

**SMCS Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 - 6:30 p.m.

**Present:** Kristen Bergstrom, David DeWitt, Helen Englebert, Dan Engelhard, Kathleen Healy-Osland, Phil Kerwin, Fr. Robert Kollath, Mary Krueger, Steve Pable, Natalie Ripley, Brian Rosiejka, Ron Schreier, Paul Seveska, Ron Steffens and Lori Vegso.

**Present by Phone (can't vote):** William Bittner

**Guests:** Patrick Batey, Jamie Frink, Jeanne Lee,

**Absent/Excused:** Fr. Dennis Bergsbaken, Terry Jack, Kim Massey, Fr. Paul Paider

Meeting Began at 6:30 p.m.

**Opening Prayer:** Ms. Healy-Osland led the group in opening prayer.

**Mission Statement and School Vision:** To aid in the Board discussions, the meeting started with a recitation of the Mission Statement and School Vision.

Mission Statement: "Preparing and inspiring students to lead meaningful lives, rooted in the teachings of Christ and our Catholic tradition."

School Vision "To be celebrated as the school system where students discover and develop their God-given talents and experience success through learning, faith and service."

**Open Forum:** No one asked to speak at open forum.

**Consent Agenda:** The following items were circulated prior to the meeting and were included in the consent agenda.

- Minutes of 3-20-19 SMCS Board of Trustees Meeting
- Minutes of 6-12-19 SMCS Board of Trustees Meeting
- Minutes of 8-15-19 SMCS Board of Trustees Executive Committee Meeting
- Minutes of 7-11-19 SMCS Board of Trustees Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting
- Minutes of 08-2019 SMCS Board of Trustees Athletic Committee Meeting
- Minutes of 08-2019 SMCS Board of Trustees Catholic Identity Committee Meeting
- Minutes of 08-16-19 SMCS Board of Trustees Finance Committee Meeting

Motion to approve by Mr. Engelhard. Motion seconded by Ms. Bergstrom.

Mr. Seveska asked about Executive Committee minutes. Typo "Ned" modified to "Need."

Motion passed unanimously.

**New Board Member Introduction:**

- New board members were introduced: Bill Bittner, Dr. Dave DeWitt, Father Bob Kollath, Natalie Ripley, and Ron Schreier. Returning board members asked to introduce themselves to new members after meeting.

## **President's Report:**

The President's Report was distributed to the Board. Ms. Englebert discussed the following items from the President's Report.

- **Admissions:** Ms. Englebert reviewed the Admissions Scorecard. The news was very good. As of two days ago we were up 59 students versus a year ago. Some of these may be dual enrolled but really excellent work. Ms. Englebert went through details of numbers. Ms. Vegso said great job but asked about why St. Gabriel seems to be decreasing when others are increasing. Ms. Englebert responded multiple factors but is meeting with St. Gabriel principal. Mr. Seveska pointed out great news at St. Mary. Talked about Aquinas numbers helping there but not total story. Ms. Ripley followed up on comment that it has taken time to raise St. Mary numbers. Ms. Ripley asked if there was any key actions. Ms. Englebert said that recent hires in the system within the St. Mary school that had contacts in the community helped. Mr. Rosiejka asked about 31 new students at the high school. Ms. Englebert said that it was really lots of different sources.

Mr. Seveska asked if we will be able to drill down further to look harder at retention. Ms. Bergstrom asked if we can go back to retention percentage on dashboard. Ms. Englebert said we can but most people didn't seem to follow it. Ms. Englebert said we can after final numbers in September. Ms. Ripley offered to assist and possibly revise formulas. Dr. DeWitt added that there would be merit to seeing who came and who left for what reasons. Particularly focusing on why people came in and what levels they came in. Ms. Englebert said we can survey those who came. Thinks it is a good idea. Middle school was down for last two years but 6<sup>th</sup> grade is up now. Mr. Engelhard said that we can talk metrics but really good job. Father Kollath asked how many years on Choice Program. This is our 5<sup>th</sup> year.

- **Business Services:** New director of business services is Jamie Frink. She comes to the system with 25 years accounting experience. Worked in Arizona with school finance and audits. This is her 6<sup>th</sup> year back in the Fox Valley. She is looking forward to joining the team and learning from Jeanne Lee. September 1 she takes the title of Director of Business Services but Jeanne Lee will remain through December as advisor to the director of business services.

