

Ascension School Board Minutes
February 12, 2007

In Attendance: Mary Jo Burns, Father Larry McNally, Neil Heskin, Tom Carraher, Peg Mackie, Ted Anderson, Vic Vanek, Patti Farlee, Craig Shannon, Liz Skalitzky, Terry Thiese

Dates to Remember:

- 1) School Board Elections: March 3-4
- 2) Parish Mission: March 12-15
- 3) Centennial Dinner Dance: April 21

Action Items Completed:

- 1) School Board support of Lisa Reed in her efforts around the school playground project. Patti Farlee will act as liaison to the board.
- 2) School Board presence at the Parish Finance meeting to present our budget and make final decision on 2007-08 tuition rates for publishing in early March.
- 3) Continued recruitment of potential board members and active participation by the board in the election process.

MINUTES:

Public Comment:

Lisa Reed (a school parent) spoke to the school board regarding her interest in forming a task force to focus on what would be required to get a playground installed in the space being vacated by the rectory. As discussed at the recent Ascension Town Hall meeting, the current plans only include grass for this space. The board encouraged Lisa to move forward with forming a task force on this subject. Patti Farlee volunteered to act as a School Board liaison to Lisa as she moves forward with this project.

Maintenance Committee Report: (Liz Skalitzky):

Liz reported that the maintenance folks are still working to solve the heating problem in the Grade 3 classroom.

We are expecting a bid early this week for the Cornice Replacement and it will be discussed further at the next Maintenance Meeting (scheduled for 2/14). This will be the second bid we've received for this project.

There is interest from Home & School to erect a Notice Board (in the form of a glass case) outside the school near the pre-school doors. Liz will discuss this possibility with the Maintenance Committee.

Liz passed on feedback from teachers to Ms. Burns in regards to the nightly cleaning crew.

Principal's Report:

Board of Specified Jurisdiction: Ms Burns provided an overview of a new policy the archdiocese has regarding 'specified jurisdiction' of a school board. This model for school boards is going to be enforced in the future for parishes that are supported by the archdiocese. Ascension does not fit into this category, but we should consider where we stand on this policy and how it impacts Ascension specifically.

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Board Elections: We are still seeking candidates for the upcoming election on March 3 and 4. We are encouraging all future, past and current school parents as well as all other parishioners to consider running. The current board will work the elections.

Budget: We continue to work through the details of our annual budget and tuition rates for the next school year. Ted Anderson provided more details and led a discussion during this board meeting in order to prepare for the board's presentation at the upcoming Parish Finance meeting.

Development Guidelines: Ms. Burns is looking for a board member to help in the creation of policies for the Staff Development Fund and Fund A Need Program. Patti Farlee volunteered her time for this effort.

Thanks: Thanks to all who helped make the Open House a success. We don't yet have final numbers on registration – Ms. Burns will provide these at the March meeting, after new family registration has been completed.

Pastor's Report:

Parish Mission: Scheduled for March 12-15.

Reconciliation Services: Father McNally will be doing Reconciliation Services with the 5-8 graders during Lent.

Centennial Update: Invites for the April 21 Dinner Dance will be mailed on March 1. All are encouraged to attend.

Town Hall Meeting: Weather was a factor in the low attendance for the Town Hall meeting this past week. This meeting included a presentation by Tom Brooker on Parish finances. Father McNally will look for other venues in which this can be presented to parishioners, with the goal of providing a better understanding and background on where our investments have been made in the past, where we currently stand financially, and to seek input on our future plans.

Cornice Project: As Liz mentioned, this project is going forward and we are looking at final bids.

Chair Person's Report: (Peg Mackie)

Issues with teachers/school policies: Discussion was held around various issues and concerns that have been brought to the attention of school board members. This discussion provided another reminder of the importance for parents with concerns for speak directly to the teacher they have an issue with. If the concern is around a general school policy, parents are strongly encouraged to speak directly with the principal and/or attend a school board meeting so that the issue can be accurately addressed.

Finance Committee Report: (Ted Anderson)

Financial Planning Update: The board, led by Ted Anderson and working closely with Neil Heskin, has produced a budget for the coming year. This budget exercise also included a recommended % increase in tuition. This budget will be presented at the Parish Finance Meeting on February 13. Tuition will be published to current and new families in the early March time period.

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Technology Committee Report: (Terry Thiese)

Terry provided highlights from the Technology Committee meeting held on February 8:

SAM (Skills Assessment Manager) Computer Training & Assessment: This program is up and running and appears to be getting a positive response from students. There is interest from the parish staff on getting this training as well.

Ascension 2007-2009 Technology Plan: Committees were formed to move forward the development of all sections of the technology plan.

Computer Curriculum: Ed Yala has re-designed the existing technology curriculum in a Scope & Sequence format for grades 1 through 8 and has asked the committee for feedback via email by next meeting.

Computer Lab Update: There are no current issues to report. Network stability has been good, but there is concern around the lack of spare/ replacement computers available to swap in for both the lab and the school staff. We need to address this issue and as part of this need to complete the inventory of all technology in the school.

Technical Support for the Parish Center: Neil Heskin is looking to create a more integrated technical environment for the parish staff. The committee agreed to support him in any way possible and will continue to focus on this topic going forward.

Home & School Association - Liaison Report : (Peg Mackie)

Thanks! A big thank you to the H&S folks who helped make Catholic Schools Week a success.

Next School Board Meeting scheduled for March 5 at 7pm in the Convent.