended Day receipts are down. Historically, Extended Day has been a moneymaker. Our accounting practices will be investigated to determine if the Extended Day numbers are accurate.

Community Space: The community space projects are being put on hold

until the parish debt has been retired.

OLD BUSINESS: Pat Hess reported on District 97's refusal to fund out Special Needs Student. District 97's mandatory obligation extends to all children who attend the school in District 97. This includes all students at Ascension, regardless of their city of origin. Currently, 10 students require special needs assistance, and District 97 is only funding 4. 6 of our students are being left behind. (It should be noted that not every parent would take advantage of the special education option, it should be offered.) Transportation is not provided to get to students from Ascension to District 97. Student parents are doing the driving. Kurt Mackey, Pat Hess and Mrs. Pesce will study this issue further.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Burns will meet with the school staff to begin planning of a long-range plan for the Centennial. One that meeting is held, Ms. Burns will report to the board as to what assistance she needs with regard to a new long-range plan.

Adjourned at 9:42 PM

Submitted by Mark Szaflarski

Next meeting 12/8/08 at 7 PM in the Parish Center

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

November 2008

We're very excited about the auction, hope to see you and your friends there. Bringing people from outside our immediate community is a great way to contribute to the success of the evening. We're doing a lot of new things and, overall, things are going very well. Jill can tell you a lot more if you have the time! If you can volunteer, contact Julie Duff. Raffle tickets will not be available for sale at the auction so get those turned in by Friday.

The alumni appeal is at the printer. This is year two of The Centennial Fund, gathering resources for the school centennial in 2012. The Ambassadors are launching The Centennial Project, a student initiative to engage the alumni. The project is designed to raise consciousness in our current population, invite the alumni into greater involvement, and gather information (facts and stories) for the centennial. Information about the project is included in the mailing.

Ms. Burns and I had a very productive meeting with George Rattin from Carmel Catholic about the strategic plan process that Carmel used to great effect last year. She will doubtless tell you more in her report. I'm excited about this project; it, too, is mentioned in the alumni mailing. (Just a little plug from my end, I'd like to call the plan The Centennial Plan, at least for marketing purposes; nice symmetry, The Fund, The Project and The Plan.) The January newsletter will feature the project and the plan.

The faculty development committee is preparing three surveys to gather information about ways we can, from their particular perspective, advance the school. The board development committee met and began the conversation about funding priorities. I believe that Jill or Terry will report.

We've started the process of updating marketing materials for the registration season, and have set dates for Early Childhood Open Houses and shadow days for older children. I'd be happy to be part of a discussion laying down a clear timeline for the entire registration process with greater Board representation from start to finish. Please let me know if this will be a new subcommittee or an ad hoc group but, again, I'd love to be a part of it so that I can help communicate the process to interested families.

Parish Staff is working on the establishment of goals for us as a group; we will then each have department goals that synchronize with the staff goals. My primary personal office goal is the interface between advancement software and parish office accounting system. I'm hopeful that Jane Houle will be available to help with this process soon after the auction; if she is, I hope we'll have a detailed financial report for your December meeting.

More consciousness raising about our illustrious alumni: Kevin O'Mara ('72) was recently awarded a Fulbright; Dan Haley ('69) and Ken Trainor ('66) were recently

honored for the excellence of their newspaper, The Wednesday Journal; and Paul Broucek (also '66) was added to the OPRF Wall of Fame for his work overseeing the music production of The Return of the King.

Lynn Fredrick