

**DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BOARD**

Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Board to establish policy for the local Catholic school community that ensures gospel-based formation and learning for all students.

Catholic Schools Board Goals

1. Promote the Catholic identity/character of the schools.
2. Build and strengthen relationships with pastors, administrators, and local boards of education/school boards.
3. Advocate for strong and viable Catholic schools through marketing, recruitment, and connection with policy makers.
4. Promote diversity, in its many forms, among Catholic Schools Board membership, its committees, and the schools' employees.
5. Support student recruitment and enrollment efforts among the Immigrant, refugee, and minority populations.
6. Continue to support further investigation around school finance to assist the various aspects of school finance.

DATE: January 22, 2018
PLACE: St. Anthony School
PRAYER: Dr. Tracy Bonday

MINUTES

I. OPENING ACTIVITIES

A. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:07pm.

B. Roll Call:

- Members Present: Beth Schulte, Deacon Chan, Deann Cook, Leslie Wurster, Gloria Castellano, Andrea Cook, Fr. Kautzky
- Schools Office Members Present: Dr. Tracy Bonday, Denise Mulcahy
- Guests: Dr. Joe Cordaro, Tom Chapman, Mary Porter

C. Prayer: Dr. Bonday led prayer

D. Call for Additional Agenda Items: No additional agenda items were mentioned

E. Approval of the Agenda: Deann Cook made a motion to approve the agenda. Beth Schulte seconded the motion. The motion carried.

F. Approval of November Meeting Minutes: Leslie Wurster made a motion to approve the minutes from November. Beth Schulte seconded the motion. Motion carried.

II. OPEN FORUM

There were no open forum issues.

A. Dr. Joe Cordaro – Principal, St. Anthony School

- The school is celebrating the 105th anniversary. There is a deep tradition in the parish and school. For Joe, this is his 30th anniversary at St. Anthony. He will be retiring at the end of the year.
- The Spanish Immersion program begins in kindergarten and moves through 5th grade. By this time, students are fluent in two languages. In middle school they participate in a Spanish Book Club and read books by Spanish authors.
- There are 360 students, 50% minority from 22 zip codes and 14 school districts.
- Dr. Cordaro appreciates the board moving around to the different schools, seeing the inside of the schools, and hearing from the principals.
- **Question:** What are your class sizes in Spanish Immersion in comparison to English? Answer: Spanish Immersion averages about 17 per class and English averages about 24. It is very difficult for students to enter the Spanish Immersion program if they don't start in kindergarten, given the nature of the program.
- **Question:** Are families coming here seeking Spanish Immersion? Answer: Yes, that is why the school draws from so many districts and zip codes.

B. Tom Chapman – Director, Iowa Catholic Conference

- Last legislative session some big things happened – collective bargaining, gun ownership, and voter ID
- This year the School Choice movement has grown to include charter school advocates.
- With federal tax reform there is a change to the 529 Savings for College which was made available for parents who pay for private school tuition. No state benefit yet.
- Governor Reynolds said she would work to allow some kind of benefit, which seems to be a school choice item.
- There is continued work on ESA (Education Savings Accounts) and also work to increase the tax credit for CTO. The issue with this will be the state budget.
- At this time the state is offering \$400 million in tax credits and STO/CTO get \$12 million. Students receiving CTO monies save the state \$12 million; however, this will not be what you hear. Instead they will talk about how the school choice effort take money from public schools.
- Possibility ESAs will begin in kindergarten and for new students and move up from there.
- The Catholic schools have a good story to tell. There is a good deal of diversity and exemplary academics and faith education. We need to tell the story to more people.
- What to do right now:
 - Talk to your legislator about school choice
 - Invite legislators to your school or have a house party and ask them to speak
 - Educational Opportunities PAC – money goes to legislators from either party who support school choice
 - Voter Voice app can be downloaded to your phone
- There will be a lot of negative talk on social media in terms of school choice. Share positive information, but face-to-face sharing is the best. There has always been a positive relationship with public schools and we need to maintain that.

C. Mary Porter – Board Chair at St. Anthony School

- The board at St. Anthony is in the process of reviewing policies
- More immersion programs are going to open up in Des Moines, so the board is looking at how to continue what has been started and how to modify for a whole school that has been a part of a Spanish Immersion program.
- **Question:** How do you market? Answer: Primarily by word of mouth. They also partner with local employees for tuition and other assistance.

III. ACTION ITEMS

A. Board Policies

In the past there has been a committee for review of board policies, but that committee has not operated in the past few years. It seems a couple of years ago, the policies were all reviewed at the same time. Since this is not best practice, we will begin a practice of alternating the policy review. It will take time as some policies will need two readings.

- Each board member is asked to take a couple of policies from the 200 and 300 sections.
- Members will read through the policy for issues, corrections, or questions.
- In March, the first reading for the policies for adoption will be held.

IV. REPORTS

A. Superintendent

- CTO and the Schools Office shared the cost of printing for marketing material. Each school was given 20-25 to use with prospective parents.
- CTO allocation to Schools Office of \$6700 for additional marketing
- Need for CTO has risen but the enrollment in the schools has dipped.
- There will be periodic advertising through Hispanic radio and TV ads
- CTO is looking to write policy that will reserve some funds for families who are new to the diocese.
- Strategic planning process is beginning. A kick-off meeting will be held on **March 1** and board members are asked to attend. The meeting will last from 2:00-4:00. This meeting will help to determine the general state of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Des Moines.
- Dr. Cordaro is retiring from St. Anthony. We are in the process of looking for a replacement. St. Anthony is now a part of Boston College's Immersion Program and will use this as a networking opportunity.

B. Director of Teaching and Learning

- School visits and mid-year goal reviews with principals
- Curriculum work in the area of Social Studies and Science.

C. March Meeting to be held on March 19. Location TBD.

D. Board Chair: Beth Schulte reminded members to review policies and bring information or questions to the March meeting. Deann Cook made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Deacon Chan seconded the motion. The motion carried; meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.