- **Staffing:** As of today, the system has had three unplanned departures since August 1<sup>st</sup>. Marcia Pate (counselor) leaving for personal reasons. This position has been filled. Rinna Hill (Mandarin teacher) was very unexpected. An offer has been extended to current translator for Kimberly Clark who had applied for previously open part-time position but decided needed a full-time position. Director of Development is open after departure of Sarah Graper. 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at St. Margaret Mary has been open all summer and the work to fill this position has been interesting. Four or five candidates have reached the offer stage but none of these led to the position being filled. There are currently two candidates the System is interviewing. Tina Fairweather, the St. Margaret Mary principal has plan for now but still working on it.

- **Fund Development Area.** Please put events on calendar. Zephyrfest is May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Back at Fox Cities Exhibition Center.

- **Parish Mission Planning.** In September, the SMCS Board of Trustees and other members of the System will be invited to a meeting about Parish Mission Planning from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. before the Board of Trustees meeting. There will be an orientation on the process, what has happened to date at St. Margaret Mary and St. Mary/St. John, and how the System can be more involved with the process at St. Gabriel and St. Patrick. The Diocese pointed out in July, 2019 that the System needed more involvement when it was reviewing plans for St. Margaret Mary and St. John/St. Mary. Father Kollath said he was a little concerned how to do Parish Mission Planning with a school system which bridges over multiple parishes. Father thinks it should be done more collaboratively. Diocese asked the System to be part of Parish Mission Planning. St. Margaret Mary has shared their Parish Mission Plan with the System. The Diocese was asked if the System can do their planning after the parishes do theirs. Ms. Bergstrom pointed out that the Diocese input shows how important it is for the System and the parishes to work together. We need to figure out how to function cooperatively together successfully. Mr. Schreier said as St. Margaret Mary has gone through the process they can help the rest along the way. Ms. Healy-Osland said that Father Dennis was surprised by what came up in the Parish Mission Planning. Mr. Schreier said it would be helpful to have the priests present. The 5:00 p.m. time was picked to help priests attend. Father Kollath pointed out that Wednesdays are bad days due to Religious Ed. Mr. Rosiejka asked what is the ultimate goal of Parish Mission Planning? Father Kollath answered. Direction, sustainability, improved ministries, resource sharing. Directed by Bishop. What does the parish want? Mr. Pable said it is us as church and us as parish saying why are we here? What are we doing and why? How does everything work together? To share the good news of Christ. To increase disciples. Ms. Ripley said great idea for School System because our goal is to increase discipleship as well.

- Mr. Rosiejka asked for summary of how marketing training went today. Mr. Batey and Ms. Englebert said it went well. Kelly Beisenstein-Weiss had students come and read the parts. Talked about values but put their own words and experiences into values. Whole document reviewed. Staff was interested and enthused. Staff pointed out that top reasons parents send their kids here is not a direct match to what we are marketing. It made staff think about how better to match. Well received.

### **Finance Committee**

Ms. Bergstrom gave a brief summary. Fundraising was lower than budgeted but balanced by not hiring an accounting position that was budgeted. Mr. Pable asked about activities funds. Ms. Bergstrom said that the activities and volunteer groups line item is an attempt to gather and share information concerning these activities by having a common budgeting process so we can get a snapshot on those obligations

### **Strategic Plan/Task Force Status:**

#### **Academic Excellence Strategic Task Force - Academic Excellence.**

Ms. Bergstrom led the discussion. In the middle of a social studies deep dive to select a new curriculum. New state standards being reviewed as well as existing materials to come up with recommendation. Doing a little lighter version of this for science. Last year we tried to show

curriculum continuity. Science and Social studies at elementary level provided a challenge. Workaround was created.

Mapping of continuity/consistency of curriculum to help System is ongoing.

The System needs to look at how it delivers education:

- Space
- Are we delivering education the best way possible?
- Are we exploring concepts like schools without walls, other new ideas?

Education sustainability is a big project. Mr. Schreier and other experts can assess where we are, where we want to go and provide some recommendations for 2021-2022 school year.

Working on a statement of educational value which ties into marketing plan. Share with teachers and get everyone to understand all the things teacher do and ensure they are valued.

Ms. Vegso asked about educational sustainability. Educational sustainability includes looking at use of space. How does the System deliver with excellence and efficiency? The System has three elementary schools within 3 miles of each other. Mr. Schreier asked about public relations piece. Communicating what we are doing to community in this area is important.

### **Strategic Task Force - Community and Continuity.**

Ms. Bergstrom led the discussion. The Task Force returned to where they had started. The goal is to find the “thread” that pulls kids from Pre-3 through high school to aid in retention. They did not like the direction in which they had started, at least in part due to some communication issues. New Athletic Committee has done a great job. Ms. Ripley asked about parish communication. Ms. Bergstrom agreed that we need a full parish system communication plan. How we communicate together. Discussion distinguished between communicating **with** parishes and communicating **to** community. Ms. Vegso asked do we rely on individual committees and task forces to communicate with parishes or do we have a centralized communication system? Mr. Schreier talked about students engaging with one another.

