

## **Saint Thomas the Apostle Board of Education Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board on Thursday, September 13, 2018**

The meeting was conducted from 6:00 pm until approximately 7:45 pm.

**Board Packets submitted to members on:** September 11, 2018.

Board E-mails leading into the September 13, 2018 meeting:

September 13, 2018: Exchange regarding candidacy of Veronica Perdue as additional Board Director and Curriculum Committee Chair.

### **Board Homework:**

None coming into the September 13, 2018 meeting.

### **CALENDAR ITEMS**

**Next Board Meeting:** Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 6 pm

Diocesan Board Summit at Cathedral Square, WEDNESDAY, November 7, 2018 at 6:30 pm

### **Meeting Agenda**

- I. **Opening Prayer-** Suzi Furtwangler
- II. **Pastor's Report-** Fr. Jim Chelich
  - a. Fr. Jim spoke about the resignation of the long term athletic director, Louis Bandlow, including how he encouraged Bandlow to reconsider resigning and his hopes that both Louis and the Bandlow family will remain involved in Hornet athletics. Fr. Jim offered a generalized briefing to the Board regarding some confidential events in connection with the resignation. Fr. Jim suggested that change in long term leadership however provided an opportunity to review and evaluate athletics policies and procedures.
  - b. Fr. Jim spoke supportively for a Dean of Students position within the administration to address the administrative vacancy created when Betsy Edgerton accepted a new job.
  - c. Fr. Jim wants to offer proactive parenting support. Therefore he is planning pamphlets and talks for parents on how to talk to children about sex and their bodies as well as bringing a Parenting with Love and Logic course to the parish.
  - d. Fr. Jim spoke on the Bishop's letter about the on sex abuse scandal which will be in the bulletin on Sunday. Fr. Jim planned to address the letter and offer a listening session to the church and school community, but also planned to keep the emphasis of the masses on Catechetical Sunday. He assured the Board of the strength of measure in place to protect the students including making sure that no child is ever alone with adults in a room particularly not with the blinds drawn unless the parent is also present. Fr. Jim indicated that if allegations of abuse/ improper conduct are immediately turned over to Child Protective Services (CPS) for investigation. CPS then handles the allegations in a confidential and professional manner.
- III. **Partner Organization Reports**
  - a. **Middle School Representative-** Ian Richthammer  
Ian indicated that morale among the middle school students was high and that the new drinking fountains were a big hit. He answered questions about MAP testing and homework expectations. He gave insight regarding the use of computer programs vis a vis testing on the computer and the perception that technology could simply/facilitate cheating on Math testing. He expressed a

liking for the new science books and Pearson materials. He expressed a middle school preference for lighter materials like packets over heavier textbooks like the 15 lb. literature book. He indicated that many of the students have a preference for cursive as faster, neater and helpful.

- b. **Parish Finance Council-** Nancy Kennedy  
The representative was excused due to conflicting obligations.
- c. **Education Foundation-** Kristi Irwin  
The representative was excused due to conflicting obligations.
- d. **Home and School-** Shawn Schuring  
The representative was excused due to conflicting obligations.
- e. **Boosters-** Kyle Wohlgemuth  
The representative was excused due to conflicting obligations.

**IV. Concerns of Visitors-** Matt Maczka

- a. No concerns were presented.

**V. Approval of Consent Agenda Items-** Matt Maczka

- a. Minutes from the April and the May meetings and the record of the June meeting were all unanimously approved.

**VI. Administrator's Report-** Suzi Furtwangler

- a. **Dean of Students Search-** One additional resume will be coming in. Suzi was pleased with the applicant pool to date and has prescreened the candidates. She is considering asking Jill Annable to participate in the interview process. A discussion clarified that the school was hiring for the Dean of Students position only. If and when an Assistant Principal is required it will be a separate and distinct hiring process with no assumption that the Dean of Students will automatically transition into the role of Assistant Principal or successor in training to the current Principal.

- b. **New curriculum materials.** The Journeys reading program is being well received. Key features appreciated by the faculty include: a writing notebook, integrated spelling and grammar lessons and tie-ins to the science curriculum too.

- c. Suzi noted that many of the school's partner organizations such as Boosters, Hone & School and the Education Foundation appear to have extra energy and direction this year.

**V. Board Deliberations-** Matt Maczka

- a. **Vote on Veronica Perdue's application to join the Board as a Director**

The Board voted unanimously to accept Veronica Perdue's application to join the Board and serve as Curriculum Committee Chair

**VI. Board Committee Reports and Action Items**

- a. **Marketing & Outreach Committee-** Judi Koepnick/ Betsy Edgerton

Judi and her Committee are in the process of putting together a "Grandfriends" day. The Committee hopes to build upon the event as a gateway to garnering support for the school in terms for additional volunteerism and donations. With respect to marketing, another director offered that a parent, Kevin Lehnert, who is a marketing ethics professor at GVSU is willing to share marketing tips and advice on marketing. One other long term outreach suggestion was made, which is to consider a transition to a more interactive website that would narrate and visually describe the website (i.e. describe images like photos and charts) to be more inclusive for those with visual and/or reading impairments.

