

**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: March 11, 2019
PLACE: St. Francis of Assisi School
PRAYER: Dr. Bonday

MINUTES

I. OPENING ACTIVITIES

A. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:03pm.

B. Roll Call:

- Members Present: Clark Smith, Beth Schulte, Leslie Wurster, Connor Flynn, Margarita Pizzano, Nicole Proesch, Celia Shedd, Andrea Cook
- Schools Office Members Present: Dr. Tracy Bonday, Denise Mulcahy
- Guests: Misty Hade, Principal at St. Francis of Assisi School

C. Prayer: Dr. Bonday led prayer

D. Call for Additional Agenda Items: No additional items were added to the agenda

E. Approval of the Agenda: Andrea Cook motioned to approve the agenda and Connor Flynn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

F. Approval of January Meeting Minutes: Andrea Cook motioned to approve the minutes from the January meeting. Connor Flynn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

II. Open Forum

Misty Hade, principal at St. Francis of Assisi School welcomed the board and shared information about the school.

- This is Misty's 12th year at the school.
- Communication has been a focus for the whole parish and to fulfill that goal a parish communications director was hired. This person gives assistance in communication and marketing.
- They are looking at families who are enrolled in the school as well as those who are not enrolled to determine how to best increase enrollment. The parish worked with Questor, through Drake, and found the best spokespeople are the students. To that end, they have created some different videos with the students to celebrate and market St. Francis of Assisi School.
- At this time, they are not full. Openings exist in grades 1, 3, and 5. They are at 93% capacity.
- Kindergarten for 2019-20 will be full.
- Over Spring Break the front entrance to the school will be redone and security will be tightened through the remodel. Funds to help with this project were raised through their auction.
- They are also looking at a wrap-around program for preschool students for the coming year. This will help parents as well as allow some families to have exposure to the school prior to kindergarten.
- **Question: Where do you draw from?** St. Francis has families from West Des Moines, Waukee, Adel, Van Meter, Johnston, and Clive.
- **Question: Is the middle school full?** Yes, the middle school is full.
- **Question: What is your teacher-student ratio?** St. Francis is 1:22.
- **Question: Have you seen steady enrollment?** We saw a drop in 2018-19, but when the data was examined the team found that several families with multiple students in each family moved out of the state for work.

The board thanked Misty for her time.

III. Action Items

A. Strategic Planning:

Dr. Bonday shared that the Strategic Planning officially came to a close on Thursday, March 7. This was the end of a 13-month project. A significant amount of time was spent on the Addendum to the plan, which is the plan for the Des Moines Metro schools. This plan looks to create a more regional school system in the metro, including the elementaries and Dowling Catholic High School.

The driving need behind this project is the need for a change in the tuition structure so that teachers and administrators can be compensated more fairly and equitably across the metro area. At this time, there are some schools that struggle to hire and retain quality teachers because of the pay. When you look at our staff experience, we have a good deal of new staff (1-5 years) and many staff who are long time veterans (20+ years). There are fewer of those in the middle range.

One way to increase compensation is to raise tuition. At this time, tuition is significantly less than what it costs to educate a child. There is also a need for high quality programming across all schools.

Outside of CTO, there is not much assistance available, and certainly nothing for middle class families. One solution to this is a capital campaign. There is not certainty about what this will look like and what goals the campaign will work toward.

In order to begin this work, a project manager will be hired to work with pastors and principals. There will be exploration of several different structures. Individual schools will maintain their own identities and charisms, we will re-brand as a diocesan system. This new structure will allow for more of the business operations to move to a more centralized system so pastors and principals can be freed up for more pastoral and instructional leadership duties.

The question we have to ask is how do we bring all schools to the same level of funding and compensation. We have to be careful not to price out those parents who are supporting the schools at this time.

Question: What does this mean for parishes? If there is going to be a savings, what happens with that? Parishes will still have financial commitment to the school and parishes without schools will also have a financial commitment to Catholic education. This can help stabilize the parish budgets and

still provide resources for all schools. More students will receive financial assistance to cover the cost of tuition.

Question: Are all parishes supportive of this? We are still working to figure out what the financial model will look like, so we can continue to share that with pastors. The Presbyteral Council made a statement that Catholic education is a mission of each parish in the diocese.

Question: What about those parishes that have not allowed information about Catholic schools to be shared or have not encouraged enrollment? There are some places where this is the norm and there will be constant conversation happening with those pastors to help them understand the benefits and importance of Catholic education.

Question: What kind of financial study has been done? If there is a centralized system, what savings will each parish see? We need to be aware of those people who work in the parishes in terms of jobs. There will be some functions happening at the system level and some at the school/parish level. There does need to be careful financial studies done to be sure we know where the financial costs will be and what the savings could look like.

Question: Are there other systems already in place you are looking at? There are some systems here in the state and close by in other dioceses that we will look at. Visits to specific systems will be made. Many dioceses across the nation are moving to a more system model.

Question: Is there a timeline? There is a timeline in the Addendum. Ultimately, the Bishop will have to sign off on whatever is decided. An Executive Director will be named and that person will work with others to create a communication plan. This person will act as the liaison between the system and others.

The Strategic Planning report and a feedback form was given to the board members. They were asked to complete and return.

B. Policy Update:

Those policies we are still looking to approve will be reviewed/approved at the May meeting. Nicole Proesch did some research into the policies she was looking at and shared that there are some changes being made by the Department of Education, so we might want to wait on those. Updated forms for some policies have been published and Dr. Bonday will share those with counsel.

IV. Reports

A. Superintendent:

- ACTION ALERT for the ESA bill – this has been limited to students with special needs. Moved further than we have gotten before.
- EDUCATION CELEBRATION is April 2nd. This is a chance to meet with legislators. They would like to have parents speak, especially those receiving CTO. Please send contact info to Dr. Bonday if you know of someone who would be willing to speak. This would be at the mid-day presentation.
- ADVANC-ED ENGAGEMENT REVIEW: The AdvancEd Engagement Review will be on April 29-May 1. We are still working on the schedule, but will need a few of you to be a part of an interview group. Clark, Leslie, Celia, and Connor are willing to help.

B. Director of Teaching and Learning:

- No report this month.

C. Board Chair:

- No report this month.

Connor Flynn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Beth Schulte seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Next Meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2019.