

**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: September 19, 2018
PLACE: Christ the King School Library
PRAYER: Dr. Tracy Bonday

MINUTES

I. OPENING ACTIVITIES

- A. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:32pm.
- B. Roll Call:
- Members Present: Clark Smith, Margarita Pizzano, Fr. Zach Kautzky, Nicole Proesch, Andrea Cook, Celia Shedd, Deacon Francis Chan
 - Members Absent: Leslie Wurster, Gloria Castellano, Connor Flynn, Beth Schulte
 - Schools Office Members Present: Dr. Tracy Bonday, Denise Mulcahy
 - Guests: Chuckie Geilenfeld, Principal Christ the King School
Mary Porter, Representative from St. Anthony School Board
- C. Prayer: Dr. Bonday led prayer
- D. Call for Additional Agenda Items: No additional agenda items were mentioned
- E. Approval of the Agenda: Andrea Cook made a motion to approve the agenda. Celia Shedd seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- F. Approval of May Meeting Minutes: Margarita Pizzano made a motion to approve the May minutes. Andrea Cook seconded the motion. Motion carried.

II. Open Forum/Guests

Chuckie Geilenfeld, Principal at Christ the King School, welcomed the board. He shared information with the board regarding the school.

- 30% of the students are Latino
- Enrollment is 170 in K-8 with preschool at 44, which is down from 58 last year.
- Key initiatives would be the *Leader in Me* program which began last year. This program is based on the 7 Habits work of Steven Covey. This is led by staff and students. The school has also implemented *STAR 360* as an assessment tool. The staff continues to receive training on the implementation and use of this program. They are also piloting the *AR* program, which is a reading comprehension program where students read books and then take computerized assessments.
- The school is changing its fundraising model and moving toward an “Ambassador’s Club.” Instead of selling things, funds will be raised through donations. With this kind of program the school receives 100% of the funds raised.
- The school is also considering a move from Power School to Ren Web.
- **Question: What curriculum do you use for Math?** Saxon Math is used in most classrooms. A change was made for 8th grade and Algebra.
- **Question: Biggest challenge?** Gaining and retaining students; difficult to pinpoint reasons; seem to lose at Middle School
- **Question: How many students go to Dowling?** About 80%
- **Question: Percentage of CTO?** 60% CTO, 50% Free/ Reduced

Mary Porter from the St. Anthony School Board spoke to the board about the 529 accounts. Iowa Coalition sent out information about 529; however, it was confusing to many parents and many did not seem to understand what this was for. Mary asked the Finance Council at St. Anthony to put together a forum to explain the 529, but they said it was something the diocese could consider. Dr. Bonday said that Iowa ACE had sent some information out that was forwarded to the principals and then to be sent out. The state has not determined how they will process this money yet; however, some have taken advantage of it. Dr. Bonday is going to resend the information to principals and encourage them to send it to parents. She will also check with ACE about what they are doing to spread the correct information to parents.

Mary also asked how policy updates are passed along. In the past, the reviewed, revised, or new policies were sent to the principal and board chair so they could be shared with the rest of the board. **What is the process now?** The diocesan website has all the policies loaded on it, so they can be found there. No information about changes will be sent to local boards moving forward.

III. Action Items

A. Board Policies: Review of 400s

Each board member was given some of the 400 policies. Members are to read, review, and bring questions or comments to the November meeting. This is a part of the review process of the board policies.

Clark Smith 481, including 481.1-481.3

Leslie Wurster: 410, 412, 415

Gloria Castellano: 421, 424

Margarita Pizzano: 427, 428, 430

Nicole Proesch: 430 and all regulations

Connor Flynn: 401, 402, 404, 407

Beth Schulte: 475, 475.1, 475.2, 478, 478.1-478.5

Celia Shedd: 433, 436, 442, 442.1

Andrea Cook: 460, 460.1, 460.2, 463, 464, 466, 472

Deacon Chan: 457, 457.1, 458

Fr. Kautzky: 445, 448, 451, 454

B. Review Key Findings

Dr. Bonday lead the discussion regarding the Key Findings Report from the Meitler Strategic Planning work. A meeting was held in June to present these findings to the larger stakeholder group. This information comes from the meetings that were held at all schools with principal, pastor, and boards.

- Catholic Identity and Academics were strong
- Questions seem to come in the areas of finance, governance, and enrollment management
- Hard to find pastors who want to be assigned to schools – we need them to promote Catholic education and find ways to be present in the schools
- How effective are the local boards? Some boards are still chosen by election and others are by appointment. Most are not pulling specific people with talent sets necessary. Most of the boards seem to be trying to deal in the daily management of the school, which is not their role. Boards should be more strategic and long-range planners and thinkers.
- At this point the Catholic Schools Office is a resource for school principals. There is no authority from the office.
- Finance is a driver as just under 50% comes from tuition. Pastors are concerned about funding and boards are trying to keep tuition low enough so parents can afford it. This causes a problem because they are not able to pay the teachers wages that are closer to the public school.
- Right now we have a large number of teachers with 1-5 years of experience and a heavy load of teachers with 15+ years of experience. Some teachers in the middle with 5-10 are leaving for the public schools with better salary and benefits. Schools are seeing reduced applicant numbers. They are sometimes forced to hire teachers who are not mission-driven.
- In order to maintain the academic excellence, we have to find ways to pay the teachers a closer pay to what public school teachers make.
- There are four work groups from the “Blue Ribbon Task Force.”
- Need to consider new funding options; however, at this time CTO is the only option for assistance as Project HOPE does not bring in a large amount of money.
- Marketing needs to be centralized so that schools are not reinventing the wheel and principals are not trying to run their marketing committees.

Dr. Bonday made notes in the worksheet to share with the Meitler group. Board members want to be sure Catholic education remains an option for all people, not just wealthy or those who struggle. There must be ways to help the middle class if tuition is going to increase. There also must be more involvement of parents. The board also suggested more of a one board system instead of each school having a local board.

The final draft and will be shared at the Catholic School Summit, which is scheduled to be held on Thursday, March 7 from 2:00-5:00 at the Pastoral Center.

IV. Committee Reports and Assignments

A. Superintendent:

- We have two locations who are receiving a more directed look through Strategic Planning. At St. Patrick's in Perry the local community has been tasked with working on a strategic plan. When the Meitler group is here in October they will be working with the pastor and principal at St. Patrick's.
- St. Albert in Council Bluffs is also working with Meitler for strategic planning. Bishop Pates has hired Meitler to create a strategic plan for St. Albert and then work with them through implementation.

B. Director of Teaching and Learning:

- One of the diocesan initiatives is the implementation of the Professional Learning Community or PLC process. Denise has been working closely with several of the schools to help them navigate this work.
- The principals are participating in observation rounds at the different schools using the observation tool through AdvancEd. This tool focused on student engagement and principals move through classrooms in 20-minute increments. Each school is able to see the data as principals key their findings into the program.

C. Board Chair: Clark Smith thanked the members for their willingness to serve on the Diocesan Schools Board. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02pm.

Meetings for the Year:

November 19

January 21

March 11

May 20

Locations will be announced closer to the meeting date.