

**ASCENSION SCHOOL BOARD
SEPTEMBER 8, 2008 MINUTES**

Dates to remember

9/13/08 Food festival
9/18/08 Back to School Night
9/27/08 Genesis “Strengthening Catholic Schools” meeting
10/6/08 School Board Meeting

Present: Father Larry McNally, Mary Joe Burns, Lynn Fredrick, Chair Jill Pollard (08), Patti Farlee (06), Craig Shannon (06), Terry Thiese (06), Dan Rodde (07), Pat Hess (08), Wendy Schmiedeler (08)

Called to order by new Board Chair Jill Pollard, who taking over following the resignation of Jason Arlington.

No public comment.

Pastor’s Report:

Still awaiting paving of Van Buren. Food festival scheduled for 9/13 at 1 PM honoring Regina Kuehn.

School board is asked to assess Father Larry’s job to date by the Archdiocese. Father Larry is has been at Ascension for 5 ½ years. Terry will chose 10 families to independently assess Father Larry’s work as pastor.

Following the 9/27 Genesis meeting, the Board, will address the possible conversion to a “Board of Specified Jurisdiction’ contemplated by the Archdiocese.

Principal’s Report:

The next School Board meeting will include a view of the progress made in the Early Childhood area of the school.

Accepting credit cards to pay tuition is being investigated.

Staff discounts and tuition waivers were discussed. Approximately \$42,000 in tuition waivers and discounts are granted each year. These policies to ensure that the school retains qualified staff.

All volunteers, including the Board, will have to fill out an Archdiocese form to ensure that they pass criminal background checks, for the safety of the children.

The ad hoc enrollment committee is suspended at this time, as its work is done.

Development Report:

Barb Fitzgerald is a great help to Lynn as Lynn begins her work for Parish Development.

Sponsor a Student is now known as Teach the Children Solicitation.

Our Auction team has formed and is busy preparing for the November 15th date.

Using credit cards for shopping certificates is being investigated.

Our development money has increased since 2003. From 7/07 to 6/08, Ascension received over \$35,000 in first time gifts from alumni.

Both the school and the parish continue to seek a person to assist with technology issues, in a role similar to the role of Ed Yala in past years.

A new “Scholarship Policy Proposal” was offered and is attached to these minutes. The policy will be amended and voted on at the October meeting.

See attached Report for more details.

Academic Committee:

The Committee continues to discuss raising nutritional awareness as previously discussed in Public Comment.

Goals include ensuring that we are student centered, not just academically centered.

The 8th grade math class has been grouped into two sections, and an additional teacher has been added. It is anticipated that one group may move quicker through the curriculum than the other group. This Math grouping will be monitored and assessed as time goes on to determine the benefits to both groups.

Two new reading programs have been implemented at Ascension. PK 4 will introduce the “Happily Ever After” program with a grant from the Rowland Reading Foundation. Kindergarten through 4th grade will adopt the MacMillian-McGraw Hill’s Treasures Program.

Finance: Neil Heskin will attend the 10/8 Board meeting.

Long Rang Planning will meet to discuss technology issues. New shelving is up in the Extended Day Room and the Computer room. All school handrails have been inspected and tightened for safety.

Home and School: The School Directory out in October.

Commissions report will be given next month.

Old Business: Need to discern a new school board member before the October meeting.

New Business: Each Board member is encouraged to submit a School Board goal for the year.

Submitted by Mark Szaflarski

Next meeting 10/6/08 at 7 PM in the Parish Center

Report to the Board

Director of Institutional Advancement

September 9, 2008

We are very happy to have Barb Fitzgerald working with us in the office. Barb is knowledgeable, quick to learn and has a great work ethic. In only a few short weeks she has made a significant difference in what we can accomplish.

The Teach the Children solicitation is being prepared for mailing this week. We're currently working on the parish annual report; the school bi-annual giving report will be next; school newsletter, grandparents solicitation and the special solicitation for auction underwriting support, and the alumni appeal (year two of the five year Centennial Fund appeal) will round out the fall printed communications.

We're producing a parish communications calendar; working with Barbara Creed on the school website, with Dan on the parish site. Dan and I are also developing a e-communications model for monthly news for parishioners. The tool we are using also has a good survey component which we may use for the freshman survey we send to high school alumni at the end of the first quarter.

The auction team is moving forward with some changes to the auction process: an actual online auction component, e-marketing, e-invitations, a different model of leadership and a new auctioneer. We have new people in key roles and are optimistic about the success of the event.

We're gearing up for an aggressive shopping certificate initiative, working with a committee of the leaders of the program. We plan to accept credit cards for certificate purchases in a trial program beginning next month and are investigating a different vendor to that end—we need to negotiate a lower percentage fee and set-up a different sort of account. We have additional plans for ways to absorb the loss we incur from those fees. We have already secured a wireless data transmitter which will allow sales at different sites—back of church, Pine Room, parish office chapel, etc. We'll premier a frequent shopper program with special incentives this fall. We've begun some outreach to groups in the parish other than school families to encourage them to

participate in shopping certificates. If you are willing to make some phone calls to help explain the program to new customers, please let me know.

The ongoing project to keep track of the dollars and cents has stalled a bit due to serious illness in the family of our lead team member. It is still our goal to interface with the parish accounting system so that we know what we have, what we have spent and what we have left in any one fund on any one day. We continue to work on a policies and procedures manual for the advancement office.

This summer, we spent \$3,899 from Science and Technology gifts for six laptops for teachers; spent \$3,340 from Best Use funds for professional painting of five classrooms and approximately \$1,000 Best Use for paint and other materials. We have transferred \$5,000 from the Evelyn Collins Scholarship Fund to benefit a family chosen by Ms. Burns and Fr. McNally; the balance in the fund is \$15,000. We are awaiting the disbursement from the Reese Family Scholarship Fund; the disbursements are made semi-annually. Ms. Burns has targeted two families as recipients of the Reese scholarship.

We are building an Advancement Team with the responses to our “pie chart” report of the summer. This will be a working group, people who share a particular skill with us as needed. We’ll keep you posted as the team grows.

Lynn Fredrick
Director of Institutional Advancement
Ascension Parish
708-434-1558

TUITION PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD

2008-09-08.001

Ascension School shall accept outstanding tuition payments by credit card.

SCHOLARSHIP POLICY

2008-09-08-002

The School’s chief administrator with the Pastor and Director of Development will administer the Collins and Reese Family scholarships separately from the Parish Waiver/Scholarship program in collaboration with the families funding the scholarships

Submitted 9/8/08