

ASCENSION SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES: 11/13/06

IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Jo Burns, Father Larry McNally, Lynn Fredrick
Chair Peg Mackie, Ted Anderson, Vic Vanek, Patti Farlee,
Craig Shannon, Liz Skalitzky, Terry Thiese, Tom
Carraher, Michaelle Van Linden, Mark Szaflarski

DATES TO REMEMBER:

12/3/06 Tea with Santa
12/5/06 Athletic Committee meeting
12/11/06 Next School Board Meeting
12/15/06 Church painting to be completed
12/22/06 Half day of school, then Christmas Break
4/21/07 Centennial Gala at the Doubletree Hotel

ACTION ITEMS COMPLETED:

1. Our most successful Auction ever raises over \$94,000.00.
2. Push to have District 97 fulfill its obligation to provide Special Education for Ascension children continues.
3. Science Room water running

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Donald Gimbel, President of Illinois Advocates of Educational Choice attended the meeting and encouraged the Ascension School Board to get to know our state legislators. Introducing our **State Senator Kimberly Lightford** and **Representatives La Shawn Ford and Karen Yarbrough** to the Ascension Community could help when various Non-Public School issues, such as funding for textbooks, transportation, and special education needs, are addressed in Springfield. He suggested that we coordinate a meeting with St. Bernadine's School to have the legislators meet with both school in January or February.

MINUTES:

Father Larry reported that the scaffolding will soon come down. We are a little behind with regard to the windows, but we are pushing forward with the floor. The goal is to demolish the Rectory this summer. A Rectory Estate Sale is planned. The Sports Committee will meet on December 5. School parents, as well as all parishioners are encouraged to fulfill their Providing for Tomorrow commitment.

Mary Jo Burns reported that our teachers and staff remain vigilant with regard to any bullying or teasing issues. The School's Discipline with a Purpose Guidelines are being used to deal with insulting instant messaging and teasing. Ascension is committed to a culture of respect.

Lynn Fredrick was congratulated on the continued success of our Auction. This year, over \$94,000.00 was raised at the Auction.

She encouraged the School Board to allocate \$10,000 of the auction proceeds to begin a school endowment through the Archdiocese. An Ascension School endowment would help with fund raising and sends the message to all that we are all stewards for the future of the school, not just the present. The endowment issue will be addressed again in conjunction with the school budget.

A trial period of the Market Basket, selling fruit and vegetables, similar to Market Days was approved. Discussion of the Market Basket proposal included discussion of how this proposal fits within Ascension's current fundraising policies. Currently, families may fulfill their fundraising obligations through Shopping Certificates, Market Days, and SchoolPop. These ongoing programs, together with two annual events – the Auction and the Runathon – make up the school fundraising activities. During this trial period, Market Basket will not qualify for family fund-raising requirements.

During **Chair Peg Mackie's** report, it was noted that our school lunch program must meet national nutritional standards. Whether our gym classes were requiring enough exercise was also discussed, as well as a request for more flexibility with regard to late payment for milk. Strategic planning and school demographics data is being collected.

Liz Skalitzky reports that our science room's water is now running, and the cabinets are installed. The school thanks **Peter Marotta** and **Martin Whittaker** for all their work in coordinating and performing this work.

Liz Skalitzky reports that **State Senator Harmon** is willing to assist with the District 97's failure to allocate funds and provide special education for several Ascension students. District 97's current position is that our school children who deserve special education assistance should be put on a waiting list, a position that ensures that the children will not get their needs addressed. Watch our local newspapers for more developments.

Ted Anderson continues to fine tune the school budget.

Terry Thiese reports that the Technology Committee will meet on November 16. Work on a year by year computer curriculum continues. Also, it was suggested by a parent that our computer curriculum be complemented with input for Ms. Flowers, our library science teacher.

OLD BUSINESS: **Ms. Burns** requests continued consideration of the following Policy Issues:

1. Develop a policy for allocating funds when a specific fundraising effort exceeds its budgeted net revenue.
2. Whether fund raising leaders should be exempt from fund raising obligations.
3. Whether shopping certificates must be paid for upon receipt.

4. A policy to address staff tuition discounts.
5. That the Board develops a policy to determine annual fundraising and development goals.

Next Board Meeting: December 11, 2006 at 7 PM in the Convent Dining Room.

Submitted by Mark Szaflarski