

ASCENSION SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES: 2/11/08

IN ATTENDANCE: Father Larry McNally, Mary Jo Burns, Terry Thiese, Liz Skalitsky, Jason Allington, Dan Rodde, Tom Carraher, Craig Shannon, Patti Farley, Mark Szaflarski, Peg Mackie

DATES TO REMEMBER:

February 24	9 AM Joint Choir with St. Catherine-St. Lucy
March 1 & 2	School Bard Elections
March 10	School Board Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT: Kurt Mackey reported on the Math and Science Committee. That Committee will work with Ms. Burns and the staff regarding volunteers to assist the teachers and preparation of summer packets for students.

MINUTES: Last month's minutes were approved.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Father Larry continues his work with the students, teaching 1st grade this week. He reported that the Archdiocese declined to target Ascension parish for the debt reduction program.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: See attached.

DEVELOPMENT REPORT: See attached

COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS:

The Amended Tuition Policy 2000-12-18 and Anti-Bullying Policy (2008-01-14) are attached.

Academic Committee: Will meet to investigate differentiated learning.

Finance: The tuition letter was prepared and went out to parents. Next year's tuition rates need to be finalized.

Technology: Ed Yala has officially resigned and a new leader is needed.

Development Liaison: Will meet to prioritize needs.

Athletics: The Handbook will be reviewed and defibulator teaching will be undertaken.

Commissions: Over 103 people attended the last Commissions meeting.

Endowment: No report.

Market Day: Moving Market Day out of the gym will be investigated. Perhaps the Pine Room would work. Market Day is receiving about 50 orders per month.

Submitted by Mark Szaflarski
Next meeting March 10, 2007

Ascension School Anti-Bullying Policy Policy No. 2008-01-14

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or psychological attacks intended to hurt a person, cause them stress or lower their self-esteem. In a school, bullying can prevent students from learning, being comfortable and feeling safe in the environment where they spend their day. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, cyber bullying, (using electronics to bully) harassment, social isolation, threats, inappropriate physical contact, lack of respect for property of others, teasing, spreading rumors or gossip and in some cases, violence.

Policy – Anti-Bullying:

The Ascension School Community recognizes that bullying is a serious form of violence that can negatively affect a student for life. Bullying creates an environment of harassment, intimidation and abuse.

Efforts to stop bullying at Ascension, (including all school sponsored activities), must involve the entire school community. The following statements define Ascension School's Policy:

1. Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated by anyone regardless of age, gender or position.
2. Teachers will incorporate anti-bullying instruction in the existing curriculum.
3. Acts of bullying will not be ignored. Adults will take the lead in confronting bullying behavior and will speak up when they see bullying occur. Parents will speak to their children about the anti-bullying policy.
4. Because children cannot handle acts of bullying on their own, they need the support of adults, and practices in place for responding to bullying in a consistent manner.
 - A. Students should tell an adult (School staff, the Pastor, Parish staff or parents), if they experience bullying.
 - B. The child being bullied will have a say in how he/she would like the situation to be handled. Examples include speaking to the person alone or in the presence of an adult. The student could work with the administration or the classroom teacher and parents to resolve the situation. In severe instances the police could be called.
 - C. Ascension School will follow the school discipline code for consequences in cases of bullying.
5. The child who is bullying will identify his/her plan to rectify his/her behavior, and comply with any consequences.
6. Bystanders are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying they witness.
7. Bullying reports are serious. There will be consequences for making false reports.

Policy – Anti-Bullying

Ascension School
COLLECTION AND DELINQUENCIES: TUITION AND FEES
Policy No. 2000-12-18