Father Kollath talked about whether analysis of why students left should fall into community and continuity. Ms. Bergstrom said it could be done. She will talk with Ms. Beisenstein-Weiss to use what is currently being done. Father Kollath feels strongly there is an important opportunity in having students singing at parishes on weekend masses.

### **Strategic Task Force – Financial Stability.**

There will be different leads for different initiatives.

Mr. Engelhard is the new head of the Foundation and the head of major gifts.

Mr. Engelhard and Ms. Englebert will start, then add people. Bill Bittner and Terry Jack are possible future additions due to their experience. Mr. Pable asked clarification question. From the tuition assistance angle, will that be rolled into foundation or will it continue to stand alone. For existing funds that have stated purpose for tuition assistance, they cannot be changed. As for future funds, there are opportunities to market for specific areas such as teacher salaries, technology, etc.

Father Kollath asked about salaries. Ms. Englebert said that we are using our own matrix, not that of the Diocese. We are getting closer to 75% to 80% of public school salaries. The challenge is maintaining it year over year. We voted for deficit last year to start to get the salaries up. Ms. Healy-Osland talked about identifying potential cost sharing opportunities and the benefit of improving the three year financial planning tool the System has been using for Parish Investment. Ms. Englebert and Ms. Healy-Osland are in the process of meeting with all the parishes. There are three main areas of discussion: Parish Investment formula, shared services opportunities and the best way to deliver education. Felt that it was good discussion. Mary Krueger and Father Kollath appreciated discussion in their parishes.

### **Strategic Task Force - Recruitment.**

Ms. Vegso led the discussion. Last year was development of strategic marketing plan. This year is execution/implementation of the plan. The new logo with new tagline is being implemented. In a future Board meeting we will review new design work.

One of the goals for this Task Force is to move Fine Arts from good to great. Working on a recommendation on how to sustain and improve.

The Board was shown the great results of the refresh of the preschool programs of the 3 elementary schools. Donors were found to fund the remodel so it is fully funded. Working with teachers to not over-clutter the areas.

### **Committee Updates:**

- Catholic Identity Committee. Ms. Ripley spoke. They are working on the Board approved policies to encourage the increase in prayer during school day and during extracurricular activities. They are also working on increasing the visual presence of our catholic faith. The committee has 18 members. Ms. Vegso mentioned that Catholic Identity relates to why people are coming here and what can we do to further meet their needs and desires.

- Athletics. Mr. Jack, Mr. Seveska and Mr. Rosiejka have done a lot of work over the summer. Mr. Seveska talked about new Athletic Director. Great addition to the System. New football coach seems to be doing a great job. Father Kollath offered to say a mass or confessions before or after games as needed.

The Board will vote on Task Force Initiatives and Committee Goals and Charters in September. If there are any questions please reach out to the committee during the next month. You do not have to wait until the meeting to ask questions.

Charters will be distributed before September meeting. Questions then vote.

### **Old Business -**

- **Foundation** There was a meeting of the Foundation. Transferring funds in existing trusts to Foundation will not triggering an audit. Dale Glen from auditors said it won't trigger a separate audit. To not trigger audit Foundation must show the funds as liability. The Foundation is not seeking variance power, which would trigger an audit. There was a meeting with Associated Bank about the existing funds.

There was a quick review of some of the existing funds and what is their purpose. The Annual Fund exists to be used every year as part of the operational budget. There are three other main groups of funds: The Miller Funds are to be used to increase enrollment. The Hartl funds are for scholarships and technology. Then there are 33 separate funds of various sizes at Associated Bank with a combined total of approximately \$1,200,000. It's a goal to give better snapshot of these three fund areas in the next couple months.

**New Business:**

- Paul Seveska talked about appreciation for those who worked on marketing plan. Particularly Annemarie Werner and Patti Purcell. Staff stepped up as well. Lori Vegso did a great job driving it to completion. We have now committed to a plan. We now need to make it part of everything we do. It is time for implementation. Welcome to our new Board members.
- Father Kollath happy to join St. Gabriel and the System. He is appreciative we don't have a mountain of debt. Glad there is no enrollment hole in the middle of the System. Appreciative of the System and the work that has been done.

**Executive Session: None**

**End of Meeting:** Mr. Seveska motioned to adjourn meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Schreier. Motion unanimously approved. Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Meeting providing an introduction to Parish Mission Planning will run from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Board of Trustees meeting with auditors will start directly after that meeting with regular agenda to follow the meeting with the auditors.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip Kerwin