- b. **Mission Effectiveness-** Jessica Poelma

The Committee largely relied upon its written report. In addition, positive response to the Rosary had been noted. Adoration's format will change this year from all day on Wednesdays to daily between 2:00 p.m. and 3:15 p.m.

c. **Curriculum Committee-** Veronica Perdue

As a newly elected Director, Veronica did not have a written report and offered a general review of broad goals for the Committee. The Board was informed that the school has doubled its investment in curriculum/textbooks for this year and will continue to push forward according to the schedule textbook/ curriculum review for review. One of the highlighted features is that the newer curriculum offerings frequently offer integration within their texts as seen in the reading Journeys curriculum. The new Mystery Science series was also praised for its alignment with other curricula and the Battle Creek Science kits as well as for being engaging.

d. **Finance Committee-** Elissa Williams

AS Elissa is transitioning to this position, Matt provided an update. The school budget was based on an enrollment of 343 students at approximately \$2600 per student, however, enrollment is currently only at 333 students due to some disenrollment following the tuition rate change letters. However, the budget also benefits from unanticipated savings from an administrative salary due to an unplanned departure.

e. **Policy & Planning Committee** - Christi Blum

The Committee largely relied upon its written report and gave a generalize overview of yearly goals and works in progress.

f. **Building & Grounds Committee** – Josh Szymanski

The committee chair was excused to attend other obligations. Josh has previously indicated that he will take the lead on partnering with the Parish Finance Counsel to develop a joint 0-5 year range Capital Plan. Josh also plans to take the lead on any future Holland Home discussions. Holland Home has indicated that the property will likely be vacated by Thanksgiving 2018. Some confidential discussion was offered concerning Holland Home’s prospects for the future of the property.

g. **Technology Committee-** Chuck Rushmore

Although not a part of the technology committee presentation, earlier discussion during the meeting talked briefly about use of technology among the Board members to share information collaboratively and included mention of Google Drive, Google Keep and Share Point as options to explore.

The Committee has met with Brian Cooper. Brian requested assistance with creating long term technology plans for the next five years- as he thought one was already in place. One of the goals of the plan would be anticipation of how to acquire more bang for the buck fir the current expenditures. Critical pieces of the plan and its implementation will include how technology use is embedded in many of the current curriculums (i.e. current technology is not a luxury- it is a necessary expense) and determination of the most efficient resource allocation in terms of leases/ ownership, etc. An acknowledged difficulty in developing a plan is that it will have to be for both the parish and the school. The Committee inquired as to whether a dedicated technology fee had been considered previously. The Committee is in search of additional members and hopes to be able to pull in other technology professionals and committed parents who are passionate about technology and its implementation to help with formation of the long term plan and other committee goals.

VII. **Closing Prayer-** Suzi Furtwangler

**ATTENDANCE:**

**15 Voting Directors:**

Chair: Matt Maczka, Present  
Vice Chair, Committee on Directors chair, Erin Schmuker: Excused  
Secretary, Policy & Planning Committee chair, Christi Blum: Present  
Mission Effectiveness Committee chair, Jessica Poelma: Excused  
Marketing & Outreach co-chair, Betsy Edgerton: Present  
Marketing & Outreach co-chair, Judi Koepnick: Present  
Curriculum Committee chair, Veronica Perdue: Present  
Finance and Fiscal Development Committee: Elissa Williams: Present  
Finance and Fiscal Development Committee, James Leonard: Present  
Finance and Fiscal Development Committee Member, Jason Balgavy: Present  
Building and Grounds Committee chair, Josh Szymanski: Excused  
Technology Committee chair, Chuck Rushmore: Present  
At Large Member, Derek Damstra: Excused  
At Large Member, Joanne Swan Jones: Present  
At Large Member, Stacy Slomski: Present

**Ex Officio Members and/or guests**

Principal, Suzi Furtwangler: Present                      Pastor, Fr. Jim Chelich: Present  
Middle School Student Rep., Ian R: Present              Parish Finance Council Chair, Nancy Kennedy: Excused  
Education Foundation Pres., Kristi Irwin: Excused Home & School President, Shawn Schuring: Excused  
Boosters President, Kyle Wohlgemuth: Excused Guests: Monica Morin  
Co-coordinator of Finance, Marie Miller: Absent      Dir. Religious Formation, Patti Reynolds: Absent

**Proposed Schedule of Topics for the 2018- 2019 Year**

August 23                      -Retreat with Annual Goal Setting  
September 13                 - General Meeting  
October 11                    - Proposed Amendment s to Bylaws  
November 7 (W)              Diocesan Board Summit at Cathedral Square  
November 8                    -  
December 13                  -  
January 10                    -Visit from the Superintendent of Catholic Schools?  
                                      -Setting the tuition rate for the 2019-2020 school year  
February 6/13 (W)?         - Initial 2019-2020 Budget Discussions  
  
March 14                      - 2019-2020 Budget Planning  
                                      -  
April 11                        - 2019-2020 Budget Finalization  
May 9                            - Prospective Directors Informational Session  
June 13                         -Elections and Year-end Wrap Up