- 1) Each year the School Board approves a financial schedule of tuition, fees and a mandatory fund-raising obligation. The Fee Schedule is published.
- 2) The registration process requires the guardian to sign two copies of the tuition contract. When a family signs a tuition contract, they make a commitment to fulfill their obligations to Ascension School. One copy of the contract will be retained by the school office. The second copy is to be retained by the parent or guardian. A copy of this policy shall be included with the tuition contract. (A copy of the tuition contract will be kept with this policy in the Board's policy book.)
- 3) Families who are more than 30 days in arrears in payment of tuition, fees, and/or mandatory fund raising obligation will not be allowed to pre-register for the following year during the first round of in-school registration. (A copy of this letter shall be kept with this policy in the Board's policy book.)
- 4) Tuition is billed in 11 monthly installments beginning the 1st business day of July. Invoices will be sent home with the oldest or only child on the 1st of the month (or the 1st business day following that date), when school is in session. Summer invoices will be mailed directly to homes. Payment of tuition and/or fees is due on the 15th or the first business day following the 15th, of the month in which it was billed.
- 5) July and August payments must be made before the first day of school. If July and August payments are not current, the school will notify the family by registered mail sent on August 16th that their registration has been cancelled. At that time a late registration fee will be charged to reinstate the child(ren), if space is available. Student(s) will not start the school year unless all balances are current or a waiver has been approved in writing.
- 6) A late charge will be applied when tuition and/or fees are 30 days or more in arrears. The amount of the late charge will be set forth each year in the financial schedule. The late fee will be calculated on the 16th of the month, (or the 1st business day following that date), and will appear on the invoice issued on the 1st of the next month (or the 1st business day following that date).
- 7) All checks returned for any reason will be assessed a returned check charge. The amount of the returned check charge will be set forth in the financial schedule, or the actual cost, whichever is greater.

- 8) Families with a balance more than 60 days past due (that is, two months behind in tuition payments), will be contacted by the Principal and sent a letter via registered mail requesting immediate payment of the past due amount. This letter will state the amount owed and will stipulate that payment in the form of cash or a certified check is expected within 15 days from the date of the letter. (If the due date is a weekend or school holiday, the payment is due on the 1st school day thereafter). If payment in full is not possible, the parent must meet personally with the principal and submit a written payment plan for approval. If payment is not received or a payment plan approved, students will be excluded from school at the end of the current quarter. (A copy of the letter will be kept with this policy in the Board's policy book.)
- 9) Families who have an open balance of past due tuition, fees, and/or mandatory fund-raising commitment as of June 15th will have their child(ren) s name(s) removed from the class list(s) for the following school year. Any pre-registration will be invalid. When the past due amounts are paid in full by cash or certified check, the family will need to re-register at the late registration fee. (A letter to this effect will be sent registered mail to families with outstanding balances on June 15th and a copy of the letter kept with the policy in the Board's policy book.)
- 10) In order for a family to be reinstated in the school, payment in full by cash or certified check for all delinquencies is required. Written payment plans may be approved by the Principal and the Parish Business Manager, however, failure to comply with the agreed upon plan will result in immediate termination of Ascension School's services. (A copy of this written agreement is to be kept with the policy in the Board's policy book.)
- 11) All sports fees must be paid prior to registering for a new sport season.
- 12) Families will receive a discount for pre-paid tuition as set forth each year in the financial schedule.
- 13) Mandatory fund-raising requirements are set forth in the financial schedule each year. One-half of the requirement will be due at the each of the dates set forth in the schedule. The policy for past due accounts will apply as of the date these amounts are billed.
- 14) All requests for waiver of tuition must be made in accordance with the Waiver Policy No. 01-0212.

Revised 12/09/02

Revised 1-14-08 (Removed Materials Fee)

Ascension School Board Meeting
February 11, 2008
Principal's Report

Open Registration

Open registration is scheduled for Tuesday, February 12, beginning at 6:30 PM in the Pine Room. Because Ascension does not have a "first-come, first served" enrollment policy, interested families have been submitting registration materials through January and February. Three Board members, the Administrative Team and the office staff will be present to help with registration. A brief orientation for Board members who will help will be held at the end of this meeting.

Open House/ Blue Ribbon/Catholic Schools Week

Thanks to School Board members, Ascension Ambassadors, faculty and staff and Home and School members who served at Open House. Home and School graciously provided a special lunch for the school staff on Monday, and hosted Kristin Cohn, United States Department of Education Regional Secretary. State senator LaShawn Ford and assistant superintendent Sr. Frances Fitzpatrick attended the event, too. Our essayists did a wonderfully, as did the orchestra and choristers. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped with Home and School's Buddy Bowling. Mrs. Creed and Mrs. Coffman coordinated music. Many thanks to Lynn Fredrick and all for their energy.

