

Cathedral School Advisory Council
February 21, 2017
Meeting Minutes

The February Meeting of the Cathedral School Advisory Council was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Chairperson Marcus Parker, in the library of Cathedral School.

In attendance were the following members of the School Advisory Council: Kacey Baxter, Casey Boggs, Shaunmarie Gutbezahl, Susie Holman, Tom Nebel, Christy Ragan, Melissa Rawlinson, Alan Sanchez, and Chairperson Marcus Parker. Also present were *ex officio* members St. Mary's Cathedral Pastor Monsignor Patrick Brennan and Principal Amy Biggs. Council member Helen Heller was absent.

I Opening Prayer

Monsignor Brennan led the Council in an opening prayer.

II Parent Comments

There were no parents present to give comments to the Council.

III Minutes

Having been circulated to the Council before the meeting, the reading of the minutes of the January 24, 2017, meeting was dispensed with. Corrections and additions were suggested to the minutes and they will be revised. A revised version of the minutes will be circulated to the Council for review and approval by e-mail.

IV Principal Report

Principal Amy Biggs reported on a variety of topics of note for the Council. She reported in detail about the results of reading and mathematics assessment of students in first through eighth grade. Based on the STAR assessments administered to the students in January, in mathematics, 94 percent of Cathedral students are meeting or exceeding grade level standard. Of the 94 percent, 68 percent are in the top quartile, i.e., exceeding grade level standard. Only 12 students are below grade level and 10 students are progressing to meet standard. In grades five and eight, all students tested as meeting or exceeding grade level standard. Principal Mrs. Biggs attributed the excellent results to a combination of (1) excellent teaching by the Cathedral School faculty; (2) an aligned curriculum with scope and sequence that builds on itself; and (3) the addition of a new math program in grades Kindergarten through sixth, as well as purchase of new mathematics text books in Middle School.

In first through eighth grade reading, 85 percent of students are meeting or exceeding grade level standard and 54 percent tested in the top quartile. While 29 students are currently below grade level, 22 of these students are progressing to the standard. Mrs. Biggs credited these reading results with (1) intention instruction by the faculty; (2) a curriculum that teaches to a standard; and (3) thoughtful communication and careful alignment of curriculum by the faculty.

Mrs. Biggs also reported on the progress and use of the Volgistics volunteer data base. At the half-way point in the year, 18 families have fulfilled their commitments. A discussion was held

with the Council with specific input from Parents' Association President Christy Ragan (sharing comments from the Parents' Association meeting) about the effectiveness of Volgistics. A variety of comments and suggestions led to a conclusion that the use of Volgistics merits further exploration and will be placed on the agenda for more discussion at a future Council meeting.

V Parents' Association Report

Parents' Association President Mrs. Ragan gave a report on behalf of the Parents' Association. The Parents' Association report good turnout for its meeting and strong communication with all within the school community. The Parents' Association was pleased with the revisions to registration forms adding an inquiry of volunteer time at the parish and the school. The Parents' Association is sponsoring a screening of *Screenagers* for parents the evening of Thursday, March 16 and for the Middle School students on Friday, March 17. Parents from St. John Fisher have been invited as well. The response has been favorable and strong with over 100 attendees already responding they are attending.

VI Mary Lang Award

Discussion of nominees for the Mary Lang award was held in Executive Session. After a secret ballot, Chairperson Mr. Parker announced that Dee Kurilo will be awarded the Mary Lang award at this year's Cathedral School Auction.

VII Committee Reports

Marketing & Advertising

Committee Chairperson Shaunmarie Gutbezahl reported the Marketing & Advertising Committee continues to work to increase enrollment and raise interest in potential families. A variety of strategies are being employed with a specific focus on filling the youngest grades and reaching out to public school parents who may be interested in transferring students.

Communications

Committee Chairperson Melissa Rawlinson reported the committee continues to work closely with Principal Mrs. Biggs along with the chairpersons of other committees to draft and review any communications coming from the school to ensure a consistency of message.

Finance

Committee Chairperson Mr. Parker reported on the school's current financial status. Because of some favorable changes in marketable securities, the budget is in a better place than anticipated; other expenses are on track. The snow days (and make up days) negatively impacted the budget with additional expenses for classified staff.

The 2017-2018 School Budget was presented to the St. Mary's Cathedral Parish Administrative Council and approved in the form that was presented to this Council at the January meeting.

The Finance Committee will present in May a summary forecast for the next four to five school years to determine long-term trends in expenses so that some long-term plans for tuition rates and fundraising goals can be suggested.

VIII Development Report

Committee Chairperson Susie Holman reported on the committee's work to assess the fundraising events of the school. The committee is looking in detail at the amount of time spent planning, the cost of carrying out, and the amount raised at different events. The committee wants to ensure events raise money for the school in a manner that is repeatable, takes advantage of the opportunity to build community, and honors the traditions of the school (while keeping it relevant to the current parent population). A discussion was held with members of the Council about the aspects of the annual auction they value and enjoy. The committee will continue to work with Principal Mrs. Biggs to look at events for next school year.

IX Future Business

Bylaws Revision Chairperson Mrs. Rawlinson informed the council that the Bylaws Revision Committee (Mrs. Rawlinson, Mrs. Holman, and Casey Boggs) will meet in the next month and have a proposal for new By-Laws at the March meeting.

Chairperson Mr. Parker asked Council members to send to him any proposed agenda items to him before the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Mr. Parker at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Melissa Rawlinson

Acting Secretary