Staffing

Ms. Courtney McGinnis is the new science teacher. Ms. McGinnis has her BA and teacher certification, with an endorsement in science, from Illinois State University. Ascension is very grateful to Stacy Hess who did wonderfully, stepping into the science position for two weeks in January.

Goals

The School continued to work on the anti-bullying goal for 2007-2008. Following the Board's acceptance of the policy, faculty members review results of a bullying survey of students in grades 3-8 that had been conducted in December. Generally, students reported few incidents of bullying. Results will be available to the Board. The School will continue to work on this goal as part of values education, with the objective of helping to prevent violence.

High School Testing/etc.

Catholic High Schools send out letters of acceptance this week, and many schools will share testing information with Ascension after that time. Ascension cooperated with OPRF in administering the Explore Test, and Mr. Zimbler and the administrative team are analyzing the results.

Tuition Collection Policies

Mary Fitch, the new financial secretary, provided current tuition payment reports that show there are several families who are not eligible to register. Memos were sent out Friday asking for responses. The Board should affirm Ascension's tuition policy, and recommend actions concerning registration.

School Mission/Academic Program Change

Ascension School has had an intervention/support program for students for many years. Currently, Mr. Zimbler works with students in Grades 1-6 five afternoons as District 97's Title 1 teacher, and as a part-time employee of Ascension. Students receive service based on test scores and teacher recommendations. This is generally, a pull-out program with students leaving class and working on skills with Mr. Zimbler individually or in small groups. Testing and teacher observation indicate that some students are functioning above Grade level. The School is considering several approaches to best meet the needs of this population. What information does the School Board need in order to advise the administration?

School Board Candidates

There is currently one candidate who has offered her name in nomination. How can more candidates be recruited? How can Ascension learn the benefits of Boards of specified jurisdiction, the new model adopted in several Archdiocesan schools?

Legislative Action/Funding

Lisa Reed agreed to serve as the school's legislative action representative. Textbook funding will help purchase a new reading series. An administrative grant will pay for a special radio connection to the fire department.

Green Space

Fund a Need funds can be used to help pay costs of painting games on the new play space asphalt area. The planning committee met last month.

Maintenance

Servicemaster will visit and bid this week.

Report to the School Board
Lynn Fredrick
Director of Development
February 10, 2008

Many thanks to the pre-school parents and the Ambassadors who helped with five early childhood Open Houses in the past three weeks. We welcomed over two dozen prospective families in for a closer look at our program.

The faculty Development Committee designed a form to keep track of work required (paint, electrical work, repairs to furniture, etc.) in their classrooms. The committee distributed the form to all faculty and staff. We are now perusing the results and will recommend work to be done during the summer. Mary Jo and I will have suggestions for the March Board meeting. We have had several volunteers come forward to direct small projects and would like to get those projects on the calendar soon.

Some of the work will augment the Early Childhood electrical work which was completed in January. Best uses funds (allocated at late summer Board meeting) paid for new lighting fixtures, switches and ceiling fans in Kindergarten and PK4 and the hallway between the two rooms; and new outlets for use with window unit air conditioners. The units have been purchased (again, with best use funds) and are ready for delivery; Illinois Sash has been contacted regarding the installation of these units and one to replace the small unit in Mrs. Ganzel's classroom.

Fund-a-need brought in \$9,300 for "play dough." Of those funds, \$2,100 has been spent for wall mats for the west wall in the gym. The mats are here and will be installed, we hope, this week. We have also purchased floor mats for gymnastics or yoga for physical education classes for approximately \$1,300. Early childhood teachers are evaluating their "large muscle" play equipment and the space in which to store it. Some of the remaining money will be used to paint the courtyard asphalt for play.

We will do a joint solicitation for underwriting support for the Run-a-thon (April 25) and the golf outing (June 20) next week. Early in March we will mail invitations for Grandparents' Day (May 2) and for the Ascension Gold Brunch, the first, on Sunday, June 22. The brunch will be for all alumni who have celebrated the 50th anniversary of their graduation.